Huns and Slavs

Joseph Amyot Padjan

Huns and Slavs

For Mom, Muta, and Syn

Truth is the cry of all, but the game of a few. – George Berkeley

Preface

The origin of the Slavs has been a matter of inquiry ever since the sixth century CE, when the ancestors of the Slavs first set foot on the world stage; and it has been a matter of controversy ever since modern scholarship has tried to answer the question of their origin. One thousand five hundred years or so after their arrival, to this day, the definitive answer to the question of their origin is still on the loose, out in the wild, and ever beyond the reach of the scholar out hunting for it. The historian has sought the answer in books; the archaeologist, in the ground; the linguist in the tongues; and the geneticist in DNA; and though much about them has been learned over the centuries, yet the question of their ethnogenesis has not been settled to the satisfaction of all inquirers. The paucity of evidence pertaining to their origin, together with the lacunas in the historical record, contributes to make any definitive answer about their ethnogenesis elusive; and the best perhaps that can be hoped for is an answer that has maximum plausibility, so much so, that the historian, the archaeologist, the linguist, and the geneticist, may all find it impossible not to agree that such answer is definitive enough. That no such definitive answer, one of maximum plausibility, one universally agreeable, has yet been provided, is

proved by the disagreement that continues among scholars to the present day. With this book, which in part is about the origin of the Slavs, I will supply an answer to the question of their origin that will be endowed with the utmost plausibility, with it at its maximum. In other words, I intend to settle the matter definitively, by demonstrating that my answer to the question of their origin is not only the most plausible, but the correct one.

The Slavs that made their appearance in Europe in the sixth century were different from the Slavs of today, in that those first Slavs were not yet mixed with the inhabitants of Europe that they encountered on their arrival. Today's Slavs are descended from both those first Slavs and the peoples those Slavs mixed with and assimilated, and with others that arrived after the Slavs. For the sake of clearness, when I am talking about those first Slavs, I will often refer to them as the early Slavs or the first Slavs.

It will become clear that Huns of Central Asia, nomadic and settled ones alike, together with their Saka neighbors, or subjects, played a significant role in the development of the early Slavs. The events that laid the foundation for that development, or influence, began in 176 BCE with the exodus of the majority of the Yue-Ji ('Yuezhi') from Gansu and their migration to Bactria, where the Yue-Ji proper, or Moon Ji clan, known when in Bactria by the Chinese as the Great Yue-Ji, would come to be most widely known as Kushans.

Speak of Huns, or speak of Sakas, and to the mind are brought scenes of warriors formed into tribes and mounted on horseback, riding hard and shooting arrows. It must be borne in mind, however, that Huns at least, were also members of clans, and that such clans could consist of thousands of members (as

some clans among the Turks today do). The difference between a tribe and a clan, is that the members of a clan have, and recognize, common ancestors, that is, they have ancestry in common; and the bonds that they maintain are strong owing to their being members of related families, whereas a tribe in former ages might have consisted of members of different ethnic backgrounds, of unrelated men, or of unrelated groups, who were united for certain purposes, such as raiding or fighting and warring. Yet a clan could, of course, if large, be considered a tribe by virtue of its size, just as, likewise, a number of small clans could be taken to constitute a tribe.

Clan ties notwithstanding, as struggles for dominance by rivals are a perennial feature of human history, so even the strongest clan bonds can be broken; and on the steppes of Asia, bonds between Huns were broken countless times, leading to clan fission, with one group maintaining fidelity to the old chief, and the other group pledging allegiance to the new one, and taking on a new name, often that of the new chief. Hundreds of years later the historian comes along, finds a few facts, learns from them of the group named after the rival that split the clan into two, and concludes he has stumbled upon a new tribe of different stock, one unrelated to the group led by the old chief, without ever realizing that it was really, merely, at least at first, one half of a clan that had split into two. It is certain, to be sure, that historians as well as scholars in archaeology and in linguistics, making extrapolations on weak and scarce evidence, have sometimes made, and perhaps have often made, the mistake of thinking that two related clans or groups of steppe peoples known by different names, and following different lifestyles in different areas when at last attested to exist, were unrelated and

of different stock, when in fact they were of exactly the same ethnic background, and formerly united in one group or clan bearing one name. If we knew less about the history of the Padjanaks in the Balkans, for instance, and if those Padjanaks that deserted Tyrach to follow Kegen had come to be known as a tribe of *Kegens*, which could easily have happened if the Fates had had a different plan for them, historians might have mistaken the Padjanaks loyal to Kegen to be a tribe of *Kegens*, a people, in their mistaken view, unrelated to the Padjanaks that remained loyal to Tyrach.

It also sometimes happened, and perhaps often, that in the ancient past a clan, tribe, or people, that had a definite endonym, a name for itself, never came to be known by it, because an exonym, a name given to it by others, obscured its existence. Conversely, the use of an endonym sometimes obscured the use and meaning of an exonym synonymous with the endonym. In my book *The Padjanaks* I have demonstrated that the Kushans, for example, were also known as the Bai-shu-ni, or Bai-shun, the latter being an exonym denoting White Huns, and the former, Kushan, being the endonym, also denoting White Huns. To demonstrate this was easy enough. It was, in part, a matter of showing the correct pronunciation of the initial letter of a name of a people, one whose name no scholar had evidently ever pronounced correctly. In a word, Strabo, Greek geographer and historian, recorded the names of those who conquered Bactria about 130 BCE (the conquerors whom the Chinese knew as the Great Yue-Ji), where the Kushan Empire was established; and he recorded the name of one of the conquering groups, Basiani, as Pasiani, the initial letter being in pronunciation most like the Thai character ป (*bpaaw bplaah*),

which represents a consonantal sound that is in pronunciation between the English letters *b* and *p*—*bp*. Had scholars realized that the *p* in Pasiani was to be pronounced more like a *b*, or like *bp*, they would have realized that Pasiani is really Basiani. This name, pronounced Bai-shu-ni or Bai-shun-i or Bai-shun, is, in fact, a transcription of Bai-Xiongnu 白匈奴. Kushan, from Ku-Xiongnu, beginning with the 'Turkic' word *ku*, meaning 'white,' is the Turkic form of Bai-shun; and Bai-shun, beginning with the Chinese word *bai*, meaning 'white,' is the Chinese form of Kushan, that is, of Ku-Xiongnu. Bai-shu-ni or Bai-shun in time acquired the Turkic suffix *-ok*, and thus became Bai-shu-nok, a form of the name which has been recorded and spelled in numerous ways, such as Besenyők, Badjanak, Padjanak, and Patzinak. Scholars looking at the form Pecheneg, the English transliteration of the phonetic spelling of the name in Russian, or looking at the other forms shown above, never suspected that they were looking at variant exonyms that all signified Kushans. If any scholars had, I would not have been the first person to point out, and to demonstrate, that the Kushans were also known as Bai-shun, and so forth. As the Kushans, or Basiani, were Xiongnu, and as the *Sogdian Ancient Letters* confirm that the Xiongnu were Huns and known as such, so the Kushans were Huns—White Huns.

What Huns, then, played a significant role in the development of the early Slavs? White Huns did, namely, the Kushans. These White Huns, when their empire in Central Asia and India fell, did not perish, as I have demonstrated in *The Padjanaks*. They, together with the Kangar (Kangju, etc.) their allies, became better known by other names, in particular by variants of that exonym, Bai-shu-ni, or Bai-shun, some of which

names I have already mentioned, as Bai-shu-nok (Besenyők and Baṣanâq), Badjanak (Bajinák), and Padjanak (Patzinak), these being, in the main, the variants that I focus on in my previous book. These variants, however, though they may in fact have been in use shortly after the fall of the Kushan Empire, are attested only after the arrival of the early Slavs in Europe. If between the fall of the Kushan Empire and the arrival in Europe of the early Slavs, and not long after the arrival in Europe of those Slavs, the Kushans or Yue-Ji or White Huns and the Kangar were known by other names than the variants mentioned above, what were those names? Kidarites, Alchon Huns, Ephthalites, Khazars, and Avars were, as will be seen, five of those names.

Procopius speaks of the Sclaveni, who were the early Slavs; and the Antes, who Procopius says spoke the same language as the Sclaveni, and had the same customs and looks as they did, were of the same stock with them. He then adds both the Sclaveni and the Antes were known in the past under one name, that of Spori. Thus the early Slavs, known first as Spori, or at least at one time as such, were later known as the Sclaveni and the Antes.

Jordanes, a Goth and contemporary of Procopius, speaks of the early Slavs as well, mentioning both the Sclaveni and the Antes, as Procopius does; but Jordanes says nothing about the Spori, yet he names a third group, the Venethi, which he says are of the same original stock as the Sclaveni and the Antes.

What other sources, such as Maurice, not improbable author of the war manual *Strategikon*, and Theophanes, and Theophylact Simocatta, to name a few, had to say about the early Slavs, I will discuss below. It is safe to say, from what all

these early authors tell us, especially Procopius, that the Sclaveni and the Antes, earlier denominated Spori, were, at least in part, together with the Venethi mentioned by Jordanes, as will be seen, ancestors of today's Croats and Serbs, of Czechs and Moravians, of Slovenes and Slovaks, of Russians and Poles, and of many of today's other Slavs.

In the following pages I demonstrate, by way of arguments and evidence, that the first Slavs originated not in the swamps of Ukraine, nor even near any boundary of that nation, but far to the east of the chilly Volga, in a region where the Himalayas begin their rise, where no scholars have ever considered the early Slavs to have had their ethnogenesis, apart perhaps from one or two groups of them that are thought to have had an Iranian origin.

Now to fix, or to endeavor to fix, the origin or ethnogenesis of a people to a certain place, and to a definite or even approximate time, is an arbitrary act, and a hazardous one as well. Different people have different ideas of what things constitute an ethnos. In any case, ethnic groups do exist, and they have existed since before the dawn of history; and they can exist only if a number of elements mingle together and cohere to form them. When a number of people come to identify or evolve likenesses of importance to them in one another, and important differences that separate and distinguish them from others of whom they are aware, the result tends to be, that those likenesses – looks, habits, customs, language, and the like – draw them together with binding force and unite them into a group and not others with them, thus making for an ethnos. With the early Slavs this process, as I will show, *began* beyond Ukraine, near distant [redacted]. But it did not *end* near [redacted].

The early Slavs, or those who came to constitute them, did not live alone in their corner of Asia, in peaceful isolation, far apart from other peoples. They had neighbors, and the most important of them were the Kushans, or White Huns, who as the Yue-Ji had arrived in Bactria by 130 BCE. The Yue-Ji, however, or Kushans, or Bai-shu-ni, did not arrive alone. With them were Sakas, Tocharians, and the Wusun (Usun, Asiani, Asii). The Sakas were an ancient Iranian people. The Tocharians, whose language was an Indo-European one, were, in all probability, Indo-Europeans, perhaps Celts. The Wusun were Huns that were, as will be seen, a clan of the Xiongnu, and were thus a branch of the same people as the Moon Ji, or Yue-Ji, or Bai-Xiongnu, or Ku-Xiongnu. After the conquest of Bactria by their ancestors, the Kushans over the years grew most in power among all the groups, so that by about 45 CE, in the reign of Kujula Kadphises, the dominance of the Kushans prevailed over the *yabghus* ruling the other groups.

The first stages of the ethnogenesis of the Slavs, as I will show, took place within the boundaries of the Kushan Empire, in close proximity to the Kushans and the Kangar, either in the reign of Kanishka the First, or shortly after it, when the Kushans were at the height of their power, that is, in the second century. To show the correctness of this assertion about their ethnogenesis, that it began in the dominion of the Kushans, and near Kushans themselves, and to make the implications of this fact impress themselves as deeply as possible in the mind of the reader, it is necessary that I begin this book with a discussion of the Kushans, or Bai-shun, or Great Yue-Ji, as well as of the Lesser Yue-Ji and the Wusun, and illuminate the origin and histories of these Huns, so that the way in which the history of

the early Slavs ties into that of the Kushans can be best understood. Moreover, this book is, as its title implies, as much about Huns as it is about Slavs, and therefore the subject of the origin of the Huns will be dealt with in detail as well. Now, it is not possible to throw light on the origin of the Huns above named, or of course of those related Huns led by Attila, without also illuminating the origin of the first of the Huns, the ancestral group of all Huns, namely, the Xiongnu. In fact, any discussion of the Yue-Ji and the Wusun naturally leads into a discussion of the Xiongnu also, and it really is possible to explain the origin of the Yue-Ji and the Wusun only by explaining, or by solving, the problem of the origin of the Xiongnu. As will be seen, this book solves the problem of their origin. Previous attempts by others to do so either have failed, or have invariably fallen short in one way or another of solving the problem, for a variety of reasons. The chief reason has been the failure on the part of those who have tried to solve it, to recognize the interconnectedness of the peoples named above, and the depth of their connection to the Kangar, as well as with others in antiquity living in China, and to reveal and understand the implications of those interconnections. Moreover, any one who attempts to solve the problem of the origin of the Xiongnu, must first understand correctly the relationship between the Yue-Ji and the Wusun on the one hand, and, on the other, the relationship of those two groups with the Xiongnu proper. This can be achieved only by determining accurately which of the two early Chinese histories is the original and correct one, the *Shi ji* or the *Han shu*. Edwin Pulleyblank and Zongli Lu stand out for having shown that the *Shi ji* is the original work, and the *Han shu* the copy. I alone have shown, in this book, that the *Han*

shu contains a gross fabrication overlooked by all scholars, one that definitively proves that certain key passages in it are not facts of history, but manifestly pieces of fiction. Now to show that the *Han shu* is an altered and embellished copy of the *Shi ji* requires deep and careful analysis of the parallel passages of the two works, and for that reason a good part of this book is devoted to that analysis, and to a necessary exposition of the two works. After solving the problem of the origin of the Xiongnu, or Huns, I take the opportunity to show that a number of peoples living in present day China and in Southeast Asia are descended from them, that they are, in fact, Huns themselves, at least in part. This book is, in fact, as much for readers living in Southeast Asia and in China as it is for those living in the western hemisphere who are interested in the subjects that I discuss in it. Therefore, the reader who comes to this book hoping to read at the outset exclusively about Attila's Huns, or about the Slavs, is asked to understand that the scope of this book is far broader than a discussion would be of those Huns and Slavs whose history involves Europe only, or Europe in the main. There were many more groups of Huns than just Attila's, and it was, in fact, Huns antecedent to Attila's that influenced the development of the early Slavs. In sum, the result of presenting all the information that the book contains, and of presenting it in the way in which it is ordered, is a complete and logical context in which the true ethnogenesis of the Huns, and that of the Slavs, becomes manifest and undeniable.

After discussing the Huns of the Far East and their descendant groups in that part of the world, as well as of those of Central Asia and the peoples descended from them, and the information pertinent to understanding their histories and the

origin of the first of the Huns, I proceed to discuss the origin of the early Slavs at length, and show what it is that demonstrates the influence of the Kushans and the Kangar upon them, and what establishes as fact, that the ethnogenesis of the early Slavs occurred in the empire of the Kushans.

Lastly, I will tackle the taboo topic of the history of the relationship of the Croats and Serbs, and reconcile the various accounts of their origins that seem impossible of reconciliation; and I will explode common misconceptions about the origin of their ethnonyms, and show their true etymology. I will also discuss the composition of the present-day populations of the various Slavic peoples, and will go into some detail on the implications of certain Y-DNA haplogroups found among them. It is my hope that the reader will find this book to be a valuable contribution to Hunnic and to Slavic studies.

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HUNS AND SLAVS

I

Truth lies within a little and certain compass, but error is immense. – Lord Bolingbroke

The Yue-Ji

Nomads of the Gobi, the warlike Yue-Ji,[1] or Moon Ji of Gansu, a clan of Huns, emerged as a people between the desert regions of southern Mongolia and the Heavenly Mountains of China, over two thousand two hundred years ago. The Chinese form of their name, as spelled by Sima Qian, author of the *Shi ji*, which is the chief written source of detailed information on this people, is 月氏, a name today most often transliterated in English as 'Yuezhi,' and meaning 'moon clan.' This spelling of their name in Chinese, however, is manifestly problematic, and the obviousness of the problem makes it all the more remarkable that scholars have completely overlooked it. In *The Padjanaks* I write:

> The original homeland, or the most ancient known habitation of the ancestors of the Kushans, the Yue-Ji, was in Gansu, and one of their ancient habitations there was near the Huangshui River.

[1] 'Yuezhi.'

Burials found in an archaeological context in Yongchang, Gansu, in what is called the Hamadun cemetery, have been determined by Chinese scholars to be the remains of the Yue-Ji,[2] and the Hamadun site is quite close to the Huangshui. We know from the *Shi ji* and the *Han shu*, two early histories written by the Chinese, that the Yue-Ji were the dominant people in Gansu at least as early as 215 BCE, but that about 176 their arch-enemies, the Xiongnu, known in the West as Huns, vanquished them in warfare, so reducing the power of the Yue-Ji, that most of them abandoned their lands in Gansu, and began to migrate westwards.[3]

It is a virtually unknown fact that among the Yue-Ji and the Xiongnu lived 'another' people, the Ji 姬, whose homeland or ancient habitation was also by the Huangshui River.[4] But this was not really 'another' people. Sima Qian, author of the *Shi ji*, as well as others that followed him, spelled the name of the Yue-Ji, or 'Yuezhi,' in Chinese as 月氏, which means 'moon clan.' The first character in this name, 月, which is a common noun that means 'moon,' is transliterated in English as *yue*. The second character in this name, 氏, which is a common noun that means 'clan,' is most commonly transliterated in English as *zhi* and *chih*. Scholars understand the name 月氏 as spelled in Chinese, and its transliteration 'Yuezhi' in English, to be a proper noun, that is, a proper name—the name of the clan to which 月氏 'Yuezhi' refers. To understand the name 月氏 in such way means, that the proper name of the clan consists of two common nouns, with the latter of the two being the very word for 'clan' in Chinese. Clearly, we have discovered an absurdity. Since the first common noun 月 in the

[2] Enguo Lu, *The Podboy Burials Found in Xinjiang and The Remains of the Yuezhi* (Circle of Inner Asian Art SOAS, Newsletter, Issue 15, June, 2002), p. 21.

[3] Sima Qian, *Shi ji, or Records of the Grand Historian: Han Dynasty II*, Revised Edition, translated by Burton Watson (Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 140-141.

[4] Mary Bai, "Bai Nationality Shines in Southwestern China," China International Travel Service Co., accessed January 4, 2025, https://www.cits.net/china-travel-guide/bai-nationality-shines-in-southwestern-china.html.

compound is being used as an adjective to modify the second common noun 氏, the second common noun is the substantive; and, therefore, with such understanding of the name as scholars maintain, the meaning is, that the name of the clan *is clan*. This is, obviously, ridiculous; but that is exactly what it comes down to, as analysis of the name demonstrates (which analysis apparently has not been done before). Obviously, Sima Qian erred when he recorded the name; for the proper name of a clan would never be the generic word or common noun 'clan' 氏 itself. This would be like saying 'John's family name is family.' That is to say, Sima Qian made a mistake in his spelling of the clan name of the people whose history he was relating. But it was a natural mistake, or perhaps a careless one, since the pronunciation of the real name of the clan, Ji 姬, is identical in pronunciation to 氏 when it 氏 is used in the compound 月氏. In other words, 月姬 and 月氏 are pronounced in exactly the same way, as Yue-Ji ('Yuezhi').

Thus, there were not 'two' peoples—the Ji 姬 and the 'Yuezhi' '月氏'—living by the same river, in the same area, at the same time, and having names identical in pronunciation; there was one people living by that river, in that location, and at that time: the 月姬氏 Yue-Ji clan—the 'Moon Ji clan.'[5]

The correct spelling in Chinese, then, of the name of this moon people, the Moon Ji, is, as I have shown above, 月姬. The name is accurately transliterated in English as Yue-Ji; and when this people is spoken of as the 'Moon Ji clan,' the Chinese spelling is 月姬氏. In *The Padjanaks*, I write:

The Chinese also referred to the Ji 姬 or Yue-Ji clan 月姬氏 as Bai, a word or name meaning 'white' that was first prefixed by

[5] Joseph Amyot Padjan, "The Padjanaks" (unpublished manuscript, 2014), accessed January 10, 2025 https://www.josephamyotpadjan.com/2025/04/the-padjanaks-2/., pp. 104-106.

them to another name by which the Yue-Ji were also known. That the Chinese also referred to the Ji (Yue-Ji) as Bai, is evidenced by the fact that the name Bai eventually became their ethnonym permanently when they migrated from Gansu to Yunnan during the Han (206 BCE to 220) and Jin (265 to 420 CE) dynasties.[6] The Chinese referred to them as Bai because of the high importance of the color white in the culture, customs, and dress of the Ji, that is, the Yue-Ji; and the Chinese prefixed the word 月 *yue* to the name Ji 姬 because the Ji (the Bai) had a moon-oriented culture. If the Yue-Ji had not had customs centered around the color white, they would not have been associated with the color white to the degree that they have, and Bai would not have come to be the ethnonym permanently. Mary Bai, in *Bai Nationality Shines in Southwestern China*, writes:[7]

> Bai people are descendants of an ancient nationality named Ji, which habited in the drainage area of the Huangshui River during pre-Qin period (about 2,200 years ago). The Ji have been known as Bai until [the author means *since*] the Han and Jin Dynasties.[8] [Brackets added.]

The year 176 BCE in Gansu was a most momentous and fateful one for the Yue-Ji, mainly because of Maodun, supreme leader, or *shanyu*, of the Xiongnu, the arch-enemies of the Yue-Ji. Though rightful heir of his father Touman, *shanyu* until about 209, Maodun rose to power against heavy odds, and against his father's wishes; for Touman with another consort had another son, one younger than Maodun the heir apparent; and, wanting that son to be the next *shanyu* of the Xiongnu, he devised a plan to get rid of Maodun through treachery.

[6] Ruru Zhou, "Bai Minority of China," China Highlights, accessed January 4, 2014, http://www.chinahighlights.com/travelguide/nationality/bai.htm.

[7] Joseph Amyot Padjan, "The Padjanaks," p. 106.

[8] Mary Bai, "Bai Nationality Shines in Southwestern China."

Accordingly, Touman sent him to the Yue-Ji to be a hostage; and then, with a force of warriors, he attacked the Yue-Ji, hoping that they would execute him. The brave and valorous Maodun, however, stole a horse from the Yue-Ji before they had a chance to kill him, and returned to the camp of the Xiongnu. Touman, impressed by his son's show of bravery and lucky escape, put Maodun in charge of a cavalry ten thousand strong; but he failed to realize that the seed of resentment that he planted in Maodun's heart by his treacherous act, was growing, and would in time come to make a deadly thorn. Sima Qian writes:

> Mo-tun [Maodun] had some arrows made that whistled in flight and used them to drill his troops in shooting from horseback. "Shoot wherever you see my whistling arrow strike!" he ordered, "and anyone who fails to shoot will be cut down!" Then he went out hunting for birds and animals, and if any of his men failed to shoot at what he himself had shot at, he cut them down on the spot. After this, he shot a whistling arrow at one of his best horses. Some of his men hung back and did not dare shoot at the horse, whereupon Mo-tun at once executed them. A little later he took an arrow and shot at his favorite wife. Again some of his men shrank back in terror and failed to discharge their arrows, and again he executed them on the spot. Finally he went out hunting with his men and shot a whistling arrow at one of his father's finest horses. All his followers promptly discharged their arrows in the same direction, and Mo-tun knew that at last they could be trusted. Accompanying his father, the *Shan-yü* T'ou-man, on a hunting expedition, he shot a whistling arrow at his father and everyone of his followers aimed their arrows in the same direction and shot the *Shan-yü* dead. Then Mo-tun executed his stepmother, his younger brother, and all the high officials of the nation who refused to take

> orders from him, and set himself up as the new *Shan-yü*.[9] [Brackets added.]

Thus did Maodun become *shanyu* of the Xiongnu, and with his ascendancy, the fate of the Yue-Ji was sealed: for in 176, about thirty-three years after becoming *shanyu*, Maodun ordered his Wise King of the Right to lead an army of Xiongnu warriors west to find the Yue-Ji and attack them.[10] The Wise King, by alleged divine aid, and by the excellence of his fighters and their strong horses, succeeded in his mission apace, 'wiping out' the Yue-Ji almost to a man, or so boasted Maodun, by slaughtering every member of the clan, or by forcing to submission every surviving one of them.[11] When the Xiongnu withdrew, the remaining Yue-Ji faced the consequences of their defeat, and recognized it was in their interest to forsake their ancestral lands in Gansu, and migrate to new ones. Most of the horde, later known as the Great Yue-Ji, migrated west, and the 'small number' of those that were unable to make the journey west with them, as Sima Qian tells us, or rather as we learn from the summary of the report by the Han envoy Zhang Qian, became known as the Lesser Yue-Ji.[12] They, or rather a number of them, as will be seen, eventually moved south after the departure of the main horde. The term 'small number,' by the way, as used by Zhang Qian in reference to the Yue-Ji that did not migrate west with the majority, and that became known as the Lesser

[9] Burton Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian of China*, translated from *The Shih chi* of Ssu-ma Ch'ien (Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 161.

[10] Sima Qian, *Shi ji*, p. 140.

[11] Sima Qian, p. 140.

[12] Sima Qian, p. 234.

Yue-Ji, is used in a relative sense. Sima Qian, throughout the *Shi ji*, speaks of battles taking place here and there, and from time to time talks of attacking forces, and in reporting the numbers of those involved, he is almost always unspecific, saying typically, for example, '20,000 or 30,000 men,' or '30,000 or 40,000 men;' and Zhang Qian, in reporting numbers, is likewise unspecific. The term 'small number,' in other words, as used in reference to the Lesser Yue-Ji, is used in an approximate and relative sense, relative to the number that constituted the majority of the Yue-Ji, and thus it may refer to tens of thousands. In fact, considering that a number of the Lesser Yue-Ji remained in Gansu after that attack by the Wise King of the Right, and possessed their territory there until at least 121 BCE,[13] surrounded by rival tribes, indicates that they must have numbered in the tens of thousands.

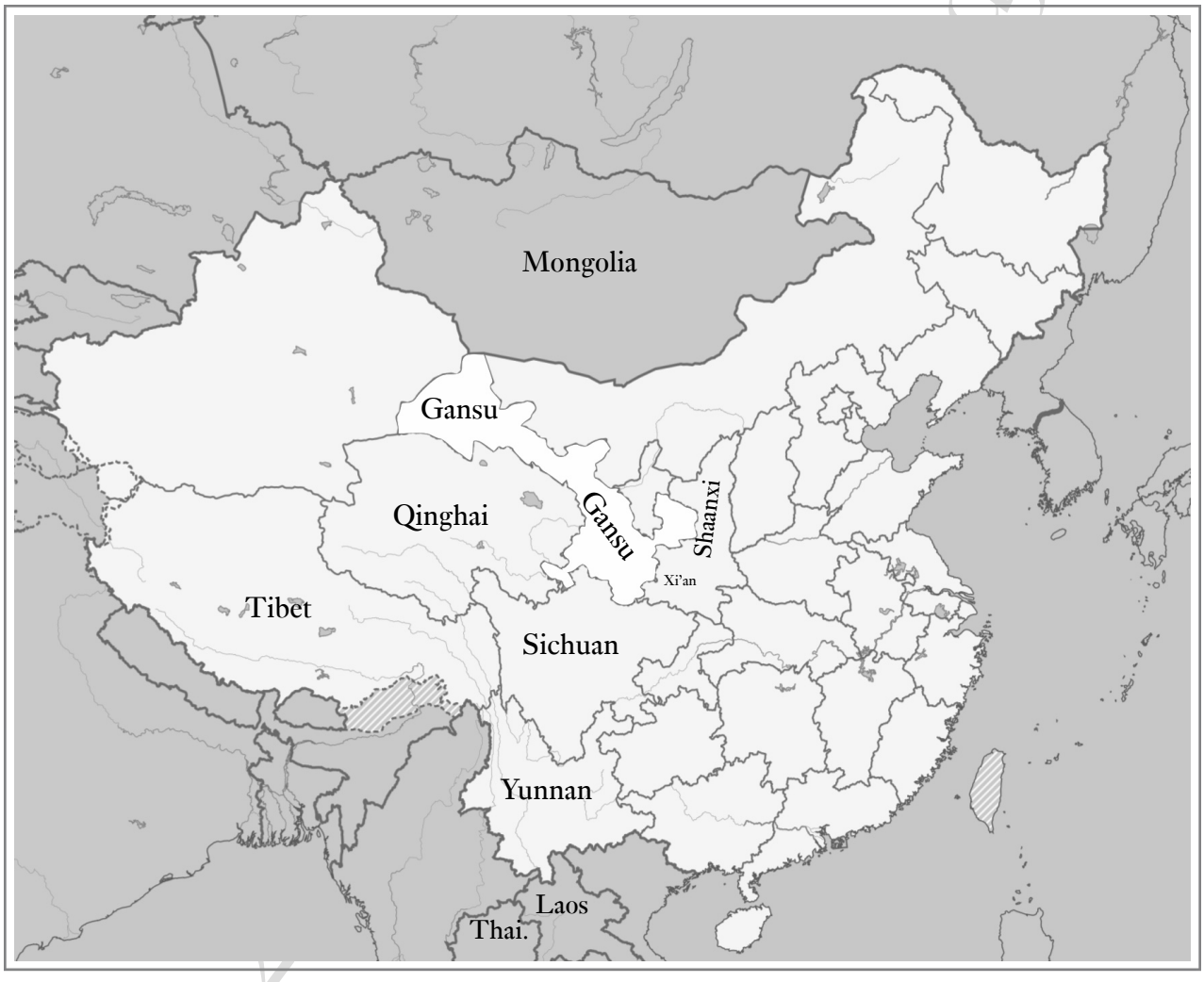
Now, before I discuss what became of those that came to be called Great Yue-Ji, it is worthwhile to discourse at the outset on those relatives of theirs that came to be called Lesser Yue-Ji, and elucidate what became of them, as well as what became of the Wusun; for the descendants of the Lesser Yue-Ji are represented to this day by a numerous people in Yunnan, China, the Bai (Pai), as mentioned above; and descendants of the Wusun, a group of which journeyed south with the Lesser Yue-Ji, or in their footsteps, are represented by two independent nations to the south of Yunnan, at the bottom of Asia, as I will explain below.

In their movement south from their ancient abode in Gansu, the Lesser Yue-Ji, Zhang Qian says, sought refuge among barbarians, the Qiang, who at the time dwelled in the 'Southern

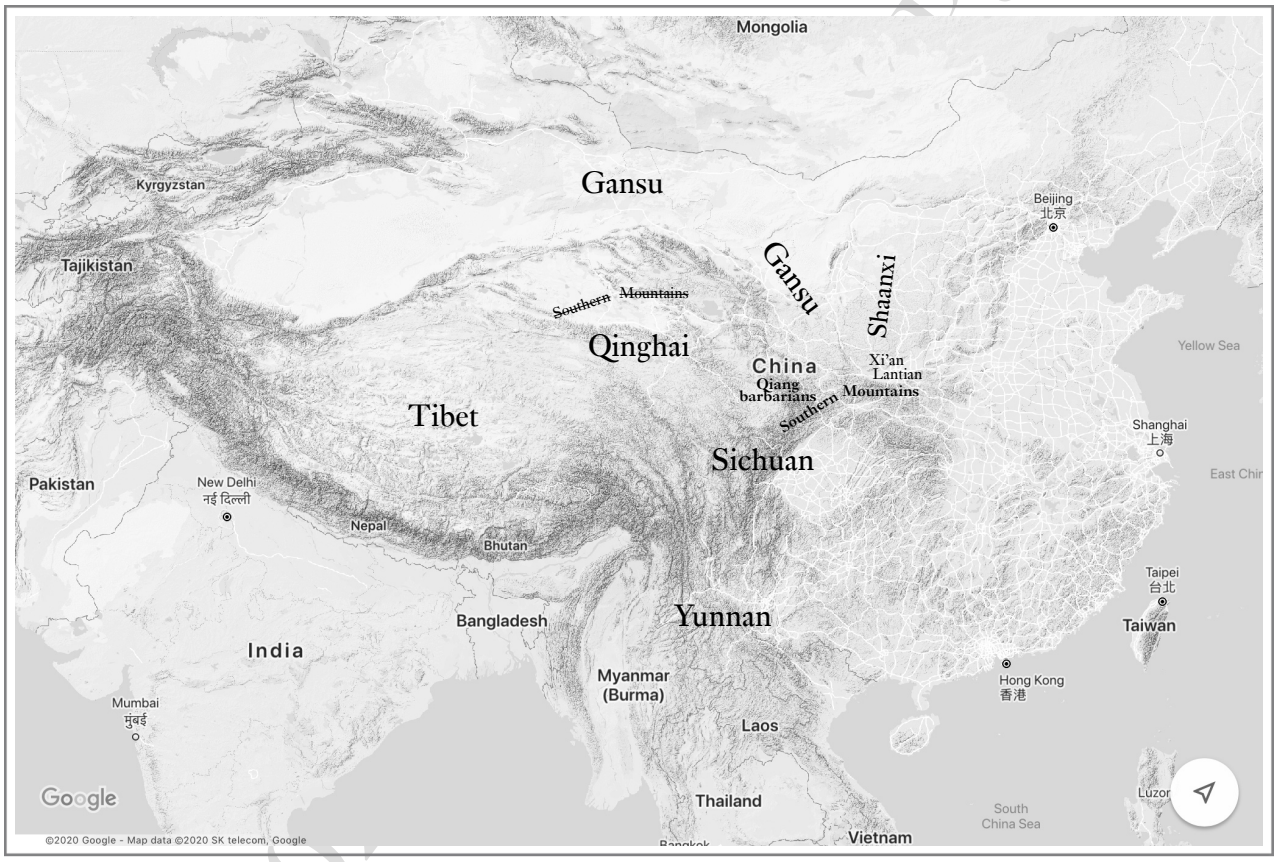
[13] Sima Qian, pp. 171-172.

Mountains.'[14] This area in the days of Maodun, where the Qiang then lived, is the same general area where their descendants, the Qiang (Chiang), do live today, though their territory now falls in Sichuan, a mountainous and forested province between Gansu and Yunnan, with Shaanxi to the northeast, and Tibet on its western side:

[14] Sima Qian, p. 234.



China (Gansu, Qinghai, Sichuan, Shaanxi, Yunnan, Tibet, Xi'an), Mongolia, Laos, Thailand


Mongolia
Gansu
Kyrgyzstan
Beijing
北京
Tajikistan
Gansu
Shaanxi
Southern Mountains
Qinghai
China
Xi'an
Lantian
Mountains
Qiang
barbarians
Southern
Yellow Sea
Tibet
Shanghai
上海
Sichuan
Pakistan
New Delhi
नई दिल्ली
East Chir
Nepal
Bhutan
Taipei
台北
Bangladesh
Yunnan
Taiwan
India
Hong Kong
香港
Myanmar
(Burma)
Mumbai
मुंबई
Laos
Google
Thailand
South
China Sea
Luzon
Vietnam
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Note the location of the Southern Mountains on the map above that I have made. In Burton Watson's translation of the *Shi ji*, which is the definitive translation of it, a map is included at the end of volume II to show China and the territories around it at the time of the Han. The map in Watson's translation is based on a map that was made in 1931 by Japanese historian Yanai Watari.[15] If Watson's map is an identical representation of that by Yanai Watari, then both of their maps have incorrectly located in Qinghai the Southern Mountains spoken of by Sima Qian (and therefore, in that location, the name of the mountains is crossed out on the map above). If the map by Yanai Watari locates the Southern Mountains in the area where I have located them on the map above, at the southern end of Shaanxi and of Gansu, and in Sichuan, then only Watson's map has them incorrectly located. In other words, the Southern Mountains are not the mountains identified as such on the map in Watson's translation. No scholar and no commentator has ever noticed this error. It has escaped the attention of everyone, including that of A. F. P. Hulsewé, who, even after scrutinizing the *Shi ji* without mercy, made the mistake of thinking that the Southern Mountains were the Kunlun Mountains.[16] Sima Qian says:

> Pleading illness once more, he [Tou Ying, also spelled Dou Ying] retired to Lan-t'ien [Lantian] in the foothills of the Southern Mountains, where he lived in seclusion for several months.[17]

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[15] Sima Qian, p. 234; p. 506.

[16] A. F. P. Hulsewé, *China in Central Asia, The Early Stage: 125 B.C.-A.D. 23, An Annotated Translation of Chapters 61 and 96 of the History of the Former Han Dynasty, with an Introduction by M. A. N. Loewe* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1979), pp. 76-77 n. 49.

[17] Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian*, p. 111.

The location of Lantian is the same now as it was then; and the Southern Mountains referred to in that sentence are the same Southern Mountains that Sima Qian speaks of in the *Shi ji* whenever he mentions that range. This is an important correction, because Zhang Qian locates the Qiang barbarians in the Southern Mountains, and it was among those barbarians that a number of the Lesser Yue-Ji sought refuge. In other words, the real location of the Southern Mountains is almost one thousand kilometers to the southeast of the region where Watson's map has mistaken them to be located. Thus, with this accurate understanding of where the Southern Mountains mentioned in the *Shi ji* really were, and therefore the Qiang, we are in a position to trace the movement of those Lesser Yue-Ji with unparalleled precision. It is worthy of note, by the way, that the map in Watson's translation does not locate the Qiang barbarians near to the false 'Southern Mountains' on that map, but locates them close to, or in, the area where the real Southern Mountains are, as on the map above that I have made. If the Qiang barbarians had been located on Watson's map where the 'Southern Mountains' are mistakenly located, then on that map the Qiang would be placed far to the north or northwest of the Han capital, in a region where a passage in the *Shi ji* indicates that they could not have been; for the *Shi ji* explicitly states that the Qiang barbarians lived west of the Han capital, Chang'an, which is present-day Xi'an.[18] Also to the west of the capital, because of their arc and extent, are the real Southern Mountains, where the ancient Qiang barbarians lived, as stated in the *Shi ji*.[19]

[18] Sima Qian, p. 441.

[19] Sima Qian, p. 234.

Now, descendants of the ancient Qiang live outside Sichuan as well, principally in Tibet, where they are known as, of course, Tibetans, and in Bhutan also, whose inhabitants the Bhutanese, are, in the main, of Tibetan descent. Thus the Bhutanese, like the Tibetans, are descendants of the Qiang, who migrated to Tibet in antiquity, and then to Bhutan.

The departure of a number of the Lesser Yue-Ji from Gansu, as indicated above, took place after that of the Yue-Ji that became in Bactria known as the Great Yue-Ji; but, as shown above, a number of the Lesser Yue-Ji remained in their ancestral land in Gansu. In 121, as Sima Qian says, one Huo Qubing, 'the general of swift cavalry,' after crossing through a place called Juyan with a force of several thousand men, passed through the land of the Lesser Yue-Ji on his way to the Qilian Mountains, where he attacked the enemy and captured the Qiutu king.[20] This statement, which comes from an imperial edict, places in 121 those Lesser Yue-Ji in the same area that they occupied at the time of the attack by the Xiongnu in 176.[21] In other words, even as late as 121 BCE, fifty-five years after the Xiongnu attack, a number of Lesser Yue-Ji were still living in their ancestral land. Now, knowing that a number of the Lesser Yue-Ji were still living in Gansu at that time, and learning from Zhang Qian that a number of them had taken refuge among the Qiang in the Southern Mountains by 128, we can accurately conclude that the Lesser Yue-Ji were themselves split into at least two groups, one having remained in Gansu since 176, and one having sought refuge among the Qiang.

[20] Sima Qian, pp. 171-172.

[21] Sima Qian, p. 171.

The importance of knowing when approximately the Lesser Yue-Ji reached the Qiang, and the importance of keeping the approximate time of their arrival in mind, becomes clear when it is remembered that the descendants of the Great Yue-Ji, wherever they may live today, are related not only to the descendants of the Lesser Yue-Ji, but to any descendants of the Qiang that may have intermixed with the Lesser Yue-Ji, wherever those descendants today may live, as well as when it is remembered that the Qiang, during the Former and the Later Han dynasty (206 BCE – 220), migrated in large numbers to Tibet, and became today's Tibetans.[22] In fact, Qiang barbarians migrated there because of the Han, who had become hostile to them; and if the Qiang migrated to Tibet after the Lesser Yue-Ji had settled in the Southern Mountains among them, then it is most probable that numbers of the Lesser Yue-Ji migrated with them to Tibet, and came likewise to be ancestors of the Tibetans.

Why did the Han become hostile to the Qiang? It is, I think, most probable, and even obvious, that the Han grew hostile to the Qiang because the Lesser Yue-Ji were now 'refugees' in the Qiang dominion, and, together with the Qiang, made for an imposing concentration of Han enemies too close to Han territory. The Han could hardly, therefore, remain at ease and allow the Lesser Yue-Ji to live at peace among the Qiang, and thus could not confront the one without confronting the other. In other words, the Han could have had no choice but to confront the Lesser Yue-Ji, and therefore the Qiang, and thus confront both at one and the same time. The Han may, of

[22] Shuo Shi, *Ethnic flows in the Tibetan-Yi corridor throughout history*, *Int. j. anthropol. ethnol.* **2**, 2 (2018). https://doi.org/10.1186/s41257-018-0009-z.

course, have been belligerent toward the Qiang before the arrival of the Lesser Yue-Ji among them; but any belligerence the Han may have directed at the Qiang before the Lesser Yue-Ji arrived, could not, it seems, have already escalated into serious armed conflict, or to the situation that provoked the Qiang to migrate to Tibet. Otherwise, the Lesser Yue-Ji would not have sought refuge among the Qiang; for no one seeks refuge among a people at war. It must have been, therefore, the settling of the Lesser Yue-Ji among the Qiang that instigated the confrontation with the Han. The migration of the Qiang to Tibet, then, must have taken place after the Lesser Yue-Ji had settled among them.

Not all Qiang, of course, migrated to Tibet and to Bhutan, nor did, of course, all the Lesser Yue-Ji. As stated above, Qiang people do still inhabit Sichuan, and they descend from the Qiang who lived there in antiquity. And, as mentioned above, Yunnan, in southern China, is home to the Bai, a moon people even today, descendants of the Lesser Yue-Ji, who after having spent time in Sichuan, migrated to Yunnan. I have written at length about the Bai in *The Padjanaks*, mostly about their descent from the Yue-Ji (the Lesser), and, though I will certainly be discussing the Bai at length in this work, I refer the reader to that book if he wishes to read a little about their descent from the Yue-Ji, for a preview of what is to be elaborated on in this book.

II

Asiani and Pasiani

Yury Zuev, the illustrious turkologist, in *Early Turks: Essays on History and Ideology (Rannie tjurki: očerki istorii i ideologii*), says the following about the Yue-Ji and the Usun:

> The Yuezhi and the Usun were originally two branches of the same people, the Yuezhi being the 'Moon clan;' while the Usun were the 'Solar clan.'[23]

Two clans of the same people are, of course, of a single stock; and these clans, the Moon and the Solar, were both of them Xiongnu clans, the Yue-Ji at various times being known as Bai-Xiongnu (Pasiani, Basiani, Bai-shun) and Ku-Xiongnu (Kushan), and the Wusun at various times being known as Wu-Xiongnu (Wusun, Usun, Asiani, Asii), as I have shown in *The Padjanaks*:

> Maenchen-Helfen could not etymologize Pasiani to his satisfaction, and therefore neglected dealing with it altogether. We will take a closer look at the name Pasiani. Now, I maintain, and it will be seen, that Jarl Charpentier was correct, that Asiani is the same as Wusun; and thus the form Usun, which is a variant of

[23] Yury Zuev, *Rannie tyurki. Ocerki istorii i ideologii* (Daik-Press, 2002), p. 10.

Wusun, means likewise, of course, the same thing as Asiani, and is, needless to say, a variant of it. In reality, all three of these forms, as well as all their variants, are phonetic spellings of the name of the tribe, or a part of the name of the tribe, clan, or people referred to. Note, by the way, that the *w* in Wusun is silent, or barely audible. Thus Wusun, like Usun, begins with a vowel sound—an initial vowel sound approximately like that in the word *ooze*. In other words, the forms Wusun and Usun are pronounced in exactly the same way. And as Zuev shows the pronunciation of Usun to be U-sun, U-shun, etc., so Wusun is pronounced Wu-sun, Wu-shun, etc. This pronunciation of Wusun or Usun is correct, however, or is as described, only because the Chinese characters that Wusun and Usun are transliterations of, are pronounced approximately as such. Now, E. G. Pulleyblank argues that the Chinese characters used to represent the name are a transcription of a non-Chinese name.[24] I will show, however, that only the latter part of the name is non-Chinese in origin. The Chinese characters are taken to mean 'crow grandson,'[25] and they seem to scholars to have been fitting characters to use to represent the name of the people, because the people to whom they referred were, according to a myth of theirs, led by a godlike man who was abandoned as a baby and fed by birds that brought him meat.[26] The non-Chinese people whose name was transcribed in Chinese as such, however, may well have explained the meaning of their name, or at least one part of it, in completely different terms. That is to say, their name to a Chinese person merely sounded like it should be spelled with the characters that mean 'crow grandson,' and it was fortuitous that the people happened to have a myth that identified birds (*not* crows) as their mythical saviors. Note that the myth does not

[24] E. G. Pulleyblank, "The Wu-Sun and Sakas and the Yüeh-Chih Migration." Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London 33, no. 1 (1970): 154–60. http://www.jstor.org/stable/613330., p. 156.

[25] E. G. Pulleyblank, "The Wu-Sun and Sakas and the Yüeh-Chih Migration," p. 156.

[26] Sima Qian, p. 238.

identify the birds as the ancestors of the Wusun; nor does it identify the species of bird.

Zuev, likewise, says that Usun means 'raven descendants,'[27] which etymology is, for all intents and purposes, the same as 'crow grandson.' But Zuev says also that the 'Yuezhi' (Yue-Ji) and the Usun were two branches of the same people, the former being the 'Moon clan,' and the latter the 'Solar clan.'[28] This is a natural conclusion and bound to be correct; for the 'Yuezhi' and the Wusun lived originally in the same general area and had like customs, or the same customs.[29] It is on the basis of the structure of the name 'Yuezhi' that Zuev identifies the 'Yuezhi' as the 'Moon clan.' And, as it is natural that a 'Moon clan' should have a counterpart clan, it is most plausible that that counterpart clan would be known as the 'Solar clan.' Since he etymologizes 'Usun' as 'raven descendants,' what is the basis of his maintaining the view that the Usun, or Wusun, were the 'Solar clan,' apart from the fact of their obvious relation to the 'Moon clan,' or 'Yuezhi?' Let us put this question aside for now, and deal instead with the problem of the etymology of the name of the people in question.

The first part of the solution to the problem lies in understanding that the myth actually provides no basis for taking the name of the Wusun to mean that the Wusun thought of themselves as 'raven descendants,' for the birds acted only as saviors in the myth, and wolves participated in saving the baby by suckling it.[30] The wolves, therefore, are equally entitled with the birds to be regarded as the ancestors of the Wusun, or, to put it conversely, the Wusun are just as bound on the same false interpretation of the myth to be regarded as descendants of the wolves as of the birds. Yet no scholar argues, on the basis of the

[27] Yury Zuev, "Ethnic History of Usuns," pp. 5–25., accessed February 9, 2014, http://s155239215.onlinehome.us/turkic/29Huns/Usuns/ZuevHunsandUsunsEn.htm.

[28] Yury Zuev, *Rannie tyurki. Ocerki istorii i ideologii* (Daik-Press, 2002), p. 10.

[29] Sima Qian, p. 234.

[30] Sima Qian, p. 238.

myth, that the Wusun were, or thought of themselves as, descendants of wolves. The second part lies in understanding that the Chinese characters used to represent their name cannot be said to be entirely a phonetic representation of a non-Chinese name. It is entirely possible, and I show it to be in fact the case, that the name Wusun, or, rather, the first part of it, *wu*, is in fact not a transcription of a non-Chinese name at all, but is actually the Chinese word for 'black.' The name Wusun, in fact, however it is spelled, has nothing whatever to do with the myth above. This fact becomes clear when it is understood that the name Wusun existed as the name of that people *before* the birth of the Kunmo, that is, before the birth of the child that was rescued by the birds and the wolves, though scholars have completely overlooked this fact. Maodun, leader of the Xiongnu, was the father of one Jizhu,[31] who would become leader of the Xiongnu upon the death of Maodun, and it was Jizhu that took in the Kunmo and raised him from the time when he was an infant.[32] Before Jizhu adopted the Kunmo, or perhaps about the same time of that adoption, Maodun, in 176 BCE, had written a letter to Emperor Wen of the Han, and boasted in it that the Xiongnu had vanquished in warfare the Yue-Ji, 'the Loulan, the Wusun, and the Hujie tribes, as well as twenty-six states nearby so that all of them have become a part of the Xiongnu nation.'[33] In other words, in his letter of 176, Maodun mentioned *by name* the Wusun as one of the defeated, which thereby proves that the name existed before they were defeated, and before the time that the myth came to be associated with the Kunmo, just as its documented use in that letter proves likewise that it is no anachronism.

Now, bear in mind that if the Wusun were a branch of the same people as the Yue-Ji ('Yuezhi'), the Moon Ji clan, who were the ancestors of the Turkic-speaking Kushans, or Padjanaks, as well as

[31] Sima Qian, p. 142.

[32] Sima Qian, p. 238.

[33] Sima Qian, p. 140.

the ancestors of the Bai people, or 'White people,' also known as, as we have seen, the Ji, and I think it will become clear that the Wusun were a branch of the same people, the counterpart clan of the Yue-Ji, and were the 'Black something,' then it is a safe assumption that the Wusun, or Usun, were likewise, at one time or another, Turkic-speaking, though not to the exclusion of the use of other languages by them, just as the descendants of the Yue-Ji, that is, the Kushans, or Padjanaks, spoke more than one language in the course of their history.

In attempting to etymologize the name Wusun, we must, then, keep in mind that two different languages had a bearing on the way in which it was recorded in written language, namely, the language of those who bore it, and the language of those who recorded it, the latter being, of course, the Chinese. To assume, therefore, that both parts of the name, *wu* and *sun*, represent one and the same language, or one and the same name in each language, is, in fact, a mistake; and this mistake has been made by all who have explained the name Wusun or its Chinese original to mean that the name of the people was 'crow grandson' or 'raven descendants.' At least one part of this name—Wusun—must have been a phonetic representation of the name of this non-Chinese people. The first part, *wu*, in Chinese means 'crow' or 'raven' when used as a noun; but used as an adjective, it means 'black.' The first part of the name recorded in Chinese of this non-Chinese people is, as will be seen, the Chinese word for 'black,' namely, *wu*; it is functioning as an adjective in the name Wusun. The second part, *sun* or *shun*, however, represents, as will be seen, the sound of the name of that non-Chinese people, or a part of the name, and is thus not Chinese but is represented, of course, by a Chinese character, there having been at the time no other way to record the name. Now, before we try to etymologize the second part of the name—*sun*—we must look into the history of the Wusun and of some other peoples discussed in the *Shi ji.*

Sima Qian, in his *Shi ji*, speaks of many different tribes, and states in many cases the places where they lived, and in some cases what the names of their kings were. Besides the Xiongnu, the

Yuezhi (Yue-Ji), the Kangju (Kangar), the Wusun, and the Qiang, he mentions the Loulan,[34] the Hujie,[35] the Yiqu,[36] the Gushi,[37] the Di,[38] the Zuo,[39] the Sui,[40] the Kunming,[41] the Hunrong,[42] the Huhe,[43] the Loufan,[44] the Diyuan,[45] the Dali,[46] the Wuzhi,[47] the Quyan,[48] the Yi,[49] the Min,[50] and the Yue.[51] A tribe by the name of Hunye he mentions also, but the Hunye were a Xiongnu tribe, or clan,[52] as were the Xiutu,[53] another Xiongnu group mentioned by Sima Qian. It was, evidently, during a period of one thousand

[34] Sima Qian, p. 140.

[35] Sima Qian, p. 140.

[36] Sima Qian, p. 132.

[37] Sima Qian, p. 233.

[38] Sima Qian, p. 236.

[39] Sima Qian, p. 236.

[40] Sima Qian, p. 236.

[41] Sima Qian, p. 236.

[42] Sima Qian, p. 132.

[43] Sima Qian, p. 132.

[44] Sima Qian, p. 132.

[45] Sima Qian, p. 132.

[46] Sima Qian, p. 132.

[47] Sima Qian, p. 132.

[48] Sima Qian, p. 132.

[49] Sima Qian, p. 294.

[50] Sima Qian, p. 445.

[51] Sima Qian, p. 81.

[52] Sima Qian, pp. 67-68; p. 312.

[53] Sima Qian, pp. 152-153.

years, roughly between the time of one Chunwei, ancestor of the Xiongnu, and the time of Maodun, the *shanyu* of the Xiongnu beginning about 209 BCE, that the Xiongnu broke up into numerous tribes, or clans.[54] Since it was the Xiongnu proper, led by Maodun, that gave the Han the most trouble, Sima Qian devoted, by far, more space in the *Shi ji* to discussion of them than to any of the other Xiongnu clans or tribes; and it is certainly for that reason that many scholars speak of the Xiongnu as if there were only the Xiongnu proper. It must be remembered, however, that a number of tribes (or clans) in the Han era were Xiongnu in origin.

Now, Sima Qian himself says little or nothing about the customs of any of the twenty-five tribes named in the paragraph just above, but he shares in his *Shi ji* a copy of the summary of the report made by the Han envoy Zhang Qian, who visited the regions west of the Han about 127 BCE,[55] and noted in his report the likeness, or sameness, of the customs of four groups, namely, the Xiongnu, the (Great) Yuezhi, the Wusun, and the Kangju.[56] (Yancai was a place name, not the name of a people.) He also noted the similarity of the customs of the people of Dayuan (Ferghana) with those of the people of Daxia (Bactria),[57] and he mentioned that the people of Anxi (Parthia), like those of Dayuan, made wine out of grapes, and had walled cities like those of Dayuan.[58] The inhabitants of these three locations—Dayuan, Daxia, and Anxi—were at the time overwhelmingly Indo-Europeans and had similar customs, but Zhang Qian noted no similarity between the customs of these three different groups of Indo-Europeans and those of all the other groups mentioned in his report. Zhang Qian, however,

[54] Sima Qian, p. 136.

[55] Sima Qian, p. 232.

[56] Sima Qian, p. 234.

[57] Sima Qian, p. 235.

[58] Sima Qian, pp. 234–235.

stated that the customs of the Wusun were much like those of the Xiongnu,[59] and that the customs of the (Great) Yuezhi were like those of the Xiongnu as well.[60] Since the customs of the Yuezhi, or rather Yue-Ji, were like those of the Xiongnu, then the customs of the Yue-Ji were like those of the Wusun also. In other words, for all intents and purposes, the Xiongnu, the Wusun, and the Yue-Ji all had the same customs. Now anyone who has read the *Shi ji* in its entirety, and comprehended it well, knows that the Xiongnu and the Yue-Ji were arch-enemies, and remembers, or should remember, that the Xiongnu also attacked the Wusun,[61] who were, it is said in the *Shi ji*, originally under the control of the Xiongnu, and acknowledged themselves a part of the Xiongnu nation.[62] How, then, did the Xiongnu and the Yue-Ji, those enemies, and the Wusun, foes at one time of the Xiongnu, all end up with the same customs? Note that customs and manners are *not* methods. Unrelated nomadic peoples living in similar environments, for example, are subjected to similar environmental and situational dictates, and are thus bound to develop similar methods to perform their everyday tasks; but customs develop independently of those dictates. Ceremonies, rites of passage, rules, penalties, incantations, courting practices, traditionary acts of respect, and the like, constitute manners and customs, and they are unique to a people. If enemies have the same or similar methods of doing things, they cannot on that account be said to be related; but if such enemies have the same customs, they must be related: they must have been sprung in the past from one and the same people. And this must be true of the Xiongnu, the Yue-Ji, and the Wusun: they must have been one people in the past, and at some point in time they must have broken up into different groups or clans, and become independent tribes or clans themselves. Since Sima Qian

[59] Sima Qian, p. 234.

[60] Sima Qian, p. 234.

[61] Sima Qian, p. 140.

[62] Sima Qian, p. 234.

states that the ancestry of the Xiongnu goes back one thousand years or so, farther back than that of the Yue-Ji, *eo nomine*, and than that of the Wusun, and says that the Xiongnu in the past broke up into a number of groups or clans, and since Zhang Qian confirms that all three had basically the same customs, the Wusun and the Yue-Ji in the past must have been, and have been known as, Xiongnu; that is to say, the Yue-Ji and the Wusun were Xiongnu clans, and they must have borne the Xiongnu name, though not necessarily exclusively. The Yue-Ji, I maintain, always continued to bear, or at least always continued to be known by, in addition, the oldest name of ancestors of the Xiongnu people, namely, Ji, but not exclusively. In other words, I maintain that the Xiongnu were themselves descended in part from the Ji clan, the Ji who were the ancestors of those who founded the Zhou dynasty, the most distant known ancestor of which was Hou Ji.[63] But this subject, as well as that of the Kangju, or Kangar, and how they figure into the history of the Ji people, I will discuss in a separate work. But about the Ji of the Zhou, I will share this legend here: 'When the Chou [Zhou dynasty] was about to rise, there was a great red raven which, holding seeds of grain in its mouth, settled on the king's house.'[64] The red raven appears to the Zhou when a saint is to be born, or when the Zhou are to be victorious in war.[65] These are the reasons why the raven was the symbol of the Zhou. The parallels of the Zhou legend to that of the Wusun are not coincidences.

Now, we have already reached the understanding that the second part of the name Wusun, *sun*, however the name is spelled (Usun, Asii, Asiani, etc.), is a transliteration of the Chinese phonetic spelling of the name, or a part of the name, of the people referred to, who were, as shown above, a Xiongnu clan. Now, if we

[63] Sima Qian, *Shi ji, or Records of the Grand Historian: Han Dynasty I*, Revised Edition, translated by Burton Watson (Columbia University Press, 1993), p. 235.

[64] Bernhard Karlgren, *Glosses on the Ta ya and Sung odes* (The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Bulletin No. 18, 1946), p. 152.

[65] Marcel Granet, *Chinese Civilization* (Routledge, 2013), p. 197.

prefix *wu* to Xiongnu, we get Wu-Xiongnu, a form pronounced approximately as *wu-shiong-nu* or *wu-shung-nu*. And what does Wu-Xiongnu mean? It means Black Xiongnu. This name in Trogus as found in Justin, was thus transliterated as Asiani;[66] and for all intents and purposes, Wusun, and all its various forms, are thus phonetic spellings or transcriptions of Wu-Xiongnu.

Now, Pasiani differs from Asiani only by beginning with the letter *p*. Since the Pasiani are attested in Strabo to have been one of the tribes that conquered Bactria, and since the name Bai was one of the names by which the Chinese knew the Yue-Ji, or Moon Ji clan, who conquered Bactria, we come logically to the only conclusion that logic offers, and it must be correct—that Pasiani is really a variant of Basiani, and that Basiani is, in fact, a phonetic spelling of Bai-Xiongnu, pronounced *bai-shung-nu*, and meaning White Xiongnu. The first part of the name is thus the Chinese word for 'white.' That being so, the first part of Bai-Xiongnu and of its derivatives makes the name an exonym in part, for the people to whom the name referred were not Chinese. They were Huns. If, again, we look to the Turkic languages for a word that means 'white,' we find that the word for 'white' is *ku*.[67] Prefix *ku* to Xiongnu, and you get Ku-Xiongnu, which is pronounced *ku-shung-nu*. The last syllable in Ku-Xiongnu and Bai-Xiongnu, however, evidently suffered the same fate that the last syllable in Wu-Xiongnu suffered: either it was dropped, or it was pronounced too indistinctly to be often heard, and this is reflected in the phonetic spelling Wusun and in most of its variants. Thus, as Wu-Xiongnu became Wusun, or Usun, etc., so Ku-Xiongnu became Kusun, or Kushan, etc., and Bai-Xiongnu became Bai-shu-ni, or Bai-shun, or Baisun, etc. The *sun* or *shun* or *shan* in these names, as indicated above, represents the sound of *Xiong*, as does the *djan* in

[66] Justini, *Historiarum Philippicarum, ex Trogo Pompeio, Libros XLIV,* edited by C. L. F. Panckoucke (Nova Scriptorum Latinorum Bibliotheca, 1833), p. 175.

[67] Forukh Boltabaev, "Qypchaq, Detachment of Blond Soldiers," Transoxiana 9, Diciembre 2004, accessed March 15, 2014, http://www.transoxiana.org/0109/baltabaev_qypchaks.html.

> Padjanak, the suffix *-ok* (*-ak*) being added to the latter to denote plurality.
>
> Thus the Wu-Xiongnu were the Black Xiongnu, or Black Huns, and almost certainly the Sun or Solar clan; and the Bai-Xiongnu, or Ku-Xiongnu, were the White Xiongnu, or White Huns; they were the Moon Ji clan.[68]

Note the variants Asiani and Asii in particular, and bear in mind that there are yet other variants. Peoples of the past, in Asia and elsewhere, whether they were grouped into clans, tribes, or nations, spoke their mother tongues and had names for themselves, and at the same time they were commonly known by their names to their foreign neighbors, in whose mouths their names, when uttered by the foreign speakers, were pronounced in a way that typically differed, more or less, from the way in which they were pronounced by the bearers of the names themselves, just as the same phenomenon is observable today, as when we hear, for instance, a native speaker of French utter any word in the English lexicon, or any name common in English usage. Such differences in pronunciation were often, of course, one reason for the differences in the spellings of the names recorded, as witness Strabo's Pasiani for Basiani, and Badjanak for Padjanak, and vice versa. But sometimes the differences in the recorded spellings arose through differences in the pronunciation of the name by the people who bore it. No two speakers speak exactly alike, even if they share the same mother tongue; and certain speech habits affect certain parts of names and words more than they affect other parts. One such habit has to do with the pronunciation of initial consonants and final consonants, in names and words. The word *mat* in English, for

[68] Padjan, pp. 110-122.

example, ends with the letter *t*, and the *t* in *mat*, when the word is distinctly enunciated, is aspirated, that is, it is followed by a puff of air, thus making the final *t* sound distinct. In normal everyday speech, however, native speakers of English will very often not aspirate the *t* at all in *mat*, or in words like it, so that the final *t* is indistinct, and dull in sound. This speech phenomenon or habit, that of not enunciating well or pronouncing distinctly final consonants, is extremely common in Thai. The Thai word for 'very,' for instance, transliterated in English as *mâak*, ends with a consonant that is equivalent in sound to the letter *k* in English, but when the Thai word for 'very' is uttered in a statement, the final consonant sound is always inaudible, or almost always so, even in formal usage, making *mâak* always sound like *mâa*. Now imagine that *mâak* is not the Thai word for 'very,' but, rather, the name of a people, tribe, or clan. The form uttered and the form written, being somewhat different, invite confusion, and make it difficult to know exactly what the name of the people is, whether *mâak* or *mâa*. The reason for my mentioning Thai in connection with this phenomenon will become clear below.

The variants of the name Wusun—Strabo's Asii and Trogus's Asiani—show the influence of the speech habit described above. Both names, however, as we will see below, denote exactly the same people.

III

The *Shi ji* and the *Han shu*

I have so far spoken about Strabo and Trogus, and the names Pasiani and Asiani, with only a passing mention of the context in which they gave those names. Both men were talking about the peoples that conquered Bactria by 130 BCE, Strabo having named the conquerors as the Asii, the Pasiani, the Tochari, and the Sacarauli;[69] and Trogus having named them as the Saraucae and the Asiani, the latter of which, says Trogus, were the 'lords of the Tochari.'[70] To the Chinese the conquerors were, of course, the Great Yue-Ji.

Now, when the majority of the Yue-Ji left Gansu about 176 BCE in search of new lands, only one direction of travel was available to them, a northwesterly one, their enemies being in eastern directions, and all routes west and southwest from northern Gansu being blocked by the Taklamakan Desert, and by the mountains that rise above it. It is important to know what happened to that horde of the Yue-Ji, or, rather, what did not happen to them, or what cannot be argued to have happened to them, in the years between their departure from Gansu and

[69] Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, Volume V, translated by Horace Leonard Jones (Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1928), p. 261.

[70] Justini, *Historiarum Philippicarum,* p. 175.

their conquering of Bactria, in order to have an accurate understanding of what kind of relationship they had with the Wusun.

The history of the Yue-Ji, or at least their situation or condition after their defeat by the Xiongnu in 176, is related not only in the *Shi ji*, but in the *Han shu* also, a history of China written by one Ban Gu (sometimes spelled Pan Ku) long after the publication of the *Shi ji*. The writing of the *Shi ji* was begun by Sima Qian's father, Sima Tan, who died about 110 BCE. It was upon his death that Sima Qian undertook the task of writing that book, and he spent the next twenty years or so engaged in the endeavor, publishing it before his death in approximately 90 BCE. Ban Gu finished the *Han shu*, or *History of the Former Han*, or *Book of Han*, about 111 CE, two hundred years or so after the *Shi ji* had been published.

Now, for at least the past ninety years, there has been notable debate among scholars regarding the authenticity of a chapter of the *Shi ji*, and of a chapter of the *Han shu*, namely, *Shi ji* 123, and *Han shu* 61, the debate centering on the fact that each chapter in each respective work relates the same events, but in some places differs completely in the name of one of the participants involved in them. It is natural to assume, and most scholars think, that one account is a flawed copy of the other, or that one is an altered and embellished copy of the other; and since the *Shi ji* is the older of the two works, the natural assumption is that chapter 61 of the *Han shu* is an altered and embellished copy of chapter 123 of the *Shi ji*. Scholars are divided on the issue, however, because some scholars seem to have succeeded in showing, either that the *Shi ji* of today is not the original *Shi ji,* but a reconstruction of it based on the

content of the *Han shu*, or that the present version of the *Shi ji* is based on fragments of the original *Shi ji*, with much supplementary content copied from the *Han shu* to supply the content of the 'lost' original *Shi ji*. Most scholars have focused their attention on the chapters mentioned above, since it is those two chapters that warrant the closest and most careful inspection.

The most serious challenge to the authenticity of the present *Shi ji*, or at least what has seemed to be the most serious challenge to it, was brought by A. F. P. Hulsewé, the scholar mentioned above. Hulsewé argued that the entire original *Shi ji* was unavailable, or 'lost,' between 100 CE and 400, and that the present version of it is a reconstruction of the original, based on content derived from the *Han shu*, and copied from it, but flawed in parts. Thus, in the opinion of Hulsewé, it is the *Han shu*, and not the present *Shi ji*, that is the original work. Hulsewé, in trying to prove his hypothesis, compared chapter 123 of the *Shi ji* with chapter 61 of the *Han shu* word for word, and line for line, and, on the basis of, as Zongli Lu sums it up: 'different textual and editorial traditions, different wording, and orthographic variants,'[71] and on, for all intents and purposes, nothing else of weightiness or importance, Hulsewé concluded that chapter 123 of the *Shi ji* is a copy of chapter 61 of the *Han shu* – that, in fact, the present *Shi ji* in its entirety is a copy of the *Han shu*. Central to the argument of Hulsewé, however, is his contention that the original *Shi ji* was out of existence between 100 CE and 400. For, if it existed, and was at no time unavailable, or 'lost,' then no copy or reconstruction of it based

[71] Zongli Lu, "Problems Concerning the Authenticity of Shih Chi 123 Reconsidered." *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 17 (1995): 51–68. https://doi.org/10.2307/495553., p. 60.

on the *Han shu* was at any time 'necessary;' and in such circumstances Hulsewé's argument is not just impossible, but absurd. Moreover, if the *Shi ji* was always in existence, or never 'lost,' then, in that case, the only possible conclusion is that the *Han shu*, or a substantial part of it, is an altered and embellished copy of the *Shi ji.* Since Hulsewé maintained his belief, with conviction, for the rest of his life, that the *Shi ji* was, in fact, a copy of the *Han shu*, he has provided us with irrefutable proof that he was completely unaware of the many Chinese texts of ancient date, to be shown below, that prove that the *Shi ji* was at no time unavailable, or 'lost,' particularly between 100 CE and 400; and those scholars who cite the work of Hulsewé in an attempt to support their constructs of supposed historical events that they concoct on the basis of content found in the *Han shu*, or on the basis of their inferences from content found in the *Han shu*, particularly in chapters 61 and 96, but not found in the *Shi ji*, must also be unaware of the ancient texts that definitively refute, not only the hypothesis and conclusions of Hulsewé, but also those of other scholars whose views align with Hulsewé's, such as those of Michael A. N. Loewe.

It is thanks to the labors of Zongli Lu, author of *Problems Concerning the Authenticity of Shih chi 123 Reconsidered*, that we have the textual evidence that demonstrates that Hulsewé's conclusions regarding the genuineness of *Shi ji* 123, are invalid. Before he proceeds to show such textual evidence, Lu mentions the work of Kazuo Enoki, who also dealt with the matter of Hulsewé's arguments, as well as with the authenticity of *Shi ji* 123, and of *Han shu* 61. As Lu notes, Enoki's observations and conclusions are, or the most important of them are, that the *Shi ji* 'follows the older usage of appellations, and the *Han shu* the

later one,' and that 'there has been no misplacement of bamboo strips on which *Shih chi* 123 was originally written.'[72] The bamboo strips on which *Han shu* 61 was written, however, according to Michael Loewe, were 'misplaced' in the text when repairs were made to the strings that are tied to the strips.[73] In other words, according to Loewe, *Han shu* 61 is in a state of disorder. And in his introduction to *China in Central Asia: The Early Stage: 125 BC – AD 23*, a translation of chapters 61 and 96 of the *Han shu* by Hulsewé, Loewe states that *Shi ji* 123 could not be used to correct the order of the text of *Han shu* 61, '*for,*' as Loewe says, '*the disorder is exactly the same in both texts*' (Loewe's italics).[74] In other words, one text is a copy of the other. Now, if the 'disorder' is exactly the same in both texts, then how can Loewe (and Hulsewé) know that there is 'disorder' in the first place? The answer is that he cannot possibly know, no one can, from a comparison of those two texts alone. One who argues that there is exactly the same disorder in *both texts* could show the existence of the alleged 'disorder' only by comparing the text of each, that of *Han shu* 61, and that of *Shi ji* 123, with another text *that is assumed to be correct* and that differs from the two that are alleged to be disordered, and only then could one possibly be in a position to say that both texts are in identical disorder. Since Loewe and Hulsewé assert that *Shi ji* 123 and *Han shu* 61 are in exactly the same state of disorder, they have therefore in fact assumed a certain other text to be correct, even though they do not explicitly say so. What text have they assumed to be correct? None other than the *Han shu*

[72] Lu, "Problems Concerning the Authenticity.", p. 54.

[73] Hulsewé, *China in Central Asia*, p. 15.

[74] Hulsewé, p. 15.

itself; that is to say, they assumed that a later chapter of the *Han shu*, namely, chapter 96, and an epitome or summary of the *Han shu*, called the *Han chi,* that was written a hundred years or so after the *Han shu* had been published, are not in a state of disorder, and that they can be relied upon to reconstruct the 'correct' order of *Han shu* 61, and, by way of extension, that of *Shi ji* 123.[75] But, as stated above, the success of their argument that *Han shu* 61 (and much of the rest of the *Han shu*) is the original work depends entirely on the success of their argument that the *Shi ji*, which, again, is older than the *Han shu* by two hundred years, was unavailable between 100 CE and 400; for if the *Shi ji* was available during those centuries, and thus never 'lost,' then it was at no time ever 'necessary' to 'reconstruct' it with content copied from the *Han shu*, and in that case the only possible conclusion is that the present *Shi ji* is the original, and the *Han shu* the copy (an altered and embellished copy). That is to say, the present *Shi ji* is the original *Shi ji*. If so, then the *Shi ji* is in its original order, and thus the disorder of *Han shu* 61 stands alone, and exists only in relation to the content of the *Han shu* itself, particularly to *Han shu* 96 (which is the real source of the disorder in the *Han shu*), as well as to that of the *Han chi* epitome. In other words, the disorder of *Han shu* 61 is owing to inconsistencies contained in, and confined to, the *Han shu* itself and the epitome of it. Remember, as Enoki has observed, 'there has been no misplacement of bamboo strips on which *Shih chi* 123 was originally written.' *The Problem of the Authenticity of Shih-chi Ch. 123, The Memoir on Ta Yüan*, was Hulsewé's attempt to show that the *Shi ji* was unavailable, or 'lost,' between 100 CE and 400, and that *Shi ji* 123 is a copy of

[75] Hulsewé, p. 18.

Han shu 61. Any evidence that proves the existence of the *Shi ji*, however, from 100 CE to 400, invalidates the argument of Hulsewé, and thus proves him and Loewe wrong.

At the outset of his article, after some prefatory remarks, Zongli Lu states his opinion on the *Shi ji*, saying that his view is, that 'the present version of the *Shih chi* is an ancient text dating from the Han dynasty (206 B. C. - A. D. 221).'[76] He then goes on to say unequivocally, 'In particular, the textual evidence A. F. P. Hulsewé gave in 1975 offers no information supporting the hypothesis that the chapter [*Shi ji* 123] was a reconstruction completed between 100 and 400 A. D. based on the *Han shu*.'[77]

The first piece of evidence that Lu marshals into his article is a direct quotation from the *San-kuo chih*, 'the official history of the Three Kingdoms period.' Quoting from chapter 25 of the history, Lu shares a series of statements by one Kao-t'ang Lung, a scholar and astrologer who was in the service of the state of Wei as Palace Attendant, and who was, as Lu notes, in charge of astrologers between 213 and 238 CE. Kao-t'ang Lung said:

> In the past Li Ssu taught the Second Emperor of the Ch'in: "Being a ruler but failing to indulge [oneself] is called making the world into one's shackles." The Second Emperor adopted this teaching. The state of Ch'in thereby collapsed, and Li Ssu himself was destroyed together with his clan. For this reason the Scribe [Ssu-ma] Ch'ien [[Sima Qian]] criticized Li's unrighteous remonstrance, and regarded it as a lesson for the world.[78] [Double brackets added.]

[76] Lu, p. 52.

[77] Lu, p. 52.

[78] Lu, p. 55.

Lu points out that "Li Ssu's speech and Ssu-ma Ch'ien's [Sima Qian's] criticism can be found in the present edition of *Shih chi* 87, the 'Memoir on Li Ssu:'" [Brackets added.]

> Therefore, when Master Shen said, "When one holds the world but fails to indulge [himself], it is called making the world into his shackles," he meant …[79]

The *Han shu*, as Lu notes, contains no corresponding passage, and therefore the passage could have come only from the *Shi ji*. The point is, needless to say, that Kao-t'ang Lung's reference to the *Shi ji* was made in the first decades of the third century.

Another piece of evidence comes from the *San-kuo chih* as well, from chapter 65. From it Lu shares the following quotation:

> [Hua Ho presented a memorial, saying] Considering that [Ssu-ma] Ch'ien had talent as an excellent historian, and wishing to let him complete what he was writing, Emperor Wu of the Han restrained himself from punishing [Ssu-ma]. Thus the work was finally accomplished, and *will be handed down forever*.[80] [Brackets and italics are Lu's]

Hua Ho, a marquis serving the state of Wu, was 'Vice Director of the Department of State Affairs.' His death came shortly after 275 CE. As Lu says, 'If the *Shih chi* were not available at that time, how could he tell the emperor it would be *handed*

[79] Lu, p. 56.

[80] Lu, p. 57.

down forever?'[81] Hua Ho's statement is clear evidence that the *Shi ji* was available at that time.

In chapter 60 of the *Chin shu*, or *History of the Chin Dynasty*, is further proof that the *Shi ji* was available between 100 CE and 400. In that chapter Chang Fu, who 'served Emperor Hui of Chin as a governor,' said:

> Of [Ssu-ma] Ch'ien's work, its wording was terse while the events were complete. He narrated the events of three-thousand years in only *500,000 characters*. Pan Ku, however, narrated the events of two hundred years in eight hundred thousand characters.[82]

Chang Fu was, as pointed out by Lu, 'the first critic to do a comparative study of the *Shih chi* and the *Han shu*. This means that he must have had both texts in his hands. Furthermore, the edition of the *Shih chi* he used consisted of *500,000 characters*. This information is noteworthy, not only because that [sic] it proves the existence of the *Shih chi* at that time, but also because it is evidence that the entire *Shih chi* was available to him.'[83] Emperor Hui reigned from 290 to 306 CE, and it was, again, during that time that Chang Fu was a governor.

Ko Hung, a Taoist of wide fame in ancient China, and prominent and important in Chinese history, lived from 284 to 364 CE. Chapter 72 of the *Chin shu* mentions Hung, stating that he 'transcribed the *Five Canons*, *Shih chi*, *Han shu*, the speeches of numerous schools, … in 310 rolls.'[84] Ko Hung could not have

[81] Lu, p. 57.

[82] Lu, p. 58.

[83] Lu, p. 58.

[84] Lu, p. 59.

transcribed a work that did not exist. His having transcribed the *Shi ji* is evidence of its existence during his lifetime, in the mid fourth century.

The above quotations from Zongli Lu's article invalidate the claims of Hulsewé and Loewe, and demonstrate that the *Shi ji* was being read during all those centuries when they say it was unavailable or lost; and when the quotations are taken together with Lu's arguments that show the feebleness of Hulsewé's claims pertaining to the text of the *Shi ji*, they usher to oblivion the very idea that the present *Shi ji* is a reconstruction of the original based on the *Han shu*. In a word, Hulsewé and Loewe, as has been demonstrated, were completely wrong: the present *Shi ji* is the original *Shi ji*, and *Han shu* 61 is, in fact, a copy of *Shi ji* 123.

Zongli Lu, however, was not the first scholar to demonstrate that the present *Shi ji* is the original *Shi ji*, and that *Shi ji* 123 is thus no copy of *Han shu* 61. Years earlier Edwin Pulleyblank, in his article *The Wu-sun and Sakas and the Yüeh-chih Migration*, showed that *Shi ji* 123 is the original. In fact, Pulleyblank so clearly demonstrates that *Shi ji* 123 is the original and *Han shu* 61 the copy, that his article should have put the matter to rest permanently. Scholars who imply familiarity with his article, who cite it in their own works alongside those of Hulsewé, whose conclusions they accept in defiance of the facts to the contrary, show the weakness of their judgment for dismissing the evidence that Pulleyblank presents, at the same time that they betray a defective understanding of the evidence thus presented. For no one can reject Pulleyblank's findings and conclusions who examines the evidence and understands it.

What is, then, the evidence, and where is it to be found? The reader will remember that I said above that *Shi ji* 123 and *Han shu* 61 both relate an account of the same events, but that the name of one of the participants in those events is completely different in each account. The passage in question pertains to a proposal made by Zhang Qian, the eminent Han envoy, and to a story he told in tandem with it to Emperor Wu. Zhang Qian had recently returned to the Han capital from a mission that lasted more than a decade, he having been captured by the Xiongnu during his mission and held prisoner by them for more than ten years, and that took him to Dayuan (Ferghana), Kangju (Kangar), the land of the Great Yuezhi (Yue-Ji), and Daxia (Bactria). His mission, apart from gathering information on the peoples of the various regions that he was to visit, and establishing relations with them, was to try to persuade the Great Yue-Ji to return to Gansu, and become an ally of the Han against the Xiongnu. The Great Yue-Ji, however, declined his invitation.

A few years after his return from that mission, Zhang Qian, despite failing in a secret second mission to Daxia, was appointed colonel of the guard, and ordered to accompany a Han general on an expedition to attack the Xiongnu. But Zhang Qian arrived late at his rendezvous with the general, or at least he was accused of arriving late, and in consequence he was sentenced to death. He reversed his fate, however, by paying a fine, and was thus permitted to become a commoner. After this, from time to time the emperor asked Zhang Qian about Daxia and its neighboring states, and on one occasion Zhang Qian, having devised a plan to weaken the Xiongnu, and at the same time to compel the states of the west to acknowledge themselves

vassals of the Han, replied to the emperor as follows, as recorded in *Shi ji* 123:

> When I was living among the Hsiung-nu [Xiongnu], I heard that the king of the Wu-sun was called K'un-mo [Kunmo]. K'un-mo's father (ruled over) a small country on the western borders of the Hsiung-nu. The Hsiung-nu attacked and killed his father. K'un-mo was abandoned alive in the wilderness. A crow brought meat in its bill and flew over him. A wolf came and suckled him. The *shan-yü* [*shanyu*] marvelled, thinking him divine, and received him and brought him up. When he was full grown (the *shan-yü*) put him in charge of troops. He frequently won distinction. The *shan-yü* gave K'un-mo back his father's people and ordered him to defend forever the Western Regions(?). K'un-mo gathered together and fostered his people and attacked small countries round about. He had several 10,000 bowmen practised in warfare.
>
> When the *shan-yü* died, K'un-mo led his people and moved far away. He made himself independent and was no longer willing to go to the Hsiung-nu court. The Hsiung-nu sent crack troops to attack him but they were not victorious. They regarded him as divine and avoided him. So they treated him as a dependency but did not make major attacks on him.
>
> Now the *shan-yü* has recently been hard pressed by Han and the former territory of the Hun-ya [Hunye] (King) [sic] is empty and depopulated. The barbarians by nature covet the goods of Han. If now we take this occasion and bribe the Wu-sun richly, inviting them to fill up the east and live in the old territory of the Hun-ya (King) [sic] and join in brotherhood with Han, they will likely agree. If they agree, it will cut off the right arm of the Hsiung-nu. When we have made an alliance with the Wu-sun, the peoples to the west around Ta-hsia [Daxia] can all be invited to come and be our outer subjects.[85]

[85] Pulleyblank, p. 155.

In *Han shu* 61 the same proposal by Zhang Qian is recorded thus:

> When I was living among the Hsiung-nu, I heard that the king of the Wu-sun was called K'un-mo. K'un-mo's father, Nan-tou-mi, originally lived together with the Great Yüeh-chih between Ch'i-lien [Qilian] and Tun-huang [Dunhuang]. It was a small country. The Great Yüeh-chih attacked and killed Nan-tou-mi and took away his territory. The people fled to the Hsiung-nu. The son, K'un-mo, was newly born. His guardian, Pu-chiu Hsi-hou (= Yabgu), ran away carrying him and set him down in the grass to look for food for him. When he returned, he saw a wolf suckling him ; also a crow carrying meat in its beak, hovering by his side. He thought him divine and brought him to the Hsiung-nu. The *shan-yü* loved him and brought him up. When he was full grown, the *shan-yü* gave K'un-mo his father's people, and put him in command of troops. He frequently won distinction.
>
> At the time the Yüeh-chih had already been defeated by the Hsiung-nu and had gone west and attacked the King of the Sakas (Sai Wang). The King of the Sakas fled south and moved far away and the Yüeh-chih occupied his territory. Having become strong, K'un-mo asked the *shan-yü* to be allowed to take vengeance for his father. So he went west and attacked and defeated the Great Yüeh-chih. The Great Yüeh-chih again fled westwards. They moved to the land of Ta-hsia. K'un-mo captured (some of) their people and so kept them there. His army became somewhat stronger.
>
> It happened that the *shan-yü* died. (K'un-mo) was no longer willing to pay court to the Hsiung-nu and serve them. The Hsiung-nu sent troops to attack him, but they were not victorious. They all the more regarded him as divine and avoided him.
>
> Now the *shan-yü* has recently been hard-pressed by Han and the K'un-mo's territory is empty. The barbarians long for their old territory. They also covet the goods of Han. If we now take this occasion and bribe the Wu-sun richly, inviting them therewith to move east to their old territory (promising that) Han will send a

> princess to be (K'un-mo's) consort, they will probably agree. Then this will cut off the right arm of the Hsiung-nu. When we have made an alliance with the Wu-sun, the peoples to the west around Ta-hsia can all be invited to come and be our outer subjects.[86]

The account of Zhang Qian's proposal in the *Han shu*, as well as the story in it about Kunmo, differs in some respects from that of the *Shi ji*, as the careful reader would have observed, though the overall account in each is the same. The *Han shu* tells us a piece of information, for example, that the *Shi ji* lacks awareness of, that is, the name of the father of Kunmo, his father's name being Nan-tou-mi; and the *Han shu* tells us of this proper name at the outset of its version of the statements made by Zhang Qian. Later the *Han shu* tells us two more things that the *Shi ji* has no knowledge of, namely, that Kunmo is really a title, and that the proper name of the Kunmo is really Lieh-chiao-mi.[87] Now, just as the *Han shu* knew at the outset of its version of Zhang Qian's proposal the proper name of the Kunmo's father, so likewise it knew *at the same time* that Lieh-chiao-mi was the name of the Kunmo, and that Kunmo was really a title. Nevertheless, the *Han shu* uses Kunmo as a proper name everywhere that it parallels the *Shi ji* account, and it is just after the point where it leaves the *Shi ji* account behind that the *Han shu* ceases to use Kunmo as a proper name, and informs us, as Pulleyblank points out, that Kunmo is really a royal title. Thus the *Han shu* does something ridiculous, and with false intent: it uses two different names as proper names for one person despite knowing all along that one of them is not a

[86] Pulleyblank, pp. 156-157.

[87] Pulleyblank, p. 158.

proper name at all, but a title, and despite knowing the real proper name of that person all along; and, again, it uses Kunmo as a proper name only in those places where it parallels the *Shi ji* account of Zhang Qian's proposal, in which Kunmo is invariably used only as a proper name. This is proof that *Han shu* 61 is a copy of *Shi ji* 123, and it is incontrovertible proof. *Shi ji* 123 is the original, and *Han shu* 61 is an altered and embellished copy of it.

In considering other things stated in the *Han shu* that pertain to periods also covered by the *Shi ji*, we should, therefore, be quite wary of their truthfulness if they depart in content from the *Shi ji*, or cannot be verified by it; for, as Strabo tells us:

> For even if there is an element of truth in what they say, we should not on that account use them as authorities, or believe them, either ; on the contrary, we should use in such a way only men of repute —men who have been right on many points, and who, though they have omitted many things, or treated them inadequately, have said nothing with false intent.[88]

Now, in the *Shi ji* account of Zhang Qian's proposal to Emperor Wu, which as we have seen is the original account, Zhang Qian stated that it was the *Xiongnu* that attacked and killed the father of the Kunmo. The *Han shu* in its copy of that account, however, made Zhang Qian say something different and untrue, something that not only never came out of his mouth, but that could not possibly have come out of it, namely, that the party guilty of that attack and murder were the *Great* Yue-Ji, not the Xiongnu. It is simply impossible that the Great

[88] Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, Volume I, translated by Horace Leonard Jones (Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1917), p. 173.

Yue-Ji killed the father of the Kunmo, because the Yue-Ji known as Great *did not exist at the time when the Kunmo's father was killed*. It was only after his murder that the Yue-Ji split into two groups, and became known as the Great and the Lesser. In fact, it was only after they had moved out of Gansu that they became known as the Great Yue-Ji. No scholar has ever noted that the Great Yue-Ji did not exist at the time of that murder, and the reason is, clearly, that no scholar has ever realized that they did not exist at that time. W. W. Tarn, for instance, writes:

> The Yueh-chi (the name is still unexplained) first appear in history in Kan-su [Gansu], in the north-west of China, where apparently they had been for some time; a struggle between them and another great horde, the Hiung-nu [Xiongnu], usually supposed (though it has been doubted) to have been the people known later to the western world as Huns, culminated in 174 or 176 B.C. in their complete defeat, and they quitted Kan-su and set out westward. Part of the horde, called by Chinese writers the Little Yueh-chi (Siao Yueh-chi, in contrast to the larger body, the Ta Yueh-chi or Great Yueh-chi), unable or unwilling to follow, turned southward into the Tarim valley and settled among the Ki'ang [Qiang], apparently a general term for the border peoples of China in that region; it used to be thought that they formed two kingdoms there, Turfan and Kucha, but that may now be doubtful. The main horde, going westward, fell on the Wu-sun, killed their king, and must have attempted to occupy their grazing lands and been driven out again, presumably by the Hiung-nu. Still going westward, somewhere before 160 they attacked a people called Sai-wang about Lake Issyk Kul and the plain northward of the Alexandrovski range and attempted to occupy their lands; the Sai-wang, or some part of them, fled southward. But in or just before the year 160 the Yueh-chi were again attacked by the son of the

> dead Wu-sun king with the help of the Hiung-nu and were driven out of the Sai-wang country […] [Brackets added.][89]

We see here that Tarn too did not understand that it was not possible that the Great Yue-Ji killed the father of the Kunmo, for Tarn writes: 'The main horde, going westward, fell on the Wu-sun, killed their king, and must have attempted to occupy their grazing lands and been driven out again, presumably by the Hiung-nu.' He has confused the order of events, and has done so from a faulty reading, or from a faulty understanding, of the *Han shu* itself. The *Han shu* states in its relation of Zhang Qian's story about the Kunmo, that:

> K'un-mo's father, Nan-tou-mi, originally lived together with the Great Yüeh-chih between Ch'i-lien [Qilian] and Tun-huang [Dunhuang]. It was a small country [in Gansu]. The Great Yüeh-chih attacked and killed Nan-tou-mi and took away his territory.[90] [Brackets added.]

The *Han shu* states that Nan-tou-mi and the *Great* Yue-Ji lived together in Gansu, and that they did so *before* the murder took place, and *before* any Yue-Ji moved anywhere at all. Nan-tou-mi was murdered in Gansu, where he lived among the Yue-Ji, not among the Great Yue-Ji. The Great Yue-Ji, *eo nomine*, *never lived in Gansu*. It was only after the Yue-Ji that came to constitute the main horde had left Gansu that they became known as the Great Yue-Ji. Before they left their original homeland in Gansu, they had not been separated from the group that came to constitute the Lesser Yue-Ji. It was only

[89] W. W. Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria & India* (Cambridge, 1938), pp. 276-277.

[90] Pulleyblank, pp. 156-157.

once the horde had separated into two groups that the one became known as the Great, and the other the Lesser. Nan-tou-mi was killed (according to the *Han shu*) where he lived among the whole horde of the Yue-Ji. The *Great* Yue-Ji could not, therefore, have killed him.

This mention of the Great Yue-Ji as the murderers is not a mere anachronism, by the way. The *Han shu* is putting words in the mouth of Zhang Qian that Zhang Qian himself did not utter, as verified by the *Shi ji*. Zhang Qian differentiates between the Yue-Ji and the Great Yue-Ji in the summary of his report when talking about past events, properly calling those Yue-Ji when speaking of the attack against them by the Xiongnu (in 207 BCE), and when speaking of Maodun's son's making a drinking cup of the skull of the Yue-Ji king after killing him.[91] And Zhang Qian properly calls those the Great Yue-Ji who were situated 2000 or 3000 *li* from Dayuan in 128 BCE.[92] Also, if the perpetrators of that murder had been of the Yue-Ji horde in the first place, then the Lesser Yue-Ji that had remained in their ancestral land in Gansu down to at least 121 BCE, would have been equally guilty of carrying out that murder, and would thus have been, and been named by the Wusun as, a target of attack, especially since they were located on the doorstep of the Wusun. In fact, that group of the Lesser Yue-Ji, still living as they were in their original homeland in Gansu, as the imperial edict reveals, were thus still living in the land that included the very territory that Nan-tou-mi ruled before the 'Great Yue-Ji' took it from him, as alleged in the *Han shu*—all the more reason for the Wusun to attack the Lesser Yue-Ji in Gansu. But they were not

[91] Sima Qian, p. 234.

[92] Sima Qian, p. 234.

attacked, and were not targeted at all by the Wusun, because the entire story of the enmity between the (Great) Yue-Ji and the Wusun in the *Han shu*, is a fabrication. That is to say, none of the Yue-Ji were guilty of that murder. Ban Gu lied. He lied about who was guilty in order to make, or to try to make, his subsequent narrative of mixed lies and truths possible, reasonable, and logical.

After telling us, then, that it was the Great Yue-Ji that killed the father of the Kunmo, the *Han shu* straightaway puts another false statement in the mouth of Zhang Qian, making him say to Emperor Wu, that the Kunmo asked the *shanyu* that had raised him to permit him to avenge his father's death, whereupon with his people he went west to attack the Great Yue-Ji; and, according to the *Han shu* account, he did so before the death of the *shanyu* that had raised him.[93] The *Han shu* account goes on to say that the Wusun, led by the Kunmo, attacked the Great Yue-Ji while they were living in the former territory of the Sakas, and drove them out, impelling them on to Bactria (Daxia). Now, it is not even necessary to compare the *Han shu* version of Zhang Qian's statements with that of the *Shi ji* to discover that the truth was once again not told in the *Han shu*, for the *Han shu* itself contains the inconsistencies that reveal the lies:

The *shanyu* that had raised the Kunmo was Jizhu, son of Maodun. Jizhu ruled the Xiongnu from 174 until his death in 158 BCE, whereupon he was succeeded by his son Junchen, who was the *shanyu* while Zhang Qian was a prisoner of the Xiongnu between 138 and 128. Now, since the *Han shu* account places the attack of the Wusun against the Great Yue-Ji before

[93] Pulleyblank, p. 157.

the death of the *shanyu* that had raised the Kunmo, it could have been none other than Jizhu that the Kunmo asked permission to attack the Great Yue-Ji; and since the *Han shu* account states that the *shanyu* that had raised the Kunmo died *after* the Great Yue-Ji had arrived in Bactria, the *Han shu* thus places the Great Yue-Ji in Bactria *before* 158 BCE, before the death of Jizhu. The *Han shu*, in other words, misplaces by as many as twenty-eight years the time of the Great Yue-Ji conquest of Bactria by placing the arrival of the Great Yue-Ji there at a time when Eucratides was still the king of Bactria, at a time, in fact, more than a decade before he was succeeded by his son Heliocles, the last Greek king of Bactria. All this is additional and incontrovertible proof that the story in the *Han shu* about the Great Yue-Ji attack against the Wusun, and about the Wusun attack against the Great Yue-Ji, is fiction, and that the *Han shu* contains lies in no small number.

Note, by the way, that in the *Han shu* the statement 'It happened that the *shanyu* died' cannot be referring to Junchen, because Zhang Qian is the author of that statement,[94] and Zhang Qian was the prisoner of Junchen when he heard the story about the Kunmo and about the death of the *shanyu*. In other words, the statement is referring to, and can refer to none other than, Jizhu.

Now, although W. W. Tarn may have been one of the more eminent historians to have misunderstood the passages of the *Han shu* that relate the story of the Kunmo and the events described in it, Craig Benjamin, in *The Yuezhi: Origin, Migration and the Conquest of Northern Bactria*, shows that he also misunderstood, or simply disregarded, what the *Han shu*

[94] Pulleyblank, p. 157.

actually says in those same passages, for much of what he states about the Kunmo, the Wusun, and the Great Yue-Ji, is incorrect and demonstrably so, and not deducible from, nor supported by the content of the *Han shu*. First and foremost, it must be said that anyone who writes about historical events has an obligation to represent accurately the sources he uses, and anyone who notices that an author has misrepresented sources, setting in some way askew the meaning of an original text, should feel obliged to point out those misrepresentations, especially for the sake of others who do not possess or have access to those sources. It is not my intention in this book to lambast Benjamin, or any other author, but a sense of propriety compels me to point out the problems that I have noticed in his book, such problems as the ways in which he represents and characterizes content in the sources that he has used. Benjamin, for example, misrepresents information in the text of the *Han shu* when he reports what it says in passages pertaining to the Great Yue-Ji. The *Han shu* says, as we have seen, that the *Great* Yue-Ji attacked and killed Nan-tou-mi. Benjamin, however, states that the 'Yuezhi' attacked and killed him, and he uses 'Yuezhi' repeatedly, disregarding every occasion where the *Han shu* names the people as the Great Yue-Ji.[95] The distinction between the two is important, because, as shown above, the Great Yue-Ji did not exist at the time when Nan-tou-mi was killed—a fact which betrays the falsity of the *Han shu* account. The Yue-Ji, of course, did exist, and thus Benjamin's use of 'Yuezhi' instead of Great Yue-Ji ('Yuezhi') is not only incorrect, but has also the effect of lending credibility to an account that is false on its very

[95] Craig G. R. Benjamin, *The Yuezhi: Origin, Migration, and the Conquest of Northern Bactria* (Brepols Publishers n.v., Turnhout, Belgium, 2007), p. 69.

face. Now imagine that another writer were to come along and argue that the Lesser Yue-Ji killed Nan-tou-mi. Everyone would be scratching his head at that claim, wondering where in the world such writer came up with that idea. Evidently no people, however, have noticed that it is just as absurd to say that the Great Yue-Ji killed Nan-tou-mi, because the source itself, the *Han shu*, says it. That statement in the *Han shu* is, however, specious, as we have seen, but to recognize its speciousness requires the understanding that the Great Yue-Ji did not exist at the time of that murder. Therefore, the author who says that the Yue-Ji killed Nan-tou-mi offers what appears to be a plausible scenario, but he can offer such scenario only by misrepresenting what the *Han shu* says. This is not to say that Benjamin realized that the Great Yue-Ji did not exist at that time. If he had, he would have said so. An accurate presentation of history requires precision in reporting what primary sources actually say. No reader can have an accurate understanding of history if it is reported otherwise. High standards are necessary in the reporting of history, and strictness is required for standards to be high.

Benjamin errs also when he tells us about the Great Yue-Ji attack against the Wusun, and about the Wusun attack against the Great Yue-Ji. He tells us, for example, that the (Great) 'Yuezhi' attacked the Wusun about 173, killed their leader Nan-tou-mi,[96] and 'expelled' them from Gansu,[97] basing on the *Han shu* what he says. If Benjamin were correct that the 'Yuezhi' attacked the Wusun in 173 BCE, Maodun could not have written three years earlier, in his letter of 176 to the Han

[96] Benjamin, *The Yuezhi,* p. 69.

[97] Benjamin, p. 74.

emperor, that the Wusun had become a part of the Xiongnu nation.[98] In other words, after 176, the Wusun did not exist as an entity separate from the Xiongnu that the 'Yuezhi' could have attacked alone; and if they could have attacked them in 173, Nan-tou-mi would thus be made to have been their king at a time when the Wusun, as a part of the Xiongnu nation, could not have had any king at all, and in fact did not have a king. The Wusun got a king again only when they became separated from the Xiongnu, only when the son of Nan-tou-mi, the Kunmo, got permission from the *shanyu* to lead his people himself; and that happened, and could only have happened, after 176. Thus, if in 173 the Wusun could have had a king, it could have been only the Kunmo that could have been their king, *not* Nan-tou-mi. Benjamin, therefore, cannot be correct. Note by the way that the *Han shu* says nothing at all about the Great Yue-Ji expelling the Wusun from Gansu. It says that the Great Yue-Ji took the territory of Nan-tou-mi, and that the people (the Wusun) fled to the Xiongnu. You choose to flee. You have no choice if you are expelled. The reader without the *Han shu* translation who reads only what Benjamin says here, cannot realize what happened according to its account, because the version of it that Benjamin gives him in that place is not the same as the translation that he is relating.

Benjamin's book is peppered throughout with statements based on inferences without support from the texts themselves (both the *Han shu* and the *Shi ji*). He tells us, for example, that when the Kunmo was in his late thirties or early forties, he requested permission from Junchen 'to pursue the Yuezhi into

[98] Sima Qian, p. 140.

the Ili' and 'avenge his father's wrongs.'[99] The reference used by Benjamin for this statement is only 'HS 61 4B.' Here Benjamin has inferred, not from the *Han shu*, but from other sources, that it was the Ili Valley where the Great Yue-Ji were when the Wusun allegedly attacked them, but he has grafted what he has imagined from inferences from those other sources on to content found in the *Han shu*, and made the *Han shu* the source of the statement 'to pursue the Yuezhi into the Ili,' which statement does not exist in that book. The *Han shu*, of course, in that passage in question, as elsewhere in it, does not mention the Ili at all, and it is thus to misrepresent what the *Han shu* says to indicate that in it the Kunmo requested permission to go to the Ili to attack the Great Yue-Ji. Incorrect as well is what Benjamin says regarding the *Han shu* passage that mentions the Kunmo's request for permission to attack the Great Yue-Ji; for he states that the Kunmo 'sought permission from Junchen to pursue' them. He also says that *Sima Qian* "confusingly states that it was after the death of a *Shanyu* that the '*Kunmo* led his people far away (and) declared himself an independant ruler.'"[100] It was not Sima Qian that stated that the Kunmo led his people far away after the death of the *shanyu* (Jizhu). It was Zhang Qian that made that statement. And Zhang Qian was the prisoner of *Junchen* when he was informed that the Kunmo had requested permission from the *shanyu* to avenge his father's death; and he was still the prisoner of Junchen when he was informed that the *shanyu* that the Kunmo had asked such permission, had died. Therefore, as already stated above, it could not have been Zhang Qian's captor, Junchen, who at the time was alive and well, that

[99] Benjamin, p. 114.

[100] Benjamin, p. 115.

the Kunmo could have asked permission, and it could not possibly have been Junchen. It could have been none other than Jizhu.

Surely, had Benjamin not been persuaded by Hulsewé and Loewe that the *Han shu* is the original work, and the *Shi ji* the copy, his book would have had merit of a better kind. That he embraced their views, and rejected those of Pulleyblank and his camp, is manifest. It is of no surprise, therefore, that he disparages the *Shi ji* text when he points out those places where it lacks accord with the *Han shu*. He simply dismisses, for instance, in a mere two lines, and completely ignores that the *Shi ji* states that it was the *Xiongnu* that killed the Wusun king, father of the Kunmo. He says nothing more than that it incorrectly lays the blame on the Xiongnu, and that later events in the Ili Basin 'indicate' that it does,[101] leaving the reader with the expectation that he will return to the subject of the *Shi ji* text when he discusses at length the 'evidence' of the Great Yue-Ji occupation of the Ili Valley. At no point, however, does he return to the subject of the *Shi ji* text to try to explain why it states that the Xiongnu were the perpetrators of the murder. He simply ignores the subject through the entirety of the rest of his book. The reader is, therefore, left with the impression that he has no argument to explain why the *Shi ji* states that the Xiongnu killed the father of the Kunmo, and is left wondering what explanation he could give that would actually explain the difference between the two texts.

[101] Benjamin, p. 69.

IV

The Wise King of the Right

Maodun became *shanyu* of the Xiongnu in 209 BCE. Two years later, in 207, he attacked and routed the Yue-Ji. Then, in 176, at the height of his glory, he dispatched a letter to Emperor Wen of the Han dynasty (who was the predecessor of Emperor Wu), in which he told the emperor that his Wise King of the Right had succeeded in vanquishing the Yue-Ji utterly, and had also conquered the Loulan, Wusun, and Hujie tribes (as well as twenty-six nearby states), with the latter three of which in consequence becoming a part of the Xiongnu nation. Thus, in one fell swoop in 176, the Xiongnu had attacked and defeated both the Yue-Ji and the Wusun.

Who was this Wise King of the Right? We learn from Sima Qian that the Xiongnu word for 'wise' is *tuqi*, and that the *shanyu's* heir is customarily called, as Sima Qian conveyed it, the '*Tuqi* King of the Left.'[102] Note the word 'customarily.' Since the King of the Right was called the Wise King of the Right, he was known as, then, in Xiongnu as the '*Tuqi* King of the Right.' If Sima Qian was not using as a mere example the phrase 'King of the Left' when he told us that the heir of the *shanyu* was customarily called the '*Tuqi* King of the Left,' then

[102] Sima Qian, p. 136.

every heir of the *shanyu* was always called, as indicated by the use of the word 'customarily,' the '*Tuqi* King of the Left,' or the 'Wise King of the Left,' and never of the 'Right.' And if so, the heir was always arbitrarily placed as king in the eastern part of the empire, the word 'left' denoting that side of it, and 'right' denoting the opposite side.[103] In other words, the part of the empire in which the heir was placed as king was decided by the fact of his being the heir. If Sima Qian was using the phrase 'King of the Left' as an example, however, then the heir could have been either the '*Tuqi* King of the Left' or the '*Tuqi* King of the Right;' and the implication would be that it is the word *tuqi* that indicates that the king is the *shanyu's* heir, or, rather, an heir of the *shanyu*. Since *shanyus* typically had a number of sons, it is, in fact, difficult to believe that the '*Tuqi* King of the Right' would not have been a son and heir of the *shanyu*, but, rather, some individual (or even a brother of the *shanyu*) who bore a title of equal tier to that of the *Tuqi* King of the Left. Moreover, when Junchen, Jizhu's son, became *shanyu*, his younger brother Yizhixie was the *Luli* King of the Left,[104] which was a rank below that of the *Tuqi* King of the Left or of the Right. We can rightly conclude, therefore, that the *Tuqi* King of the Right was also a son and heir of the *shanyu*, and that Sima Qian was using the phrase '*Tuqi* King of the Left' as an example when he told us that the heir of the *shanyu* was customarily referred to as such. That is to say, the key word, the one that denotes heir, is not 'left,' but *Tuqi*. In fact, 'left' cannot possibly denote heir, because 'left' denotes east or eastern. It may have been the case that the heir apparent, or the oldest son, was made the *Tuqi*

[103] Sima Qian, p. 136.

[104] Sima Qian, p. 150.

King of the Left, and the next oldest the *Tuqi* King of the Right, but the reverse may have been the case as well. At any rate, it is clear that both *Tuqi* kings were sons and heirs of the *shanyu*. Yizhixie, by the way, on the death of his elder brother Junchen, attacked Junchen's son and rightful heir Yudan, evidently a *Tuqi* King, and set himself up as *shanyu*.[105]

Now, since the *Tuqi* King of the Right attacked and conquered the Wusun in 176, and since it was not until the Kunmo had become a man that the Wusun gained again their independence from the Xiongnu nation, we can be sure that it was in the warring of 176 that the father (Nan-tou-mi) of the Kunmo was killed by the Xiongnu. Note that Maodun did not mention in his letter to the Han emperor that the Xiongnu, or rather the *Tuqi* King of the Right, killed the king of the Wusun. It was Zhang Qian that informed the emperor that the Xiongnu killed the Wusun king, just as of the Han it was Zhang Qian that informed the emperor that the son of Maodun killed the king of the Yue-Ji. It could have been only the *Tuqi* King of the Right that killed the Wusun king, by the way, because after the defeat of the Wusun in 176 by the *Tuqi* King of the Right, the Wusun became a part of the Xiongnu nation, as Maodun confirms, after which there was no Wusun king to be killed, that is, after 176. This means also that about 176, the infant Kunmo was cast out in the wilderness, and left to die near the distant boundary of the *western* part of the Xiongnu empire, very far from the area where the *Tuqi* King of the Left was located. Since Jizhu was the successor of Maodun, he would have been the *Tuqi* King of the Left *if* Sima Qian really meant that the heir was customarily called the *Tuqi* King of the Left. Now, the Kunmo was not

[105] Sima Qian, p. 150.

rescued from the wilderness until Jizhu took him in and reared him, which would thus mean that the *Tuqi* King of the Left took in the Kunmo. But how did the *Tuqi* King of the Left get involved in a situation from which he was so far removed, one in which he did not in any capacity participate at all? Undoubtedly, he did not get involved. If he had, he would have been out of his jurisdiction, as it were, operating where he was not permitted to do so under Xiongnu law; and his kingdom, in the far eastern part of the empire, would have been without its king for the duration of thirty battles or conflicts in distant lands, leaving it vulnerable to attack. That is to say, the only logical conclusion happens to be the correct one as well, namely, that Jizhu was not the *Tuqi* King of the Left, but, rather, the *Tuqi* King of the Right, the one that was in the area where the abandoned infant Kunmo was; and thus it clearly was, as will be further demonstrated below, Jizhu that conquered both the Yue-Ji and the Wusun in 176, and that killed both their kings.

It is a misnomer to say, as many do, that Maodun defeated the Yue-Ji in 176, since it was, as Maodun tells us, the *Tuqi* King of the Right that defeated them, a king who was thus a son and heir of Maodun. If the *Tuqi* King of the Right was not Jizhu, then one of Maodun's unknown sons defeated the Yue-Ji (and the Wusun, etc.) in 176, and (in this scenario) his other son (Jizhu) killed the Yue-Ji king. But the son in a position to kill the Yue-Ji king was the *Tuqi* King of the Right, the one that had defeated the Yue-Ji, not the *Tuqi* King of the Left, who, located in the distant eastern part of the empire, was far removed from all the action of 176, and who is thus not mentioned at all in connection with the defeat of the Yue-Ji, or of the Wusun, or, for that matter, in connection with any achievements

whatsoever. This plain truth increases exponentially the improbability that the obscure and meritless *Tuqi* King of the Left became *shanyu*, rather than the *Tuqi* King of the Right, who through his numerous victories, whether or not helped to them by Heaven, the excellence of his fighters, and their strong horses, had as a leader done so much for the Xiongnu nation as to be acclaimed by Maodun as having himself 'succeeded in wiping out the Yue-Ji.'[106] It would be absurd to think that Maodun would not have arranged for that king to be the next *shanyu* if that king was not already destined to be *shanyu* next. If, as was clearly the case, Jizhu had been the *Tuqi* King of the Right, who must have become *shanyu*, he would have been deeply embittered to see the *Tuqi* King of the Left, who had done nothing noteworthy for the Xiongnu nation, become *shanyu* on the death of Maodun; and it is all but certain that he would have assassinated him,[107] or would have started a civil war. As none of those things happened, however, so it is further sure to have been the case that Jizhu was, in fact, the *Tuqi* King of the Right. The opposite conclusion, that he was the *Tuqi* King of the Left, makes no sense at all, and, frankly, cannot be correct. Incidentally, it is even entirely possible that the *Tuqi* King of the Right, obviously Jizhu, murdered his father Maodun, and set himself up as *shanyu*; for Maodun did exactly that to his own father, the *shanyu* Touman. Treachery was, as we have seen, one of the hallmarks of the Xiongnu.

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[106] Sima Qian, p. 140.

[107] Jizhu may very well have assassinated the Wise King of the Left. It is certain that after defeating all those peoples in 176, the Wise King of the Right, Jizhu, would have killed anyone that might have stood in the way of his becoming the next *shanyu*. If, therefore, the Wise King of the Left was in fact to be the next *shanyu*, then Jizhu must have killed him; for there is no doubt that Jizhu was, in fact, the Wise King of the Right.

Shortly after the *Tuqi* King of the Right (Jizhu) had defeated the Yue-Ji and the Wusun, Jizhu must have taken in the Kunmo, because an infant in the circumstances described could not have survived two years, from 176, the year when the Wusun became a part of the Xiongnu nation, to 174, the year when Jizhu became *shanyu*. Thus when Zhang Qian, in telling the story of the Kunmo to Emperor Wu, refers to Jizhu as *shanyu* at the time when he adopted the Kunmo, he was evidently speaking anachronistically, though barely so, Jizhu having been at the time still just a *Tuqi* king, and only becoming *shanyu* shortly after adopting the Kunmo.

Zhang Qian, in the summary of his report, tells us that Maodun attacked and defeated the Yue-Ji when he *became shanyu*.[108] Since the year 176 BCE arrived thirty-three years after Maodun had become *shanyu*, that statement of Zhang Qian's can refer only to the defeat of the Yue-Ji by Maodun in 207. Then in his summary Zhang Qian tells us, that 'Some time afterwards his [Maodun's] son, the Old *Shanyu* [Jizhu],[109] killed the king of the Yuezhi and made his skull into a drinking cup,' as said above; and that after the Yue-Ji had been defeated by the Xiongnu, the majority of the horde migrated west, and settled beyond Dayuan, where they were known as the Great Yue-Ji. Now, since it was Jizhu that killed the king of the Yue-Ji, and since Jizhu became *shanyu* of the Xiongnu in 174 BCE, a number of scholars have reckoned that the greater part of the Yue-Ji began their migration west about 174, *after* Jizhu succeeded his father as *shanyu*. This is not an illogical conclusion if based only on the statements in the *Shi ji* just

[108] Sima Qian, p. 234.

[109] Sima Qian, p. 142.

above mentioned, and the reasoning behind it seems not amiss at first glance, since in those statements Zhang Qian says first, after telling us that Maodun defeated the Yue-Ji (in 207) when he became *shanyu*, that his son, the Old *Shanyu*, killed the king of the Yue-Ji and made his skull a cup, and then says that after they were defeated the majority of the Yue-Ji migrated west. It is because he is referred to as 'Old *Shanyu*' in that passage, that it is assumed that Jizhu was already *shanyu* when he killed the king of the Yue-Ji. But in that passage he is also referred to as Maodun's son, and it is the word 'son' that is the substantive word in the statement, that is, it is the word 'son' that is the subject of the clause that mentions his making of the king's skull into a drinking vessel, not the term 'Old *Shanyu,*' which in the statement is an appositive phrase modifying the subject of the statement, namely, 'son.'[110] That is to say, in fact, that the word 'son' is more important in that statement than the term 'Old *Shanyu*.' It is the word 'son' about which the predicate makes an assertion and on which the thought of the sentence is based. Zhang Qian did not say that 'The Old *Shanyu*, Maodun's son, killed the king of the Yue-Ji…' If he had, we could be sure that Maodun was already dead and that Jizhu was *shanyu* at the time of the killing of the Yue-Ji king. In other words, Zhang Qian is not telling us that the *shanyu* of the Xiongnu killed the king of the Yue-Ji. He is telling us that a *son* of Maodun killed the Yue-Ji king. His use of 'son' as the substantive in the statement, whether in the translation or in the original, instead of *shanyu* or the Old *Shanyu*, indicates that Maodun was still alive at the time when his son killed the king. No text mentions any other conflict or battle between the Xiongnu and the Yue-Ji after the

[110] Sima Qian, p. 234.

one in 176. When that battle in 176 was fought, Jizhu was not *shanyu*, but he was Maodun's son. And as only Jizhu could have been the Wise King of the Right, as has been shown, which king according to Maodun wiped out the Yue-Ji in 176, so Jizhu must have killed the king in 176, *before* he became *shanyu*, and that is what the text actually implies by its substantive use of the word 'son.' In fact, there is nothing that precludes that to have been the case. When the passages explained above are rightly understood, and understood in connection with those that pertain to the Wise King of the Right and his deeds in 176, it is easily seen that that is what the text is actually saying. The fact that no text, not the *Shi ji* and not the *Han shu*, nor the summary of Zhang Qian's report, mentions any other conflict between the Xiongnu and the Yue-Ji after the two mentioned above, the one with the Xiongnu led by Maodun in 207, and the one in 176 led by the *Tuqi* King of the Right, who was clearly Jizhu, is evidence enough to refute any suggestion that another conflict, a third one, took place. If Zhang Qian in his statement about Maodun's son's making the king's skull into a cup were referring to a conflict different from the one that took place in 176, and that took place after it, then he failed in his summary to mention at all the conflict of 176, which year saw the Xiongnu vanquish in their most glorious series of campaigns the Yue-Ji, the Wusun, the Loulan, the Hujie, as well as twenty-six nearby states, as Maodun affirmed in his letter to Emperor Wen. But Zhang Qian, of course, did not fail to mention that conflict. Zhang Qian mentions only two conflicts, and the *Shi ji* and the *Han shu* mention only two conflicts; and thus all the texts are in agreement, the only difference being *how* they refer to the conflict of 176 and its outcome. Maodun referred to it in his

letter to Emperor Wen without mentioning his son's killing of the Yue-Ji king; and Zhang Qian referred to it when he told us that Maodun's son made the Yue-Ji king's skull a goblet. It is because the conflict of 176 is referred to in these two different ways by two different individuals that lived at different times, that it appears that there were three conflicts when the one led by Maodun in 207 is counted as well. But in reality there were only two conflicts, the one in 207 and the one in 176. Since Zhang Qian reported simultaneously that Maodun defeated the Yue-Ji and that later his son (Jizhu) killed the Yue-Ji king, he would have known *at that time* about any third conflict or battle (as some scholars fantasize one to have happened) between the Xiongnu and the Yue-Ji, and he would surely have reported about it when he told us about the Yue-Ji defeat when Maodun *became shanyu*, and about his son's making the king's skull into a drinking vessel. The fact that Zhang Qian says nothing about any third conflict, together with the fact that neither the *Shi ji* nor the *Han shu* says anything about one, and the above analyses that show that Jizhu was the *Tuqi* King of the Right, who vanquished the Yue-Ji, invalidates any argument or any suggestion that after 176 the Xiongnu fought the Yue-Ji again. The correct interpretation of the texts is, then, that Jizhu killed the king of the Yue-Ji at the time when the Xiongnu defeated them in 176, and thus before he became *shanyu* in 174, and before the death of Maodun. This explains why no other conflict is mentioned in any text, and also why 'son' was used as the substantive in that statement. In sum Jizhu was, as shown above, the *Tuqi* King of the Right, and it was he that defeated in 176 the Yue-Ji (and the Wusun, etc.) and that made the king's skull a cup. And thus, the beginning of the westward migration

of the Yue-Ji that became known as the Great is dated, definitively, to 176. As they began to move westward, they must have been followed eventually in their migration by an indeterminate number of Wusun, because, as will be seen, the Asiani that participated in the conquest of Bactria were none other than a group of Wusun.

Craig Benjamin, however, has come to the conclusion that Jizhu killed the king of the Yue-Ji in 162, fourteen years after the Xiongnu when led by the *Tuqi* King of the Right (Jizhu) defeated them.[111] In an effort to make his case, he posits the occurrence in 162 of another conflict between the Xiongnu and the Yue-Ji, one in which the Xiongnu are again victorious, and gives as the chief 'evidence,' for both the 'reality' of the conflict and the date at which it was begun, a peace treaty effected between the Xiongnu and the Han in 162,[112] and the description of an event that he assigns to the same year from his interpretation of certain passages of the *Shi ji* and the *Han shu*. The ostensible reason for his placing in 162 the beginning of his hypothesized conflict, is that, as Benjamin opines, it became possible for the Xiongnu to attack the Yue-Ji once the Xiongnu and the Han had signed a peace treaty.[113] The extreme implausibility of this hypothetical scenario, however, becomes clear when it is understood that it had never been necessary in the past that the Xiongnu be at peace with the Han before attacking the Yue-Ji, or attacking the Yue-Ji and many others at the same time. Remember, in 176, the Xiongnu defeated nearly thirty peoples in the series of campaigns led by the Wise King of

[111] Benjamin, p. 84.

[112] Benjamin, p. 71.

[113] Benjamin, p. 71.

the Right. Thus, after so severe a defeat by the Xiongnu in 176, it would have been least likely the case that the Xiongnu would later care to be at peace with the Han to attack the Yue-Ji. In the next two pages, however, Benjamin reverses course, and after saying in the last paragraph on page seventy-one of his book that the Xiongnu attacked the Yue-Ji after the Xiongnu and the Han had made peace, he comes to the opposite conclusion, and says on page seventy-three that the Xiongnu attacked the Yue-Ji just before signing the peace treaty.[114] Before I explain the reason for his change of mind, I will remind the reader that in both cases it is just his opinion, his opinion on the timing of his hypothesized conflict. At any rate, the reason for the vacillations of his mind is that the content of a passage in the *Shi ji*, and of the parallel passage in the *Han shu* points to, as he thinks, a clue that suggests to him the adoption of a new line of reasoning, one that may lead, in his opinion, to the setting of a more accurate *terminus post quem* for the hypothesized conflict and its conclusion. I will discuss only the *Shi ji* version of the passage in question, since the *Shi ji* is the original account.

At the opening of the chapter on Dayuan, Sima Qian reintroduces us to Zhang Qian, the first Han envoy to venture to the remote regions of the west and give an account of them to China. Sima Qian states that Zhang Qian served as a palace attendant during the *jianyuan* era, which was a span of time between 140 and 135 BCE.[115] It should be noted that in the passage that mentions that era, the years 140 and 135 are enclosed in parentheses in the Revised Edition of Burton Watson's translation of the *Shi ji*, and are placed in them

[114] Benjamin, p. 73.

[115] Sima Qian, p. 231.

immediately after the word *era* (whereas in the first edition brackets were used). The parentheses needless to say are not Sima Qian's; they are Burton Watson's. We know this to be the case, that the parenthetical content is not Sima Qian's, because in the same paragraph we find immediately after the name 'Yuezhi' the term 'Indo-scythians' in parentheses, and since that term did not exist when Sima Qian wrote the *Shi ji*, we know that Sima Qian did not add that term but that Watson did; and thus we know likewise, that Burton Watson uses parentheses where most Western writers would use brackets, and would use them for the sake of clearness, that is, to make clear that the brackets do not enclose the words of the author. Craig Benjamin does the same as Watson. Where most writers would use brackets to indicate that the content enclosed in them was not written by the author, Benjamin uses parentheses. We know this to be true of Benjamin as well, because in sharing in his book the statement of Sima Qian's that follows the one that ends with mention of the *jianyuan* era, Benjamin quotes him exactly as "'At this time (*jianyuan* era – 140-135 BCE) the emperor…'"[116] At any rate, now that the reader is informed that Siam Qian is not the author of the content placed in parentheses by both Benjamin and Watson in those places where the one is translating his words or is adding comment, and where the other is quoting from that translation (or from that of the *Han shu*), we can now return to discussion of that line of reasoning that Benjamin began to follow, when he had come to think that he could arrive at a more precise *terminus post quem* for the hypothesized conflict that he imagines.

[116] Benjamin, p. 72.

Thus taking up that line of reasoning, Benjamin quickly draws our attention to a reference in the *Shi ji* (and its parallel passage in the *Han shu*) in which we are told that 'various Xiongnu who had surrendered to the Han' reported to Emperor Wu (whom Benjamin refers to as Emperor Wudi) that the Xiongnu, at some past time not mentioned in the text, had defeated the king of the Yue-Ji and made his skull into a drinking vessel, whereupon the Yue-Ji fled.[117] One implication of the reference is, that it was evidently between 140 and 137 BCE that those Xiongnu had reported to the Han emperor. When Zhang Qian was summoned to be the envoy to go to the Great Yue-Ji, he was still a palace attendant, which was his position during the *jianyuan* era (140-135 BCE).[118] Zhang Qian's mission to the western regions exceeded a period of ten years, because for more than ten years that envoy was a prisoner of the Xiongnu, having been captured by them on his way to the Great Yue-Ji. By 127 BCE, however, Zhang Qian had succeeded in completing his mission and had returned to China, issuing his report on the western regions to the emperor about 128. The 'various Xiongnu' that had had that meeting with the emperor could have had their meeting with him, then, only between 140 and 137.[119] Benjamin interprets that passage about the emperor's meeting with those 'various Xiongnu' as being the *first time* that the Han had heard that the Xiongnu had ultimately defeated the Yue-Ji. It was not, however, the first time that the Han had heard such. The letter from Maodun written in 176 informed them of the Xiongnu defeat of the Yue-

[117] Sima Qian, p. 231.

[118] Sima Qian, p. 231.

[119] Sima Qian, p. 231.

Ji in that year, which was, as Maodun averred, the ultimate defeat, the only one in which the king's skull could have been turned into a cup, a detail that Maodun in his letter to the Han omitted, just as he omitted mention of the killing of the Wusun king in 176 in that same letter. Also in his letter, Maodun said nothing of the Yue-Ji's fleeing. Benjamin evidently separates in his mind one battle, that of 176, into two, because the two different ways in which it is reported in the texts has led him to think that one battle was two different battles. He believes that it was his hypothesized battle (in 162) in which Jizhu made the skull of the Yue-Ji king into a cup. But he overlooks something obvious, namely, that it was not the 'news' (which was old news) of the defeat of the Yue-Ji that got the emperor's attention when he heard from the Xiongnu deserters, but, rather, the news (which was new news) that the Yue-Ji had fled, which the emperor had not heard before from anyone. That is precisely why we are straightaway told by Sima Qian in the same passage, that when the emperor heard the news of their fleeing, he decided to try to send an envoy to the Yue-Ji. If the emperor had known at an earlier time of their fleeing, he would have tried to send an envoy to the Yue-Ji long before the time that he dispatched Zhang Qian to go to them. In other words, the Han emperor had already known about the Xiongnu defeat of the Yue-Ji, but the emperor had no idea that the they *had fled* after they were defeated. This explains the point of Sima Qian's opening the chapter with a reintroduction to the Han envoy Zhang Qian. Benjamin nevertheless assumes that the passsage is referring to his hypothesized conflict of 162 between the Yue-Ji and the Xiongnu, rather than to the documented one of 176, when the *Tuqi* King of the Right, who could have been none

other than Jizhu, annihilated the Yue-Ji. Benjamin disregards the fact that the statements of the Xiongnu deserters can exclude only the defeat of the Yue-Ji in 207, that they cannot exclude the defeat of the Yue-Ji in 176. Since the *Shi ji*, the *Han shu*, and Zhang Qian mention only two battles or conflicts between the Xiongnu and the Yue-Ji, and since the one in 207 could not have been the defeat that the deserters were referring to, the only defeat that they could have meant was the one in 176. In other words it was, as said above, the *Tuqi* King of the Right that made the skull of the Yue-Ji king into a drinking vessel, just as it was, as it could only have been, the *Tuqi* King of the Right that killed the Wusun king, and that took in the Kunmo when an infant, as shown above. Nevertheless, Benjamin, either disregarding or overlooking what the *Shi ji*, the *Han shu*, and Zhang Qian actually say, persists in developing his hypothesized conflict, and proceeds to make some calculations of the age of the Kunmo when Jizhu died, the answer to which, as he thinks, allows him ultimately to arrive at his third and most precise *terminus post quem*, that the hypothesized conflict was concluded in or about 162, just before the signing of the peace treaty between the Xiongnu and the Han.[120] On page seventy of his book, he says that the "*Han shu* specifically names one 'Laoshang' as the Xiongnu *Shanyu* who so crushingly defeated the Yuezhi in 162 BCE, and turned their king's skull into a drinking cup…"[121] Here again, he presents his hypothesized conflict as factual, and borrows the *Han shu* to use it to deliver a mention of that concocted event, wording his statement in a way that makes the *Han shu* the source of the

[120] Benjamin, p. 73.

[121] Benjamin, p. 70.

statement that 162 was the year when 'Laoshang' allegedly defeated the Yue-Ji. The *Han shu*, of course, says nothing about any defeat in 162, though Benjamin cites 'HS 96A 15A' as the source of that statement and the content that he put in it. Laoshang, by the way, according to Hulsewé and Loewe, translates as 'old and elevated.'[122]

Whether Benjamin had additional reasons for deciding on that date of 162, we do not know, but we do not rule out that possibility. For example, by inventing that conflict that he says occurred in that year, he postpones artificially the time of the breaking up of the Yue-Ji into separate hordes to 162, down almost to the time when Junchen took over the throne from his father Jizhu. This has the effect of giving a semblance of credibility to his statement that the Kunmo asked *Junchen* for permission to attack the Great Yue-Ji. It has also, however, the unintended effect of contradicting both his argument and the source that he relies on, the *Han shu*, by 'invalidating' that erroneous statement in it that the *Great* Yue-Ji killed the Wusun king, father of the Kunmo, since his scenario postpones the existence of the Great Yue-Ji for eleven years after the time (173) that he assigns to that murder. In other words, he has constructed his argument in such way that problems of logic plague it, problems to which he himself is, obviously, wholly oblivious. One of Benjamin's aims is, of course, to increase as much as possible the plausibility of the *Han shu* version of events, but without realizing it, he has inadvertently 'demonstrated' its implausibility. In any case, two insuperable problems invariably negate his argument and the *Han shu* version of events. One is, as said above, that neither the *Shi ji* nor the *Han*

[122] Benjamin, p. 70.

shu has anything in it—not even the merest hint—that actually supports his hypothesized conflict of 162, which, given the outcome of it that he describes, would have been more crushing than the one effected by the *Tuqi* King of the Right, that is, by Jizhu, and thus even more worthy of detailed recording in the sources than that conflict of 176; and the other is, that the *Han shu* version, which as we have seen is a flawed and embellished copy of that of the *Shi ji*, has been shown to contain serious inconsistencies and blatant lies pertaining to the story of the Kunmo. In other words, to believe that Benjamin is correct about the events that he hypothesizes took place, one must of necessity first meet the precondition of believing that a version of events that has been shown to have been fabricated is not fiction.

To borrow the words of Sir Thomas Browne: *I had not wanted reason for complaint*.[123] The more I scrutinize the content of Benjamin's book, however, and compare it with the information in the sources, the more statements, inferences, and theories in it I find to raise complaint about – things of a specious character, or things of fiction represented as realities to be found in those sources though they are absent in them, or not inferable from them. Not to point out what is clearly misleading in it is tacitly to accept such statements of his, as well as his presentation of events and his characterization, or his mischaracterization of them. I could pass over in silence, and without small complaint, those statements that he makes from an assumed omniscient perspective, such as the baseless statement, 'The Yuezhi's initial intention…' was to move a great

[123] Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici, The Works of Sir Thomas Browne,* Volume I, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (The University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 9.

distance and '...resettle in the valley of the Ili River,'[124] but I will not because Benjamin of course can have no clue as to what the 'initial intention' of the (Great) 'Yuezhi' may have been regarding anything. Of course, we would all like to know what the Yue-Ji that would become known as the Great were doing between 176 and 128 BCE, and exactly where they were at this time or at that time. But we should not try to fill in the blanks of their history by inventing conflicts, drawing inaccurate or questionable inferences, stating unrealities as facts, putting thoughts and intentions in their minds, and making claims based on unjustifiable interpretations of the texts, that they did this or that, or were here or were there. If we do, and in our doing so we misrepresent the sources, we are distorting the content of them to fit our preconceived theories, and we are then writing fiction, not revealing and representing history. All this is not to say that his book is without any merit, but its faults on some of the most important points much debase its value.

I said above that it was important to know what cannot be argued to have happened to the main horde of the Yue-Ji between 176 and 128 BCE, in order to have an accurate understanding of what kind of relationship they had with the Wusun after 176, as well as before. Now that we have shown that Hulsewé and Loewe were mistaken that the *Han shu* is the original, and that Zongli Lu and Pulleyblank were, and are right that the original is the *Shi ji*; we can say truly that Ban Gu, the main author of the primary source of all such claims—the *Han shu*—fabricated, among other things, the story of the Great Yue-Ji attack on the Wusun, and the Wusun attack on the Great Yue-Ji.

[124] Benjamin, p. 91.

V

The Lesser Yue-Ji, The Wusun, and Their Descendants

Having now achieved a right understanding of what kind of relationship the Yue-Ji and the Wusun had, or at least what kind of relationship they cannot be argued to have had on the basis of the *Han shu* account of them, we can now turn our attention to the Wusun, and show it is the case that one faction of them arrived in Bactria with the Yue-Ji that would become known there as the Great, and that another faction of them either migrated to the Southern Mountains alongside the Yue-Ji that would become known as the Lesser, and settled there with them among the Qiang, or arrived later in those same areas where those Yue-Ji, or factions of them, or descendants of those Yue-Ji, after abandoning the Qiang domain, had in time come to be occupants and settlers, such as in Assam, Tibet, Bhutan, and Yunnan, to name a few. In fact, the Yue-Ji and the Wusun, as shown above, were really two clans of the same people, and wherever the one or the other has migrated, or wherever a faction of the one or of the other has migrated, the other one has almost always followed it, and thus the two have almost always ended up together in the same general area, from the east

of Asia to the Caucasus and beyond, living sometimes as allies, sometimes as foes, but as neighbors almost always.

Now, the Wusun were divided into three factions, as Sima Qian tells us, when the Kunmo was an old man, with one faction being under the command of his son Dalu; one under the command of the grandson of the Kunmo, one Cenqu; and one, the largest of the three, still under the authority of the king, the Kunmo himself.[125] Cenqu was the son of Dalu's older brother, the dead heir apparent, who before his death had implored the Kunmo to make his son Cenqu the new heir. When his son the heir was dying, grief had overcome the Kunmo, and being moved by his deathbed entreaties, he agreed to make Cenqu his heir apparent, a move which infuriated Dalu. At this time the Kunmo still had at least ten sons, and Dalu, who had been living in a separate part of the kingdom with a force of ten thousand horsemen, persuaded his brothers to join him in revolt. When news of the uprising reached the Kunmo, he feared for the life of Cenqu, and, as a measure to protect him from Dalu and his followers, he put Cenqu in command of ten thousand horsemen, and sent him to live in a different part of the kingdom. This was the state of affairs in the Wusun realm when Zhang Qian arrived there as Han envoy on a mission to try to persuade the Kunmo to move with his people east, and settle in an unoccupied area where a Xiongnu tribe or clan, the Hunye, had formerly lived.[126] Zhang Qian was endeavoring to put in effect the plan he had shared with Emperor Wu when he had told him the story of the Kunmo and had made the claim, that if they were successful in persuading the Wusun to settle in the east, they would in effect

[125] Sima Qian, p. 239.

[126] Sima Qian, p. 238.

cut off the right arm of the Xiongnu, and then be able to persuade Daxia and its neighbors to acknowledge themselves Han vassals.[127]

Thus at the time when Zhang Qian visited the Wusun, one faction of the three had become an enemy of the other two; and, as far as we can tell from the *Shi ji*, Dalu's faction never rejoined in peace Cenqu's and the Kunmo's to unite again the Wusun horde, evidently resulting in one faction that went its separate way. The question is, where did its separate way take that faction? And what became of Cenqu's and the Kunmo's Wusun?

It is at this point that we must begin to make use of, at least from time to time, careful inferences from clues found among peoples nearly contemporaneous with them and bearing an obvious variant of their name, as well as among later peoples who cannot but be descendants of the Wusun, to help us to determine where, outside their ancient realm, factions of the Wusun eventually, evidently, arrived as either conquerors, or settlers. Now, although inference as well as conjecture is not without its risks, so long as it is handled with prudence, and is capable of supporting its conclusions through a myriad of pieces of information that conduce to show, that its conclusions are so highly unlikely to be wrong, that they can heartily be accepted as correct, it is often the first means by which a clear and trustworthy picture of the outline of the history of an obscure people is achieved.

Now, the Bai of Yunnan, as I have demonstrated in *The Padjanaks*, are the direct descendants of the Lesser Yue-Ji. The Bai themselves, who are a moon people even today with a hereditary fondness for the color white, know, or at least a

[127] Sima Qian, p. 238.

number of them know, that their ancestors were the Ji, and that they migrated from Gansu to Yunnan during the Han and Jin dynasties, about two thousand two hundred years ago.[128] The name Bai is an exonym, an ancient one, first used of the Yue-Ji by the Chinese even before the days of Strabo, who mentions, as said above, one of the conquering groups of Bactria as the Pasiani, or Basiani, that is, to spell it phonetically, the Bai-shu-ni or Bai-shun, whom the Chinese knew also as the Great Yue-Ji. Bai is, as elsewhere said, a Chinese word meaning 'white,' and it is often transliterated as Pai. Now, in order to show what became of the Wusun and their factions, we must discourse on the Bai also.

In the mid to late 1800s, as more and more explorers, diplomats, academics, surveyors, and others from the West arrived in Southeast Asia, accounts of the various peoples inhabiting the lands of present-day Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, and of southern China, especially Yunnan, grew numerous and increased in details, providing the West with relatively thorough descriptions of the physical characteristics, customs, costumes, and languages of the various peoples that those Westerners encountered in their travels. A number of them, French, American, and British nationals alike, speak in their books of the Bai of Yunnan, usually informing us not only of those aspects named above, but also of what names they called themselves, as well as what names the Chinese used in reference to them. One Terrien de Lacouperie, for example, in *The Languages of China before the Chinese*, which was published in 1887, devotes two paragraphs to the *Peh-jin* (Bai) and their language, stating in the first one:

[128] Bai, "Bai Nationality Shines."

> The MIN-KIA TZE [ ], or *Peh-jin* [ ], now intermingled with the other population of the neighbouring region of Tali-fu [Dali] in C. W. Yunnan and the S. E. of the Province, claim to have come from S. Kiangsu [Jiangsu] near Nanking [Nanjing]. They are much mixed in race, and their language bears the same testimony; we have a vocabulary of 110 words, including numerals, published by Father Desgodins, and another series of numerals by the late Francis Garnier. Chinese, Mosso, Lolo and Tibetan words have been adopted instead of the original vocables, but the Mōn character of the language is still recognizable in many words, and the positions of the genitive and of the adjective are in accordance with this indication.[129] [Brackets added. Empty brackets indicate missing Chinese characters.]

Min-kia-tze, or Min-kia (also spelled Min Kia, Min-chia, Min Chia, Min-ch'iang, and today as Minjia), was what the Chinese called the speakers of the language above described by Lacouperie.

The name of Terrien de Lacouperie is not unfamiliar to those who have tried to classify the Bai language, nor is that of H. R. Davies, who in a book on Yunnan echoes much of what Lacouperie says about the Min-chia tongue. Like Lacouperie, Davies concluded Min-chia to be of Mon-Khmer origin, and arrived at that conclusion after his comparison of Mon-Khmer words with Min-chia ones revealed such striking similarities between the lexicons of the tongues compared, that he was, like Lacouperie, left in little doubt that Min-chia was best classified as of the Mon-Khmer family, that is to say, as Austroasiatic.[130]

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[129] Terrien de Lacouperie, *The Languages of China before the Chinese* (David Nutt, 1887), p. 46.

[130] H. R. Davies, *Yun-nan: The Link between India and the Yangtze* (Cambridge, 1909), pp. 345-346.

Davies first explored Western China in 1894, and at least one more time, in 1903, before the publication in 1909 of his book *Yun-nan: The Link between India and the Yangtze*. His experience in Yunnan, as well as elsewhere in China and Southeast Asia, was quite extensive. In his Preface he writes:

> The main part of the book is taken up with an account of my own travels in Yün-nan and the neighbouring provinces. Of the 5,500 miles of road which I covered, almost exactly half was ground previously untrodden even by missionaries, while much of the remainder has not been previously described.[131]

When he comes to speak of the Min-chia language, he says:

> In venturing to place the Min-chia among the Mon- Khmer languages, I am supported by the authority of Professor Terrien de Lacouperie, who considers that the Mon-Khmer origin of the language is still traceable amongst the mass of borrowed words which now constitute the greater part of the vocabulary of this race. Min-chia is undoubtedly the most puzzling language of Yün-nan to classify. An examination which I have made of 100 words gives the following result:—
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Of Chinese origin . . . . | 42 |
> | Of Tibeto-Burman origin . . | 33 |
> | Of Mon-Khmer origin . . . | 23 |
> | Of Shan origin . . . . . | 2 |
>
> This very mixed language is probably spoken by an equally mixed race. As the Min-chia have no near neighbours who speak languages of the Mon-Khmer type, it seems probable that their original tongue was of this family, and that it has since been much

[131] Davies, *Yun-nan*, p. 3.

modified and altered by contact with their Tibeto-Burman neighbours, the Mo-so and Lo-lo, and that they have also borrowed very largely from the Chinese who have settled amongst them.

If questioned as to the origin of his race, the Min-chia will usually reply that his ancestors came from Nan-king. This probably refers to the large settlements of men from eastern China which are known to have been made in Yün-nan during the Ming dynasty. These Chinese probably to a great extent mixed with the original owners of the soil, and have largely imposed their language on them. Certainly the language at present spoken by the Min-chia seems to consist very largely of corruptions from the Chinese, and they have even gone to the length of adopting the Chinese order of words, which in the position of the adjective and the genitive differs from that of the Mon-Khmer languages. The order as deduced from such expressions as *Man* (*male*), *Woman*, *Hair*, *Chicken's egg*, *Ride a horse* given in the table of vocabularies is

Adjective before noun,
Possessor before thing possessed,
Subject before verb,
Verb before object.

Whether a language of which three-quarters of the vocabulary and half the grammar belong to other types of speech, can still rightly be classed in the Mon-Khmer family is of course open to doubt, and must to some extent be a matter of opinion. It would certainly be difficult to classify it in any other family, and the only alternative seems to be to put it entirely by itself. It seems, however, probable that M. de Lacouperie's opinion that the language is of Mon-Khmer origin is correct, and in the accompanying vocabulary I have given some words for comparison. Besides the Min-chia vocabulary given in the tables, other lists of

words are available from Prince Henri d'Orléans' *Du Tonkin aux Indes*, and from Mr Clark's *Kweichow and Yün-nan Provinces*.[132]

[132] Davies, pp. 343-346.

COMPARISON OF MIN-CHIA WORDS WITH WORDS OF MON-KHMER LANGUAGES.

ENGLISH	MIN-CHIA	MON-KHMER, with name of particular language in brackets	ENGLISH	MIN-CHIA	MON-KHMER
Father	A-te	I-tie (*Yao*) Te (*Wa*) A-ta (*P'u-man*)	Speak	Ga	Ha (*Miao*) Ska (*Talain*)
Head	T'e (paw)	Tao (hao) (*Miao*) Dau (*Annamese*) Kdap (*Talain*)	Fly	Fu	Pu (*Wa*) P'wa (*P'u-man*) Pö (*Palaung*) Paw (*Talain*)
Eye	Ngwe- (su)	Ngai (*Wa, La, Palaung & Riang*)	Stand	Djö	Ch'o (*Cambodian* Jong (*Wa*) Jang (*Palaung*)
Trousers	Kwa-yo	Kla (*Wa*) K'o (*Cambodian*)	Tie	Ba	Bak (*Palaung*) P'uk (*La*) P'yow (*Wa*) Buok (*Cambodian*) P'ö (*P'u-man*)
Pig	Te	Teng (*Miao*) Tong (*Yao*)			
Copper	Hwe	Hlui (*Talain*)			
Paddy	Sö	Srom (*Talain*) Srau (*Cambodian*)	Pound	Te	Toa (*Miao*) Tuh (*Palaung*) T'u (*P'u-man*) Tang (*Wa*) Ta (*La*)
Hot	U	U (*P'u-man*)			
Cold	Kö	Kwet (*Wa*) Kwat (*La*) K'a (*P'u-man*) Kaw (*Palaung*)	Cook	Dju	Cho (*Miao*)
			Pierce	Ch'a	Chawk (*La*) Ch'u (*P'u-man*)
Dry	Ka	K'wa (*Miao*) Kru (*Wa*) K'aw (*P'u-man*) K'o (*Annamese*)	Be hurt	Sö	Sö (*Wa*) Sao (*La*) Shu (*P'u-man*) Saiow (*Palaung*) Su (*Riang*)
One	A	A (*Yao*)			
Two	Gaw	Kar (*Riang*)			

Davies' table of word comparisons[133]

[133] Davies, p. 345.

And Davies says of the Min-chia people:

MIN-CHIA OR PE-TSÖ.

This tribe call themselves *Pe-tsö*, and are usually called *Min-chia* by the Chinese, but in the dialect of the T'êng- yüeh district they are often called *Min-ch'iang*.

In some parts of the upper Mekong valley they appear to be called *Lama-jên*. At least Prince Henri d'Orléans describes the Lama-jên as speaking a language closely connected with Min-chia, and mentions that they call themselves *Petsen*, which looks like a misprint for *Petseu*, or as I have transliterated it *Pe-tsö*. In another place Prince Henri describes the Lama-jên as a mixture of Min-chia and Chinese. Their language is at all events a dialect of Min-chia, and I think one is entitled to consider them as a tribe of that race.

The headquarters of the Min-chia race are the plain of Ta-li Fu (lat. 25° 40', long. 100° 10') and the country to the north of this nearly up to Li-chiang Fu. Eastward they are found in the Chao Chou plain, but not to the east of this, and southward they do not extend below the plain of Ta-li Fu. Westward the Mekong River may be taken as their boundary line. In the Yün-lung Chou district they are very numerous, and a few of them extend up the Mekong valley to the north of the latitude of Wei-hsi T'ing. They thus all live within a comparatively small area, and are not scattered all over western China like the Miaos and Lo-los.

I have myself only come across the Min-chia in the plains of Ta-li Fu and Chao Chou. Here they have come very much under Chinese influence, and have taken to Chinese dress, except that their women do not as a rule bind their feet. Most of them can speak Chinese, but they still keep up their own language and usually talk Chinese with a foreign accent. Some of them, however, have studied the Chinese classics and have even taken their degree in the official examinations.

> The Min-chia are an enterprising people and travel far in search of work, even finding their way to Burma [Myanmar] in the cold season. They are very good as coolies, and can carry very heavy weights on their backs.[134]

To understand how it was that Lacouperie and Davies arrived at the understanding that the Min-chia language, despite its heavy borrowings from other tongues, was ultimately a Mon-Khmer, or Austroasiatic one at its base, and to show why it was that they were, in fact, more or less correct, regardless of what modern linguists may think, requires more than just an analysis of the language and a comparison of it with others. It is necessary to trace back in time, in so far as it is possible, the origin of those who spoke it, of those, that is, whom the Chinese called Min-chia, and necessary to identify with accuracy the peoples to whom they were most closely related at the time.

Now, another Westerner that spent a good deal of time in China, and particularly in Yunnan, was one William Mesny. In 1896 he published in Shanghai, where he lived at the time, *Mesny's Chinese Miscellany: A Text Book of Notes on China and the Chinese*. On the subject of the origin of the people in question, he writes:

> Amongst the natives of Ta-li Fu [Dali] is a tribe called Lao Min-Chia. These people claim to be descendants of immigrants from Nanking. Their dialect is, however, very different to the Nanking dialect of the present day, or to any other dialect that I have heard before or since. The actual natives of the city style themselves Ta-

[134] Davies, pp. 372-373.

> li jên, and are particularly careful to tell strangers so, lest they should be mistaken for Chinese or Lao Min Chia.[135]

Mesny, like Lacouperie and Davies, notes that the Min-chia in Dali said that they were descendants of immigrants from Nanking; but Mesny includes a detail omitted by the other two, or not known about by them, namely, that the Min-chia were, and were called, in fact, Lao Min Chia.

Mesny was not, however, the only Westerner in that age to know that the Min-chia were a Lao tribe, or a tribe with a large Lao component. Ten years earlier Gabriel Devéria, French diplomat and interpreter, and also noted sinologist, having spent time in Yunnan, had a chance to study at Dali the Min-chia, or Pe-jen (Peh-jin, Pai-jên, Pe-tsö, etc.), and he published in Paris, in 1886, his observations on them, in his book *La Frontière Sino-Annamite*, in which he says:

> Les Pe-jen [ce nom signifie *hommes blancs*] habitaient d'abord sur le territoire de Pe-yai tchouen de Ta-li, c'est une tribu des barbares blancs *Kin-tche* (Dents d'or). Ils sont tous de la même race que les Pa-y. Ils habitèrent plus tard le territoire de la préfectures de Yun-nan, *Lin-ngan*, Kiu-tsing, *Khaï-hoa*, Ta-li, Tchou-hiong, Yao-ngan, Yong-tch'ang, Yong-pei et Li-kiang fou. Ils sont soumis à l'administration du lieu de leur résidence; leurs demeures sont éparses parmi celles de la population (chinoise); ils en adoptent les mœurs et le costume. Il en est parmi eux qui étudient et se présentent aux concours littéraires. Un certain nombre de Pe-jen s'enveloppent la tête d'un morceau d'étoffe, marchent nupieds, portent des tuniques courtes et des pardessus de peau de mouton.

[135] William Mesny, *Mesny's Chinese Miscellany: A Text Book of Notes on China and the Chinese*, *in Two Volumes*, vol. I ("China Gazette Office," Shanghai, 1896), p. 270.

Les Pe-jen sont aussi appelés *Min-kia tze*; ils paient l'impôt foncier et des taxes.[136] [Devéria's footnote is placed in the brackets.]

Translation:

The Pe-jen [this name means *white men*] first lived in the Chouen Pe-yai territory of Ta-li, a tribe of the white barbarians *Kin-tche* (Golden Teeth). They are all of the same race as the Pa-y. They later inhabited the territory of the prefectures of Yun-nan, *Lin-ngan*, Kiu-tsing, *Khaï-hoa*, Ta-li, Tchou-hiong, Yao-ngan, Yong-tch'ang, Yong-pei and Li-kiang fou. They are subject to the administration of the place of their residence; their homes are scattered among those of the (Chinese) population; they adopt its customs and costume. There are some among them who study and take the literary competitions. A number of Pe-jen wrap their heads in a piece of cloth, walk barefoot, wear short tunics and sheepskin overcoats.

The Pe-jen are also called *Min-kia tze*; they pay property tax and taxes.

Devéria continues:

Les Min-kia de la plaine de Ta-li, dit M. Thorel, et les Chepin jen doivent être réunis comme ayant la même origine et les principaux traits communs. Ils ne sont cependant pas absolument identiques, mais les uns et les autres résultent du croisement des Laotiens avec les sauvages à type caucasique, additionné probablement d'un peu de sang de sauvages océaniens. Ils forment incontestablement le groupe le plus intéressant et le plus nombreux parmi ces populations croisées. Leur civilisation est parfaitement distincte de

[136] Gabriel Devéria, *La Frontière Sino-Annamite*, *Description Géographique et Ethnographique*, Publications de L'école des Langues Orientales Vivantes, III Série, Volume 1, ed. Ernest Leroux (E. J. Brill, 1886), pp. 128-129.

celle des chinois; elle est relativement très avancée surtout chez les Min-kia et présente de grandes analogies avec celle des Laotiens. Les caractères distinctifs des Min-kia sont d'être trapus, vigoureux, et très bien proportionnés. Leurs membres, surtout les jambes, sont forts et les mollets bien développés. Leur tronc est assez court, pourtant la taille commence à se dessiner. Leur peau est ordinairement oeu colorée; presque toujours pourtant elle offre une légère teinte brune et paraît quelque peu enfumée. Leur tête est sphérique, leur visage arrondi ou légèrement ovale. Leurs traits sont réguliers, ramassés le plus souvent. Leur nez est assez prononcé, mais épaté inférieurement et moins large à la racine que celui des Indo-Chinois; pourtant il est encore mousse [sic] à son extrémité. Leurs lèvres sont assez épaisses, leurs yeux sont horizontaux, plus ouverts et moins bridés que ceux des chinois. Leur barbe est sensiblement plus abondante que chez les individus de race mongole; elle est frisée et se montre toujours sur les côtés du visage. En résumé, l'impression qu'on éprouve à la vue des Min-Kia c'est qu'ils présentent une très grande ressemblance avec les Laotiens et certains types caucasiques, et peu d'analogie avec les chinois.[137]

Translation:

The Min-kia of the Ta-li plain, says Mr. Thorel, and the Che-pin jen must be united as having the same origin and the main common features. They are not, however, absolutely identical, but both are the result of crossing Laotians with Caucasian savages, probably supplemented with a little blood from savages of Oceania. They undoubtedly form the most interesting and numerous group among these crossed populations. Their civilization is perfectly distinct from that of the Chinese; it is relatively very advanced, especially among the Min-kia, and presents great analogies with that of the Laotians. The hallmarks of Min-kia are being stocky,

[137] Devéria, *La Frontière*, pp. 131-132.

vigorous, and very well-proportioned. Their limbs, especially the legs, are strong and the calves are well developed. Their trunk is quite short, yet the size is starting to take shape. Their skin is usually egg colored; almost always, however, it has a slight brown tint and appears somewhat smoky. Their head is spherical, their face rounded or slightly oval. Their features are regular, picked up most often. Their nose is quite pronounced, but flat below and less broad at the root than that of the Indo-Chinese; yet it is still foam [sic] at its end. Their lips are quite thick, their eyes are horizontal, more open and less slanted than those of the Chinese. Their beard is appreciably more abundant than in the Mongolian individuals; it is curly and always shows on the sides of the face. In summary, the impression you get when you see the Min-Kia is that they bear a very strong resemblance to Laotians and certain Caucasian types, and little analogy to the Chinese.

Devéria again:

Le texte du *Houang-tsing Tche-kong-t'ou* [*Tableaux des peuples tributaires de la dynastie impériale des Ts'ing*] nous dit que les Pe-jen étaient les Kin-tche, qu'ils sont de l'espèce des Pa-y et surnommés Min-kia tze (enfants des familles du peuple). Or, les Min-kia, d'après Garnier, disent être venus des environs de Nan-King: Leurs femmes, ajoute t-il, ne se mutilent pas les pieds et les jeunes gens des deux sexes portent une sorte de bonnet orné de perles d'argent d'une forme très originale. Leur costume et leur langage indiquent un mélange très intime avec les anciennes populations laotiennes de la contrée.

Si les Pe-jen étaient originaires de Nan-King ils seraient chinois, ce qui est en contradiction non seulement avec le texte que nous avons traduit et d'après lequel ils seraient de la même race que les Pa-y, mais encore avec le passage suivant de l'histoire du royaume de Nan-tchao: «Les Pe-min (population blanches) sont désignés sous les noms de A-pe ou A-po, Pe-eurl-tze (fils blancs) et *Min-kia-tze*. Ce sont les aborigènes du Yun-nan. Leur origine

remonte au *Royaume blanc* ou Pe-kouô (appelé aussi Pe-tze kouô) qui était le souverain vers le deuxième siècle avant l'ère chrétienne».[138]

Translation:

The text of the *Houang-tsing Tche-kong-t'ou* [*Paintings of tributary peoples of the imperial Qing dynasty*] tells us that the Pe-jen were the Kin-tche, that they are of the Pa-y species and nicknamed Min-kia tze (children of the families of the people). Now, according to Garnier, the Min-kia say they came from the vicinity of Nan-King: Their wives, he adds, do not mutilate their feet and young people of both sexes wear a sort of cap adorned with silver beads of a very original shape. Their costume and language indicate a very intimate mix with the ancient Laotian populations of the region.

If the Pe-jen were from Nan-King they would be Chinese, which is in contradiction not only with the text which we have translated and according to which they would be of the same race as the Pa-y, but also with the following passage from the history of the kingdom of Nan-tchao: 'The Pe-min (white population) are referred to as A-pe or A-po, Pe-eurl-tze (white sons) and *Min-kia-tze*. They are the aborigines of Yunnan. Their origin dates back to the White Kingdom or Pe-kouô (also called Pe-tze kouô) which was the ruler around the second century BC.'

Devéria, like Mesny, Davies, and Lacouperie, reports that the Min-chia said that their ancestors came from Nanking; and he affirms almost the same as what Mesny asserted, that the Min-chia were Laotians of a mixed kind, that is, in his view, Laotians crossed with Caucasian savages, and perhaps, as he says, supplemented with the blood of savages of Oceania. Devéria

[138] Devéria, pp. 130-131.

adds, that according to the *Houang-tsing Tche-kong-t'ou*, which was published about 1769, the Pe-jen, also called Min-chia, were of the same 'species' as the Pa-y (Pai-i, Pai-y, Pai-yi). Devéria, however, unlike the others, points out the impossibility that the *Pe-jen* could have been from Nanking, noting the passage from the 'Histoire du Nan-tchao' that confirms that the White Men, or White Barbarians, namely, the Pe-jen (Pai-jên), were the aborigines of Yunnan, and that their origin dates back to 'the White Kingdom or Pe-kouô (also called Pe-tze kouô).' The passage that Devéria quoted was from the *Nan-tchao pei k'ao*, which, as Pelliot and Sainson observe, is source material in the *Nan-chao Ye-shih*, or *Unofficial History of Nan-chao*, composed in 1550 by Yang Shen.[139] The *Nan-chao Ye-shih* was translated into French in 1904 by Camille Sainson, and entitled 'Histoire Particulière du Nan-tchao.' It was, obviously, written long after the fall of Nan-chao, and, needless to say, after 1053 CE, a very important year, as will be seen.

All of these men, Mesny, Lacouperie, Davies, and Devéria, as well as Garnier and others, in speaking of the Min-chia, did not realize that they were talking about either the descendants of a heterogeneous immigrant people that had applied to them the name of the natives of Dali after living among them for a long time, or a composite people that resulted from part of the established population of Dali assimilating the descendants of a heterogeneous immigrant group to some extent—a heterogeneous immigrant group that was in large part Laotian. That the two groups or peoples, the natives of Dali and the descendants of the immigrants, had not entirely become a single

[139] Paul Pelliot, C. Sainson, "Nan tchao ye che, histoire particulière du Nan-tchao," In: Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient. Tome 4, 1904, pp. 1094-1127; https://www.persee.fr/doc/befeo_0336-1519_1904_num_4_1_1423., p. 1118.

people in that day and age is, in fact, confirmed by Mesny. The established population, or the natives, whom Mesny referred to as Ta-li jên, stating that that was what they called themselves at the time, were, of course, the Bai, known at the time also as Pai-jên (and Peh-jin, Pe-jen, Petsen, Pe-tsö, etc.); and the population of the descendants of the immigrants, which immigrants had arrived in Dali many centuries earlier, were a composite people, one consisting of Laotians, a Tai people, known also as Shans, and of a people whose identity I will reveal below. The Chinese, however, lumped under the name Min-chia, or Min-kia-tze, the natives of Dali and the descendants of the immigrants, regardless of whether a number of the natives and the descendants of the immigrants constituted a composite people at the time, or of whether the natives were just neighbors of the descendants of immigrants that had applied to them, or that had applied to themselves, the name of the natives (Pai-jên, Pe-tsö, etc.) and had adopted some of their customs. Pai-yi 白夷, by the way, which means 'White Barbarians,' as do its various forms and derivatives (Pa-y, Pai-i, Shui Pai-yi, etc.), unfortunately came to be applied to the Tai Lü, a Dai (Tai) people of Yunnan, and its use in reference to them has caused considerable confusion among researchers. Pai-yi 白夷 is a synonym of Pai Man 白蠻, which means 'White Barbarians;'[140] and both Pai Man 白蠻 and Pai-yi 白夷 were first used, and exclusively so, in reference to the natives of Dali, the Bai (Pai), whose descendants are the Bai, not the Tai Lü or any other Tai.

Another source of confusion for a number of researchers, who were, like Lacouperie, Davies, and others named above,

[140] Grant Evans, *The Ai-Lao and Nan Chao/Tali Kingdom: A Re-orientation* (Journal of the Siam Society, Vol. 102, 2014), p. 230.

evidently oblivious to the fact that they were confused about the origin of the Min-chia, and who were thus misled to think that the Min-chia were Pai-jên (Pe-tsö, etc.), or that the Pai-jên were Min-chia, is a Chinese text, known in English as the *Topography of Yünnan*,[141] which states that the Min-chia were also called Pai-jên.[142] F. S. A. Bourne, a British judge, diplomat, and botanist who spent much time in China in the late 1800s, traveled through Yunnan between October 1885 and May 1886, and wrote an account of his travels there, which was published in 1889 in *The Archæological Review*, under the title, *Report by Mr. F. S. A. Bourne of a Journey in South-western China*. Bourne, misled by the *Topography*, writes:

> At Pei-yin-shan [23.07ºN, 100.32ºE][143] we had to stop a day to make bread, etc., and give the coolies a rest, for we had travelled eight days on end, as much as could be managed. We stayed in a large inn with a big stable below (all traffic on this route is by caravan of pack animals), and well-filled store-rooms above, kept by a Min-chia family. I had made the acquaintance of the landlord and his sons when staying in the village on the way to Ssŭ-mao. We now had the opportunity of studying the economy of a Min-chia household. Compared with the Chinese, the most striking fact is, that the women do all the work ; the first thing we saw on reaching the inn door was the daughter of the house, coming up a steep path carrying along her back a bamboo tube as big round as herself, fastened to a wooden collar supported upon her shoulders ; it turned out that she was bringing water from a spring

[141] F. S. A. Bourne, *Report by Mr. F. S. A. Bourne of a Journey in South-western China,* Vol. III, March—July, 1889 (David Nutt, 1889), p. 58.

[142] Bourne, *Report by Mr. F. S. A. Bourne*, p. 65.

[143] Office of Geography, Dept. of the Interior, *China Volume II: M-Z, Official Standard Names approved by the United States Board on Geographic Names* (Gazetteer No. 22, June 1956), p. 614.

lower down the hill. The women were dressed in homespun cotton, dyed a deep black ; their ornaments, bangles, earrings, buttons, etc., were of plain silver. Their agility, sleekness, and easy natural manner, set off by spotless black and shining silver, made a pleasing impression on our party. The landlord showed me with pride his store of corn, wine, and oil, the sides adorned by rows of bacon. He told me there were about 300 Min-chia families in this neighbourhood, and that they had migrated from Ta-li Fu. Pei-yin-shan is healthy all the year round (5,630 feet), and there are bamboo partridges in plenty.

What we saw of these Min-chias' way of life would be quite enough to identify them as Shans, but fortunately the *Topography* is very clear on this subject. Under the heading of Pai-jên, *i.e.*, men of Pai (white), it says : "Pai-jên formerly lived at Pai-ngai-chuan, in Ta-li Fu, and belong to the golden teeth Pai barbarian family, who belong to the Pei or Po stock. Afterwards they lived at Ching-tung Fu, and now are very widely distributed over Yünnan (mentions ten Departments). They are also called Min-chia. They are a branch of the ancient Pai [Bai] nation." The *Topography* goes on to praise them for their intelligence and frugality, virtues for which they are still conspicuous. Further, when treating of a tribe called Na-ma, the *Topography* explains that Na-ma is the name by which the Mo-hsieh tribe (? Mishmee) know the Min-chia who belong to the P'o family.[144] [Parentheses are Bourne's.] [Brackets added.]

The Min-chia women described as dressed in homespun cotton dyed a deep black were Shans, most closely related to the Dai people, particularly the Tai Lü, and to the Zhuang people, despite the linguistic differences. Clothes dyed deep black are still worn by women of the Tai Lü and Zhuang peoples; they are a part of their national costumes, and are a hallmark of their

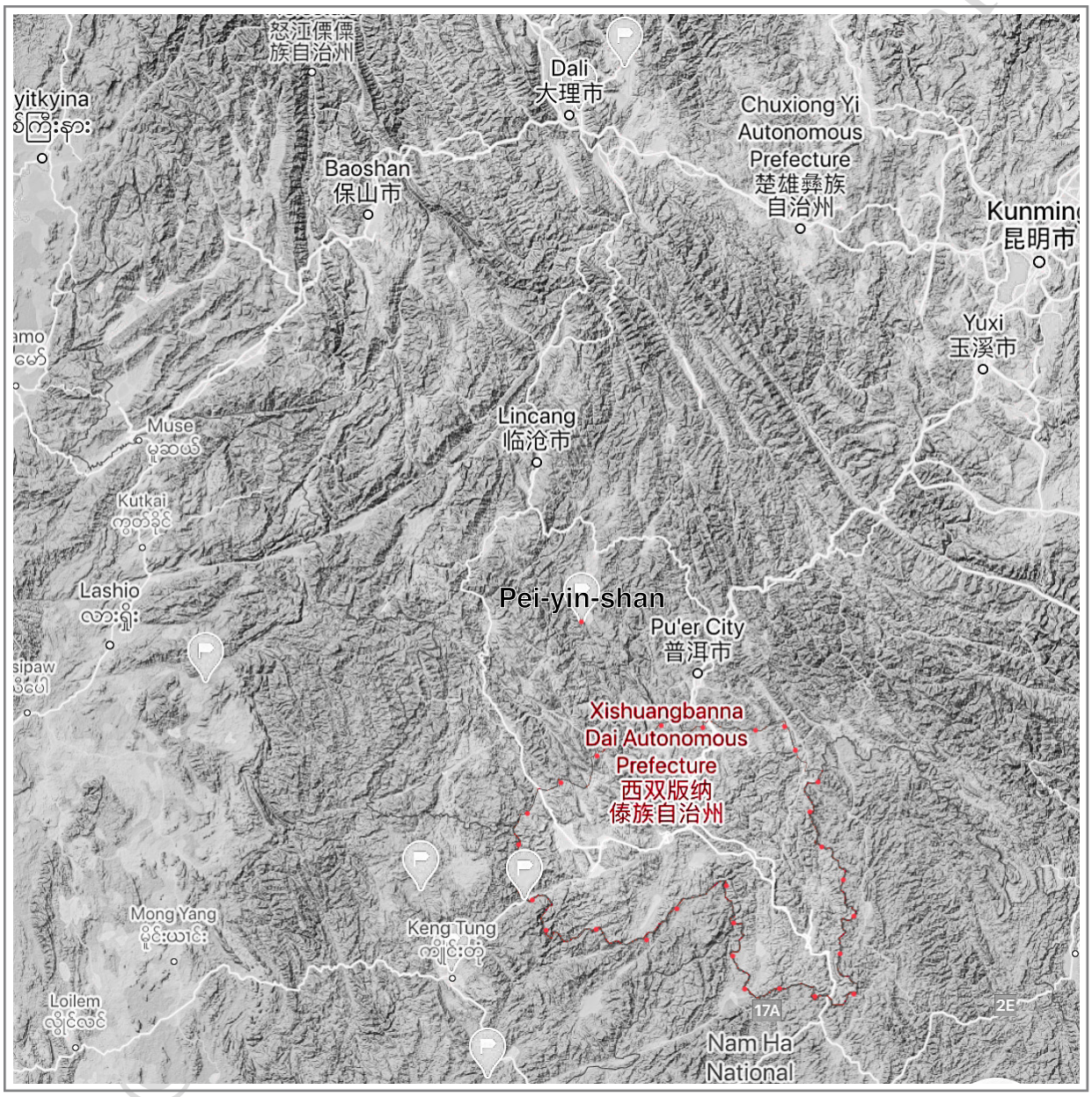
[144] Bourne, pp. 64-65.

cultures. The national costume of Bai (Pai) women is white, as it has been since time immemorial. Despite what the *Topography of Yünnan* says, and what other works and authors say, the Min-chia were Shans (of a mixed kind), as Bourne at first suspected, either Shans that were assimilated by a branch of the Pai-jên (the Bai), or Shans that became so associated or so mixed with the Pai-jên because of their proximity to them in Dali, that the name of the natives came to be applied to them, or they came to apply it to themselves and adopted aspects of their culture, as well as words from the Pai-jên language, and thus came to be identified as a branch of them.

Sir Alexander Hosie also was in no doubt that the Min-chia were Shans:

> The villages to the north of Shang-kuan—the "Upper Fortress"—are inhabited by a race called the Min-chia, no doubt Shans, who differ in manners, language, and, to a certain extent, in dress from the Chinese.[145]

[145] Sir Alexander Hosie, *Three Years in Western China ; A Narrative of Three Journeys in Ssŭ-Ch'uan, Kuei-Chow, and Yün-nan,* Second Ed. (George Philip & Son, 1897), p. 130.



Dali, Pei-yin-shan, and the Dai (Tai) Autonomous Prefecture

Mesny, who of all the men named above had spent by far the most time in China, having lived there for fifty-nine years, confirms in 1896 that the natives of Dali, namely, the Ta-li jên, who were, of course, the Pai-jên, or Bai, were careful to point out that they were not Min-chia; and thus Mesny pointed out that the Min-chia were really Laotian, that is, Lao Min Chia. Where did the Min-chia or Lao Min-chia come from? Where did these and other Shans come from? The answer is contained in Bourne's *Journey in South-western China*:

> The road from Kuang-nan leads over low mounds bare of trees and houses. At last, after a walk of five miles, we came to a guard-house, or rather shed, occupied by three men with rusty tower muskets, where we had breakfast. From this point on to the end of the stage is said to have been the scene of a great struggle in the eleventh century.
>
> According to the version of the local population, who are all Shans, the Lolos were attacked and defeated here, after a tremendous struggle, by a Chinese general named Yang, who is worshipped by all the country-side, an ox being sacrificed to him every three years. At the end of the battle the chief of the Lung-jên was taken up to heaven. A large block of stone which we passed on the right hand of the road was said to have been a huge fish which Yang had brought up from Po-sê to fend off the arrows of the enemy. It had been turned into a block of limestone, as Yang himself had been—there he stood in a cave on the opposite side, wearing a straw hat. So said my escort ; and they explained the general's winning the battle after he had been turned into stone, by the fact that there were six brothers Yang—one as good as another. Yang had only to sow beans, and soldiers sprang up. There must be a vivid tradition about this hero, for the local members of our party talked of nothing else all the stage. Beyond the boulder and the stone man there is a fortified work in the hills in which the hero is said once to have taken refuge.

This tradition has evidently a basis of fact, although the above version is very far from the truth, for in the *Topography*, under the head of "Non-official Worship", it is written:—

"To the north-west of the city of Kuang-nan there is a temple to Yang Wên-kuang, who was a general under Ti Ch'ing of the Sung [Song] dynasty, and who pursued Nung Chih-kao [Nong Zhigao] as far as this. Posterity worshipped him." Under the heading "Ancient Remains", the *Topography* says :

"On the north of Kuang-nan Fu there is the impression on the rock of a horse's hoof, which tradition declares to be that of the horse of Nung Chih-kao as he fled from his defeat by Ti Ch'ing of the Sung dynasty." Again, under the heading of "Inscriptions" :

"Forty li from (?) Hsin-ngan-so in Mêng tzû Hsien there is an old stone with the following inscription : "The Sung General Yang Wên-kuang was encamped here, to wit, while Ti Ch'ing was campaigning against Nung Chih-koa [sic] [-kao]" Again, under the heading of "Hills and Streams" :

"The hill named K'ê-yen is 70 li to the north of the city of Kuang-nan Fu. Tradition affirms that the Sung general Ti Ch'ing pursued Nung Chih-kao as far as this." Then follows a note by a scholiast of the orthodox type, whose object is to show, with regard to the hoof impression, that Nung Chih-kao, having been a rebel, it cannot be the mark of his horse's hoof, which heaven would not have preserved, and must therefore be the mark of the hoof of one of the Imperialist soldiers that served under Ti Ch'ing against Nung ; but by the way he gaves us valuable facts, as that Ti Ch'ing was a Chinese Imperialist general ; that the contest took place in 1053 A.D. ; that Nung Chih-kao was a rebel man (barbarian) of the district now called Nanning Fu in Southern Kwang-si [Guangxi] ; that, after his defeat, Nung Chih-kao escaped into the territory of the Ta-li kingdom, now Ta-li Fu [Dali], by which state he was killed ; that his mother, named A-nung, his brother, and his two sons were sent to the capital in cages and killed in the market-place. Again, under the heading "History of Government" (Yen-kê), the *Topography* says:

"After Ti Ch'ing had defeated Nung Chih-kao in 1053 A.D., the descendants of the latter settled in Kuang-nan Fu."

Now, there is no doubt whatever that the Nung-jên, or Pu-nong, as they call themselves, the tribe to which Nung Chih-kao belonged, are Shans, as are nine-tenths of the population of the Nanning prefecture. In fact, what happened was, that the Shan chieftain, Nung Chih-kao, whose home was in the modern Nanning, sustained a crushing defeat in this neighborhood at the hands of Yang Wên-kuang, a lieutenant of the Sung Imperialist general Ti Ch'ing, in the year 1053 A.D. In fact, for a moment the curtain rises, and we get a glimpse of the struggle between the Chinese and the vigorous Shan race for the possession of southern China.

Between the city of Kuang nan-fu [Guangnan, Yunnan] and the Kuangsi [Kwangsi; Guangxi] border the whole country population is Shan. The Chinese call them "t'u-jên", aborigines. Asked in Chinese where they come from, they describe themselves as "k'e-chia" (immigrant families), Hakkas, and say that their ancestors came, many generations back, from Hunan or Nanking, or some such high-toned locality ; but their speech bewrayeth [betrayed] them, for, with their women, they speak a dialect of which Shan No. 5 is a specimen, and admit to the inquirer, who can speak a few Shan words, that they call themselves Pu-nong, Pu-chei or Pu-tai in their own language. Respecting themselves as Chinese, they profess to worship the Chinese general who defeated their chieftain in the eleventh century. However, their narrative reveals their secret sympathies : the Lolos are introduced as the defeated party ; the Pu-nong chieftain is taken up to heaven, although, on their own showing, it is not clear what he had to do with the affair ; and the Chinese general has to bring up a fish to fend off his arrows, and is turned into stone.[146] [Brackets added.]

[146] Bourne, pp. 119-121.

Thus the Shans said their ancestors came from Nanking, just as the Min-chia had been saying all along that their ancestors came from Nanking. The Min-chia said such because they were, as shown above, Shans, or, rather, Shans in part, or in large part. They were, in other words, to no small extent Tai.

Now, before we address the issue of language, and explain why it was that Lacouperie and Davies identified the Min-chia language as a Mon-Khmer one, and not as a Shan, or as a Tibeto-Burman one, we have to familiarize ourselves with content from two written works pertaining to Nan-chao, in order to begin to develop the historical context that will make it possible to understand who the Min-chia and other Shans really were, how the Min-chia ended up in Dali, and why Lacouperie and Davies identified the Min-chia tongue as such, the two written works being, the *T'ai-ho Inscription*, and the *Man shu*.

The *T'ai-ho Inscription* was etched in a stone near Dali in 766 CE by one Cheng Hui, a Chinese captive of Nan-chao, when the kingdom, under its king Ko-lo-feng, began to expand again its dominions through a series of military campaigns.[147] The *Man shu* was written by one Fan Ch'o, a Chinese serving as secretary to General Ts'ai Hsi, the general in charge of the Chinese forces in An-nan at the time.[148] Fan Ch'o wrote the *Man shu* in 862 or 863, while he was stationed near Nan-chao, and when Nan-chao was at its zenith. Apart from *The Old* and *New T'ang Histories*, which contain information about Nan-chao, these two works, the *T'ai-ho Inscription* and the *Man shu*, are the only existent

[147] Wilfrid Stott "The Expansion of the Nan-Chao Kingdom: Between the Years A.D. 750-860 and the Causes That Lay behind It as Shewn in the T'ai-Ho Inscription and the Man Shu." *T'oung Pao* 50, no. 1/3 (1963): 190–220. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4527545., p. 193.

[148] Stott, "The Expansion of the Nan-Chao Kingdom," p. 194.

writings that give detailed contemporary accounts of Nan-chao and its inhabitants and rulers. It is worthy of note, by the way, that *The New T'ang History* drew largely on the *Man shu* for its information pertaining to Nan-chao, a fact which shows that the *New T'ang* could not draw such information on Nan-chao from *The Old T'ang History*. In other words, apart from the *Inscription*, the *Man shu* is the primary source of information on Nan-chao, its inhabitants, and its kings.

Now, it will be recalled that Devéria pointed out that the 'Histoire du Nan-tchao,' or, really, the *Nan-chao Ye-shih*, or *Unofficial History of Nan-chao*, states that the Pe-jen (Pai-jên, etc.), or White Barbarians, were the aborigines of Yunnan, but that it also states that the Pe-jen were also called Min-chia, or Min-kia-tze. Devéria recognized, of course, the problem of equating the one with the other, noting that the Min-chia maintained that their ancestors had come from Nanking. Now Yang Shen, the author of that history, or compilation, could not have used either the *Man shu* or the *Inscription* as the source of the name of the Min-chia, for neither the *Man shu* nor the *Inscription* mentions the name Min-chia, nor any name that could possibly be construed as a variant of it. If the name Min-chia, or any variant of it, had been borne by a tribe or a clan in Yunnan in 862 or 863 (or earlier), when the *Man shu* was composed, or even if a tribe or a clan had been known by it, the name would have been recorded somewhere in that work, for the *Man shu* is comprehensive, especially in its tally of tribal names. It records the names of no fewer than forty tribes or clans.[149] But, again, not one of the names recorded in it is Min-chia, or

[149] Fan Ch'o, *Man shu (Book of the Southern Barbarians)*, translated by Gordon H. Luce (Data Paper Number 44, Cornell University, 1961), pp. 23-45.

any form of it. In numerous passages, however, the *Man shu* mentions the Pai Man 白蠻, or White Barbarians, and indicates that they, along with the Wu Man 烏蠻, or Black Barbarians, were the principal inhabitants of Yunnan,[150] the two together constituting the bulk of the population, and representing the oldest known inhabitants, of course apart from the 'vanished' Ai-lao, who are mentioned in connection with land that they once held in Yunnan.[151] The Pai Man 白蠻 were called such because they wore clothing made of white silk; and the Wu Man 烏蠻 were called such because they wore clothing made of silk dyed black.[152] The earliest mention of the name Min-chia in regard to inhabitants of Yunnan, however, is found in the *Nan-chao Ye-shih* by Yang Shen, or in its source material the *Nan-tchao pei k'ao*, and it is quite possible that the information regarding their presence there in his day was obtained directly, that is, from a first-hand account. However it was that information on the Min-chia was obtained, Yang Shen was manifestly just as confused about their identity as were the later explorers, academics, and others that wrote about them, whether from the West or the East.

On the basis, then, of the absence of the name Min-chia in the *Man shu*, and of the earliest occurrence of it being in the *Nan-chao Ye-shih* (or the *Nan-tchao pei k'ao*), we can date the arrival of the Min-chia in Yunnan, and particularly in Dali, at some time between the composition of each of these works, that is, between 863 and 1550. And, as it happens, we can narrow

[150] Fan Ch'o, *Man shu*, p. 33.

[151] Fan Ch'o, p. 60.

[152] Fan Ch'o, p. 44.

their arrival in Dali down to a specific year between 863 and 1550, because, between those years, the Shans whose descendants maintain that their ancestors had come from Nanking, such as the Min-chia maintain, were involved in a series of well-documented conflicts that led to mass movements and relocations of a large number of those Shans, the conflicts beginning, or the most serious ones beginning, in 1042, with the rise to power of a Shan or Tai warrior named Nung Zhigao (Nung Chih-kao, Nùng Trí Cao),[153] and ending with his retreat to Dali in 1053.[154]

All the Shans that live between Guangnan County and the Guangxi border, as noted by Bourne, maintained that their ancestors had come from Nanking, or from its vicinity. Those Shans, or Lao, or Tai, are the modern Zhuang, the tribe of Nung Zhigao, whose clan was the Pu-nong, or Nong (Nùng), or Nung-jên.[155] They are of the same stock as the Tai Lü of Yunnan, as well as of the Min-chia in Dali that became confused with the Pai-jên, or Bai. The (Lao) Min-chia and the Zhuang, living far from each other in different parts of Southern China but both maintaining that their ancestors had come from Nanking, or from its vicinity, and both being Shans, could not have told the *same* story of their ancestors' coming from Nanking if they were originally of different and unrelated tribes. The Min-chia must, therefore, be descended from the same group of Shans as the Nong, those warlike ones led by Nung

[153] James Anderson, *The Rebel Den of Nùng Trí Cao : Loyalty and Identity along the Sino-Vietnamese Frontier* (University of Washington Press, 2007), p. 88.

[154] Anderson, *The Rebel Den*, p. 8.

[155] Anderson, p. 163 ; Damrongphon Inchan, *"Nong" of Southern China: Linguistic, Historical and Cultural Context* (Silpakorn University Journal of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts Vol.15(1) : 157-175, 2015), p. 159.

Zhigao; and it is all but certain that it was in 1053 that those who were, or would come to be known as Min-chia first arrived in Dali, and arrived there with none other than Nung Zhigao himself. It is certain, in fact, that he did not arrive in Dali without a horde,[156] and it is clear that women, and thus families, were a part of it; and since the Shans of Dali known as Min-chia claim the same origin for their ancestors that the Nong descendants of Nung Zhigao claim, it can be asserted, that the Nong today, that is, the Zhuang, and the Min-chia are two branches or clans of exactly the same tribe—the Shans of Nung Zhigao, though with different proportions of the ethnic stocks comprising each composite branch, or with different clans comprising each, as will be explained below. As for the Tai Lü, they too are descended from those same Shans as Nung Zhigao's. The dialect of the Tai Lü, as Chris Baker observes, has words and constructions in common only with those used by the Zhuang of Guangxi,[157] and the national costume of the Tai Lü is the same as that of the Zhuang, as well as the same as that of the Min-chia described by Bourne. It is important to note, by the way, that Chinese influence, or alleged Chinese ancestry, or the purported desire to be associated with things Chinese, had nothing to do with these Shans of Nung Zhigao's—the Nong, the Tai Lü, and the Min-chia—saying that their ancestors had come from Nanking or near it. These Shans detested the Chinese. It is commonplace for historians to say also that the people in Yunnan, as well as elsewhere in Southern China, who hold that their ancestors came from Nanking, are descended

[156] Anderson, p. 8. In 1052, Nung Zhigao led five thousand of his subjects in a revolt that spread from the coast of South China to the city of Guangzhou, after which he retreated to Dali.

[157] Chris Baker, *From Yue To Tai* (Journal of the Siam Society 90.1 & 2 (2002)), p. 8.

from Chinese immigrants who arrived in Yunnan during the time of the Ming Empire. That may well be the case for many of the ethnic Chinese *individuals* of Yunnan, those who are descended from Ming soldiers or from Ming exiles; but the Min-chia and other Shans are clans of people that are not Chinese, and the vicinity of Nanking was home for a long time to a large population of non-Chinese origin. It was their home long before the arrival of the Min-chia in Yunnan. Who this people was I will tell below.

No one knows what became of Nung Zhigao after his arrival in Dali. The story of his execution by the people of Dali on his arrival there in 1053, as alleged in the *Topography of Yünnan*, has no credibility. Neither has the statement of C. P. FitzGerald, that the king of Dali handed a rebel (Nung Zhigao) over to the Chinese in 1053, which he stated in *The Southern Expansion of China*, any basis in reality, and it is anyone's guess where FitzGerald, who invariably forwent citing his sources, obtained his misinformation.[158] As James Anderson points out in his book *The Rebel Den of Nùng Trí Cao*, the *Official History of the Song Dynasty* closes the account of Nung Zhigao with the statement, 'whether he lives or has perished, there is no one who knows.'[159] What is clear, is that those Shans who arrived in Dali with him in 1053 found refuge there, and in time, after associating or after mixing to some extent with the natives, the Bai, or with a branch of them, the name of those Shan immigrants or their descendants, Min-chia, came to be applied to the natives as well, resulting in the mistaken identification of

[158] C. P. FitzGerald, *The Southern Expansion of the Chinese People* (Australian National University Press, 1972), p. 62.

[159] Anderson, *The Rebel Den*, p. 113.

the Pai-yi (Pai Yi), or Pai Man, or Pai-jên (etc.), that is, the Bai proper, as Min-chia—an erroneous identification that scholars continue to make.

I said above that the Min-chia were Shans of a mixed kind, and that I would reveal the identity of those with whom these Shans, or Lao, or Tai were mixed. Now, to say that these Shans were mixed with another people implies that the Min-chia consisted, in the main, of two peoples at least, namely, the group or groups yet to be identified, and the Shans themselves. At this point it must appear to the reader that we are dealing with two peoples, the Shans and those that they combined with to constitute the Min-chia. The correct way to understand the origin of this composite people, however, as will be seen, is to realize that the Shans, or Lao, or Tai were in part actually Min-chia. In other words, it was the Min-chia, or, rather, the ancient *Min* or *Minyue* that merged with another people (or peoples), and it was with them that they constituted the Tai peoples—the Shans, the Lao, the Dai (Tai), the Zhuang, etc. That is to say, the Min-chia are not descended from the Shans and another people; the Shans are descended from the Min-chia (that is, the Min or Minyue) and another people, or, rather, more than one, the most important of which will be identified below. To understand properly, therefore, who the ancestors were of the Shans, or Lao, or Tai, we need to understand who the Min-chia, or rather who the Min really were, and what peoples it was that they merged with to produce their descendants—the Tai peoples.

First of all, we need to correct a mistake that has been repeated over and over ever since the publication of the *Nan-chao Ye-shih*, in which work is to be found the origin of the

mistake. Yang Shen misspelled in Chinese the name Min-chia, misspelling it thus 民家,[160] and everyone who has written it since has misspelled it in exactly the same way. In this use, the first character of this name 民 is intrinsically the Chinese word for 'people;' and the second character 家 is intrinsically the Chinese word for 'home' or 'family.' Thus, literally, the name 民家 means 'people family' or 'people families' or 'private house,' and is ridiculous. In any case, the combination of these Chinese characters had the misfortune to come into existence, in effect eventually forcing a translation of the term, the least ridiculous one in English usually being 'folk houses.' Now it must be borne in mind, and not forgotten, that it was originally the Shan immigrants, and not the Bai of Dali, that were called Min-chia, and that the written form of the name in Chinese did not antedate the existence of the immigrants. The term was formed to preserve the pronunciation of the name in use by them, or by which they were known at the time. These were immigrant families of a certain kind, which is precisely why Yang Shen used the character for 'families;' and these immigrant families were known by a name, which was pronounced *min*. But Yang Shen, knowing the pronunciation of the name of the immigrant families, Min, but obviously not knowing the character to represent its pronunciation, used the character for 'people,' which happened to have the same pronunciation as the name, and thus he created the term 民家 Min-chia, from which various meanings have come to be derived, and for which a variety of translations have been given, such as 'folk houses.'

[160] Yang Shen, *Nan-Tchao Ye-Che, Histoire Particulière du Nan-Tchao*, translated by Camille Sainson (Ernest Leroux, 1904), p. 163 n. 2.

And if by chance Yang Shen had merely copied the spelling from an earlier writer, then everything just said about Yang Shen applies to that earlier writer. It is almost inconceivable that no scholar has realized that the Chinese spelling of this name is incorrect and absurd. C. P. FitzGerald, for example, in *The Southern Expansion of China*, which despite its flaws is an admirable work that I have read with pleasure, tells us that 'Min Chia' means literally 'common people,'[161] and James Stuart Olson, clearly echoing FitzGerald, gives the same translation in *An Ethnohistorical Dictionary of China*.[162] How did these two men, as well as others who wrote about the Min-chia, arrive at such translation? It is manifest it was through no analysis of the Chinese spelling of the name by either of them, or by anyone else who gave the same erroneous translation of it, or merely repeated it. Translating it as such, whoever it was that came up with such translation, is merely an attempt to make sense out of a nonsensical combination of characters.

In Chinese there is more than one way to write 'common people,' but 民家 Min-chia is not one of them. One Chinese spelling of 'folk,' 民间, pronounced *min-jian*, is similar in pronunciation to 民家 *min-chia,* but the final characters of the respective terms are completely different. Another Chinese word for 'folk' or 'people,' 人家, pronounced *ren-jia*, has the same final character as the Chinese spelling of Min-chia, but the first character is different in every way. At any rate, the Chinese misspelling ('民家') of Min-chia, as indicated above, represents the correct pronunciation of the name of those Shan immigrants

[161] FitzGerald, *The Southern Expansion*, p. 75.

[162] James S. Olson, *An Ethnohistorical Dictionary of China* (Greenwood Press, 1998), p. 19.

in Dali. In other words, the second part of the name, represented by the character 家 and pronounced *chia* or *jia*, and meaning 'family' or 'families,' is preceded by a name that is pronounced *min*, and it must be a proper name. In fact, the families were 'Min families'—閩, Min; and thus the correct spelling of the name in Chinese must be, and is, 閩家—Min-chia, that is, Minjia—'Min families' or 'Min people.'

Who were the Min? And where were they from? Sima Qian provides some answers to these questions. He says, for instance, in *The Biographies of the Money-Makers*, a book in the *Shi ji*, that the customs of the inhabitants of Southern Chu had become mixed with those of the 'Min and Yue tribes.'[163] Now this statement, if it were the only one in the *Shi ji* relevant to the questions we have posed, would lead us to believe that the Min were one people, and the Yue another, and that the realm of Southern Chu was close to their territories. But, in *The Account of Eastern Yue*, Sima Qian reports a statement made to the Han emperor that paints a different picture, namely, that the Min were Yue. The statement was made by one Tian Fen, the grand commandant, who said in reference to the inhabitants of two Min kingdoms, that of Eastern Ou and that of Minyue, whose respective kings were both descended from King Goujian of the state of Yue in antiquity,[164] that the men of Yue commonly attack each other.[165] Since the statement means, and might just as well be expressed as 'The Yue commonly attack each other,' and since these respective Yue were inhabitants of Min

[163] Sima Qian, p. 445.

[164] Sima Qian, p. 219.

[165] Sima Qian, p. 220.

kingdoms ruled by related kings, we can safely conclude that the Min tribes were of Yue stock, and instead of calling the Min tribes, we should correct the terminology, and call the Min clans.

The kingdom of Eastern Ou, which was the name by which it came to be known in Han times, was really the kingdom of Donghai.[166] It was because its capital was at Dongou, or Eastern Ou, that it came to be known by the name of its capital, and its king the king of Eastern Ou. Dongou is now Wenzhou, a city approximately four hundred sixty-five kilometers to the south of Shanghai, a distance lengthened by zigzags of the coast between each city. The kingdom of Minyue (Eastern Yue) was to the south of that of Donghai, with its capital city Dongye,[167] today called Fuzhou, on the coast, just like Dongou was, or Wenzhou is. And it was to the west of these two kingdoms that Southern Chu was located. The king of Eastern Ou, Zou Yao, and the king of Minyue, Zou Wuzhu, lost their ranks as kings when the Qin dynasty consolidated the empire; but after the fall of the Qin, Emperor Gaozu of the Han again established Zou Wuzhu as king of Minyue. This he did in 202 BCE, upon the ascendancy of the Han to empire status, but in the fifth year of his reign as monarch.[168] About ten years later, after the death of Gaozu, Emperor Hui of the Han bestowed upon Zou Yao the same favor, making him king of Eastern Ou again in 192.[169]

[166] Sima Qian, p. 219.

[167] Sima Qian, p. 219.

[168] Sima Qian, p. 219.

[169] Sima Qian, p. 219.

Southern Yue was the name of another Yue kingdom. As implied by its name, it was located to the south of the Min kingdoms of the other Yue peoples, Minyue and Eastern Ou, and it was contemporaneous with them. Its capital was Panyu, now modern Guangzhou, in the region of Canton.[170] Upon the fall of the Qin one Zhao Tuo, a former magistrate turned military commander, gained control of two provinces in the south of China by force, Guilin and Xiang, and thereupon made himself king of Southern Yue.[171] Gaozu on his rise to power over all of China in 202 BCE, forwent punishing Zhao Tuo, but did not recognize him as king of Southern Yue until 196.[172]

Thus there were three Yue kingdoms in the early years of the Han Empire, and, as Tian Fen observed, warfare among them was not uncommon. Long before the rise of the Han, the state of Yue, which was the forerunner of these three kingdoms, was a powerful polity in the mid fifth century, whose most famous ruler, King Goujian, was the common ancestor of the Yue kings Zou Yao and Zou Wuzhu, as said above. The capital of the state of Yue was located in Kuaiji, now present-day Shaoxing. And located to the north of this state, between Nanking and Shanghai, was its chief enemy, the state of Wu, the capital of which was Suzhou, having been moved there from its first capital, which is thought to have been modern Wuxi, or near to it.

[170] Sima Qian, p. 207.

[171] Sima Qian, p. 208.

[172] Sima Qian, p. 208.

VI

The Genesis of the Xiongnu

One Tai Bo, descendant of the sire of the Ji clan, Hou Ji, and thus himself a member of that clan that founded the Zhou dynasty, founded in antiquity, about 1200 BCE, the state of Wu, 'in a region inhabited by non-Chinese tribes.'[173] He did so after conquering the inhabitants of the region to become that state, a people known as Wu barbarians. Who were those barbarians called Wu? As said above, the capital of the state of Wu was located between Nanking and Shanghai, at modern Suzhou; and thus it was in the vicinities of those cities that the Wu people lived. It has been pointed out already that the word or name *wu* as a noun means 'raven,' a black bird; *wu* as an adjective means 'black.' Its application to the inhabitants of the lands between and around the cities mentioned above means that the 'Wu barbarians' were, or were regarded as, 'black barbarians.' The use of *wu* in reference to people has two obvious explanations, one, that the people to whom it referred wore black clothes, such as, as shown above, the Wu barbarians of Nan-chao, and two, to the color of the skin of the people to whom it was applied, relative to the color of the skin of those who applied the

[173] Confucius, *The Analects of Confucius*, translated by Burton Watson (Columbia University Press, 2007), p. 149.

term. We know, of course, nothing about the clothes worn by the Wu barbarians that Tai Bo conquered, but, as will be seen, we may rightly infer that their skin was dark in comparison to that of the Ji people, as well as to that of those who wrote about them, and we may make such inference without excluding the possibility that their clothes were like those of the Wu barbarians of Nan-chao, that is, in general black in color.

It is in the understanding of a complex of relationships among certain historical peoples, to be named again below, and their connected histories, that will help us to understand why it was that those barbarians were called Wu barbarians, and part of this chapter will be devoted, therefore, to exposing in what ways those peoples were connected, and in what ways their relationships cannot be explained or described.

Now, the Yue-Ji were the 'Moon Ji,' as I have demonstrated in *The Padjanaks*,[174] and thus, like their Ji relatives, the Ji of the Zhou dynasty, they were a moon people, one whose descendants, the Bai's, practices and traditions provide clues as to what practices and traditions may have defined, at least in part, the culture of the Yue-Ji themselves, and, by way of extension, of that of their ancestors the Ji. And I have demonstrated in that same book, and have further shown in *The Kangar*, that the Kangar, or Kangju, spoken of by Sima Qian in the *Shi ji*, or rather by the Han envoy Zhang Qian, were of Indian origin, of Dravidian stock with undoubted Austroasiatic admixture.[175] But Zhang Qian noted in his report that the customs of the Kangar,

[174] Padjan, pp. 104-107.

[175] Padjan, pp. 75-76; Joseph Amyot Padjan, "The Kangar" (unpublished manuscript, 2016), accessed January 10, 2025 https://www.josephamyotpadjan.com/2022/05/the-kangar/., pp. 37-42.

who at the time were located in Sogdia, were like those of the (Great) Yue-Ji, who had only very recently arrived in Central Asia from Gansu. How could recent arrivals from Gansu, who settled in Bactria after conquering it, and who later set up their court on the Oxus River to the south of Sogdia, have on their arrival customs like those of a people in Sogdia who were originally from India? There is only one way, and no other: through the intermixing of branches of these two peoples in the distant past and in a different location, either the Kangar had Ji ancestry, or the Ji people, or Yue-Ji, had Kangar ancestry. If the Kangar of Sogdia had Ji ancestry, they could have acquired it only after the time of Hou Ji, for it was with Hou Ji that the Ji clan, and thus the Ji people, came into existence. If the Ji, or rather the Yue-Ji, had Kangar ancestry, they too could have acquired it only after the time of Hou Ji; but they could not have acquired Kangar ancestry in the areas where they settled in Central Asia, or have acquired it in Sogdia, of course, because the customs that they had in common with the Kangar of Sogdia were customs that they had in common *before* they (the Yue-Ji) arrived in Central Asia. Note that it cannot be argued that the Yue-Ji may have adopted the customs of the Kangar of Sogdia at a time when the Yue-Ji may have been settled in Ferghana, or somewhere near Sogdia, because the Xiongnu, of which, as has been shown, the Yue-Ji were a clan, had also the same customs as the Kangar, and the Xiongnu proper at no time lived in Central Asia before the Yue-Ji. Note also that it cannot be argued that the Kangar, who Zhang Qian says were, like the Yue-Ji, a nomadic people, may have adopted the customs of the Yue-Ji before they arrived in Bactria, because the Yue-Ji could not have been settled long enough anywhere between the time

that they left Gansu, 176, and the approximate time that they conquered Bactria, 130 BCE, a period of forty-six years, for the Kangar to have established relations so close with them as to have put them in a position to adopt their customs. In that period of forty-six years, the Yue-Ji were in the midst of a migration for no short time, one that started more than two thousand kilometers away from the area where the Kangar lived, and two nomadic peoples on the move, ever picking up in one place and leaving to another, do not spend time enough in the company of each other for their two cultures to combine and come to reflect each other in the space of one or two generations. Therefore the Yue-Ji, or rather ancestors of theirs, must have acquired Kangar ancestry and Kangar customs somewhere in present-day China, after the time of Hou Ji, but, of course, before they migrated to Central Asia. All this can only mean that the Kangar, or rather a branch of them, must have migrated to China in deep antiquity, before 1200 BCE, and must have settled in a region of it that was, or that came to be, inhabited by the Ji clan or Ji people, or a branch of it.

Zhang Qian informs us, as indicated above, that the customs of the Wusun, as well as those of the Great Yue-Ji, and thus those of the Lesser, were like those of the Xiongnu. Since the customs of the Kangar were like those of the Yue-Ji, so those of the Xiongnu and the Wusun were likewise like those of the Kangar, despite the fact that the former, the Xiongnu, at no time lived even remotely close to the Kangar of Sogdia before 130 BCE. In other words, the customs of these four peoples, the Yue-Ji, the Kangar, the Wusun, and the Xiongnu, having been, for all intents and purposes, either the same or so similar as to be indistinguishable, must have originated in a single source. And it

is important to note that none of them had any customs in common with any of the peoples mentioned in the *Shi ji* who are known to have been Indo-Europeans.

Now, in the *Shi ji* Sima Qian informs us, as said above, that one Chunwei was the ancestor of the Xiongnu, and that he had lived about one thousand years before 209 BCE, the year when Maodun became *shanyu* of the Xiongnu. The sire Chunwei, in other words, lived about 1200 BCE, and thus it was about 1200 that the Xiongnu came into existence. That time also saw, as said above, the victor Tai Bo of the Ji clan, after conquering the Wu barbarians in the vicinity of Nanking and Shanghai, found the state of Wu. Chunwei could not possibly have lived in Central Asia, by the way, because the Chinese, who recorded his existence, knew nothing about those peoples west of China, or in Central Asia, until Zhang Qian returned to China in 128 BCE from his mission to give an account of his observations in those western regions. In other words, the Xiongnu came into existence in an area close enough to the Chinese to make it possible for them to record the name of Chunwei. It must have been, therefore, somewhere in present-day eastern China, or somewhere in present-day Mongolia, such as in the middle part of the former, near Nanking, or as in the southernmost part of the latter, that the Xiongnu became a people. Sima Qian states that Chunwei was a descendant of the rulers of the Xia dynasty (c. 2070 – c. 1600 BCE).[176] Though the existence of that dynasty is questioned and debated, there being nothing to verify that it ever existed, its proposed location places its eastern boundary in close proximity to Nanking.

[176] Sima Qian, p. 129.

I have demonstrated in *The Padjanaks* that the Yue-Ji proper were also known as Basiani, a name, as I have already shown, transliterated in English from Strabo's Greek as Pasiani, and that Basiani, which evolved into Bai-shu-nok and Padjanak, is derived from, and in fact means, Bai-Xiongnu, meaning 'White Xiongnu;' hence the customs being the same among both the Xiongnu and the Bai-Xiongnu, or Yue-Ji. As the Yue-Ji were, then, the Bai-Xiongnu, a Xiongnu clan, so the Yue-Ji were likewise descended from Chunwei. But the Yue-Ji, or Moon Ji clan, who were, and still are by their descendants the Bai of Yunnan, also known simply as Ji when in Gansu, were of course likewise descended from Hou Ji. Since the Yue-Ji were a Xiongnu clan, it must be the case, then, that the Xiongnu proper were also descended from Hou Ji, for the existence of the Xiongnu proper had antedated the existence of any and all clans that were Xiongnu in origin. In other words, both Hou Ji and Chunwei were, and must have been, the progenitors, or most distant known forefathers, of the Xiongnu and the Bai-Xiongnu, or Yue-Ji, as well as the progenitors of that other Xiongnu clan that I have discussed above, namely, the Wu-Xiongnu, or Black Xiongnu, or Wusun, or Asiani. The Xiongnu proper, in other words, were a composite people, one that had formed from the merging of two peoples in the main—the Ji and another people. Since we know that Chunwei lived about 1200, and long after Hou Ji, we can be sure that it was about 1200 when the Ji, or a branch of them, merged with another people and became known as the Xiongnu.

In 1200 BCE the Wu barbarians were a conquered people, and it was, again, the Ji led by Tai Bo that conquered them, and that set up a state in the vicinity of Nanking, in Suzhou, where

the Wu lived. The Ji and the Wu, then, at this time, began to live together, and at the same time that they began to live together, the Xiongnu, from the merging of two peoples, one of which was the Ji, came into existence.

Now, the people that the Ji merged with, and from which merger the Xiongnu would come into existence in 1200, could not have spoken Chinese or any archaic form of it, or any other tonal language, for two clans of the Xiongnu, namely, the Bai-Xiongnu or Yue-Ji, and the Wu-Xiongnu or Wusun, must have spoken the Xiongnu language, or a dialect of that language, and it must have been the same as, or closely related to, the agglutinative one, a 'Turkic' or Hunnic tongue, that the Padjanaks spoke, the Padjanaks having been descended from, and thus having been one and the same as, as has been demonstrated, the Bai-Xiongnu or Ku-Xiongnu, that is, the Kushans or Yue-Ji proper. Since the Ji of the Zhou dynasty spoke an archaic form of Chinese, or an early Tai tongue, it follows that the Ji of Tai Bo would have spoken archaic Chinese or an early or proto-Tai language. It must have been, therefore, that the people with whom the Ji merged spoke an agglutinative language.

The Kangar, or Kangju of Sogdia, as well as all other Kangar, of course, wherever they have ended up, came originally from India, as said above. They were a Dravidian people and originally speakers of a Dravidian language, and in India today they are still a Dravidian people, of course, and still using their agglutinative mother tongue. The Dravidian languages, and thus the original Kangar language, as demonstrated by K. H. Menges, bear a genetic relationship to the Altaic languages, to

the Turkic tongues, including all those spoken in antiquity.[177] I have demonstrated in *The Padjanaks*, and Lingum Letchmajee has shown in *An Introduction to the Grammar of the Kui*, that the Kangar, or Kangju, or Kuenju, are also called, and have been called since time immemorial, Khands, which is the Austroasiatic or Munda name for them.[178] In fact I have shown definitively in *The Kangar*, that the Kangar had been known as Khands before 539 BCE.[179] Note that the *d* in the name Khands is silent or mostly inaudible, and that the initial *kh*, like the *kh* in the common variant Khangar, is often pronounced as a voiceless guttural fricative /χ/ (cf. *khangar* or *khanjar* or *handžar*— 'dagger'), that the name Khands is, in fact, pronounced Khans. The Xiongnu, as attested in the *Sogdian Ancient Letters*, were also called *xwn*, which is pronounced as either Hun or Khun, the initial *kh* being a voiceless guttural fricative.[180] Since the Xiongnu, or Khuns, and the Khans, or Kangar, had customs in common, had names in common, and had spoken in common genetically related languages, and since the Yue-Ji, or Bai-Xiongnu, had also spoken a language genetically related to that of the Kangar, but unrelated to that of the Ji of the Zhou dynasty, the Xiongnu, or Khuns, must have been a single composite people that had formed from the merging of the Ji

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[177] K. H. Menges, "Dravidian and Altaic." Anthropos 72, no. 1/2 (1977): 129–79. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40459078., p. 172.

[178] Lingum Letchmajee, *An Introduction to the Grammar of the Kui or Kandh Language*, Second Ed. (Bengal Secretariat Press, 1902), p. 20 ; F. B. J. Kuiper, *Proto-Munda Words in Sanskrit* (Noord-hollandsche uitgevers maatschappij. Amsterdam, 1948), pp. 48-49.

[179] Joseph Amyot Padjan, "The Kangar," p. 42.

[180] W. B. Henning "The Date of the Sogdian Ancient Letters." Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London 12, no. 3/4 (1948): 601–15. http://www.jstor.org/stable/608717., p. 615.

and the Kangar, or Khans, about 1200 BCE. What would the Chinese have called the alien Kangar, Dravidians in China, with their dark skin, before 1200? They would have called them Wu barbarians, black barbarians. The Xiongnu could have been none other than a composite people that formed about 1200 from the merging of Tai Bo's Ji and the Kangar, those Wu barbarians, in the vicinity of Nanking. This would explain, and in fact it does explain what nothing else can explain, namely, how it was that the Yue-Ji had customs in common with the Kangar of Sogdia before the Yue-Ji arrived in Central Asia, as well as how the Kangar of Sogdia and the Xiongnu proper had customs in common as well, and the same name, Khans, Khuns, though the two never lived even remotely close to each other. Certainly, the reader will find it most interesting to learn that the tribal name Kangar means 'sword- or dagger-bearer;' that the word *kangar* means 'sword' or 'dagger;' and that the name Khand, and thus its variant Khan, or Khun, means 'sword' or 'dagger' in Munda.[181] The Xiongnu name for 'sword' was *kenglu*,[182] which is undoubtedly, and clearly, a variant of *kangar* —Kangar.

Now, Hou Ji had died, of course, long before the founding of the Xiongnu, leaving Tai Bo and Chunwei as the men alive about the time when the Xiongnu came into existence. Chunwei, of course, was not a Kangar, or Wu barbarian. If he had been a Kangar, he would have been a member of the conquered group, and would not have been in a position to exercise control over the conquerors, the Ji, to bring the two hordes together to form the Xiongnu. And if he had been

[181] F. B. J. Kuiper, *Proto-Munda Words*, p. 48.

[182] E. G. Pulleyblank, *The Consonantal System of Old Chinese, Part II* (1962), p. 22.

descended from the Xia, if such ever existed as a people, and not just as a dynasty, he would not have been a Ji. As the Yue-Ji, or Bai-Xiongnu, were, however, a Xiongnu clan, sprung from the Xiongnu proper just as the Wu-Xiongnu had been, and as Chunwei could not have been a Kangar, it follows logically, from all the above, that Chunwei himself must have been a member of the Ji clan. If so, and I think it to have been the case, it is most logical to assume that he must have been the successor, or a successor, of Tai Bo, since Tai Bo's leadership antedated, as it must have, the ascension of Chunwei to power. In sum, the scenario is, that Tai Bo and his Ji conquered the Wu barbarians, or Kangar, in the vicinity of Nanking in 1200 BCE, and Chunwei, a successor of his, formed from the two hordes, in the same vicinity, the Xiongnu, and did so shortly after Tai Bo's conquest.

Scholars have never been able to demonstrate how the name Xiongnu evolved into the name Hun, or Khun, and they will never be able to demonstrate it. The reason is, that the name Hun or Khun is, in fact, no form at all of the name Xiongnu. It is simply the name Khan (Khand) spelled in English with the vowel *u* rather than with the vowel *a*. The Xiongnu were known as Khuns, or Huns, simply because the Kangar, or Khans, formed, together with the Ji, the Xiongnu people. That is why the Xiongnu were also known as Khuns, or Huns; and the Bai-Xiongnu, or Ku-Xiongnu, that is, the Moon Ji, were known also as the Yue-Ji because it was the Ji of Tai Bo that formed, together with the Kangar, or Khans, the Xiongnu. The name Khun was always so closely connected with the name Xiongnu, that the two names became, for all intents and purposes, synonymous, and the name Khun or Hun was thus likewise

applied to, or always in use for, the Xiongnu clans the Bai-Xiongnu and the Wu-Xiongnu. The English transliterations of Bai-Xiongnu and Wu-Xiongnu, namely, Pasiani (Basiani) and Asiani, are, in fact, phonetic representations, transcriptions, of Bai-Xiongnu and Wu-Xiongnu, and Bai-shun and Wu-sun are clipped forms of those clan names. Ku-shan, or Ku-Xiongnu, is the Hunnic or 'Turkic' form of the name Bai-shun, or Bai-Xiongnu. In time the name Khan, or Khun, came to denote 'people' or 'man' or 'you' in languages spoken by some descendants of the Xiongnu. The Great Yue-Ji, or Bai-Xiongnu, or Ku-Xiongnu, or Kushans, or Padjanaks, on the other hand, followed for the most part a different linguistic trajectory, largely through their constant contact with Indo-European-speaking peoples. And the Lesser Yue-Ji, as will be shown below, had also a different history and different linguistic trajectory, resulting from their merging with the Qiang.

VII

Far Eastern Descendants of the Xiongnu

After 1200 BCE, the inhabitants of Tai Bo's state of Wu were a mixed people, and it was, as shown above, from this mixed people made up of the Ji and the Wu, or Khans, or Khuns, or Huns, or Kangar, that in the vicinity of Nanking and Shanghai the Xiongnu formed. Some time after their formation, however, the Xiongnu proper evidently migrated north, and lived in the main in present-day Mongolia, where they were a constant threat to the Chinese. It is unclear when and where the Bai-Xiongnu and the Wu-Xiongnu came into existence and split off from the main horde, but there is, as will be seen, evidence to suggest that after the Wu-Xiongnu had broken up into three different groups, which breakup, again, we hear of from Sima Qian, one faction migrated from northern China, from Gansu, back down to the vicinity of Nanking and Shanghai, and arrived there during the ascendancy of the Jin dynasty. In any case, even after the departure of the Xiongnu proper from the area near Nanking where they formed, no small number of the now intermixed Ji and Khuns, or Khans, or Wu, remained in the vicinity of Nanking and Shanghai, and remained there even after King Goujian of the Yue conquered the state of Wu in 473 BCE and replaced it with the state of Yue, which lasted until

214 BCE.[183] For, during the Jin dynasty (265–420 CE), a Wu tribe or clan, that is, as I show above and below, a group of mixed Ji and Kangar, or Khuns, from the area of Shanghai, with probable Yue admixture, migrated to Fujian province in southern China, and settled among and mixed with the Min, which were, as shown above, a Yue people. It was the arrival in greater Shanghai of hostile nomads from the north, as well as civil war, that caused many of the Wu to flee southwards.[184] Could those hostile nomads have been the Wu-Xiongnu, that is, the Wusun? Remember that chapter five of this book began with an account of how the Wusun had broken up into three factions; and remember that at least one of them, Dalu's Wusun, or Usun, evidently never rejoined those led by the Kunmo, or those led by his grandson Cenqu. There is, in fact, as will be seen below, a reason to speculate about this possibility of at least one Usun clan migrating back into the region of Shanghai, and of migrating eventually, in fact, to southernmost China, and down into Southeast Asia.

Now, it must be remembered that two different language types, one a tonal and one an agglutinative, were spoken by the two groups—the Ji and the Kangar—that would constitute the Wu after 1200 BCE, that is, that would constitute about 1200 the Xiongnu and thus the Xiongnu clans. The Xiongnu proper and their clans were speakers of an agglutinative language, but they must also have spoken the tonal language of their Ji ancestors. In other words, they must have been bilingual, at least

[183] Olivia Milburn. "A Virtual City: The 'Record of the Lands of Yue' and the Founding of Shaoxing." Oriens Extremus 46 (2007): 117–46. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24047667., p. 117.

[184] Phyllis Ghim-Lian Chew, *Emergent Lingua Francas and World Orders : The Politics and Place of English as a World Language* (Taylor and Francis, 2013), p. 186.

for a time. The Wu that migrated south after the arrival of those hostile nomads from the north, had among them at least eight families or clans, whose surnames are known to have been Lín, Huáng, Chén, Zhèng, Zhan, Qiu, Hé, and Hú.[185] Such surnames as these imply that the bearers of them spoke a tonal language. It was these Wu, or these mixed Ji and Kangar, or Khuns, with their probable Yue admixture, and surely some Chinese ancestry, that migrated to Fujian province and settled among, and consequently merged with the Min there.[186] Since the intermixed Khuns and Ji (and Yue and Chinese) must have merged with the Min in Fujian during the Jin dynasty, and must have become residents in that province, for it to be possible to explain the use of the names borne by their descendants in the regions where those descendants came to be residents, we know that after 420 CE, when the Jin fell, this new composite people consisting of the Ji, the Khuns, the Min, or Yue, and any Chinese, were residents in Fujian for a long time; and, as will be seen, we know that they later spread out from Fujian to other parts of Southern China and to Southeast Asia, and continued to be known as Khuns, but came to be known also as Shans, and Lao, and Tai, all of whom, incidentally, consistently said, just as the Min-chia had always consistently said, that their ancestors had come from Nanking.

The origin of the Tai peoples has been a matter of controversy, as well as of extreme confusion, ever since the first attempt at an account of their origin was made public. The prevailing theory at this time is that 'Yue peoples' eventually became known as Tai peoples, and spread out from southeastern

[185] Ghim-Lian Chew, *Emergent Lingua Francas*, p. 186.

[186] Ghim-Lian Chew, pp. 186-187.

China into other parts of southern China, and into Southeast Asia.[187] But who were the Yue peoples? Some scholars point out that the name Yue, as used by the Chinese, did not denote any specific ethnic group or people, but was applied broadly to any number of different ethnic groups in southern China; but other scholars point out that there are in fact examples of Yue used in reference to a single people, or to a chief.[188] The truth of the matter is, that scholars do not know for certain whether the name Yue was originally invariably used in a generic sense to refer to peoples of different ethnic backgrounds, or originally in a specific sense to refer to an identifiable people whom the Chinese knew as different from other peoples that they did not name. At any rate it seems clear, that the application of the name Yue evolved over time, as the applications of names in general do, referring at first perhaps to a single people, and later referring to a number of peoples of different backgrounds.

Now, Sima Qian, our principal authority, states clearly in the *Shi ji* that the king of Eastern Ou, Zou Yao, and the king of Minyue, Zou Wuzhu, were both descended from King Goujian of the Yue.[189] In other words, in the *Shi ji*, all three kings are regarded as having been of Yue stock. Note, however, that the important point here is not that the name Yue was applied to the kings and their people, but that all the kings were related. The kingdom of Eastern Ou, as said above, had its capital at present-day Wenzhou; and present day Fuzhou marks the location of the ancient city Dongye, the capital of the kingdom of Minyue. The

[187] Baker, *From Yue To Tai*, p. 19.

[188] William Meacham, *Defining the Hundred Yue* (Vol. 15: The Chiang Mai Papers, Volume 2, 1996, pp. 93–100), p. 93.

[189] Sima Qian, p. 219.

people that King Zou Yao ruled over could not all have been of a completely different ethnic background from those that King Zou Wuzhu ruled over, despite the distance separating their kingdoms. The respective peoples of those related kings must have been made up of an indeterminate number of subjects who were of the same ethnic background as their respective kings. Since the Chinese give us the name Yue for all of them, so it is the name Yue that we will use in reference to those related kings and their respective peoples. This is not at all to say, of course, that peoples of other ethnic backgrounds than Yue did not constitute a part of the respective populaces governed by the two different kings. The inhabitants of the two different kingdoms were undoubtedly not all of Yue origin. We already know, from what I have shown above, that the Ji and the Kangar came to constitute a part of the poulation about 1200 BCE. We do not have, however, in writing the names of other ethnic groups; we have only the name of the ethnic group of the kings, or what may be said to have been the name of the ethnic group of the kings, namely, Yue. Thus we call the peoples that those related Yue kings governed Yue peoples, and those Yue peoples in each kingdom were doubtless composite peoples, peoples made up of the Yue and of others whose names have not come down to us.

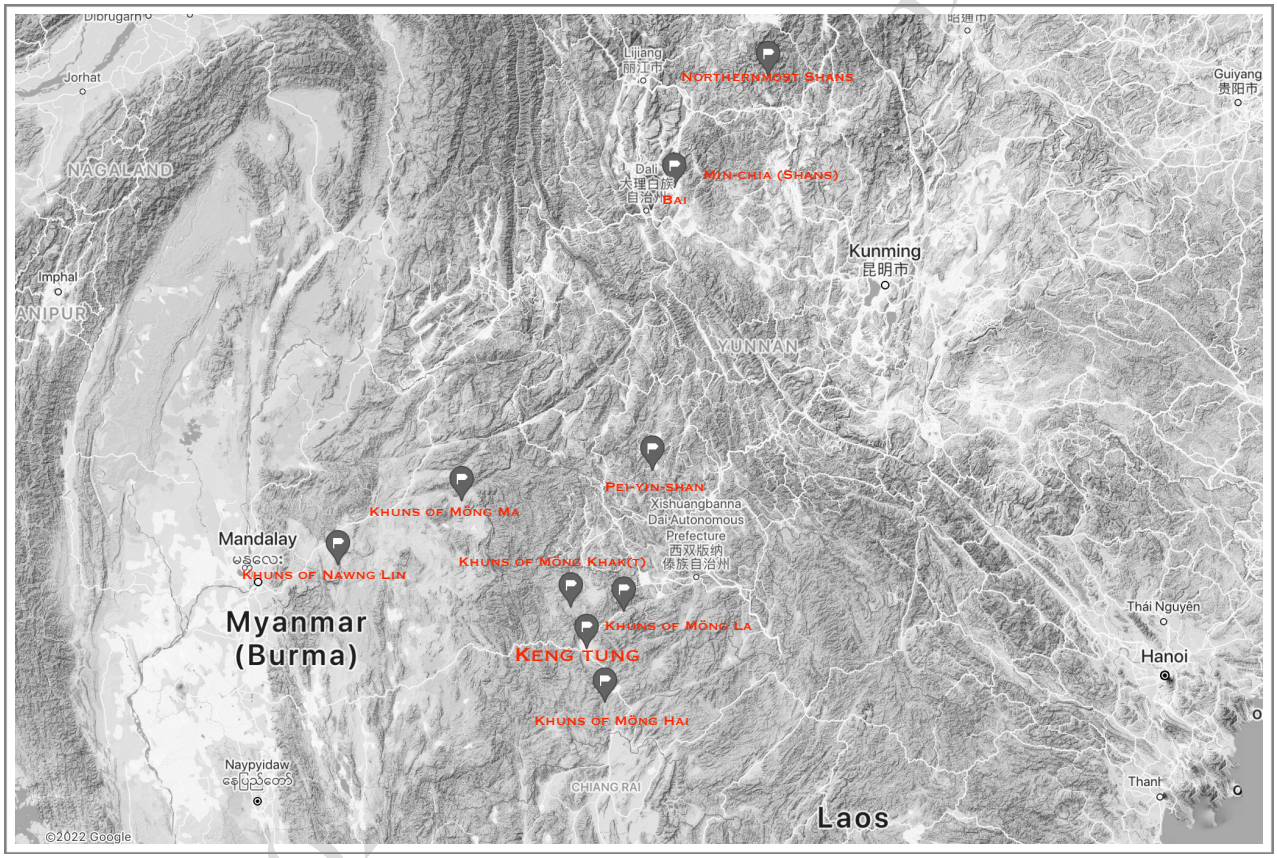
From all the above we can see that those Yue or Min of Fujian, after the fall of the Jin, and after the arrival among them of the Wu from the area of Shanghai, were a composite people consisting of the Ji, the Kangar, or Khans or Khuns, the Yue, the Min, or Yue, and whatever other groups had gone into the composition of the Yue and of the Min before the arrival of the Wu. All these groups, along with any number of Chinese that

had assimilated into them, as well as a number of Mons and Khmers that made up a part of one group to be named below, together constitute the core of all the Tai peoples today; and even down to the present there are, in fact, in Southeast Asia, groups of Tai peoples who are known as Khuns; and as they are Khuns, so they in fact are Huns, as are, at least in part, all other Tai peoples.

In 1895 in Calcutta, Captain H. B. Walker published his *Report on the Keng Tung Keng Cheng Mission for 1893-94*. During this series of expeditions, Captain Walker documented all the various peoples that he and his party encountered, many of which, as shown on the map below, were Khuns.[190] The map also shows the location of the northernmost Shans, whose location 'near Pê-tiao on the Ya-lung River, about lat. 28º 5´, long. 101º 30´', was documented by Major H. R. Davies on one of his expeditions in China.[191] The map shows also the location of the Bai and the Min-chia, and the location of Pei-yin-shan, a place mentioned by F. S. A. Bourne.

[190] H. B. Walker, *Report on the Keng Tung Keng Cheng Mission for 1893-94* (Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, India, 1895), p. 55.

[191] Davies, p. 378.



Khuns, Bai, Min-chia (Shans), Northernmost Shans

Note on the map the location of Laos, in relation to the areas where the Khuns (Huns) are found, and remember that Thailand is to the west of Laos and is separated from it by the Mekong River. Northeast Thailand, a very large region consisting of twenty provinces, is known as Isan. It is known as such because the Tai people who live there, who are ethnically Lao, call themselves Isan. No satisfactory explanation of the origin of the name Isan has ever been given. It bears a clear resemblance in sound, and in form, to the name Usun, though this clear resemblance has never been noticed before. The Isan people, being a Tai people, have in common with the Usun, or Wu-Xiongnu, descent from the Ji and the Kangar, or Khuns, and it is not at all out of the realm of possibility that the name Isan is, in fact, merely a variant of the name Usun. The leader of the Usun, as we have seen, was known as Kunmo, a name, or rather a title, that is all the more interesting when we consider the fact that the Isan people, like most other Tai peoples, call in their language 'person' or 'man' *kon*, and use the word *khun* to mean 'you.' As stated already, the Usun were broken up into three factions when the Kunmo was an old man, and no one knows what became of the separate factions that did not participate in the conquest of Bactria or that ended up in Yunnan, other than at least one of them, Dalu's, went its separate way from the others. We do know that hostile nomads from the north invaded greater Shanghai, and caused the Wu to flee south to Fujian. Those invading nomads may very well have been a clan of the Usun, perhaps descendants of Dalu's clan, and there is no evidence to suggest that those nomads went no farther south than Shanghai. They may very well have migrated farther south, all the way down into Fujian, and they may

themselves have constituted a part of the composite people there that would later come to be known as Tai peoples. It cannot be coincidental that a people calling themselves Isan and descending from the Ji and the Kangar, or Khuns, would call themselves the same name, or almost the same name, that the Usun, also descendants of the Ji and the Kangar, or Khuns, called themselves. In my view the name Isan is, in fact, a variant of Usun, and I maintain that the Isan people today are descended, in part, from a clan of the Usun, or Wusun, or Black Huns of antiquity, that is, from the Wu-Xiongnu.

It might be wondered how a name consisting of as many syllables as Wu-Xiongnu came to be shortened or clipped to Wusun, or Usun, or Isan. The reader will remember that I described above a language phenomenon that is extremely common in Thai, but not confined to it, namely, the barely audible pronunciation of the last syllable or the last letter of words in spoken Thai, in both formal and informal language. This same phenomenon occurs in Isan as well, and just as often as it does in Thai. This common tendency, or common speech habit, of not pronouncing distinctly the last syllables or letters of names and words, especially of final consonants, is the process of language simplification at work, and it no doubt explains how and why Wu-Xiongnu evolved into the forms above. 'As language evolves it tends to become simplified.' In fact, this process of simplification is observable in every language. This explains how Wu-Xiongnu lost its last syllable.

At this point we have a clear and accurate understanding of who the ancestors of the Tai peoples were. Now that we have determined the origin of the Tai peoples, let us consider the origin of the Mongolians, and posit that they are related to the

Tai peoples. The Mongolians trace their ancestry, or at least some of it, to the Xiongnu, not just to the Xianbei, and as they are descended in part from the Xiongnu, so they are, like the Tai peoples, in part descended from the Ji and the Kangar, or Khuns, or Khans. The Thai word for 'person' or 'man,' like the Isan word, is *kon*; and as in Isan the Thai word for 'you' is *khun*. The Mongolian word for 'man' is *khün*. The Mongolian word for 'man' and the Thai or Isan word for 'man' or 'person' are, for all intents and purposes, the same word; and the Thai or Isan word for 'you' is identical with the Mongolian word for 'man.' The Mongolians and the Tai peoples inherited these names and basic words from the ancestors that they have in common. The two peoples are, doubtless, related. It should also be remembered that the Kangar themselves, before they merged with any groups in China, had among them, or must have had among them, Austroasiatics from India; for the name Khand, or Khan (or Khun), is Austroasiatic in origin. It is, again, the Munda name for the Kangar. The Kangar name for the Kangar is Kuenju (Kangju). What is clear from all the above, is that the Tai peoples and the Mongolians, as well as all the other peoples discussed above, were not, and are not, homogeneous peoples. They were and are composite peoples, related to one another through common ancestry.

Now, Chris Baker, in his paper *From Yue To Tai*, says, citing others, that the 'term Yue fades from usage around 0 AD as the Chinese gained more knowledge of the southern peoples and began using other descriptors.'[192] Be that as it may, it is clear that not long after the days of the warrior Nung Zhigao, the name Min-chia, which has been discussed at length above, and

[192] Baker, p. 4.

shown to mean 'Min families,' came into use for a people with a large Tai component between 1053 CE, the year when Nung Zhigao arrived in Nan-chao, and 1550, the year when Yang Shen published the *Nan-chao Ye-shih*, or *Unofficial History of Nan-chao*, in which the Min-chia are first mentioned. And it has been shown that that people known as Min-chia, who came to live in Yunnan where the heart of Nan-chao was, must have arrived in Nan-chao with Nung Zhigao. Now that we know that ancestors of the Tai peoples in fact did come to Southeast Asia from Nanking, as many Tai peoples have invariably maintained, such as the Zhuang, descendants of those led by Nung Zhigao and related to the Min-chia, and now that we know from what I have demonstrated above, that the Min-chia that migrated to Nan-chao were largely a Tai people, we have before us what no one has ever given us before, namely, an accurate explanation of why the Min-chia likewise always maintained that their ancestors had come from Nanking.

I said above that I would address the issue of why Lacouperie and Davies classified the language of the Min-chia as a Mon-Khmer one, and at this point we are in the best position to explain why they classified it as such, rather than as a Shan tongue, or as what most linguists today classify it as, namely, a Tibeto-Burman one. The explanation for the different classifications is simple. Linguists today are *not* classifying the same language that Lacouperie and Davies classified. The language that linguists are classifying today is the language of the Bai people, who have had the misfortune to come to be confused with that composite people known to the early Western explorers as Min-chia, the most well-informed of whom, such as Mesny, Devéria, and Hosie, observing so large a

Lao component among them, rightly called them Shans, or Lao, or Lao Min-chia.

The Min-chia in Yunnan encountered and described by the early Western explorers were, then, as has been pointed out above, like all Tai peoples, a composite people, one having a large Shan or Lao component, but one consisting also, evidently, of a majority of speakers of a Mon-Khmer tongue. It should come as no surprise that the Min-chia Shans that migrated to Yunnan would have had among them a majority of Mon-Khmer speakers. The Mon and Khmer peoples, being natives of Southeast Asia, have always lived in close proximity to the areas where that composite people consisting of the Ji, the Kangar, or Khans or Khuns, the Yue, the Min, or Yue, and Chinese, would come to be known as Tai peoples. It is only natural that the Tai peoples would absorb into them other peoples in the areas into which they were spreading. That is evidently precisely what happened. Tai peoples spreading out into Southeast Asia from southern China encountered Mons and Khmers, and subsequently the latter groups in large numbers came to constitute a part of the groups of those Tai peoples, and in some cases to a greater extent than in other cases. The Min-chia documented by the early Western explorers represented a composite people consisting, evidently, of almost equally large components of Mons (and Khmers) and descendants of mixed Mins (Yue, Ji, Kangar, etc.), namely Shans, with a Mon-Khmer language evidently becoming the language of that mixed group. The Min-chia always maintained that their ancestors had come from Nanking because a large number of their ancestors did come from Nanking, namely, the Wu tribes, tribes that were made up of those groups named

above. They were called Min-chia because they were, evidently, still known to the Chinese as of Min stock, or because forbears of those immigrant Min families that arrived in Nan-chao were regarded as such, despite the fact that the Min, or Yue, were a composite people. Incidentally, the Min-chia of Yunnan were described in 1902 by George Litton thus: 'The pure Minchia type resembles that of the Romany or gipsy, save that it is lighter in complexion.' See my book *The Padjanaks* for the correct explanation of the origin of the Romani, and to gain an understanding of why the phenotypes of the Min-chia and the Romani were so similar.

VIII

The Bai, The Pai Man

Now that we have straightened out the chaos that arose from the Bai being misidentified as the Min-chia, and have succeeded in showing the true origin of those whom the early explorers identified as Min-chia, we can now proceed to elucidate the origin of the Bai themselves, and make sense of another mess of misunderstandings.

H. R. Davies, in his book on Yunnan, as shown above, points out the following:

> This tribe call themselves *Pe-tsö*, and are usually called *Min-chia* by the Chinese, but in the dialect of the T'êng- yüeh district they are often called *Min-ch'iang*.[193]

Here again we see that the name Min-chia was applied by the Chinese to the people who were not Min-chia, but who were the Bai, a people who had been in Nan-chao far longer than the Min-chia.

The first part of the name *Pe-tsö* is a variant of Pai, that is, of Bai. The second part of the name, *-tsö*, however, as it relates to the first part of the name, has never been correctly etymologized

[193] Davies, p. 372.

by anyone. No one has ever determined what *-tsö* in the name *Pe-tsö* means, or where it comes from.

In *The Padjanaks* I have demonstrated, as said above, that the Bai are the descendants of the Lesser Yue-Ji, and in that book I share what Zhang Qian said about the Lesser Yue-Ji in the summary of his report. This is what he said:

> The Yuezhi originally lived in the area between the Qilian or Heavenly Mountains (Tian Shan) and Dunhuang, but after they were defeated by the Xiongnu they moved far away to the west, beyond Dayuan, where they attacked and conquered the people of Daxia and set up the court of their king on the northern bank of the Gui [Oxus] River. A small number of their people who were unable to make the journey west sought refuge among the Qiang barbarians in the Southern Mountains, where they are known as the Lesser Yuezhi.[194] [Brackets added.]

In *Peoples and Societies in Yunnan*, Mao-Chun Yang, professor of Rural Sociology in the College of Agriculture at National Taiwan University, informs us:

> *Mo-so* is the name of one race, one tribe. But due to the fact that in Chinese writing it is composed of two characters, some Chinese writers have mistakenly thought that it represents two peoples. This is how the mistake has been made: One early writer, Fan Ch'ueh, author of *Yunnan-chih*, wrote the name in a shortened form, in order to save one character, such as the *Mo* barbarians instead of the *Mo-so* barbarians. This way of shortening the name of a place or the name of a nation or of a race has been quite common in all Chinese writings. After some time, later writers took it for granted that *Mo* is the name of a tribe and before long *so* became the name of another race. Thus it appears in numerous

[194] Sima Qian, p. 234.

writings such statements as "It is a place continuously lived by the *Lo-lo*, *Mo*, and *So* barbarians," and "In the past the Mo barbarians and the So barbarians lived here." All such statements are wrong because *Mo-so* is one single name and it represents one single race. It cannot be broken up to have it seem [*sic*] representing two different races. The interpretation of Mo-so is, according to *Fang Kuo-yu*, that the bearers of this name were originally a branch of the *Ch'iang* [Qiang] people who live in eastern Tibet, or the present *Si-k'ang* province. This branch of the *Ch'iang* were in the early times herders of a certain kind of cattle whose hair was especially long and, for this reason, they were called *Mao niu*, or *Mao* cattle. Gradually, this branch of people were identified by the outsiders, especially by the Chinese, to the Mao niu, and they were called the *Mao-niu Ch'iang*. After the Chinese had established frequent relations with these people the road leading from the Chinese territory to the land of the *Mao-niu Ch'iang* was called *Mao-niu tao*, or the *Mao-niu* road. And a *Mao-niu hsien* was installed in the district through which the road passed. There is no doubt, in dealings with the Chinese, the tribal people accepted the name and called themselves the *Mao-niu* people, for convenience or business expediency if not for other reasons. The word for people or race in the *Ch'iang* society is *ts'o.* Thus it is no difficulty for one to believe that these people finally came to identify themselves as *Mao-niu t'so*, and in a shortened form, *Mao-t'so*. Then, with some slight deviation, *Mao* can also be said as *Mo*. For the two sounds are very close to each other. And the same kind of change must have happened to the word *t'so*, that is to say it was changed from *t'so* to *so.* In conclusion, we have the name *Mo-so*.

That the *Mo-so* people were originally a branch of the *Ch'iang* race in eastern Tibet is fully indicated in the *Hou-han-shu* (後漢書) *Hsi-ch'iang chuan* says: Their [the Qiang's] descendants spread out and formed many groups. All the groups went to different places and established their own territories. One group was called *Mao-niu* tribe. They became the *Ch'iang* of the *Yueh-sui* district. One group was the *Pei-ma* [*Pai-ma*] (white horse) tribe, and they

> became the *Ch'iang* of the district of *Kuang-han*. And a third group was called *T'san-lung*, they were the *Ch'iang* people of *Wu-tu*. *Yueh-sui* was in the area at the lower course of [the] *Yueh* River, or the present *Ya-lung Ch'iang* (river). The *Mao-nui* people in this area were called the *Yueh-sui Ch'iang*. Therefore, the *Mao-niu* people or the *Mo-so* in the *Ya-lung Kiang* areas were undoubtedly an offshoot of the *Ch'iang* race.[195] [Brackets added.] [Italics and underlining Yang's]

The name or word *tsö*, then, is the Qiang word for 'people' or 'race,' and it is attested to have been a part of a compound name by which the Qiang have identified themselves, namely, *Mo-so*. The Lesser Yue-Ji, ancestors of the Bai, did seek refuge among the Qiang, as Zhang Qian says, and eventually the two peoples, through intermixing with each other, became a single people, a fact attested by the *Man shu*, as we will see below. *Pe-tsö* is, then, really *Pai-tsö*, the first part of which being, of course, synonymous with Bai, and the second part, *tsö*, meaning 'people.' Thus the name *Pai-tsö*, however spelled, means 'White People.'

The mixed Bai and Qiang, or *Pe-tsö*, today of course known simply as Bai, though still often erroneously referred to as *Minjia*, still live in Yunnan, in and around Dali, in what was once the heart of the kingdom of Nan-chao. In earlier centuries, however, this composite people is documented to have lived in other areas as well, a fact which is revealed in the passage from the *Hou Han shu* shared by Mao-Chun Yang; for the *Pei-ma*, or 'White Horse' tribe, were likewise a composite people made up

[195] Mao-Chun Yang (Martin M. C. Yang), "Peoples and Societies in Yunnan Part II," (Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica) accessed January 10, 2025, https://www.ios.sinica.edu.tw/people/personal/mouchunyang/Peoples%20and%20Societies%20in%20Yunnan%20(Part%202).pdf., pp. 19-21.

of the Bai, or Lesser Yue-Ji, and the Qiang. Note also that the *Hou Han shu* passage quoted by Yang says that the group known as *Mao-nui*, who were also known as *Mo-so* and as *Yueh-sui Ch'iang* (Yue-Ji Qiang), were the *Ch'iang* (*Qiang*) of the *Yueh-sui* district. The *Yueh-sui* district mentioned in the *Hou Han shu* was actually the *Yueh-sui Chao*, the word *chao* meaning in this case 'princedom' or 'kingdom.'[196] This *Chao*, that of the *Yueh-sui*, was one of six *Chaos* that made up the kingdom of Nan-chao, and it was, in fact, a *Chao* established by the Lesser Yue-Ji and the Mo-so, or Qiang. The *Yueh-sui Chao* was named after the Lesser Yue-Ji, the spelling *Yueh-sui* being merely one of a number of variant spellings of Yue-Ji. Note that the Lesser Yue-Ji did not think of themselves as the 'Lesser.' That term was applied to them by others. Another variant of Yue-Ji is the spelling *Yüeh-hsi*, which is the transliteration of the name found in Gordon H. Luce's translation of the *Man shu*, which in one place states:

> Yüeh-hsi, one Chao. It is also called Mo-so-chao. The tribe inhabits the old Yüeh-hsi-chou of Pin-chü, 1 day-stage distant from Nang-ts'ung mountain. There was an unruly clansman, Chang Hsün-ch'iu. He was a Pai Man (White Man) [White barbarian].[197] […] [Brackets added.] [Parentheses and underlining Luce's.]

Here we have a paragraph directly from the *Man shu* that gives us all together, in one fell swoop, the names *Yüeh-hsi*, *Mo-so*, and *Pai*, and refers to the inhabitants of the Chao named after

[196] Charles Backus, *The Nan-chao kingdom and T'ang China's southwestern frontier* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 47.

[197] Fan Ch'o, p. 24.

both peoples as one tribe. Mary Bai, in *Bai Nationality Shines in Southwestern China*, as shown in chapter one, tells us the following about the Bai, and she is precisely right in what she says:

> Bai people are descendants of an ancient nationality named Ji, which habited in the drainage area of the Huangshui River during pre-Qin period (about 2,200 years ago). The Ji have been known as Bai until [the author means *since*] the Han and Jin Dynasties. [Brackets added.]

Below is another passage also directly from the *Man shu*:

> Mo-so Man. They are beyond the Shih Man. They intermarry with Nan-chao. They also have marriage-relations with Yüeh-hsi-chao.[198] [Underlining Luce's.]

The Mo-so, or Qiang, and the Pai Man, or Bai Man, or Lesser Yue-Ji, who were, as shown above, also known as the Bai-Xiongnu, were the inhabitants of the same Chao, and this is why the Chao was named both Mo-so and Yüeh-hsi, and that is why the Yüeh-hsi were also known simply as Pai (Bai). But why were the Yüeh-hsi, or Lesser Yue-Ji, known as Pai Man, or White Barbarians, or as Bai-Xiongnu, in the first place? The *Man shu* gives us the definitive and correct answer:

> All are tribal clans of Wu Man and Pai Man (Black and White Man). Men and women [of the Wu Man] use black silk cloth to make their clothes, which are so long as to trail along the ground. Again to the east there are Pai Man (White Man): their men and women use white silk cloth to make their clothes, which do not

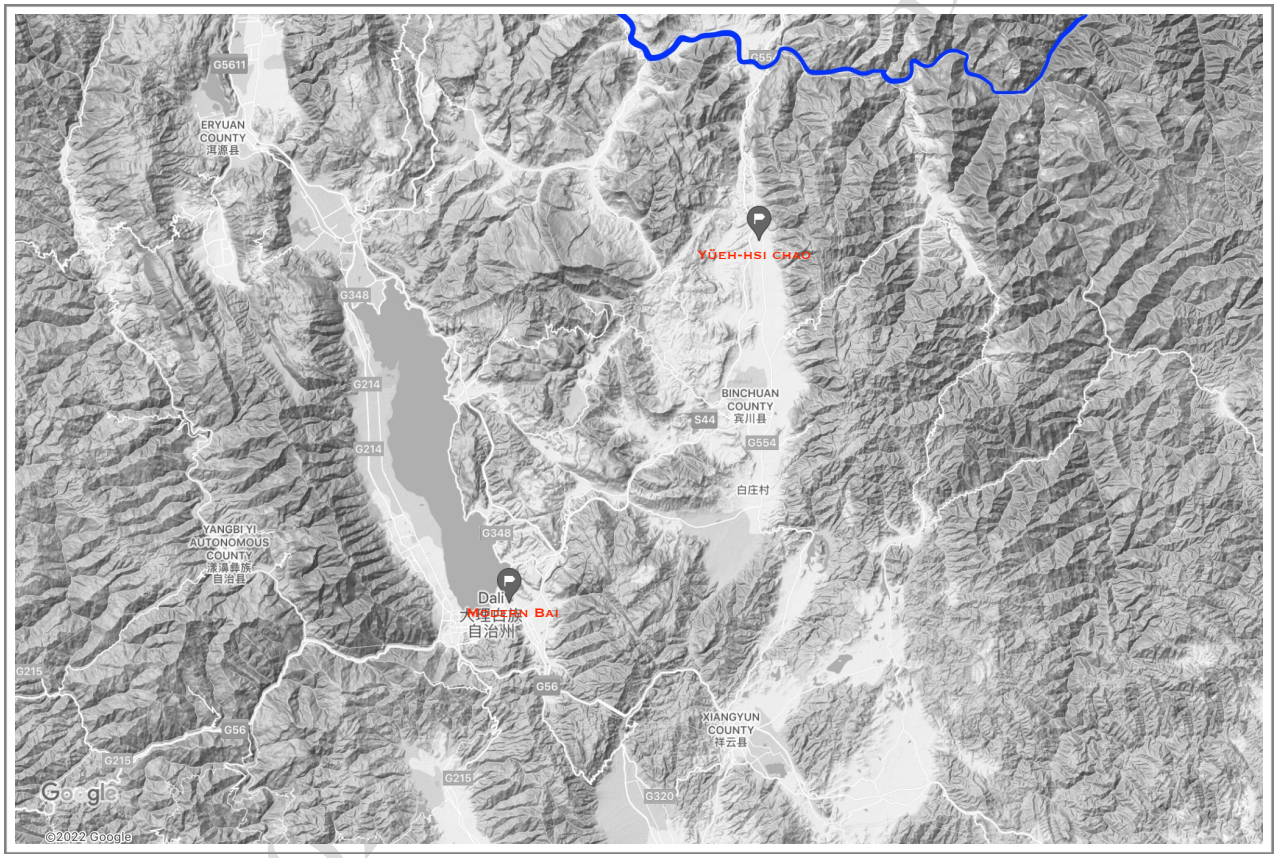
[198] Fan Ch'o, p. 39.

> descend below the knee.[199] [Brackets added.] [Parentheses and underlining Luce's.]

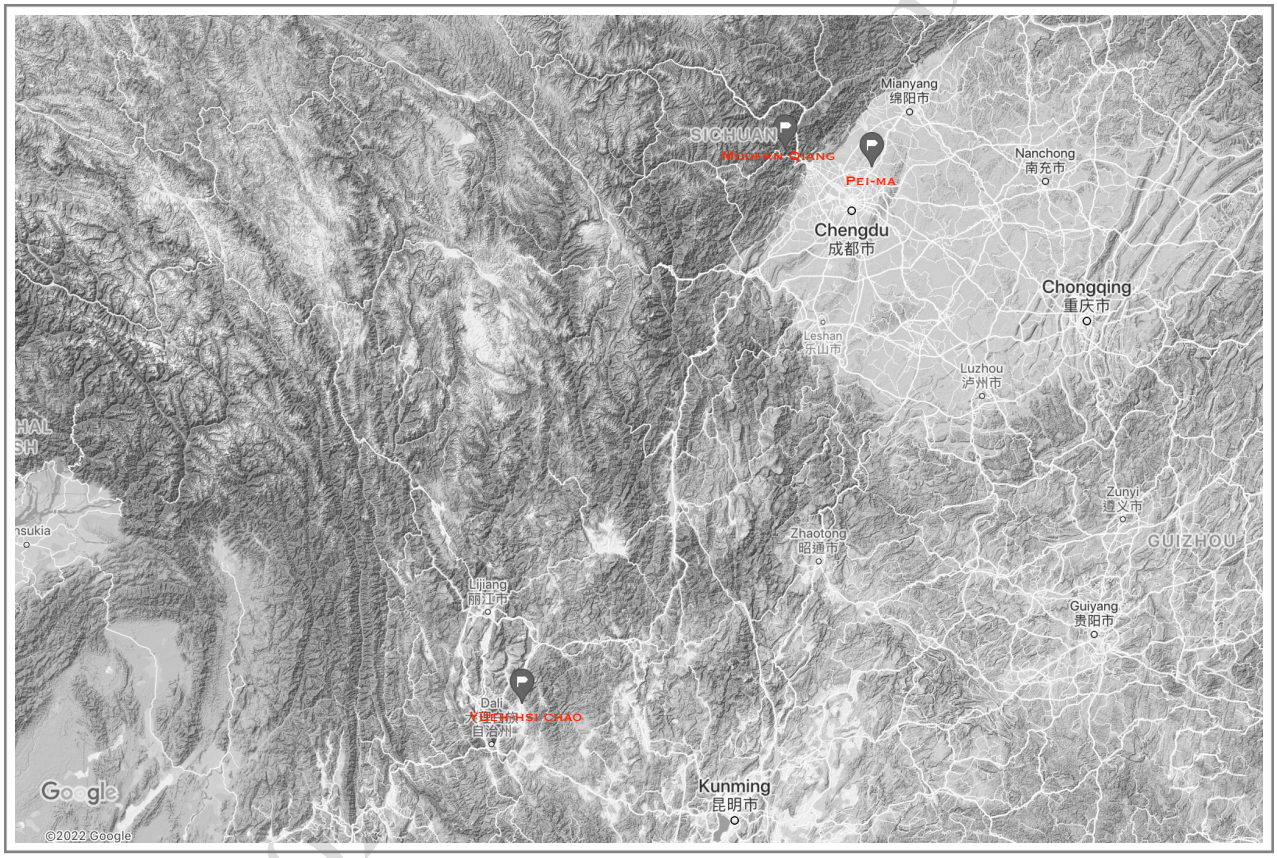
Thus the Mo-so and the Pai together constituted, or came to constitute, a single people, and their descendants in the late nineteenth century would be known and recorded as Pei-tsö, that is, Bai-tsö. All this further validates what I demonstrate in *The Padjanaks* about the Bai of Yunnan being descended from the Lesser Yue-Ji; and what I demonstrate in that book corroborates and complements what I have shown here about the Lesser Yue-Ji, or Bai, the Qiang, and their various descendants.

The maps below show the location of the Yue-Ji or Mo-so Chao, the location of the Pei-ma, and the location of the Modern Qiang in Sichuan, and that of the Modern Bai in Yunnan. The river shown on the one map is a major tributary of the Yangtze. In Chinese it is called the Jinsha Jiang, and in early times it was known as the Yueh River, and as the Ya-lung (Yalong) River.

[199] Fan Ch'o, p. 44.



Modern Bai, Yüeh-hsi or Mo-so Chao, Ya-lung River



Yüeh-hsi or Mo-so Chao, Modern Qiang, Pei-ma

IX

The Wu Man

Who were the Wu Man, or Black Barbarians? Let us remember that the Lesser Yue-Ji, or Bai-Xiongnu, or Pai Man, were immigrants in Yunnan, that in a series of migrations they had arrived there from Gansu, where they had lived in close proximity to the Wusun, or Wu-Xiongnu, or Black Xiongnu. Thus in Gansu the neighbors of the Bai-Xiongnu were the Wu-Xiongnu, and in Yunnan the neighbors of the Bai-Xiongnu, or Bai Man, were the Wu Man, or Black Barbarians. The *Man shu* tells us:

> The Western Ts'uan are the Pai Man (White Man). The Eastern Ts'uan are the Wu Man (Black Man).[200] [Parentheses and underlining Luce's.]

The Wu Man and the Pai Man were thus also known by the single name Ts'uan, the Eastern Ts'uan and the Western Ts'uan, respectively. Charles Backus, in his book *The Nan-chao kingdom and T'ang China's southwestern frontier*, tells us that Chinese sources first recorded the Ts'uan in the third and fourth centuries as elites in Nan-chung, and that Ts'uan was

[200] Fan Ch'o, p. 33.

either one of the surnames granted by Chu-ko Liang to the elite in the third century during his pacification campaign, or one of the surnames that he confirmed by ceremony at that time.[201] In other words, Backus, like all other scholars, has no idea whether the name was in use for, or in use by, the Wu Man and the Pai Man before the time of Chu-ko Liang's pacification campaign. Backus says 'it seems likely' that the name Ts'uan was the personal name of a chief, and that it seems likely also that the Chinese at least came to use the name to refer to all the peoples under the control of that (hypothetical) chief.[202] That is to say, Backus is only speculating about the origin of the name Ts'uan, but he presents his speculation in such a way that the hasty reader is likely to think that there was a chief by that name, and that the Chinese came to refer to the whole group of unknown peoples under his hypothetical control by the name Ts'uan as well. There may well have been, of course, a chief by that name, and it is possible, of course, that the Chinese began to refer to all the peoples under his control by that name. But no one, not any scholar at all, has any idea when the name came into use, or whether it was ever borne by a chief. What is certain is that the name Ts'uan was recorded as a family name,[203] and it was a family name that applied to both the Wu Man and the Pai Man, as the *Man shu* confirms.[204] Backus goes on to say that the Ts'uan, as hereditary rulers, were in firm control of the northeastern part of present-day Yunnan by the fifth century,

[201] Backus, *The Nan-chao kingdom*, pp. 6-7.

[202] Backus, p. 7.

[203] Backus, pp. 6-7.

[204] Fan Ch'o, p. 33.

but that in the first half of that century they split into eastern and western halves.[205]

Now, if the Wu Man and the Pai Man, or the Ts'uan, had split up into two separate groups in the first half of the fifth century, then they were, before that century, a single group of people, and it is thus irrelevant whether they were called Ts'uan at any time in the past. The important point, in other words, is that the two peoples were definitely related; and the use of the name Ts'uan for both of them, for the Pai Man and the Wu Man, implies, in fact, that they were one and the same people. We already know, now, from what I have shown above, and from what I have demonstrated in *The Padjanaks*, that the Pai were the Lesser Yue-Ji, that they were immigrants in Yunnan from Gansu, and that the use of the name Bai for the Lesser Yue-Ji had antedated the 'split' that occurred between the Wu Man and the Pai Man in the fifth century. Since the Pai Man, or Bai-Xiongnu, or White Xiongnu, were immigrants from Gansu, where they lived in close proximity to their relatives the Wusun, or Wu-Xiongnu, or Black Xiongnu, the Wu Man, or Black Barbarians, that were related to the Pai Man, or White Barbarians, had to have been immigrants from Gansu as well, and they could have been none other than the Wu-Xiongnu, that is, the Wusun; for the Bai, or Bai-Xiongnu, could not have had one group of relatives in Gansu that bore the designation Wu and that had the same customs as the Bai, but that did not migrate from Gansu to Yunnan, and another group of relatives in Yunnan that bore the designation Wu and that had the same customs as the Bai their relatives, but that did not come from Gansu. Impossible. It is, in fact, as I stated above, certain that

[205] Backus, p. 8.

the Bai-Xiongnu and the Wu-Xiongnu, that is, the Lesser Yue-Ji and the Wusun, or a group of the Wusun, left Gansu together, owing to Xiongnu proper hostility, and migrated south about the same time and allied themselves with the Qiang. The definite existence of Wu and Bai in the names for the respective groups before the fifth century shows, in fact, that the use of silk dyed black for the clothes of the one, and the use of white silk for the clothes of the other, antedated the 'split' that is said to have occurred in the fifth century, indicating that the single people known as Ts'uan were two large related clans, the Wu-Xiongnu and the Bai-Xiongnu, that were differentiated from each other, in the main, by the different colors of silk that they wore and the length of their clan costumes, the one wearing black silk clothes that were so long as to trail along the ground, and the other wearing white silk clothes that did not descend below the knee.

We now find ourselves in a position that no scholar and no commentator has ever found himself in, namely, the position of being able to state definitively, and correctly, that the Wu Man and the Pai Man were, in fact, the Wu-Xiongnu and the Bai-Xiongnu, respectively. And we may accurately infer, from what the *Man shu* tells us about them, that in the days of Zhang Qian and Sima Qian, the two clans, when still in Gansu, were distinguished from each other, in the main, by the color of the clothes that they wore, and that their respective clan names were merely a reflection of that difference. It seems probable also that the Wu-Xiongnu were the Solar Clan, since their counterparts, the Bai-Xiongnu, were the Moon Ji clan. Why would the Solar clan choose to make their clan costumes black? Perhaps it had to

do with the fact that when the sun shines on bodies of any kind, such bodies cast shadows, and shadows are, of course, black.

The Xiongnu proper were, at least in part, and in not a few cases in large part, the ancestors of many of the peoples that I have discussed in this book. As we have seen, from them descend Tai peoples, whether they live in Myanmar, and are known as Khuns; or in China, and are known as Cantonese, Zhuang, or Tai Lue; or in Assam, and are called Ahom; or in Thailand or in Laos, and are known as Thai, Lao, or Isan; or whether they live in Vietnam, and are known as Nong. Likewise the Tibetans, and thus the Bhutanese, being descended from the ancient Qiang, and those Qiang ancestors of theirs having been doubtless mixed with the Lesser Yue-Ji, or Bai-Xiongnu, and most probably with the Wu-Xiongnu, or Wusun as well, are also descendants of the Xiongnu, as are at least in part, of course, the Mongolians. All these peoples, to be sure, and many others, are in part descended from the Xiongnu proper, and they are thus, as many of them have always suspected themselves to be, related to one another, as well as related to the Bai, and to the Yi people, who are generally held to be the descendants of the Wu Man, or Black Barbarians, of Nan-chao.[206]

[206] Backus, p. 7.

X

The Conquerors of Bactria

The conquest of Bactria was a pivotal event in world history, for in its aftermath the descendants of the conquerors, known to the Chinese simply as the Great Yue-Ji, to Strabo as the Asii, Pasiani, Tochari, and Sacarauli, and to Trogus as the Saraucae and Asiani, would go on to create an enormous empire, one that would last hundreds of years, that would control trade between East and West, and that would do more to popularize Buddhism than would any other polity or institution before or since, spreading it everywhere within its boundaries, as well as far beyond them, all the way to distant imperial China. This was, of course, the Kushan Empire.

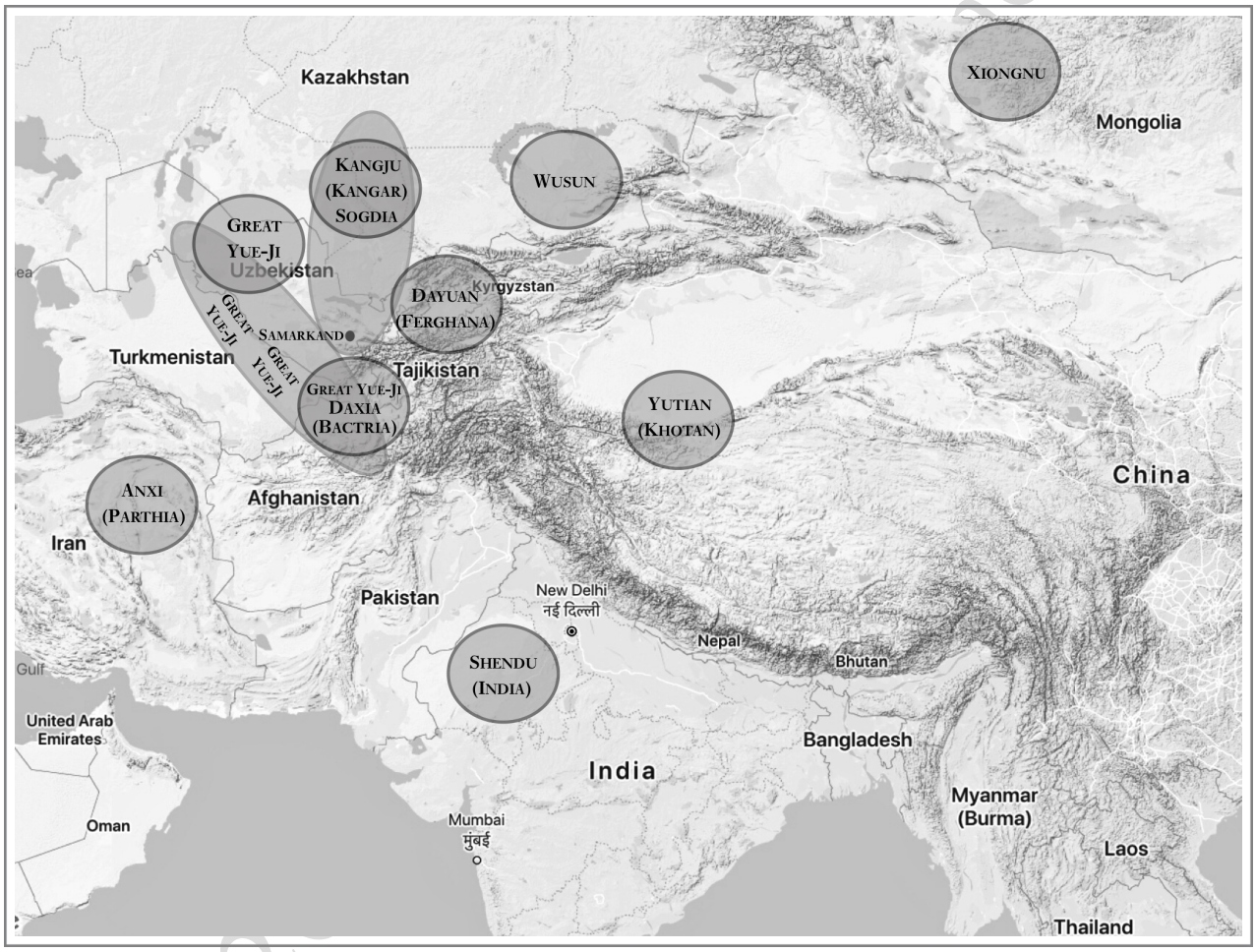
When, however, did the conquest of Bactria take place? Most scholars reckon the conquerors to have arrived in Bactria about 130 BCE. Since the Greek Heliocles I reigned in Bactria from 145 BCE until the Great Yue-Ji had conquered his kingdom, which they had achieved before the arrival of Zhang Qian in the region in 128, we know for certain that the Great Yue-Ji had taken control of Bactria between those years. We also know, from what I have shown above, that the names of two of the conquering groups recorded by Strabo and Trogus, namely, Pasiani and Asiani, are variants of Bai-Xiongnu and Wu-

Xiongnu respectively. The other groups, the Sacarauli, or Saraucae, and the Tochari, were respectively, of course, Sakas and Tocharians.

Now the *Shi ji*, or rather Zhang Qian in the summary of his report, identified two places with the Great Yue-Ji in 128 BCE: Daxia, or Bactria, which they ruled at that time, and the place where they lived to the north of the Amu Darya River, in today's Uzbekistan.[207] To Zhang Qian, and to others of his day of course, the Amu Darya became known as the Gui River,[208] while to others at that time it was known as the Oxus. The map below shows the approximate locations of the Great Yue-Ji, the Wusun, the Kangju, or Kangar, the Xiongnu proper, as well as of Daxia, of Dayuan, or Ferghana, of Anxi, or Parthia, of Shendu, or India, and of Yutian, or Khotan, about 127 BCE, the year when Zhang Qian returned to China and reported what he had learned about the regions of the west.

[207] Sima Qian, p. 234.

[208] Sima Qian, p. 234.


Kazakhstan
XIONGNU
Mongolia
KANGJU (KANGAR) SOGDIA
WUSUN
GREAT YUE-JI
Uzbekistan
DAYUAN (FERGHANA)
Kyrgyzstan
GREAT YUE-JI
SAMARKAND
Turkmenistan
GREAT YUE-JI
Tajikistan
GREAT YUE-JI DAXIA (BACTRIA)
YUTIAN (KHOTAN)
China
ANXI (PARTHIA)
Afghanistan
Iran
Pakistan
New Delhi
नई दिल्ली
Nepal
Bhutan
SHENDU (INDIA)
Gulf
United Arab Emirates
Bangladesh
India
Myanmar (Burma)
Oman
Mumbai
मुंबई
Laos
Thailand

Now, there has been debate for decades as to whether the Asii named by Strabo, or the Asiani named by Trogus, were in fact the Wusun spoken of by Sima Qian. In his *Account of Dayuan*, Sima Qian points out that 'the Wusun people were split into several groups,' and he says:

> Zhang Qian dispatched his assistant envoys to Dayuan, Kangju, the Great Yuezhi, Daxia, Anxi, Shendu, Yutian, Yumo, and the other neighboring states, the Wusun providing them with guides and interpreters.[209]

Zhang Qian dispatched his assistant envoys to the Great Yue-Ji and to those locations after 123 BCE, at least five years after the Great Yue-Ji, or Asiani (Asii), Pasiani, Tochari, and Sacarauli, had conquered Bactria, and, of course, at least five years after his first visit to the region.[210] He sent with his assistant envoys Wusun interpreters *knowing from his previous visit* that the language that needed to be interpreted, *was the same language that the Wusun spoke*. Zhang Qian tells us that the Wusun lived 'some 2000 *li* northeast of Dayuan,' and that 'Daxia is situated over 2000 *li* southwest of Dayuan.'[211] The Wusun, in other words, lived over two thousand kilometers from Bactria, about the distance between Los Angeles and Vancouver, British Columbia. And Anxi, Shendu, Yutian, Yumo, and 'the other neighboring states,' were so distant from the area where the Wusun lived, as the map above shows, that the Wusun guides and interpreters could not possibly have known the languages

[209] Sima Qian, p. 239.

[210] Sima Qian, p. 237.

[211] Sima Qian, pp. 234-235.

spoken in any of those places. In other words, the Wusun could have served as interpreters only in those places where the Great Yue-Ji were living. For these reasons we may correctly presume that it was in those places where the Pasiani, Asiani, Tochari, and Sacarauli were, that the Wusun would serve as interpreters. But how did the Wusun interpreters, who were obviously not from Bactria, and who lived so far away from that area, know in the first place at least one of the languages of one of the conquering groups named by the classical authors – Pasiani, Asiani, Tochari, Sacarauli – as they must have, to be used as interpreters? We know beyond all possibility of doubt that the Wusun were not Sakas, nor Tocharians. The Great Yue-Ji and the Lesser Yue-Ji were, of course, the Yue-Ji. The Lesser Yue-Ji merged with the Qiang, as we have seen, and we know from Zhang Qian that the two were living together by 128 BCE; and in Yunnan, when Nan-chao existed as a kingdom, the two lived together in the Yueh-hsi Chao, or Yue-Ji Chao, where, again, the Qiang were known as the Mo-so (Mo-tsö), and the Lesser Yue-Ji were known as the Pai Man, or Western Ts'uan, and as Pai-tsö. Since the Lesser Yue-Ji were the Pai Man, or Bai, the Pasiani that participated in the conquest of Bactria, which Zhang Qian confirms in 128 BCE was conquered by the Great Yue-Ji, could have been none other than the Great Yue-Ji themselves, for the people that constituted the Great Yue-Ji must have borne the same name, or the same designation, as their relatives the Lesser Yue-Ji did at that time, namely, the name or designation Bai. The name Pasiani is, as demonstrated above, a compound name containing the word for 'white,' namely, *bai* (*pai*); and Pasiani is, as I have shown, a transcription of Bai-Xiongnu. The Wu Man of Nan-chao, also known as the

Eastern Ts'uan, were related, as has been seen, to the Western Ts'uan, or Pai Man, or Lesser Yue-Ji. Now, as shown above, at one time the Wusun lived in the same area in Gansu as the Yue-Ji, or Bai-Xiongnu, with whom they had the same customs; and when that 'small' group of the Bai-Xiongnu, or the Lesser Yue-Ji, migrated to Yunnan, a group of the Wusun must have accompanied them, because, as has been said, the Bai-Xiongnu, or Lesser Yue-Ji, or Pai Man, or Western Ts'uan, could not have been related to one group of people in Yunnan known as Wu that were different from another group in Gansu bearing the designation Wu and having the same customs as those in Yunnan called Wu must have had, since those in Yunnan, also known as, again, the Eastern Ts'uan, were related to, and at one time were a single people with, the Lesser Yue-Ji, or Pai Man, or Western Ts'uan, and therefore must have had the same customs as they. In other words, the Lesser Yue-Ji had the same customs as the Wu Man and the Wusun, and thus the Wusun and the Wu Man had likewise the same customs. It is simply impossible that two 'different' peoples in different parts of China would have had the same designation, the same customs, the same relatives as neighbors, the Yue-Ji, and have really been two different peoples. It is not possible. Thus the Wusun and the Wu Man were, in fact, one and the same people. Moreover, to spell it out explicitly, as the Pai Man had the same customs as the Wusun, so the Pai Man had the same customs as the Great Yue-Ji, since the Great Yue-Ji had the same customs as the Wusun, as confirmed by Zhang Qian. In other words, the Pai Man (the Lesser Yue-Ji) and the Pasiani (the Great Yue-Ji) not only bore the same designation, Pa(i), or Ba(i), but also had, of course, the same customs; they were one and the same people, the Yue-Ji.

And as the Western Ts'uan, or Pai Man, were the Bai-Xiongnu, so their relatives, the Eastern Ts'uan, or Wu Man, or Wusun, were Xiongnu as well, namely, the Wu-Xiongnu. Pasiani means Bai-Xiongnu, and Asiani means Wu-Xiongnu. The Wusun were able to serve as interpreters in Bactria because the Asiani were really the Wusun, and the Pasiani were the Great Yue-Ji. They were, as has been shown, two clans of the Xiongnu—the Black Xiongnu and the White Xiongnu, respectively, that is, Black Huns and White Huns.

Today a superficial familiarity with the writings of the ancients is as common a problem as ever among some commentators, who would like us to believe that they have read in full, and have read with care and understanding, the works that they cite in support of this or that point that they may be trying to make, and Strabo is a victim of such individuals, who skim through books and find passages to lend authority to the claims that they make. They read, for example, this passage of Strabo:

> On the left and opposite these peoples are situated the Scythians or nomadic tribes, which cover the whole of the northern side. Now the greater part of the Scythians, beginning at the Caspian Sea, are called Däae, but those who are situated more to the east than these are named Massagetae and Sacae, whereas all the rest are given the general name of Scythians, though each people is given a separate name of its own. They are all for the most part nomads. But the best known of the nomads are those who took away Bactriana from the Greeks, I mean the Asii, Pasiani, Tochari, and Sacarauli, who originally came from the country on the other side of the Iaxartes River that adjoins that of the Sacae and the Sogdiani and was occupied by the Sacae.[212]

[212] Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, Vol. V, pp. 259-261.

and think that Strabo by Scythian means a particular kind of people or ethnos, defined by them as Iranian, and argue accordingly that those who conquered Bactria, the Asii (Asiani), the Pasiani, the Tochari, and the Sacarauli, were all Iranians. This faulty conclusion shows that they have not read Strabo in his entirety, or that they have misunderstood what he has written even after reading him through. For Strabo says:

> I maintain, for example, that in accordance with the opinion of the ancient Greeks—just as they embraced the inhabitants of the known countries of the north under the single designation "Scythians" (or "Nomads" to use Homer's term) and just as later, when the inhabitants of the west were also discovered, they were called "Celts" and "Iberians," or by the compound words "Celtiberians" and "Celtiscythians," the several peoples being classed under one name through ignorance of the facts—I maintain, I say, that just so, in accordance with the opinion of the ancient Greeks, all the countries of the south which lie on Oceanus were called "Ethiopia."[213]

As we can see from a reading and an analysis of the two passages above, Scythians to Strabo were not any particular ethnic group, but, rather, any nomadic inhabitants of the areas defined by him in that passage. That is precisely why he uses the term 'nomadic tribes' in apposition with the name Scythians. He is defining Scythians simply as any nomads to be found in certain regions, regardless of their ethnicity, just as did the ancient Greeks that he mentions define Scythians as such. Moreover, he refers to the Asii (Asiani), the Pasiani, the Tochari, and the Sacarauli simply as nomads. It is, therefore, a mistake to identify all the groups

[213] Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, Vol. I, pp. 121-123.

that conquered Bactria as Iranian. The Asiani and the Pasiani were not Iranian. They were Huns, the Wu-Xiongnu and the Bai-Xiongnu, respectively, that is, the Wusun and the Great Yue-Ji.

About one hundred seventy-five years after the conquest of Bactria by the Great Yue-Ji, one Kujula Kadphises, a Kushan, in approximately 45 CE, rose to power and founded the Kushan dynasty. I have already shown that the name Kushan is simply a transcription of Ku-Xiongnu, meaning White Xiongnu, and is thus synonymous with Bai-Xiongnu. In other words, the Pasiani, or Bai-Xiongnu, came to be widely known by the name Ku-Xiongnu, or Kushan, *ku* being, as has been shown, the 'Turkic' or Hunnic word for 'white,' just as *bai* is the Chinese word for 'white.' In other words, Kushan, like Bai-shun or Bai-shu-ni, means White Huns.

The Kushan Empire, when at its height under Kanishka the Great, who flourished in the early second century, was powerful and large, covering present day Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, as well as much of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and most of the northern half of India; and within its boundaries fell the ancient satrapy of Arachosia, a region to the south of Bactria, just beyond the Hindu Kush.

From Zhang Qian we learn that the Great Yue-Ji, at the time of his visit to them in 128 BCE, had set up their court on the northern bank of the Amu Darya, in present day Uzbekistan. It was in the mid first century, however, that their descendants the Kushans, led by their warlike king Kujula Kadphises (45 - 90 CE), began to build an empire by a massive expansion of their domination, as the numerous find-spots of his coins, which have been found in abundance from the Kabul Valley to the Western

Punjab, bear ample testimony.[214] Numismatists of the latter half of the nineteenth century, or those who so thoroughly examined ancient coins in that century as to qualify themselves as numismatists, such as Sir Alexander Cunningham, came across coins that indicated Kujula was preceded by an earlier Kushan king, his name, Heraios, or, as Cunningham's analysis of the king's coins determined it most likely to be, Miaüs.[215] The coins of Miaüs consist of two types, tetradrachms and oboli, and with the exception of two copper coins too worn to attribute definitively to Miaüs, although Cunningham did incline to attribute one of them to that king, who may in fact have issued both of them, all the coins of Miaüs are silver.[216] At any rate, part of the legend of one of the two copper coins is in Greek legible enough to make out that it was issued by a Kushan king. Joe Cribb, a numismatist, argues that the copper coins, as well as the silver ones, were issued by Kujula Kadphises, but his attributing them to Kujula creates a number of problems that are either impossible or very difficult to reconcile.[217] First, he argues that a series of letters on one of the Miaüs copper coins does spell out 'Kushan,' but then he tries to make the case that 'Kushan' in this 'context' was a personal name for Kujula

[214] Sir Alexander Cunningham, *Coins of the Kushans, or Great Yue-ti, Part III, Reprinted from the Numismatic Chronicle, Vol. XII., Third Series, Pages 40-82* (London, 1892), pp. 6-7.

[215] Cunningham, *Coins of the Kushans,* pp. 1-2.

[216] Sir Alexander Cunningham, *Coins of the Sakas, Part II, Reprinted from the Numismatic Chronicle, Vol. X., Third Series, Pages 103-172* (London, 1890), p. 9 ; p. 12.

[217] Joe Cribb, "The Heraus Coins: Their Attribution to the Kushan King Kujula Kadphises, c. AD 30-80," Academia.edu, accessed January 12, 2025, https://www.academia.edu/1639716/The_Heraus_Coins_Their_Attribution_to_the_Kushan_King_Kujula_Kadphises_c._AD_30-80., p. 107; pp. 124-125.

Kadphises.[218] Such interpretation, for a host of obvious reasons, strains credulity, and excessively so. Also, if the silver tetradrachms were in fact issued by Kujula, then they were the only silver coins that he issued, and he issued all of them without putting his name, Kujula, on any of them, all the coins bearing his name alone, or his name and that of the Greek king Hermaeus, being copper, such as the ten copper coins bearing both of their names that were found with a single coin bearing the name of Miaüs.[219] What is the satisfactory explanation for the absence of the name Kujula on all those silver tetradrachms? Conversely, why is the name Miaüs confined to the silver coins, and not found on any of the copper tetradrachms issued by Kujula? In addition, a number of the Miaüs silver tetradrachms show on the reverse Victory flying towards the king mounted on horseback to place a wreath on his head, and, as Cunningham observes, this served as the prototype for the same depiction of Victory on the coins of the Indo-Parthian king Gondophares, who ruled between c. 19 CE and c. 46, and thus began his reign years before Kujula is generally held to have begun his.[220] Cribb argues, however, that such depiction of Victory on the coins of Gondophares is traceable to Scythian predecessors of his, such as Azes.[221] But this conclusion, which places the Gondophares coins at an earlier date than the Miaüs coins that have the same depiction of Victory, and thus makes the Gondophares coins the

[218] Cribb, "The Heraus Coins," p. 128; p. 131.

[219] Sir Alexander Cunningham, *Coins of the Indo-Scythian King Miaüs, or Heraüs, Part II, Supplement, Reprinted from the Numismatic Chronicle, Vol. VIII., Third Series, Pages 47-58* (London, 1888), p. 5.

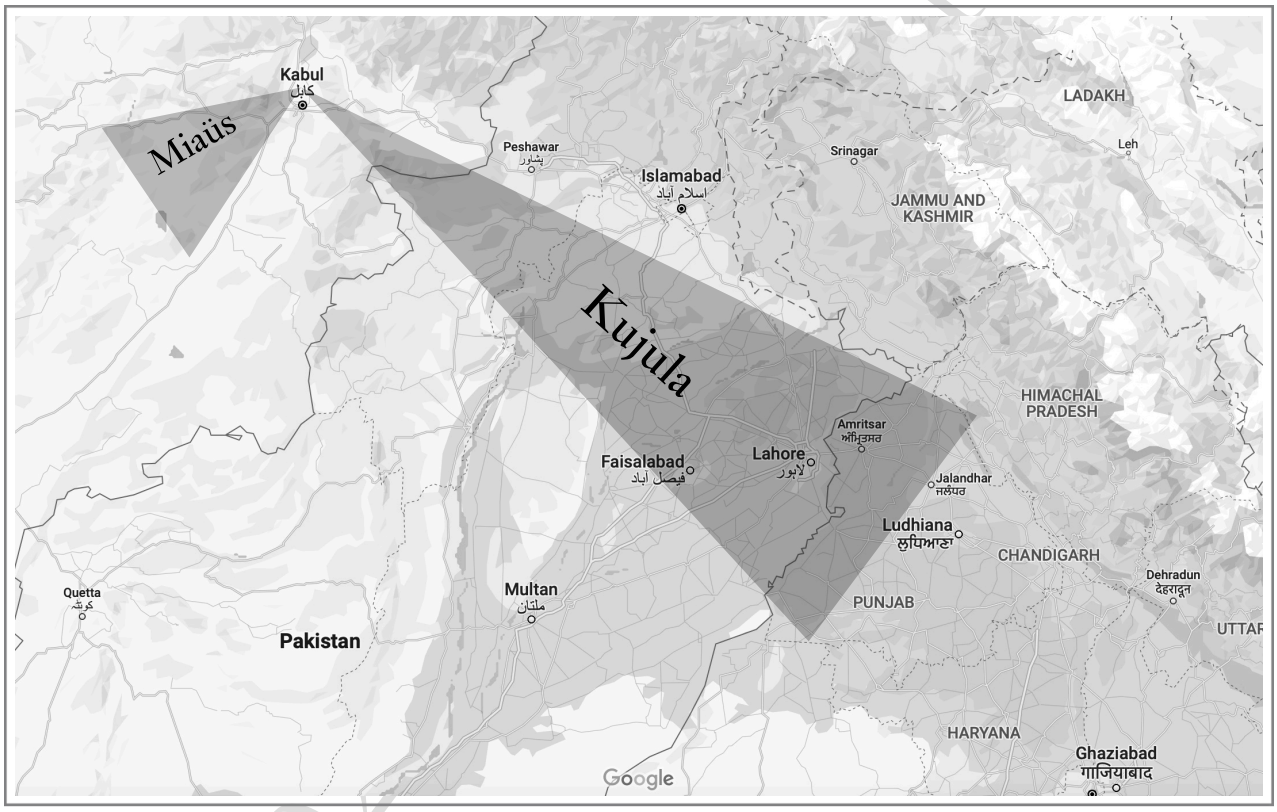
[220] Cunningham, *Coins of the Indo-Scythian King Miaüs,* p. 5.

[221] Cribb, p. 123.

protoypes and those issued by 'Miaüs' the copies, rather than the other way around, as Cunningham concluded, rests entirely on whether the Azes Era is accepted to be dated to the same time as the Vikrama Era. This, then, is yet another condition that must be met for Cribbs' identification of the coins as issues of Kujula, instead of issues of Miaüs, to be correct. The earliest coins indisputably issued by Kujula have on the obverse the name and a bust of Hermaeus, the last Greek king in the region, who ruled the Paropamisadae to the south of Bactria from 90 to 70 BCE, while on the reverse is Kujula's name alone. These first coins of Kujula bearing his name (Kujula) together with that of King Hermaeus, as Cunningham points out, use the original Greek sigma Σ, just as the tetradrachms of Miaüs use it, whereas the later coins of Kujula bearing only his name use the round or lunate sigma C.[222] Since the use of the lunate sigma came after the use of the original one, the tetradrachms bearing the name of Miaüs were issued before the coins of Kujula that bear only the name of Kujula. Also unlike the coins of Kujula, the coins of Miaüs have been found in an area spanning from the vicinity of Kabul approximately to Wardak and Ghazni,[223] in the opposite direction from all the areas where Kujula's have been found, as the map below shows:

[222] Cunningham, *Coins of the Indo-Scythian King Miaüs,* p. 5 ; Cunningham, *Coins of the Sakas,* p. 11.

[223] Cunningham, *Coins of the Indo-Scythian King Miaüs,* p. 5.


Miaüs
Kujula
Kabul
کابل
Peshawar
پشاور
Islamabad
اسلام آباد
Srinagar
LADAKH
Leh
JAMMU AND KASHMIR
HIMACHAL PRADESH
Amritsar
ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ
Lahore
لاہور
Faisalabad
فیصل آباد
Jalandhar
ਜਲੰਧਰ
Ludhiana
ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ
CHANDIGARH
Dehradun
देहरादून
Quetta
کوئٹہ
Multan
ملتان
PUNJAB
Pakistan
HARYANA
Ghaziabad
गाजियाबाद
Google

Cribb argues, as said above, that the coins that have been traditionally assigned to Miaüs (or Heraios) were issued by Kujula; he interprets, as said above, the name 'Kushan' on one of the copper coins as being a personal name for Kujula himself. I am not persuaded by Cribbs' interpretation of the coins. To accept it would require at the same time the acceptance of too many conditions, all acknowledged and pointed out by him, and the sheer number of conditions, together with the nature of them, place his conclusion that the coins were issued by Kujula, securely in the realm of speculation. Further, if we were to accept Cribbs' argument, then we would also be forced to accept that Kujula had issued coins, those silver tetradrachms having the original sigma, with a completely different name on them, that of Miaüs or Heraios, and only that name, *before* he issued any coins, those having only the lunate sigma, with only the real name of Kujula on them, that is, the name Kujula. No new king of a region, however, would issue coins bearing a single name on them that was not his own. The weight of evidence indicates that Miaüs was the first Kushan king whose name has come down to us, and that he was the predecessor of Kujula.

The next of the Kushans to reign as king was Vima Taktu (90 - 113), Kujula's son. The *Hou Han shu*, or *Book of the Later Han*, compiled by one Fan Ye, who died about 445, informs us that it was Kujula's son that conquered northwestern India.[224] It is owing to the Rabatak inscription, however, found in

[224] Fan Ye, "The Western Regions according to the Hou Hanshu: The Xiyu juan, 'Chapter on the Western Regions' from Hou Hanshu 88. Second Edition, 2003 (Extensively revised with additional notes and appendices)," Section 13 – The Kingdom of the Da Yuezhi 大月氏 (the Kushans), translated by John E. Hill, accessed January 12, 2025, https://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/hhshu/hou_han_shu.html.

Afghanistan in 1993, and written by Kanishka I, that we know that the name of this king was Vima Taktu.[225]

Under the rule of Taktu the territory of the Kushans was vast, and thus within it were numerous inhabitants, the native peoples of the various regions now included in the Kushan Empire. In Arachosia, the inhabitants were largely of Iranian or Indo-Aryan stock, and called Pactyans. I will discuss these subjects of the Kushans below.

Next to rule the empire was Vima Kadphises (113 - 127), son of Vima Taktu.[226] Kadphises extended Kushan rule as far east as Gorakhpur and Ghazipur, where coins of his, made of Roman gold *dinarii* that had been recoined by that Kushan king, have been found in large quantities, just as they have been as far south in India as Jabalpur.[227] So large was the empire by this time, and so powerful, that the Kushans controlled trade on land between East and West, all the routes of the Silk Road, from China to Greece, winding through their territory. But as large, rich, and powerful as the empire was when Vima Kadphises was on the throne, it was not his name that became famous, but that of his son, Kanishka I, also known as Kanishka the Great (fl. 127 - 150).

Under Kanishka, whose empire spanned from northeast India to the Caspian Sea,[228] or almost all the way to that body of

[225] Nicholas Sims-Williams, "The Bactrian Inscription of Rabatak: A New Reading." Bulletin of the Asia Institute 18 (2004): 53–68. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24049141., p. 57.

[226] Sims-Williams, "The Bactrian Inscription," p. 57.

[227] Sir Alexander Cunningham, *Coins of the Indo-Scythians, Part I, Reprinted from the Numismatic Chronicle, Vol. VIII., Third Series, Pages 199-248* (London, 1888), p. 22 ; Sir Alexander Cunningham, *Coins of the Tochari, Kushâns, or Yue-ti, Reprinted from the Numismatic Chronicle, Vol. IX., Third Series, Pages 268-311* (London, 1889), p. 60.

[228] Cunningham, *Coins of the Kushans*, p. 20.

water, the Kushans became firmly established as a world power, with their influence extending far beyond the borders of their territory. At this time, as earlier, to the southwest of the Kushan Empire was the Parthian Empire, and in the Far East, ruling much of China, as well as regions to the west of it, was the Han dynasty. Together these three powers, in the second century, dominated the bulk of the lower half of Asia, and ruled over numerous and diverse peoples.

Now, when the coins of the Kushan rulers began to be discovered in the nineteenth century, scholars examining their legends began to offer different opinions on the ethnic affiliation of the Kushans, with some saying they were Sakas or of the Saka 'race.' Percy Gardner in particular, an English archaeologist and numismatist, and contemporary of Cunningham, concluded they were Sakas on the basis of reading the Greek legend of a single coin of Miaüs as ΤΥΡΑΝΝΟΥΝΤΟΣ ΗΡΑΟΥ ΣΑΚΑ ΚΟΙΡΑΝΟΥ.[229] In regard to Gardner's reading of that legend, however, Cunningham says:

> But he has omitted the letter B at the end of ΣΑΚΑ (or ΣΑΝΑ), which is found on all the eight or ten tetradrachms that I have seen, and is quite distinct on the British Museum coin. He also points out that the third letter of the word read as ΣΑΝΑΒ is not found like the other N's on the coin, but like a retrograde *И*. But I may refer him to his own note at the foot of the same page, where the same retrograde form is found in the word read by him as ΚΟΙΡΑΝοΥ, but which should therefore be ΚΟΙΡΑΚοΥ. M. Tiesenhausen's coin, he admits, seems to read, ΣΑΝΑΒ, and I may add that on one of my tetradrachms the N is properly formed,

[229] Cunningham, *Coins of the Indo-Scythian King Miaüs,* p. 1.

reading ΣANAOB. I may mention also that on one specimen all the N's of *Turannountos* and *Koiranou* are retrograde.

Heraüs [Miaüs], according to Mr. Gardner, thus becomes a King of the Sakas ; but according to my reading of the last two words ΣANAB (or ΣANAOB) KOPCANOY, he must have been the king (*Sanaob* or *tsanyu*) of the *Korsâns* or *Kushâns*. We know that on all the coins of Kujula Kadphizes the name of his tribe *Kushâna* in the native legend, is rendered as KOPCAN in the Greek legend. We know also that *Tsanyu* or *chanyu* was a royal title.[230] […]

Taking the various readings of *Sanab*, *Sanaob*, and *Sanabiu*, I think it probable that the term may be intended to represent the native title of *tsanyu*, or *chanyu*, "chief," or "king." As the last word on the small silver *oboli* is KOPCANOY, there can be no doubt that the king belonged to the *Korsân*, or *Kushan* tribe. *Tsanyu* is a contraction of *Tsemli-Khuthu-tanju*, "Heaven's son great," or "Great Son of Heaven," = *Devaputra*. As the common pronunciation of the Greek B was V, the Greek form of ΣANAB, or ΣANABIY, would approach very nearly to the native title.[231] […]

In my original paper on the coins of this chief [Miaüs], I suggested that the word ΣANAB might be only the Greek form of the title of *Tsanyu* or *Tanju*, which is itself a contraction of the Chinese *Tsem-li-Khu-thu—Tan-ju*, or "Heaven's-son-Great," or "Great son of Heaven." My suggestion has since been confirmed by the acquisition of a duplicate copper coin, on which in Gandharian characters I read the Indian title of *Devaputra*, which has exactly the same meaning. As this title is used by the three Kushân kings Kanishka, Huvishka, and Vâsu Deva, its use by Miaüs would seem to prove that he also was a Kushân, as I had already pointed out by my reading of KOPCANOY.[232]

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[230] Cunningham, *Coins of the Sakas*, pp. 9-10.

[231] Cunningham, *Coins of the Indo-Scythian King Miaüs,* p. 3.

[232] Cunningham, *Coins of the Kushans*, pp. 1-2.

Percy Gardner's assertion that the Kushans were Sakas was confuted and dismissed long ago, the spelling of the word in question, ΣANAB, clearly being the one most often found on the coins of Miaüs. Cunningham, as we have seen, showed ΣANAB to be synonymous with *devaputra*, meaning 'Great son of Heaven,' and by doing so showed it to be likewise a synonym of the royal title *tsanyu* or *shanyu*, which he understood to mean the same thing. He therefore concluded that ΣANAB was a Greek spelling of *tsanyu*.

The supreme leader of the Xiongnu, as shown above, was called *shanyu*, a title which is sometimes rendered as *chanyu*, as well as *tsanyu*, the form Cunningham adopted. Maodun, after assassinating his own father, set himself up as *shanyu* in 209 BCE; but, in a letter that Maodun wrote to the Han emperor in 176, he credits Heaven for having set him up as the supreme leader.[233] Being set up by Heaven to be the supreme leader of the people was an act of creation in the mind of Maodun and in the minds of his contemporaries, including his enemies the Han; and the title borne by the individual that was differentiated from all others by that act of Heaven was symbolic of that act. The meaning of *shanyu* is not explicitly stated in the *Shi ji*, but to take it to mean 'Son of Heaven' or 'Great son of Heaven' on the basis of what the Xiongnu and the Han believed, and on what Maodun wrote, is not only entirely reasonable, but it accords with what linguist Alexander Vovin has determined the title to mean, namely, 'Son of Heaven, Ruler of the North.'[234] I have already shown that the Kushans were a

[233] Sima Qian, p. 140.

[234] Alexander Vovin, *Once Again on the Etymology of the Title qayan*, Studia Etymologica Cracoviensia, vol. 12, Kraków 2007., p. 184.

Xiongnu clan, the White Xiongnu. Their use of the same title as that of the Xiongnu proper would therefore be natural and expected, all the more reason to conclude that Cunningham, in explaining ΣANAB as being the spelling of *tsanyu* in Greek, did correctly etymologize it. Note, by the way, that it is not possible that the title *shanyu* could have been transmitted to the Kushans by a people unrelated to the Xiongnu proper and living in Central Asia that had borrowed it from the Xiongnu. The Yue-Ji, ancestors of the Kushans, and the Wusun that conquered Bactria with them, were the first Xiongnu clans to have settled in the regions that the Kushans would come to dominate. It was, in other words, only those Xiongnu clans that could have been the first to have carried the title *shanyu* out of China and Mongolia, and into Central and South Asia.

For more than a century after the discovery of the Kushans, until, in fact, the discovery of the Rabatak inscription, all the names of the Kushan kings before the time of Kanishka I were not known, nor were the relationships of the kings one to another. Now we have all their names and know how they were related, at least all those from Kujula to Kanishka I, and, together with the whole catalogue of the Kushan coinage, we can list accurately all the Kushan kings in succession. As for the connection of Miaüs to the subsequent kings of the Kushans, the greatest likelihood is, or at least seems to be, that he was the father of Kujula Kadphises, and thus the most distant known forefather of all the other kings. These were the kings of the Kushans:

MIAÜS or HERAIOS

KUJULA KADPHISES

VIMA TAKTU

VIMA KADPHISES

KANISHKA I

HUVISHKA

VASUDEVA I

KANISHKA II

VASISHKA

KANISHKA III

VASUDEVA II

XI

The Kushans, The Ashina, The Juan-Juan, and The Origin of the Turks

Now, as I have shown, the Yue-Ji and their descendants the Kushans were the White Xiongnu, and as such they were, then, White Huns. We know that the Xiongnu were known as Huns as early as the fourth century CE, a fact that finds confirmation in the *Sogdian Ancient Letters*. The *Letters* were discovered by Sir Marc Aurel Stein in 1907, and in them, as shown above, the Xiongnu are referred to as *xwn*, that is, as Huns or Khuns. Seven years earlier, Stein completed his translation of Kalhaṇa's *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, a Sanskrit chronicle of the kings of Kashmir that dates to the twelfth century. In that chronicle three Kushan kings are mentioned, the names of two of them, Kanishka and Huvishka, transliterated by Stein as Kaniṣka and Huṣka, being instantly recognizable, while the third, rendered by Stein as Juṣka, remains a mystery to this day.[235] For our purposes it is unnecessary to try to determine the identity of Juṣka, although, knowing which of the Kushan kings he was least likely to have been, I am inclined to equate Juṣka with Vasishka. At any rate,

[235] M. A. Stein, *Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅgiṇī*, *A Chronicle of the Kings Kaśmīr*, translated by M. A. Stein, Vol. I, Books I.-VII. (Archibald Constable and Company, Ltd., 1900), p. 30.

the point of significance is that the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* identifies the Kushan kings as descended from the *Turuṣka* race.[236] In other words, it identifies them as Turks, that is, of Turkic origin.

We can safely assume that Kalhaṇa, in identifying the Kushan kings as Turks, considered the rest of the Kushans to have been Turks, too. Now, for him to have identified the Kushans as Turks, or to have considered them as such, he must have known of something that established a connection or relationship between Turks and the Kushans, unless, as is possible, he was echoing Ṭabarī, who also referred to the Kushans as Turks. The matter of the origin of the Kushans I have settled, by demonstrating that they were Xiongnu in origin. If the Turks were ultimately Xiongnu in origin as well, then Kalhaṇa's assertion that the Kushan kings were Turks is explainable by the fact that both the Turks and the Kushans were of Xiongnu origin, even if Kalhaṇa did not know that the Xiongnu proper were the ancestral group of both of them, and arrived at his conclusion instead on the basis of something else, such as, perhaps, the understanding or conjecture that the Turks and the Kushans spoke as mother tongues related languages, or even the same mother tongue. The point is, that Kalhaṇa implies that he understood the Turks and the Kushans to be of the same original stock.

The oldest reference to a people identified as Turks dates to 439 CE, when a Chinese history, the *Book of Sui*, mentions the Ashina,[237] a clan whose rise to power in the mid five hundreds coincided with their becoming known to the Chinese as 突厥

[236] Stein, *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, p. 31.

[237] Wei Zheng et al., *Book of Sui,* Vol. 84: 突厥之先，平涼雜胡也，姓阿史那氏。

Tūjué (*T'u-chüeh*), that is, as Turks, specifically Göktürks, after their exodus from Gansu in the fifth century and settlement near Gaochang, China, in the Juan-Juan Khaganate.[238] At the time the Juan-Juan, a people whose origin or ethnic affiliation is an unsettled question, ruled over a large territory in northwest China. The people that constituted the Ashina, then, were the forefathers of those that constituted the first Turks, and in time use of the name Ashina gave way to use of Göktürks and Turks as the name of the people descended from them. And not long before the Ashina rose to power and came to be known as Turks, they still lived in their original homeland, or most ancient known habitation, Gansu, where, remember, a few hundred years earlier a people by the name of Wusun lived, a people, as we have seen, that I have demonstrated to have been one and the same with the Asiani recorded by Trogus. These 'two' peoples, the Ashina and the Asiani, or Wusun, could not possibly have arisen independently at different periods of time and have been formed by unrelated peoples, in the same place, in Gansu, and just by chance have borne names for their respective clans that were, for all intents and purposes, identical. In other words, the Wusun of Sima Qian, and the Asiani of Trogus, must have been one and the same with, and either the ancestors or earlier clans or branches of, the Ashina of the *Book of Sui*, just as the two earlier clans were branches of exactly the same people. As no alternative explanation for the above correspondences exists, we may affirm that the Ashina, the first Turks, were the Asiani, that is, a clan of the Wusun, and that they were therefore

[238] Wei Zheng, *Book of Sui*: 後魏太武滅沮渠氏，阿史那以五百家奔茹茹，世居金山，工於鐵作。金山狀如兜鍪，俗呼兜鍪為「突厥」，因以為號。

Xiongnu in origin, descended from the Wu-Xiongnu, or Black Xiongnu, that is, Black Huns.

Now, the Kushans of course were not descended from the Ashina, but the two clans were related, ultimately of the same Xiongnu origin. The Kushans, of course, were descended from the Yue-Ji branch, and, as we have seen, they were also known as Pasiani, meaning, again, Bai-Xiongnu, that is, White Huns.

The language of the first Turks, an agglutinative tongue, was passed down to them from the Ashina; and since the name Ashina fell out of use, and Turks in general eventually came to be the name applied to their descendants, the languages spoken by them are known as Turkic ones. The Padjanaks, too, spoke a Turkic tongue, or rather a tongue classified as Turkic, and, as I have shown, the Padjanaks were the Kushans, their name being an evolution of that recorded by Strabo, namely, Pasiani, an exonym in use for the Kushans long before the days even of Kujula. In other words, the Kushans were speakers of a 'Turkic' language, their very name containing, as we have seen, the 'Turkic' word for 'white,' namely, *ku*, and their full name Kushan being a transcription of Ku-Xiongnu, meaning, of course, White Xiongnu, or White Huns. The Kushans, or Padjanaks, were nevertheless not monolingual. Bactrian, or a dialect of it, became their second or perhaps their third tongue, and it is probable some of them came to speak Greek also.

Now, as the Padjanaks were the Kushans, we can be sure beyond all possibility of doubt that the mother tongue of the Kushans was the same mother tongue that the Padjanaks are known to have spoken, an agglutinative language, and as the Padjanaks, or Kushans, were a Xiongnu clan, a clan of Huns, that language, though denominated a Turkic one, could have

been none other than the language of the Xiongnu, the language of the Huns. Likewise the Ashina, being clearly, as we have seen, one and the same with the Asiani, or Wusun, were a Xiongnu clan also, or clan of Huns, the Wu-Xiongnu, and thus the language that they passed on to their descendants that became known as the first Turks, the Göktürks, could have been no other tongue than that of the Xiongnu, that of the Huns. Thus the language of the Xiongnu or Huns proper, however changed it may have been after centuries of use by the clans they spawned, was the mother tongue of the Kushans and the Ashina —the White Huns and the Black Huns, respectively; and that language, as well as the various forms of it, came to constitute a language category, and the word Turkic became its name; thus we have the Turkic languages.

Kalhaṇa and Ṭabarī tell us, in essence, that the Kushans were Turks, and only their knowledge of a connection between the language of the Turks and the language of the Kushans could have been, it seems, the basis of their saying so. The Kushans, or Padjanaks, however, were not Turks; they were Huns. And the first Turks, as shown above, were in reality Huns bearing a new name, that is, Göktürks or Turks.

Attempts have been made, of course, to etymologize the name Göktürks, or Köktürks, with the most fitting explanation being that the name means 'Blue Turks,' *blue* because the word *kök* signifies that color. If this etymology is accurate, and I think it is, and if 'Celestial Turks,' the other etymology proposed, is incorrect, why would the Ashina, or Black Huns, the forebears of the Göktürks, come to be known as 'Blue Turks' and not 'Black Turks?' I have demonstrated above that the Eastern Ts'uan, or Wu Man, of Nan-chao, were the Wusun, the Wu-

Xiongnu, and that they were known as the Wu Man, or Black Barbarians, because, as the *Man shu* tells us, they wore silk clothes that were dyed black. The fact that the Wu Man, or Black Barbarians, of Nan-chao were a clan of the Wusun, having been called Wu Man because of their black silk clothing, proves that my explanation that the name Wusun, and thus its forms Asiani and Ashina, begins with the Chinese word for 'black,' namely, *wu*, and is a transcription of Wu-Xiongnu—that the name means, however spelled, Black Xiongnu, or Black Huns. Now if black is not jet-black but a faded black, it looks bluish or dark blue. The most probable explanation for the use of the name Göktürks, or Blue Turks, for the Ashina, a clan of the Wusun, or Wu-Xiongnu, is, that those nomads wore silk clothes that were dyed black just like those of the other Wusun clans, but that they looked bluish, bluish enough for them to come to be called Göktürks, or Köktürks, namely, Blue Turks.

I explained above the difference between a clan and a tribe, and I pointed out that large clans often break up into separate clans when rivals to the chief arise and gain large followings themselves. In many cases throughout history, especially among the nomadic peoples of Asia, what appears to have been warfare between tribes was really warfare between related clans, clans formerly united in one large clan that had split into two or more, with each separate clan afterwards following a different life trajectory. That is, as Sima Qian confirms, exactly what happened with the Xiongnu, as shown above. In Nan-chao there were the Eastern Ts'uan and the Western Ts'uan, that is, the Wu Man, or Black Xiongnu, and the Pai Man, or White Xiongnu, respectively; and in northwest China, at the same time, there were the Juan-Juan. Note the close similarity of the

'Ts'uan-Ts'uan' in the south of China to the name 'Juan-Juan' used by those nomads in northwest China. The *Song shu*, or *Book of Song*, a history written by Chinese historian Shen Yue in 492-93, when the Juan-Juan were still extant and a power to be reckoned with, states that the Juan-Juan were of Xiongnu origin; and the *Liang shu*, or *Book of Liang*, a Chinese history written in the early seventh century, states the same.[239] The *Wei shu*, however, a Chinese history written in the mid five hundreds by one Wei Shou, states that the Juan-Juan were descended from the Donghu people.[240] The Donghu were the ancestors of the Xianbei. The *Wei shu* also states that the Yellow Emperor, whom the Han Chinese regard as their ancestor, was the ancestor of the Xianbei. In other words, the *Wei shu* assigns the same ancestry to the Xianbei, and thus to the Donghu, that it assigns to the Han, thereby making the Han and the Xianbei peoples of the same origin. This means that the *Wei shu* makes the Juan-Juan a people of the same stock as the Han, both being in its view descended from the Yellow Emperor. Obviously the *Wei shu* is mistaken about the origin of the Juan-Juan, and its account can be promptly dismissed. Moreover, the hereditary title of the first Juan-Juan rulers was the Xiongnu *shanyu*, not *khagan*, which title the Juan-Juan rulers adopted later from the Xianbei.[241] If the Juan-Juan had been Xianbei in the first place, as some scholars argue, or descended from them, or from the Donghu, their first rulers would not have borne the title *shanyu*, and their later rulers would have had no need to borrow the title

[239] Peter B. Golden, "Some Notes on the Avars and Rouran," In *The Steppe Lands and the World Beyond Them*, ed. Florin Curta, pp. 43-66 (Editura Universității, 2013), p. 54.

[240] Golden, "Some Notes on the Avars and Rouran," p. 55.

[241] Golden, p. 56.

khagan from the Xianbei. Alexander Vovin, however, has demonstrated that the title *qagan* (*khagan*), as well as, naturally, *qan* (*khan*), is, in fact, of Xiongnu origin.[242] This, in fact, makes perfect sense, when we remember that the Xiongnu were formed, in part, as I have shown, by a people, the Kangar, who have also been known since time immemorial as Khands (Khans), the Munda name for them. Since the *Song shu* and the *Liang shu* state that the Juan-Juan were of Xiongnu origin, and since both titles used by the Juan-Juan rulers are demonstrated to be of Xiongnu origin, we can be sure that the Juan-Juan were, in fact, a Xiongnu clan. They were, therefore, related to the 'Ts'uan-Ts'uan' of Nan-chao, the Eastern Ts'uan and the Western Ts'uan, and it is thus probable that the name for these related Xiongnu clans, Juan-Juan or 'Ts'uan-Ts'uan,' is exactly the same name, differing only in the way in which it has been transcribed in Chinese and transliterated in English. It could not possibly have been by chance that these related Xiongnu clans, those in Nan-chao and those in northwest China, bore the same name. Remember, those Xiongnu in Nan-chao, those 'Ts'uan-Ts'uan,' had formerly lived in the north, in Gansu, in very close proximity to the area where the Juan-Juan rose to power. The Juan-Juan themselves must have been in part a clan of the Wusun; and, since the repeated Ts'uan in the one name represents a second clan, the White or the Black Xiongnu, so the repeated 'Juan' in the other name, in all probability, represents a second clan as well, namely, the White Xiongnu. If the Wusun, or Black Xiongnu, constituted one clan of the Juan-Juan, it naturally follows that it must have been a clan of the White Xiongnu that constituted the other, just as in Nan-chao.

[242] Vovin, *Once Again on the Etymology of the Title qaγan*, pp. 183-184.

But what White Xiongnu were still in northern China? I mentioned in an earlier chapter a imperial edict that confirmed the presence of a group of Lesser Yue-Ji in Gansu as late as 121 BCE, a time when at least one faction of the Wusun were still living in Gansu as well; and I have shown two important things above, one, that the Yue-Ji were the White Xiongnu, and two, that there is no evidence whatever that the Wusun and any of the Yue-Ji were foes either at that time, in 121 BCE, or in the days of Maodun, or of Jizhu, or of Junchen, or at any other time, at least before the Common Era—I will elaborate on this below. If, therefore, two clans are represented in the name of that people by the repeated 'Juan,' with one 'Juan' representing the Wusun, it could have been none other than the White Xiongnu, that is, a branch of the Yue-Ji, that the other 'Juan' represented. This is not to say, however, that no peoples of origins different from that of Xiongnu constituted a part of the Juan-Juan. The Xianbei, for example, may very well have constituted a part of the horde, and they probably did, most likely becoming a part of it long after it had formed. It cannot be ruled out also, that some Indo-European peoples, such as East Iranians or even Tocharians, had become a part of the group. With Xianbei and East Iranians in the mix, the Juan-Juan may be properly said to have been a tribe. Note also that the use of the name Juan-Juan, or 'Ts'uan-Ts'uan,' as with the various forms of Wusun and Pasiani, antedated the ancient texts in which it was first recorded. In other words, the name Juan-Juan or 'Ts'uan-Ts'uan,' however spelled, was in use for the Black Xiongnu and the White Xiongnu, or by them, before Chu-ko Liang's pacification campaign in the third century, and doubtless long before.

XII

The Kidarite Huns

Priscus, Roman historian and rhetorician of Thracian birth, most famous for introducing his acquaintance Attila and his horde of Huns to Western civilization, gave the West its first report of the Kidarites, a people whom he constantly called Kidarite Huns. Now, from the fragments of his history, it is clear that Priscus himself had no direct contact with any of the Kidarite Huns, but that his knowledge of them came mainly from the accounts of ambassadors, particularly those of the Persians, who in the mid 400s were often at war with the Kidarites. It is significant that Priscus, through others with first-hand knowledge of them, knew the Kidarites to be Huns, significant because of what the Chinese knew and reported of their origin, as well as because of the location of the territory where they rose to power, namely, in the heart of the former empire of the Kushans, in Bactria. The Persian ambassadors, in carrying out their embassies to the Romans, could not of course have failed to learn of Attila and his Huns, just as they could not have failed to know of the earlier Huns of the same horde as Attila's, whose ineffectual invasion of Persia in 395 under the command of two Hunnic chiefs of royal blood, Kursich and Basich, the Persian diplomats could not forget; and as Priscus's

mentions of the Kidarite Huns were penned after those embassies, so the Persian ambassadors must have had nothing to point out that so differentiated the Kidarite Huns from Attila's, as to suggest that the Kidarites were of some other origin, and unrelated to Attila's Huns. In other words, the Persians, who were in a position to observe and note a difference between the two groups of Huns, and to correct any Roman misunderstanding regarding them if any misunderstanding existed, having knowledge of both of them, must have observed no significant difference between the two. Priscus names in his history the Alans,[243] the Lazi,[244] the Goths,[245] the Visigoths,[246] the Vandals,[247] the Franks,[248] the Isaurians,[249] the Boïski,[250] the Tounsoures,[251] the Skiri,[252] the Avars,[253] the Sabiri,[254] the

[243] John Given, *The Fragmentary History of Priscus : Attila, the Huns and the Roman Empire, AD 430-476* (Evolution Publishing, 2014), p. 10.

[244] John Given, *The Fragmentary History of Priscus*, p. 121.

[245] Given, p. 9.

[246] Given, p. 107.

[247] Given, p. 30.

[248] Given, p. 99.

[249] Given, p. 42.

[250] Given, p. 8.

[251] Given, p. 8.

[252] Given, p. 148.

[253] Given, p. 139.

[254] Given, p. 139.

Sorosgi,[255] the Asemountians,[256] the Roubi,[257] the Itimari,[258] the Souani,[259] the Amilzouri,[260] the Maurousians,[261] the Thracians,[262] the Saracens,[263] the Blemmyes,[264] the Aimorichiani,[265] the Noubades,[266] the Sarmati,[267] the Saragouri,[268] the Ourogi,[269] the Onogouri,[270] the Skrithiphini,[271] the Alcildzuri,[272] and the Tuncarsi,[273] but Huns he calls none of them. Only Attila's horde, the Akateri,[274] and the Kidarites,

[255] Given, p. 11.

[256] Given, p. 39.

[257] Given, p. 12.

[258] Given, p. 8.

[259] Given, p. 155.

[260] Given, p. 8.

[261] Given p. 75.

[262] Given, p. 8.

[263] Given, p. 42.

[264] Given, p. 118.

[265] Given, p. 126.

[266] Given, p. 118.

[267] Given, p. 60.

[268] Given, p. 139.

[269] Given, p. 139.

[270] Given, p. 139.

[271] Given, p. 174.

[272] Given, p. 9.

[273] Given, p. 9

[274] Given, p. 139.

does he call Huns. In other words, Priscus had accurate information on the Kidarites, and knew that they were, in fact, Huns.

The Kidarites took their name from their first leader, one Kidara, who in the Chinese sources was one Ch'i-to-lo. Chapter 97 of the *Bei shi*, or *History of the Northern Dynasties*, states:

> The Ta Yüeh-chih [Great Yue-Ji] country has its capital at Ying-chien-chih west of Fu-ti-sha. It is 14,300 li from the (Chinese) capital. In the north it borders on the Juan-juan. It was invaded several times and the capital was displaced to P'u-lo 2,100 li west of Fu-ti-sha. The king, Ch'i-to-lo was a courageous warrior and thus mobilized his troops, crossed the great mountain (Hindu-kuš) to the south and invaded northern India. From Gandhara he subdued the five countries of the north.
>
> The Hsiao Yüeh-chih country has its capital at Fu-lou-sha its first king was the son of Ch'i-to-lo, the king of the Ta Yüeh-chih. Ch'i-to-lo was expelled by the Hsiung-nu and moved west. After that he ordered his son to protect the city and therefore it is called Hsiao Yüeh-chih.[275]

The *Bei shi* text above, which was taken from the *Wei shu*, places Kidara, king of the Great Yue-Ji, to the north of the Hindu Kush in an area corresponding to Tokharistan, which of course was known as Bactria in the days of Zhang Qian, first of the Chinese to tell us about the Great Yue-Ji and their conquering of it. In the early 400s, from his stronghold in Tokharistan, Kidara with his forces swept over the mountains and down into Gandhara, where after his conquest of northern India, he set up his son as king. The Chinese afterwards called the Yue-Ji in

[275] William Samolin. "A Note on Kidara and the Kidarites." Central Asiatic Journal 2, no. 4 (1956): 295–97. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41926398., p. 297.

Gandhara 'Hsiao Yüeh-chih,' that is, the Little or Lesser Yue-Ji. That group was, of course, not the Lesser Yue-Ji that merged with the Qiang, and that with them became widely known later as the Bai people. The Chinese styled the Yue-Ji planted in Gandhara the Lesser only to distinguish them from the Great Yue-Ji that Kidara himself led.

Now, to this day scholars, reading the various accounts of the Kidarites, and examining all the data in the historical record pertaining to them, numismatic and otherwise, nevertheless continue to be at a loss to tell us how it was that they were known as Huns to the Romans, but to the Chinese as Yue-Ji. The solution to their tough enigma this book has given above, by demonstrating that the Yue-Ji were a Xiongnu clan, the Bai-Xiongnu, or White Huns; and with an easy extrapolation we can see, then, that the Kidarites themselves, having been of Yue-Ji stock, were likewise White Huns, or Bai-Xiongnu. We can take it further and assert, without doing the least violence to the classification of them, that the Kidarite Huns were in fact Kushans, or a faction of them, since the Kushans were, as shown above, the Ku-Xiongnu, or Bai-Xiongnu, or White Huns, that is, the Yue-Ji. Now, some however will object and say, that it was the Ephthalites, or White Huns, fighting together with the Sasanians led by Peroz I, that effected the destruction of the Kidarites, and that it was in 466 or 467 that such destruction of them at last occurred. Scholars who tell us that the Ephthalites, on behalf of Peroz, warred against the Kidarites, however, cite *no primary source* that actually says or shows that the Ephthalites fought against the Kidarites on his behalf, and the reason for their citing no primary source that actually says such is, that *none* exists. Those who talk about the war between Peroz and

the Kidarites, who have any credibility, use such phraseology in their speculations as 'it seems' that the Ephthalites helped the Sasanians in their war against the Kidarites. Those who say in the affirmative that they did so, have no credibility, and are, in fact, as I demonstrate below, incorrect. I will discuss the relationship between the Kidarites and the Ephthalites in a subsequent chapter, in the proper place. In bringing this chapter to a close, I will say, in sum, that the Kidarites were Yue-Ji; they were Xiongnu; they were Kushans; they were Huns. They were White Huns, same as the Ephthalites. Had Priscus identified the Kidarites not as Huns, but as of some other stock instead, his identification would have been in discord with what the Chinese tell us of the ethnic affiliation of Kidara and his horde. As it is, the two respective identifications are in perfect harmony. The conclusion, incidentally, that the Kidarite Huns, and Attila's Huns, by having Xiongnu ancestry in common, were of one and the same stock, is a correct one.

XIII

War is the Child of Pride, and Pride the Daughter of Riches. – Jonathan Swift

The Ephthalites, or White Huns

Procopius tells us in his *History of the Wars*, that the Ephthalites, or White Huns, were 'of the stock of Huns in fact as well as in name,' but that they did not associate with any of the Huns known to the Romans, 'for,' as he says, 'they occupy a land neither adjoining nor even very near to them; but their territory lies immediately to the north of Persia.'[276] Procopius, in describing the proximity of the Ephthalites to the Huns known to the Romans, had in mind a specific area where those Huns known to the Romans were at the time of his writing, and from what he says it could have been only one location that he meant, one in the vicinity of the Sea of Azov, which was then known as Lake Maeotis. Procopius writes:

> This path terminates in a place cut off by cliffs and, as it seems, absolutely impossible to pass through. For from there no way out appears, except indeed a small gate set there by nature, just as if it

[276] Procopius, *History of the Wars*, Volume I, translated by H. B. Dewing (Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1914), pp. 13-15.

> had been made by the hand of man, which has been called from of old the Caspian Gates. From there on there are plains suitable for riding and extremely well watered, and extensive tracts used as pasture land for horses, and level besides. Here almost all the nations of the Huns are settled, extending as far as the Maeotic lake.[277]

Besides the Ephthalites, or White Huns, as well as the Massagetae, who Procopius says came to be known as Huns,[278] he tells us the names of only three other groups of Huns in all the volumes of his *History of the Wars*, namely, the Sabiri,[279] the Cutrigurs,[280] and the Utigurs.[281] Now, long before the time of Procopius, a people known as Cimmerians and widely accepted to have been an Iranian one, were living near the Sea of Azov. In ancient times, as Procopius says, their king lost control of his realm and subjects to a certain man, who later had two sons, one named Utigur, and the other Cutrigur.[282] When their father died, Cutrigur and Utigur rose to power and divided all his subjects between them, with one group coming to be called Cutrigurs, and the other Utigurs; and, as we learn from Procopius, from then on they were also known as Huns, although he refers a few times to them, anachronistically, as Cimmerians. All these details conduce to indicate a certainty,

[277] Procopius, *History of the Wars*, p. 79.

[278] Procopius, *History of the Wars*, Volume II, translated by H. B. Dewing (Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1916), p. 105.

[279] Procopius, Vol. I, p. 129.

[280] Procopius, *History of the Wars*, Volume V, translated by H. B. Dewing (Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1928), p. 341.

[281] Procopius, *History of the Wars*, Vol. V, p. 93.

[282] Procopius, Vol. V, pp. 87–89.

that the man that wrested power from the hapless king of the Cimmerians was a leader of Huns, and it was doubtless on the heels of a conquest that his Huns subsumed the Cimmerians into their nation, and brought about their demise as a people. The Huns that effected this fate of the Cimmerians must have been the forerunners of those that Attila would be descended from, for the end of the Cimmerians living near the Sea of Azov occurred only once in history, and from what Procopius says, we can make the accurate inference that it was Huns that brought about their demise or end, and that those Huns that did so were the first Huns to arrive in that region, and that they were ancestral to the Huns that would be living in that same area near the Sea of Azov in the days of Priscus, whose history informs us that Attila's Huns had come from the shores of that sea to ravage and plunder Europe.[283]

Now, still living near the Sea of Azov in the time of Procopius, of course, were Cutrigurs and Utigurs, and as we can see from the above, they had been living there since before the time of Priscus. In other words, no other horde of Huns by a different name came along and conquered them. The Cutrigur Huns, as Procopius sometimes calls them, lived in his days, as he says, on the western side of the Sea of Azov;[284] and he indicates that the Utigur Huns lived on the eastern side.[285] As for the 'Sabiri Huns,' they lived in the region of the Caucasus according to Procopius, on the northern side of that mountain

[283] Given, pp. 9-10.

[284] Procopius, Vol. V, p. 239.

[285] Procopius, Vol. V, p. 95.

range.[286] I will discuss the Sabiri below, in another chapter. But I will tell the reader here, that just as the Massagetae were an Iranian people that became known as Huns, through mixing with them, so the Sabiri were a people whose lot it was to become mixed with Huns as well, and acquire as a result the name of Huns from having assimilated a number of them, or from having been assimilated by them, though of this, what I will call fact, Procopius knew nothing.

Procopius was, then, in speaking of the Utigurs and Cutrigurs of his time, identifying Huns that were of the same stock as Attila's horde. Had the case been otherwise, the Cutrigurs and Utigurs, in all probability, would not have been existent in the time of Attila and also after his death; his nation of Huns, bearing whatever name it might have borne, would have absorbed them before his time, and their names would have been doomed to oblivion. The Utigurs and Cutrigurs had existed before the days of Attila and after his days ended, and they lived in exactly the same area where the forefathers of his Huns did before they stormed into Europe. The conclusion that they were all one and the same Huns, that is, of the same Hunnic stock, is, clearly, the correct one.

Procopius says of the Ephthalites, 'they are not nomads like the other Hunnic peoples, but for a long period have been established in a goodly land.' And then he points out:

> They are the only ones among the Huns who have white bodies and countenances which are not ugly. It is also true that their manner of living is unlike that of their kinsmen, nor do they live a savage life as they do ; but they are ruled by one king, and since they possess a lawful constitution, they observe right and justice in

[286] Procopius, Vol. V, p. 75.

> their dealings both with one another and with their neighbors, in no degree less than the Romans and the Persians.[287]

The Ephthalites, then, according to Procopius, had faces unlike those of other Huns, of Cutrigurs and Utigurs in particular we may say, whom as we can see, Procopius judged ugly in comparison to the Ephthalites; and the skin of the Ephthalites was white much unlike the skin of those other Huns, whose skin on the basis of what Procopius says, we infer, of course, to have been dark relative to that of the Ephthalites. Nevertheless he does assure us, that the Ephthalites in fact were every bit as Huns as those the Romans knew, those Huns named above. So how could the Ephthalites, or White Huns, have been Huns in fact and in name, as Procopius asserts, and at the same time have been so different in every way from all the other Huns? What was it about all the hordes that showed all of them to be of the same stock in fact? That is to say, what established the Hunnic identity of the Ephthalites? One thing that established their identity as Huns must have been language. Procopius must have known that the Ephthalites did not speak a language different from that of the other Huns, or at least completely different from it. Without the same spoken tongue in common, or similar dialects, and with the entire absence of similarities between them and the other Hunnic peoples, Procopius, doubtless, would have regarded the Ephthalites and the other hordes of Huns as peoples of different origins altogether. Had he been the least unsure of their origin, he would have expressed or conveyed doubt in talking about them and their identity. But he expressed and he conveyed no doubt. Thus we can be sure that

[287] Procopius, Vol. I, p. 15.

language was one of the key factors that made Procopius declare, and declare with conviction as he does, that 'in fact as well as in name,' the Ephthalites were 'of the stock of Huns.' The evidence and arguments that I present and make below bear out, in fact, the correctness of his identification of them as Huns.

Nevertheless, the Ephthalites seem to have been a unique horde of Huns, at least to those Romans that had had first-hand experience with them, and in all probability in addition to a Hunnic tongue, they came to speak some other language also, at least by the latter half of the sixth century, and it was almost certainly an East Iranian one. Scholars of recent times, however, finding dissatisfaction with the classification of the Ephthalites as Huns, and believing them to have been of some other stock, and the Roman eyewitnesses wrong, have offered theories for us to consider, with two of them being proposed with greater vigor than the rest, namely, that of Kazuo Enoki, who argued that the Ephthalites were originally an Iranian tribe,[288] and that of Étienne de La Vaissière, whose theory runs that they were a branch of the Gaoju.[289]

Enoki arrived at his conclusion that the Ephthalites were of Iranian origin, or were in the main an Iranian tribe, after surveying and dismissing eight origin theories based on Chinese, Persian, Indian, or Byzantine sources, in light of the arguments advanced by other scholars in support of some of those various theories, and, in particular, after becoming

[288] Kazuo Enoki, *On the Nationality of the Ephthalites*, Memoirs of The Research Department of the Toyo Bunko (The Oriental Library), No. 18 (The Toyo Bunko, 1959), p. 23.

[289] Étienne de La Vaissière, "Is There a 'Nationality of the Hephtalites'?" Bulletin of the Asia Institute 17 (2003): 119–32. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24049310., p. 121.

satisfied in two regards, one, that he had correctly identified a region known to the Chinese as Hsi-mo-ta-lo, to the west of Badakhshan, on the eastern frontier of Tokharistan, as the location where the Ephthalites originated,[290] and two, that the culture of the Ephthalites could be seen as bearing some similarities to that of later peoples of Iranian stock.[291] Unlike most peoples of the past as well as of the present, but like some Iranians, the Ephthalites practiced polyandry, which is polygamy in which a woman has two or more husbands. This should not be taken to mean, however, as most scholars, including Enoki, seem to have taken it, that the Ephthalites at no time practiced as well the usual polygamy, in which a man has more than one wife. A king of the Ephthalites is attested to have had multiple wives, as Enoki knew, and it is inconceivable that his example would have gone forever unfollowed by other Ephthalite men.[292] In general, it was not noteworthy in antiquity, or in the Middle Ages, especially in Asia, particularly among nomads or peoples with a nomadic past, that a common man had multiple wives, and as such it ought to be understood, that accounts of ordinary polygamy are bound to be rare in past writings regarding the ancient peoples of Asia.

Now, polyandry in Asia, or in Central Asia, was not exclusively an Iranian custom, and Enoki knew this. It was a Tibetan practice as well.[293] But, as he points out in his paper, it was the custom of Ephthalite women to wear on their heads

[290] Kazuo Enoki, *On the Nationality of the Ephthalites*, p. 36.

[291] Enoki, p. 23.

[292] Enoki, p. 51, n. 5.

[293] Enoki, p. 52.

horns to represent the number of their husbands, one horn for each husband, and it was that custom that distinguished the Ephthalite practice of polyandry from the Tibetan one of later days.[294] Kafir tribals in West Chitral, however, who are Nuristanis speaking an Indo-Iranian language, are documented to have worn horned caps, but, of course, long after the Ephthalites had been documented to do such.[295] Enoki of course avoids drawing attention to the fact that that peculiar custom of the Ephthalite women was first recorded among no other people than the Ephthalites themselves. In other words, as no people before the Ephthalites are known to have had the horn custom, it is entirely possible that that custom had its genesis among the Ephthalites, and that the Kafirs, or Nuristanis, that had a similar custom in later centuries, were descended from Iranians that had copied that custom from the Ephthalites, if, in fact, the Nuristanis descend from others that had copied it. Moreover, it is not known whether the ancestors of the Nuristanis had undergone a language shift, whether they had become speakers of an Indo-Iranian tongue after speaking a language altogether different from the one that the Nuristanis speak today. And most importantly, the Kafirs, or Nuristanis, have never been known or documented to have practiced polyandry. In an attempt to show an instance of documented polyandry among East Iranians that antedated the existence of the Ephthalites, Enoki interprets a statement made by Herodotus as evidence that the Massagetae, who were Sakas originally, practiced polyandry.[296] But such interpretation of what Herodotus says in

[294] Enoki, p. 51.

[295] Enoki, p. 55.

[296] Enoki, p. 53, n. 2.

the passage Enoki quotes, which reads, 'Each man marries a wife, but the wives are common to all,'[297] in one translation, and 'every man has a wife, but the wives are used promiscuously,'[298] in another, is manifestly a distortion of what Herodotus says and means. His statement is, as anyone free from bias can see, no description of polyandry among the Massagetae at all. Polyandry involves the marriage of two or more men to the same woman, and Herodotus mentions nothing about marriages of that kind in that statement. In sum, the practice of polyandry by the Ephthalites, as well as the custom of Ephthalite women to wear horns on their heads, offers no evidence of the Ephthalites having been of Iranian origin.

Enoki knew the odds were against him in trying to make his case that the Ephthalites were an Iranian tribe, and in his pursuit of evidence, with those odds ever on his mind, he left no stone unturned, even if it was a mere pebble, and could yield nothing but a minute prospect of evidence, or something that could possibly be interpreted as evidence, for his argument. Naturally, then, in hopes of discovering Iranian characteristics, he examined the few statements made in regard to the religious practices and views of the Ephthalites by their contemporaries, such as those mentioned in the account of Sung Yün, the Chinese traveler and Buddhist monk, who passing through Tokharistan in the early 500s observed of the Ephthalites in Badakhshan, that '[The majority of them] do not believe [in] Buddhism. Most of them worship *wai-shên* or foreign gods.

[297] Herodotus, *The Persian Wars*, Volume I, translated by A. D. Godley (Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1920), p. 271.

[298] Herodotus, *The Histories*, translated by Aubrey de Sélincourt, Revised, with an introduction and notes by A. R. Burn (Penguin, 1972), p. 128.

They kill living creatures and eat their flesh [raw];'[299] and he said of those in Gandhara: 'The disposition of the people is cruel and vendicative [sic], and they practice the most barbarous atrocities. They do not believe in Buddhism, but love to worship *kuei-shên* or demons.'[300] Immediately after sharing those observations of Sung Yün, Enoki quotes a couple of sentences from the *Liang shu*, or *Book of Liang*, that deal with the same subjects, and read: 'They worship T'ien-shên or heaven-god and Huo-shên or fire-god. Every morning they first go outside [of their tents] and pray to gods and then take breakfast. They kneel down to bow only once.'[301] Last of all, Enoki shares the observations of the Chinese pilgrim Hsüan-Chwang (Xuanzang) on the people of Hsi-mo-ta-lo, whom Enoki determined or took to be Ephthalites, and whom Hsüan-Chwang described thus: 'The disposition of the people is rude and harsh. They are not conscious of sin and happiness.'[302] With these various accounts in mind, Enoki concludes:

> It is evident that foreign gods and demons in Sung-yün's account correspond to Heaven-god and Fire-god in the *Liang-shu*, and it goes without saying that fire-worship formed a great characteristic of the Persians and other Iranian tribes.[303]

The *Liang shu* is, in the main, a history of the Liang dynasty, which ruled a large portion of southeastern China from 502 to

[299] Enoki, p. 45.

[300] Enoki, p. 45.

[301] Enoki, p. 46.

[302] Enoki, p. 46.

[303] Enoki, p. 46.

557. To the Chinese under the Liang, the Ephthalites were not known by the name Ephthalites, neither were they known as White Huns; they were, as Enoki notes, known to them by the name of Hua, the same name that the Chinese used of the country that they ruled.[304] Enoki points out also, that 'According to the *Liang-shu*, five envoies [sic] were sent from the country of Hua to the court of the Liang between the 15th year of T'ien-chien and the 7th year of Ta-t'ung […],'[305] and then he goes on to say:

> It is, however, to be remembered that Hua can not be looked upon as *the* center of the Ephthalite empire at the beginning of the 6th century, but it was a country under the rule of the Ephthalites who occupied Khôrasân, Tukhârestân, Sogdiana, Gandhâra, north of the T'ien-shan Mountains and a part of Chinese Turkestan. The Ephthalites were nomad [sic] and their king, having no fixed residence, removed from one place to another every month. For some reason unknown to us, Hua was received [by the Liang] as, or pretended [to the Liang] to be, the Ephthalite empire itself. That the envoy of Hua told the Liang that their king was named YEN-TAI-I-LI-T'O (*Yeptailitha) will only show that the country was under the control of this king.[306]

Enoki here asserts that we must understand Hua to have been just a country under Ephthalite rule, regardless of what the *Liang shu* says, and the implication of his assertion is, that the populace of Hua, being under the rule of the Ephthalites, must therefore be understood to have consisted of two or more

[304] Enoki, p. 1.

[305] Enoki, p. 2.

[306] Enoki, p. 6

peoples, the people or peoples of Hua that were under Ephthalite rule, and a number of Ephthalites as well; and the same holds true of other places that Enoki points out as having been occupied by Ephthalites and under their rule, namely, Khôrasân, Sogdiana, Gandhâra, north of the T'ien-shan Mountains and a part of Chinese Turkestan. If the *Liang shu* stated that the envoys had come from Sogdiana, for example, Enoki would have said the same thing in regard to such statement as he says about the statement that they came from Hua. In other words, Enoki could not accept, and in fact with vigor rejected, that the envoys sent from Hua to the Liang were representing the Ephthalite king or empire, because to have accepted that they were would have contradicted his theory that the center of the Ephthalites was not in Hua, which country he located 'in the neighbourhood of the middle waters of the Oxus,'[307] but in Hsi-mo-ta-lo, just to the west of Badakhshan in Tokharistan, and far from Hua. But in asserting that Hua was just a country under Ephthalite rule, he created for himself a problem, one that he did not foresee. When later in his paper, in his attempt to show documentary evidence that might lend support to his theory of the Iranian origin of the Ephthalites, he quotes the *Liang shu* passage that says in regard to Hua 'They worship T'ien-shên or heaven-god and Huo-shên or fire-god. Every morning they first go outside [of their tents] and pray to gods and then take breakfast. They kneel down to bow only once,'[308] Enoki forgets that he had asserted previously that Hua was just a country under the rule of the Ephthalites, and likewise forgets, or just ignores, that by asserting such, he

[307] Enoki, p. 4.

[308] Enoki, p. 46.

thereby defined the populace of Hua to have consisted of two or more peoples, thus making it impossible in his argument for him to attribute that *Liang shu* passage to a particular people. Moreover, he also forgets, or perhaps ignores, that he clearly implies that the envoys from Hua were not even Ephthalites, that they were merely from a country under the rule of the Ephthalite king. In other words, he constructed his argument in such way that he unintentionally made it impossible for himself to use that passage of the *Liang shu* to support his theory that the Ephthalites were of Iranian origin. When we turn to Procopius to guide us, we can see that on the basis of anyone else's argument as well, no matter what it might entail, that passage of the *Liang shu* could not possibly be used to support any other theory that the Ephthalites were originally Iranians.

In his *History of the Wars*, Procopius relates a story about an incident between the Persians and the Ephthalites, and the relevance of the incident to the question here at hand, namely, the ethnic affiliation of the Ephthalites, is clear, but not obvious. Procopius writes:

> Perozes, marching against these Ephthalitae, was accompanied by an ambassador, Eusebius by name, who, as it happened, had been sent to his court by the Emperor Zeno. Now the Ephthalitae made it appear to their enemy that they had turned to flight because they were wholly terrified by their attack, and they retired with all speed to a place which was shut in on every side by precipitous mountains, and abundantly screened by a close forest of wide-spreading trees. Now as one advanced between the mountains to a great distance, a broad way appeared in the valley, extending apparently to an indefinite distance, but at the end it had no outlet at all, but terminated in the very midst of the circle of mountains. So Perozes, with no thought at all of treachery, and forgetting that

he was marching in a hostile country, continued the pursuit without the least caution. A small body of the Huns were in flight before him, while the greater part of their force, by concealing themselves in the rough country, got in the rear of the hostile army; but as yet they desired not to be seen by them, in order that they might advance well into the trap and get as far as possible in among the mountains, and thus be no longer able to turn back. When the Medes [Sasanians] began to realize all this (for they now began to have a glimmering of their peril), though they refrained from speaking of the situation themselves through fear of Perozes, yet they earnestly entreated Eusebius to urge upon the king, who was completely ignorant of his own plight, that he should take counsel rather than make an untimely display of daring, and consider well whether there was any way of safety open to them. So he went before Perozes, but by no means revealed the calamity which was upon them; instead he began with a fable, telling how a lion once happened upon a goat bound down and bleating on a mound of no very great height, and how the lion, bent upon making a feast of the goat, rushed forward with intent to seize him, but fell into a trench exceedingly deep, in which was a circular path, narrow and endless (for it had no outlet anywhere), which indeed the owners of the goat had constructed for this very purpose, and they had placed the goat above it to be a bait for the lion. When Perozes heard this, a fear came over him lest perchance the Medes had brought harm upon themselves by their pursuit of the enemy. He therefore advanced no further, but, remaining where he was, began to consider the situation. By this time the Huns were following him without any concealment, and were guarding the entrance of the place in order that their enemy might no longer be able to withdraw to the rear. Then at last the Persians [Sasanians] saw clearly in what straits they were, and they felt that the situation was desperate; for they had no hope that they would ever escape from the peril. Then the king of the Ephthalitae sent some of his followers to Perozes; he upbraided him at length for his senseless foolhardiness, by which he had wantonly destroyed both himself and the Persian people, but he announced that even

> so the Huns would grant them deliverance, if Perozes should consent to prostrate himself before him as having proved himself master, and, taking the oaths traditional among the Persians, should give pledges that they would never again take the field against the nation of the Ephthalitae. When Perozes heard this, he held a consultation with the Magi who were present and enquired of them whether he must comply with the terms dictated by the enemy. The Magi replied that, as to the oath, he should settle the matter according to his own pleasure; as for the rest, however, he should circumvent his enemy by craft. And they reminded him that it was the custom among the Persians to prostrate themselves before the rising sun each day; he should, therefore, watch the time closely and meet the leader of the Ephthalitae at dawn, and then, turning toward the rising sun, make his obeisance. In this way, they explained, he would be able in the future to escape the ignominy of the deed. Perozes accordingly gave the pledges concerning the peace, and prostrated himself before his foe exactly as the Magi had suggested, and so, with the whole Median army intact, gladly retired homeward.[309]

Thus Peroz with his whole army of Sasanians fell for the ruse, the feigned retreat, a signature tactic of Hunnic warriors, and put himself and his men in grave danger and at the mercy of his enemy. The king of the Ephthalites, or White Huns, however, out of sheer magnanimity, offered Peroz a deal. On condition that he prostrate himself before the king, he could free himself and his men and avert their annihilation at the hands of the Huns. Peroz at first was at loss what to do, and he turned to the Magi for guidance. The wise men advised Peroz to prostrate himself at dawn when he bowed in prayer to the rising sun, so that it would appear to the Ephthalite king that he was humbling himself in prostration at the king's feet, when in

[309] Procopius, Vol. I, pp. 15-21.

reality he would be doing what he did every morning anyway, and would thus avoid humiliation. Accordingly Peroz, at dawn on the day appointed, made his obeisance facing the ascending sun, and thereby at the same time satisfied the demand of the Ephthalite king, thus saving his face, and saving the Sasanians from destruction.

Now, the success of this deception depended entirely on one thing, namely, that none of the Ephthalites knew that the Sasanian religion involved the ritual of bowing to the rising sun every morning during prayer. And, in fact, the Ephthalites were wholly ignorant of the practice, and thus the deception was a success. Had the Ephthalites been Iranians, such as Enoki had in mind, they too would have been bowing to the sun in prayer at dawn; had they been Iranians, they would have discovered the Sasanian deception immediately, and Peroz and his army would have been destroyed on the spot. Moreover, religion aside, none of the Sasanians even suspected that the Ephthalites were Iranians, or even related to Iranians in any way, not even the wisest among them, the Magi, whose plan it was, as we have seen, to deceive the Ephthalites in that manner. Had the Magi been the least unsure of the identity of the Ephthalites, unsure, that is, of whether they were an Iranian people, they would have advised Peroz to try to extricate himself from the situation in some other way. In brief, the Ephthalites were not Iranians.

That memorable incident between the Sasanians and the Ephthalites occurred in 474, more than twenty-five years before the ascendency of the Liang, and more than fifty years before the first pages of the *Liang shu* would be written. Now, if we discard, as we should, Enoki's argument that Hua was just a country under Ephthalite rule, we discard also its implication

that we must understand the populace of Hua to have consisted of two or more peoples, and we can then understand, correctly, what the *Liang shu* says, that the book in fact uses Hua in reference to one people only, namely, to the Ephthalites. But the *Liang shu* does not refer to, or describe, the Hua, or Ephthalites, of 474 and earlier, but the Ephthalites, or Hua, of the mid 500s and later, long after that incident between them and the Sasanians. The *Liang shu* passage that reads 'They worship T'ien-shên or heaven-god and Huo-shên or fire-god. Every morning they first go outside [of their tents] and pray to gods and then take breakfast. They kneel down to bow only once' is, in fact, a mere snapshot of the Ephthalites taken long after that first exposure of theirs to the religion of the Persians, or Sasanians, and thus to their religious practices, and if it was the Ephthalite ritual of the worship of Mithra that that passage describes, then it is clear that the Ephthalites in time *adopted* the religion of the Sasanians, and that they did so *after* 474, after Peroz had pulled off the ruse that saved him and his Sasanians from annihilation.

Now, Enoki of course also quotes Procopius, and he does so for the express purpose of juxtaposing what Procopius says of the Ephthalites with the description of the Huns given by Ammianus Marcellinus, the one account set next to the other emphasizing how unlike, in point of countenance, the Ephthalites were to the Huns. Ammianus says the Huns were 'monstrously ugly,'[310] hideous, and Procopius describes the Ephthalites as not ugly. Enoki's short commentary afterwards on the two accounts juxtaposed, however, has the unintended effect

[310] Ammianus Marcellinus, *The Surviving Books of the History of Ammianus Marcellinus*,Volume III, translated by John C. Rolfe (Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1939), p. 381.

of highlighting a bad habit Enoki indulges in, instead of lending support to his theory. In discussing all the various accounts of the Ephthalites, Enoki emphasizes the points in them that seem to corroborate one another and strengthen his argument, in light of what Ammianus says of the Huns, but he remains utterly silent on the points in them that correspond to the description of the Huns by Ammianus, points that are staring the reader in the face and begging for an explanation from Enoki, who nowhere attempts to explain them, or to reconcile them, despite the weakening effect that they have on his argument. Hsüan-Chwang, for example, in his *Records of Western Countries*, says that the features of the people of Hsi-mo-ta-lo, whom Enoki asserts to have been Ephthalites, 'are mean and ugly,'[311] which description of them tallies exactly with what Ammianus says of the visages of the Huns. Enoki nevertheless acts as if he had never quoted Hsüan-Chwang once he juxtaposes what Ammianus says of the Huns with what Procopius says of the Ephthalites to emphasize the ugliness of the Huns. Likewise, Sung Yün, in describing the people of Badakhshan, who Enoki affirms were Ephthalites,[312] says in a passage quoted by Enoki, 'They kill living creatures and eat their flesh raw,'[313] which observation finds its parallel in Ammianus, who says of the Huns:

> But although they have the form of men, however ugly, they are so hardy in their mode of life that they have no need of fire nor of savory food, but eat the roots of wild plants and the half-raw flesh

[311] Enoki, p. 34.

[312] Enoki, p. 45.

[313] Enoki, p. 45.

> of any kind of animal whatever, which they put between their thighs and the backs of their horses, and thus warm it a little.'[314]

In other words, Enoki cherry-picks from the sources, and does so right in front of your face, and to a greater extent than I have pointed out, noting only those things that conduce to strengthen his argument, and leaving behind and neglected, in plain sight, what detracts from it by way of contradiction.

Knowing at this point, as we do, that the Ephthalites were not Iranians in origin, we now have at hand an array of fewer peoples among whom we might discover their ancestors or kinsmen. Enoki in his paper surveys, as said above, the various origin theories of the Ephthalites proposed over the years, and he dismisses all of them one by one, explaining why, in his view, the Ephthalites could not have been Gushi, nor Kangar, nor Yuezhi (Yue-Ji), nor Kidarites, nor Gaoju, nor Xiongnu, or Huns, nor Turks, nor Mongols, nor a people of Altaic stock ('Turks or Mongols'[315]). With his Iranian theory dismissed as well, its invalidity being above demonstrated, we see we leave ourselves, for all intents and purposes, no ancestors and no kinsmen to connect with the Ephthalites, or White Huns, if we assent to Enoki's view that all the theories he dismisses are invalid. In other words, his conclusion that the Ephthalites were not a branch of any one of the peoples above mentioned, or related to any one of them in any way, cannot possibly be correct. One of the peoples dismissed by Enoki, or more than one of them, must have been either the ancestors of the Ephthalites, or their kinsmen.

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[314] Marcellinus, pp. 381-383.

[315] Enoki, p. 22.

In the first place, in common with all the peoples I just mentioned, the Ephthalites were in no way a homogeneous people; they were, like all the others, a composite or hybrid one, an ethnos into whose making more than one people participated, their forebears, whoever they were, themselves also having been made up of two or more stocks. This is not to say, however, that the Ephthalites, or any of the other peoples named above, cannot be identified as an ethnic group. No ethnos is a spontaneous creation made in isolation from dust and dirt modeled into men and women, and then animated. A continual process of regular mixing among a finite number of peoples, some of the same origin and others of different origin, punctuated by periods of isolation from others not mixing among them, creates the conditions for the ethnogenesis of a people.

Of the peoples named above, the Yue-Ji, as I have demonstrated, were White Huns, the Bai-Xiongnu; and the Xiongnu proper themselves, as I have shown, were in origin a hybrid people, one constituted, in the main, by the merging of the Ji people led by Tai Bo and a branch of the Kangar, or Khands, or Khans, or Khuns, one that had found its way into China in remote antiquity. The Yue-Ji, as we have seen, were called Bai-Xiongnu, or White Huns, not because they had white bodies, but because they wore white silk clothing, just as their descendants the Pai Man, or Bai Man, of Nan-chao did, as the *Man shu* confirms. This should not be taken to mean, however, that all the descendants of the Yue-Ji, wherever such descendants may have lived, continued to wear clothing made of white silk. Fashions change more quickly than names fall out of use, and circumstances, ever changing as they are, alone often

dictate what the dress of a people will be, or will become. The Ephthalites were known to the Romans not just as Huns, but, of course, as White Huns; and to the Indians also, who had no idea what names the Romans knew them by, the Ephthalites were known as Sveta Hûna, that is, as White Huns. Procopius tells us that the Ephthalites had white bodies, but he does not say that it was owing to their white bodies that they were called White Huns. The use of the name White Huns in the region of the Oxus antedated the existence of the Ephthalites, and it was not used in reference to white bodies. The Yue-Ji, or Great Yue-Ji, as I have shown, were the Pasiani, or Basiani, of Strabo, that is, the Bai-Xiongnu, or White Huns. And remember, the Great Yue-Ji, or White Huns, set up their capital on the Oxus, as Zhang Qian confirms; and it was on the Oxus as Enoki shows, that the country of Hua, that is, the country of the Ephthalites, or White Huns, as described in the *Liang shu*, was located.

Now, a number of official dynastic histories, all written in Chinese by contemporaries of the Ephthalites, or near contemporaries of them, state that the Ephthalites were a branch of the Ta-yüeh-shih, that is, a branch of the Great Yue-Ji, namely, the *Sui shu,* the *Zhou shu*, the *Wei shu*, and the *Bei shi*, the first being the official history of the fleeting Sui dynasty (581 - 618); the second, the history of two Xianbei dynasties – the Western Wei (535 - 557) and the Northern Zhou (557 - 581); the third one, the *Wei shu*, a history of the Northern Wei (386 - 535) and the Eastern Wei (534 - 550); and the *Bei shi*, or *History of the Northern Dynasties*, is, in the main, a compilation of content found in the other three histories named above.[316] In his paper Enoki examines, of course, the passages in those histories

[316] Enoki, p. 7.

that pertain to the Ephthalites, and expresses his opinion that it is unclear what the name Great Yue-Ji meant to the authors of those histories. He tells us:

> …It is not clear why the Ephthalites were looked upon as a sort of the Ta-yüeh-shih or what the Ta-yüeh-shih meant to the authors of these books. As is well known, in Chinese records, the Ta-yüeh-shih is used for three meanings. First, it was the name of [the] tribe who emigrated from Kan-su [Gansu] to what is now Russian and Afghan Turkestan. Then it was used as a designation of the Kushanian and some of their successors. And, at the same time, it meant the territory occupied and ruled by the first Ta-yüeh-shih and the Kushanian, that is to say, Tokharestan and Gandhara. And in the 5th and the 6th centuries [sic] (Ta-)yüeh-shih usually meant the territory on both sides of the Hindukush Mountains. It is quite unlikely that the Chinese knew at that time what the first Ta-yüeh-shih tribe was like. So I am of the opinion that the Ta-yüeh-shih origin of the Ephthalites was invented either because the Ephthalites occupied the region which was known to the Chinese as Ta-yüeh-shih or because the Ephthalites were looked upon as a sort of the Kidarites who were called Ta-yüeh-shih under the Wei.[317]

The Ephthalites, as Enoki states, were first known to the Chinese in 456, the year when they sent their first embassy to the Northern Wei.[318] Now, as the *Wei shu* tells us, or as the *Bei shi* conveys to us what the *Wei shu* says, Kidara, king of the Great Yue-Ji, and known as such to the Wei, conquered Gandhara and set up his son as king there, the Chinese afterwards, as we have seen, calling the Great Yue-Ji colony in

[317] Enoki, p. 11.

[318] Enoki, p. 2.

Gandhara the Lesser Yue-Ji, and the territory that they ruled, Gandhara itself, the 'Hsiao Yüeh-chih country,' that is, the 'Lesser Yue-Ji country.' These events recorded in the *Wei shu* and the *Bei shi* took place also in the early 400s. Again, Enoki makes the statement that it is unclear what the name Ta-yüeh-shih, or Great Yue-Ji, meant to the authors of the histories named above, and states likewise his opinion that the Wei invented the Great Yue-Ji origin of the Ephthalites because they occupied a region, as he says, that the Chinese knew as Ta-yüeh-shih.[319] The documented use of that name by the Wei, however, invalidates his statements and shows them to be baseless. The Wei used the name Great Yue-Ji on the basis of what people were, or what the Wei understood them to be, and not on the basis of their being from territory that the Wei knew, or once knew, as Great Yue-Ji country, that is, from the region known to us as Tokharistan. The evidence for this is found in the *Wei shu*, where in a passage of it related in the *Bei shi* as well as in the *Tongdian*, we see that the Wei vacillated between two different identifications of the Ephthalites, not knowing whether to identify them either as a branch of the Great Yue-Ji, or as a branch of the Gaoju, a tribe or clan of 'Turks.'[320] Tokharistan at the time was the seat of the Ephthalites, their stronghold, and they ruled their empire from there for a long time. If it had been on the basis of their occupying Tokharistan, the Great Yue-Ji country, as Enoki says, that the Wei identified the Ephthalites as Great Yue-Ji, there would be no mention of

[319] Enoki, p. 11.

[320] Charles Bunnell Wakeman, "Hsi Jung, the Western Barbarians: An Annotated Translation of the Five Chapters of the T'ung Tien on the Poples and Countries of Pre-islamic Central Asia," Ph.D. dissertation (University of California, Los Angeles, 1990). pp. 709-713.

them anywhere in the *Wei shu* as having been perhaps Gaoju or any other people whatever, for the mere mention of them as perhaps a branch of the Gaoju demonstrates a different basis of identification altogether from a geographical one, from the basis Enoki proposes to have been used. In other words, the Wei would not have speculated about their being a branch of the Gaoju if the basis of the identification of the Ephthalites as Great Yue-Ji were, in fact, one of geography; on such geographical basis, the Wei would have regarded them as Great Yue-Ji regardless of any other possible identification. The *Wei shu* itself, in fact, as represented by both the *Bei shi* and the *Tongdian*, shows the fact explicitly in its first line, in plain language, that the basis of the identification was not geographical, for the Wei referred to the region occupied by the Ephthalites, known to them as Yada, not as 'Great Yue-Ji country,' or as 'Lesser Yue-Ji country,' as they did in the case of the Kidarites, but as 'Country of the Yada,' or 'Yada country,' as the *Bei shi*, which is corroborated by the *Tongdian,* informs us:

> 嚈噠國，大月氏之種類也，亦曰高車之別種。其原出於塞北。自金山而南，在于闐之西，都烏滸水南二百餘里，去長安一萬一百里。
>
> Country of the Yada. There is a kind of Da Yuezhi, also called a different kind of Gaoju. They originated in the north, and came south from Jinshan mountain.

In other words, the Chinese did not consider the region occupied by the Ephthalites as 'Great Yue-Ji country,' and their own statements prove that they did not. They knew it as, and referred to it as, 'Country of the Yada,' that is, 'Ephthalite

country.' Anyone who thinks otherwise, and concurs with Enoki, makes as gross a mistake as he made, and like him, has a misunderstanding of what the text actually says.

Étienne de La Vaissière for one, who resuscitated, in 2003, the Gaoju theory of the origin of the Ephthalites, or White Huns, with the publication of his *Is There a "Nationality of the Hephthalites?"*, became convinced of Enoki's interpretation of the *Wei shu* and the other texts in their description of the Ephthalites, believing that the Wei described them as Great Yue-Ji only because they occupied the territory formerly held by the Great Yue-Ji.[321] He would not have fallen into the error of thinking that to have been the case if he had realized, that the basis of their identification as Great Yue-Ji, as demonstrated above, had nothing to do with geography. At any rate, to clear the way for his arguments that the Ephthalites were Gaoju in origin, and that Enoki's Iranian theory is invalid, he tells us, at the outset of his paper, of the discovery of a single polyandric marriage contract in the Rob archive, one that antedated the first attestation of the Ephthalites in Bactria by a hundred years.[322] Then, on the basis of the existence of that single marriage record, he asserts that 'Polyandry was a genuine Bactrian custom, not a Hephtalite one.'[323] Whether polyandry was in fact a Bactrian custom is, for our purposes, now beside the point, we having already demonstrated that the Ephthalites were not Iranian in origin. I will say, however, that it is a hasty extrapolation to assume a custom of a people existed, or existed in a region, on the basis of the discovery of just one marriage

[321] La Vaissière, "Is There a 'Nationality of the Hephtalites'?," p. 120.

[322] La Vaissière, p. 119.

[323] La Vaissière, p. 119.

contract. Almost immediately after telling us that polyandry was present as a practice in Bactria a century before the first mention of the Ephthalites there, who were, again, first mentioned to be there in 456, La Vaissière shows us, and emphasizes, that the Ephthalites were in Bactria nearly one hundred years before the first mention of them as being there,[324] not realizing at all, evidently, that he completely nullified, in almost the same breath, what he had just said and implied, that polyandry was a custom in Bactria before the Ephthalites were there. Apart from the *Liang shu*, the Chinese sources, the *Bei shi*, or the *Wei shu* in particular, locate the origin of the Ephthalites north of the Chinese frontier, and the *Tongdian* alone provides a date for their migration from the Altai to the south, the latter source specifying, or at least making it possible for the interpretation, that those nomads eventually reached Bactria, or Tokharistan, eighty or ninety years before the reign of the Wei emperor Wen. In other words, the *Tongdian* places the arrival of the Ephthalites in Bactria, or, as La Vaissière sees it, of Gaoju known as Ephthalites, between 360 and 370,[325] about the same time when that polyandric marriage contract was written, and about one hundred years before the Ephthalites gained control of Bactria, or Tokharistan, and were first mentioned there. Here is La Vaissière in his own words, contradicting himself, as shown by the juxtaposition of his statements, and thus negating his 'refutation' of Enoki's theory:

> What Enoki could not have foreseen is the discovery in the Rob archive of a polyandric marriage contract antedating the first

[324] La Vaissière, p. 122.

[325] La Vaissière, p. 121.

> mention of the Hephtalites in Bactria by a century…. In other words, the Hephtalites were in Bactria a century before gaining control there….[326]

Nevertheless La Vaissière, believing he has dealt a fatal blow to Enoki's Iranian theory, and thinking the Great Yue-Ji theory to be dead already, moves quickly and eagerly on to discussion of the *Tongdian*, which, as he points out, summarizes the *Wei shu*, with the text beginning in this way:

> Yada country, Yidatong: Yada country is said to either be a division of the Gaoju or of Da Yuezhi stock. They originated from the north of the Chinese frontier and came down south from the Jinshan mountain.[327]

The *Tongdian* was written by one Tu Yu, a Tang official, who began the work in 765 and finished it in 801.[328] The passage above, which La Vaissière quotes in his paper and uses as the basis of his Gaoju theory, was translated by Charles Wakeman, who translated five chapters of the *Tongdian* and included them in his dissertation, of which the paragraph above constitutes a part. Note that the pronoun *they* in that paragraph refers to neither the Gaoju nor the Great Yue-Ji; it refers, in both instances, to Yada. Yada means Ephthalites. Note also that the text does not say or imply that the Yada originated in, or in the area of, the Altai; it says that 'they originated from the north of the Chinese frontier,' which was a vast area, and it goes on to say that 'they came down south from the Jinshan mountain,' that is,

[326] La Vaissière, p. 119; p. 122.

[327] Charles Bunnell Wakeman, "Hsi Jung, the Western Barbarians," pp. 709-713.

[328] Wakeman, p. 5.

the Altai. La Vaissière, however, misunderstanding what the text actually says, writes:

> Basically, Enoki does not explain why a text placed the origin of the Hephtalites in the Altai.[329]

Had the text said that the Ephthalites originated in the Jinshan mountain and migrated south from there, then, in that case, La Vaissière would, of course, be correct, and would have an argument. As it is, however, the text does not say anything of that kind, and it does not imply anything that can be construed to mean what La Vaissière thinks it means. In other words, he is seriously mistaken; he never had any argument in the first place. Incidentally, the Chinese version of the *Bei shi* says only that they originated in the *north*.

Now, La Vaissière, reading that Wakeman translation above, asserts that the information in it came from the Ephthalite ambassadors that visited the Wei in 456, and he says in regard to that information:

> According to these data, gathered from the Hephtalites and early enough to be regarded as a reliable account of their origin, the Hephtalites had migrated from the Altai to the south in the middle of the fourth century and were of the same stock as the Gaoju. We do not have the slightest reason to doubt this description from a sinological point of view.[330]

Anyone who argues, or asserts, or who holds that the information in that paragraph from the *Tongdian*, or the *Wei*

[329] La Vaissière, p. 120.

[330] La Vaissière, p. 121.

shu, or that same information from the *Wei shu* found in the *Bei shi*, was communicated by, or gathered from, the Ephthalites themselves, as La Vaissière does, must necessarily accept that *all* of the information in it came from the Ephthalites. If you tell us that the Ephthalites themselves provided the information in that paragraph, you do not have the privilege of rejecting on any basis some of the content in it as not from them. In other words, one cannot accept that they were Gaoju, but reject that they were Great Yue-Ji, or vice versa, who argues, as La Vaissière does, that the Ephthalites were the source of the information contained in that passage. Moreover, to believe and accept that the origin information in it was gathered from the Ephthalites themselves, as La Vaissière does, is to put those Ephthalites that he assumes to have been the source of it in a dubious position. What, they could not decide whether they were Gaoju or Great Yue-Ji. They arrived at the court of the Wei in 456 in a state of confusion regarding their identity? If the Ephthalites had been the source of the information regarding their origin, there would be one ethnonymic name in that statement, not two—two connected by the disjunctive conjunction *or*. La Vaissière's argument that the Ephthalites were Gaoju in origin was fatally flawed from the beginning. His theory is here demonstrated to be invalid.

Now there is, of course, also the ethnonym Yada in that paragraph translated by Wakeman, and it is clearly the name Yada, and only Yada, that represents the name that the Ephthalites identified themselves with when they met with the Wei; but not when they met with them, as we will see, in 456. Yada, or Yida, is synonymous with Yeta, or Ye-tha, and all these forms are contractions of the name Ye-tha-i-li-to, or Yen-tai-i-

li-t'o ('Yeptailitha'), the former full name being Cunningham's rendering of it,[331] and the latter, as well as its variant Yeptailitha, being Enoki's spelling of the name of the Ephthalite king as recorded in the *Liang shu*.[332] In Western sources, Ye-tha-i-li-to, or Yen-tai-i-li-t'o, is most often written as Ephthalites, or as Hephthalites by some, and least often as Nephthalites. 'Their true name of *Ephthalites* was very closely rendered by the syllables *Ye-tha-i-li-to*,' says Cunningham in *Coins of the Tochari, Kushâns, or Yue-ti*;[333] and in considering all the various forms of the name, he points out that Theophylact Simocatta's rendering of it as *Abdela* 'is the nearest form to the original Ephthalite.'[334] Cunningham, in saying that about the form Abdela, showed remarkable insight, as it would not be until more than one hundred years later that the full form of their endonym—ēbodalo—would be discovered in Bactrian documents translated by Nicholas Sims-Williams.[335]

From the above we can see that all the various forms of the name—Ephthalite, Ye-tha-i-li-to, (Y)eptailitha, Abdela—are transcriptions and transliterations of the endonym ēbodalo, as well as transcriptions and transliterations of the name of the king. Thus the name Ye-tha-i-li-to, or (Y)eptailitha, or ēbodalo, however the name is rendered or contracted, or corrupted, is a proper name—the name of the horde, the name of their country,

[331] Cunningham, *Coins of the Tochari, Kushâns, or Yue-ti*, p. 70.

[332] Enoki, p. 4.

[333] Cunningham, *Coins of the Tochari, Kushâns, or Yue-ti*, p. 70.

[334] Cunningham, *Coins of the Tochari, Kushâns, or Yue-ti*, p. 74.

[335] Stefan Heidemann, "Coin Hoards 2015. Medieval and Modern. Middle East?, The Hephthalite Drachms Minted in Balkh a Hoard, a Sequence, and a New Reading." The Numismatic Chronicle 175 Offprint (The Royal Numismatic Society, 2015), p. 332.

and the name of a king of the Ephthalites, the one after whom the horde took its name.[336] Chavannes, for one, did not overlook the fact that the horde was named after the king:

> Ce roi est nommé Ephthalanos par Théophane de Byzance qui dit que c'est de lui que les Hephthalites prirent leur nom; l'histoire des *Leang* rapporte d'autre part que, en 516, le roi des *Hoa* nommé *Ye-tai-i-l-t'o* envoya une ambassade en Chine; enfin le *T'ang chou* dit: «*Ye-ta* était le nom de famille du roi; dans la suite, ses descendants firent de ce nom de famille le nom du royaume». Ces trois témoignages se confirment mutuellement; ils expliquent pourquoi la dénomination «Hephthalites» n'apparaît que vers la fin du V° siècle à la suite du règne glorieux d'Akhschounwâr dont le nom de famille devait être Hephthal ou Hethailit.[337]

Translation:

> This king is named Ephthalanos by Theophanes of Byzantium who says that it is from him that the Hephthalites took their name; the history of the *Leangs* [Liang] relates on the other hand that, in 516, the king of the *Hua* named *Ye-tai-i-l-t'o* sent an embassy to China; finally the *T'ang chou* said, '*Ye-ta* was the king's surname; later, his descendants made this family name the name of the kingdom.' These three testimonies mutually confirm each other; they explain why the denomination 'Hephthalites' only appears towards the end of the 5th century following the glorious reign of Akhschounwâr whose family name was to be Hephthal or Hethailit.

[336] Enoki, p. 14.

[337] Edouard Chavannes, *Documents sur les Tou-Kiue (Turcs) occidentaux*: Recueillis et commentés par Édouard Chavannes ... Avec une carte. (Présenté à l'Académie impériale des sciences de St-Pétersbourg le 23 août 1900).. Russia: Commissionnaires de l'Académie impériale des sciences, 1903., p. 223.

The Ephthalites sent a total of five embassies to the Liang, in the years 516, 520, 526, 535, and 541,[338] and it was from the first embassy that the Liang learned that the name of the reigning Ephthalite king was Ye-tha-i-li-to; and, as the *Liang shu* informs us, he was still king when the Liang received embassies from the Ephthalites in 520 and 526. The first embassy to the Northen Wei sent by the Ephthalites was, again, in 456, and the second one was about fifty years later, in 507.[339] Now, the *Wei shu* was compiled by its author between 551 and 554, and, as shown above, it uses the name Yada in reference to the Ephthalites in its passage regarding their origin. The Ephthalites, however, or Yada, could not have been known as Ephthalites or as Yada, or by any variant of either of those forms, when the horde sent its first embassy to the Wei in 456, if the king Ye-tha-i-li-to, whose reign lasted until at least 526, and whose name the horde shared, was the first king to bear that name, for he could not have reigned from 456 to 526, a period of seventy years. Moreover, in 458, the king of the horde was known as Akhshunwar.[340] This latter name, however, which Ṭabarī recorded in his history, is generally held to have been a title, one of Sogdian origin. The Ephthalites, of course, did not emerge as a people in Sogdia and spread out from there; they emerged elsewhere and eventually brought Sogdia under their control. This is demonstrated by Enoki, who shows that the Ephthalites, *eo nomine*, could not

[338] Enoki, p. 2.

[339] Enoki, p. 27.

[340] Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Yazīd al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī Vol. 5, The Sāsānids, the Byzantines, the Lakmids, and Yemen*, translated by C. E. Bosworth (State University of New York Press, 1999), p. 113.

have established themselves in Sogdia before 437.[341] Now, Firdausí, the poet, who was born shortly after the death of Ṭabarī, and like that historian gives an account of the struggles of Peroz with the Ephthalites, calls Akhshunwar by the personal name Khushnawaz, and refers to him as 'son of the Khan.'[342] While the name Akhshunwar may be, or be derived from, a Sogdian word or title, *khan* is not Sogdian. *Khan* of course was used among speakers of an agglutinative language, not an analytic one; and it should be kept in mind, and not forgotten, that the use of the title *khan* for the ruler of the horde, at least in Firdausí, antedated the use of the title Akhshunwar from which Khushnawaz is derived. Firdausí then goes on to reveal that Khushnawaz had a son, named Faghanish,[343] who was a king at the same time that Khushnawaz was.[344] As for the horde led by Akhshunwar, or Khushnawaz, Ṭabarī refers to them always as Hephthalites, and Firdausí calls Khushnawaz and Faghanish and their hordes Haitálians,[345] both of which, of course, are two different forms of one and the same name. The *Wei shu*, as we have seen, calls the horde Yada. In all three cases, in Ṭabarī, in Firdausí, and in the *Wei shu*, in its reference to the Yada in the year 456, the respective variants Hephthalites, Haitálians, and Yada, are in fact anachronisms; for the name Ephthalites for the horde, derived from the name of the king Ye-tha-i-li-to named in the *Liang shu*, came into use for the horde at some point *after*

[341] Enoki, p. 25.

[342] Abu'l-Qâsem Firdausí Tusi, *The Sháhnáma of Firdausí*, Vol. VII., translated by Arthur George Warner and Edmond Warner (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1915), p. 165.

[343] Abu'l-Qâsem Firdausí Tusi, *The Sháhnáma of Firdausí*, pp. 359-360.

[344] Firdausí, p. 157.

[345] Firdausí, p. 157.

the ascendancy of Ye-tha-i-li-to, who was evidently the first to bear that name. This explains why the Liang alone, who are the only ones to have given us the name of that king, did not call the horde by the name of Ephthalites or of Ye-tha, or by any variant of either of those forms. The Liang, as we have seen, knew the horde by the name *Hua*. In other words, the horde was not known, or at least yet widely known, as Ephthalites, or as Ye-tha, or Yada, when the Liang received the first envoys from the king Ye-tha-i-li-to in 516, just as the horde was not, and could not have been known as Ephthalites when Peroz first warred against them. They had a different name altogether; and the *Liang shu* tells us that the name by which the Liang knew them in 516 was Hua. By 520, however, as we learn from the first-hand account of Sung Yün, the horde was definitely known as Ye-tha, that is, as Ephthalites, for in 520 Ye-tha is what Sung Yün calls them.[346] But Sung Yün too, as we will see, uses the name Ye-tha anachronistically in at least one instance.

To the Liang, then, king Ye-tha-i-li-to's horde and their country, which, as said above, Enoki determined to have been on the middle Oxus, were known as Hua; and the *Liang shu* tells us that the Hua, which would soon be known to the rest of the world as Ephthalites, or as Ye-tha, were a branch of the Gushi, one descended from a man named Pa-Hua, a Gushi prince, son of King Nung-Ch'i.[347] The connection that the *Liang shu* made between Prince Pa-Hua and the Hua, however, was on the basis of no fact at all, but wholly on a supposition made by one Pei

[346] Faxian and Sung Yün, *Travels of Fah-Hian and Sung-Yun, Buddhist pilgrims : from China to India (400 A.D. and 518 A.D.)*, translated by Samuel Beal (Trübner and Co., 1869), p. 184.

[347] Enoki, p. 3.

Ziye, a Chinese historian who died in 532. Book 30 of the *Liang shu* includes a biography of Pei Ziye, and states the following:

> At the time [when he took service to Kao-tsu of Liang] embassies came via Min-shan-tao from Po-t'i and the country of Hua, both of which existed outside the northwestern frontier, to pay tribute. These two countries had never sent an envoy [to China] for generations and no one knew of their origin. (P'ei) Tzŭ-yeh [Pei Ziye] referring to Po-t'i, a general of [the] Hsiung-nu, which is commented [on] by Fu Ch'ien as a personal name of a Hsiung-nu killed by Ying(?)-yin-hou [i.e. Kuan Ying], and also referring to Pa-Hua who attacked [the] Hsiung-nu under Ting-yüan-hou [i.e. Pan Yung], wondered if these two countries [Po-t'i and Hua] were descended from them…[348]

Pei Ziye merely *wondered* whether the Hua were descended from Pa-Hua of the Gushi, but the chief compiler of the *Liang shu*, one Yao Silian, who finished the *Liang shu* in 635, made the false assumption on the basis of what Pei Ziye wondered, that Pa-Hua was, in fact, their ancestor, and thus the fallacious account of the Gushi origin of the Hua was born; and Yao Silian inserted that mistaken account in Book 54 of the *Liang shu*. Now, bear in mind that the name Hua was not given to the horde by the Liang, nor of course by Pei Ziye. The name Hua for the horde existed before Pei Ziye's wondering whether it might have originated with Pa-Hua. Had the name not existed before Pei Ziye wondered whether its use as their name indicated that Pa-Hua was their ancestor, the horde would have had, of course, some other name than that of Hua, and Pei Ziye would have been wondering about the etymology of that entirely

[348] Enoki, p. 4.

different name, not that of Hua. In other words, the horde was called Hua *before* the Liang and Pei Ziye knew of their existence, and it could have been only the envoys of the Hua in 516 that had told the Liang that Hua was the name of their people; for before 516, the Liang had never heard of the Hua.

Note that the name Hua 滑, as used by the Liang, is a transcription of the name of the horde in Chinese, and can be regarded only as an approximate pronunciation of the sound of the clan or tribal name. Note also that the initial sound of the Chinese character used to represent Hua, 滑, is aspirated. In other words, the name begins with an *h* sound followed by a puff of air. The aspiration of the *h* sound in Hua 滑, however, is of brief duration and nearly inaudible, resulting in a pronunciation representable in English approximately as *h(u)wah—hwah*, or (*h*)*wah*. It is, apparently, partly for that reason that Marquart read the name as *Oat*, and that O. Franke read it as *Warz*,[349] and that both men mistook the name Hua 滑 in the *Liang shu* for the name of an Ephthalite king, one named *W.r.z* (or *W.z.r*), whom Ṭabarī mentions in his history,[350] *W.r.z* being the king whom Sinjibu, or Istämi, leader of the Western Göktürks, killed in battle. Ṭabarī writes:

> The Khāqān Sinjibū [Istämi] was the most implacable, the most courageous, the most powerful, and the most plentifully endowed with troops of all the Turks. It was he who attacked W.r.z (?) the king of the Hephthalites, showing no fear of the numerousness or the fierce fighting qualities of the Hepththalites, and then killed their king W.r.z and the greater part of his troops, seizing their

[349] Enoki, pp. 4–5.

[350] Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Yazīd al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, p. 152.

> possessions as plunder and occupying their lands, with the exception of the part of them that Kisrā had conquered.[351]

Istämi, or Sinjibu, ruled from 552 to 575, his reign beginning thirty-six years after the first mention of the Hua in the *Liang shu*, in 516, at which time, as shown above, Ye-tha-i-li-to was king. From these facts alone, it is clear that the name Hua for the horde antedated the existence of W.r.z the king, and that O. Franke and Marquart were clearly mistaken.

Now, Sung Yün tells us that he and his companion entered the kingdom of Gandhara 'during the middle decade of the 4th month of the first year of Ching-Kwong,' which was the year 520; and he says that Gandhara was formerly called the country of Ye-po-lo.[352] He says that it was that country that 'the Ye-thas destroyed, and afterwards set up Lae-lih to be king over the country, since which events two generations have passed.'[353] Two generations before 520, then, as Sung Yün says, perhaps about 478, but not before 477, a horde of barbarians swept into Gandhara and 'destroyed' it. Sung Yün's use of the name Ye-tha in that passage is an anachronism; for Ye-tha-i-li-to, the king after whom the horde would take its name, became king after the conquest of Ye-po-lo, or Gandhara, had taken place, the earliest evidence of the existence of Ye-tha-i-li-to as king being the 'Hephthalite tax' of the year 483 CE,[354] and Akhshunwar, or Khushnawaz, still being the king of that horde right up to the

[351] Ṭabarī, p. 152.

[352] Faxian and Sung Yün, *Travels of Fah-Hian and Sung-Yun,* pp. 196-197.

[353] Sung Yün, p. 197.

[354] Nicholas Sims-Williams, *Bactrian Documents from Northern Afghanistan I: Legal and Economic Documents* (Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 50.

time of that Ephthalite tax. And the Liang, even later, as late as 526 in fact, were still referring to those that would become known as Ephthalites as Hua. Nevertheless, as we will see, it was, in fact, White Huns that conquered Gandhara at the time referred to by Sung Yün, or that took control of it, but they were not Ephthalites. They were, however, as I will show, related to the White Huns that became known as Ephthalites.

It must be understood also, and remembered, that Ṭabarī and Firdausí, as well as Procopius, in all their various uses of the name Ephthalites in reference to events in and before 483 (or 484), used the name Ephthalites anachronistically. In other words, Peroz I was at no time fighting a horde by the name of 'Hephthalites' or 'Haitálians,' that is, by the name Ephthalites or by any variant of that name. That name did not exist until after Ye-tha-i-li-to had become king, until after the wars between Peroz and Akhshunwar had ended. But, of course, as Peroz was fighting a people that had a name, and as that horde was also known as White Huns, it could have been named none other than Kidarites, as we will see.

Now, the *Bei shi*, relating the *Wei shu*, tells us that after Kidara had conquered Gandhara and had subdued the five countries to the north, the Xiongnu expelled him, leaving him no choice but to move west. Now, Gandhara must have been the base of the Kidarites under Kidara himself for a period of time, for any number of years, because it was, according to the text, from Gandhara that Kidara had subdued those five countries, a feat improbably to have been effected in a short time; but the text implies, or seems to imply, especially to one who makes a cursory reading of it, that it was in Gandhara that the Xiongnu

found him, and from there that they expelled him. Again, the text reads:

> The Ta Yüeh-chih [Great Yue-Ji] country has its capital at Ying-chien-chih west of Fu-ti-sha. It is 14,300 li from the (Chinese) capital. In the north it borders on the Juan-juan. It was invaded several times and the capital was displaced to P'u-lo 2,100 li west of Fu-ti-sha. The king, Ch'i-to-lo was a courageous warrior and thus mobilized his troops, crossed the great mountain (Hindu-kuš) to the south and invaded northern India. From Gandhara he subdued the five countries of the north.
>
> The Hsiao Yüeh-chih country has its capital at Fu-lou-sha its first king was the son of Ch'i-to-lo, the king of the Ta Yüeh-chih. Ch'i-to-lo was expelled by the Hsiung-nu and moved west. After that he ordered his son to protect the city [country] and therefore it is called Hsiao Yüeh-chih [country].[355]

Notwithstanding, however, what the text seems to imply, or does imply, the final sentences of that *Bei shi* passage describing Kidara's activities are only, and can be only, a summary of happenings, a summary in which the statement that the Xiongnu expelled Kidara and that he moved west, is extraneous or parenthetical where it stands, out of chronological order, and not meant to be taken to mean that Kidara was in Gandhara at the time of his expulsion, but back in the Great Yue-Ji country, in Tokharistan, when they expelled him. If it had been from Gandhara that the Xiongnu expelled him, the Xiongnu would have seized Gandhara from Kidara's son, its new king, depriving him of his kingdom there, and afterwards there would have been no lineage of Gandharan Kidarites. As the Kidarites of Gandhara, however, sent their last embassy to the Wei in 477,

[355] William Samolin. "A Note on Kidara and the Kidarites," p. 297.

we can make the accurate inference, and draw the correct conclusion, that the Xiongnu attacked Kidara in Tokharistan, in the Great Yue-Ji country, and from there expelled him. In other words, if we are to make sense of the text, we must conclude that Kidara traveled back and forth between Gandhara and Tokharistan over a period of years, leading successive campaigns in the north, to have subdued those five countries from Gandhara. Thus, after Kidara had conquered Gandhara and had made his son king there, and after he had subdued those five countries, he returned once again to Tokharistan, warred there with the Xiongnu, was defeated, and in consequence was driven west.

The Xiongnu that defeated Kidara, who considered himself to be king of the Kushans, and thus a Kushan himself, could not have been Ephthalites, for that horde, *eo nomine*, as we have seen, did not exist in the days of Kidara. We know, however, from the *Tongdian*, that the horde that would become known as Ephthalites had migrated to Tokharistan in the mid fourth century. To the Liang, of course, they were known as Hua, even after Ye-tha-i-li-to had become their king; and this same horde was known to the Romans, of course, also as White Huns. The White Huns, as I have already shown, were the White Xiongnu, who were best known as the Yue-Ji, whether the Great or the Lesser, and as Kushans, from Ku-Xiongnu, as well as Pasiani, or Basiani, or Bai-Xiongnu. Knowing that the Ephthalites, *eo nomine*, could not have been those that had expelled Kidara from Tokharistan, and knowing from the numismatic evidence that 'Alchon' Huns were occupying areas of Tokharistan in the mid 400s, we can conclude, correctly, that the Xiongnu referred to in the *Bei shi* as having been those that expelled Kidara, could

have been none other than 'Alchon' Huns. The *Bei shi* refers to the 'Alchon' Huns as Xiongnu because the 'Alchon' Huns *were* Xiongnu; they were, in fact, as we will see, White Xiongnu, or White Huns.

Sung Yün, again, speaking anachronistically, in 520 says that the Ye-thas overran Gandhara two generations earlier, and set up Lae-lih to be king. Lae-lih could have been, as I show below, none other than Khingila, king of a horde of 'Alchon' Huns. Since the Gandharan Kidarites, *eo nomine*, had sent their last embassy to the Wei in 477,[356] and since the numismatic evidence confirms that King Khingila had extended his rule to include Gandhara,[357] his dominion there beginning after the fall of the Kidarites there, after, that is, 477, or about two generations before 520, when Sung Yün was visiting the region, and reported that Lae-lih, two generations earlier, or about 478, was king there, we see that the horde that 'invaded' Gandhara after 477 but by 478, could not have been Ye-thas, or Ephthalites, but that they were, and could have been none other than, 'Alchon' Huns, that is, White Huns, led by Khingila. If the horde led by Khingila had not been White Huns, Sung Yün would not have confused them with Ye-thas, or Ephthalites, who were also known as, of course, White Huns; and the Egyptian monk Cosmas Indicopleustes, another independent eyewitness who had traveled to India in the early 500s,[358] would not have also

[356] Enoki, p. 27.

[357] Michael Alram. "From the Sasanians to the Huns New Numismatic Evidence from the Hindu Kush." The Numismatic Chronicle (1966-) 174 (2014): 261–91. http://www.jstor.org/stable/44710198., p. 273.

[358] Cosmas Indicopleustes, *The Christian Topography of Cosmas, an Egyptian Monk*, translated by J. W. McCrindle (The Hakluyt Society, 1897), p. X.

called them White Huns.[359] The warfare between the 'Alchon' Huns and the Kidarites was, therefore, in fact, internecine warfare; it was, at bottom, competition for power between or among rivals of the same people, of the same overall horde, despite the different or alternative names in use for those competing factions. In other words, the Yue-Ji were White Huns; the Kushans were White Huns; the Kidarites were White Huns; the 'Alchon' Huns were White Huns; and the Ephthalites were White Huns. They were all of them White Huns; they were all related; but after the fall of the Kushan Empire, they were not at all times all united.

Now we see, and we see clearly, that Peroz could not possibly have been at war with a people known at the time as Ephthalites. Priscus, again, tells us that Peroz was engaged in a war with the Kidarites led by Kunkhas; and Ṭabarī tells us that Peroz was engaged in a war with the 'Hephthalites' led by Akhshunwar; whereas Firdausí tells us that Khushnawaz was the name of the king of the Ephthalites at that time. But we know now that Ṭabarī and Firdausí used those variants of the name Ephthalites anachronistically. Priscus, however, did not use the name Kidarites anachronistically. Peroz, in other words, fought a series of wars against one people, Kidarites, that came to be known as Ephthalites with the ascension of Ye-tha-i-li-to to the throne. All this means, and can only mean, that Kunkhas, Akhshunwar, and Khushnawaz of course, were *all the same person*, and that the Kidarites and the Ephthalites were one and the same people. And as the Kidarites were really Kushans bearing a new name, so the Ephthalites were likewise Kushans, or their descendants.

[359] Cosmas Indicopleustes, *The Christian Topography of Cosmas*, p. 370.

If all is so, however, then why do the Chinese dynastic histories say that the Ephthalites originated to the north of the Chinese frontier and migrated south from the Altai? They say such because the horde did migrate south from the Altai; but, clearly, as they were Kushans, they had migrated *to* the Altai *from* Tokharistan. This they did, or must have done, after Shapur I had effected the demise of the Kushan Empire in the first half of the third century. In other words, it can only be the case that the horde was migrating *back* to the territory that their Kushan ancestors had formerly ruled. Thus the bulk of the Kushans had been absent from Tokharistan, or Bactria, for at least one hundred years; and, incidentally, during that time of their absence there—this is another thing to be observed—they had no need of the Bactrian language.

Now, the Hua ambassadors to the Liang did not identify themselves as Gaoju on any of the five occasions that they met with the Liang; but, as pointed out above, we can accurately infer that they did identify themselves by a name that the Chinese pronounced approximately as Hua 滑. The *Bei shi* states that the language of the Ephthalites, or Yada, was different from that of the Gaoju, from that of the Juan-Juan, as well as different from the languages of the 'various Hu,' that is, of the Iranic or Aryan peoples of Central Asia, or, to narrow it down as Enoki does, of Tokharistan, of Bactria.[360] The Gaoju spoke an agglutinative language, as did the Juan-Juan; and the Iranic peoples, or the various Hu, spoke analytic languages, Indo-European ones. As Enoki shows, Book 54 of the *Liang shu* states:

[360] Enoki, p. 39.

> In Hua 滑 country…people have no letters, but use a wooden piece as tally. In negotiating with neighboring tribes, they make use of the Hu 胡 of neighboring countries in order to prepare a document in the Hu 胡 language, using sheep-skin instead of paper. …Their language is intelligible [to the Liang] only through oral interpretation conducted by the people of Ho-na 河南 (or T'u-yü-hun 吐谷渾).[361]

It must be remembered that the Hua sent their first embassy to the Liang in 516, and their last in 526. That fact alone shows that the paragraph above can be describing the situation of the Hua only from 516 to 526 and beyond, not before 516. Note that the paragraph mentions or indicates two languages. The text reads that the Hua make use of the Hu of neighboring countries in order to prepare a document in the Hu language. The phrase 'make use' indicates switching temporarily from one language to another, and although this is an English translation of the Chinese, the act of switching is confirmed by the foregoing statement in the paragraph, that the Hua have no letters. In other words, the Hua, as late as 526, were still speaking the Hua language. If the Hua had ceased to use the Hua language by 526 and were (again) speaking Bactrian by that time, *the text would not say that the Hua have no letters*; for, obviously, Bactrian, a Hu language, had letters at that time. Their use of the Hu language of their neighbors, and with the help of those neighbors, therefore, at that time, was only occasional, whenever any need arose for them to seek the Hu's help and to make use of the Hu's language. The language that the Hua 'made use' of was not, therefore, their language. The statement, then, that '*their*

[361] Enoki, p. 41.

language is intelligible' can refer only to the Hua language, not the Hu language of their neighbors, not Bactrian. The Hua, in other words, had not forsaken the Hua language, their mother tongue, by 526, and had not (again) adopted by then the Bactrian language. Remember, the *Bei shi*, quoting the *Wei shu*, which, again, was compiled between 551 and 554, that is, after the close of the first half of the sixth century, states that the language of the Yada, that is, of the Hua, was different from the Hu tongues. In other words, the Hua were still speaking their mother tongue in the first half of the sixth century, at least as late as 526 according to information in the *Liang shu*, as we have seen, and until at least 551 according to statements in the *Bei shi*, or *Wei shu*. Therefore the individuals from Ho-na, that is, from Henan, or Tuyuhun, that served as interpreters for the Hua ambassadors to the Liang, could have been interpreting only the Hua language, not a Hu language, not Bactrian. This brings us to another point: If the Hua, or White Huns, who were Kushans or the descendants of them, had ceased to use their mother tongue in the first half of the sixth century, and had again become speakers of Bactrian in that period of time, Procopius, writing about them in the first half of the sixth century, would never have identified them as Huns in the first place, as Huns 'in fact as well as in name.' As explained above, he would have identified them as Persians, as Iranians, or as some other people. I said above that the basis of Procopius's identification of the Ephthalites as Huns could have been only one of language, and, clearly, apart from the fact that they were known as White Huns, that was, in fact, the case. The tongue that the Hua, or Ye-tha, or Yada, or Ephthalites, who were, in reality, Kidarites known by that new name, were speaking in the

days of Procopius, then, in and through the first half of the sixth century, was a tongue associated with Huns, one spoken by Huns, a Hunnic tongue as it must have been. Otherwise Procopius, noting the absence among the Ephthalites of all other characteristics borne by Huns, by Huns known to the Romans, would have identified them, as said above, as a people of some other stock. Procopius, however, sagacious as he was, made no such misidentification. He went even further. He correctly spoke of the Ephthalites as White Huns. And who were the White Huns? They were, again, as I have demonstrated in *The Padjanaks*, and have further shown in this book, in fact, the Yue-Ji. I have also shown that the epithet *white*, in its association with the name Huns, or Khuns, or Xiongnu (Bai-Xiongnu, Ku-Xiongnu, etc.), originated on account of the traditional white silk costume first worn by the ancient Yue-Ji, that is, of this branch of the Xiongnu—the White Xiongnu.

The Juan-Juan, as said above, I posit to have had the same origin as the Eastern Ts'uan and the Western Ts'uan, or 'Ts'uan-Ts'uan,' and the names of the hordes to have been merely different spellings of the same name. In the course of time, however, through assimilating others into their respective hordes, or from being assimilated by others, regular exposure to different foreign tongues was inevitable for these related peoples, for the Juan-Juan, as well as for the Eastern Ts'uan and the Western Ts'uan, making it all the more likely that a divergence in language use among them would eventually occur. And that is exactly what happened. In time the Western Ts'uan, or Bai Man, or Lesser Yue-Ji, for example, merged with the Qiang and picked up a new tongue; and similar fates were in store for those other branches. The Yue-Ji were, as shown above,

the Moon Ji clan, a clan of Xiongnu; and the Xiongnu proper were, as I have demonstrated, a hybrid people at the outset, one constituted, in the main, in antiquity, by the merging in China of the Ji people and a branch of the Kangar, the Kangar being since time immemorial, as shown above, also known as Khands (Khands, Khans, Khuns—Huns), and the Ji that merged with them being those led by Tai Bo, the conqueror.

Now, as pointed out above, the Ashina, whose descendants would be the first to be known as Turks, arrived in the Juan-Juan Khaganate from Gansu, which was their ancient homeland, just as Gansu was the ancient homeland of the Yue-Ji. The *Book of Sui* tells us, as mentioned above, that the Ashina fled to the Juan-Juan in 439 CE; and as their descendants rose to power a hundred years later, the Chinese recorded their name, and began to refer to them as 突厥 *Tūjué* (*T'u-chüeh*), that is, as Turks. The first Turks were, then, formerly known as Ashina; and the Ashina, as shown above, were none other than that people from Gansu known to Sima Qian and Zhang Qian as the Wusun. But to Trogus, as we have seen, the Wusun, or Ashina, were the Asiani, the overlords of the Tocharians. I have shown above that all these names, Ashina, Wusun, Asiani, as well as Strabo's Asii, are synonyms, and that all of them are, in fact, transcriptions of Wu-Xiongnu, meaning Black Xiongnu, or Black Huns. They were the counterpart clan of the Yue-Ji, or Bai-Xiongnu, or Ku-Xiongnu, or White Xiongnu, or White Huns.

The Gaoju were, then, contemporaries of the Ashina, the ancestors of the first Turks. The existence of the Gaoju antedated, therefore, the use of the name 突厥 *Tūjué*, of the name Turks or Turkic, as well as every derivative form of the

name, including, of course, the compound Göktürks, or Köktürks, by far more than a hundred years, yet the Gaoju are said to have been Turks, or, as Enoki says, a 'Turkish tribe.'[362] This is an example of putting the cart before the horse. The Gaoju were not descended from the first Turks or any Turks. The Chinese sources are, for all intents and purposes, unanimous in saying that the Gaoju were descended from the Xiongnu. The *Wei shu*, for example, as shown below, names the Xiongnu as their ancestors at bottom:

> 高車，蓋古赤狄之餘種也，初號為狄歷，北方以為敕勒，諸夏以為高車、丁零。其語略與匈奴同而時有小異，或云其先匈奴之甥也。[363]

Translation:

> The Gaoche are a remnant of the ancient Red Di [赤狄]. They were originally named Dili [狄歷]. In the north, they were called Chile [敕勒], and in the Xia Dynasty, they were called Gaoche [高車 - 'high cart'] or Dingling [丁零]. Their language is roughly the same as that of the Xiongnu, but sometimes there are slight differences. It may be said that they are the nephew of the first Xiongnu.

The classification of them as Turks, though a misclassification of them, is nevertheless a fitting one, since the Turks of those days and later were simply Huns that had come to be called Turks; but, to be particular, the Gaoju, as a Xiongnu horde

[362] Enoki, p. 19.

[363] Wei shu, *Book 103*.

antedating the existence of all Turks and the use of the name Turks, are properly said to have been Huns: They were Huns, just as the Yue-Ji were Huns. But the Yue-Ji were White Huns, whereas the Gaoju were not; and as the Ephthalites were White Huns, ultimately descended, as shown above, from the Yue-Ji, so the Gaoju were of a Xiongnu lineage different from that of the Yue-Ji and their descendants.

Now, we have seen above that Akhshunwar was, in fact, Kunkhas. If Akhshunwar was a Sogdian title, as Henning and others argue,[364] and if Kunkhas is a variant of Akhshunwar, then Kunkhas was likewise, of course, a title. From this some may be apt to think that this would mean that two different kings bore the same title. If it had been the case, however, that Akhshunwar and Kunkhas were 'two' different kings, then two kings alive at the same time were known by the same title at the same time, one that was used in Sogdia, by, of course, Sogdians. That would mean, then, that Sogdia at that time was ruled at one and the same time by two different kings that bore the same Sogdian title, one of whom being king of the Kidarites, and the other king of the 'Ephthalites,' each of whom also just happened to be, over a period of years, the nemesis of Peroz. Such line of reasoning as the above is wholly absurd. The conclusion that Akhshunwar and Kunkhas were two different kings is not only incorrect, but, when all the facts are correctly understood, impossible. Kunkhas and Akhshunwar were one and the same king, and, as demonstrated above, the Kidarites came to be known as Ephthalites.

[364] W. B. Henning, "Neue Materialien Zur Geschichte Des Manichäismus." Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 90 (n.F. 15), no. 1 (1936): 1–18. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43368449., p. 17.

Why, however, did only one king of the White Huns bear such Sogdian title? Faghanish, son of Akhshunwar, or Khushnawaz, or Kunkhas, was a king at the same time that his father was, but Faghanish was never known as, and never bore the title Akhshunwar, or any form of it, nor did any other successor of Akhshunwar bear it. Firdausí writes:

> So Khúshnawáz, what time Pírúz was Sháh,
> Filled all the world with bloodshed, heat, and anguish,
> And perish Faghánish that son of his[365]

The conclusion that Akhshunwar was a Sogdian title may be correct. But any argument or conclusion that it was the hereditary title of the kings of those White Huns has no cogency. The dominions of the king known as Akhshunwar included Sogdia, and he was thus, as shown above, the king of the people living in Sogdia, the Sogdians, and not just the king of the horde that would later be known as Ephthalites. Naturally the Sogdians would have called their king, that king, by the Sogdian title for *king*, evidently Akhshunwar, or Kunkhas. Firdausí writes also:

> When Khúshnawáz, son of the Khán, had heard :–
> "The Sháh and all his host have crossed Jíhún
> Against the treaty that Bahrám Gúr made :
> Fresh war and strife have come upon the land,"
> A veteran scribe was called by his command.[366]

[365] Firdausí, pp. 359-360.

[366] Firdausí, p. 165.

The father of Akhshunwar, or Khushnawaz, as far as Firdausí was concerned, was not known by the Sogdian title Akhshunwar, but by the title khan. Yet the poet also calls the 'Chinese' king khan,[367] a word bearing no relation whatsoever to the Chinese word for *king*. The 'Chinese' he means, of course, were the Western Göktürks, but the naming of the 'Chinese' king as khan is still a misnomer. From this it is clear that Firdausí failed to match consistently peoples with the native title for *king* that they actually used. His mistake was, not that he called the king of the Western Göktürks khan, but that he identified the Western Göktürks as Chinese, and thus mismatched the 'Chinese' king with the title khan, a name or title that was a foreign one to Firdausí. We cannot say, however, just as no one else can say, that the non-Chinese, such as, for example, the Juan-Juan, did not refer to any real Chinese king as khan when they spoke of him in their native language. It is practically certain that they did refer to the Chinese king as khan, as well as to the kings of other peoples in whose tongues khan was not the title used, just as English speakers invariably call any monarch king regardless of what the native title is. The point is, that a king whose subjects consist of two or more unrelated peoples whose languages are different one from another, will be known to those unrelated peoples in their resepective languages by different titles that mean or denote the same thing. Ṭabarī gives us Akhshunwar, but, as Ṭabarī's translator says, it is, in fact, not clear whether Akhshunwar was a title or a proper name.[368] It is the linguists that tell us it was a title. At any rate, it is manifest, that the kings of the White

[367] Firdausí, p. 49.

[368] Ṭabarī, p. 113.

Huns, from the middle of the fifth century and on, having as subjects a variety of peoples speaking different languages, were known by more than one title meaning king, despite the fact that all such titles by which they were known were not recorded. Nicholas Sims-Williams has translated an undated letter found in the Rob archive and written in Bactrian, which letter he thinks may date to the Bactrian year of 480, or 703 CE. It states:

> ēbodalo iagbo "Hephthalite yabghu"
> rōbo xaro "*khār* (= ruler) of Rob"
> ēbodalo xo(ad)ēoaggo labiro "scribe of the Hephthalite lords"
> toxoarastano garsigostano ladobaro
> "judge of Tukharistan and Gharchistan."[369]

The use of the title *yabghu* in all of Central Asia was first recorded among the Kushans, who were, again, the Yue-Ji proper, or White Huns, namely, the Ku-Xiongnu (Kushan), a name synonymous with, and referring to one and the same people as, Bai-Xiongnu (Pasiani, Basiani), the horde being known when in Bactria to the Chinese as, of course, the Great Yue-Ji. But the title *yabghu* was used by the Yue-Ji and the Wusun before either horde ever left Gansu, and it was among them, those Huns, that its use is first attested.[370] Ṭabarī was born about 839 and died about 923,[371] and Firdausí was born

[369] Nicholas Sims-Williams, "New Findings in Ancient Afghanistan --- the Bactrian documents discovered from the Northern Hindu-Kush," accessed January 28, 2025, http://gengo.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/hkum/bactrian.html

[370] Joe Cribb, "Kujula Kadphises and His Title Kushan Yavuga." Sino-Platonic Papers, No. 280, August 2018, p. 2.

[371] Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Yazīd al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī Vol. 1, General Introduction and From the Creation to the Flood*, translated by Franz Rosenthal (State University of New York Press, 1989), pp. 10-11; p. 78.

about 940,[372] both men flourishing hundreds of years after the Ephthalites had come and gone. On the other hand, the scribe to the Ephthalite ruler was, of course, alive at the same time as that ruler, and it was by the title of *yabghu* that that ruler was known, as the scribe makes abundantly clear. Iranians did not use the title *yabghu*; Huns did, and Turks their descendants continued to use it in one way or another for many centuries. The assimilation of the Ephthalites in Iranian culture was an inevitable outcome of their living in Tokharistan, but their assimilation did not lead to the complete dissolution of their Hunnic culture. That scribe, of course, was not speaking of the first king of the Ephthalites, but of a later one, a successor of Ye-tha-i-li-to, and the king that he was speaking of most certainly inherited the title of *yabghu* from his predeccesor. Unlike Ṭabarī and Firdausí, the scribe has doubtless given us the name of the hereditary title of the Ephthalite kings, the Ephthalite title that denoted king. It was yabghu, not Akhshunwar, a fact further confirmed by the 'Ephthalite yabghu seal,' on which in Bactrian, next to the king's head, is written:

ēbodālo bbgo "Yabghu of the Ephthalites."[373]

The *Bei shi*, which as Enoki shows is echoing the *Zhou shu*, states that the manners and customs of the Yada, or Ephthalites, were almost the same as those of the Tūjué,[374] or Turks. Enoki

[372] A. Sh. Shahbazi, "The Birthdate of Firdausī (3rd Dey 308 Yazdigardī = 3rd January 940)." Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 134, no. 1 (1984): 98–105. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43374142., p. 105.

[373] Michael Alram. "From the Sasanians to the Huns New Numismatic Evidence from the Hindu Kush." p. 279.

[374] Enoki, p. 10; p. 13.

attempts in one place to explain this away by saying that it was because both were nomads in Central Asia,[375] and in another place by saying '…such similarity of manners and customs is an inevitable phenomenon arising from similarity of their environments.'[376] But Enoki, like so many others, has unconscioulsy confused with manners and customs something else entirely different, namely, *methods*. Two peoples following the same kind of lifestyle, one that involves, say, keeping many horses and other livestock, that involves having access to the same kinds of natural resources for tool making and for making clothes, and involves living on the land in tents, are bound to devise similar methods to perform their similar everyday tasks with efficiency and greater ease, and the similarity of their methods may be attributed to the dictates of their similar lifestyles in the same environment. Manners and customs, however, are not methods, and they arise independently of the environmental and situational dictates that lead to the creation of methods. Ceremonies, rites of passage, rules, penalties, incantations, courting practices, traditionary acts of respect, and the like, are those things that constitute the manners and customs of a people, those things that define their mores or culture; and manners and customs are hereditary things. The Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang (Hsüan-Chwang), when he passed through the country that he called Hsi-mo-ta-lo, observed that the manners and customs of the people of Hsi-mo-ta-lo were like those of the Tūjué, and he attributed the similarity or sameness of their manners and customs to Tūjué influence, arising from the fact, as he says, that the territory of the one

[375] Enoki, p. 37.

[376] Enoki, p. 56.

adjoined that of the other.[377] Xuanzang, however, had had no previous exposure to either people, and he merely passed through the area during his travels and made observations. Whether he too confused methods with manners and customs no one can say. In any case, he could not possibly have known who influenced whom, just as he could not possibly have known in the first place that sheer influence was to account for the similarities. It is a matter of fact that the Tūjué inherited their *manners and customs* from their ancestors the Ashina, that is, the Asiani, or Wusun, counterpart clan to, and relatives of the Pasiani, or Basiani, or Yue-Ji, who passed on to their various descendants the same *manners and customs* that the Ashina passed on to theirs. They were, as said above, two clans of the same people, the Wu-Xiongnu and the Ku-Xiongnu or Bai-Xiongnu respectively—the Black Huns and the White Huns. If the Ephthalites had been of Gaoju origin, they would not have been known as White Huns. The weight of evidence shows, unequivocally, that the Ephthalites were the Kidarites—that they were, ultimately, the Yue-Ji.

[377] Enoki, pp. 34–35.

XIV

The 'Alchon' Huns

Sung Yün, using, again, the name Ye-thas anachronistically, tells us that that horde had conquered Gandhara two generations before his visit to that region, about 478, and that after the conquest, Lae-lih was set up to be king there. To say that Lae-lih had been set up to rule Gandhara implies that another king made Lae-lih the king of that territory. If, in fact, another king had put him on the throne there, then at least two kings were working together at the same time, and were thus participating in the governance of a growing or incipient empire. Such practice existed among the Xiongnu proper under Maodun, who had set up multiple kings to rule the various parts of his empire, *tuqi* kings and *luli* kings[378] and *zici* kings.[379] But there was only one *shanyu* of the Xiongnu, one supreme leader, the unforgettable Maodun himself having been the most notable *shanyu* of all, his immortality secured through his undying infamy.

Now, if the testimony of Sung Yün on the name of those conquerors stood alone, scholars would perhaps have an easier time finding a way to dismiss his identification of them as Ye-

[378] Sima Qian, p. 136.

[379] Sima Qian, p. 152.

thas, or, in particular, as White Huns, and they would be able, in that case, in their efforts to harmonize the numismatic record of the region with the alleged name (αλχονο) of the horde ruled by the kings named on the coins circulated there after that conquest, to conclude with less difficulty that the alleged name of the conquerors means 'Red Huns.' They are, however, faced also with the independent testimony of that Egyptian monk, Cosmas Indicopleustes, who, as mentioned above, traveled to India in the 520s and wrote in Greek of the λευκοί Ουννοι, or White Huns, that were ruling northern India at the time of his visit. Cosmas was altogether oblivious, however, to the existence of the White Huns in Tokharistan, those known to the Liang as Hua, and soon to be known widely as Ephthalites and as Yada, or as Ye-thas. Cosmas, in other words, identified the horde ruling northern India as White Huns in the absence of any conception of the existence of any other horde known as White Huns, and thus idenitified them as such without any influence from a comparison of them with others known by the same name. For all he knew, the White Huns in northern India were the only White Huns on earth. If those rulers of northern India, of Gandhara, had called themselves 'Red Huns,' or if others had called them by a name that meant such, as some scholars would like to believe, why would the eyewitness Cosmas have recorded their name as White Huns? If the conquerors were known as 'Red Huns,' why did the other independent eyewitness Sung Yün also identify them as Ye-thas, or White Huns? The anwser is that both of these men recorded the facts as they found them, the horde whose name they recorded having been, as a matter of fact, White Huns. To conclude that both of these independent eyewitnesses were mistaken, and that the mute coins of the

kings are the messengers of the true name of that horde, and that that name means 'Red Huns,' a name arrived at through linguistic interpretation and sheer imagination, is the height either of scholarly stupidity, or of scholarly arrogance, or of both. John Adams has some words for those who show disdain for facts:

> Facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations, or the dictates of our passions, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence […].[380]

The word or name αλχονο (*alchono*) found on the coins means something, of course, but the reality is that no one knows what it means. It is found in no documents at all. It is found only on the coins, and on a seal, and everywhere it is found it stands alone, devoid of any context that might serve to shed light on its enigmatic meaning. Clearly it does not mean 'Red Huns.' All of the known kings of the so-called Alchon Huns, beginning with Khingila (430 - 490?), may have been kings of a certain class within the polity of the White Huns, just as the example of the Xiongnu proper informs us that there were different classes of kings, *tuqi*, *luli*, and *zici* kings, as said above. The king Lae-lih, for example, if in fact set up as monarch of Gandhara by another king, could have been only a subordinate king, at least at first, subordinate to the ruler who made him king. The word or name αλχονο may very well denote a class of kings. It may denote a clan name; it may denote a title. Unless a document or artifact from the period of the rule of the kings

[380] John Adams, "Adams' Argument for the Defense: 3–4 December 1770," National Archives, accessed February 1, 2025, https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/05-03-02-0001-0004-0016.

named on those coins is unearthed, and provides independent confirmation of their name as Alchon, and as meaning 'Red Huns,' precedence must be given to the eyewitness testimonies of Sung Yün and Cosmas, and the name of the horde or hordes ruled by those kings—Khingila, Toramana, Mihirakula, Mehama, Javukha, etc.—presumed to be exactly what the one eyewitness indicates by having recorded their name as Ye-thas, and what the other eyewitness expressly tells us, namely, White Huns.

While Cosmas was traveling in India, Ye-tha-i-li-to, as we know from the Liang, was the reigning king of the Hua, or White Huns, to the north of the Hindu Kush; and at that time, on the southern side of that range, one Gollas, as Cosmas says, was king of the White Huns.[381] The identification of Gollas with Mihirakula, or Mihiragula, king of the horde in northern India at the time of Cosmas's visit, as we know from the numismatic record, is generally accepted, there being nothing really contestable about the identification. Kings Ye-tha-i-li-to and Mihirakula were, then, contemporaneous kings, reigning at the very same time. But by 520, except to the Liang, Ye-tha-i-li-to's White Huns were known increasingly widely as Ye-thas, or Ephthalites, taking their name from the king himself, as shown above, whereas Mihirakula's White Huns would never be known as Ephthalites, or Ye-thas. Khingila, Toramana, Mihirakula, Mehama, Javukha, etc., in fact, were not Ephthalites at any time; but they and their horde, or hordes, were nevertheless White Huns, or Huna.

Now, as demonstrated above, the name Hua 滑, regardless of the Chinese character used to represent approximately the

[381] Cosmas Indicopleustes, p. 370.

sound of the name, is a transcription of the name used of the horde by the ambassadors that Ye-tha-i-li-to had sent to the Liang. Hua 滑, in other words, or a name closely approximating to the sound of Hua 滑, is what those barbarians called themselves at that time. These very same barbarians, this same horde, were also known as Huna, or, as Theophanes puts it in Greek, Λευκοὺς Οὔννους.[382] Enoki feebly attempts to dismiss the proposition that the name Hua 滑 is a transcription of Huna, by passing the buck to Bussagli, who takes the view that it was not a transcription of Huna.[383] Bussagli, however, as with all others taking the same position, was either oblivious to, or forgetful of syncope, a common speech habit in which sounds or letters in a word or name are regularly omitted. In Dalmatia, for example, the ancient coastal city Spalato came to be called Split by Croats, owing to syncope. Syncope explains why Theophanes and other Greek writers spelled the name *White Huns* in Greek without the initial aspirate, so that in English the name he gives us in Greek becomes *White Uns* instead of *White Huns*. The White Huns that the Western writers discuss are exactly the same Huna, the same White Huns, that the Liang recorded as Hua 滑. Here syncope, once again, wrought its effects, and is the explanation for the absence of the sound of *n* in Hua 滑. The Greek writers and the Liang give us, for all intents and purposes, exactly the same name, but in superficially different forms, the former omitting the initial aspirate, but retaining the

[382] Theophanes, *Theophanis Chronographia* (Lipsiae : B.G. Teubneri, 1883), p. 122.

[383] Enoki, p. 4 n. 3; Mario Bussagli, "Osservazioni sulla persistenza delle forme ellenistiche nell'arte del Gandhara," Istituto Nazionale di Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte, accessed February 1, 2025, https://www.inasaroma.org/patrimonio/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/07-M.-BUSSAGLI-Osservazioni-sulla-persistenza-02.pdf., p. 232.

sound of *n*, the latter omitting the sound of *n*, but retaining the initial aspirate, though ever so faintly. The view that Hua 滑 is a completely different name for exactly the same White Huns that the Greek writers are talking about, is a mistaken one. As shown above, chapter 97 of the *Bei shi* states:

> Ch'i-to-lo [Kidara] was expelled by the Hsiung-nu and moved west.

The Hsiung-nu, or Xiongnu, referred to in that passage were the same horde whose kings' coins bear the name or word *alchono* on them. They were White Huns, exactly of the same overall horde of White Huns that the Liang recorded a branch of as 滑 Hua. In short, 滑 Hua means Huna, indicating Xiongnu. Chen Yinke, Chinese linguist and historian, points out that the Xiongnu 匈奴, or *Huna*, were also recorded by the name 胡 *Hu*;[384] and Yang Jidong states:

> The origin of *hu* is quite clear. During the pre-Qin period it usually referred to the nomadic people to the north of the Middle Kingdoms, who were mentioned in later Chinese sources as *Xiongnu* 匈奴 (the Huns).[385]

The form 胡 Hu, just like the form 滑 Hua, begins with an initial aspirate; both forms are, in fact, variant proper nouns denoting the same people, the Huna, and as such the

[384] Yang Jidong, "Replacing *hu* with *fan* : A Change in the Chinese Perception of Buddhism during the Medieval Period." (Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, Volume 21, Number 1, 1998, pp. 157-158), p. 157 n. 2.

[385] Yang Jidong, "Replacing *hu* with *fan*," p. 157.

explanation that the influence of syncope *in speech* discarded the final syllable *-na* in 胡 Hu, and the sound of *n* in Hua 滑, is, obviously, the correct one. The name of 胡 Hu was, of course, inherited by many others that bore it or a form of it from, none other than the Xiongnu proper, namely, Maodun's horde.

With the understanding, then, that the Huns ruled by Khingila and his successors or contemporaries were at no time Ephthalites, but were nonetheless White Huns, we can proceed to elucidate the evidence that shows that the White Huns to become known as Ephthalites, or Ye-thas, and those White Huns whose kings minted coins with the word or name αλχονο on them, denoting whatever it may, were related branches of White Huns extant in the fifth century and later, the Ephthalites themselves being, as shown above, Kidarites that came to be known as Ephthalites after Ye-tha-i-li-to had become their king.

After the final departure of Kidara from Gandhara, there were, as said above, two groups of Kidarites, those that were still under the kingship of Kidara himself and that followed him west after his expulsion from Tokharistan, or from territory in Tokharistan, and those that continued to live in Gandhara under the kingship of his son, and of his son's successors. Kidara died in the fifth century, very likely after 412, which year his conquest of Gandhara in all probability followed; for, as others have pointed out, Faxian, a Chinese monk who traveled to Gandhara at that time, speaks of no invasion of Gandhara by any horde. The Kidarites that Kidara had led, however, remained a menace to the Sasanians long after his death. In 464, as we will see below, Peroz attacked Akhshunwar, or Kunkhas, and for two years the Sasanians and the Kidarites, anachronistically referred to in the sources as Ephthalites,

warred, the Sasanians gaining the victory in 466. As for the Kidarites led by Kidara's son and by the Kidarite kings to follow him, we know that their control of Gandhara lasted until at least 477, the year when, as said above, they dispatched their last embassy to the Wei. The White Huns that overran Gandhara and that 'set up' Lae-lih to be king there, must have done so, then, after 477. The early kings of the White Huns to come in the days of Ye-tha-i-li-to to be called Yada, or Ye-thas, or Ephthalites, and so forth, were thus Akhshunwar, or Khushnawaz, or Kunkhas, and Faghanish. It is a little known fact, and evidently an unknown one to some of those who have written at length about the White Huns, or Ephthalites, with a focus on Akhshunwar, that Firdausí names not one but two kings that both bore the name Faghanish, one having been a son of Khushnawaz, as shown above, and the other having been of 'the race of Khushnawaz,'[386] that is, the Faghanish to have been installed on the throne by popular consent in the days of White Huns King Ghátkar, the nemesis of Sinjibu. It is suprising, but not shocking, that scholars in reality often know much less than we realize about the subject on which they seem at first to have expertise. When we look more and more closely at their knowledge, as offered up in their books and other writings, and compare it with what the sources say, we come to understand what they do not know, what they do not understand, and what they misunderstand. We do not deny, of course, that many scholars have a wealth of knowledge. Most true scholars have it in abundance. Nor do we say that they lack a perfect familiarity with their subject. But in every field true scholars are not equally distributed. At any rate, King Khushnawaz, or King

[386] Firdausí, pp. 332-333.

Akhshunwar, and King Faghanish his son, as pointed out above, were kings of White Huns at one and the same time, Faghanish having been king of Chaghán, while his father Khushnawaz ruled over other territories; and both of them were kings before Peroz became shah.

Now, Peroz had a brother, Hormizd, and when their father King Yazdagird died, Hormizd ascended the throne, infuriating Peroz, and by the way sealing his own doomed fate; for Peroz would soon march against him, and usurp the crown. Firdausí writes:

> Hurmuz succeeded to his father's throne,
> And set upon his head the crown of gold,
> While, thou hadst said, Pírúz was all one rage
> With tears of envy mounting to his eyes.
> He went incontinent with troops and treasures,
> And many chiefs, to the Haitálian king,
> Who was a princeling of Chaghán, a man
> Of high ambition and possessed of troops,
> Of treasure, and of power, hight Faghániśh.
> To him Pírúz said : " O good friend of mine !
> Two sons were we—the glories of the throne.
> Our father gave the younger of us twain
> The royal crown and, having acted thus
> Unjustly, died. If thou wilt give me troops
> I have myself wealth, weapons, majesty,
> And might of hand."
> The monarch of Chaghán
> Replied : " 'Tis well, thy sire was king himself.
> I will point out the way to get thy rights,
> And furnish thee with troops upon these terms :
> That I shall have Tirmid and Wísagird,
> To which effect I hold a covenant
> From Yazdagird."

Pírúz said : " Yea, 'tis well,
And thou deservest greater sovereignty."
The monarch gave him thirty thousand swordsman—
A noble army of Haitálians—
Where with Pírúz, the Sháh, arrayed a host
That darkened sky and moon with flying dust.
He fought with king Hurmuz who could not long
Endure the stress of war but presently
Was taken, and his father's crown and throne
Grew worthless to him. When Pírúz beheld
His brother's face he yearned for love and union,
Bade him remount and sped to grasp his hand,
Dispatched him to the palace nad declared
His own conditions. Said Hurmuz to him :—
" Thank God that those who worship Him are wise.
My brother taketh from me crown and throne ;
Be victory [victorious] both in name and deed his own."[387]

As we can see here it was Faghanish, not Akhshunwar, that helped Peroz usurp the throne from his brother. Ṭabarī writes also of Peroz's usurpation of the throne from Hormizd, but, contrary to what some mistaken scholars say and hold, Ṭabarī does not name anywhere the king of the White Huns that helped Peroz, and he does not in any way connect Akhshunwar to the success of his usurpation of it. The same scholars who fail to mention that Faghanish was the monarch that assisted Peroz, do not question the reliability or accuracy of Firdausí, and they therefore use him, without qualification, as a source of factual information on other events involving the White Huns, such as, for example, the fall of King Ghátkar and the installment on the throne of Faghanish, descendant of Khushnawaz, despite the

[387] Firdausí, pp. 157-158.

fact that Ṭabarī names the 'Hephthalite' king W.r.z. as the enemy of Sinjibu, and not Ghátkar.[388] The point is, that only one king is actually named in the sources as having been the king that helped Peroz to the throne, and his name was Faghanish, not Akhshunwar. The early kings to have ruled the White Huns later to be ruled by Ye-tha-i-li-to, and to come to be known after him as Ye-thas and Ephthalites, among other names, were, then, as the sources tell us, Akhshunwar, or Khushnawaz, or Kunkhas, and Faghanish, the father and thus his son being descended from, doubtless, Kidara himself.

In sum, as shown above, the Kushans, or White Huns, that is, the Yue-Ji, returned to Tokharistan in the mid 300s from the Altai under the leadership of one of their own, a Kushan named Kidara, but they were known, of course, when he was king, as Kidarites, and as such as well when Kunkhas was on the throne; but later, in and after 483, when Ye-tha-i-li-to had become king, those White Huns came more and more widely to be known after him as Yada, or Ye-thas, or Ephthalites, and so forth, though the Liang, of course, continued to call them Hua.

It is necessary here to point out some erroneous information coming from the mouth of Priscus, perhaps put into his mouth by Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus alone, or by him as well as by others, unless Priscus himself, whose *History* comes to us, of course, second-hand, is to be blamed as the sole source of it. Priscus through Constantine tells us, that the father of Peroz had been at war with the Kidarites, and that the war resulted from his refusing to pay to the Kidarites the tribute that had been agreed upon earlier; and Priscus says, according to Constantine, that his father bequeathed that war to his son,

[388] Ṭabarī, p. 152.

stated to have been Peroz, when he bequeathed the kingdom to him.[389] This is incorrect. Peroz did not inherit the kingdom, neither did he inherit that war. As shown above, he took the throne later by force from his brother Hormizd. In other words, it could have been none other than Hormizd that had continued the war with the Kidarites immediately after the death of Yazdagird II in 457, *not Peroz*; and it was, in reality, not 'Ephthalites' as Firdausí, speaking anachronisitcally, tells us, but Kidarites under the kingship of Faghanish, son of Akhshunwar, or Kunkhas, that had helped Peroz usurp the throne from his brother. Why would they have helped Peroz? Probably because he had promised to restore the tribute. The war that resulted from the Persians' refusal to pay that tribute must have been concluded, as we will see, when Peroz usurped the throne from Hormizd, that is, it must have been concluded in 457, that being the year, clearly, when Peroz in fact ascended the throne. But that war over the tribute would not be, of course, the last war between the Persians and those White Huns.

Now Peroz, after he had become shah of the Sasanians, grew hostile, as Ṭabarī tells us, towards the father of his benefactor Faghanish, and attacked Akhshunwar, thus starting, in 464, according to the chronology laid out by Ṭabarī, who tells us of a famine of seven years that commenced or was underway just after Peroz had imprisoned Hormizd and had ascended the throne (in 457), the first of two or three wars with the 'Ephthalites' (Kidarites) under Akhshunwar's (Kunkhas's) kingship.[390] His reign thus beginning in 457, seven years added

[389] Given, p. 145; R. C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus, and Malchus* (Francis Cairns, 1983), p. 349.

[390] Ṭabarī, pp. 109–110.

to that year to account for the peace during the famine, brings us, of course, to 464, two years after which year, in 466, according to information in Priscus, Peroz had at last defeated the Kidarites;[391] but according to the *anachronisitic* information in Ṭabarī, 464 was the year in which Peroz had gone to war against the 'Ephthalites.' The war that had ended between the Sasanians under Peroz and the Kidarites under Kunkhas (Akhshunwar) in 466, according to information in Priscus, was *exactly* the same war that had started in 464 between the Sasanians under Peroz and the 'Ephthalites' (Kidarites) under Akhshunwar (Kunkhas), according to information in Ṭabarī. In other words, Priscus and Ṭabarī are both referring to the *first* war that *Peroz* had fought against a *foreign* enemy, namely, against those White Huns. Priscus, however, conflates two wars into one, the war that *Hormizd* had inherited from his father Yazdagird, and the war that Peroz had started in 464; and Ṭabarī, speaking anachronistically, tells us that it was the 'Ephthalites' that Peroz had gone to war against (in 464), when in reality it was the *Kidarites* that he had gone to war against. Nevertheless, Ṭabarī's anachronisms, and Firdausí's also, are not without a basis, in that those Kidarites would later become known as Ephthalites, after, of course, the ascension of Ye-tha-i-li-to to the throne, and long before the time of those writers.

From the above it is clear that Peroz had usurped the throne from Hormizd at some time in 457. As he had become shah, then, in 457, Peroz thus ruled for twenty-six or twenty-seven years. In 457, Faghanish and Khushnawaz, or Akhshunwar, or Kunkhas were, of course, already on their respective thrones. Again, Firdausí tells us that Faghanish, to help him achieve the

[391] Given, pp. 147-148.

crown, gave Peroz thirty thousand swordsman, 'a noble army of Haitálians [Kidarites],' from which a logical suggestion arises, namely, that Faghanish must have had far more than thirty thousand White Huns still under his command, for surely he would not have given Peroz the bulk of his troops, or even one half of them. As for the number of White Huns ruled by Akhshunwar, who as father of Faghanish must have been the supreme leader of the White Huns in 457, or at least the supreme leader between the two of them, they must have numbered upwards of sixty thousand or so, for he would not have put his son in command of the greatest number of the White Huns. Chaghán, or Chaghaniyan, the territory ruled by Faghanish,[392] was located on the right bank of the Oxus, lying in the plains between the Hissar mountains and the Hindu Kush. Akhshunwar, on the other hand, ruled territories on both sides of that river, including, of course, the area where the *Liang shu* locates the country of Hua, his dominions having included Tokharistan and the entirety of the territory of Khurasan.[393] Akhshunwar was alive as late as 484, the year when Peroz died when at war with him; but it is possible that Akhshunwar was dead as well by 484, as well as possible that the year 483 was in fact the year during which both kings died, since the dating of events in Central Asia during the fifth century is *approximate*. Whether King Ye-tha-i-li-to was a son of Akhshunwar and his rightful successor to the throne, or one of his relatives, or an unrelated rival that rose to power and became king of the White Huns upon the death of Akhshunwar, no one knows. It is unlikely that Ye-tha-i-li-to was a son of Faghanish, since the

[392] Firdausí, p. 157.

[393] Ṭabarī, p. 110.

horde (Kidarites) ruled by Ye-tha-i-li-to, when at last known to the world as Ye-thas, or Ephthalites, were in control of the areas that Akhshunwar had been ruling.

Now, Akhshunwar, or Kunkhas, in 457, was likely at least already forty years old, since in that year his son Faghanish was himself an established adult king, one in command of a large body of White Huns. It is probable, practically certain, that Akhshunwar was dead by 483 or 484, at the age of sixty-six or sixty-seven, or that he had been invalided in his last war with Peroz, and upon his death or sudden infirmity immediately replaced on the throne by Ye-tha-i-li-to. The reason is, that the first mention of the 'Hephthalite tax' is dated, as shown above, to the Bactrian year of 260, which corresponds to 483 of the Common Era, the tax being named, just like the horde, after the king, Ye-tha-i-li-to. Whether his father was Akhshunwar or some other man, Ye-tha-i-li-to must have been born, therefore, before 483, and in 483, if king, as was evidently the case, he must have been a young one. The fact that the Liang referred to the White Huns under his kingship as Hua, and not as Ye-thas or Yada, suggests either that the bulk of his people had not yet begun to use his name to refer to themselves, or that the use of his name by them in reference to the horde had not wholly supplanted the use of Hua by 516, and not even completely by 526. At any rate, the emissaries sent by Ye-tha-i-li-to to the Liang did not identify themselves, or their horde, as Ye-thas. But by 520, as we know from Sung Yün's account, his horde had evidently taken his name, and had largely become widely known as Ye-thas. The conclusion that Ye-tha-i-li-to was a son of Akhshunwar, or Khushnawaz, or Kunkhas, and was his immediate successor, creates no problems at all in the

chronology of the succession of the kings of the White Huns, and it appears, in fact, to be the correct conclusion. References to the Hua (Kidarites), or White Huns, as Yada, or Ye-thas, or Ephthalites, and so forth, concerning events before 483, as in the *Wei shu*, the *Bei shi*, and the *Tongdian*, as well as in Ṭabarī and Firdausí, and in Procopius too, are, as demonstrated above, anachronisms.

The consensus of scholars at present is that the Bactrian Era began about 223 CE. Khodadad Rezakhani, like other scholars, knows well what the consensus is, but, in calculating the date of a letter written by King Mehama to Shah Peroz, he has made a mistake which must be pointed out. Reckoning with the date of 223 CE in mind, Rezakhani tells us that Mehama, known also as Meyam, was 'elevated' to the position of 'governor of the famous and prosperous king of kings Peroz,' *after* Peroz had defeated the Kidarites (whom, again, Ṭabarī and Firdausí anachronistically call Ephthalites) in 466.[394] We know that Mehama, or Meyam, wrote that letter and sent it to Peroz in the Bactrian year of 239.[395] If we add 223 to 239, we get the year 462 CE, which demonstrates that Meyam, or Mehama, had composed that letter four years *before* Peroz defeated the Kidarites, at a time when he was already governor of that famous king of kings Peroz, as Mehama himself says.[396] How Rezakhani arrived at the incorrect date of that piece of history is unclear. But partly on the basis of his misunderstanding of that

[394] Khodadad Rezakhani, *ReOrienting the Sasanians: East Iran in Late Antiquity* (Edinburgh University Press, 2017), p. 121.

[395] Nicholas Sims-Williams, *Bactrian Documents from Northern Afghanistan II: Letters and Buddhist Texts* (The Nour Foundation, 2007), p. 108.

[396] Nicholas Sims-Williams, *Bactrian Documents from Northern Afghanistan II*:, p. 108.

date, he invents some scenarios regarding the career of Mehama after the defeat of the Kidarites in Tokharistan without realizing that his miscalculation undermines his credibility, at the same time that its consequences accentuate the implausibility of the scenarios he weaves. Rezakhani is worth reading, but I suggest that he be read with caution, and that his presentations of possible scenarios regarding the White Huns and their kings, whether he calls them Alchons or Hephthalites, be considered, if considered at all, with sustained circumspection.

Now, King Lae-lih was, in all probability, in control of Gandhara by 478, ruling the horde of White Huns that conquered that region and ended the hegemony of other White Huns there, namely, the Kidarites. Whether he began to rule Gandhara in 478 or a little later, Lae-lih was, of course, a contemporary of Akhshunwar; both were kings of White Huns at one and the same time. On the other hand, as shown above, the numismatic evidence confirms that King Khingila had extended his rule to include Gandhara, his dominion beginning after the fall of the Kidarites there, after, that is, 477, or about two generations before 520, when Sung Yün was visiting the region, and reported that Lae-lih, two generations earlier, or about 478, had been set up as king there. King Lae-lih and Khingila were clearly the same person, one and the same king, the form Lae-lih being obviously a nickname for Khingila, or at least the form of it that had been conveyed to Sung Yün, just as the nickname Gollas for the name of Mihirakula made its way into Cosmas's ears. It is not impossible, of course, that Lae-lih and Khingila were two different kings, and that each ruled Gandhara for a short time between 478 and 493, until Toramana (c. 493 – 515) became king there. But the weight of evidence in

favor of their having been the same king is greater than the weight of any opposing evidence, which at best amounts to little or nothing, allowing for the conclusion, or at least a tentative one, that Lae-lih and Khingila were, in fact, one and the same man, the same king. No evidence, however, shows unequivocally that Khingila reigned *until* 493.

From all the above it is clear that Akhshunwar and Khingila were, at least for a while, alive at the same time, King Akhshunwar probably having died before Khingila. It is possible, however, that Khingila was dead before Akhshunwar. The Schøyen copper scroll, dated to about 492, mentions a king Khingila as a donor to a Buddhist stupa at that time,[397] and it is not entirely impossible that the Khingila named in it is the same Khingila that issued coins in the 430s; but it is probably referring to a later king of that name, it being unlikely that the Khingila that issued coins in the 430s, when he must have been already in his twenties, lived to the year of 492 or 493, to the overripe age in those days, of, say, eighty-two or so. At any rate, did Akhshunwar set up Lae-lih, or Khingila, to be king of Gandhara? Did anyone really set him up as king there? If he had been set up as king of Gandhara by some other ruler of White Huns, Khingila must be acknowledged to have been a minor king, subordinate to him who made him king there. But Khingila issued coins bearing his name and his bust, and his having done so suggests that he was no minor king at all. If it was Khingila that led the White Hun conquest of Gandhara, and made himself king there, we must conclude, then, that Sung Yün misunderstood the events that took place two generations

[397] Hans Bakker. "A Buddhist Foundation in Śārdīysa: A New Interpretation of the Schøyen Copper Scroll." Indo-Iranian Journal 61, no. 1 (2018): 1–19. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26546804., p. 4; p. 6.

before 520, and that Khingila, or Lae-lih, was not, in fact, set up by someone else to be king, but that he declared himself king of Gandhara following the conquest there. If in fact he was no minor king, we must assume, then, the name αλχονο (*alchono*) not to have denoted a class of kings of a lower order, but, perhaps, of a higher one, that is, if it denoted a class of kings at all.

Another question is, which king was the older of the two, Akhshunwar or Khingila? The latter king's coins, which, as noted above, first began to be issued about 430, indicate that Khingila's reign had begun before that year, in the 420s; for, the earliest coins that identify him as king would have been minted, of course, after that barbarian conqueror had ascended the throne, which is unlikely to have been later than 429. As king already, therefore, by the mid or late 420s, and definitely by 429, Khingila must have been at least twenty years old in 430. Akhshunwar, on the other hand, we have shown above to have been, in all probability, at least forty years old by 457, the year when Peroz requested the help of his son King Faghanish to help him overthrow Hormizd to achieve the crown. All the above calculations, which of course provide us with only approximate dates, show that Khingila must have been born by, or before, 410, and that Akhshunwar must have been born after 410. For, if Akhshunwar had been born before 410, he would have been no younger than seventy-four when he died, whenever his death occurred, since he was still alive at least up to 483 (or possibly 484), when he fought Peroz for the last time. Of course, it is not impossible that Akhshunwar did live into his mid seventies, but it seems improbable that he did. As for Khingila, he would have been about sixty-eight years old in 478

if he had been born in 410, and would thus have been sixty-eight at the time when Gandhara must have come under the rule of Lae-lih, who could have been none other than Khingila. It should also be remembered that the dates assigned to the coins issued by Khingila are approximate ones. It is possible, in other words, that Khingila was born later than 410, and that his first coins were issued after 430 (but before 440). If he had been born about 415, and his first coins issued about 435, he would have been about sixty-three in 478; whereas Akhshunwar, if born about 415 as well, would have been sixty-eight or so in 483. As Akhshunwar, or Khushnawaz, or Kunkhas, was the father of Faghanish, who must have been at least twenty-years old in 457, so Akhshunwar must have been about forty years old in 457, or, at the very least, thirty-five. Had he been thirty-five in that year, he would have been born about 422; if forty, then his birth would have occurred, of course, in 417. Since Akhshunwar could not have been younger than thirty-five in 457, his son Faghanish already being an adult king in that year, he could have been born no later than 422; and since it is unlikely that he was in his mid seventies in 483 or 484, he must have been born no earlier than 413. Again, if Akhshunwar had been born in 415 or so, he would have been sixty-eight in 483, which, though not impossible, still seems improbable. All things considered, Akhshunwar must have been born about 420, and Khingila must have been born before 420. In other words, Khingila must have been older than Akhshunwar.

From all this it is clear that neither king could have been the father of the other, but Akhshunwar and Khingila could have been brothers; and, in any case, they must have been related; for, as Michael Alram points out, one of the early coin types of

Khingila in Gandhara bears the tamgha of the Ephthalites, that is, of the White Huns to become known as Ephthalites, as do, as Alram shows, some initial anonymous 'Alkhan' coins.[398] Akhshunwar was, of course, either a king at the time when those coins of Khingila bearing that tamgha were issued, or soon Akhshunwar, or Kunkhas, would be king, and for Khingila to have issued coins with the tamgha of Akhshunwar's horde, which horde was, in reality, as demonstrated above, the Kidarites, he must not only have known Akhshunwar, or Kunkhas, but also have been of the same ethnic stock as he was, as well as, of course, of Akhshunwar's horde, or people, the Kidarites, there being no other logical or satisfactory explanation for that tamgha to have been included on those coins. Khingila, in other words, and his people were, in fact, White Huns. Moreover, the presence of that tamgha on those coins of Khingila validates the eyewitness accounts of Sung Yün and Cosmas, whose testimonies inform us, as shown above, that the Huns in India at the time of their respective visits to that country were, in fact, White Huns. Likewise, the identification of them as White Huns by those two eyewitnesses, explicit in the one case and implied in the other, and the use of the tamgha that establishes their relationship with the White Huns that would become known as Ephthalites, further confirms what I have demonstrated above, namely, that the Ephthalites were, in fact, White Huns, that is, ultimately, Yue-Ji. Note, by the way, that the use of different tamghas among these White Huns, when known by their various names—Kidarites, 'Alchons,' and Ephthalites—does not indicate, in any way, that they were unrelated 'peoples.' Tamghas changed owing to changes of

[398] Alram, p. 279.

leadership, or to changes of mind regarding them among the various leaders of the different branches of these White Huns. In sum, as said above, Khingila, Toramana, Mihirakula, Mehama, Javukha, etc., and the respective branches that they ruled, were at no time Ephthalites, but they were, in fact, White Huns, of exactly the same stock as the White Huns that came to be known as Ephthalites after the accession of Ye-tha-i-li-to to the throne.

It should be clear by this time that the Yue-Ji, or Bai-Xiongnu, or White Huns, that lived in Gansu before 176 BCE, were the ancestors not just of the Kushans, but of the hordes to dominate Central Asia and India after the fall of the Kushan Empire, the hordes, that is, known as Kidarites and then as Ephthalites, as well as those hordes ruled by the kings that struck coins with the word or name αλχονο (*alchono*) on them. The existence of the 'Hephthalite' bowl depicting a hunting party of 'Alchons' and Kidarites[399] is further evidence that shows that I have, in fact, correctly characterized the relationships of these different branches of White Huns, one to another.

I explained at the outset of this book that the various hordes of Huns, whether referred to as tribes or as clans, were sometimes allies, sometimes foes, the desire for power and the prospect of gain, financial or territorial, ever on the minds and in the hearts of their fickle kings and haughty upstarts, having been the most common causes of conflicts or serious friction among them, and the very wedges, needless to say, to split the hordes into competing groups or branches, and make on occasion enemies of relatives. Nevertheless, cooperation among

[399] Alram, pp. 274-275.

all of them with one another was still a perpetual characteristic of their relations with one another, and it was cooperation more than anything else that made possible as well as so expansive their dominace of all other peoples for so long a time, notwithstanding whatever rivalries arose among them and seemed to threaten their mutual hegemony. Whether Akhshunwar, or Kunkhas, and Khingila, and Mehama, and the rest, all felt themselves to share equally in the possession of a single empire, one that resulted from the territories that they subsumed through conquest, we will likely never know; but enough evidence, textual, numismatic, and artistic, exists to show that those kings and their respective branches were not in the main foes or at odds, not at least for any great length of time, and in fact it indicates that they were, for the most part, on friendly terms and were allies, and not just relatives.