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Horsemen from the Edge of Empire:
The Rise of the Jurchen Coalition

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Abstract

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This dissertation examines the formation and rise of the Jurchen Coalition under the leadership of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan during the late 11th and early 12th centuries. The Anchuhu Wanyan utilized their political and geographical position along the periphery of the Liao Dynasty in order to consolidate power among the many Jurchen groups of the northeast. It is well established that the Anchuhu Wanyan served the Liao Dynasty as enforcers of imperial rule within Jurchen territory. However, this role as a policing force for the empire was only part of their success in consolidating power among the other Jurchen tribes of the northeast. The early Anchuhu Wanyan leaders utilized diverse tactics to allow them to maintain a dual-façade as both servants and rivals of the Liao Empire.

The expansion of the Jurchen Coalition brought them into conflict with various groups seeking to challenge their power. Many of these early conflicts were with rival Jurchen leaders who would often flee to the Liao Empire for political asylum. However, the Jurchen Coalition also had a major confrontation with the kingdom of Goryeo. The war between Goryeo and the Anchuhu Wanyan has not been adequately covered in the literature and yet was a crucial event during the years immediately prior to the Jurchen invasion of the Liao Dynasty. Finally, the war with the Liao Empire and the earliest most crucial phase of

invasion is examined along with potential answers to questions surrounding the motivations, and key factors of Jurchen success.

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Introduction

Many questions surround the meteoric rise of the Jurchen people within the region of North China during the 12th century. The history of the first Jurchen emperor, Aguda (r.1113-1123), is relatively well known within the field and was familiar to me as I began to investigate his story. The invasion and conquest of the formerly dominant Kitan-Liao Dynasty (907-1125), followed by the successful invasion and occupation of the northern territories of the Song Dynasty (960-1276) makes the story of the Jurchen-Jin (1115-1234) a remarkable chapter in China's premodern history. The Jurchen people not only conquered their neighbors, but they also established a lasting and successful administration over their conquered populations. Like the Kitan and Tangut empires before them, the Jurchens developed their own written script and used it alongside the standard administrative language of premodern East Asia: Chinese. Like scholars before me, I was compelled to ask the question of *how*. How did they do it? How were the Jurchens able to succeed and accomplish so much in so short a span of time? What factors contributed to their success? This dissertation contains my answers to these questions surrounding the rise of the Jurchens.

The scope of the narrative told here favors the earliest days of the coalition of tribes led by the Anchuhu Wanyan: the Jurchen clan that eventually became the imperial clan of the Jin Dynasty. This is due in large part to my own naiveté when approaching my original questions. I decided to “begin at the beginning” in order to discover whether or not the later success of the Jurchens under Aguda could be attributed in some part to his predecessors within the Anchuhu Wanyan clan and their efforts at state-building within the frontier zone

of the Liao Empire. My findings revealed that Aguda's predecessors had indeed done much to provide a foundation upon which the later emperor would build his authority and legitimacy. Furthermore, I discovered that the story of these pre-Jin Dynasty, or pre-imperial Jurchens was not well covered in the scholarly literature. I found this surprising due to the intrinsic value of the story as an approximate record of a group living within the shadow of a strong imperial border in premodern East Asia. Thus, much of this project is an investigation of the frontier world of the northeastern borders of the Liao Dynasty, and how the Anchuhu Wanyan flourished within that complex political environment.

The narrative of the early Anchuhu Wanyan is contained primarily within the first chapter of the Jin Dynastic History, or *Jinshi* 金史. This record was initiated early in 1343 under the direction of a Mongol minister of the late Yuan Dynasty named Tögtö (1313-1355).¹ The *Jinshi* compilers drew heavily from the private writings of Jin Dynasty scholars as well as the official records kept by the Jin government.² However, the origins of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan and their creation of a Jurchen state predates the establishment of the Jin Dynasty and thereby predates many of the later records written about this period. The original documentation of the pre-imperial Jurchen was possibly recorded soon after the establishment of the dynasty by educated Jurchens seeking to record the stories of their past. For example, the illustrious war hero Zonghan 宗翰 (d.1136) was known to enjoy visiting with elderly Jurchens to ask them about their histories, presumably so they could be recorded

¹ Tögtö, or Tuotuo 脫脫 was Chief Minister of the Right (*you chengxiang* 右丞相) at the time of the *Jinshi* project, but resigned from his post in early 1344 before its completion.

² For a more comprehensive account of the compilation of the *Jinshi* and the myriad issues surrounding this Yuan Dynasty project see Hok-lam Chan, *The Historiography of the Chin Dynasty: Three Studies* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1970).

in the newly fashioned Jurchen script.³ Yet, the nature of the first chapter of the *Jinshi* as a third hand account of stories that were probably first transmitted orally demands caution in using it as a primary source for the period. However, the story contained in the *Jinshi* is not found in any other extant source and is therefore the only window available to view the pre-imperial past of Jurchen society. In many ways, portions of this project can be seen as a study of memory and how the early imperial Jurchens chose to present their past.

My analysis of the rise of the Anchuhu Wanyan coalition builds upon the research of previous scholars, primarily that of Herbert Franke who published his own translation of the first chapter of the *Jinshi* in 1978.⁴ I have chosen to not re-translate the story found in that first chapter, but instead to analyze the narrative and investigate it within the larger historical framework of East Asia at that time. The main contribution of this research is its analysis of the pre-imperial Jurchen and how the leaders of the Anchuhu Wanyan successfully negotiated their position as rulers of a tribal coalition on the periphery of the Liao Empire. Additionally, the relationship between the pre-imperial Jurchen and the state of Goryeo provides a crucial piece of knowledge in the story of the rise of the Jurchen that has been relatively ignored by the scholarship. The establishment of relations and hostilities with Goryeo provided invaluable experience to the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition in the realms of both military and political training. The final contribution of this research is its analysis of the early events surrounding the Jurchen invasion of Liao. The question of *how* the Jurchen

³ *Jinshi* 66.1558. The Jurchen script continued to be used under later dynasties and was even studied by interpreters and translators during the Ming, centuries after the Jurchen-Jin had been destroyed. See: Daniel Kane, *The Sino-Jurchen vocabulary of the Bureau of Interpreters*, Indiana University Uralic and Altaic Series, v.153 (Bloomington: Indiana University, Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 1989), x.

⁴ Herbert Franke, "Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (II): a Translation of Chapter One of the *Chin-shi*," *Zentralasiatische Studien*, 12 (Wiesbaden, 1978): 413-452. This article was reprinted along with other articles by Franke and his colleague Hok-lam Chan in *Studies on the Jurchens and the Chin Dynasty* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate: 1997).

conquered the eastern lands of the Liao is investigated in detail with emphasis given to the key events that took place in the large armies of the Liao emperor as well as the rebellion of the Liao Eastern Capital in 1116. This work does not cover the entirety of the Liao conquest, but instead identifies the period in which the Liao Empire fell from its position as hegemon of East Asia. After losing the eastern regions of the empire to Aguda and his new Jurchen-Jin Dynasty, the Liao were put in a vulnerable diplomatic and military position. The fact that Emperor Tianzuo and his closest advisors failed to recognize this fall in status was a key factor in the continuing aggression of the Jurchen and the ultimate demise of the Liao Empire.

The early structure and organization of the pre-imperial Jurchen under the leadership of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan is referred to herein as the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition or Jurchen Coalition depending on style and context. I have chosen to use the word “coalition” to describe the early Anchuhu Wanyan polity to underline that it was a union of various groups. This style of alliance and union is consistent with the early political traditions of Jurchen tribes living along the Songhua River, who practiced a form of elective leadership similar to various steppe people like the Kitan and later the Mongols.⁵

The first chapter deals with the earliest origins of the imperial lineage of Aguda and the other emperors of the Jin Dynasty. These imperial progenitors were remembered as having started as outsiders to Jurchen society and only after generations of cohabitation were they accepted as rulers of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan. The most important individual within this earliest phase of the expansion of Anchuhu authority over the other inhabitants of the Songhua River system was Aguda’s grandfather, Wugunai. While earlier rulers had initiated

⁵ Both Abaoji, the founder of the Kitan-Liao Dynasty, and Chinggis Khan of the Mongols were granted their authority by those they ruled in some form of elective assembly, or *quriltai*.

the expansion of Anchuhu rule, Wugunai was the leader who established the general style and strategy of Anchuhu power as an extra-territorial entity along an imperial border.

Wugunai's particular "frontier strategy" defies the conventional descriptions established within existing frontier studies and proves itself to have been remarkably effective.

The second chapter discusses the reign of Aguda's father, Helibo, who early in his rule was forced to battle former allies in an effort to retain control of the coalition. The inter-tribal wars among the Jurchens during Helibo's reign reveal the turbulent political environment of the pre-imperial Jurchen clans. Helibo's rule was put in grave danger by the alliance of Jurchen groups who gathered to march against him and his followers. It was a crisis that threatened the family in which Aguda was raised and was a major turning point in the history of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan. Another interesting aspect of this period was the role of the Liao Dynasty within these inter-tribal conflicts. Despite the empire's lack of a strong military presence in the area (or maybe because of it), the Liao were extremely active in the tribal politics of their northeastern neighbors. Learning how to navigate the relationship between Jurchen clans and the Liao Empire became the Anchuhu Wanyan's forte, and the key to their rise to power within the shadow of the empire.

The third chapter looks deeper into the relationship between the Jurchens and the Liao Empire as more and more Jurchen leaders fled to the Liao for protection from the aggressive expansion of the Anchuhu Wanyan. The Liao Empire officially recognized only one legitimate ruler of the unregistered Jurchens living beyond its borders, but it simultaneously maintained a relatively open policy of communication with all minor Jurchen leaders in the area. The empire was quick to offer these enemies of the Anchuhu Wanyan

political asylum and worked to mediate a cessation of hostilities between the two parties. However, the leaders of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition, most notably Helibo's younger brother, Yingge, were extremely adept at deflecting Liao intervention into Coalition affairs. Much of that deflection was achieved through tactics of guile and deceit that served to maintain the position of the Anchuhu Wanyan as the preferred enforcers of Liao imperial rule among the Jurchens living beyond their borders. The military strength of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition increased well before Aguda's invasion of the Liao, and was probably most apparent in the Coalition's conflicts with the rebel Kitan official, Xiao Haili as well as the large battles with the kingdom of Goryeo in the first decade of the 12th century.

The fourth chapter continues the history of the Jurchen-Goryeo relationship during the years of 1103-09. During this period, immediately prior to the later Jurchen aggression against the Liao Empire, the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition was engaged in a large-scale military and political campaign to retain the administration of Jurchen groups living north of the Goryeo border. In addition to the valuable battle experience obtained by Coalition forces in the conflicts with Goryeo, it was during this time that the Anchuhu Wanyan leaders took their first steps into the larger world of East Asian politics and presented themselves as legitimate rulers in their own right.

The personality and rise of Aguda to leadership within the Coalition makes up much of chapter five. The decision to invade the Liao was not a reckless reaction to any particular insult; instead the more complex motives of *why* Aguda led his people into war are investigated. While it is often cited as the pivotal moment in which the Jurchen made clear their antagonism to the Liao, the fateful dance scene in which Aguda refuses to participate is

re-evaluated within light of the long-standing relationship between Aguda's clan and the Liao Empire. The Anchuhu Wanyan did not enter the war with Liao lightly, nor without the full expectation that they would be forced to defend their homeland from an eventual Liao invasion. It was only after the failure of the Liao to successfully respond to the initial Jurchen attacks on Liao territory that Aguda and his followers shifted their intentions toward a thorough campaign of conquest.

The final chapter analyzes how Liao's ability to defend their interests in the east fell apart. The ultimate disintegration of Liao defenses during the latter years of the Jurchen invasion resulted from the crippling events of 1115-17. The military failures of the Liao on frontier battlefields were only a part of the larger erosion of Liao power along the eastern frontier. The major effort of Tianzuo to repel the armies of the Jurchen took the form of a massive Liao army that marched to war late in 1115. However, this impressive force was derailed by multiple insurrections from within the Kitan ranks. Low morale of Liao soldiers may have done more to bring down the empire than its Jurchen enemies. In fact, the loss of the Eastern Capital and administrative headquarters of the eastern regions was accomplished without the participation of Aguda's forces. The urban Bohai of the Eastern Capital successfully captured the city and the settlements of the lower Liaodong region independent of Jurchen assistance. Although the Jurchen did eventually take these territories from Bohai control, they played no part in their initial conquest.

The year 1117 provides a reasonable date to end this narrative. By the year 1117, the Liao Dynasty had fallen from its former position of dominance within the international community of East Asia and had lost the capacity to adequately defend itself from the newly

risen Jurchen-Jin Empire. Furthermore, the declaration of a new regnal era in 1117 by Aguda reveals that he too perceived of that year as a turning point in the history of his state. After 1117, the Jin Dynasty embarked on a campaign to not only establish itself as a legitimate empire in the eyes of the East Asian international community, but to establish itself as the dominant empire within that system.

Who were the Jurchens?

The first thing that should be said about the Jurchens is that they were not a homogenous group. The people that would later be included under the term “Jurchen” were the descendants of a diverse collection of groups that inhabited the areas within and around the Songhua River system.⁶ Too often we read of historical populations and people and imagine their physical existence paralleling the historical record; a sudden rise to the spotlight followed by an eventual decline and disappearance as if a group of previously unknown origin could arise from historical and temporal obscurity to a new height of power only to eventually decline and disappear from the earth. Populations, ethnicities, and groups do not simply appear from nothingness, nor do they simply fade out of existence. Their identity as a people is a creation formed by both themselves and the people they come into contact with. And to complicate the situation even further, their identification within the records of the past were often penned by individuals who only vaguely understood the people

⁶ The Songhua 松花 or Sungari River is the largest tributary of the Heilong Jiang 黑龍江 or Amur River. See Map 1: Lands of the Jurchen.

they were naming.⁷ Thus, the question of “who were the Jurchens” can only be answered by defining the social and political environment from which they came and in which they were formed. This introduction will attempt to relate the narrative of how the people known as the Jurchen came to be considered the dominant people of the region and how the early leaders of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan solidified their position at the head of a growing Jurchen political state.

Before the Jurchens were Jurchens – The Mohe

Due to its location along the periphery of the centralized states of the North China Plain and the Korean Peninsula, the area of the Songhua and its inhabitants prior to the foundation of the Jin dynasty received only passing mention within the historical record. However, a rough narrative of the people living within this region can be teased out and placed within the context of the rich history of East Asia in the centuries prior to Jurchen dominance. Before they were referred to as Jurchen, the majority of the people of the Songhua River system were called Mohe 靺鞨. During the era of the Sui Dynasty (580-618), the Mohe were seen as being comprised of seven distinct but linked groups. They were the Sumo 粟末, Boduo 伯咄, Anchegu 安車骨, Funie 拂涅, Haoshi 號室, Baishan 白山, and

⁷ In the case of the Jurchens, the origin of their name has been a subject of much debate. I have chosen to use the term “Jurchen” for both *nüzhi* 女直 and *nüzhen* 女真 in the historical record. The original name *nüzhen* found in the records of the Sui was altered to *nüzhi* during the middle of the Liao dynasty by the Kitan because the second character in *nüzhen* (真) was also contained in the given name of the then deceased emperor Yelü Zongzhen 耶律宗真 (r.1031-55) [aka Xingzong 興宗] and was therefore tabooed. The Jurchens themselves, upon creating their own dynasty chose to follow the Liao custom and refer to themselves as *nüzhi*, while the Song Dynasty continued to utilize the pre-Liao designation of *nüzhen*. For a more comprehensive etymology and rationalization for the use of the term Jurchen, see Han Rulin 韓儒林, “Nuzhen yiming kao 女真譯名考” [a study of the transcription of the name ‘Nüzhen’], *Studia Serica* (Chengdu) 3, nos. 1-4 (1943):1-11, and Paul Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1959-63), 366-90.

Heishui 黑水. While these groups may have been united under a loose political allegiance during the Sui, the disappearance of five of the seven from the later historical record indicates that by the early Tang period they had likely fractured into independent entities. During the first decades of the seventh century the Sumo Mohe and the Heishui Mohe were seen as the key players in the struggle for power in the Songhua region.

The Sumo Mohe had settled within the lower reaches of the Huifa River 輝發河, a tributary of the Songhua. The *Jinshi* records that the Sumo Mohe were at first subject to the kingdom of Goguryeo located in the northern territories of the Korean peninsula. They are also recorded as having defended their position from the invasions of the Tang in 645, who were then advancing into Goguryeo. The experience of the Sumo Mohe is indicative of later circumstances facing the inhabitants of the Songhua river valleys, who were forced to negotiate their position along the political periphery of multiple empires. Following their initial submission to Goguryeo, the Sumo Mohe, along with numerous refugees from China Proper and the Korean Peninsula established an independent kingdom in 698 called Bohai, or Balhae (698-926).⁸ Consequently, the people once known as the Sumo Mohe were from thereafter referred to as Bohai. The kingdom of Bohai existed for over two hundred years and during most of that time it dominated the river basins of the Songhua, Liao, and portions of the Heilong (Amur) Rivers. It had five capital cities and administered over fifteen administrations and sixty-two prefectures. In a description of the Bohai kingdom, the *Jinshi*

⁸ The name of this kingdom was recorded in Chinese records as Bohai 渤海, while the Korean reading of the kingdom is Balhae. It is believed by some that the name Bohai dates back to the Han Dynasty when it was the name of a commandery (*jun* 郡) with its capital located southeast of present day Cang 滄 County in Hebei. See Karl A. Wittfogel and Feng Chia-sheng, *History of Chinese Society: Liao* (907-1125), (Philadelphia, The American Philosophical Society: Distributed by the Macmillan Co., New York, 1949), 59n.3. However, it seems to me that the location of the Bohai kingdom and Cang County are too far removed from each other to warrant such a connection.

records that the Bohai dynastic family ruled for ten generations and that their kingdom had a script 文字, rites 禮, music 樂, offices and officials 官府, and regulations 制度.⁹

The Heishui Mohe also formed an early alliance with Goguryeo; however their settlements were further north along the lower reaches of the Songhua. While the Sumo Mohe were defending their own territory during the 645 invasion by Tang, the Heishui Mohe reportedly assisted Goguryeo by sending a force of 150,000 soldiers against the invading Tang army. This hostility against the Tang did not last, for in the early 700s, representatives of the Heishui Mohe arrived at the Tang imperial court to present tribute. The Tang then created a new Heishui Administration and granted the Heishui leaders the titles of governors (*dudu* 都督) or prefects (*cishi* 刺史). The *Jinshi* also notes that one of the Heishui governors was given the imperial surname of Li 李, a new personal name of Xiancheng 獻誠, and the title of Conquest Commissioner of Heishui (*jinglue shi* 經略使).¹⁰ The Tang also appointed a senior scribe (*zhangshi* 長史) to supervise them. By appealing to the larger and wealthier empire of Tang, the leaders of the Heishui Mohe were able to obtain a confirmation and legitimation of their rule over their people. By obtaining recognition from the Tang, the Heishui Mohe would also have been allowed to enter into the tributary system which

⁹ *Jinshi* 金史(Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 1.1. It is unclear whether the “script” mentioned in this passage is an original, and unknown, Bohai script, or if it is a reference to the more ubiquitous characters of the Chinese language. However, because no Bohai script has ever been discovered, it is safe to assume that the script mentioned here is in fact Chinese in origin and would be consistent with the similar use of Chinese script within the states of the Korean Peninsula and the islands of Japan.

¹⁰ The Tang Dynasty had a habit of bestowing the Tang imperial surname Li 李 upon leaders of peripheral states and groups. The rationale behind these types of name changes is consistent with the premodern concept of fraternity between rulers. While surely not meant to signify equality between the Tang emperor and these types of regional rulers, it was likely used to signify a sense of cooperation and diplomatic oneness between states. The granting of an imperial surname could also be seen as an effort to symbolically incorporate distant leaders into the imperial enterprise of the Tang dynastic family. The personal name bestowed here, Xiancheng 獻誠 has a rough meaning of “presenting, or offering up honesty/sincerity.”

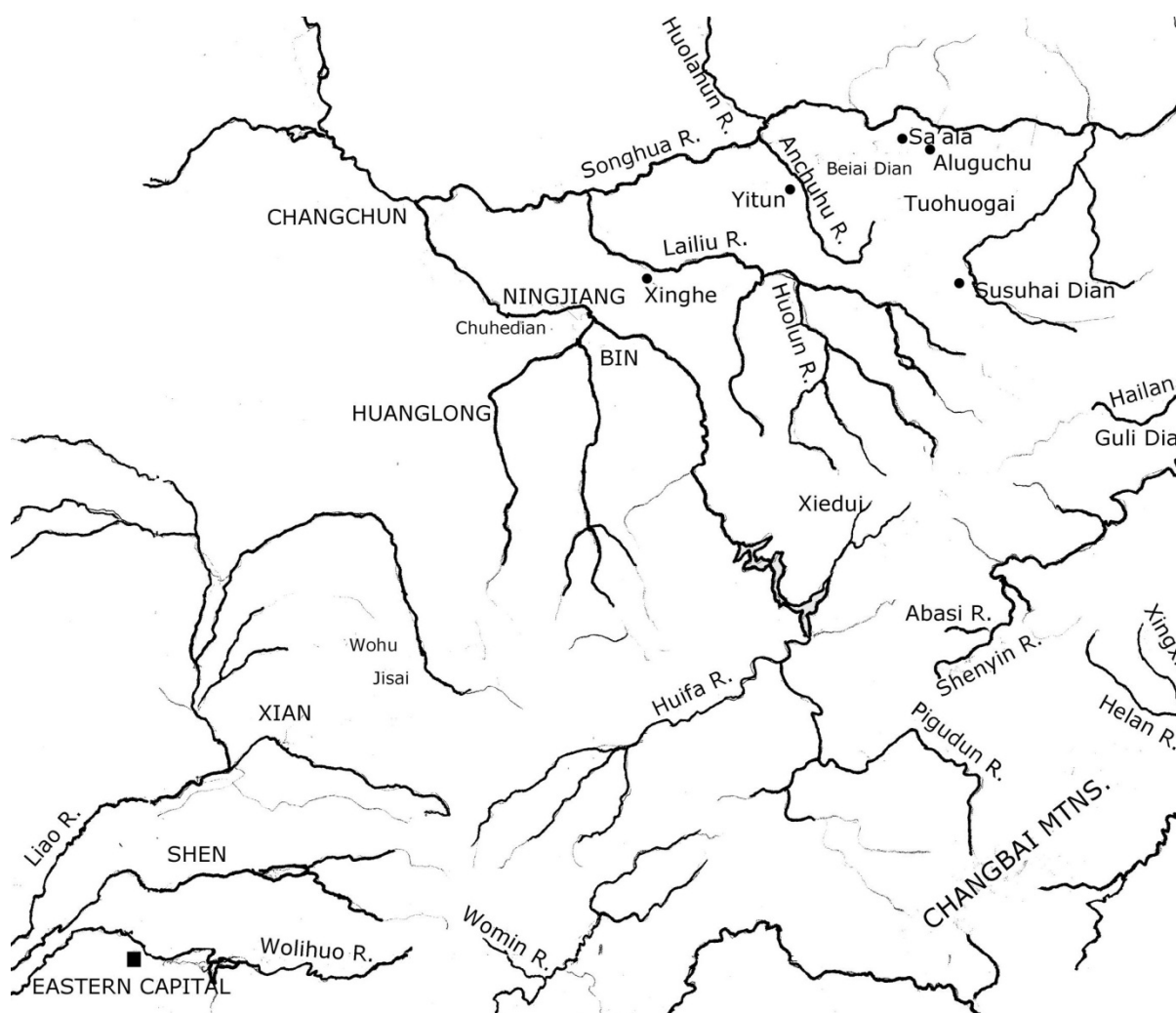
facilitated the ritualized exchange of lavish gifts between rulers which could bolster their personal power and wealth. This type of investiture was a common strategy of power utilized by groups existing along the political periphery of large premodern empires, and was a common practice among the Mohe, and later Jurchen peoples in their relations with the more southern empires.¹¹ As the Bohai kingdom increased in power, it eventually dominated contact between the Heishui Mohe and the Tang, and became the new recipient of Heishui tribute and allegiance.

¹¹ For a more thorough discussion of this type of frontier strategy see Thomas Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China 221 B.C. to AD 1757* (Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell Publishers, 1989). Barfield's theories on frontier strategies as they pertain to the pre-imperial Jurchens is discussed on page 41 of this work.

Chapter One: Rise of the Anchuhu Wanyan

Introduction

The history of the pre-imperial Jurchens as contained in the *Jinshi* record is truly a story centered on the history of the imperial clan. This chapter presents the earliest beginnings of the imperial lineage of the Jin Emperors as embodied in a succession of their ancestral leaders. Due to the nature of the historical source, the legends and stories of these earliest rulers reveals above all how the later rulers of the Jin Dynasty perceived their distant past. However, because this is the only source that claims to have originated with the oral histories of the early Jurchens, we must do our best to draw conclusions and analyze the historical trajectory of events despite the lack of corroborating sources. The rule of Aguda's grandfather, Wugunai, is the first of these early rulers for which we have reign dates. Thus, it is possible that beginning with Wugunai's story, the narrative increases in historical reliability relative to what is written before it. Yet, in all cases of historical analysis, it is important to recognize that history is constructed to further particular ends. And in the case of the *Jinshi* record, one of these goals would have been to present the imperial ancestors in the most positive light.



The Anchu Wanyan-Hanpu

Before anyone claimed the title emperor, the people known as the Jurchen had become united under the leadership of one family. This family was a branch of the Wanyan tribe, and will be referred to from here on as the Imperial or Anchu Wanyan.¹² It has already been mentioned that the history of the Anchu Wanyan is recorded primarily in the *Jinshi*, compiled centuries after the events it records. Thus, while we are forced to rely on its narrative in order to glean any information on the rise of the Imperial Wanyan family, we

¹² Anchu is the name of the river tributary of the Songhua along which this branch of the Wanyan family eventually settled and lived.

must also be aware of the historical biases woven into the narrative by their royal descendents. Such biases will emphasize stories and circumstances important to the later authors of the tale and surely distort the actual events that may have occurred.

Branches of the Wanyan tribe lived scattered throughout the river valleys northeast of Liao territory generations prior to the arrival of the recognized first ancestor of the Imperial lineage of the Jin emperors.¹³ This ancestor's name was Hanpu 函普. Hanpu was the middle of three brothers who lived the majority of their lives within the lands of the Korean peninsula.¹⁴ At the age of sixty, Hanpu and his younger brother Baohuoli 保活里 moved north out of the peninsula, where they eventually parted ways and settled within the river valleys of Pugan 僕幹 and Yelan 耶懶, respectively.¹⁵ Their elder brother, Agunai, did not migrate north and instead remained in his homeland within the Korean peninsula. Yet, even though Agunai did not move with the others, his name consistently appeared among the genealogies of later groups who claimed descent through his line. These types of genealogical claims became increasingly important as the leaders of the later Imperial

¹³ Following current scholarly practice, I have purposefully avoiding using the toponym "Manchuria" to refer to the region encompassing the modern provinces of Liaodong, Jilin, and Heilongjiang; the region in which the entirety of this study takes place. However, there is not yet a well defined alternative to "Manchuria" and thus I have tried to make due with references to specific river valleys, border administrations, or more generally "the northeast." For a discussion on the creation and use of the Manchurian toponym see Mark C. Elliott, "The Limits of Tartary: Manchuria in Imperial and National Geographies," *Journal of Asian Studies* 59.3 (2003): 603-46.

¹⁴ The belief that Hanpu and his brothers originated within the lands of the Korean Peninsula is rooted in a direct reading of the narrative given in the *Jinshi*. However, some Jurchen scholars suggest that Hanpu and his brothers hailed from a Jurchen tribe that was merely subject to rule from the peninsula. Still others believe that Hanpu and his brothers never lived within the peninsula and instead were from a family of the Changbai Mountain Jurchens (*Changbai shan* 長白山) who were known to the state of Goryeo as the "Eastern Jurchen." See Dong Wan 董万, "Wanyan Nüzhen faxian Heilongjiang shuo yingdang zhongxin renshi 完顏女真發祥黑龍江說應當重新認識," *Northern Cultural Relics* 北方文物 74.2 (2003): 60-61.

¹⁵ The location of the Pugan River is unknown, although it is assumed to be a river proximate to the Anchuhu River valley. The Yelan River is known today in China as the Damehei River 塔馬黑河 located in Russia's Far Eastern Federal District within a region known to China as Binhai 濱海.

Wanyan family consolidated their power over the northeastern regions; if a group could claim parallel descent from one of Hanpu's brothers they held a better chance of obtaining a more favorable status under Wanyan rule than those not linked to the family by similar blood ties.

Hanpu is said to have lived along the Pugan River among a group of Wanyan, though in the beginning he was not considered a member of their clan. His position as an outsider was made clear when he was requested to stand as a mediator and judge between the Wanyan and an enemy clan. This practice of employing a third party mediator was a common method of conflict resolution within kin-based stateless societies. Within these types of social environments, one's position and identity was maintained through one's affiliation with a tribe or clan. These groups retained internal solidarity through a recognized, and occasionally fictitious, sense of kinship.¹⁶ The actual genealogical ties were secondary to a symbolic joining of one family to another. In such societies, any slight to one member of the clan was perceived as a slight to the entire group that had to be redressed through retaliatory action against the offending clan. Unmediated disputes could quickly escalate into blood feuds in which entire clans would engage in open warfare. By employing a third-party mediator, each side could agree to the mediator's judgment without a loss of status or honor. Indeed, these types of mediators must have been desperately sought out by such groups who could see no way to end persistent blood feuds.¹⁷

¹⁶ For more information on the relationship between kin-group solidarity, political organization, rules of residence, and group identity see Jeffery M. Paige, "Kindship and Polity in Stateless Societies," *American Journal of Sociology* 80.2 (1974):301-320.

¹⁷ The use of third party mediators is a common phenomenon of tribal or clannish societies, although it has been noticed particularly as a social function of religious, or holy, men within tribal societies. One prominent historical example of this type of third-party mediation can be seen in the narrative of the young prophet

Using his authority as mediator, Hanpu successfully resolved the dispute between the two groups by proposing a new method of conflict resolution. Hanpu ruled that instead of seeking reciprocal punishments and private vendettas for the murder of one man, the perpetrator's family would agree to give one of their number over to be executed and provide an additional payment of twenty horses, ten cows, and six ounces of gold.¹⁸ Hanpu also stipulated that once payment was made, the matter would be considered closed and no private vendettas would be allowed.¹⁹ The two groups agreed and the feud was ended. The Wanyan were so pleased with his service that they rewarded Hanpu by offering him an older unmarried Wanyan woman to be his bride, thereby allowing him to join their clan. Hanpu's bride was sixty years old herself and was accompanied by a gray ox as a betrothal gift (a symbolically important animal in traditional Jurchen culture). Thus, Hanpu was officially married into this branch of the Wanyan clan. In their old age, Hanpu and his wife bore three children. Their two sons were named Wulu 烏魯 and Wolu 斡魯, and their daughter,

Mohammad and his journey to the city of Yathrib (Medina) where he was employed as a judge and mediator of disputes between tribal groups within that region. See Nile Green, "Blessed Men and Tribal Politics: Notes on Political Culture in the Indo-Afghan World," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 49.3 (2006): 344-360. The importance of third party mediation is as a potential solution to violent conflicts that would otherwise demand group or individual retaliation or vengeance is also mentioned in Roger V. Gould, "Revenge as Sanction and Solidarity Display: An Analysis of Vendettas in Nineteenth-Century Corsica," *American Sociological Review* 65.5 (Oct 2000), 684. For a discussion on the rationale behind distinguishing "tribes" from "clans" in this dissertation see page 65 of this work.

¹⁸ This story is cited by the *Jinshi* compilers as the origin of the latter Jurchen customary law requiring a murder to be compensated with thirty horses or oxen.

¹⁹ This type of transition is often called a shift from *lex talionis* or the Law of Retaliation to a system of *Wergeld*, referencing early Germanic law in which a man's life was accorded a price which was to be paid by the perpetrator if he was slain. However, unlike the *Wergeld* it is unclear whether or not the Wanyan made the distinction between the rank or station of a man when calculating the price to be paid at his wrongful death. See Franke, "Chinese Texts of the Jurchen (I): a Translation of the Jurchen in the *San ch'ao pei-meng hui-pien*," *Zentralasiatische Studien* 9 (Wiesbaden, 1975), 143. This article was reprinted along with other articles by Franke and his colleague Hok-lam Chan in *Studies on the Jurchens and the Chin Dynasty* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate: 1997). For more information on the purpose and function of *lex talionis* in human law codes, see Morris J. Fish, "An Eye for an Eye: Proportionality as a Moral Principle of Punishment," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 28.1 (2008): 57-71.

Zhusiban 注思板. The ability of Hanpu's wife to bear children at such an age was recorded as one of the signs of Heaven's favor over Hanpu and his descendants.

Suikē

The line of imperial descent was seen as having passed through the descendants of Hanpu's eldest son Wulu to his great-grandson Suikē 綏可. While it is not mentioned that Hanpu ever became a leader of the Wanyan in any capacity beyond his initial role as a third-party mediator, by the time of Suikē it seems that his descendants had risen to a prominent position within the clan. Furthermore, while Suikē was a direct descendant of Hanpu's eldest son Wulu, it is important to note that the Anchuhu Wanyan did not adhere to the customs of primogeniture. Leadership was often (and preferably) passed from older to younger brothers before jumping to the next generation. This type of succession has often been criticized as chaotic and unstable. And while it does allow for more potential successors at the death of a particular ruler, when combined with a strong policy of electoral leadership (when a new ruler is chosen by the consensus those being ruled) such a custom has the capacity to provide a smooth succession.

Prior to Suikē's leadership, this group of Wanyan followed the "old custom" of the Heishui Mohe by practicing an irregular migration to different locations throughout the year. The majority of the time they lived within holes dug deep into the ground that were roofed with grasses and earth. However, during the summer months they would "follow the water and grass" and during the winter they would reside within some of the many caves of the

region.²⁰ Under the rule of Suike, the Imperial Wanyan established a permanent residence along the Haigu River 海古, a tributary of the Anchuhu, and Suike instructed his people to construct permanent houses.²¹ Suike also began to practice the regular cultivation of land and agriculture. From then on, this particular branch of the Wanyan tribe settled permanently within the region of the Anchuhu River, where they would later establish the Supreme Capital of their empire. Meanwhile, outside of the mountains and river valleys of the lower Songhua, empires were rising up within the wake of the fallen Tang dynasty.

Successors to the Tang

Traditionally, the dynastic lineage of Chinese history is described as passing from the Tang through the politically chaotic period of the Five Dynasties before finding a strong successor in the Song dynasty (960-1276). However, with the disintegration of Tang central power, a multitude of states and polities arose to claim regional power within the boundaries of former Tang influence.²² And while the Five Dynasties of China Proper were influential in their own right, they were overshadowed by a much more powerful successor to Tang hegemony; the Kitan, or Liao Empire to the north (907-1125). Particularly to the

²⁰ It is unclear what exactly is meant by the phrase “following water and grass” as it pertained to the Jurchen but it can be assumed that during the months of fair weather, the clan traveled to various locations. Presumably these would be favorite grounds for hunting, fishing, and pasture. The phrase is a consistent adage within Chinese literature when describing non-agrarian groups. It was first coined by Sima Qian who used it when describing the Xiongnu. See *Shiji* 110.2879 and Linda Cooke Johnson, *Women of the Conquest Dynasties: Gender and Identity in Liao and Jin China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2011), xxi.

²¹ Known today as the large (*da* 大) and small (*xiao* 小) Hai Channels (*haigou* 海溝), northeast of Acheng city 阿城市, Heilongjiang

²² Naomi Standen, “The Five Dynasties,” in Denis Twitchett and Paul Jakov Smith, eds., *Part One: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors*, *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Herbert Franke, “The Chin Dynasty,” in Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett, eds., *Alien Regimes and Border States, 907-1368*, *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 218. Franke believes that the Jurchens were among the many new political units along the former borders of the Tang that took shape after the dynasty fell.

inhabitants of the northeast, the Liao dynasty was the most important successor state of the Tang.

The Liao was established by a federation of pastoral nomads named the Kitan who originally hailed from the lands of today's Eastern Inner Mongolia. While the Kitan had long been an influential group within the power struggles of the eastern steppe, their rise to power truly began after the fall of the previously dominant Uighur Empire (744-840) centered to their west. The collapse of the Uighur Empire brought many Uighurs to Kitan lands; the most notable of these migrants were the imperial Uighur clan of Shimo (later renamed Xiao 蕭). The Shimo became the marriage allies of the later imperial Kitan family of Yila (later renamed Yelü 耶律). The alliance of the Shimo and Yila families is important for this study because much of the territory controlled by the Liao dynasty in the northeast was directly governed by male members of the Shimo clan and their Yila wives. When the power of the Tang court collapsed completely in 907, the Kitan rulers were ready to assert their position as the prime empire of the north. Like other groups living within the steppe, the early Kitan had a custom of electing their leaders, called *qaghan*. In 907, that election went to the successful general and ruler of the Yila clan, Abaoji 阿保機 (872-926). However, at the end of his three-year term as *qaghan* Abaoji refused to step down and continued to expand the power of the Kitan state.²³

Conquest of Bohai

²³ The ethnically limited name of Kitan was only later changed to the supraethnic "Liao" in 947 under Abaoji's son and successor Deguang. However, in their own language the name was not Liao but instead Daur Gurun, or Daur Dynasty. See Christopher Atwood, "Kitans," in *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire* (New York: Facts on File, 2004).

The power of the Kitan Empire in the northeast was made manifest in 926, when Abaoji's forces conquered the kingdom of Bohai. The pretext for the invasion is recorded in the *Liaoshi* as having to do with the Bohai murder of a Kitan prefect assigned to govern the newly designated Kitan Prefecture located near Bohai territory.²⁴ The initial campaign against Bohai was extremely swift. The central capital of Bohai, Huan 忽汗 was captured by Kitan forces during the first month of 926. By the second month all of the prefects came to surrender. However, even though the kingdom fell quickly, the inhabitants of the former kingdom were resistant to their new rulers and repeatedly rose against the Liao in rebellion throughout the years of Kitan occupation. During the Kitan invasion, the Bohai heir apparent, Da Guangxian 大光顯 and tens of thousands of his people fled south to the newly created kingdom of Goryeo within the Korean peninsula.²⁵ There, Guangxian was accepted by the ruling family and given the imperial name of Wang Kie 王繼. Other groups of Bohai scattered to different areas of the northeast or were later forcibly moved by the Kitans into areas closer to Liao central control.

After conquering the Bohai kingdom, Abaoji proclaimed that the conquered territories were to form a new kingdom called Dongdan 東丹 centered in the previous Bohai capital of Huan 忽汗 (though the Kitans renamed it Tianfu 天福) to be ruled over by his son and planned successor, Bei 倍. The kingdom of Dongdan did not last long, nor did its founder or first king. Abaoji died soon after the conquest of Bohai in 926 and his planned

²⁴ *Liaoshi* 遼史 2.4a.

²⁵ The kingdom of Goryeo was the renamed kingdom of Later Goguryeo following the successful coup of the throne by a popular general Wang Kon in 918. Wang Kon was known for bestowing his imperial surname upon allies and supporters of his throne.

successor Yelü Bei ruled Dongdan for only four years, which was after he had renounced the Kitan throne in favor of his younger brother Deguang 德光 in 927. Eventually, in 982 the kingdom was abolished and incorporated into the Eastern Capital Route (*dongjing dao* 東京道).²⁶ Even though the kingdom existed in name until 982, the Bohai inhabitants of the region were forcibly moved out of their homes in 929, only three years after Abaoji's invasion, and relocated in the area of the Liang River 梁水(aka Wolihuo River 沃里活水) in the Liaoning region.²⁷

It was during these years of Kitan advance into previous Bohai territory that the name “Jurchen” began to appear with greater frequency within the historical record. While it is possible that the previously dominant Mohe group was being displaced by a newer and more successful Jurchen one, such an interpretation is grounded in the dangerous assumption that merely because a group's name fades from the historical record, that the people themselves are displaced and fade into obscurity. Additionally, this interpretation does not take into account the many statements of later Jurchens who confidently claim the Mohe as their ancestors, be they genetic or political, and make no claims regarding their dominance over them. If the Mohe people had merely died out or been overtaken by these “new” Jurchen groups, then reference to their submission would surely have been made by their conquerors, the Jurchen. Since this is not the case, we can assume that the Mohe as a people were neither conquered nor eliminated by their successors, but that the people previously known as Mohe chose to identify themselves increasingly as Jurchen.

²⁶ The Eastern Capital Route 東京道 was the large territorial region that covered nearly the whole area of modern Jilin, Liaoning, as well as areas of Heilongjiang, and parts of North Korea.

²⁷ *Liaoshi* 75.1238. The Liang River is known today as the Taizi River 太子河 within Liaoning Province.

In looking at the list of groups who arrived at the Liao court to present tribute in the years immediately after the conquest of Bohai both Mohe and Jurchen are listed separately. In 926, the Mohe are recorded as having sent a tributary mission to the Liao though it is unclear which branch of the Mohe it was. The first recorded embassy of the Jurchen arrived two years later in 928. During the next decade, groups identified as Jurchen presented tribute four times without any mention of a Mohe embassy. Yet in 938, both the Mohe and Jurchen presented tribute to the Liao. That was the last recorded tribute from a group identified as Mohe, while the Jurchen missions continued sporadically throughout the remainder of the Liao reign.²⁸ One explanation of the simultaneous presentation of tribute by both Jurchen and Mohe groups in 938 could be attributed to the possibility that these terms were not solely ethnic in character, but that they were utilized within a political context. Thus, while many of the groups in the northeast adopted the use of the Jurchen name, it is possible that at least one group chose to present themselves as Mohe in an attempt to draw upon the legacy and legitimacy of the long-established Mohe identity. Again, the ambiguity of the records prevents a satisfying answer to the relationship between the Mohe and Jurchen people. However, it is clear that by the late 930s it was the groups referred to as Jurchen that were the rising stars of the northeast wilderness.

The name Jurchen was not originally an ethnographic term, but was instead applied to a diverse body of populations and people living within the river valleys of the northeast. The most distinctive characteristic used to sub-divide the Jurchen people was their level of integration into the Liao Empire's system of frontier administration; namely, the official

²⁸ Karl A. Wittfogel and Feng Chia-sheng, *History of Chinese Society: Liao (907-1125)* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1949): 322.

registration of specific Jurchen groups within the Liao bureaucracy. The Jurchen groups that lived firmly within the territorial boundaries of the empire and were registered within the territorial administration of the frontier regions were referred to as “civilized” (*shou* 熟, “cooked”) Jurchen. Jurchen groups living far beyond the normal reach of the Liao, who were not regularly listed on the imperial registries, and who therefore followed their own traditions of rule were called “uncivilized” (*sheng* 生, “raw”) Jurchen. Between these two types of Jurchen there seems to have existed a third classification of Jurchen living just beyond the scope of Liao administration who were not considered “civilized” yet were near enough to the imperial regions to not be labeled as “uncivilized.” Again, this classification of Jurchen groups seems to have been rooted in the level of integration each group had in relation to the Liao Empire. The use of “civilized” and “uncivilized” or “cooked” and “raw” monikers surely transmitted a level of judgment regarding the moral and cultural sophistication of each group, but it was the location of their residence, their inclusion in the Liao registries, and the form of their political structures that determined which group was considered “civilized” and which was not.²⁹

²⁹ While the Chinese characters *shou* 熟 and *sheng* 生 do literally mean “cooked” and “raw,” in an effort to better express the political thought of the system, scholars have customarily used dichotomous terms in place of these uncomfortably culinary expressions. For example, “tame” vs. “wild;” “familiar” vs. “unfamiliar;” and “civilized” vs. “uncivilized.” The Liao were the first to utilize this type of categorization in reference to frontier populations, and in so doing established a terminology that continued late into the later dynasties of Ming and Qing. However, the concept of *shou* being used to describe a person’s familiarity or knowledge of a particular subject dates back to pre-Qin times. See Leo K. Shin, *The Making of the Chinese State: Ethnicity and Expansion on the Ming Borderlands* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 139; Franke, “Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (I),” 121; Donald Sutton, “Ethnicity and the Miao Frontier,” in Pamela Kyle Crossley, Helen F. Siu, and Donald S. Sutton eds., *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006): 195. Richard von Glahn has given his own definition, that “*sheng* has the force of ‘beyond the pale.’” See Richard von Glahn, *The Country of Streams and Grottoes: Expansion, Settlement, and the Civilizing of the Sichuan Frontier in Song Times* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1987): 16-17.

When Abaoji of the Kitans took advantage of the decline and disorder of the Tang to found a state in the northern regions he also annexed the 36 barbarian (populations) and the Jurchen were one of them. Abaoji was worried that the Jurchen would cause trouble so he enticed the powerful clans and great families with several thousand households to move to the south of Liaoyang in order to divide their power and prevent them from communicating with each other (possibly referring to the Jurchen groups left behind). Those who were moved to Liaoyang and registered there were called by the name Hesukuan 合蘇款. These were the ones called Civilized Jurchen.

契丹阿保機乘唐衰亂開國 北方併吞諸番三十有六女真其一焉。阿保機慮女真爲患乃誘其強宗大姓數千戶移置療陽之南以分其勢使不得相通。遷入療陽著籍者名曰合蘇款所謂熟女真者事也。

Those that lived northeast of Xian Prefecture within the region demarcated by the area where one enters the mountains and valleys up to the Shumo River (the Songhua) were under the jurisdiction of the Warden's Office and were permitted to travel to and from between their home country. They were neither Civilized Jurchen nor Uncivilized Jurchen.

North of the Shumo River and northeast of Ningjiang 甯江 scattered within lands over one thousand *li* [square] there lived over ten thousand households. Within the mountains and valleys they lived as of old in a wilderness beyond the borders. They individually elected heroic and powerful chieftains (*qiuzhang* 酋長). The smallest of them [lead] one thousand households while the larger ones [lead] several thousand households. These were therefore called Uncivilized Jurchen.

Those at the most distant frontiers were near the Eastern Sea and were therefore called Eastern Sea Jurchen. Many of them had yellow hair and side-whiskers. All of those that had yellow [hair] and green [eyes] were called Yellow Head Jurchen.

自咸洲之東北分界入山谷至於東沫江中間所居隸屬咸洲兵馬司許與本國往來。非熟女真亦非生女真也。

自東沫之北甯江之東北地方千餘萬散居山谷間依舊界外野處。自推雄豪酋長小者千戶大者數千戶則謂之生女真。

極邊遠而近東海者則謂之東海女真。多黃髮鬢皆黃目青綠者謂之黃頭女真。³⁰

This passage identifies the three broadly defined groups of Jurchen based on their location and relative incorporation into the Liao state. However, it also provides strong evidence for the amount of regional, political, and ethnic diversity among those labeled as Jurchen. The Hesukuan, or “civilized” Jurchen, were forcibly moved into Liao territory and registered south of Liaoyang. It is unclear how this forced migration of Jurchen households was related to the similar displacement of Bohai leaders following the capture of Huhan. While it is likely that the two groups were moved under similar conditions and were placed ultimately in proximate areas of Liaoyang, it is unlikely that the two groups were one and the same. References to these two relocated populations within the historical records of the Liao are very specific concerning their status as Bohai or Hesukuan Jurchen. The forced relocation of both groups should be seen as only part of the larger policy of relocation utilized by the Kitan to subjugate the former territory and people of Bohai.

The text ascribes to the Liao a motivation of fear for this decision and also records that the Hesukuan were the most influential and powerful of the Jurchen lineages prior to the arrival of the Kitans. While it is not mentioned, we may speculate that it was through these Hesukuan families that the earlier Bohai leaders communicated and controlled tribute from the more distant northern groups. The dynamics of imperial frontiers foster the development of strong go-between groups located along borders that facilitate contact and control over

³⁰ Xu Mengxin 徐夢莘(1126-1207), *Sanchao beimeng huiban* 三朝北盟會編 “Collected Accounts of the Treaties with the North under Three Reigns” (1878 edition), 3.2a-b. Trans. Franke, “Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (I),” 124-25.

more distant groups beyond the reach of the powers in the center. The Bohai must have retained their position at the center of northeastern tribute and trade through the utilization of such intermediary groups. With the conquest of the Bohai capitals, it makes sense that the invading Kitan would identify these powerful Hesukuan Jurchen families as the most direct threat to their rule in the northeast. By removing them from their regions of influence, the Kitan stripped the Hesukuan of their power and simultaneously left a vacuum of control over the middling regions between Kitan territory and the lower reaches of the Songhua.

The groups that remained within this middling region must have been the families and groups disassociated from power by the previously dominant Hesukuan families. They are not described in much detail, but their new position relative to the Liao is given as being under the jurisdiction of Xian Prefecture's Warden Office (*bingma si* 兵馬司).³¹ Their freedom to communicate with the more distant groups of Jurchen as well as their proximity to the military garrisons of the Kitans placed these families in a position to assert greater control over frontier politics and trade. In fact, among the many Jurchen groups later recorded within the *Liaoshi* there is a group referred to as the Jurchen State or Jurchen Kingdom 女直國 which seemed to have maintained a more intimate relationship with the Liao government. In 990, the ruler of this Jurchen state was granted the title of Shunhua Wang 順化王 which can be clumsily translated as "Submissive and Transformative King." Furthermore, the inhabitants of this state were referred to as Shunguo "Submissive State"

³¹ The Warden's Office, or *bingma si* 兵馬司 was a military office that likely policed the areas in and around the capital cities. See Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), 383-4.

Jurchen.³² While the exact location of the state is not given, an episode from 1113 reveals that it was likely located just outside of Xian Prefecture, and therefore within the area inhabited by those Jurchen families holding a position along the new Liao border. The incident involved a quarrel between the soon-to-be Jurchen emperor Aguda and the king of this Jurchen State.³³ To settle the quarrel, the case was brought before the government of Xian Prefecture, corroborating the claim in the *Sanchao beimeng huibian* that the affairs of these border Jurchen were under the jurisdiction of Xian Prefecture. Thus, it is very likely that following the relocation of the powerful Hesukuan Jurchen into Liaoyang, the new leaders of trans-border contact and trade in the northeast were these middling Jurchen groups some of whom utilized their role as intermediaries along the Liao border to obtain titles and status from the Kitan emperors.

The third and final classification of Jurchen people are called the “uncivilized” or “raw” Jurchen who lived within the wilderness beyond the frontier. The text says that these groups elected their own leaders and lived within households of varying size. The practice of electing leaders was an Inner Asian tradition of rule within the Eastern Steppe and the regions it bordered. The election of leaders was a familiar custom to the Kitans and later Mongols.³⁴ Thus, it was not an unfamiliar concept to the northern inhabitants of the Liao Empire. The territory of the “uncivilized” Jurchen is described as being northeast of Ningjiang, within the mountains and river valleys north of the Songhua. It was among these

³² *Liaoshi* 遼史, 46.756.

³³ *Liaoshi* 27.326-7. Interestingly, at this later date, Aguchan 阿鶻產, the king of the Jurchen State, is referred to only as a Great King 大王 and is not attributed the special title of Shunhua King 順化王 as his forebears were.

³⁴ The first Kitan Emperor, Abaoji, was first elected as a tribal ruler before claiming the title of emperor. Under the Mongols, these elections took place during large annual gatherings called *quriltai*. See Christopher Atwood, “Kitans” and “*quriltai*” in *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire* (New York: Facts on File, 2004).

unregistered clans and people that the Imperial Wanyan lived and began accumulating their power. This is not to say that the “uncivilized” Jurchen groups were too far removed from the empire to be affected by Liao control or influence. On the contrary, these groups were extremely active in negotiating position and influence relative to the Liao while simultaneously pursuing their own agenda within regional power struggles. If anything, their distance from direct Liao jurisdiction provided them with the freedom to more effectively interact with the empire without sacrificing their autonomy.

Rise of the Anchuhu Wanyan - Shilu

Suike’s decision to permanently inhabit and cultivate the lands near the Anchuhu river were later seen as the first steps taken by the early Anchuhu Wanyan toward their imperial destiny. And while it is prudent for us to not read too much into these stories, it is safe to recognize that changes were taking place among this Wanyan branch that were at a divergence from previous traditions. These changes continued in the generation following Suike’s leadership but Suike’s son Shilu 石魯 may have had a more difficult time implementing them among his clansmen. The *Jinshi* records that during Suike’s time the “uncivilized” Jurchen did not make use of written contracts (*shuqi* 書契) nor binding treaties (*yueshu* 約束) and were therefore impossible to control.³⁵ Shilu desired to set-up a series of regulations that would presumably foster a greater level of organization and accountability among the clan. However, when he proposed these changes all of the Elders (*zhufu* 諸父) and tribesmen (*buren* 部人) became angry and wanted him killed by burying him alive.

³⁵ *Jinshi* 1.3.

While it is unclear why death by burying (*kengsha* 坑殺) was seen as an appropriate punishment for such radical ideas, it is obvious that his proposition was not well received. Shilu's vision of a more regulated clan structure nearly cost him his life, but before the mob could close on him his uncle, Xielihu 謝里虎 drew his bow and aimed it at the angry crowd, scattering those who had captured Shilu, thus allowing him to escape.³⁶

Shilu survived and began the process of expanding the power and influence of the Anchuhu Wanyan through force and the forging of alliances with nearby groups. The initial hostility expressed by the elders of the clan toward him likely faded as Shilu's regulations contributed to the increasing strength of the clan. The record states that Shilu sought to disseminate his regulations to the neighboring peoples, presumably with himself in the position of leader, but many of them refused to submit. "Those who submitted were treated with care, and those who did not yield were punished." 順者撫之, 不從者討伐³⁷ The forces of the Anchuhu Wanyan, led by Shilu ranged through the territory west of the Qingling Mountains and northwest of the Changbai Mountains. This would indicate that Shilu focused his efforts on expanding Anchuhu power into the lands further removed from the Liao border. It is also mentioned that the Liao government bestowed on Shilu the title of *tiyin* 惕隱, making him the first recorded Wanyan leader to receive any form of official recognition from the Liao.³⁸

³⁶ Xielihu (aka 謝里忽) seems to have been a strong supporter of Shilu's efforts and is recorded as later assisting him in gaining the alliance of the Wusazha 烏薩扎 clan living along the Heishui River.

³⁷ *Jinshi* 1.4

³⁸ The title of *tiyin* was likely derived from the Altaic office of *tegin* or *tigin*. Under the Liao, the title was used to designate an official who held authority over the tribal components of the Northern Administration. It was usually granted to prominent Kitan figures but was limited in its jurisdiction to cover only the tribal forces of the empire. However, the bestowal of the title was also granted to significant individuals within the

While Shilu's forces may have been widely successful in their military engagements, there is evidence to show that these attacks were not lasting conquests of territory. On his return from a successful campaign against the inhabitants of the Yelan River valley he fell ill while stopping at the village of Guli Dian 故里甸.³⁹ However, due to the arrival of robbers (*dao* 盜) during the night he chose to continue onward until he reached the village of Bilaji, where he died soon after arriving. It is curious that Shilu and his victorious army would fear the arrival of brigands to the extent of fleeing before them. The size and composition of the Anchuhu Wanyan army is not listed, but in light of this experience it would seem that they were not as formidable as the local bands of brigands roving the area. This observation is strengthened by the fate of Shilu's remains after his forces moved on from the village of Bilaji. After placing his body and coffin on a cart to continue their journey home, the Anchuhu Wanyan were attacked again while traveling through the territory of the Hailan River 孩懶.⁴⁰ The attacking force was led by a man named Shixian 石顯 who was the leader of the Hailan Wulinda 烏林答 clan. Shixian's presence and decision to attack the Anchuhu as they passed through his territory can be well understood, but the record also tells of the assistance of a second man who is named only as Wohuwochu 窩忽窩出 of an unidentified

administrations of the "subordinate states," a term applied to polities existing beyond the control of the empire (e.g. Xi Xia, Goryeo, Japan). The title of *tiyin* within this later context was not seen as the highest office of the state (which was usually Great King or *dawang* 大王) but was instead applied to lesser leaders. Holders of this title were occasionally referred to as Ministers of the Masses. This then would indicate that Shilu's title was granted to him in recognition of his position as a minor leader within a larger perceived political body. It is unclear which state that may have been, but the *Liaoshi* records a number of Great Kings among the Jurchen, though rarely by name. For more information on the title of *tiyin* see Wittfogel & Feng, *Liao*, 438, 443, and 479-80.

³⁹ Likely near modern Ning'an in Heilongjiang Province.

⁴⁰ The Hailan is known today as the Hailang River 海浪河, a branch of the Mudan River along the border of Hailin County 海林縣, Mudanjiang City, Heilongjiang Province.

branch of the Wanyan tribe. Shixian and Wohuochu captured Shilu's coffin and boasted of their ability to capture the body of a man who many other clans respected and venerated.⁴¹ Their victory was short lived, for the followers of Shilu converged to join with the funeral guard to attack and reclaim Shilu's remains. However, Shixian remained in power and continued to oppose the leadership of the Anchuhu Wanyan for years to come.

The story of Shilu's life (and posthumous adventures) conveys an image of Jurchen lands as being a generally lawless wilderness with only scattered settlements which were themselves susceptible to attack by mobile armies like Shilu's. The identity or clan affinity of the robbers surrounding the first village of Guli Dian is not made known in the text but can be assumed to have been either members of local groups or an independent band of armed men that preyed on such isolated settlements. The unexpected vulnerability of Shilu's company has already been mentioned, but the presumed booty from their successful raids against the people of the Suifen must have made them an even more alluring target of attack. Finally, the fact that Shixian specifically desired to capture the body of Shilu intimates that Shilu was both well-known and obviously disliked by prominent members of neighboring groups. Thus, while the *Jinshi* describes Shilu's military victories as successful endeavors in increasing the "submission" of tribes to the Anchuhu Wanyan, his forays against other clans didn't necessarily guarantee any lasting allegiance, and likely incurred their hostility. Furthermore, the presence of Wohuochu shows that in Shilu's time the various branches of the Wanyan tribe were just as likely to oppose the Anchuhu as any other.

⁴¹ *Jinshi* 67.1573-74.

Wugunai

Following the death of Shilu, leadership of the Anchuhu Wanyan passed to his eldest son, Wugunai 烏古迺 (1021-1074). Wugunai continued in the footsteps of his father and worked to expand the power of the clan by obtaining the allegiance (or barring that, the submission) of other northeastern groups. It is during Wugunai's reign that we can begin to speak of a coalition of clans and people united under the leadership of the Anchuhu Wanyan. This coalition was the seed from which Jurchen power grew and expanded to eventually become the dominant force in continental East Asia. Wugunai's early campaigns are not recorded in much detail but the *Jinshi* does record that he was able “to control to some extent all of the clans. From the submission of the Baishan, Yehui, Tongmen, Yelan, and Tugulun up to the leaders of the Five Nations; they all heeded his commands.” 稍役屬諸部自白山耶悔統門耶懶 土古論之屬以至五國之長皆聽命⁴² I believe it is important to remember the “to some extent” portion of this passage and assume that while Wugunai's commands may have been widely known it is doubtful that the “submission” mentioned here included a full integration into the Wanyan enterprise. However, the incorporation of these groups into a tighter and more organized coalition continued throughout Wugunai's reign and that of his sons'. As for the location of these groups, some of them are easily recognizable. For example, the people of Baishan assumedly lived within or very near the Baishan Mountains just as the Baishan Mohe had centuries previous. Similarly, the Tongmen and Yelan were rivers along which their inhabitants lived.⁴³ Unfortunately, the location of the Yehui and

⁴² *Jinshi* 1.5; trans. Franke, “Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (II),” 419.

⁴³ Franke, “Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (II),” 442.

Tugulun are unknown, but it can be assumed that these names were similarly associated with particular regions within the northeast.

The Five Nations listed in the passage above form a more distinct and recognizable group within the historical records. The *Liaoshi* regards the Five Nations as a single body of five united clan groups located far to the northeast.⁴⁴ The people of the Five Nations were officially considered one of the Inner Tribes of the Liao state, but unlike the other Inner Tribes, the Five Nations were never taxed and only presented tribute to the Liao court. Their main products of tribute were horses, sable fur, and falcons. The importance of horses will be discussed later, but it is the falcon trade that seems to have also been of serious import to the empire. The routes to the lands of the Five Nations were commonly referred to as the Falcon Roads (*yinglu* 鷹路) and the maintenance of these roads was a consistent concern in Liao administration of the northeast. The statement that Wugunai's commands were heeded by the leaders of the Five Nations is significant indeed, for it shows that the Anchuhu Wanyan were beginning to be reckoned as an alternate source of authority within the sphere of Liao influence.

One significant contribution to the increasing deterioration of Liao authority and allegiance along the northeast frontier was the Liao practice of forcibly relocating troublesome populations. After the defeat of Bohai, and the Liao's failure to successfully administer the conquered area through the establishment of the short lived kingdom of

⁴⁴ The *Liaoshi* 33.392 records the Five Nations as having submitted to Liao authority during the reign of Liao Shengzong 聖宗 (982-1031) and cites that the five individual clans were named Pouali 剖阿里, Pennuli 盆奴里, Aolimi 奧里米, Yuelidu 越里篤, and Yueliji 越里吉. However, none of these groups are mentioned by these names within the *Jinshi* record of Wanyan interactions with the Five Nations. Therefore, I am working on the assumption that either 1) some of the names recorded in the *Jinshi* reference the same groups listed within the *Liaoshi* or 2) the groups composing the Five Nations were not limited to only five and may have grown to include other neighboring people. See also Wittfogel & Feng, *Liao*, 92.

Dongdan, the remnants of Bohai's subject people were incorporated into the tributary system of the Liao as subordinate states.⁴⁵ Two such groups were the Wure 兀惹⁴⁶ and the Tieli 鐵
 驪⁴⁷ who were recorded among the subordinate states of Liao. During the turn of the 11th century the relationship between these two former subjects of Bohai was very hostile. In 995, for a reason unknown to history, the Wure invaded the territory of Tieli thus provoking a military response from the Liao. This type of policing was a common tactic/responsibility of the Liao in their dealings with frontier populations. While it is left unsaid, the Wure attacks were probably reported to the nearby Liao authorities by the Tieli themselves. However, because the Liao retaliatory attack against the Wure was unsuccessful in subduing their aggression, the Wure relationship with the Liao was soured decades after the fact. For during another skirmish between the two groups in 1021 the Tieli in turn invaded the Wure and captured a large number of its people. Yet, in this instance, instead of marching against the Tieli as they had against the Wure, the Liao received Tieli ambassadors who presented the captive Wure to the Liao for relocation. The Liao obliged and subsequently moved these captured Wure into Bin 賓 Prefecture where they were settled with other Bohai refugees.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ See note 22.

⁴⁶ The Wure (aka 烏惹, 烏舍) seem to have been a group that established themselves within the area of the former Bohai Supreme Capital, following the relocation of the area's original inhabitants to the Liaoning region. The first mention of them acting against the Liao is recorded in *Liaoshi* 8.95 where it is recorded that they rebelled in 975.

⁴⁷ The Tieli (aka 鐵利) had formerly composed one of the fifteen administrative districts of the Bohai kingdom and were probably located near the Alechuge River 阿勒楚喀 in modern Jilin. The *Jinshi* records the name of this people as the Tiele 鐵勒; a name usually identified with the Central Asian people known as Tölös who were prominent in the 8th century. I am assuming that the *Jinshi* has mistakenly used the latter in reference to the former.

⁴⁸ Bin Prefecture was located near the juncture of the Songhua and Yitong 伊通 Rivers. Another note of interest in this episode is that in addition to presenting their Wure captives, the Tieli ambassadors also requested and were given Buddhist images and copies of the five Confucian classics from the Liao. It is very possible that this type of cultural politic was used by the Tieli to demonstrate their willingness to become fluent in the

While this particular episode of relocation took place years prior to Wugunai's rule of the Wanyan, the *Jinshi* records that during his reign the Liao made efforts to use military means to transfer both the Wure (presumably those not captured by the Tieli in 1021) and the Tieli out of their original homelands. Again, the reason for this relocation is not mentioned, but the very real threat posed by the Liao soldiers to these groups and the fact that they didn't want to move, made many of the Tieli and Wure flee to the Wanyan coalition for protection where they submitted to the authority of Wugunai.

In this way, the northeast frontier of the Liao began to experience a process of unraveling that stood as one of the greatest territorial fears of premodern empires. The control of frontier regions and populations was crucial to maintaining a secure central state. Numerous stratagems were used to keep frontier populations bound to the imperial center. The control of trade and border markets; lucrative gifts and titles presented to local leaders; cultural trappings of the center promulgated among local elite; marriage relationships between local rulers and the imperial clan; threat of military force; population relocation and control; and offers of military aid against local competition are only a few of such strategies of frontier control. The aim of all of these policies was to lock the orientation of distant communities toward the imperial center. It was feared that the failure to maintain the orientation of border populations would result in a situation where in these groups would begin to abandon their allegiance and become hostile to the empire. This situation of an unraveling frontier was two-fold; not only would the security of the state's borders become compromised, but such a situation would initiate a larger process of erosion of imperial

shared political culture of East Asia. Such overtures may have contributed to the favorable way in which the Tieli were treated compared to the Wure. Of course, the Tieli had not defeated Liao troops in battle as had the Wure, which may have partly explained the Liao's willingness to favor the Tieli in this conflict.

authority that could spread throughout the fringes of empire. Indeed, this process occurred during the years of Jurchen invasion following 1114 when numerous areas along the imperial periphery took advantage of Liao preoccupation with the Jurchen and rebelled against central authority.⁴⁹

In an effort to reassert their authority over the fleeing Tieli and Wure, the Liao appointed a *linya* named Helu 曷魯 to lead Liao forces to the lands of Wugunai to request the return of those who had fled.⁵⁰ However, Wugunai feared that the incursion of Liao troops so deep into Anchuhu Wanyan territory would allow the Liao to make note of the region's mountain passes, rivers, and roads, and set a precedent for further campaigns against him and his followers.⁵¹ In an effort to prevent the troops from entering his territory, Wugunai took the initiative to meet with Helu and said: "If the troops enter deep (into the territory), all of the tribes will surely begin to cause trouble, and some unforeseen disturbance may arise which would make it impossible to obtain the fleeing households. This is not a proper plan. 兵若深入諸部驚擾變生不測逋戶亦不可得非計也。"⁵² The words of Wugunai, as they were remembered by his descendants, could be perceived as either disingenuously given advice or even as a slightly veiled threat to Helu and the Liao soldiers. I personally lean towards the former because Helu heeded Wugunai's words and traveled on alone leaving his

⁴⁹ The Bohai rebellion within the Eastern Capital in 1116 and the 1122 rebellion among the Liao's Han subjects in the Southern Capital that resulted in the deaths of thousands of Kitan and Xi soldiers, *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 11.2a.

⁵⁰ A *linya* 林牙 was the Kitan equivalent to the traditional Chinese title Hanlin 翰林. It usually signified a position of high scholarly status, but it was also occasionally given to military commanders. See Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 442; Wittfogel & Feng, *Liao*, 128 n.28.

⁵¹ This fear of Liao familiarity with the geography of the northeast was present throughout the pre-imperial period and shows that the "uncivilized" Jurchen relied on the inaccessibility of their location as a key disincentive to outside invasion.

⁵² *Jinshi* 1.5.

troops at the border. If Helu felt threatened, I doubt he would have ventured deeper into Wugunai's territory without an armed escort. But the key piece of information obtained from this interaction with Helu is a glimpse at the kind of tactics used by the Anchuhu Wanyan to retain their local power while maintaining an appearance of obedience to the Liao throne. Wugunai's leadership was recognized by Helu, but Wugunai had no qualms about projecting an image of himself as a somewhat weak leader without full control over his followers. That Helu was so quick to heed Wugunai's words also shows that Helu found the prospect of Wugunai's followers rising up and causing trouble to be completely believable.

In this way, Wugunai successfully navigated his position as an intermediary between the local frontier population and the imperial government; he was able to satisfy local interests by dissuading the advance of Liao troops into the region while simultaneously presenting himself in good faith to imperial representatives and offering them assistance. This type of power negotiation was a crucial aspect of the success of the early Imperial Wanyan family. The key component of Anchuhu Wanyan strategy in their relationships with their followers and the Liao Empire was their ability to maintain a dual-image of themselves as 1) imperial subjects when dealing with the Liao, and 2) as rivals for Liao imperial power when dealing with their local power base.

The episode above has shown how Wugunai expanded and maintained his power among frontier groups by presenting his family as an intermediary between the northeast communities and Liao control. However, Wugunai was also willing to utilize his position as a peripheral member of the Liao Empire to request the aid of the center in the consolidation of his own local power. For example, one of the groups that had continually refused to join

the Wanyan coalition was the Hailan Wulinda clan led by the bodysnatching Shixian. By the time of Wugunai's reign, Shixian had fortified himself within a key mountain pass and resisted all attempts to root him out. Wugunai was unable to remove him by force so he instead acted upon a strategy that was dependent upon his position as a good-standing subject of the larger Liao Empire; he complained to the emperor that Shixian was blocking the precious Liao trade routes to the lands bordering the eastern sea. The Liao envoys sent to confront Shixian carried what must have been an infuriating message, "Why do you dare to block the Falcon Roads? If it is truly not for another reason [than this], dispatch a chieftain (*qiuzhang* 酋長) to come to us [to discuss it]. 汝何敢阻絕鷹路審無他意遣其酋長來."⁵³

Shixian obediently sent his eldest son, Pozhukan 婆諸刊 to the Liao court where he was treated generously and given gifts. Before being sent back to his father, Pozhukan was told to advise his father to come personally to the Liao court. Shixian complied with the wishes of the emperor and presented himself and his son to the court while the Kitan ruler was attending the Spring Hunt.⁵⁴ The Liao Emperor spoke to Shixian and ruled that "The crime is with you and not with your son" 罪惟在汝不在汝子 and sent Pozhukan back home and kept Shixian there in the border territories. This of course, was supposedly Wugunai's plan all along; to remove Shixian from the area and leave his less capable son in his stead.⁵⁵

An Alternate Frontier Strategy

⁵³ *Jinshi* 67.1574.

⁵⁴ The Liao Emperors continued to practice the Kitan traditions of large-scale hunting, and spent a large amount of time residing in and traveling between seasonal hunting grounds set aside for the imperial entourage.

⁵⁵ *Jinshi* 67.1574.

This type of negotiation, where in a frontier leader utilizes his position as a subject of a larger neighboring state to receive superior political or military backing for his own power struggles is a consistent historical phenomenon. In his 1992 work *Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China*, Thomas Barfield presented this type of “Inner Frontier” strategy as one of two options available to frontier groups when dealing with large neighboring states. In return for economic and military subsidy, groups employing the Inner Frontier strategy were usually required to recognize the authority of the imperial center and police or protect the borders of the state. The significance of this theory of frontier dynamics is that it places control of the center-periphery relationship with the periphery and not with policies of the center. Thus, Wugunai’s willingness to present himself as a loyal subject of the Liao and call on their assistance in a regional conflict shows his adeptness as a pragmatic frontier politician. The second of Barfield’s options open to frontier leaders is named the “Outer Frontier” strategy in which a frontier group chooses to remain outside of the imperial structure and instead extort payments through threats of raids, trade disruption, and possible invasion.

The Inner and Outer Frontier strategies seem to adequately fit a large number of historical relationships between premodern states and their peripheral groups. However, in the case of the rise of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan, the simplicity of Barfield’s model falls short of adequately describing how these Jurchen rulers negotiated power along the frontier. Wugunai’s plea to the Liao for assistance in removing Shixian from his inaccessible position within the passes may seem to be a type of Inner Frontier strategy, although both Shixian and Wugunai were acting as subjects of the Liao with neither posing as an external threat to the

state. But just because Wugunai was willing to adopt the role of a loyal subject in his dealings with the Liao does not mean that he was not able to simultaneously present himself as a challenger of imperial authority. In fact, I would argue that Wugunai's authority as the head of a growing coalition of northeast clans was dependant on his ability to protect these groups from Liao incursions and control. In other words, the Imperial Wanyan employed a form of strategy more nuanced than Barfield's Inner or Outer Frontier strategies; they successfully maintained simultaneous roles as both loyal Liao subjects as well as their greatest competitors in the northeast.

The following story will more clearly illustrate how Wugunai employed this strategy to cultivate Liao support while retaining his regional powerbase. Sometime after Pozhukan was sent back to the Hailan river valley, a group traditionally belonging to the Five Nations chose to remove themselves from the Liao tributary system and ceased sending tribute payments. The land of the Five Nations was located beyond the Anchuhu Wanyan, in the deep northeast far removed from the Liao frontier garrisons. The clan's name was Punie 蒲聶 and they were led by a man named Bayimen 拔乙門. Upon hearing of the Punie's disobedience and their disruption of the trade routes to their lands, the Liao reacted very similarly to when they were told of Shixian's "blocking" of the Falcon Roads: they dispatched an emissary to present to them (the Punie) an imperial proclamation. The Liao emissary was named Tonggan 同幹 and he led a force of Liao soldiers north with him as he marched towards the Punie. Wugunai was able to foresee the consequences of the Punie rebellion and saw that in order to reach their territory, Tonggan and his soldiers would be forced to march through Anchuhu lands. Therefore, in an effort to prevent this from

occurring Wugunai met with Tonggan and convinced him that it was folly to march an army out to deal with Bayimen. Using an argument similar to the one he employed to dissuade the army of Helu, he argued that by marching troops against Bayimen, Tonggan would only force him to retreat further into the mountains where he could hold out for many more months.

Wugunai presented an alternate plan that involved him and his own people approaching Bayimen. Under Wugunai's plan, he would not read the proclamation from the Kitan throne, but would instead offer him a false alliance. Tonggan agreed to the ruse and Wugunai proceeded to contact Bayimen and offered to ally with him in his resistance against the Liao, even going so far as to offer his wife and sons to Bayimen as hostages. Bayimen agreed to the alliance with the Anchuhu Wanyan, but when Wugunai approached his lands to seal the offer the Wanyan forces attacked. Wugunai captured Bayimen and turned him over to the Liao authorities.

This episode clearly shows Wugunai's power as an intermediary force between the Liao and their more distant northeastern subjects. Indeed, the Anchuhu Wanyan were acting in a way similar to other border groups that chose to utilize an Inner Frontier strategy. Yet, even though Wugunai was acting as an enforcer of the Liao Empire, he was also retaining the territorial integrity of his own domain by once again preventing Liao soldiers from moving deeper into the lands of the Anchuhu Wanyan coalition. While traditional historians of China (and possibly contemporary Liao dynasty observers as well) could perceive this episode as one in which the Liao empire retained its strength by using "barbarians to fight barbarians," it must be asked which group held and exercised the most power in this situation.

The Liao could interpret the situation however they liked, but the fact was that the Liao were stopped and waited on Wugunai to remedy the situation. Aside from the evidence supporting the regular use of hostages to seal political alliances among northeastern groups, another facet of this story is the readiness to which Bayimen agreed to a (be it fictitious) alliance with Wugunai and the Anchuhu Coalition. This readiness shows that Wugunai was readily seen as an alternative locus of regional allegiance as well as a believable enemy to the Liao Empire. Even though the Anchuhu had not yet rebelled openly against the Liao, leaders of the northeast may have had a better understanding of Wugunai's position towards the empire than Liao officials did.

The postscript to this attack against the Punie strengthens the position that the Anchuhu were much more nuanced in their dealings with the Liao than merely working as enforcers for the throne. In order to reward and honor Wugunai's service to the empire, the Liao emperor bestowed on him the office of *jiedushi* 節度使, or "Commanding Prefect" of the Uncivilized Jurchen Tribes 生女直部族節度使.⁵⁶ This title became a key component to later assertions of regional authority by Wugunai's sons and grandsons. The emperor also desired that Wugunai be incorporated into the Liao registers and be granted an official seal. It must be remembered that the "uncivilized" Jurchen were defined by their status as

⁵⁶ The title of Commanding Prefect 節度使, like *tiyin* was an office bestowed on members of the noble Kitan clans within the Northern Administration of the Liao. Similar to the office of *tiyin* that was bestowed on Wugunai's father, Shilu, the office of Commanding Prefect was not the highest office, but was usually recognized as being inferior to *zaixiang* 宰相 or "Prime Minister" which in turn was inferior to the office of *dawang* 大王. Within the organization of the "subordinate states" of which the Uncivilized Jurchen were considered to be among, the office of Commanding Prefect of a particular tribe (in this case "of the uncivilized Jurchen tribes" *sheng nüzhì* 生女直) stood as an ambiguous position of limited authority over a particular group. It is likely that the office was granted to Wugunai merely to express the pleasure of the emperor and to confirm his status as an authorized leader among his people. For more information on the title of Commanding Prefect see Wittfogel and Feng, *Liao*, 443, 480.

unregistered populations living beyond the scope of the civil administration of the empire. It is not clear whether the Liao offer extended to all of the Anchuhu clan, or just Wugunai and his immediate family, but either way it was an honor he was loathe to accept, saying, “Let us please wait until another day 請俟他日.”⁵⁷ However, after Wugunai returned to his lands the emperor sent another envoy requesting again that he accept the seal and be entered into the Liao registers. To this, Wugunai dispatched one of his clansman to lie to the envoy by saying, “If our lord and ruler accepts the seal and is entered into the registers then the people of the clans will surely kill him!” 主公若受印繫籍部人必殺之.⁵⁸ It seems that the envoy believed these words, for it is written that after hearing them he returned to Liao territory.

We will never know whether the Kitan emperor was cognizant of the potential danger that Wugunai posed to Liao control over the regions of the northeast but I’d like to give him the benefit of the doubt. If Wugunai had accepted the seal and entered himself (and possibly the entire Anchuhu clan) on the registers then his potential military strength would have been known and recorded. Additionally, it can be assumed that by entering the registers, Wugunai would have been expected to adhere more closely to imperial policy and direction; the least of which may have included more cooperation and association with Liao military forces within the region. Wugunai’s refusal to accept the seal shows his awareness of his position of strength as a frontier power beyond complete central control. The ruse used to deceive the Liao ambassador from insisting that Wugunai receive the seal illuminates the type of relationship between Wugunai and his followers. Whether his people would have killed him or not is secondary to the fact that the Liao believed them possible of doing so. Therefore,

⁵⁷ *Jinshi* 1.5.

⁵⁸ *Jinshi* 1.5.

Liao officials were aware that leaders like Wugunai retained power only insofar as they retained their ability to please their followers. It must be remembered that elective leadership was a familiar concept to Kitan culture and must have resonated with Liao officials and leaders. And it was conceivable to them that the inhabitants of the northeast wilderness would turn on a leader who associated too closely with the empire. Of course, it is my belief that Wugunai's lie held a kernel of truth, that in fact had he accepted that seal his leadership of the coalition would have gone to another or would have fractured entirely.

Expansion and Foundation of the State

Under Wugunai, the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition expanded far beyond the tentative network of alliances forged under his father, Shilu. It was under Wugunai's direction that the Anchuhu first began to buy up and stockpile large amounts of iron to be used for bows, arrows, and other weapons.⁵⁹ This improvement in armaments contributed to the military success of the Anchuhu Wanyan over an increasing number of northeastern groups. Furthermore, this growing coalition was not merely a network of loose alliances orbiting around a particularly charismatic leader, but was instead an increasingly regulated state structure. For example, in an anecdote celebrating Wugunai's leniency he is said to have received the submission of a large group at the Helan River 曷懶水. "He recorded their ages and family names and sent them away so that they could resume their former lives. Because of this the people had greater trust [in him] and obeyed him." 曷懶水有率眾降者錄其歲

⁵⁹ *Jinshi* 1.5-6.

月姓名即遣去俾復其故人以此益信服之。⁶⁰ Here we are told that Wugunai kept a record of the people who joined the coalition. In this way, the Anchuhu had a set of registers likely similar to the style used by the Liao in their own administration. Also, the fact that Wugunai allowed the people to return to their lands and continue their former labors strengthens the idea that many of these northeastern groups were submitting to the Anchuhu Wanyan in order to safeguard their existing liberties and territory. Certainly if the Liao practice of forcible relocation was a consistent threat to such groups, Wugunai's policy of allowing them to remain in their homelands while providing protection from Liao incursion must have made submission to the Anchuhu an easier decision.

It was also under Wugunai's rule that the Anchuhu first began to be recognized by other branches of the Wanyan clan as a dominant group. Leaders of the Taishen Tebao Wanyan 泰神忒保 and those of the Shenyin Wanyan 神隱 each came to Wugunai and submitted to his rule.⁶¹ Thus, the coalition seemed to have come far since the days immediately after the death of Shilu when Wohuochu, a Wanyan man himself, allied with Shixian to abscond with Shilu's body. These Wanyan alliances are also significant because they remind the reader that the Wanyan clan was not a unified family leading a larger coalition of tribes, but that the biggest competitors for position as hegemon over the coalition were likely to be other members of the Wanyan who could also claim distant kin-relations with the leading Anchuhu. It is in this intra-family arena of conflict that the imperial line's

⁶⁰ *Jinshi* 1.6. Trans. in Franke, "Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (II)," 421.

⁶¹ The location of the Tebao and Shenyin Rivers is unclear. However, in the short glossary within the *Jinshi*, the word Taishen 泰神 (given in the glossary as 太神) meant "High" 高 in the Jurchen language, see *Jinshi* 36.2895. Thus, it can be assumed that the Taishen Tebao Wanyan hailed from the upper reaches of the Tebao river, presumably within the same middle zone of the northeast as that inhabited by the Anchuhu Wanyan.

claim of descent from Hanpu becomes a critical factor in their leadership; Hanpu was not born of Wanyan blood. Thus, while other Wanyan branches may have been able to lay claim to kinship (and relative equality) to many members of the Anchuhu, Wugunai and the other members of the later imperial family were able to trace their line from Hanpu, marking them as a separate lineage group within the greater Wanyan clan.

Conclusion

The early ancestors of the Jin Dynasty imperial family were active participants in the creation of a more stable and powerful state structure among the people of the northeast. The shape of this early political state was a type of coalition presided over by the lineage of Hanpu within the Anchuhu Wanyan clan. The “uncivilized” Jurchens’ rise to power was due in large part to the destruction of the kingdom of Bohai and the subsequent relocation of the previously dominant households along the Bohai frontier. By removing these previously powerful Jurchen clans (the Hesukuan lineages), the Liao created an arena for newly dominant groups to step in and present themselves as intermediaries between the Liao center and the more distant inhabitants of the northeast wilderness. At the death of Wugunai, the coalition led by the Anchuhu Wanyan was only one of the groups actively seeking to dominate the region. The power of the Anchuhu Wanyan at the head of this multi-tribal coalition was rooted in their ability to safeguard the territory and populations of those who submitted to them from the incursions of Liao soldiers and officials. In order to facilitate this role as a protector from the Liao, the early Anchuhu leaders courted Liao favor while simultaneously expanding their power and reputation as a shield from Liao control. In this

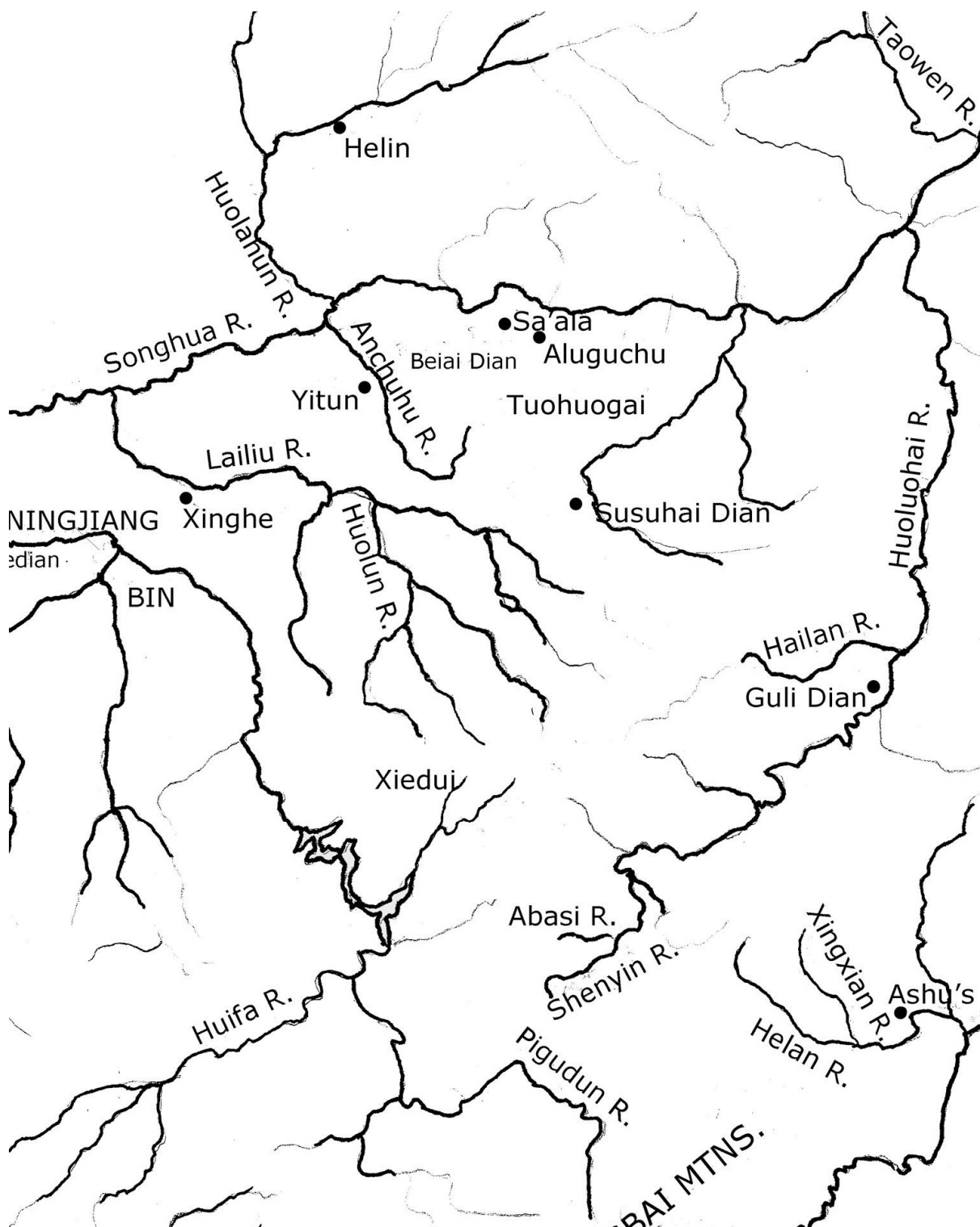
way, these leaders practiced a modified form of an Inner Frontier strategy that took into account the nuanced political acrobatics needed to present a dual-image to both the Liao and their followers.

By the time of Wugunai's death, the coalition of the Anchuhu Wanyan was an organized and an increasingly regulated state structure. The titles granted to Shilu and Wugunai by Liao authorities would be passed on to their sons and grandsons and become an increasingly important factor in the expansion of their authority over the northeast. However, in the years separating Wugunai's death from the proclamation of his grandson, Aguda as a recognized emperor (*huangdi* 皇帝) of a new Jurchen-Jin Dynasty in 1115, the Anchuhu coalition passed through its greatest struggles. These struggles will be the topic of the next chapter and will hopefully further elucidate the type of international environment in which the Imperial Wanyan came into their full power.

Chapter Two: Crisis within the Coalition

Introduction

Wugunai had done much to establish the beginnings of coalition government under the leadership of the Anchuhhu Wanyan clan. This chapter will cover the crisis that occurred in the wake of his death, a crisis that threatened to dissolve the coalition entirely. Although Wugunai declared that his office/titles of leadership would ideally pass to his son Helibo at his death, a number of prominent coalition leaders chose instead to support Wugunai's younger brother, Bahei for the position of coalition leader. The conflict between the sons of Wugunai and the anti-Helibo faction eventually erupted into open warfare between rival tribal coalitions; each supporting an Anchuhu Wanyan successor as the legitimate ruler. These wars were a crucial component in the formation of the later Jurchen Coalition, and served to solidify the claims of Wugunai's line. Furthermore, the description of conflict and interaction among the various tribal leaders provides a small level of insight into the structure and organization of the Coalition government. Finally, the larger discussion of the Liao Empire's role in these conflicts is also analyzed, as is the increasingly imaginative strategies employed by the Anchuhu Wanyan to disarm Liao fears of their increasing power as they continued to consolidate greater numbers of followers.



Death of Wugunai

Wugunai's final campaign occurred in 1074 and was against a people called the Monian 沒撚 who belonged to the larger conglomerate group of the Five Nations. This rebellion interrupted trade along the Falcon Road and presumably had provided the Liao with another opportunity to marshal their forces to advance deep into the northeast to reopen the trade routes. However, Wugunai (seemingly acting without prior instruction from the Liao) donned his heavy armor (*chongkai* 重嶝) and led his own troops against the Monian, defeated them in battle, and reopened the Falcon Road. It was while he was traveling to the Liao border to report this victory that he fell ill and was forced to return to his house, where he died at the age of 54.

Leadership over the Wanyan Coalition passed to Wugunai's second son, Helibo 劄里鉢 (b.1038, r.1074-92) who inherited the title of *jiedushi* 節度使 or "Commanding Prefect" at the age of 35.⁶² This was the title granted to Wugunai by the Liao emperor after the Wanyan successfully put down the rebellion of the Punie, a group from among the Five Nations.⁶³ In the frontier lands of the northeast, this title of *jiedushi* became an important component of Anchuhu legitimacy over the other "wild," or "uncivilized," Jurchen clans.

⁶² The position of *jiedushi* 節度使 took on great significance during the late Tang, particularly after the rebellion of An Lushan in 756, when what was previously a military office in charge of frontier defense, became the highest position of authority over increasingly autonomous frontier regions. Translated by Wittfogel and Feng as "Commanding Prefect" and "Military Commissioner" by Hucker, this title retained its status as an influential military office under the Liao Dynasty. Within the Wanyan Coalition of the pre-imperial Jurchen, the title of *jiedushi* was the supreme position of leadership and was passed from leader to leader, beginning with its bestowal on Wugunai by the Liao emperor. However, Wugunai also claimed native Jurchen titles of leadership independent of the Liao office of *jiedushi*. It is likely that Wugunai was the first to promote the use of the title *dubojielie* 都勃極烈, or General *Bojilie*, which carried the meaning of a supratribal leader.

⁶³ The full title granted to Wugunai was "Commanding Prefect of the Wild Jurchen Tribes" 生女直部族節度使.

Beginning with Wugunai, the office was handed down from ruler to ruler until Wugunai's grandson, Aguda declared himself emperor of a new Jurchen empire in 1115. It is interesting to note that while Wugunai accepted the prestige of the *jiedushi* title granted by the Liao, he did not accept the seal of the Liao, nor did he allow himself or his followers to be entered into the Liao registers. This type of calculated appropriation of Liao authority (readily adopting the façade of Liao authority without an accompanying integration into the Liao bureaucracy) was a hallmark of the political strategy utilized by the Anchuhu Wanyan.

After the death of Wugunai, the primary threats to Anchuhu leadership were not from outside the coalition membership but instead arose from within; even from within the royal family itself. This was due in large part to the fluidity inherent in the traditions of political succession among the pre-imperial Jurchen. Active leadership may have been embodied in one man, but the ruler was only one of a larger and more general ruling clan. When leadership is perceived as a family enterprise, a smooth succession of power requires family consensus and negotiation. However, as shall be seen in the story of Helibo's succession to leadership, rifts within the ruling family could be more damaging to one's legitimacy and rule than that of an external threat to power. This chapter will focus on these intra-Jurchen wars and rivalries, and will demonstrate how the sons of Wugunai overcame these serious threats to their power and how they perpetuated their clan's hegemony over the other Jurchen groups of the Songhua River basin.

The Succession – Fraternal Households

Although Helibo was not the eldest of Wugunai's sons, he was chosen as successor over his elder brother because he better demonstrated the attributes Wugunai deemed necessary for rule. However, the eldest son, Hezhe 劬者, was not completely overlooked by his father, but was instead paired-up with Helibo to form a type of joint-household. The record states that "there came a time when the brothers were to live separately 及當異居."⁶⁴ It was at that time that Wugunai organized his four eldest sons into joint-households. While Helibo was recognized for his "magnanimity" or "capability" (*qiliang* 器量) and "knowledge" (*zhishi* 智識), Hezhe was seen by his father as being too weak to rule. Thus, Wugunai commanded that his two eldest sons and their families live together; with Hezhe governing household affairs, and Helibo focusing primarily on leadership of the coalition. Wugunai's two younger sons, Hesun 劬孫 and Polashu 頗刺淑 (r.1092-1094) were similarly paired in this way with the "good natured" Hesun managing the house and Polashu taking a leading role in coalition management. Each pair of sons lived under the same roof (*tongju* 同居) as they fulfilled their respective duties of managing the internal and external affairs of the house.

This style of family management within the pre-imperial family gives some insight into the family structure and customs of the pre-imperial Jurchen. The wording of the text suggests that the Jurchen commonly divided their large family units into smaller household groups when sons came of age.⁶⁵ Whether or not the practice of fraternal co-habitation, as seen in the case of Wugunai's sons, was widespread among the pre-imperial Jurchen is left unknown. However, the matter-of-fact nature of the narrative could indicate that such

⁶⁴ *Jinshi* 1.7. In a parallel passage of the *Jinshi* it states that the division of the household was a "national custom" 國俗 of the Jurchen. *Jinshi* 70.1613.

⁶⁵ Franke, "Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (II)," 422 n58.

practices were not unknown in later times. In any case, it is clear that the compilers of the *Jinshi* believed that the succession of leadership to Helibo (and later to Helibo's younger brothers Polashu 頗刺淑 and Yingge 盈歌, respectively) was ordained by Wugunai during this original division of his household.⁶⁶ Unfortunately, this clarity of succession was not as easily accepted by other members of the Anchuhu Wanyan family. Although the sons of Wugunai were all within the ruling clan, they held connections through their mother that may have been perceived as a threat by the brothers of Wugunai, the surviving sons of Shilu.

Duobaozhen

Wugunai was survived by nine sons, but only the five mentioned previously were considered for leadership, with three ultimately holding successive positions as leaders of the Wanyan Coalition (Helibo, Polashu 頗刺淑, and the youngest, Yingge 盈歌). All five were born to Wugunai by his principal wife, Duobaozhen 多保真 of the Tangguo 唐括 clan. Duobaozhen was the daughter of man known as Shipidesaguzhi 石批德撒骨只, a man who interestingly is recorded within the *Jinshi* as having been a type of sorcerer or shaman (*wu* 巫).⁶⁷ In her adult years, Duobaozhen was a prominent figure and personality during the rule of her husband and seems to have played a very active part in the management of coalition affairs. She is described as having first captured the interest of Wugunai in his younger years

⁶⁶ *Jinshi* 70.1613.

⁶⁷ *Jinshi*, 63.1500. No other mention is given of the mysterious Shipidesaguzhi, but his affiliation with sorcery and mysticism may well have influenced his grandson Helibo, who while never labeled as such, certainly was attributed an aura of supernatural ability.

when he was known by the nickname of “Raven” (*huoluo* 活羅).⁶⁸ Before her marriage to Wugunai, Duobaozhen was renowned for entertaining and hosting visitors within the home of her parents. She is described as having a discerning manner and being frugal in the dispensing of wine. In fact, it was this perceived stinginess that moved Wugunai’s father, Shilu, to remark that she was “too miserly with food and wine and would be impossible to marry.” The story records that it was after hearing this statement on her character that Wugunai sought and won the hand of Duobaozhen.

Duobaozhen regularly entertained guests within the home of Wugunai, and although she personally served her visitors, she herself was said to never drink wine. Instead she would make the most of hosting and is reported to have dissuaded a number of drunken quarrels in her home by singing before tempers rose too high. Additionally, she was remembered as having been a compassionate personality to offset the occasionally strict rule of Wugunai. For example, in her biography it is mentioned that whenever an individual within the army was to be whipped as punishment, she would use food and wine to both notify and console him.⁶⁹ She reportedly traveled with Wugunai as he traveled among the various Jurchen clans and often sat in judgment with her husband over lawsuits and affairs of government. Additionally, she is reported as having supervised certain cooperative agricultural enterprises.⁷⁰ This increased understanding of Duobaozhen’s position and reputation among the Jurchen helps illuminate the earlier ruse perpetrated on Bayimen, the rebellious leader of the Punie tribe of the Five Nations mentioned in the previous chapter. In

⁶⁸ The word transliterated here as *huoluo* 活羅 is defined within the text as a Jurchen word meaning ‘crow’ or ‘raven.’ 活羅漢語慈烏也. *Jinshi* 1.6.

⁶⁹ *Jinshi*, 63.1500.

⁷⁰ *Jinshi*, 63.1500.

order to convince Bayimen of his intention to ally with him against the Liao, Wugunai sent Duobaozhen and his third son Hesun to the Punie to be held as political hostages to guarantee his cooperation. Of course, the nature of the ruse was such that Wugunai never had any intention of siding with Bayimen against the Liao, however the presence of the influential and charismatic Duobaozhen was likely to have been a convincing enough ploy to deceive the Five Nations leader from Wugunai's true intent.⁷¹ Duobaozhen was remembered by the *Jinshi* historiographers as a remarkable example of a royal woman.⁷²

Helibo and Conflict within the Coalition

The rise of Wugunai's sons to the position of *jiedushi* and leaders of the Wanyan Coalition was contested by the alternative heirs to leadership; the brothers of Wugunai, Helibo's uncles. One particular uncle was Wugunai's younger half-brother Bahei 跋黑. Bahei supposedly harbored seditious plans soon after the death of his brother and was the target of Helibo's attention early in his reign. Fearing Bahei's intentions, Helibo chose not to grant him control over any soldiers and instead granted him only the relatively minor title of *bojin* (勃堇).⁷³ The fact that Helibo, as a newly appointed and relatively young ruler, could dictate whether or not Bahei, an uncle and senior member of the Anchuhu Wanyan family,

⁷¹ Thus far I have been unable to locate within the sources the method of Duobaozhen and Hesun's escape from the custody of the Punie. Being that their entire presence there was meant to provide a token of good faith to the Punie, it is intriguing that Wugunai was able to attack without fear of violent reprisal against his wife and son.

⁷² Although Duobaozhen is not mentioned in her book, Linda Cooke Johnson has made wonderful strides in illuminating the role and identity of women, both Jurchen and non, during the Liao and Jin. Cooke's focus is primarily on the later periods of Jin history. See Johnson, *Women of the Conquest Dynasties*.

⁷³ A parallel passage of the *Jinshi* records that the title given to Bahei was one of "tribal chief" or *buzhang* 部長 (*Jinshi* 1.7) However, *buzhang* and *bojin* are described as synonyms within the record. See *Jinshi*, 44.992. Therefore, I have chosen to use the title of *bojin* over that of the more generic *buzhang* because *bojin* seems to have been the preferred nomenclature used for this position by the authors of the *Jinshi*.

could be granted the command of soldiers shows that the coalition leader held real power among his kinsmen. While most members of the royal family held prominent positions within the coalition, this shows that leadership was not merely a conglomerate institution of family rule but was instead a centralized and legitimate institution within the eyes of its members. The title of *jiedushi* likely had much more significance among the early Anchuhu Wanyan than what has been previously realized. If not for any larger meaning and significance within the greater realm of Liao Empire, the title seemed to have held great weight within the competitive political sphere of the distant northeast.

Although Bahei was denied official control over coalition troops he found ways to incite unrest under Helibo's reign and gathered a following of prominent coalition members. The names of the most prominent dissenters are the two brothers Huannan 桓赧 and Sanda 散達, the iron smelter turned tribal leader Wuchun 烏春, and a man closely allied with Wuchun known as Womouhan 窩謀罕. In addition to these four men, there were numerous other leaders who withdrew from the coalition following the death of Wugunai. Some chose to attack neighboring groups and incite Helibo to action, while others forcibly resisted any and all summonses to leave their strongholds and participate in coalition campaigns and tribute. The general fallout with these rebellious clans seems to have been precipitated by the initial challenges to Helibo's leadership posed by these four prominent dissenters. These internal challenges to Anchuhu supremacy during the reigns of Wugunai's sons form a key period in the establishment of a larger Jurchen political identity.

Wuchun the old Iron Smelter

Wuchun was not a member of the Wanyan, but was instead originally an iron smelter within the Wendu clan 濫都 living along the Abasi River 阿跋思.⁷⁴ It is recorded that he and his people joined the Wanyan Coalition after a particularly poor harvest season during the reign of Wugunai.⁷⁵ After joining the coalition, Wuchun became friendly with Wugunai and worked closely with him in providing iron tools and implements for the clans. Additionally, Wuchun was granted the title of *buzhang* (*bojin*) and was made an authority over his clan as well as other members of the coalition. However, following the death of Wugunai, Wuchun was the first to challenge Helibo's authority. The text states that Wuchun trusted Bahei and that they had lived near each other. Because of these things, Wuchun was quick to listen to Bahei's complaints of Helibo and developed a lasting distrust and scorn for the young leader.

From early on, Wuchun chafed at Helibo's leadership and seems to have sought out opportunities to provoke the new *jiedushi* into an open confrontation. His biography records that Wuchun began to mistreat those put under his command. It is likely that his aggression was aimed at those who demonstrated loyalty to Helibo, but the record is silent on the political leanings of his victims. What is clear is that complaints were raised against him, and that Helibo was forced to send a representative to the man in an effort to rectify the injustices. The words from Helibo are recorded as follows,

“My father had trust and faith in you; he made you *buzhang*. Now, people are reporting that you have murdered innocent men, and have tried cases unfairly. Beginning now, someone else can take over your work.” Wuchun replied: “Your father, myself, and others are men of an older generation. You have been allowed to be chief (*zhang* 長) only a few days, why should any of this concern you?”

⁷⁴ The Abasi was a tributary of the Upper Mudan River 牡丹江.

⁷⁵ *Jinshi*, 67.1577.

吾父信任汝，以汝為部長。今人告汝有實狀，殺無罪人，聽訟不平，自今人得復爾為也。烏春曰：吾與汝父等輩舊人，汝為長能幾日，干汝何事。⁷⁶

As always, it is highly unlikely that these were the exact words spoken, but we may glean the central issues of concern from these idealized exchanges. Wuchun was abusing his position and persecuting certain members of the coalition. Meanwhile, Wuchun dismissed Helibo's authority on grounds of him being both younger and more limited in experience. This provides evidence that the conflict between Bahei and Helibo was indeed rooted in a contest of authority between generations within the ruling house. Helibo was very conscious of Wuchun's animosity and made efforts to reconcile himself with his father's former friend and ally. Instead of responding to Wuchun with hostility, Helibo approached Wuchun with an offer of a marriage alliance between their two families.⁷⁷ Such political arrangements assumedly took place prior to Helibo's day as his clan was consolidating power, but this passage provides proof and justification of that assumption. It is understandable why Helibo would pursue such a union with Wuchun, a prominent member of the coalition; it would not only bolster Helibo's support within the old guard of the coalition, but it would also rob his uncle of a key supporter. Wuchun's response makes clear his own feelings on the matter: "Laughing, he replied: 'Even if the offspring of dogs and pigs live together, how can they breed? How can I allow Huligai and Nuzhi to be wed?'" 笑曰：狗彘之子同處，豈能生育。胡里改與女直豈可為親也。⁷⁸

⁷⁶ *Jinshi*, 67.1578.

⁷⁷ *Jinshi*, 67.1578.

⁷⁸ *Jinshi*, 67.1578. The text is not explicitly clear who the prospective bride and groom are, or how they are related to their family patriarchs, Helibo and Wuchun. However, the colorful response here from Wuchun

Wuchun continued in his hostility toward the sons of Wugunai and the records suggest that he was actively seeking an excuse to raise troops against them. His opportunity came when a blacksmith of the Jiagu clan 加古 produced and sold a fairly large number of suits of iron armor to Helibo. The blacksmith's name was Wubutun 烏不屯 and the controversy centered on Wuchun's claim that the armor was produced within the territory he controlled and was therefore his. Wuchun's complaint to Helibo is recorded in his biography as follows, "That armor is my armor. Everything south of the Lailiu River and everything north of the Pigudun River, is my land. How can you then take my armor? Bring it swiftly and present it to me." 甲吾甲也。來流水以南，匹古敦水以北，皆吾土也。何故輒取吾甲，其亟以歸我。 Wuchun's assertion of territory in this statement (and the corresponding implication of ownership of the labor performed within that territory) when combined with the earlier episode of Wuchun abusing his political position sheds some light on the social and political framework of the pre-imperial Jurchen coalition under the Anchuhu Wanyan.

First, Wuchun's position as a *buzhang* (granted unto him by the former Anchuhu leader, Wugunai) gave him authority and stewardship over an assigned portion of the coalition population. In his position as *buzhang* (or *bojin*) he sat as both judge and executioner in cases brought before him. This function of coalition officers was seen earlier in the biography of Helibo's mother, Duobaozhen, when it was reported that she often sat in judgment with her husband Wugunai over civil cases. Clearly there existed a recognized and promulgated code of laws under which coalition members lived and were held accountable. In fact, during the tumultuous years of rebellion initiated by Bahei, Wuchun, and the other

suggests that Huligai was probably a son of Helibo, which would leave Nuzhi a member of Wuchun's family, possibly a granddaughter or niece.

dissenters, an episode occurred that speaks explicitly to this known code of laws that governed society under the Wanyan Coalition.

The episode involved a man from the Wole clan 斡勒 named Beinai 盃乃, the brother of the Wole clan *bojin*. Beinai held a hatred for a prominent member of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan named Huandu 歡都 and when Beinai's house unexpectedly caught fire one day, he believed the (false) report that it was an act of arson perpetrated by Huandu and an accomplice.⁷⁹ The significant portion of this story is that Beinai then approached Helibo and demanded compensation for the arson according to the “covenants” or “treaty.” (*yue* 約). That there even existed a requisite compensation for an act of arson, and that Helibo (either acting as leader of the entire coalition, or merely as Huandu's patriarch over the Anchuhu Wanyan) was expected to compensate the victim is indicative of the level of sophistication governing relationships between coalition members decades prior to Aguda's declaration of a Jurchen dynastic state.

Secondly, Wuchun was able to claim jurisdiction over a delineated territory marked by the rivers Lailiu and Pigudun. In Helibo's response to Wuchun's demand for Wobutun's suits of armor, no mention was made regarding Wuchun's claim to this territory. Instead, Helibo acquiesced to Wuchun's demands and again sought reconciliation. In addition to demanding the armor, Wuchun also requested that the armor be delivered to him by two of

⁷⁹ *Jinshi*, 1.9, 68.1591. Beinai, and his brother, the *bojin* Shilu 石魯, like Wuchun, had joined the coalition under the reign of Wugunai. Their clan, the Wole, lived just north of the Anchuhu River. Huandu was a son of Hesun, the third son of Wugunai who was paired with Polashu into a joint-household by their father. The rest of this story involves an irate Huandu mounted and in full battle gear waving a halberd, and an execution by Helibo of the false witness, a Wole man named Bugeshu 不歌束. Beinai used this event as a pretense for dissention and joined the forces of Wuchun along with the allied houses of those living along the Woluganchu River 斡魯紺出水.

Bahei's sons: Xiege 斜葛 and Sile 廝勒. The *Jinshi* states that Helibo was reluctant to allow Xiege out of his custody but was compelled to do so by the other members of the coalition who were consistently advocating reconciliation and peace between the two men.⁸⁰ Even in sending the two men to Wuchun, the reality of a clearly demarcated territory of control is clearly recognized when Helibo conspires with Sile to feign sickness “halfway along the road” to Wuchun's camp. Wuchun and the other leaders (*bojin*) within the coalition seemed to have been granted regional jurisdiction in addition to legal and political stewardship. Thus, Helibo sent the sons of Bahei along with the armor in an effort to prevent what may have seemed an inevitable war between the “old guard” allies of Bahei, and the sons of Wugunai led by Helibo.

The brothers Huannan and Sanda

As mentioned above, Wuchun was not the only dissenter swayed by Bahei's words. The brothers Huannan and Sanda also became the locus of a large anti-Helibo alliance in the years following Wugunai's death. Huannan and Sanda were close affiliates of the Anchuhu Wanyan and even lived among a group of Wanyan within the village of Yitun 邑屯村. It is very likely that the brothers were originally approached by Bahei because like Wuchun, they too had been close compatriots to Wugunai and may have been unhappy to see leadership

⁸⁰ Xiege was presumably under the same type of close observation as his father, Bahei. Sile, on the other hand poses an interesting figure. Wuchun seems to have recognized him as a son of his ally Bahei, but Sile (unlike Xiege) is undeniably a supporter of Helibo. In fact, before sending the two brothers to Wuchun, Helibo warns Sile to beware of Xiege and to feign illness along the road that he may return unharmed to Helibo's territory. Unfortunately for Sile, this plan fails and he is forced to accompany Xiege to Wuchun's camp where he is scorned and threatened by both men. This story seems to indicate again the complexity of relationship and loyalty within the Wanyan coalition. The decision of who to support politically was more of a personal decision than a tribal one.

shift into the hands of a younger generation. Another reason why the brothers may have felt resentment towards the sons of Wugunai was because of an experience involving a young Wugunai, and their father Yada 雅達. Yada held the prestigious office-title of *guoxiang* 國相. At some time during Wugunai's solidification of power, he approached Yada and purchased the right to the title of *guoxiang* from him with gifts of cloth and horses and then ordered that his son, Polashu, fulfill it.⁸¹

This title of *guoxiang* poses an interesting conundrum in Jurchen history, largely because the significance attached to it in the early Jurchen narrative is not reflected in other sources describing the period. The title is not mentioned within the list of titles found in the *Liaoshi* that were bestowed on the Jurchen by the Kitan. Nor was it an administrative title under the Tang. The *Jinshi* itself makes repeated mention that the origin of the title is unknown, and only that Yada was recognized as owning it.⁸² Herbert Franke translates the title as “Chancellor of the State” and believes that the position did not designate a specific function but was instead a term of respect for those “close to the ruler.”⁸³ Such a definition would fit within the narrative of the pre-imperial Jurchen; the title being a somewhat hollow marker of status that carried with it a vague air of authority. However, the work of Mikami Tsugio most thoroughly investigates this issue and concludes that if the title was not of Tang, Jurchen, or Kitan origin then it must have derived from another source. He presents the hypothesis that the title of *guoxiang* was likely a remnant of the Bohai state and was possibly

⁸¹ *Jinshi*, 1.11.

⁸² *Jinshi*, 1.11, 67.1574.

⁸³ Franke, “Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (II),” 445, n85.

a modification of the office of *zaixiang* 宰相 originally used under the Tang.⁸⁴ If this was indeed the case, then Yada and his family were possibly the scions of a formerly prominent regional official under the Bohai state whose title was handed down through the generations. Thus, with the title having been purchased by Wugunai and passed down to his own son, Polashu, the sons of Yada (Huannan and Sanda) may have seen their rebellion against Helibo as a way to reclaim the authority once held by their family line.

Huannan and Sanda did not move against Helibo immediately upon his ascension to leadership, but instead bided their time; increasing the number of their allies and preparing their warriors. Following the uneasy peace agreed upon after the negotiations surrounding Wubutun's suits of armor, Wuchun and the other supporters of Bahei waited a few years before moving openly against Helibo and his brothers. During that time, Helibo was forced to accept that any member of the coalition could at any time turn on him. The *Jinshi* records that during this time of mistrust and conspiracy there was a children's rhyme that circulated among the Anchuhu Wanyan that contained the line: "If you want to live then join with Bahei, if you want to die then join with Helibo and Polashu." 欲生則附與跋黑，欲死則附與劬里鉢頗刺淑⁸⁵ This would indicate that there was a palpable tension within the ruling Wanyan clan and that Wugunai's sons were in danger of losing their position and lives. In order to combat his unseen enemies, Helibo concocted a plan that would reveal who among his family and followers were actually supporters of his uncle Bahei. In a story

⁸⁴ Mikami Tsugio 三上次男著, *Kindai seiji seido no kenkyū* 金代政治制度の研究(Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan 中央公論美術出版, 1970), 104-106. In Tang times, the holder of the office of *zaixiang* functioned as a powerful executive official, and within the Liao administration the title was bestowed as one of a pair of executive officers (i.e. Left and Right *zaixiang*), see Hucker, *Official Titles*, 514.

⁸⁵ *Jinshi*, 1.7, 65.1542.

demonstrating the type of character Helibo had attained within the later Jin sources, Helibo pretended to make preparations for a journey. This was likely done in order that he and his forces would be absent from the main Anchuhu settlement. He then sent a man among the people to declare that enemies (or bandits, *kou* 寇) were approaching. The people, not knowing that it was all a ruse, gathered together to protect themselves and the property of their leader; some moved to protect Helibo's house, while others gathered to protect Bahei's. Thus was Helibo able to discern who among his followers were loyal to his cause. Yet, even after rooting out the identity of his dissenters Helibo continued to act defensively and avoid warfare with the supporters of his uncle. However, his efforts at reconciliation were eventually put to naught after only a few years of peace. Wuchun was the first to raise troops against the *jiedushi* Helibo, but Huannan and Sanda were quick to take advantage of Wuchun's move and rose in revolt themselves. The time of political give and take was over, and the sons of Wugunai were forced to battle their former allies in order to retain their lives and position.

Tribes and clans

The war between the supporters of Bahei and the sons of Wugunai created a schism within the Wanyan Coalition. Both sides drew on warriors from numerous clans, often times with clansmen raising arms against their own kin. No other event in the history of the pre-imperial Jurchen emphasizes the relatively fluid nature of the Jurchen tribal structure, as does the war between Helibo and the supporters of Bahei. The description of the pre-imperial Jurchen as being a "tribal" people is a description ubiquitous in the secondary scholarship.

However, rarely is the term itself described or explained. I have chosen to utilize the word “tribe” when describing the large lineage networks that encompassed multiple locations and settlements. I believe this usage resonates with the definition given by Morton H. Fried, when he stated that “a tribe, as ordinarily denoted in scholarly literature and in popular usage, is a reasonably well-defined social, economic, and political unit, often comprised of several bands or settlements but united by a distinct language and culture and often distinguished by a common name.”⁸⁶ The Wanyan, for example, stand as a tribe among the pre-imperial Jurchen, but was in turn fractured into numerous settlements scattered throughout Jurchen territory. However, in the case of the pre-imperial Jurchens, the various settlements of a given tribe did not necessarily comprise a single political unit but often acted independently of other branches.⁸⁷

In describing the various groups of the pre-imperial Jurchen, I have chosen to rely primarily on the word “clan” instead of “tribe” because I feel that the former term provides more emphasis on the fact that these groups were often smaller kin-based organizations that inhabited distinct settlements and regions. Furthermore, the nature of social organization among the pre-Imperial Jurchen required that groups be defined with both a tribal name (such as Wanyan) as well as a regional location (such as the Anchuhu River valley). Thus, while the primary sources do not distinguish between “tribe” and “clan” (all groups are *bu* 部,

⁸⁶ Morton H. Fried, “Tribe to State or State to Tribe in Ancient China,” in *The Origins of Chinese Civilization*, ed. David K. Keightley (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 471.

⁸⁷ The political allegiance and activity of the pre-imperial Jurchen tribes is difficult to adequately describe with general rules or trends. For example, the early conflicts between members of the Anchuhu Wanyan and those of other Wanyan clans suggests that while each clan may have recognized its affiliation to a larger network of clans all belonging to a recognized Wanyan tribe, the actions of these groups were not determined by their inclusion in that tribal structure. However, during the reigns of Wuyashu and Aguda, the consistency with which the Anchuhu Wanyan fought against various branches of the Heshilie Tribe (the notorious Ashu was a leader of a Heshilie clan) suggests that opposition to the Anchuhu may have been a unified stance of all Heshilie clans.

usually translated into English as “tribe”) I feel that the reality of how the Jurchen groups interacted with each other justifies the use of a more specific nomenclature.

As a final note, it must be stressed that the designation of these groups as “tribal” or “clannish” refers primarily to their native political organization (or lack thereof) and does not necessarily signify that the Jurchen placed more emphasis on kinship relations than other East Asian cultures of their time. For example, the division of Wugunai’s household among his sons suggests that the Jurchen usually lived within small family groups; a marked difference from the trend towards large family compounds then gaining ground within the Song Empire.⁸⁸ One would hesitate to call Song dynasty social institutions “tribal” even in light of evidence supporting the great emphasis they placed on large lineage groups and extended family relations. Yet, there is little hesitation among scholars to label the early Jurchen as such. Again, the distinction is in the fact that the Jurchen had no overarching political system to appeal to as the Song subjects did, and instead found it expedient to place political power into the hands of their family leaders. This is not to say that the Jurchen did not readily adopt titles and position from external authorities; the Liao emperor granting Wugunai the title of *jiedushi* or the former Bohai government granting an ancestor of Yada the position of *guoxiang* (*zaixiang*) are only two examples of the Jurchen participating in a larger political organization. The coalition forged under the Anchuhu Wanyan can be seen as the first major political organization native to the inhabitants of the Songhua River basin.

Conflict becomes war

⁸⁸ Patricia Ebrey, “Conceptions of the Family in the Sung Dynasty,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 43.2 (1984), 231.

Wuchun led his army from the north, toward the lands of the Anchuhu. Hearing of Wuchun's advance, Huannan and Sanda mobilized their forces and rode to attack the Anchuhu lands from the south. Faced with this two-fronted assault, Helibo was forced to split his warriors into two groups; he personally led a force to confront Wuchun and assigned his younger brother (and known successor) Polashu to meet Huannan and Sanda in the south. The respective armies of Wuchun and the brothers Huannan and Sanda were formidable and are described as having been quite strong. (*qi shi shen cheng* 其勢甚盛) Helibo recognized the danger he and his followers were in and before sending Polashu to the south instructed him by saying, "If you can make peace, then make peace with them. If not, then you must resolve to fight them." 可和則與之和，否則決戰⁸⁹

Polashu led his army south and met the forces of Huannan and Sanda near the Woluganchu River 斡魯紺出水 and its corresponding settlements. Polashu arrived after the enemy and thus ordered his warriors into formation outside of the unnamed village where the two brothers were awaiting his attack. Polashu dispatched the *bojin* Pende 盆德 to the enemy to discuss peace. However, the brothers knew that Wuchun was placing pressure to the north and that it was an opportune time to press their advantage. Pende returned to Polashu and reported that Huannan and Sanda did not want peace and that battle was imminent. Pende, presumably while on his mission to the opposing camp, observed that the enemy's forces were near to the village marketplace and would be difficult to root out. Pende recommended that Polashu feign a retreat and seek to draw the enemy out into open ground where they would be more easily engaged. Polashu authorized this plan and ordered

⁸⁹ *Jinshi*, 1.8.

a small retreat to more open ground and succeeded in drawing out Huannan and Sanda's warriors from the village. Unfortunately, the second part of the plan, wherein Polashu's forces would regroup and turn on their pursuers, failed miserably.⁹⁰ Polashu was defeated and fled the field with what warriors he could.

Meanwhile, Wuchun's advance from the north was turned back, not by Helibo's army, but by a severe storm of heavy rain that forced him to retreat.⁹¹ Helibo, heard of Polashu's defeat, and because of the temporary respite given his troops by Wuchun's retreat, seized the opportunity and took a portion of his troops through the wilds in an attempt to circumvent Huannan and Sanda's forces and strike at their unprotected homes and families. Huannan and Sanda caught word of the danger and sent riders ahead of their main force in an effort to defend their homes. They might have made it in time, if they had not been intercepted by Polashu and his remaining forces. The clash between these relief riders and the warriors of Polashu resulted in a second defeat for Helibo's younger brother. Polashu may have met his end in the aftermath of that battle if word of his second defeat had not reached Helibo, who promptly sent two of his most trusted lieutenants, Huandu 歡都 and Yehe 冶訶 to aid him.⁹² Yet, it was a mixed victory for the riders of Huannan and Sanda because their defeat of Polashu stalled them long enough that they failed to protect their homes and families from

⁹⁰ *Jinshi*, 67.1575.

⁹¹ *Jinshi*, 67.1578.

⁹² *Jinshi*, 67.1575. Huandu 歡都(1081-1113) and Yehe 冶訶 were two close confidants of Helibo and are often described as being his Right and Left lieutenants. Huandu was a member of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan, the nephew of Helibo and Polashu through their brother Hesun. As for Yehe, there is little mention of his parentage, but I assume that he too was a member of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan though not within the royal lineage. In addition to Huandu and Yehe, there is reference to them obtaining help from "seven *mouke* of the clan" 以本部七謀克助之. A more thorough description of *mouke* 謀克 and their function within the early organization of the Jurchen will be given later, but a basic meaning of the term is believed to be "captain of hundred." Thus, it was only through the help of these lesser captains that Huandu and Yehe were able to give aid to Polashu and see to his safe return.

Helibo's army. The records state that Huannan and Sanda's houses were burned to the ground and over one hundred people were killed in the raid on the brothers' territory. When Helibo returned to the main camp and heard of Polashu's second defeat he upbraided him for his failures but did not punish or demote him. After all, Polashu was the acknowledged heir to Helibo's position and title; with the high coalition leadership already fragmented, it would do little good to incite more antagonism within the royal Wanyan family.

The war between the supporters of Bahei and those of Helibo soon extended beyond its original mission to remove the sons of Wugunai and Duobaozhen from power. Although the impetus of the conflict was originally centered on the legitimacy of the relatively young Helibo, the nature of the war became a large-scale conflict that brought violence to all Jurchen groups even loosely affiliated with the coalition. In and amongst the movement of these largest of "wild" Jurchen forces, smaller groups and families were forced to make a decision to join one side or the other. Moreover, the choice of whether to follow Helibo or his enemies was not always a decision made by clan chief on behalf of his followers. There is record of brothers fighting brothers and individuals of the same clan riding for opposing armies. The earlier example of Bahei's two sons Xiege and Sile being sent to Wuchun is only one of the stories that show how an individual's loyalty was not predetermined by any larger communal decision of the clan. Another example can be seen in an event that took place during Wuchun's initial advance against the Anchuhu River valley. While traveling south, Wuchun stayed within the home of a man named Zibunai 滓不乃. Zibunai was a supporter of Wuchun and Bahei, but his brother Shengkun 勝昆, was not. During Wuchun's stay, soldiers (presumably those of Wuchun) were placed around the house of Shengkun.

However, when Wuchun's forces withdrew from the area (after being denied passage due to the severe storm), Shengkun seized his brother Zibunai and sent a message to Helibo, requesting that he himself would be spared from the execution of his family and inquired as to whether Zibunai should be executed.⁹³ Obviously, there was likely a lot of previous animosity between Shengkun and his family members (being that he made no move to save anyone else but himself, and took the execution of his family as a given) but this story still shows that the Bahei-Helibo conflict became a platform for numerous smaller conflicts within families and clans.

The Battle at Abuwan

With the army of Wuchun having temporarily retreated, the army of Huannan and Sanda was the largest immediate threat to Helibo and his brothers. Even after razing their homes, Helibo sought some kind of peace with the two brothers.⁹⁴ However, these peace negotiations failed to assuage hostilities and the two sides continued to move toward a massive battle that would ultimately decide the fate of the coalition alliance. The *Jinshi* records that the two armies eventually assembled for battle near the plains of Tuohugai 脫

⁹³ *Jinshi*, 1.7. Zibunai's fate is not recorded, but it can be assumed that because Shengkun's request to escape the execution of his family was granted by Helibo, that Zibunai and the rest of the family were killed.

⁹⁴ Following Polashu's second defeat at the hands of Huannan's troops, Helibo dispatched a man to the enemy camp to discuss options of peace. Huannan and Sanda's reply was in the positive: that they would agree to peace only on the condition that they be given the two marvelous horses owned respectively by Helibo's younger brother Yingge 盈歌 and his cousin, the prominent Anchuhu general, Cibushi 辭不失. These horses are mentioned consistently within the narrative and are assumed to have been of a legendary caliber. Upon hearing their demands, Helibo refused the peace and went to war. Now, either the perceived value of these horses was seen as being worth the great loss of life about to be suffered on the battlefield or the transfer of these horses would be perceived as too large a slight to the house of Wugunai to be tolerated. It is also possible that Huannan and Sanda, in their position of strength, knew that that the Anchuhu Wanyan would never part with such treasures and insisted on the point only to provoke the ire of Helibo and his followers.

豁改原, at a place called Abuwan 阿不彎.⁹⁵ Huannan and Sanda's army was much larger than that of Helibo and his allies. In fact, on the eve of battle, Helibo's warriors were struggling with low morale and had little hope that they would be victorious once the armies met on the field.⁹⁶ Additionally, Helibo had even gone so far as to send Polashu to the garrisons of the Liao to request aid, but there is no record of how well Polashu fared in this endeavor. It was during these days of preparation that Helibo received news that drastically changed the nature of the war: his uncle, Bahei, had died unexpectedly while eating a meal in the home of his father-in-law.⁹⁷ The concerns of Helibo's legitimacy and capability within the Anchuhu Wanyan clan surely did not disappear immediately, but the death of Bahei robbed the opposition of a clear contender to the position of *jiedushi*. Helibo was then able to focus his efforts on the external threats to his rule: the large armies of the coalition dissenters. This shift in the nature of the war also opened up new military and political possibilities that previous to Bahei's death were unavailable to Helibo and his brothers.

After hearing of Bahei's death and before the upcoming battle with the warriors of Huannan and Sanda, Helibo pulled his younger brother Yingge aside and holding his hands gave him instructions on what to do when the battle occurred.

“During the events of [the battle] today, if we are victorious then all is well, but if on the small chance that we are not victorious then I will surely be dead.

⁹⁵ The name given here as Abuwan could likely be more accurately described as “the bend of Abu.” The character *wan* 彎 signifies a bend or curve in what was possibly that of a river. However, no river name is mentioned and very little information is given about this site; only that it was near to the plains of Tuohuogai. The only mention of this area is given when describing the route taken by the fleeing forces of Huannan and Sanda after their defeat. “They pursued their victory and followed after them, from Abuwan to the village of Bei'ai.” 乘勝遂之,自阿不彎至于北隘甸. See *Jinshi*, 1.9.

⁹⁶ *Jinshi*, 67.1576. Seeing the low morale of his troops, Helibo is said to have commanded his men to remove their armor, wash their faces, and eat a meal of boiled grain. After this small kindness, the morale of his troops was greatly increased and they faced the upcoming battle with renewed strength.

⁹⁷ *Jinshi*, 1.8, 67.1576. If the *Jinshi* is to be believed, Bahei died somewhat ignominiously: choking on a piece of meat.

You will now mount your horse and watch from a distance and not take part in the affairs of the battle. If [I] die, do not retrieve my body, do not gaze back at [your] loved ones, relatives, and in-laws, but with all urgency you will ride quickly and report to your elder brother Polashu [all that has occurred]. He is to enter the registers of the Liao and accept the seals, and beg for an army in order to take revenge on these enemies.”

今日之時,若勝則已,萬一有不勝,吾必無生.汝今介馬遙觀,勿預戰事.若我死,汝勿收吾骨,勿顧戀親戚,亟馳馬奔告汝兄頗刺淑,于遼繫籍受印,乞帥以報此讎.⁹⁸

This is a fantastic example of a frontier leader planning on invoking the type of periphery-center relationship described by Barfield as the Inner Frontier Strategy. If defeated, Polashu (and the remainder of the Anchuhu Wanyan) would become registered subjects of the Liao Empire and allow Polashu to utilize this relationship with the Kitan state to more effectively expand and establish power along the imperial periphery of the far northeast. However, this was exactly the type of relationship that Wugunai so staunchly opposed. He refused to enter his people into the Liao registers and cunningly denied the Liao emperor's offer to accept the official Liao seals. Why then did Helibo instruct his brothers to undo what their father had worked so hard to maintain? I believe that the answer lies in the recent death of their uncle, Bahei.

Prior to Bahei's death, the war between uncle and nephew was merely a succession crisis within the Anchuhu Wanyan clan. The conflict centered on who would attain the title of *jiedushi* and the accompanying authority bestowed on that position by both the Liao government as well as the native Jurchen tribes. From the perspective of the Liao, whether or not Bahei succeeded in overthrowing Helibo was irrelevant to the fact that both men were

⁹⁸ *Jinshi*, 1.8-9. Trans. in Franke, “Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (II),” 425.

potential successors to Wugunai and both were members of the Anchuhu Wyan. After Bahei's death, the issue surrounding the title of *jiedushi* was settled and the conflict became one between a clan sanctioned and given authority by the Liao to rule over the "wild" Jurchen, against non-Wanyan rebels fighting that authority. It is possible that prior to Bahei's death, the Liao authorities were unwilling to step too heavily into what they perceived as merely a succession dispute.

Furthermore, with Helibo facing potential destruction at the hands of these rebels, the desire to remain independent of Liao control became moot. If the followers of Helibo lost the battle at Abuwan against Huannan and Sanda, then the entire leadership of the Wanyan Coalition –likely the coalition in its entirety— would have dissolved. The entire enterprise of the Anchuhu Wanyan in building up their power in the northeast and becoming an alternative to Liao control would have been undone and the only salient purpose remaining to them would have been to pursue revenge against those who had destroyed them. In which case, entering the registers of the Liao and allying closely with the Kitan would bring the military strength needed to continue the fight against the enemies of Wugunai's line.

Before returning to the battle, it is also pertinent to explain why it was that Yingge was ordered to find and report to Polashu if Helibo and the others were defeated. The reason goes deeper than the fact that Polashu was the recognized successor and second-in-command to his older brother. As mentioned above, Polashu was not present when Helibo gave his orders to Yingge. He had earlier been sent to the territory of the Liao in an effort to request assistance from the empire. While Polashu's absence from the battlefield was surely felt by some, it is safe to assume that his presence there was not perceived as a critical factor in

Helibo's battle plan. By now it is hopefully clear to the reader that Polashu was not exactly a brilliant military tactician or a fearsome physical combatant. His talents laid elsewhere. He is described as having been clever (*min* 敏) from a young age and very proficient in debate (*shanbian* 善辯). In addition, he seems to have filled a particular niche within his family: "He had a special capacity in his knowledge of the sentiments/feelings (*qing* 情) of the Liao people as well as the men within the [Liao] state government. Whenever there was an affair involving the Liao, it was all commissioned to him because he would focus his entire mind to it." 尤能知遼人國政人情.凡有遼事,一切委之肅宗 (Polashu) 專心焉.⁹⁹ He was also proficient in both Jurchen and Kitan languages. Thus, it makes sense that he was the one chosen by Helibo to seek aid from the Liao. It is also clear why Polashu was doubly qualified to have negotiated a submission to the Liao Empire if the battle against Huannan and Sanda went very poorly.

Returning to the battle at Abuwan, after Helibo gave Yingge his instructions he returned to his warriors and made ready to fight. Yet, instead of donning his armor, Helibo picked up his sword and bow and moved into position at the vanguard of his army wearing only a garment of hemp that hung over his back and breast. There is a discrepancy in the record as to what happened next. Two passages describe the battle at Abuwan; one is found in the first chapter of the *Jinshi* and the other is found in the biography of Huannan and Sanda. In the first chapter account, Helibo waved his banner three times, ordered the drums to be beaten three times, and then charged the enemy forces and entered into a fierce close combat. His troops followed after him and together they tore through Huannan and Sanda's

⁹⁹ *Jinshi*, 1.11.

soliders, leaving a wide swath of victims. It is recorded that in the course of the battle, Helibo had personally cut down nine enemy soldiers and was admired by his troops.¹⁰⁰

While this account is the more sensational of the two, the account of the battle recorded in the brothers' biography may be closer to the truth. In this second account, Helibo positioned himself at the vanguard of his army, waved his banner three times, ordered the drums to be beaten three times, and stood his ground to meet the advance of Huannan and Sanda's infantry forces. The enemy advanced carrying shields (presumably to provide a measure of cover from the arrows fired from the midst of Helibo's army) and were met by Helibo's warriors who were wielding long spears (*changqiang* 長槍). While it is not a crucial detail, it makes more sense that Helibo's outnumbered warriors would be the ones to receive an enemy charge instead of charging ahead themselves. Thus, I feel that the account contained in the biography section is the more likely of the two scenarios. Moreover, the tactic recorded in the second account resonates better with the second aspect of Helibo's battle plan.

In both accounts, it is stated clearly that Helibo used his banners and drums to signal the commencement of the battle. However, this signal was not for the warriors surrounding him on the field, but was instead meant for the cavalry forces lead by his cousin, Cibushi 辭不失.¹⁰¹

Cibushi was renowned for his skill with the bow and his bravery in battle. Prior to the battle, Cibushi had been given instructions to wait with his cavalry on the plains of

¹⁰⁰ *Jinshi*, 1.9.

¹⁰¹ aka Xibushi 習不失, possibly referenced also as Xibuchu. Cibushi was like Helibo's close lieutenant, Huanda, in that he too was of the royal Anchuhu Wanyan family but was not within the line of succession. He is described as being a grandson of Shilu, the father of Wugunai and Bahei. He was apparently able to fire a bow using either left or right hands, and was renowned for his bravery and tenacity in battle.

Tuohugai and enter the battle only after Helibo gave the signal using banner and drums. With the signal given, Cibushi led a charge on the rear of Huannan and Sanda's forces, engaging the enemy cavalry. This attack from the rear by Cibushi's cavalry would have been a very effective tactic when used in conjunction with the wall of long spears described in the second account of the battle, and thus strengthens my belief that it was this more defensive (and less flamboyant) tactic that Helibo used to win the battle that day. Pinned between the long spears of Helibo's infantry and the charge of Cibushi's cavalry the enemy was overwhelmed and fled the field. The forces of the coalition followed up on their victory and pursued the enemy. Cibushi, in order to join the pursuit was forced to leap from his horse which was critically wounded after being pierced by nine arrows, and proceed on foot.¹⁰² There is no number given of the casualties of this battle, but it was remembered as a battle in which the corpses were "like fallen hemp (*puma* 仆麻) and the waters of the Poduotu River ran red." 死者如仆麻, 婆多吐水水為之赤¹⁰³ Huannan and Sanda were never able to recover from their loss at Abuwan. Many years after the battle, the two brothers brought their families to Helibo and submitted to his authority in 1091.¹⁰⁴

For the majority of Helibo's reign, he worked toward repairing and solidifying the Wanyan Coalition. After the defeat of Huannan and Sanda, he still had to deal with the forces of Wuchun and Womouhan, as well as a number of smaller dissenting groups. But the battle of Abuwan was the most crucial point in his early reign, and all of the battles after it

¹⁰² *Jinshi*, 70.1618.

¹⁰³ *Jinshi*, 1.9.

¹⁰⁴ *Jinshi*, 1.9. The only dates given for this period are the accession of Helibo in 1074 and the submission of Huannan and Sanda in 1091. The text states that a "few years" passed between Wuchun's initial provocation and when he actually marched an army toward the Anchuhu River valley. Because the battle at Abuwan occurred after Wuchun's march, I assume that the defeat of Huannan and Sanda occurred sometime in the early to mid-1080s.

were fought from a much stronger position. The story of these latter battles will not be related here for the sake of space, but the reader may be curious to know the fate of the iron smelter Wuchun and his ally Womouhan. The two continued to gather followers from among the “wild” Jurchen clans and clashed often with the Wanyan Coalition. The cause of Wuchun’s death is unknown, but it occurred while amidst his continued antagonism against the sons of Wugunai. Following Wuchun’s death, Womouhan appealed to the Liao in an attempt to gain an upper hand in his war with Helibo. He confessed to the Liao that he desired their help in bringing about a peace agreement with the Anchuhu Wanyan, which was successfully achieved with Liao intervention. However, soon after the peace agreement, Womouhan rose and attacked the Anchuhu again. The Liao were angry at his duplicity and denied his later appeals for sanctuary. He was eventually killed along with many members of his home village.

Strategies of negotiation with the Liao Empire

The role of the Liao Empire in the distant northeast continued to be a factor that Helibo and his brothers/successors were forced to deal with. Womouhan’s appeals for the Liao to involve themselves in the political battles among the Jurchen, be it as mediator or protector, were not unusual. Like their father, the sons of Wugunai continued to implement a frontier strategy that presented a dual-image of their rule. They continued to act as an alternative power to the Liao Empire and continued to expand their power among the inhabitants of the northeast. Additionally, they continued to present themselves as enforcers of Kitan authority in the region and maintained a strong relationship with the Liao

administration. Helibo, Polashu, and Yingge each contributed to the expansion of Anchuhu authority while interacting closely with Liao authorities and representatives. The following section will describe key events during the reign of the sons of Wugunai that illustrate the specific tactics they used to maintain their independence from and close cooperation with the Liao Empire.

Successors to Helibo

Helibo's death came in 1092 at the age of 54, after ruling as *jiedushi* for nineteen years. He had contracted an illness following the conquest of Womouhan's followers at a place called Xiedui 斜堆. As to the type of man Helibo was, the record as found in the *Jinshi* ascribes to him, more than to any of the other pre-imperial Anchuhu Wanyan leaders, an aura of mysticism and wisdom. The story of his early conflicts against Wuchun and the brothers Huannan and Sanda reveal a measure of his character as a man of patience. Yet, when pushed to violence the historical character of Helibo was a fierce combatant who more often than not chose to wear little to no armor and fought on the front lines. He was supposedly immune to cold weather and abstained from alcohol following an embarrassing incident of inebriation involving a donkey.¹⁰⁵ He was also considered a man of prophecy and dreams;

¹⁰⁵ The incident mentioned above occurred at the end of an evening of excessive drinking. Helibo in his drunkenness rode his donkey into his house and into his personal rooms before retiring for the night. In the morning he had no memory of the incident, but he did notice the hoof prints in his home. (Presumably, the donkey had retired to its own quarters for the night). After questioning his household about what had occurred and learning the truth, he swore to never drink wine again.

foretelling the death of his first wife and that of his brother Polashu while he laid on his deathbed.¹⁰⁶

Polashu and Ethnic Identity

By using his knowledge of Kitan language and state culture, Polashu was able to utilize another tool in furthering the political purposes of his family: ethnic identity and perception. The following story is recorded within the description of Polashu's character found in the first chapter of the *Jinshi*. While it was most likely recorded to illustrate Polashu's intelligence and cunning, the story reveals much more about how language, stereotypes, and ethnic identity functioned within the administration of the Liao Empire.

“Whenever anything is [presented] to the Liao officials, all are commanded to kneel far away and state their words. An interpreter [then] conveys and administers it. Often it was made incorrect and confusing by the interpreters. Polashu desired to present himself in front of [the official] and turn it about by speaking it [himself]. Hence, he would begin by reporting untruthfully to the interpreter. The interpreter would then be perplexed by it, and would have no choice but to guide him forward and make him speak for himself. Then he used grass, wood, tiles, and stones to count out his affairs while stating them. The officials, civil officers, and those who heard him were all astonished [by this] and if they asked him the reason for [using these counters] he would reply with humble words saying: ‘[We] are remote, ignorant, and have no culture, that is the reason for [doing it this way].’ The officials and officers took this to be truthful and correct, and did not doubt him. This was how all of his petitions could not but be met according to his wishes.

凡白事與遼官，皆令遠跪陳辭，譯者傳政之。往往為譯者錯亂。肅宗欲得自前委曲言之，故先不以實告譯者。譯者惑之，不得已，引之前，使自言。乃以草木瓦石為籌，枚數其事而陳之。官吏聽者皆愕然，問其故，

¹⁰⁶ *Jinshi*, 1.10-11. In one case, he refused to personally participate in a battle because of an ominous dream he had experienced the night before.

則為卑辭以對曰：鄙陋無文，故如此。官吏以為實然，不得疑之，是以所訴無不如意。¹⁰⁷

The first point of interest here is the description of how matters were brought before Liao officials by the “raw” Jurchens. The practice of presenting a request to the Liao was a common recourse for many of the Jurchen leaders in the pre-imperial narrative. It is understandable that there should exist an established protocol to handle the official communication between such Jurchen leaders and the Liao administration. That they were commanded to kneel afar off and transmit their petition to an official interpreter is an interesting insight into Liao-Jurchen relations. Even if a Jurchen messenger was able to speak for himself and be understood by the Liao official, as was Polashu, he was still expected to work through an interpreter. Such interpreters must have been an influential force along the imperial frontiers. By keeping the petitioners at a physical distance from administrating officials, above and beyond the regular obstacle posed by a language barrier, the interpreters effectively controlled all official access to the Liao state. If the above passage is to be believed, it seems that the ability of these interpreters in conveying an accurate message to the officials often fell short of the mark. Of course, whether or not their habit of misconstruing a Jurchen petition was deliberate or not is unstated. However, the fact that Polashu was able to confuse his assigned interpreter suggests that the interpreter was not a native Jurchen speaker. Moreover, the wording used in the text hints that the interpreter would have preferred to not let Polashu advance and speak for himself; that it was in the

¹⁰⁷ There are a couple terms in this passage that can be translated differently. The words *bi* 鄙 and *lou* 陋 can also be rendered as “base, lowly, or crude.” Also, the word translated here as “culture” *wen* 文 can be taken to mean more specifically “written language” or “writing” which would also fit within the context of the passage. See Franke, “Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (II),” 429. However due to the overall impression Polashu is trying to convey, I have chosen to convey the full implications of the word and render it as “culture.”

interpreter's best interest to prevent a petitioner from bypassing his transmission. The extent to which interpreters and translators (*yizhe* 譯者 or *yishi* 譯史) were organized and integrated into the regular Liao bureaucracy is unknown. No mention of them as an official occupational class is given within the account of Liao government organization in the dynasty's official history, but scattered references to them hint that they may have been considered a type of specialized class of clerk.¹⁰⁸

One example of the power held by interpreters and translators can be seen in an event that occurred a generation after the time of Polashu. The story takes place in the Jurchen ruled empire of Jin, founded in 1115 by Polashu's nephew Aguda. It was recorded by a Song ambassador, Hong Hao 洪皓(1088-1155) who was sent to the Jin Dynasty in 1129 and was detained there by his hosts for over a decade. Upon his return he wrote of his experiences in a brief first-hand account titled, *Song mo jiwèn* 松漠記聞 "Personal experiences in the pines and deserts," which served as one of the primary sources for latter Song compilations of this era and region.¹⁰⁹ Hong Hao recorded that under the early Jin, interpreters (*tongshi* 通事) were required in relations between Jurchen officials and Han subjects. He related a story in which a Han monk sought to bring his debtors to trial. However, the debtors approached the interpreter and bribed him to relay a false message to the Jurchen official. Instead of presenting a case against his debtors, the interpreter reported that the monk desired to immolate himself before the official and ascend to Heaven. The Jurchen official agreed to

¹⁰⁸ *Liaoshi*, 24.289. Wittfogel and Feng believe that translators/interpreters were ranked according to a regional hierarchy and organization. Wittfogel and Feng, *Liao*, 495, n.21.

¹⁰⁹ The most notable of these Song sources was the *Sanchao beimeng huibian* which incorporates the information contained in the *Song mo jiwèn* along with dozens of other sources.

this request and saw to it that the monk was thrown into a large fire and burned to death.¹¹⁰ Of course, it is possible that the Song ambassador Hong Hao exaggerated the corruption of the interpreters under the Jurchen and recorded this story in order to cast the Jin state in a more sinister light. Be that as it may, it is undeniable that the position and power of interpreters was feared by those forced to work through them. By relying on interpreters, the Liao (and later the Jurchen-Jin) states were forced to deal with another layer of administrative personnel who could use their position to enrich themselves and distort communication between the government and its subjects.

Another insight gleaned from Polashu's experience with the Liao officials is that he seems to present himself as a savage, bereft of sufficient means to organize and express his petition to the state. By using grass, stones, and other simple tokens, to number his affairs, Polashu was consciously performing a role that coincided with Liao stereotypes surrounding his people, the wild Jurchen. Instead of striving to present himself as a sophisticated leader familiar with the rites and customs of the Kitan state, he chose to adopt a completely opposite persona. The history records that his ploy consistently worked and that because of his actions and humble words, he was considered trustworthy and sincere. By adhering to the role of a stereotypical "wild" Jurchen, Polashu was able to receive approval for nearly all of his requests. In other words, the negative stereotypes against the "wild" Jurchen were not a hindrance in his relations with Liao officials. If anything, he was able to utilize these stereotypes as a way to manipulate the Liao officials into seeing only what they expected to see.

¹¹⁰ Hong Hao 洪皓, *Song mo jiwèn* 松漠記聞 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu shuguan 臺灣商務書館, Wang Yun wuzhu bian 王雲五主編 no.2457), 11.

This type of self-barbarization, or personal emphasis on one's more barbaric traits, was not unique to Polashu. Aggrandizing one's ethnic or cultural stereotypes as a tool used in inter-cultural/inter-ethnic relations was a consistent phenomenon in premodern Asia. Marc Abramson's study of ethnic identity during the Tang has shown that non-Han populations, particularly those in the military, regularly relied and emphasized ethnic stereotypes in order to augment their professional reputations.¹¹¹ The fact that Polashu was a Jurchen addressing himself to a Kitan official (both of whom were considered barbarians by the predominantly Han Chinese historical record) made no difference in the application of Jurchen ethnic stereotypes. Again, it must be remembered that the Kitan were the ones to first make use of the term "cooked" (*shou* 熟) and "raw" (*sheng* 生) barbarians. Polashu's utilization of a stereotypical ethnic identity was just one of the ways in which the Anchuhu Wanyan negotiated their relationship with the Liao Empire.¹¹²

Conclusion

Polashu did not live long in the position of *jiedushi* and died after only three years of rule. However, the reigns of Helibo and Polashu were crucial in the solidification of the royal Anchuhu Wanyan family. The level of fracturing and dissent among so many

¹¹¹ Marc S Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 47; Michael Drompp, "The Hsiung-nu *topos* in the T'ang Response to the Collapse of the Uighur Steppe Empire," *Central and Inner Asian Studies* 1 (1987): 1-46. This utilization of image and stereotype was also common among Mongol populations during the Ming Dynasty. See David M. Robinson, "Images of Subject Mongols under the Ming Dynasty," *Late Imperial China* 25.1 (June 2004), 106.

¹¹² For more discussion on the utilization and mutability of ethnic identity along frontier zones see Jonathan Karem Skaff, "Survival in the Frontier Zone: Comparative Perspectives on Identity and Political Allegiance in China's Inner Asian Borderlands during the Sui-Tang Dynastic Transition (617-630)," *Journal of World History* 15.2 (June 2004): 117-153. For a more general discussion on identity and ethnicity see James Clifford and George E. Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); Pamela Kyle Crossley, "Thinking about Ethnicity in Early Modern China," *Late Imperial China* 11.1 (1990): 1-35.

influential coalition members was never again experienced among the pre-imperial Jurchen. Indeed, following the reigns of Helibo and Polashu, the house of Wugunai as the leading family of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition was never again threatened by dissent from within. Moreover, the key leaders who distinguished themselves in this period became the primary leadership for the coalition as it transitioned from frontier alliance into an imperial bureaucracy. Huanda, Cibushi, and even the young Aguda all were trained under the leadership of Helibo, Polashu, and Yingge.

The strategy of presenting a simultaneous dual-image to both “superiors” (the Liao Empire) and followers, the Anchuhu became more proficient in embracing their role as an alternative to Liao control in the northeast. However, as the coalition grew they encountered more enemies who were not ready to join the alliance and submit themselves to a Jurchen clan hailing from an increasingly distant river valley. The tendency of Anchuhu enemies to seek out the protection and assistance of the Liao increased as the coalition expanded beyond the Songhua River basin. During the reign of Polashu, and particularly that of his brother Yingge, the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition spread into the regions southwest of strong Anchuhu control; into the territories of the Registered Jurchen of the Liao, or “cooked” Jurchen clans. Because of this, the Liao became increasingly involved in the affairs of the coalition. As more Liao representatives came into contact (and conflict) with the coalition leadership, the Anchuhu Wanyan were forced to find new ways to simultaneously assert their control while still maintaining the appearance of loyal Liao subjects.

The following chapter will investigate how the newly solidified ruling family of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition successfully expanded their control to the very door of the Liao

Empire without being called out as a dangerous threat. Additionally, we will look at the beginnings of coalition foreign policy as their control spread to the far northern borders of the state of Goryeo, then dominating the Korean Peninsula. Furthermore, through their connections in Goryeo the Jurchen began interacting with other foreign states within the East Asian multi-state system of the 12th century. In the act of establishing independent political relations, the pre-imperial Jurchen began the process of constructing for themselves a new imperial political identity that could compete for prestige with the other polities then surrounding them. Ultimately, this new political identity would be strongly influenced by the hegemonic Liao Empire, the model of which served as a blueprint for Jin Dynasty relations with its neighbors.

Chapter Three: Manipulating an Empire

Introduction

The previous chapter covered the turbulent period within the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition following the death of the leader Wugunai. Prominent members of the coalition rose up in opposition to the new *jiedushi*, Wugunai's son Helibo. The conflict within the coalition extended to the royal family and was embodied in the antagonism between Helibo and his uncle, Wugunai's younger brother, Bahei. At the battle of Abuwan, the sons of Wugunai defeated the forces of the most powerful leaders of the anti-Helibo movement, the brothers Huannan and Sanda. Following the unexpected death of Bahei and the resolution of who would stand as Wugunai's successor, the Liao Empire began again to step heavily into the affairs of the "raw" Jurchen of the northeast. Finally, the role of ethnic identity and stereotypes was mentioned within the context of Polashu's relationship with Liao interpreters and officials. By presenting himself in accordance to the stereotypes surrounding his people, Polashu was able to better manipulate his Liao audience to grant him a more favorable reception.

This chapter attempts to explain how the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition continued to expand in power while still retaining an image as a loyal enforcer of Liao imperial rule. New strategies and ploys were used to navigate their ascension over other northeastern groups beholden to the Kitan emperor. One of the major conflicts of this period was the battle between the Anchuhu and the followers of the Jurchen leader Ashu 阿疎 who held strong ties to Liao imperial power and was able to obtain refuge within the empire while working

against the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition. In many ways, Ashu represented the last Jurchen opposition to the hegemony of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan over the inhabitants of the entire Songhua River basin. Furthermore, the close cooperation between Ashu and the Liao Empire presented a formidable obstacle to the dominant strategy of the Anchuhu Coalition in their own relationship with the Liao Empire, and forced leaders like Yingge to employ new tactics of political guile to retain their position as the sanctioned authority over the “wild” Jurchen. The expansion of the Coalition into the south also brought it into greater contact with registered Liao populations as well as the state of Goryeo. Under the reign of Yingge, the Jurchen coalition, as led by the Anchuhu Wanyan, took its first steps out of the obscurity of the northeastern wilds and into the larger realm of East Asian diplomacy. In so doing, the Jurchen coalition led by the Wanyan began to construct for themselves a new imperial identity in order to negotiate on a more equal footing with the existing states of continental East Asia.



Shifts in the Liao – Anchuhu Relationship

In 1094, the position of *jiedushi* over the “uncivilized” Jurchen passed from Polashu to his brother Yingge 盈歌 (r.1094-1103), then 42 years old and the youngest son of Wugunai and Duobaozhen. Among all of the pre-imperial Anchuhu Wanyan leaders, Yingge took the most drastic steps in establishing the independence of the Jurchen people and stepping out from under the perceived dominance of the Liao Empire. It was under Yingge

that tribute to the Liao Empire ceased and word of a powerful Jurchen leader reached the ears of the distant Song imperial court. In what stands as the most comprehensive history of the Jurchens in English, scholar Jing-shen Tao writes that “Among [the leaders following Wugunai] Yingge was the most ambitious and capable” of the early Wanyan leaders because of his efforts in increasing agriculture, training soldiers, and breeding an ever increasing number of horses.¹¹³ It could be said that it was under Yingge that the Jurchen Coalition began to transition from a regional power to one of imperial ambitions. The following section will investigate a few key events of Yingge’s rule that exemplify how the Anchuhu functioned along the Liao borderlands and their first steps toward war with their former overlords.

The Anchuhu Wanyan’s role as Liao enforcers –Confrontation with the enemy Ashu

At this point, the role of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition as an enforcer for the Liao Empire should be a familiar concept to the reader. By serving in this capacity as an extra-territorial police force, the Anchuhu were able to increase their regional power while forming an alliance with the more powerful Liao state. In chapter one, this type of relationship between a border population and an imperial state was identified as a particular “frontier strategy” identified by the anthropologist Thomas Barfield.¹¹⁴ It was a frontier relationship common within the premodern world and is one of the first things attributed to the pre-

¹¹³ Jing-shen Tao, *The Jurchen in Twelfth-Century China: A study of Sinicization* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1976), 17.

¹¹⁴ Thomas Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China 221 B.C. to AD 1757* (Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell Publishers, 1989).

imperial Jurchen when describing their relationship to the Liao imperial center.¹¹⁵ However, as mentioned in chapter one, the political tactics of the early Anchuhu Wanyan do not conform to either the “Inner” or “Outer” frontier strategies presented by Barfield and instead form a type of “alternate” frontier strategy involving a duplicitous political façade of simultaneous and conflicting loyalties. Yingge, like his father and brothers before him, attempted to remain within the good graces of the Liao while simultaneously expanding his power and reputation as a competitor to Liao dominance in the northeast. The Anchuhu Wanyan established a parallel civic and military organization with established laws, registries, and leadership that were independent of the Liao imperial system. Shortly after Yingge’s ascension to power, a series of events transpired that not only showcased the complicated relationship between the Liao and their Jurchen neighbors, but also illuminated how the Anchuhu were able to successfully deflect Liao aggression against their rising hegemony over the other Jurchen groups.

In 1096, only two years after Yingge gained the position of *jiedushi*, there arose a personal conflict between a man named Bate 跋忒 and another named Bage 跋葛. Despite the similarity of their names, the men were of two different groups and stations. Bate is described only as a man of the Wendu 溫都 clan, but Bage on the other hand held the position of *bojin* within the Tangguo clan. The nature of their argument is not stated in the sources, but it was of a serious enough nature that Bate sought out and murdered the *bojin* Bage. Surely there already existed established punishments for crimes such as murder within the coalition organization but it is possible that this crime was of a more personal nature to

¹¹⁵ Tao, *Jurchen in Twelfth-Century China*, 18; Hok-lam Chan, *Legitimation in Imperial China: Discussions under the Jurchen-Chin Dynasty (1115-1234)* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1984), 56.

Yingge because he was closely related to the Tangguo clan through his mother Duobaozhen.¹¹⁶ Yingge ordered his nephew, Aguda (1068-1123) to lead a force of warriors out to capture Bate. Unfortunately, Bate escaped immediate capture and fled southward into the region surrounding the Xingxian River 星顯水; pursued closely by Aguda and his small army.¹¹⁷ Due to previous events, Bate likely thought that the Xingxian River was a good place to flee from the authority of the Anchuhu Wanyan. It was home to a branch of Jurchens known as the Heshilie 紇石烈 tribe who at that time were under the direction of two rebellious *bojin* and were raising forces against the coalition.

Members of the Heshilie tribe had been a nuisance to Anchuhu authority for a number of years prior to Aguda entering the Xingxian River valley in pursuit of Bate. They seemed to have been a relatively numerous tribe with multiple groups living throughout the Songhua River system. Two Heshilie brothers, Lapei and Machan were recorded as having raided horses along the Lailiu River 來流河 and had made a habit of attacking settlements in the last years of Helibo's rule. During the few years of Polashu's rule, he was commanded by the Liao to attack Machan and his allies after the latter had blockaded themselves into a river fortress along the Zhiwukai River 直屋鎧水.¹¹⁸ However, like the other Jurchen tribes of the mountainous northeast, the Heshilie tribe was divided into smaller clans, each politically autonomous and led by its own clan chiefs. In this way, some clans of the Heshilie tribe were allied with the Anchuhu and held high positions within the coalition. Up until the reign

¹¹⁶ See the incident involving the laws of recompense following an act of arson mentioned in chapter two.

¹¹⁷ Modern Bu'erhatong River 布爾哈通河, a tributary of the Tumen 圖們江, bordering Yanji County 延吉縣, Jilin located near the Changbai Shan region.

¹¹⁸ *Jinshi* 1.12; 2.20; 67.1582. The exact location of the Zhiwukai is unknown, but it is likely that it was a small tributary along the upper Kentong River 肯通河 in today's Heilongjiang Province.

of Yingge, the clan of Heshilie living along the Xingxian River were considered allies of the Anchuhu. However, there was a shift in sympathies among the Xingxian Heshilie leaders following the death of Polashu in 1092. It is unclear what motivated this change of allegiance, but by the time Bate fled to the Xingxian for safety the Heshilie living there were actively mobilizing soldiers for war against the coalition.

The two Xingxian Heshilie leaders mentioned in the sources are the two *bojin* Maodulu 毛睹祿 and Ashu 阿疎. Whereas little is known of Maodulu, Ashu is given a biography within the *Jinshi* and was at the center of the later break-down of relations between the Anchuhu and the Liao Empire. Ashu's father was allied with Wugunai and Helibo and even helped in the resistance against Wuchun and the other dissenters of Helibo's day. Prior to raising troops in open rebellion, Ashu was a regular participant in affairs within the Anchuhu leadership. He was even remembered as a favorite of the aging matriarch, Duobaozhen, who was said to have had a sincere affection for the young Heshilie leader.¹¹⁹ However, Ashu's loyalty to the coalition seemed to have wavered sometime after the ascension of Yingge. As rumors of Ashu's intentions began to circulate, Yingge summoned him to the Anchuhu headquarters using the bestowal of a fine saddle and horse as an excuse to gauge his true designs. Ashu assented to the request and presented himself, but all later summonses were refused as were any other orders handed down from Yingge. This was only a year or so before Aguda and his soldiers marched into the Xingxian River valley to apprehend the murderer Bate.

¹¹⁹ *Jinshi* 67.1585.

Despite the clash between Aguda's troops and those of Ashu and Maodulu, Bate was eventually captured and executed. But the attack on the coalition troops by the local Heshilie could not be allowed, and Yingge saw to it that the minor uprising was put down by personally leading a force into the Xingxian region and attacking Ashu's warriors. The result of this punitive campaign into the Xingxian River region was the full occupation of the valley by Anchuhu forces and the escape of the Heshilie leader, Ashu.¹²⁰ Prior to the arrival of Yingge's army, Ashu had received word of their approach and fled with his brother Digubao 狄故保 to the Liao Empire for safety. This was an important move for Ashu, for while he was not able to defend his territory in person, he was able to work for its safety from within the borders of the Liao Empire. In his absence, his home village was placed under guard by a detachment of the Anchuhu army led by the *bojin* Hezhe 劾者.¹²¹ Ashu's Town (for that is the name ascribed it in the records, *Ashu cheng* 阿疎城) was guarded (*shou* 守) by the soldiers under Hezhe for a full two years.¹²² During that time, Ashu remained within the protected territories of the Liao Empire and was actively petitioning Kitan intervention to halt the attack on his home territory.

Ashu's tactic of utilizing the Liao Empire as a location of political refuge was a somewhat common practice available to these early Jurchen leaders. In such cases, the Liao often responded by dispatching an envoy to attempt a mediation between the warring parties

¹²⁰ The details of the advance against the Xingxian Heshilie can be found in *Jinshi* 1.13, 67.1584-6. One interesting detail is the successful attack on the walled village of Dun'en 鈍恩城 by the Anchuhu Wanyan leader Sagai 撒改. Sagai was the cousin of Yingge and son of Hezhe (Wugunai's oldest son). He was also the recipient of the position of *guoxiang* following the death of Polashu. This minor campaign was the first of many for Sagai, who would later stand as one of the most prominent Jurchen generals of the early dynasty.

¹²¹ This Hezhe is not to be confused with the other Hezhe of this period, one of the sons of Wugunai and oldest brother of Yingge.

¹²² *Jinshi* 67.1585. Ashu's Town was located near the junction of the Xingxian and Tongmen Rivers, near today's Tingji City 廷吉市 in Jilin Province.

involved.¹²³ In Ashu's case, after remaining within the empire for a year, the Liao finally dispatched an imperial envoy to the Xingxian River valley to mediate the dispute between the Xingxian Heshilie clan and the Anchuhu Wanyan. The details of this fascinating encounter illuminate one of the ways in which Yingge dealt with Liao intervention into Jurchen disputes. But before touching on how the Anchuhu were able to deflect Liao interference into their affairs, it is helpful to show how the Anchuhu were still viewed during this time by the Liao Empire as a vital and necessary part of their northeastern frontier management. The length of the siege on Ashu's Town may not have been wholly due to the level of fortifications surrounding the settlement, though such fortifications surely contributed. During the years that the siege was underway, other events were taking place within the northeast that demanded the attention of the Anchuhu and forced them to temporarily shelve the siege of Ashu's Town

The event I am referring to involved Liao imperial representatives within the lands of the wild Jurchen. In previous chapters, Liao officials and representatives have played minor roles in the political struggles of the wild Jurchen groups. In addition to their role as mediators of intra-Jurchen conflict, the Liao also seemed to rely on a more regular cadre of representatives who helped maintain communication and trade with the groups of the distant northeast. The importance of the Falcon Road (*yinglu* 鷹路) to the Kitan court has already been touched upon, but it must be remembered that throughout the pre-imperial period Liao envoys and state sanctioned merchants were actively transporting falcons and other goods through the mountain roads of the northeast. Indeed, it seems that any obstruction of these

¹²³ One previously mentioned example would be the Liao mediator sent to oversee the short-lived peace treaty between Helibo and Womouhan.

routes was the fastest way to incite the ire of the empire and ensure a swift response either in the form of an envoy or army. It seems that following the investiture of Wugunai as *jiedushi* over all of the wild Jurchen, Liao military forces were less prevalent in the deep northeast of the Songhua River basin. In fact, the ability to allocate Liao forces elsewhere in the empire and to allow the Anchuhu Wanyan to more frequently intercede on their behalf was likely one of the main purposes behind the investiture of the Anchuhu Wanyan as the sanctioned enforcers of the empire in the region. Although there is no overt evidence of it, it is possible that the Liao considered the capability to “reopen” the Falcon Road if it was ever disrupted to be one of the primary functions of the wild Jurchen *jiedushi*.

The incident in question was centered around the traffic along the Falcon Road and occurred sometime around the uprising of Ashu and the other Heshilie of the Xingxian River region. A different group of Heshilie rose up in arms against the authority of both the Anchuhu and the Liao Empire. This Heshilie group dwelt along the Taowen 陶溫 and Tulonggu 徒籠古 Rivers, and blocked the route to the Five Nations, effectively preventing all traffic along the Falcon Road.¹²⁴ Yet, they went even further in their uprising and began killing Liao representatives who had been sent to the northeast to capture (and presumably bring back) the falcons.¹²⁵ Upon hearing of the interruption of trade and tribute, the Liao commanded (*zhao* 詔) Yingge to punish the Heshilie of the two rivers and rectify the situation. Yingge complied with the will of the Liao and mobilized his forces to attack the fortifications of the Heshilie along the Taowen and Tulonggu Rivers. It is recorded that the

¹²⁴ *Jinshi* 1.13. For more information on the Five Nations see Ch.1, pg 14. The Taowen and Tulonggu Rivers were tributaries of the lower Songhua River in the region of today’s Hegang City 鶴崗市.

¹²⁵ *Jinshi* 1.13. The description given of these men of Liao is too vague to identify exactly who they were. The text refers to them with a very literal designation of “those envoys of Liao who capture falcons” 遼捕鷹使者.

warriors of Yingge entered one of the walled settlements under heavy arrow bombardment and rescued the few Liao envoys who were still alive within. This incident exemplifies that when it suited their needs the Anchuhu were receptive to Liao demands and were willing to wage war on the empire's behalf.

However, the timing of this incident may also have been a factor in the ready cooperation of the Anchuhu. Remember, it was during this time that their enemy, Ashu was dwelling within Liao territory and vehemently calling for redress against Anchuhu aggression against his people. The fact that Ashu eventually succeeded in pressuring the Liao to send an envoy to the Xingxian River to force the withdrawal of the Anchuhu soldiers there indicates that Liao sympathies may have been swinging away from the Wanyan *jiedushi*. When the putting down of the rebellion of the Taowen and Tulonggu Heshilie is seen within context of the existing hostilities against Ashu and his successful petitions to the Liao, it is possible that Yingge was eager to prove that his clan was still vital to the empire. In that light, the attack on the rebellious Heshilie and the forceful reopening of the Falcon Road was an opportune moment for the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition to prove their worth and reinforce their image as loyal enforcers of the Liao.

Diplomacy through Guile and Misdirection: Siege of Ashu's Town

In 1100, Ashu's requests for assistance were finally granted and the Liao dispatched an envoy to the Anchuhu Wanyan to negotiate a truce on his behalf. The purpose of the envoy was to put a stop to the hostilities between the two groups and force a withdrawal of Yingge's soldiers from around Ashu's Town. Yingge was understandably concerned with

this action and was forced to find some way to assuage the reproach of the Liao ambassador without completely giving in to imperial demands. It was in exactly these types of situations that the particular frontier strategy of the Anchuhu Wanyan was made manifest. They were not completely part of the Liao Empire, but neither were they completely outside of it. If Yingge acquiesced to Liao demands regarding the treatment of other wild Jurchen groups, then the authority of the Anchuhu Wanyan would have surely been tarnished. Conversely, if they refused to cooperate with the wishes of the empire, then they risked being seen as a potential threat to perceived Liao hegemony in the region. Either position was dangerous to the Coalition, who even at the time of Yingge, only a decade or so prior to Aguda's proclamation of a new dynastic empire, did not feel prepared to openly stand against the might of the Kitan Empire.¹²⁶

Yingge received advance warning that a Liao envoy was on the way, and thus made preparations for his arrival. When the Liao envoy approached the lands of the Anchuhu, Yingge assigned Hulu 胡魯 *bojin* of the Pucha tribe and the *bojin* Miaoxun 邈遜 to escort the Liao envoy to the Xingxian River and Ashu's Town. The small party traveled by horse and eventually arrived at Ashu's Town where they were met with a most unusual reception. Prior to the arrival of the Liao envoy, Yingge had sent word to Hezhe, the commander of the Coalition forces laying siege to Ashu's Town. In his message he instructed Hezhe to trade out the uniforms and banners of the Coalition troops to match those of the defenders of

¹²⁶ This point is supported by Yingge's later decision to refuse the offer of alliance extended to him by the Kitan rebel, Xiao Haili, to make a joint-assault against the Liao.

Ashu's Town. Furthermore, he told Hezhe to ignore all of the envoy's efforts to halt the attack and to attempt to mislead him with this alternate strategy.¹²⁷

Thus, when the Liao envoy arrived with his escorts he was met with what appeared to be a united force of warriors of one clan, in formation both within and outside of the town's fortifications. To make matters worse, Hezhe (presumably dressed in the colors of Ashu's clan) confronted the Liao envoy and his escorts saying, "If I and my people fight against each other, what is it to you?! Who recognizes [the authority] of your *taishi*? 吾等自相攻,干汝何事,誰識汝之太師"¹²⁸ After saying these words, the disguised Hezhe drew his sword and fatally stabbed the horses that the Wanyan escorts, Hulu and Miaoxun, were riding upon. The Liao envoy was terrified by this turn of events and fled the scene on foot, ending any chance that the defenders of Ashu's Town had of escaping the siege of the Coalition warriors through the diplomatic intervention of the Liao representative. Shortly after his encounter with the envoy, Hezhe's forces sacked the settlement, killing and capturing a large number of Ashu's clansmen. Among the casualties of Ashu's Town was Ashu's brother, Digubao, who had at some point during the siege returned from the lands of the Liao and was captured and killed while trying to return to his people.¹²⁹

Looking again at these events from the Liao envoy's perspective, it is no wonder that he was frightened by his experiences outside of Ashu's Town. If we assume that the envoy did not recognize Hezhe as a man under the command of Yingge, then the situation appeared

¹²⁷ *Jinshi* 1.15. From this passage we can also assume that the pre-imperial Jurchen utilized colored banners and/or distinctive dress to differentiate themselves from each other.

¹²⁸ *Jinshi* 67.1586. The term *taishi* 太師 was supposedly the Liao designation for the position of *jiedushi*., and in this particular case referred to the current *jiedushi* of the Wild Jurchen, Yingge. *Taishi* is usually translated as "Grand Preceptor."

¹²⁹ It is possible that Digubao was returning to Ashu's Town with the expectation that the Liao envoy had succeeded in dispersing the siege, not knowing that the town was still held by enemy forces.

to be one in which the Anchuhu Wanyan were not even involved. He had made the hard journey to Ashu's Town in order to prevent the Anchuhu Wanyan from continuing to attack Ashu's Heshilie clan. But with the uniforms and banners swapped out to match those of the defenders, the envoy was unable to identify who it was he supposed to be reprimanding. Also, Hezhe's angry words made it seem that the people he was supposedly there to help (the inhabitants of Ashu's Town) were angry at his intervention and didn't want his assistance. Moreover, those he was there to supposedly protect from the Anchuhu Wanyan openly attacked him by drawing swords and slaying horses. How could he accomplish what he was commanded to do when the situation seemed so far removed from what he was lead to believe? On top of that, he may have feared that by arriving in the company of *bojin* who were united with the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition, the people of Ashu's Town may have mistakenly thought he was on their (the Anchuhu's) side of the conflict.

The fate of the frightened Liao envoy is unknown, but word of his failure eventually reached Ashu who was still residing within the protective custody of the empire. Hearing that Yingge had somehow duped the Liao emissary and broken through the defenses of his home, Ashu continued his petitions to the empire for justice. In answer to Ashu's pleas, and also likely in response to the previous debacle of their first envoy, the Liao sent another representative of the throne to the lands of the Anchuhu Wanyan. However, this second emissary was not a standard official of the empire, but was himself a high ranking tribal leader within the Liao imperial system. His name was Yilie 乙烈, and he was neither Kitan, Bohai, nor Jurchen. Yilie held the position of *jiedushi* over the subject Xi 奚 people of the empire.

The Xi people have largely been forgotten as a distinct group within the history of East Asia. The Chinese historical record classifies them as distant relatives of the Kitan, both of whom were supposedly descendents of the Xianbei 鮮卑 who had dominated the northeast beginning in the second century AD. During the Tang Empire the Xi were located in western Liaoning and like the Bohai and Jurchen, their economy was more agricultural than pastoral. With the rise and expansion of the Kitan-Liao Dynasty, the Xi were absorbed into the state. At first, the Xi retained their own kings and paid tribute (not taxes) to the Kitan Emperor, but by the turn of the 11th century the Xi king had become a salaried official within the Liao bureaucracy. In the late 990's the Kitan rulers established a Chinese-style administration over all Xi territories, and in 1006, the existing Xi capital city was appropriated and designated as the new Central Capital of the Liao Empire.¹³⁰ The city was dominated primarily by Chinese and Xi inhabitants and became a center for receiving foreign ambassadors from the south. By the time that Yilie was sent to the lands of Yingge, the Xi were nearly fully incorporated into the Liao Empire but still retained some forms of tribal organization.¹³¹

Yingge heard of Yilie's approach and met him at a village called Xinghe 興和村 located along the Lailiu River. Whatever the reason behind the Liao choice to send Yilie to confront the Anchuhu Wanyan, the effect he had on Yingge's behavior suggests that he was held in much higher regard by the Jurchen than was the previous envoy. Yilie inquired about the situation involving Ashu's Town, and commanded (*ming* 命) Yingge to return all of those

¹³⁰The Liao Central Capital (*zhongjing* 中京) in no way intimates that this city was the hub or imperial seat of the Liao Dynasty. Its designation as "central" was done mainly to differentiate it from the other capital cities of the empire: Supreme, Eastern, Western, and Southern.

¹³¹ For a brief description of the Xi and their incorporation into the Liao Empire see CHC vol. 6, 97-98.

captured in the fighting to their homes and to provide full compensation (*beichang* 備償) [to the families] of those who were killed.¹³² On top of these commands, Yilie also made a request for several hundred horses. Clearly, the interaction (and demands) between the two *jiedushi* was on a different level than the previous interactions with the earlier Liao official. The fact that Yilie could presume to command Yingge while standing within Jurchen territory speaks much to the Xi leader's power within the northeast. As for the several hundred horses he requested, two scenarios seem the most likely. The first is that the horses may have been requested as a payment of tribute to the empire; a tribute that would have been perceived as a required token of loyalty.¹³³ The second possibility is that the request was of a more personal nature, and one in which Yilie himself hoped to profit from his journey into the lands of the wild Jurchen.

At this time, the Jurchen were the owners of massive herds of horses. Again, while they were not pastoral nomads like the Kitan they too shared in the prevalent horse culture of the Eurasian steppe. Evidence of the rise of horse husbandry among the Jurchen can be dated to around the year 960.¹³⁴ Prior to that time, Jurchen tribute to the court of the Liao Dynasty was in the form of forest goods like wax, honey, and furs. However, by the 980s horses were in abundance among the Jurchen. For example, following a Liao punitive expedition in 985-86 against a Jurchen group (unspecified in the records), over 200,000 horses were

¹³² *Jinshi* 1.14.

¹³³ According to the discussion of tribute and the charts of tribute found in Wittfogel and Feng, *Liao*, 317-25, the "Jurchen" had not presented tribute since 1095, five to six years prior to the arrival of Yilie at Xinghe Village. However, the information contained in the *Liaoshi* regarding tribute and as represented on Wittfogel and Feng's chart must not be taken as a complete listing of all tribute received. Also, the tribute presented by various Jurchen groups was usually recorded without regard to their specific tribe or region. Thus, what is recorded as "Jurchen" tribute masks the details concerning which Jurchen group in particular had presented tribute.

¹³⁴ Jing-shen Tao, "The Horse and the Rise of the Chin Dynasty," *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters* 53(1968): 187.

captured.¹³⁵ Thus from the late 10th century on, nearly all Jurchen tribute to the Liao was in the form of horses. This increased demand for horses likely spurred the market for horses to greater heights. By the time of Yingge's reign, horses were an integral part of Jurchen economy and culture.¹³⁶ It is very likely that the large number of tribute horses supplied by groups like the Jurchen were the reason for the massive herds kept by the Kitans. The official history of the Liao records that by 1101, within a year of Yilie's visit to the wild Jurchen, there were several tens of thousands of herds within the Liao Empire.¹³⁷ Given that each herd is described as having no less than one thousand head each, the number of horses within the empire could have easily exceeded 50 million.

Yingge's response to Yilie's commands was to stall negotiations at Xinghe village while he organized a way to escape the direct demands of the empire. The Xi leader, Yilie seemed a much more formidable force than the first Liao envoy and to deny him directly would undoubtedly be perceived as a minor act of rebellion against the throne. The Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition had become a very strong force in the northeast, but Yingge was not yet ready to defy the Liao directly. When Yingge had previously been in this type of position—at the receiving end of political pressure to the expansion or to reverse the actions of the coalition against Ashu's followers—he had been called upon by the Liao to put down a rebellion of the Heshilie of the Taowen and Tulonggu Rivers who had committed the cardinal sin of blocking the Falcon Road. And through his service to the empire he had

¹³⁵ *Liaoshi* 11.1.

¹³⁶ One example of the prominent horse culture and significance that horses held to the pre-imperial Jurchen can be seen in the story of Huannan and Sanda's rebellion. In response to Helibo's proposal of a peaceful reconciliation, the two brothers demanded the legendary horses then belonging to Cibushi and Yingge as payment for peace. Helibo denied their demands and thus chose war.

¹³⁷ *Liaoshi* 60.932.

effectively assuaged Liao antagonism against his attacks on Ashu. Yet, this time around, there was no convenient rebellion for him to put down as a way to demonstrate his loyalty to the state. So, in order to remedy this lack of a distant rebellion, Yingge fabricated one.

Yingge sent a directive to the people living along the Zhuwei 主隈 and Tuda 禿答 Rivers ordering them to obstruct (*zujue* 阻絕) the Falcon Road. It is assumed that these rivers were proximate to each other although only the Zhuwei River has been identified on any historical maps.¹³⁸ The most important factor in their location was that they were near to the lands of the Five Nations and therefore beyond the normal reach of Liao forces. He then dispatched the *jiedushi* of the Biegude 鼈故德部 to inform the Liao that unless they sent Yingge to remedy the situation the Falcon Road would remain closed.¹³⁹ Hearing that the Falcon Road was blocked and that Yingge was seen as the only man capable of reopening the route, the Liao ordered Yingge to immediately travel to the area and put down the rebellion; an order which Yingge was all too happy to oblige. The matter of Ashu's Town and reparations for the victims were forgotten when Yingge, in the name of the Liao emperor, left the village of Xinghe and his negotiations with Yilie in order to enforce imperial policy beyond the imperial borders. Yilie, as *jiedushi* of the Xi people, presumably returned to his own lands. Whether he ever received the horses he requested from the Anchuhu Wanyan is left unknown. Meanwhile, Yingge ventured forth and spread the word that he had successfully put down the rebellious tribes and reopened the Falcon Road. In truth, he

¹³⁸ The Zhuwei River was located just south of today's Jiayin city 嘉蔭 and was a small tributary of the Heilong Jiang.

¹³⁹ The Bie'gude were presumably a tribal group near, if not one of, the Five Nations. The fact that they were led by their own *jiedushi* suggests that they were not considered Jurchens but were familiar to the Liao and integrated into the frontier system in a way similar to that of the wild Jurchen.

traveled to the Tuwen River 土溫水 and did some hunting before returning to his home along the Anchuhu.¹⁴⁰

Through this type of deception and political misdirection (both the false rebellion and the incident of the army disguising themselves in the enemy's colors), the Anchuhu Wanyan under Yingge were able to continue their aggressive expansion in the northeast without direct interference from the Liao. Individual Jurchen leaders, like Ashu, obviously retained the privilege of bypassing their regional leaders (in this case, Yingge as *jiedushi* over all the wild Jurchen) and were allowed to contact the empire directly. Given the pressure that Ashu was able to exert on the Anchuhu Wanyan, the empire may have, to some extent, expected and relied upon the involvement of such individuals as a way to keep a check on any one group growing too powerful. Certainly the activities of the Anchuhu Wanyan were not entirely overlooked by the Liao; some may have seen through the various ruses initiated by Yingge and his family. Yet, even if we give the empire the benefit of the doubt and assume that the Wanyan were seen early on as a potential threat to Liao hegemony in the northeast, the physical, political, and cultural distances involved would have made it near impossible to allow them the ability to follow up on their suspicions. Not to mention the fact that Yingge knew exactly where to squeeze when applying pressure to the Liao: the Falcon Road and the trade/tribute arriving from the distant Five Nations region.

This ability to control trade, information, and populations along the frontier was at the heart of Jurchen political control under the Anchuhu Wanyan for generations prior to the establishment of the Jin Dynasty. By making themselves integral to the management of the

¹⁴⁰ The Tuwen River is today's Tangwang River 湯旺 located in Yichun city administrative district 伊春市轄區.

frontier and lands beyond, the Anchuhu Wanyan expanded their hegemony over the northeast with the sanction and assistance of the Liao. Indeed, after Yingge “put down” the fictitious rebellion along the Zhuwei and Tuda Rivers the Liao sent another envoy to Yingge to congratulate him on his victory and to present gifts to those who had fought to reopen the Falcon Roads.¹⁴¹ The following year, in 1102, Yingge ordered that the gifts from the Liao be given to the inhabitants of the Zhuwei and Tuda Rivers, with some of the money being used to actually repair (*xiu* 修) the Falcon Road.¹⁴² Afterall, they were the ones who had gone through the effort of pretending to rebel. It was through such actions that the Anchuhu Wanyan were able to assert their local hegemony and attract more and more followers.

Rebellion of Xiao Haili

The reputation of Yingge and the Wanyan Coalition was not limited to the lands outside the Liao borders. Within the empire there were those who recognized that Yingge led a powerful force that had the potential to defy the dominance of the Liao in the northeast. Among the high Kitan officers over the northeastern garrisons was an official named Xiao Haili 蕭海里.¹⁴³ Haili was a very likely a member of the royal Xiao clan of the Kitan Empire; the marriage allies of the imperial Yelu clan, and descendants of the great qaghans of the once mighty Uighur Empire (744-840). In the year 1102, Xiao Haili rebelled against the Liao Empire and led soldiers in an attack on the armory of Qian Prefecture (*qianzhou* 乾州)

¹⁴¹ *Jinshi* 1.14.

¹⁴² *Jinshi* 1.15. The reference here to the Falcon Road being repaired is another indication that the Falcon Road may have very well been a prominent route through the forests and valleys.

¹⁴³ Wittfogel and Feng, *Liao*, 569 n65. This Xiao Haili should not be confused with the imperial son-in-law of the same name who had married the notable Kitan princess, Yanmujin 獻母堊. Yanmujin was the second daughter of the Empress Qin'ai 欽哀皇后 and Liao Shengzong (r.982-1031) and was married four times.

and plundered it of weapons and armor.¹⁴⁴ Armed and in open rebellion against the empire, the army of Xiao Haili sought refuge within the arms of potential allies in their fight against the Liao. In a telling move, Xiao Haili led his forces to the lands of the Jurchens and began efforts to sway as many clans as he could over to his side of the conflict.

The records indicate that Xiao Haili and his forces found refuge along the Peizhu River 陪肅水 among a Jurchen clan known as the Adian 阿典.¹⁴⁵ The Adian Jurchen were not like the wild Jurchen of Yingge and the other clans within the coalition, but were instead listed as Xi'an 係案 Jurchen; Xi'an meaning “the registered” Jurchen.¹⁴⁶ In other words, the Adian were considered among the “civilized” or “neither civilized nor wild” Jurchen clans along the Liao frontier. Whatever contact or agreement he had established with the Adian, the fact that he resided there while in open rebellion to the Liao Emperor indicates that even these registered Jurchen groups were considered outside the normal scope of direct Liao supervision. At the same time, their status as a registered population within the empire might have made them a more comfortable or “known” destination to Haili and his rebel army, than the alternatives of deeper penetration into the areas of Yingge’s realm. For the reputation of Yingge and the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition was known to Xiao Haili, and because of this Yingge was among the first to be contacted by the rebel Kitan official.

During Xiao Haili’s time among the Adian Jurchen, he actively pursued an alliance of peace and cooperation with Yingge and the Wanyan Coalition. He chose one of his kinsmen,

¹⁴⁴ Qian Prefecture was located within today’s Beizhen County 北鎮縣, Liaoning.

¹⁴⁵ *Liaoshi* 27.319; *Jinshi* 1.15. The Peizhu River was presumably a tributary of the Liao River and located within the northern part of modern Liaoning. As for the Adian clan, we have little information beyond the fact that they are listed as one of the many recognized Jurchen clans and that the name itself was understood to mean “thunder” in the Jurchen language (see the Jurchen glossary as contained in the final section of the *Jinshi*, listed as *Jinguo yujie* 金國語解.2896).

¹⁴⁶ Franke, “Chinese Texts on the Jurchen II,” 449 n.128.

named Wodala 斡達刺, to carry the message to Yingge saying: “I desire to become friends with the *taishi* (Yingge), and together we can attack the Liao. 願與太師為友, 同往伐遼”¹⁴⁷

Unfortunately for Haili (though more so for his relative Wodala) Yingge did not want to tie his fortunes to the rebel official, and so seized Wodala and handed him over to the Liao authorities. Meanwhile, the Liao had been scrambling to capture Haili, but had been unable to do so. The man first sent to capture the rebel was a Kitan *linya* named Hejia’nu 郝家奴 who failed to capture and arrest Haili before the rebel escaped to the lands of the Jurchens.¹⁴⁸

Upon hearing that Xiao Haili was contacting Yingge, the Liao ordered Yingge to arrest and suppress (*butao* 捕討) the rebel, while simultaneously sending a contingent of Liao troops to pursue the same ends. In accordance with the Liao command, Yingge set about to increase the size of his army and collect arms and armor to better combat the newly well-equipped soldiers under Xiao Haili. The *Jinshi* records that Yingge was able to collect over one thousand suits of armor and was thus able to field the largest army ever assembled under the banner of the Wanyan clan.¹⁴⁹

It was during this time that a significant portion of Liao forces in the area were defeated by a portion of Xiao Haili’s army after the former were drawn into a pursuit of a few thousand of the rebel troops. After witnessing the Liao defeat, Yingge spoke to the Kitan commander and told him to withdraw his forces and allow his Jurchen soldiers to engage the rebel forces and capture Xiao Haili. Whether it was because of his own recent

¹⁴⁷ *Jinshi* 1.15.

¹⁴⁸ *Liaoshi* 27.319. As mentioned in chapter one, a *linya* 林牙 was the Kitan equivalent to the traditional Chinese title Hanlin 翰林. It usually signified a position of high scholarly status, but it was also occasionally given to military commanders.

¹⁴⁹ The exact size of this Jurchen force is not recorded, but it was the first time that the armored component of the Wanyan army numbered over a thousand.

defeat, or perhaps because the idea of these auxiliary Jurchen warriors being the ones to fall to Haili's army was more appealing than more casualties among his own men, the Liao commander agreed to give Yingge's forces room to attack.¹⁵⁰ The battle narrative contained in the record is very brief and seems to be aimed at lionizing the actions of the later successors to Yingge: the two sons of Helibo, the brothers Wuyashu and Aguda. It is said that Aguda whipped his horse forward to attack Haili's army after which the rebel leader was struck in the head with a stray arrow and fell from his horse, before he was captured and killed. Also, Wuyashu is said to have been the first of the Wanyan warriors to climb the enemy fortifications.¹⁵¹

Despite the murky details surrounding the battle, its results had massive ramifications for the Wanyan Coalition. The rebel official, Xiao Haili, was defeated and killed by the largest Jurchen force ever assembled under the Anchuhu Wanyan. His head was removed and presented as tribute to the Liao Emperor.¹⁵² As a reward for his service, Yingge was received by the Liao emperor's court at a place referred to only as "the fishing place" (*yusuo* 漁所), where he was presented with elaborate gifts and granted the additional title of

¹⁵⁰ Of course there are numerous alternate motivations that may have played a part in this decision to withdraw and let the Jurchen move against the rebel forces. Not least of which may have been the obvious familiarity of terrain that the Jurchen warriors possessed over their Liao allies.

¹⁵¹ The text is rather ambiguous regarding Wuyashu's supposedly heroic scaling of enemy fortifications. The reference in full reports only that "Kangzong (posthumous name for Wuyashu) was the very first to climb 康宗最先登." There is no mention of what type of structure he successfully climbed and thus we are left to presume that it was some sort of wooden fortification used commonly by the Jurchen during this time similar to those mentioned in other passages of the *Jinshi* record.

¹⁵² *Jinshi* 1.15; *Liaoshi* 70.1125. Interestingly, in this instance, the *Liaoshi* refers to the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition as the "Jurchen State" (*nüzhì guó* 女直國) despite that name having already been given to a separate Jurchen polity that existed closer to the Liao borders, possibly just outside of Xian Prefecture, and was ruled over by a sanctioned "Obedient and Transformative King" or Shunhua Wang 順化王 since at least 990. In 1113, Aguda would come into conflict with the ruler of this earlier "Jurchen State" who by that time was accorded only the title of Great King (*dawang* 大王). See *Liaoshi* 46.756.

shixiang 使相.¹⁵³ Early the following year, the Liao dispatched envoys to the Anchuhu to present gifts and offices to those who had distinguished themselves in the battle.

In addition to the actual victory over Haili's forces, the Wanyan had another reason to celebrate and reflect on their accomplishment. In this battle, not only were the Jurchen outnumbered by their enemy but they were able to succeed where the Liao army had failed. In decades previous, the Anchuhu Wanyan had followed a policy of preventing Liao forces from ever entering Jurchen territory by doing their work for them as imperial enforcers. By keeping the Liao out of the distant northeast, the Anchuhu Wanyan were able to establish their own regional authority over the population. Yet, by so doing, the Wanyan Coalition were never put in a position to directly compare their military strength with that of the Liao Empire. The early direction of expansion away from the borders of the Liao signify that for many years the Anchuhu Wanyan had no desire to openly clash with the Liao military machine. It was not until the reign of Yingge that the Coalition began to expand southward in earnest toward the more supervised lands adjacent to the regular garrisons of the Liao and Goryeo states, and in so doing placed them in a position to observe and compare their relative military strength.

The suppression of Xiao Haili's rebellion showed the Jurchen that their military could compete on a level with that of the Liao. Additionally, the Jurchen warriors were able to witness the martial proficiency of imperial soldiers on an individual level, something that

¹⁵³ *Jinshi* 1.15. The title of *shixiang* was not meant to replace Yingge's existing position as the *jiedushi* of the Wild Jurchen, but was an additional office and position bestowed on him to recognize his role in defeating Xiao Haili. The title itself denoted an official who held concurrent military and civil ranks. The military rank of a *shixiang* was equivalent to that of a commanding prefect or chancellor, while the civilian rank equaled that of a prime minister. See Wittfogel & Feng, 232n.41; Hucker, 425. It is possible that this "fishing place" was the same location used for an imperial fishing trip in 1112, during which Aguda refused to dance at the command of Tianzuo. If this is the case, then the place referred to here may have been within Ningjiang Prefecture.

may have helped dispel any form of mystique that the empire's soldiers may have retained among the Jurchen clans.¹⁵⁴ It should be remembered that in only a little over a decade following the Wanyan victory over Xiao Haili and the corresponding evaluation of the Liao military as somewhat lacking, the Anchuhu Wanyan defiantly declared themselves the rulers of a new dynastic empire and stood their ground against the full force of the Liao Emperor and his armies.

Establishing an international presence: Early relations between Goryeo and the Jurchen

By the reign of Yingge, the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition were established enough to begin stepping out of the Liao imperial shadow to interact with kings and emperors beyond their corner of the northeast. The Coalition's expansion into the south would likely not have been successful if not for the types of frontier strategy and political machinations of coalition leaders like Polashu and Yingge. There was much more to their power base than merely their role as Liao enforcers. After decades of war and diplomacy, they had successfully swept control of the northeast away from the Kitan state. Under Yingge, the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition made their first independent contacts with the kingdom of Goryeo located on the Korean Peninsula. Goryeo was the first large political entity that the Wanyan-led Jurchen were able to approach on their own terms, and not as a theoretically subject population.

¹⁵⁴ The capture of Xiao Haili was later touted as evidence of Jurchen martial superiority over the Liao. Wuyashu's oldest son, Moulianghu 謀良虎 (aka Zongxiong 宗雄) brought up the Liao's inability to capture Haili when discussing with Aguda about early battle plans against the empire. See *Jinshi* 73.1679.

The relationship between the kingdoms of the Korean peninsula and the inhabitants of the lands to their north was historically very close. As mentioned in chapter one, the northeastern state of Bohai (698-926) was originally founded by political refugees from the peninsula-based state of Goguryeo along with the ruling families of the Sumo Mohe. During its two hundred plus years of existence, the state of Bohai held close contacts with its southern neighbors within the peninsula while at the same time dominating contact between the more distant northern tribes (most notably the Heishui Mohe inhabiting the Songhua River valleys) and those states. When the Kitan ruler Abaoji invaded and conquered the state of Bohai in 926, the inhabitants of the Korean peninsula were in no position to help defend their northern neighbor. Only a couple decades prior to the conquest and dismantling of Bohai, the Korean empire of Silla, which had previously unified the entire peninsula, was fractured into three separate regimes. Thus, when the Kitan invaded Bohai, the states of the peninsula were more concerned with conflict within the peninsula as opposed to what was happening to their north. The fighting within the peninsula did not stop until 936 when the kingdom of Goryeo (918-1392) rose to dominance over its rivals. But by that time Bohai had been shattered and its population had either fled south into the lands of the peninsula or been forcibly relocated into the Liao territory of Liaodong.¹⁵⁵

With the destruction of Bohai, the many tribes and groups north of the Korean peninsula were able to carve out their own political niche within the region. Again, the fall of Bohai was a crucial precursor to the rise of the many smaller Jurchen polities such as the later coalition of clans led by the Anchuhu Wanyan. These many Jurchen groups are

¹⁵⁵ *Liaoshi* 75.1238.

glimpsed fleetingly within the historical records of Liao, Song, and Goryeo, and contribute to the misconception that the Jurchen were a homogenous or politically unified group for centuries prior to the establishment of the Jurchen-Jin Dynasty.¹⁵⁶ For example, the Song Dynasty recorded that the first Jurchen ambassadors arrived at their court in the year 961, and hailed from the Jurchen State (*nüzhī guó* 女直國).¹⁵⁷ It is impossible to know if this Jurchen State was the same Jurchen State (also *nüzhī guó* 女直國) mentioned in the *Liaoshi* as having requested an official title in the year 977, but the relative proximity in dates suggests it is likely.¹⁵⁸ However, this title of “Jurchen State” was also used over a century later by the Liao to refer to the Anchuhu Wanyan when they presented the head of the rebel, Xiao Haili, in 1103. Clearly, the title of “Jurchen State” was never meant to identify any particular Jurchen polity over and above any others. But was likely used (by both sides) as a way to simplify their position as a polity based within the geographic and cultural milieu recognized as “Jurchen.” It is likely that the majority of Jurchen groups that were engaged in such missions of international diplomacy, especially in the years prior to the rise of the distant Anchuhu Wanyan, were those located in proximity to imperial borders or open waterways.¹⁵⁹ Thus, it is my assumption that these early Jurchen envoys hailed primarily from the “civilized” (cooked, *shou* 熟) Jurchen who dwelt within the sphere of Liao control within the

¹⁵⁶ The ambiguity of the historical record in recording where specific Jurchen envoys hailed from is the root of the confusion among scholars regarding the pre-imperial Jurchen.

¹⁵⁷ *Songshi* 宋史 1.10.

¹⁵⁸ *Liaoshi* 46.756.

¹⁵⁹ The earliest Jurchen envoys to the Song court presented gifts of horses to the empire and were thereafter labeled as a potential source for the valuable animals. These Jurchen ambassadors to Song arrived there after traversing the short distance across the Yellow Sea from the Liaodong to Shandong peninsulas. Having access to the ocean would allow such a group to bypass the Liao and Goryeo states that would have otherwise limited contact to the more southern state of Song.

region of Liaodong, and were not the more remote “wild” Jurchen groups of the Songhua River system.

The kingdom of Goryeo was able to survive completely independent from the Liao Empire until the 990s when the Liao invaded the northern portion of the state and demanded that the kingdom submit and become a vassal, or tributary, state.¹⁶⁰ It is believed that one of the main motivations for this invasion was the increasingly close contacts between Goryeo, the Jurchen groups of Liaodong, and the great enemy to the Kitan state: the Song Dynasty. In fact, after compelling Goryeo to submit to Liao suzerainty, the Liao Empire set out to prevent precisely the types of diplomatic missions mentioned above between Jurchen groups and the Song.¹⁶¹ However, Liao control over Goryeo and the subject populations of the northeast was never absolute and there were many rebellions and wars still fought within the region.¹⁶² By the turn of the 11th century, Liao control in the northeast was fading as they relied more and more on groups like the Wanyan Coalition.¹⁶³

As for the relationship between Goryeo and the Jurchen groups living to its north during the decades prior to the founding of the Jurchen-Jin Dynasty, the description contained in the *Goryeo sa*, or *Official History of Goryeo* speaks of these Jurchens as

¹⁶⁰ The role of Jurchen groups within the relationship between Liao and Goryeo is complicated. In some cases the Jurchen allied with Goryeo and at other times they allied with the Liao. Again, the diversity among the Jurchen themselves surely contributed to their perceived capriciousness in times of war and conflict.

¹⁶¹ Tao, *Jurchen in Twelfth-Century China*, 15.

¹⁶² For example: the punitive war with Goryeo from 1011-1019 following a military coup within Goryeo resulting in the murder of the former king; or the Bohai rebellion of 1029 during which a Bohai general usurped power and declared himself emperor of a new, and very short lived dynasty. See Denis Twitchett and Klaus-Peter Tietze, “The Liao,” *Alien Regimes and Border States, 907-1368*, *The Cambridge History of China*, vol.6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 111-114.

¹⁶³ This type of fluctuating presence of Liao power over Goryeo and the surrounding territory is mentioned in Michael C. Rogers, “The Regularization of Koryŏ-Chin Relations (1116-1131),” *Central Asiatic Journal* 6, no. 1 (1961): 54.

alternating between presenting tribute and attacking frontier settlements.¹⁶⁴ Additionally, many of these Jurchen groups also courted a sporadic allegiance to the more distant Liao Empire. Probably the most significant rationale behind this supposed on-again, off-again relationship with the Jurchens living just north of the peninsula is due once again to the illusory homogeneity of the Jurchen people. Each clan was ruled independently of the others, and unless a given clan entered into a larger alliance or coalition of clans (as seen in the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition) each group acted on its own initiative and political agenda with some desiring to ally with their strong southern neighbor and others seeking to remain independent.

In the 10th century, Goryeo's northern border was located just south of the region referred to in the sources as Helan Dian 曷懶甸.¹⁶⁵ The size and extent of Helan Dian has been the subject of minor debate among scholars with some believing that the region extended north from the Hamheung 咸興 region of today's North Korea all the way to the Qidouman River 起豆滿江 (mod. Tumen River 圖們江). However, Jiang Xiusong has put forth that Helan Dian was likely a relatively small region limited primarily to the lands just north of the Hamheung area of North Korea and well south of the Qidouman.¹⁶⁶ In addition to textual evidence, Jiang points out that Helan Dian was likely of a size comparable to the other "Dian" 甸 mentioned in the *Jinshi* narrative (i.e. Guli Dian 故里甸, Bei'ai Dian 北隘甸, etc.) all of which were clearly understood to be regions much smaller than that proposed

¹⁶⁴ The frequency and numbers of Jurchen envoys presenting themselves to the Goryeo court, as recorded in the *Goryeo sa* 高麗史 are too numerous to mention. Suffice it to say that throughout Goryeo's history there was a steady contact between the Goryeo court and their neighbors to the north.

¹⁶⁵ *Jinshi* 2.33.

¹⁶⁶ Jiang Xiusong 蒋秀松, "Nüzhen yu Gaoli jian de 'Helan Dian zhi zhan' 女真与高丽间的'曷懶甸之战,'" *民族研究*, no.1 (1994), 84.

for Helan Dian by previous scholars. Yet, despite the more limited size of Helan Dian, there seems to have been a large concentration of Jurchen inhabitants settled there.

In order to identify who these Helan Dian Jurchen were, we must rely on the various historical records of Liao, Goryeo, Jin, and even Song governments. Again, because of the ambiguity and inconsistency within the sources regarding the names and origin of Jurchen groups we are forced to construct a plausible identity of them through correlating features of the records. For example, the *Liaoshi* records a Jurchen group called the Changbai Shan 長白山, or Long White Mountain, hailing from what is today the Changbai Mountain range. Meanwhile, the *Goryeo sa* does not mention a Jurchen group claiming that name, but instead refers to the Jurchen as being either “Eastern” or “Western.” Due to the facts that 1) the Changbai Mountains are located within the territory immediately north of the Goryeo border and that 2) both the Changbai Jurchen of the *Liaoshi* and the Eastern Jurchen of the *Goryeo sa* are said to have each been composed of thirty separate clans (*bu* 部), we are open to assume that the Chang Bai Jurchen of the *Liaoshi* and the Eastern Jurchen of the *Goryeo sa* were one and the same.¹⁶⁷ Such inductive arguments are by no means indisputable, but they serve to provide a measure of coherence into what would otherwise be an even more disjointed historical landscape of people and relationships.

¹⁶⁷ Jiang, “Nüzhen yu Gaoli,” 85. It should be noted that scholar Dong Wan has put forth that the founding ancestor of the imperial Wanyan line, Hanpu, had possibly emigrated into Wanyan territory from an original home among the Changbai Jurchen. Dong goes further to suggest that the Jurchen groups living within the Helan Dian were branches of these Eastern Jurchen and therefore kinsmen of the royal line of the Anchuhu Wayan (Hanpu's descendents). Such a connection is not improbable, but in this author's opinion goes beyond the mark and assumes too close an association between individual Helan Dian groups, as well as connections between the Helan Dian region and the Anchuhu River valley. See Dong Wan 董万, “Wanyan nüzhen faxiang 完顏女真發祥,” 64-66.

Even assuming that the Changbai Jurchen of the *Liaoshi* and the Eastern Jurchen of the *Goryeo sa* were composed of the same Jurchen clans and lineages, we are still left with a picture of a very fragmented political landscape within Jurchen lands. Among the many recorded visits of Jurchen representatives to the Goryeo court, there is a visit from an Eastern Jurchen man named Oeuldal 烏乙達 who along with 144 other men and women arrived in Goryeo in 1044. Oeuldal desired to present tribute and submit to the authority of the throne.¹⁶⁸ However, unlike the majority of other embassies recorded within the *Goryeo sa* (of which there are many) the words of Oeuldal (or something reflecting his original words) to the Goryeo King were recorded within the official history. After presenting a number of fine horses (*sunma* 駿馬) to the throne as tribute he supposedly said:

“We reside within the borders of your precious state. We have been transformed and made subject [to you] for many years. Every time we worry of vile bandits coming to raid us, they do not capture us because of the three walled settlements that have been ordered built in order to defend against bandits along the roads. Thus, we have come to your court to express our great thanks for the king’s excellent gifts.

我等在貴國之境，慕化臣服有年矣。每慮醜虜來侵，未獲奠居，令築三城以防賊路。故來朝謝恩王優賞。”¹⁶⁹

Here we have reference to a group of Eastern Jurchens relying on the garrisons of Goryeo to defend themselves from other groups, presumably other Jurchen clans. Clearly, the statement given as “we reside within the borders” reflects that at least one of the two

¹⁶⁸ As mentioned above, the fact that a Jurchen leader would present himself at court and desire to present tribute to the Goryeo court was not an unusual occurrence.

¹⁶⁹ *Goryeo sa* 高麗史, *juan* 卷 6.33.138 (Seoul: Asea Muhwasa 亞細亞文化社, 1972). Jiang Xiusong believes that the “three walled settlements” (*cheng* 城) mentioned in this passage refer to the three Goryeo settlements of Jeong-ju 定州, Jang-ju 長川, and Wonheung-jin 元興鎮; each of which were arrayed along the then northern border of the state. See Jiang, “Nüzhen yu Gaoli,” 86.

parties involved (be it the actual Jurchen representative or the scribes of the Goryeo court) saw these people as living well within the boundaries of the Goryeo state. Whether that was actually the case is somewhat irrelevant to the perceived reality that at least some portion of the Eastern Jurchen were subjects of the Goryeo king. The fact that there were Jurchen clans living so close to Goryeo settlements also shows that there was no hard border between Goryeo and Jurchen lands. Therefore, the picture along the northern Goryeo frontier in 1044 was one in which some Jurchen clans had turned to Goryeo for refuge from attacks by other Jurchen groups referred to here as “bandits.” All of which were named as “Eastern Jurchen” within Goryeo sources.¹⁷⁰

Initial Contacts between the Anchuhu Wanyan and Goryeo - 1103

Yingge was the first Anchuhu leader to actively pursue expansion into the southern regions north of Goryeo. Of course, knowledge of Goryeo and the societies of the Korean peninsula were well known to the Anchuhu Wanyan. Remember that the ruling lineage of the Anchuhu Wanyan claimed to be distant relatives of the Koreans through their founding ancestor, Hanpu 函普, who was said to have migrated out of the peninsula along with one of his brothers six generations previously. The events preceding the first diplomatic contacts

¹⁷⁰ This culture of raiding along the Goryeo frontier seems to be consistent with the descriptions of other frontier experiences in East Asian history, particularly those dealing with the steppe frontier of North China. However, in much of the secondary literature dealing with the northern borderlands of China the culture of raiding is attributed to the dietary necessity of grains required by steppe pastoralists and that when they could not trade for grains they were forced to plunder agricultural settlements. However, while such dietary incentives may have played a part in a group’s decision to raid a settlement, because the Jurchens were traditionally agriculturalists this surely had little to do with obtaining grains. This suggests that there the consistency of raids along imperial frontiers cannot be reduced to merely a need for certain foodstuffs. For an example of this “trade or raid” theory see: Sechin Jagchid and Van Jay Symons, *Peace, War, and Trade along the Great Wall: Nomadic-Chinese Interaction through Two Millennia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); Henry Serruys, *Trade Relations: The horse fairs (1400-1600)* (Brussels: Institut Belge des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, 1973), 16.

between the Anchuhu Wanyan and Goryeo were precisely the same events mentioned earlier in this chapter, namely the siege of Ashu's Town. Ashu's Town was located at the junction of the Xingxian and Tongmen Rivers, putting it just north of Helan Dian. As the Anchuhu Wanyan increased their focus on overcoming Ashu's people and the other Heshilie Jurchen of the Xingxian River valley, their increased presence in the area led them to make contacts with the Jurchen clans living to the south in Helan Dian.

The first Anchuhu representatives we have record of that were sent to the area of Helan Dian were named Shengguan 勝管 and Chou'a 醜阿.¹⁷¹ They were ordered by Aguda, with Yingge's approval, to gain the submission of the many tribes living west of the Yiligu Mountains 乙離骨 and the Zhu'amen River 注阿門水.¹⁷² Although not mentioned in this particular passage of the *Jinshi*, there is a story of another individual who accompanied Shengguan and Chou'a to their assignment in Helan Dian found in the chapter dedicated to a discussion of Goryeo. The man's name is not recorded, but it is said that he was originally from Goryeo and held a position within Yingge's court as an able physician. When one of Yingge's in-laws became ill, he offered the Goryeo physician the opportunity to return to his homeland if he successfully ministered to his ailing kinsman. The physician won his freedom to return to Goryeo and traveled in the company of Chou'a and Shengguan. This story is contained in both the *Jinshi* as well as the *Goryeo sa* and reports that it was through the words of this physician upon returning home that first informed the Goryeo court first

¹⁷¹ Chou'a is sometimes written as Sou'a 叟阿.

¹⁷² *Jinshi* 1.14. The Yiligu Mountains are located south of North Korea's 咸鏡 and borders on today's 摩天 Mountains. The location of the Zhu'amen River is unknown, but was likely nearby the Yiligu Range.

learned of the rising strength of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition.¹⁷³ Although this unnamed physician was not an official ambassador from the court of the Anchuhu, he nonetheless was able to relate details concerning Yingge and activities of the growing coalition. The details of this elaborate story may be questionable, but both records state that it was during this time that Goryeo first took notice of the Anchuhu Wanyan and sent an ambassador to open relations with the rising Jurchen power.

Initially, contacts between the two governments were quite cordial with a handful of ambassadors being sent back and forth between courts. However, throughout relations with Goryeo, the Anchuhu Wanyan were still actively courting the Jurchen living within the Helan Dian and surrounding areas in an effort to win their alliance. In fact, in 1103, Ashu, who was still residing safely within the protection of the Liao Empire, dispatched one of his followers named Daji 達紀 to Helan Dian in an effort to stir up the population against the Anchuhu Wanyan. It is unclear whether Ashu was aware of the efforts of the Anchuhu to recruit the Helan Dian Jurchen to their cause and therefore sent Daji in a bid to oppose their progress, or if he instead recognized that the inhabitants of the Helan Dian would make ideal allies in his own struggles to liberate his people (the Xingxian River and Ashu's Town were located just north of Helan Dian) from Anchuhu occupation. Either of these possible motivations made little difference, for Daji found a very cold reception within Helan Dian and was quickly seized and handed over into Yingge's custody.¹⁷⁴ It was around this time that Yingge and his large coalition army defeated the Liao rebel Xiao Haili, and gained the gratitude of the Liao

¹⁷³ *Jinshi* 135.2882; Chong In-ji 鄭麟趾 et al., comps., *Goryeo sa* 高麗史, 3 vols. (Asea Munhwasa, 1972), 12.3.240. Hereafter *Goryeo sa*. Franke believes that the account in the *Goryeo sa* is a copy of the *Jinshi* account, see Franke, "Chinese Texts on the Jurchens (II)," 449, n.131.

¹⁷⁴ *Jinshi* 1.16; 135.2882.

Emperor along with the significant boost in confidence among the coalition members regarding their strength and power. These two events –the capture of Ashu’s follower Daji, and the defeat of Xiao Haili— provided Yingge with an excellent opportunity to officially initiate relations with the kingdom of Goryeo.

In 1103, Yingge officially dispatched at least one mission to Goryeo that not only fostered this burgeoning diplomatic relationship, but that also serves to illuminate the type of political environment that existed within East Asia during that time. The first item of interest was the handing over of Ashu’s follower, Daji, to the king of Goryeo. Yingge’s proclaimed rationale behind this action was merely that Daji was causing disruption along [the] borders and was therefore handed over to the king to answer for his crimes.¹⁷⁵ However, the presentation of Daji to Goryeo marked the first instance in which a captive was handed over to a foreign, not-Liao, state. (The reason he was not handed over to the Liao seems obvious: the Liao was where Daji’s lord, Ashu was residing as a political refugee)¹⁷⁶ This type of action, the handing over of prisoners/exiles/criminals to a foreign power was a common policy among East Asian states and became a general practice between states in later periods.¹⁷⁷ Indeed there existed a type of mutual respect/recognition of shared authority concerning the respective populations of neighboring states.¹⁷⁸ By engaging in similar

¹⁷⁵ *Jinshi* 135.2882.

¹⁷⁶ Ofcourse it is entirely possible that Daji was originally from Goryeo and thus his return to the Goryeo king would be seen as the return of a subject, but there is no mention of his place of origin in the record.

¹⁷⁷ This relationship of reciprocal policing of the frontier was a key aspect of the formal treaty established between the Ming Empire and the court of the powerful Mongol leader, Altan Khan. See Henry Serruys, “A Mongol Settlement in North China at the end of the 16th century,” *Central Asiatic Journal* 4.4 (1959), 272; Henry Serruys, “Four Documents Relating to the Sino-Mongol peace of 1570-1571,” *Monumenta Serica* 19 (1960), 37-38.

¹⁷⁸ The most notable example of a border of this type can be seen along the Song-Liao border following the Shanyuan treaty of 1005. See Naomi Standen, *Unbounded Loyalty: Frontier Crossing in Liao China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2007), 25.

activities with Goryeo, Yingge was presenting himself and his state in a manner consistent with existing political relationships governing the interaction between rulers. It should be noted that the Anchuhu had long handed over captives of war or other perceived rebels into the custody of the Liao. And yet, the Liao had not seen fit to reciprocate in such actions and continued to provide refuge for Ashu despite the desires of the Anchuhu Wanyan.

The diplomatic protocol surrounding Yingge's defeat of Xiao Haili marks the second significant aspect of these early contacts between Goryeo and the Anchuhu Wanyan. The *Jinshi* records that in 1103 Yingge sent a man named Woluhan 斡魯罕 to Goryeo to announce the victory over the Liao rebel. This announcement must have been considered a notable achievement for it prompted the king of Goryeo to send a return embassy that offered congratulations for Yingge's victory. While it is possible that the victory may have served only as a flimsy pretext for an initial diplomatic contact, when seen within the larger context of the nature of Haili's rebellion it hints at the style of political culture then dominant in East Asia.

Xiao Haili had rebelled against neither the Jurchen nor Goryeo, but was instead an enemy to the Liao. Moreover, both the Anchuhu Wanyan and the kingdom of Goryeo had a history of tense relations with the Kitan Empire and in Goryeo's case had even been subject to attack and invasion back in the 990s. Why then would these two powers announce and congratulate one another on the demise of a powerful Liao detractor? Two possibilities present themselves. The first was that it was possible that it was considered a good form of political protocol to publicly uphold the sovereignty of all existing rulers. And hopefully without stepping too far out into the realms of speculation, that any rebellion against a

reigning monarch was perceived as a violation against the existing order of rule. However, a second possibility explains why the leaders of both the Anchuhu and Goryeo would rejoice in the suppression Haili's rebellion. That it was precisely because it was a rebellion *against the Liao* that it was therefore considered an event worthy of announcement and congratulation. Both the Anchuhu Wanyan and Goryeo were tributary regimes to the Liao, and that even in diplomatic communications involving only each other (and not the Liao) they maintained their political identity as official supporters of the Liao throne.

Breakdown of peaceful relations– The first battles of Helan Dian

At the close of 1103, the relationship between the Anchuhu Wanyan and the kingdom of Goryeo seemed full of promise. Both sides had sent envoys bearing respect for their respective authority over the lands of their jurisdiction. However, who was it that determined where the lands and authority of these two regimes began and where it ended? It was no secret that the Anchuhu Wanyan were actively courting the alliance and incorporation of the Helan Dian Jurchen into their coalition. The success of their first representatives into the area, men like Shengkun and Chou'a, can be seen in the swift capture of Ashu's follower Daji when he tried to stir them up against the Anchuhu. Moreover, as evidenced by the passage noted above dating from the 1040s, there were surely some Jurchen clans living north of the peninsula who considered themselves subjects (or at the least friends of) the Goryeo kings. That same passage spoke of Jurchen groups preying on each other; indicating that the Helan Dian inhabitants were far from maintaining any form of political cohesion or shared allegiance. As both the Anchuhu Wanyan and Goryeo sought to dominate the political

landscape and allegiance of the Helan Dian region, their former friendliness was dropped in order to make room for contention and war.

Near the end of 1103, Yingge died at the age of 51. In his nine years of rule, he had built upon the foundation set by his brothers Helibo and Polashu. He continued to solidify and expand the number of clans under the Anchuhu Wanyan banner, while he simultaneously maintained the position of the coalition as a lynchpin of the Liao Empire's ability to enforce its rule in the northeast. As mentioned previously, Yingge was the first of the Wanyan Coalition rulers whose reputation extended across much of East Asia, and was referred to within Song Dynasty sources. He was succeeded by his nephew Wuyashu 烏雅束 (b.1061, r.1103-1113), son of Helibo and elder brother of Aguda.

It is undeniable that in his final years of rule, Yingge desired closer relations with Goryeo. In addition to handing over Daji and announcing his victory over Xiao Haili, Yingge also sent a number of additional envoys to the Goryeo court. One of these envoys was a man named Xiege 斜葛 who seemed to have been a kinsman of Yingge (*zudi* 族第) and because of this relationship to the Anchuhu leader he was considered an envoy of particular high honor.¹⁷⁹ Yet, it must not be forgotten that the mission of these Jurchen envoys was not solely to engage with the royal court of Goryeo. They also continually traveled in and out of Goryeo in order to maintain contacts and foster relations among the Helan Dian Jurchen.¹⁸⁰ It was among these same groups that Goryeo had traditionally

¹⁷⁹ *Jinshi* 135.2882. One of these first envoys to the Goryeo court is recorded in the *Goryeo sa* as specifically from Yingge during the last year of his life in 1103 (4th month of the 6th year of the Goryeo King, Sukjong 肅宗) “The Eastern Jurchen chieftain, Yingge, dispatched an envoy who arrived at court. 甲辰東女真酋長盈歌遣使來朝” *Goryeo sa* 11.34.(v.1, 236).

¹⁸⁰ Jiang, “Nüzhen yu Gaoli,” 87.

maintained a relationship of occasional tribute and protection. The situation came to a head when a number of the Helan Dian Jurchen clans desired to officially join the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition.

Prior to his death, Yingge received word that certain clans of the Helan Dian Jurchen desired to join (*fu* 附) the coalition. At that time, Xiege was the highest ranking coalition member in the Helan Dian area and because he regularly traveled to and from Helan Dian and the courts of Goryeo, he was likely aware of the Helan Dian Jurchens' decision. However, Goryeo's response to their desire to join the coalition was to intercept the Helan Dian envoy, which they did, and to mobilize their forces to prevent them from joining with Yingge's people. Presumably it was Xiege who finally got word through to Yingge of the Helan Dian Jurchen and the involvement of Goryeo. Upon hearing the situation, Yingge gave orders to a man who would later play a large part in the Coalition's ability to maintain and govern the Helan Dian region.

The man's name was Shishihuan 石適歡 and he was commanded to travel to Helan Dian in order to receive the allegiance of the Jurchen clans there. However, because of the death of Yingge, Shishihuan did not leave right away, and was only dispatched later under the direction of the new *jiedushi*, Wuyashi. When he finally left the Anchuhu region, Shishihuan carried orders to gather an army as he traveled to Helan Dian. His travels took him through the Xingxian and Tongmen River valleys, and through the Yiligu Mountains before his forces finally arrived at the Huonie River 活湫水.¹⁸¹ The *Jinshi* records that Shishihuan, at the head of an army composed of coalition troops as well as those clans

¹⁸¹ *Jinshi* 135.2882. The location of the Huonie River is unknown, though was surely located within the Helan Dian area.

among the Helan Dian Jurchen who had allied with the coalition, overtook seven strongholds of resistance (*cheng* 城, lit. walled settlements) and gained control of the entire Helan Dian region.¹⁸² The fact that there were walled settlements resisting the arrival of Shishihuan and his allies indicates that among the Helan Dian Jurchen there were some groups that desired to remain independent of the coalition.¹⁸³ Thus, the later retaliation and attacks into the region by Goryeo should be understood within the context of the complex political patchwork of the Helan Dian region and its inhabitants. It is entirely likely that among the Helan Dian inhabitants that were resisting, there were groups and individuals such as those mentioned above that considered themselves vassals to the Goryeo King in the south.

Goryeo's response to the aggressive occupation of the entire Helan Dian region was to appoint new generals to their northern command and in the following year (1104) they sent multiple attacks against Shishihuan and his local Helan Dian allies. The first attack was led by an officer named Rim Gan 林幹 but he was unable to overcome Shishihuan's forces and was defeated outside the walls of a walled settlement in Jeong-ju 定州.¹⁸⁴ Not content to merely defend, Shishihuan counterattacked and led his forces in pursuit of the defeated Goryeo army and set fire to their northern garrisons before returning.¹⁸⁵ A few months later, the Goryeo king appointed a new commander over the northern forces and tried once again to push out Shishihuan and his army. This second commander's name was Yun Gwan 尹瓘 (d.1111) and his defeat was answered again with similar destruction as Shishihuan's

¹⁸² *Jinshi* 135.2882.

¹⁸³ *Goryeo sa* 12.5 (v.1, 241). The implications of this attack and the possible rationale behind Anchuhu aggression in the region is discussed by Jiang, "Nüzhen yu Gaoli," 87.

¹⁸⁴ *Goryeo sa* 12.5 (v.1, 241). Jeong-ju was located in today's Jeongpyeong 定平 region of North Korea.

¹⁸⁵ *Jinshi* 135.2883.

victorious warriors crossed into the northern regions of Goryeo, killing and capturing a large number of people in the process. It was after this second failed attack that the aging king of Goryeo, Sukjong 肅宗 (1054-1105) sued for peace and halted any further expeditions into the north.

Only two years separated Yingge's first embassy to the Goryeo court from Shishihuan's retaliatory raids on Goryeo's northern territories. The Anchuhu Wanyan had gone from a relatively unknown presence beyond the reach of Goryeo control, to a powerful and aggressive northern neighbor that had successfully repelled all efforts to push them back to the north. When investigating the cause for this dramatic shift in the relationship between the Anchuhu and Goryeo, we should not put too much emphasis on the passing of Yingge and the rise of Wuyashu as a factor. For Shishihuan had originally received his command to march into the Helan Dian region from Yingge himself and can therefore not be associated with any drastic policy change attributed to the new leader, Wuyashu. Additionally, while the Jurchen record places the blame of original hostilities on Goryeo (marked as the first assault by Rim Gan), if it were not for Shishihuan's assault and occupation of the reticent Helan Dian settlements Goryeo may not have felt the need to march to the protection of their smaller vassals/allies. The cause for the antagonism between Wanyan and Goryeo can be found in the complex political situation of the Jurchen groups living along the frontiers of both Goryeo and the growing Anchuhu Coalition. Both states had supporters among the Helan Dian inhabitants and both sides were willing to bring forth soldiers to protect/claim the allegiance of these groups. The events occurring within Helan Dian during the turn of the

12th century is another example of how a frontier region/population becomes central in the actions of premodern states and empires.

Conclusion

In 1105, only a few months following the tentative peace agreement reached with the Anchuhu Wanyan, the Goryeo King, Sukjong, died and passed leadership to his son Yejong 睿宗(b.1079 r.1105-1122). Almost immediately, the young king began preparations for a massive campaign into Helan Dian to push out the Anchuhu Wanyan and to establish a strong presence in the region. At the same time, Wuyashu was faced with increasing problems surrounding the administration of the newly acquired territories of Helan Dian. The people having been accustomed to fighting amongst themselves, they had difficulties adjusting to life within the laws of the coalition. Moreover, following their success over Xiao Haili in the wake of Liao defeat, the leading members of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition were beginning to re-evaluate the strength of the Kitan Empire and the power of its emperor.

The following chapter will look at the years immediately prior to the accession of Aguda and the declaration of a new Jurchen-ruled dynasty named Jin. The conflicts with Goryeo were far from over and the expansion of the Coalition into lands increasingly aligned with the Liao continued. What had began as a remote confederation of wild Jurchen clans by the turn of the 12th century had grown into a state organization able to compete militarily with the established empires of East Asia.

Chapter Four: War with Goryeo

Introduction

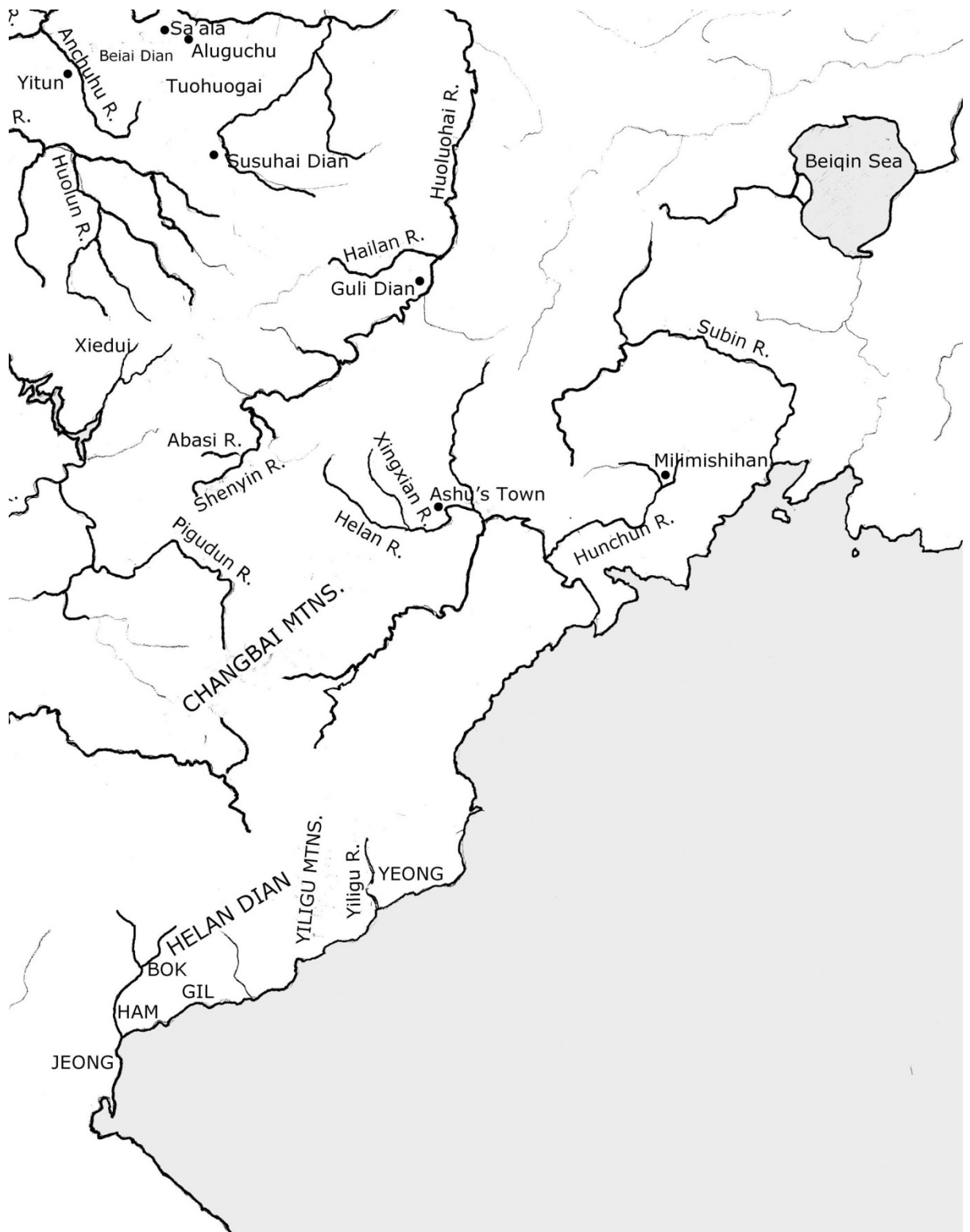
Within the first five years of the 12th century the Liao Empire, the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition, and the kingdom of Goryeo each experienced a transition of leadership as their respective rulers passed away and new rulers rose to take their place. The passing of leadership from Yingge to his nephew Wuyashu in 1103 has been mentioned and coincided with an outbreak of hostility between Jurchen and Goryeo forces within the Helan Dian region just north of the Korean Peninsula. However, what has not been mentioned is that in 1101, two years prior to Yingge's death, the Liao Emperor Daozong 道宗 (r.1055-1101) died and passed his throne to his grandson Tianzuo 天祚.¹⁸⁶ The succession of Tianzuo occurred without great incident within the empire, but the passing of leadership to a new emperor after Daozong's lengthy reign may have been perceived as a very significant event among the Wanyan Jurchen. After all, Daozong became emperor twenty years before the death of the great patriarch Wugunai and was the individual who had bestowed all of the titles, gifts, and directives upon the Anchuhu Wanyan leaders for forty-six years.¹⁸⁷ The final shift in power occurred in the state of Goryeo where the uneasy peace with the Anchuhu Wanyan forged

¹⁸⁶ The names used here are the posthumous or temple names granted to the emperors after their deaths. Their given names were Yelü Hongji 耶律洪基 and Yelü Yanxi 耶律延禧, respectively.

¹⁸⁷ The last anecdote involving the aging Liao Daozong and the Anchuhu Wanyan is found in the third chapter of the *Sanzhao beimeng huibian* 三朝北盟會編 in which Aguda and his kinsman, Wushi 悟室 (aka Wushi 兀室) were in attendance at the Liao court during the final year (1101) of Daozong's life. While there, Aguda drew a short blade on a Liao nobleman and wounded him in the chest after the latter cheated on a game of backgammon ("double six" 雙陸). Upon hearing of the event Daozong desired to execute Aguda but was convinced by his courtiers to spare the Jurchen's life, and let the future Jin Emperor return to his homeland. See Franke, "Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (I)," 150; Xu Mengxin 徐夢莘 (1126-1207), *Sanzhao beimeng huibian* 三朝北盟會編 "Collected Accounts of the Treaties with the North under Three Reigns" (1878 edition), 3.8b.

under King Sukjong 肅宗 (r.1095-1105) in 1104 was replaced by renewed aggression under his son and successor Yejong 睿宗 (r.1105-1122).

These changes in leadership among the key states of continental northeast Asia set the stage for the rise and establishment of the Jurchen-Jin Dynasty, founded by Aguda in 1115. The most significant event in the period immediately prior to Aguda's reign as leader of the Jurchen Coalition was the renewed war with Goryeo over the inhabitants and lands along the borders of Goryeo. Although this second phase of the war lasted only three years (1106-09) it resulted in a major mobilization of military force on both sides of the conflict and contributed to the political and military trajectory of the Wanyan Coalition. Yet, the conflict between Goryeo and the pre-Jin Jurchen is a story left largely untold in the secondary sources. This chapter attempts to reconstruct the events of the war from the two primary sources of the period: the *Jinshi* and the *Goryeo sa*, or *Official History of Goryeo*.



Escalation of conflict with Goryeo over Helan Dian

In the year immediately following the 1104 peace agreement between Goryeo and the Anchuhu Wanyan, relations between the two powers seem to have been relatively peaceful. With the cessation of hostilities between Goryeo and the Wanyan-led armies occupying Helan Dian, Wuyashu set about to govern the newly acquired territory and population. He first chose his clansman Xiege as his representative to the region and commanded him to consolidate and establish leadership over the clans of Helan Dian. Xiege seemed a fine choice given his long experience as an envoy to Goryeo under Yingge and his role as one of the earliest ambassadors of the Anchuhu Wanyan to the Helan Dian inhabitants. However, the *Jinshi* records that Xiege had difficulty effectively managing the numerous issues and lawsuits that arose among the Helan Dian population, which left the region's inhabitants feeling somewhat bitter about their new leadership.¹⁸⁸ This type of situation is consistent with the earlier evaluation of the Helan Dian region as having been a relatively dense and politically fragmented area. Prior to their incorporation into a single government body, the many clans likely resolved conflicts through retaliation and vendetta law.¹⁸⁹ Yet, after their incorporation into the coalition the people of Helan Dian would presumably have been forced to adhere to the Coalition laws and stipulations governing conduct between its members. Such a drastic change in how conflicts were resolved must have made for a difficult transition, particularly if Xiege was slow to address such issues.

When Wuyashu heard of the growing discontent of the Helan Dian population, he recalled Xiege and sent the military leader Shishihuan in his place. Shishihuan was familiar

¹⁸⁸ *Jinshi* 135.2883.

¹⁸⁹ This type of conflict resolution was the same practiced by the wild Jurchen of the Songhua River system prior to the laws established and promulgated by the Anchuhu Wanyan. See chapter one pp.4-5.

with the people and territory, since he was the coalition commander who led the initial attacks and invasion into the area. Shishihuan seems to have taken greater initiative in his position as Wuyashu's representative to Helan Dian and established a regional administrative headquarters along the Sanchan River 三澗水.¹⁹⁰ While the details are not clear, the record clearly states that Wuyashu was pleased with Shishihuan's ability to manage the affairs of Helan Dian and was presumably relocated to the region in order to more effectively govern it. Shishihuan's role and administration as commanding military officer (*mufu* 幕府) may have brought a measure of stability to the region but it by no means erased the tension between some of the Helan Dian clans and their new rulers, the Anchuhu Wanyan. To make matters more complicated, the ascension of the new Goryeo king, Yejong, brought into question the durability of the previous peace accord forged under the former king of Goryeo, Sukjong.

In the years following the Anchuhu Wanyan occupation of the Helan Dian region a large number of Jurchen inhabitants chose to remove themselves from Coalition rule and enter into the protection of Goryeo and its lands. The *Goryeo sa* records numerous instances of migration and/or defection from the Jurchen lands to their own. One example of this phenomenon involved a military officer along the northeastern border who reported that a large group of Eastern Jurchen had presented themselves at the border to surrender. The text relates that an unnamed Eastern Jurchen commander arrived outside of Dun Gwan 屯關 along with two thousand cavalrymen and gave themselves up into Goryeo custody. The reason supposedly provided by the Jurchen commander was that in all of the wars previously,

¹⁹⁰ Modern Daecheon 大川 in Korea's Bukcheong 北青 province.

there had not been a Goryeo king so just and fair as the newly ascended King Yejong.¹⁹¹

Surely such a motivation was good news to the young king, but the actual reasons behind the defection of such a large group (led by a Jurchen officer) were surely more complex than an admiration for the Goryeo monarch. Also, it is unknown how many similar defections and migrations into Goryeo may have occurred that were not recorded on the official record.

As for the official diplomatic relationship between the Anchuhu Wanyan and the Goryeo court, early contacts between the two gave the impression that the new Goryeo king intended to honor the peace agreement made by his father. In 1106, the *Jinshi* records that an envoy from Goryeo named Heihuanfangshi 黑歡方石 arrived in Wanyan territory seeking an audience with Wuyashu.¹⁹² The envoy was supposedly sent to the Anchuhu Wanyan court in order to belatedly offer congratulations to Wuyashu on his ascension as leader over the Wanyan Coalition.¹⁹³ Again, this type of diplomatic formality is consistent with the notion that both Goryeo and the Anchuhu Wanyan were acting within established modes of diplomatic protocol consistent with that between the larger states of continental East Asia (such as the Song and Liao courts). However, the timing of the arrival of the Goryeo envoy as well as the later actions of the Goryeo state suggests that this event was meant to present only a façade of goodwill.

¹⁹¹ *Goryeo sa*, 96.21.249.

¹⁹² *Jinshi* 1.16; 135.2883. In both of these passages, the envoy's name is given as Heihuanfangshi 黑歡方石 however Franke believes that there were actually two envoys from Goryeo: one named Heihuan 黑歡 and the other Fangshi 方石. (See Franke, "Chinese Texts on the Jurchen II," 450 n.145) In either case, the name does not appear to be of native Goryeo lineage and indicates that the envoy may have been Jurchen himself. The Korean reading of his name would be Heukhwan bangseok (흑환방석) but because the record was transliterated from the original into Chinese, I have chosen to use the Chinese reading of Heihuanfangshi.

¹⁹³ Wuyashu rose to his position as leader of the coalition after the death of his uncle, Yingge, three years previously in 1103.

Wuyashu honored the Goryeo envoy and sent a reciprocal envoy to the court of Goryeo. The Jurchen envoy chosen for this mission was man known as Beilu 盃魯¹⁹⁴ Beilu had experience dealing with Goryeo and the clans of Helan Dian, and was earlier sent to negotiate with Goryeo under the direction of Shishihuan in the months following the initial occupation of the area by the Anchuhu Wanyan administration.¹⁹⁵ In addition to announcing the position of Wuyashu, Beilu was also instructed to 1) receive a formal acknowledgement from the court that they would honor the previous agreement established under the late king Sukjong, and 2) to guarantee the return of any and all refugees who had fled into Goryeo lands. Beilu's visit to the court of Goryeo is not recorded in the annals of the *Goryeo sa* but the *Jinshi* records that Beilu was promised that Goryeo would indeed honor the previous arrangement and hand over all Jurchen refugees.¹⁹⁶ He was instructed to inform Wuyashu that he need only present his representatives at the border and the refugees would be returned to them.

If Beilu sensed possible deceit in the words of the Goryeo King he did not relate those fears to Wuyashu, who believed the words of Yejong and dispatched a small mission of envoys to the Goryeo border to retrieve the promised refugees. Even if the historical record was not clear on the level of trust Wuyashu provided Yejong, his choice of ambassadors could be used to indicate the level of trust Wuyashu placed in the Goryeo king. The men chosen to lead this diplomatic mission to retrieve the Jurchen refugees were Agua 阿聒, a

¹⁹⁴ *Jinshi* 135.2883.

¹⁹⁵ *Jinshi* 135.2882. At that time he traveled to the Goryeo border in the company of the Helan Dian Jurchen leaders Xiele 斜勒 and Yelabao 冶刺保 (both of whom held the title of *xiangwen* 詳穩) in order to discuss the arrival of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition. Unfortunately for Beilu, he was denied entrance to the discussions by the Goryeo officials with a curt “This affair does not involve you. 無與爾事.”

¹⁹⁶ *Jinshi* 1.16; 135.2883.

member of the Wanyan tribe, and Shengkun 勝昆 a member of the prominent Wulinda tribe.¹⁹⁷ Both men held high clan affiliations and were trusted to do as commanded.

Wuyashu is said to have awaited their return within the Maji Mountains 馬紀嶺 where he engaged in hunting.¹⁹⁸ When Agua and Shengkun arrived at the Goryeo border they were not received with honors, but were instead murdered. The news of their death along the Goryeo border may have taken slightly longer to reach him in the mountain wilds, but it surely put an end to his enjoyable hunting excursion.

Invasion/Reclamation and Retaliation

The murder of Agua, Shengkun, and other members of the Jurchen leadership along the borderlands by the state of Goryeo was the first act of a much larger plan involving a massive advance northward and reclamation of the Helan Dian region. The two sources we must rely on in reconstructing the Goryeo campaign of 1106 are the *Jinshi* and *Goryeo sa*. The contribution of the *Jinshi* is not nearly as thorough as the account contained in the *Goryeo sa* under the biographies of the prominent Goryeo generals who participated in the campaign. It is primarily from the Goryeo account that the details surrounding the events of this war are found. And even then, we are unable to accurately gauge how reliable those details are without another source to corroborate the story. However, certain events like the

¹⁹⁷ It is not known whether Agua was closely related to the royal line of the Anchuhu Wanyan, or if he was a member of one of the other Wanyan branches. It is possible that this Shengkun was the same individual who had supported Wuyashu's father, Helibo, in his war against Wuchun even though it was contrary to the sentiments of his family and elder brother, Zibunai. If it is indeed the same individual, then it is possible that after the execution of his family that he remained close to Helibo's lineage and was recognized and respected by Wuyashu.

¹⁹⁸ *Jinshi* 135.2883. The Maji Mountains 馬紀嶺 are known today as the Laoye Mountains 老爺嶺 in Heilongjiang province.

murder of Jurchen representatives at the Goryeo border in late 1106 is mentioned in both histories albeit with slightly different emphases.

The *Jinshi* records only that Agua and Shengkun were killed along the Goryeo border prior to a massive push of Goryeo forces into the Helan Dian region. According to the *Goryeo sa*, Agua and Shengkun were probably only two of what were hundreds of Jurchen leaders murdered in an ambush along the border. Agua and Shengkun traveled to the border to receive the Jurchen refugees the Goryeo King, Yejong, promised to return. The *Goryeo sa* references this pretense of returning Jurchen individuals back to their original homelands as a way to lure Jurchen leaders to the border. Two Assistant Commanders (*Byeongma pangwan* 兵馬判官) from Goryeo, Choe Hongjeong 崔弘正 and Hwang Gunsang 黃君裳 entered the border regions of Jeong-ju 定州 and Jang-ju 長州 and informed the Jurchen chiefs (*Nyeojin sujang* 女真首長) there that Goryeo was going to be returning a number of prominent Jurchen individuals back over to them.¹⁹⁹ The text informs us that the entire affair was a ruse meant to entice the Jurchen leadership to present themselves at the border where they could be removed prior to the push north led in part by these very Goryeo commanders.

According to the *Goryeo sa*, the Jurchen chiefs believed the words of Choe Hongjeong and Hwang Gunsang and upwards to 400 of them presented themselves at the border to be hosted by the kingdom of Goryeo and to celebrate the return of their

¹⁹⁹ *Goryeo sa* 96.14.142. The prominent Jurchens to have been returned is given as Heojin 許真, Rabul 羅弗, and others 等. However, no reference to either name is given in either the *Jinshi* or any other contemporary source to my knowledge. It is assumed that these men were prominent local leaders who had been captured during previous engagements against Goryeo, possibly during the wars of 1103.

countrymen.²⁰⁰ Of those that arrived at the border, all but fifty or sixty of them entered the Goryeo compound and drank heavily of the wine provided them by their hosts. Those fifty to sixty Jurchens halted at the gates and remained suspicious of Goryeo's intentions. It is said that they turned around and headed back towards their lands. This proved to be a slight nuisance to the Goryeo military who were forced to send another Assistant Commander to intercept them on the road and kill them. As for the inebriated Jurchen chiefs, the ambush laid for them went off perfectly and all of them were slaughtered during their celebration.²⁰¹ Word of Goryeo's treachery eventually reached Wuyashu during his hunting expedition, but by that time, the massed armies of the Goryeo Kingdom were already on the march, determined to push the Anchuhu Wanyan out of the region and force the Helan Dian Jurchen to submit to Goryeo rule.

The Second War with Goryeo: 1106-07

Under their new king, Yejong, the forces of Goryeo had been preparing themselves for a massive northern campaign. Probably the most significant player in the Goryeo military at this time was the general Yun Gwan 尹瓘. Gwan first appeared on the scene of the northeastern border as the commander chosen to replace the previous general, Rim Gan 林幹 in the first attacks against the Jurchen in 1103. Even though Yun Gwan was not any more successful in his initial efforts to rout the Anchuhu Wanyan out of Helan Dian than his

²⁰⁰ Among the Jurchen chiefs who arrived, there is only one name listed: Gora 古羅. This is surprising because if the prominent Agua and Shengkun were among those present at the celebration to hand over the Jurchen prisoners/refugees then why did not the recorders of Goryeo list them? Of course, no satisfactory answer exists, but it is possible that Agua and Shengkun arriving from the distant Anchuhu valley were relatively unknown to the local Goryeo commanders and officials compared to the long time chiefs of the Helan Dian.

²⁰¹ *Goryeo sa* 96.14.142.

predecessor, he retained his position as military commander of the border forces. Under the new king, Yun Gwan was authorized to reorganize the Goryeo military and prepare them for a more focused invasion over the border into Jurchen lands.²⁰² With the slaughter of the Jurchen chiefs of Jeong-ju and Jang-ju, Gwan ordered each of his commanders to lead their forces north and east toward their individual objectives.

The Goryeo advance of 1107 was a multi-pronged attack involving an overwhelming number of soldiers. If the numbers recorded are to be believed, then the size of the total attacking force of Goryeo was upwards to 170,000 men.²⁰³ Yun Gwan himself led the central column (and largest force: numbering 53,000) and entered the area of Jeong-ju 定州 at Daehwa-mun 大和門. His Assistant Commanders led columns of the Right and Left Wings into Jeong-ju at Honghwa-mun 弘化門 and the region of Anryuk-su 安陸戍, respectively. Another force was commanded to enter Seondeok-jin 宣德鎮 with an army numbering close to 44,000 men. There were even smaller amphibious attacks commanded by naval officers and sailors that pushed into areas along the coasts.²⁰⁴

The various armies of Goryeo each penetrated deep into the region, taking villages, prisoners, and killing those who came against them. The sheer size of the Goryeo force likely prevented a good amount of resistance from those they encountered. For example, when the column led by Yun Gwan into Jeong-ju approached a village (*chon* 村) called

²⁰²For more specific information on exactly what changes Yun Gwan made to the Goryeo military, see *Goryeo sa* 96.12.141 - 96.13.142.

²⁰³This number was computed by adding up the troop numbers listed under the various military commanders listed in the description of the initial attack within Yun Gwan's biography. See *Goryeo sa* 96.14.142. For an additional treatment of the wars between Goryeo and the Jurchen over Helan Dian, see Jiang, "Nüzhen yu Gaoli," 83-89.

²⁰⁴*Goryeo sa* 96.12.142.

Daenaepaji 大乃巴只村, the inhabitants were deeply afraid and either hid themselves or ran away, making the village look abandoned even though it was mid day.²⁰⁵ When faced with an army the size of the one led personally by Yun Gwan (again, 53,000 strong) it is no wonder that a large portion of the population fled their homes and sought out places to hide. However, not every Jurchen within Helan Dian fled at the sight of Yun Gwan's soldiers, and not every settlement was left abandoned.

Following Yun Gwan's march through the empty village of Daenaepaji he encountered the walled town (*seong* 城) of Dongeum 冬音 which far from being abandoned, was manned by men ready to fight. Seeing their defenses, Yun Gwan sent a pair of his assistant commanders (one of whom was Choe Hongjeong 崔弘正, the officer involved in the ruse and slaughter of hundreds of local Jurchen leaders [chiefs 首長] within this area) with a force to try and surround or flank the town's defenders. When Hongjeong reached the rear of the town, he saw a group of Jurchen defenders massed near a back gate. Hongjeong sent forth an interpreter to the Jurchens to speak to them about the possibility of their surrender. Their alleged reply is recorded in the *Goryeo sa* and, like all dialogue within the pre-modern historical record, it likely reflects how the Jurchen were perceived and remembered by the historians of Goryeo rather than conveying any definitive information on what the Jurchen defenders actually said.

Upon hearing the interpreter speak of surrender, the Jurchens replied "We desire one battle in which victory is decided. Why would we speak of surrender? 吾欲一戰以決勝否何謂降歟?" Subsequently, they re-entered the rear gate and fought in earnest; firing arrows to

²⁰⁵ *Goryeo sa*, 96.14.142.

the rear like rain and preventing Hongjeong and his troops from advancing towards the wall.²⁰⁶ This insight into how the courts of Goryeo perceived the defenders of Helan Dian suggests that the Jurchen were seen as fierce enemies who seemed to invite the challenges of war. The walled town of Dongeum proved to be a difficult nut to crack, but eventually the Goryeo soldiers were able to breach the wall and force their way inside. Of the defenders of Dongeum town, the records of Goryeo say that they were all killed, both men and women, young and old.²⁰⁷

When the armies of Goryeo finally halted their advance, they had succeeded in conquering Helan Dian and in replacing the Anchuhu Wanyan as the rulers of the region. Each prong of the attack had successfully overtaken villages and had taken hundreds of people into captivity. However, this campaign was more than just reclamation of territory lost to the Jurchen. Prior to the Wanyan Coalition's arrival in the region in 1103, the local Jurchen clans lived and fought each other within the shadow of the Goryeo Kingdom; some presenting themselves at the Goryeo court to announce their fealty, and some attacking Goryeo settlements and allies. The Goryeo kings had never maintained a strong military presence in the region. This changed when first Yingge, and then Wuyashu, directed Shishihuan and other Coalition commanders to march into the area, gather followers, and subdue those who resisted. What initially began in 1103 as Goryeo's attempt to push the Anchuhu Wanyan forces back from their border became in 1106 an attempt by Goryeo to conquer and occupy the Helan Dian region. Yun Gwan's armies entered Helan Dian not as liberators but as conquerors. The *Goryeo sa* records details of the initial 1106 invasion and

²⁰⁶ *Goryeo sa*, 96.15.143.

²⁰⁷ *Goryeo sa*, 96.15.143.

includes statistics such as how many villages were subdued, how many enemies were beheaded, and how many people were captured and taken as prisoners.

Using Yun Gwan's personal command as an example, his army conquered thirty-seven villages, beheaded 2,120 people, and took around 500 captives.²⁰⁸ Upon returning to Goryeo, Yun Gwan and his officers were granted rewards and honors by King Yejong. The new king had successfully reclaimed control of the borderlands and restored any prestige that may have been lost by his kingdom during the earlier defeats at the hands of the Jurchen in 1103. However, as stated above, this latter campaign was not about marching to the defense of the minor tributary clans within Helan Dian as was the earlier war with the Wanyan Coalition. It was instead a campaign to push out resistance and claim the region for the state of Goryeo. In other words, with Yun Gwan's advance in 1106, Yejong and the kingdom of Goryeo sought to expand its direct control over what was previously an ambiguous patchwork of Jurchen clans that was only claimed to have been under Goryeo protection and rule.

In order to accomplish this aspect of possession and occupation Goryeo constructed a series of nine fortified towns, or forts (*seong* 城 lit.walled settlement). After the battles ended, Yun Gwan commanded that men survey the conquered territory and map it. Once the region was mapped, he gave orders to individual commanders to construct fortified settlements in key locations, usually within or at the base of a mountain range.²⁰⁹ Goryeo constructed a series of forts or walled settlements along the new Goryeo border in Helan

²⁰⁸ *Goryeo sa*, 96.15.143.

²⁰⁹ While labeled only as "walled settlements" (*seong* 城) within the record, their proximity to mountains as well as their construction taking place under military command after a major assault into enemy territory qualifies these nine settlements to at least be considered "forts" if not frontier garrisons.

Dian. Although there were many fortified settlements erected under Yun Gwan's direction, these nine key forts later became the key strategic positions of Goryeo's military presence within Helan Dian. The nine forts are mentioned in passing within Jin Dynasty sources, but it is only in the *Goryeo sa* that their exact locations are recorded.²¹⁰

Jurchen response to Goryeo's capture of Helan Dian

While the forces of Goryeo celebrated their victory and erected the series of forts designed to claim the region of Helan Dian, Wuyashu returned to the Anchuhu River valley and consulted with his officers and kin about how they should respond to Goryeo's attacks. The record of this council is quite brief, but there seemed to have been a strong feeling of trepidation among the majority of Coalition members against raising warriors to march against the armies of Goryeo. However, the reason for their reticence was not a fear of battling the forces of Goryeo, but it was instead a fear of a possible punishment from the Liao. "The multitude all said, 'We cannot raise troops. For we fear the men of Liao will punish us' 衆咸曰不可舉兵也恐遼人將罪我."²¹¹ Supposedly the only man who pushed for a confrontation with Goryeo was Wuyashu's younger brother, and future emperor of the

²¹⁰ *Goryeo sa* 96.22.146. Reference to the nine forts can also be found in *Jinshi*, 1.16; 135.2884. The nine forts were located in: Ham-ju 咸州 (mod. N.Korea's Hamheung 咸興); Yeong-ju 英州 (mod. Gon Heung-ri 東興里 in Gapyeong township 加平面, Sinheung county 新興郡); Ung-ju 雄州 (mod. Hamheung county 咸興郡, West Toejo township 退潮面, Seongdong village 城洞里); Gil-ju 吉州 (possibly within the mod. Cheongyebong Mountains 天雞峰山 in Hongwon county 洪原郡, Hakcheon township 鶴泉面); Bok-ju 福州 (mod. Sinheung county 新興郡, Joyang township 朝陽面, Tapdong village 塔洞里); Gongham-jin 公嶮鎮 (possibly in the mountains of mod. Hamheung County 咸興郡, Deoksan township 德山面, Sangdae village 上岱里); Tongtae-jin 通泰鎮 (mod. Hamheung county 咸興郡, Unheung township 云田面, Unseong village 云城里); Sungnyeong-jin 崇寧鎮 (mod. Hamheung county 咸興郡, Cheonsoo township 川西面, Unheung village 云興里); Jinyang-jin 真陽鎮 (mod. Hamheung county 咸興郡, Sanggicheon township 上岐川面, Oro village 五老里). See *Goryeo sa* 96.16.143; 96.21.146. See also Jiang, "Nüzhen yu Gaoli," 88.

²¹¹ *Jinshi* 135.2883.

Jurchen-Jin Dynasty, Aguda. Aguda argued his position saying, “If we do not raise troops, and if we do not stop the loss of Helan Dian, then all of the various tribes will not be ours. 若不舉兵豈止失曷懶甸諸部皆非吾有也。”²¹²

The most pressing issue raised by this passage concerns the role of the Liao Dynasty in the relationship between supposedly “subordinate states” like the Anchuhu Wanyan and Goryeo. The Liao had maintained no qualms about intervening in previous conflicts between regional leaders in the northeast in years previous.²¹³ Moreover, the scope of Liao authority was not limited to territory and people theoretically under the military jurisdiction of the empire such as the Jurchen clans. In 1106, the same year that Goryeo had taken control of Helan Dian, the Liao dispatched two high officials to the Song court in an effort to persuade the Song to return the territory they had captured from the Tangut-Xia Empire following their recent campaigns against them.²¹⁴ One year previously, the Liao had hosted representatives from both the Xia and Song and tried to mediate a peace accord between the two empires.²¹⁵ Obviously, the Liao were quite willing to lend their significant political and military weight to assist in mediating international conflicts. Thus, even though there is no record that the

²¹² *Jinshi* 135.2883.

²¹³ One prominent example of this type of Liao interference can be seen in the persistent efforts of the Liao in trying to halt the siege of Ashu’s Town during the reign of Yingge.

²¹⁴ *Liaoshi*, 27.322. The two officials listed were the Northern Establishment Commissioner of Military Affairs, Xiao Delidi 蕭得里底, and the Southern Establishment Commissioner of Military Affairs, Niu Wenshu 牛溫舒. This particular war between the Song and Tangut-Xia lasted from 1103-06. For more information see: Ari Daniel Levine, “The Reigns of Hui-tsung (1100-1126) and Ch’in-tsung (1126-1127) and the Fall of the Northern Sung,” in Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank, eds., *Part One: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors*, *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): 614-619.

²¹⁵ It was during this diplomatic mission that a member of the Song delegation, Lin Shu 林攄 (given as Lin Zhu 洙 in *Liaoshi*, 27.322), incited the anger of the Liao officials because he refused to rehearse the Liao court ceremony in preparation for his audience. To punish him, the Liao officials halted the delivery of his meals and later escorted him to a place where tigers were kept, presumably in an effort to intimidate him into complying. However, Lin Shu did not back down and referred to the tigers with disdain saying, “These are but dogs of the Southern Country!” See Wittfogel & Feng, *Liao*, 271, n.166.

Liao chose to intervene in the conflict between Goryeo and the Anchuhu Wanyan, it is not surprising that the Jurchen fully expected them to.

The second issue raised by this passage is Aguda's rationalization that the raising of warriors to retake Helan Dian was crucial in maintaining the position of the Anchuhu Wanyan as the ruling clan of the many Jurchen tribes within the Coalition. His words resonate with the sentiments held by his grandfather Wugunai when the latter refused to accept the Liao Dynasty seal and enter his clan into the imperial registries. Both of them seemed to have adhered to the belief that the Anchuhu Wanyan had to maintain an image of strength within the eyes of its Jurchen followers in order to continually qualify themselves as leaders of the Jurchen Coalition. Aguda's words suggest that the loss of prestige that would accompany the abandonment of Helan Dian to Goryeo would erode the legitimacy of the Anchuhu Wanyan among the Jurchen tribes and precipitate a potential secession of clans from Coalition rule. This type of dissent and secession would have been similar to that experienced by Aguda's father Helibo when rivalries within the ruling Anchuhu Wanyan family encouraged a widespread fracturing of the coalition followers.²¹⁶

Wuyashu agreed with the reasoning of his brother Aguda and ordered that soldiers be raised to retake Helan Dian from the armies of Goryeo. The coalition leader who had been in charge of the region prior to the Goryeo invasion was Shishihuan 石適歡, who had not only led the campaign to first occupy the region, but had also established a local office of military command to help maintain order.²¹⁷ However, after the Goryeo invasion of 1106, Shishihuan

²¹⁶ During the early reign of Helibo, his uncle (Wugunai's half-brother) Bahei was raised by certain coalition leaders as an alternate successor to Wugunai's title and position. The battles that followed threatened to eradicate the existing coalition government and organization. See chapter 2 for more details on Helibo's reign.

²¹⁷ *Jinshi* 135.7035.

does not appear again in the sources. It is possible that he lost his life in the failed defense of the region, or perhaps he was removed from his position by the Anchuhu leadership after Helan Dian fell. In either case, Wuyashu had to find a new general to replace Shishihuan. The man he chose was from his own Wanyan clan and his name was Wosai 斡賽.

Wosai had a reputation for being both effective in battle and able to manage the affairs of coalition government. His first assignment of note was given to him by Wuyashu's uncle, Yingge, and it is a story that provides more illumination on the political environment that existed within the Jurchen Coalition during these pre-Imperial years. Yingge commanded that Wosai, in the company of a man named Yehe 冶訶, take a force of Wanyan warriors to investigate complaints he had heard about a *bojin* named Nagennie 納根涅. Wosai and Yehe discovered that Nagennie had abused his power and had unlawfully conscripted warriors from the people living along the Subin River 蘇濱水²¹⁸ in order to fulfill tasks assigned to his own troops. Further investigation revealed that Nagennie often preyed on and persecuted the settlements along the Subin River. Upon hearing that representatives from Yingge were arriving, Nagennie hid himself and then fled the region with his followers. Yet, in spite of Nagennie's obvious wrongdoing and abuse of the Subin people, Yehe and a number of others with him did not want to pursue the disobedient *bojin*. Wosai refused to let Nagennie flee unscathed. He rebuked Yehe and his companions and marched to off to pursue Nagennie and his forces. Wosai's group eventually caught up with Nagennie and the subsequent battle resulted in Nagennie's death. Wosai then returned to the Subin River region and worked to soothe and reconcile the Subin River clans to Coalition

²¹⁸Known today as the Da Suifen River 大綏芬河.

rule. Yingge was pleased with his service and appointed him along with Wosai's companion, Wolu 斡魯, to the Subin River where they governed (*zhi* 治) all of the clans living there.²¹⁹

The experience of Wosai and Nagennie shows how leadership and authority was allocated within the Jurchen Coalition in the years prior to dynastic rule. It is not known whether Nagennie's position as *bojin* was bestowed on him by previous Coalition leaders, or whether he received it by election from those who followed him. In either case, he held authority to raise or conscript warriors from among the clans living along the Subin River. This is further evidence supporting the theory that Coalition leaders were granted areas of jurisdiction or territory that they were free, to an extent, to govern however they saw fit.²²⁰ Yet, when Nagennie's rule became too onerous for those he governed, the people were able to circumvent Nagennie's authority and appeal directly to Coalition leadership within the Anchuhu River valley. In this instance, Yingge was told of Nagennie's abuse of power through reports submitted to him by the people under Nagennie's rule. The fact that Yingge then had the power and responsibility to send representatives of his authority to the Subin River valley to investigate these claims confirms that the Anchuhu Wanyan clan, specifically the *jiedushi* of the Coalition, had the power to punish or remove any *bojin* from his position of leadership. Nagennie's action of hiding and then fleeing from Wosai and Yehe suggests that he was very aware of the potential punishment he would receive at the hands of Yingge's representatives.

Nagenie's flight and Yehe's reluctance to pursue him complicates the inner workings of Coalition leadership during this time because it suggests that the power of the

²¹⁹ *Jinshi* 65.1547.

²²⁰ Previous discussions of this idea were raised in chapter two when analyzing Wuchun's early dissention from the leadership of Helibo.

jiedushi may not have been as absolute as it was purported to be. The ability to physically remove oneself and one's followers from the jurisdiction and rule of a regime was a relatively common event in the pre-modern world; among the Jurchen of the early 12th century it seemed to have been an acceptable avenue of self-defense. The large number of Jurchen refugees from Helan Dian who presented themselves at the borders of Goryeo after the victories of Shishihuan testify of this phenomenon, not to mention the prominent case of the Heshilie leader Ashu fleeing to the Liao Dynasty for political asylum. The fact that Yehe and others with him were reluctant to pursue the fleeing Nagennie suggests that while they might not have condoned his actions against the people of the Subin River region, they saw his escape from Yingge's justice as a sufficient punishment and saw no need to confront him directly. He had already removed himself the situation, and if a *bojin*'s authority within the Coalition organization was primarily delineated by territory then his flight effectively removed him from his position of power. Wosai, however, refused to allow him to escape the authority of the Anchuhu Wanyan and convinced his men to pursue Nagennie. This sentiment can be considered similar to that of the Anchuhu Wanyan leaders like Yingge and Polashu who made consistent demands of both Liao and Goryeo to hand over those refugees who fled to their lands to escape Anchuhu authority.

Wosai's pursuit of Nagennie was many years prior to his being assigned by Wuyashu to lead a Jurchen counterattack against the armies of Goryeo in Helan Dian. Wosai was appointed as the primary commander of the Jurchen offensive. His assistant officers were his trusted associate Wolu, and two other Jurchen leaders from the Hegu 劔古 and Pucha 蒲察

tribes.²²¹ By the time Wosai and his soldiers reached Helan Dian, the walled settlements or forts of Goryeo had already been erected and local Jurchen resistance had met with mixed success. While there is some record of successful ambushes perpetrated on Goryeo forces en route to certain locations, prior to the arrival of the Wanyan Coalition armies most Jurchen groups were crushed by the armies of Goryeo. During this time, a number of Jurchen chieftains (*sujang* 首長) of Helan Dian chose to surrender instead of resist. In one example, a chieftain named A Rohwan 阿老喚 and others approached the Goryeo army and surrendered themselves and their 1,460 plus followers.²²² There is also some evidence that Goryeo may have relied on Jurchen allies or conscripted laborers to construct their walled settlements and places of fortification.²²³

In order to combat an enemy that was entrenched within its nine walled forts or settlements, Wosai chose to divide his Coalition soldiers into ten smaller bands (*dui* 隊) that each advanced and attacked independently of the others.²²⁴ It is not alluded to in the sources, but it makes sense that if the armies of Goryeo in Helan Dian were centered around the nine walled forts they had erected in preparation of the Anchuhu attack, then Wosai's division of his army into ten groups may have served a purpose in observing and harassing each of the nine various Goryeo contingents (with one band free to reinforce where needed). Exactly

²²¹ *Jinshi* 65.1547. Although Wolu is not mentioned in Wosai's biography as specifically being an assistant commander, his later position as Wosai's replacement supports the idea that Wolu was by Wosai's side during his time as general. The two assistant commanders mentioned in Wosai's biography are Huonizhuo 活你茁 of the Hegu tribe and Digunai 狄古迺 of the Pucha. Although the Pucha tribe is well attested in the sources, the Hegu are more difficult to identify and may have been a comparatively smaller Jurchen lineage.

²²² *Goryeo sa* 96.17.144.

²²³ *Goryeo sa* 12.35.256. In this instance, reference is given to Yun Gwan using "pacified Jurchen" (*pyeongjeong nyeojin* 平定女真) to construct some of the new fortresses.

²²⁴ *Jinshi* 65.1547.

how the Jurchen chose to combat their enemy is left very vague in the Jurchen record and therefore must be gleaned from the Goryeo sources.

The *Goryeo sa* records that the first major attack on their position in Helan Dian was against the newly erected walled settlement in Ung-ju 雄州, when tens of thousands of Jurchen troops gave a tremendous battle cry, rushed the gate, and encircled the walls.²²⁵ It seems that the Goryeo commanding officer within the fort at that time was Choe Hongjeong 崔弘征, and together with his officers they devised a plan of attack against their enemy outside the walls. The Goryeo soldiers simultaneously opened all four gates of the fort and rushed out to attack the surrounding Jurchen warriors. Whether the Jurchen were surprised or unprepared for this maneuver is left unsaid, but their containment of the Goryeo forces was shattered and they took heavy losses before forcing the soldiers back into the walled settlement. In addition to taking eighty heads in the battle, the Goryeo soldiers were able to capture a number of horses and other supplies from the Jurchen army.²²⁶

The narrative of these months in late 1107 and early 1108 is difficult to reconstruct due to the differences between the *Jinshi* and *Goryeo sa* accounts. The story contained in the *Goryeo sa* gives the impression that the Jurchen were being routed throughout the region. Hundreds of Jurchen were reportedly taken prisoner or beheaded. Horses and other supplies

²²⁵ *Goryeo sa* 96.17.144. The *Goryeo sa* rarely records who was in command of which Jurchen forces. This army of “tens of thousands (*suman* 數萬)” is similarly unidentified and could therefore have not been under the direction of Wosai at all. However, the attributed size of the attacking force lends support to the idea that this was not merely a local skirmish, but was instead an organized assault on a stronghold of Goryeo power in the region.

²²⁶ *Goryeo sa* 96.17.144. Despite the number of Jurchen soldiers being numbered as “tens of thousands,” the amount of equipment captured suggests that the numbers were much more modest. Of the supplies captured, there were forty horses, 200 carts (*jungcha* 中車?), and fifty plus wagons designed to hold prisoners of war (*hoekbyeongcha* 獲兵車?). Furthermore, it is possible that this first failed attack was one of the reasons that Wosai commanded the Coalition forces to be divided into ten smaller, more mobile bands.

were captured in large amounts as Yun Gwan and his various commanders traveled between the nine forts attacking, and being attacked by, Jurchen warriors. The *Goryeo sa* retains this image of Goryeo dominance up to early 1109 when a representative of Wuyashu supposedly approached Yun Gwan's personally led force and requested that peace be made. The details of this episode will be treated later, but the importance for this discussion is that the *Goryeo sa* records very few defeats at Jurchen hands.

This is in contrast to the terse description of events as remembered by the Jurchen in the *Jinshi* which speaks of Wosai marching into Helan Dian and crushing the Goryeo forces there. The record tells of Wosai "encircling their forts" (*cheng* 城) as a method to defeat them. And while the first episode of a large Jurchen force encircling a Goryeo fort did not go so well for the Jurchen attackers, the *Goryeo sa* actually tells of a second siege of the walled settlement in Ung-ju 雄州 that was more successful. This second attack came in the early months of 1108 and effectively cut off the entrenched Goryeo soldiers from any escape. The Jurchen supposedly did this by erecting a wooden palisade (*chaek* 柵) that circled the existing outer wall of the fort.²²⁷ In fact, this palisade was so effective in trapping the Ung-ju soldiers that upon hearing of their plight, King Yejong commanded the Military Vice Marshall, O Jeongchong 吳廷寵 to lead a rescue force wielding hatchets and large axes to presumably cut down the palisade wall.²²⁸ Another passage of the *Goryeo sa* tells that Yun Gwan was forced to march to the rescue of the walled settlement in Gil-ju 吉州 which had

²²⁷ *Goryeo sa* 96.22.146; 12.35.256.

²²⁸ *Goryeo sa* 12.36.256.

similarly been surrounded by hostile Jurchen forces.²²⁹ Thus, while the *Jinshi* account lacks the level of detail contained in the *Goryeo sa*, its mention of Wosai's army relying heavily on a tactic of encircling the many walled settlements in Helan Dian is corroborated by Goryeo's record of the conflict.

Another possible contribution to Jurchen success in the war over Helan Dian was the erection of nine Jurchen forts, each mirroring and built proximate to one of the nine forts utilized by Goryeo. These forts seem to have been the idea of Wosai's longtime friend, Wolu, who temporarily took over command of Coalition forces in Helan Dian while Wosai returned to his homeland to attend to his dying mother.²³⁰ During Wolu's time in charge, he supposedly directed the construction of these nine Jurchen forts. However, despite the writings of Herbert Franke to the contrary, I have yet to locate any reference to these forts in the *Goryeo sa*.²³¹ In any case, Wolu's leadership was relinquished back to Wosai near the end of 1108 and the former commander renewed his attacks on Goryeo soldiers and settlements.

The fighting between Goryeo and the Anchuhu Wanyan-led Jurchen significantly disrupted both regimes and dominated the social and political activities of both governments. Yet, the disruption to the Jurchen population and local inhabitants of Helan Dian must have been enormous. Whether it was Coalition soldiers arriving from the deeper forests and

²²⁹ *Goryeo sa* 96.22.146.

²³⁰ *Jinshi* 65.1547. Wosai's mother, Heniwei 和你隈, had become seriously ill and called out for her son.

²³¹ Franke, "Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (II)," 451, n149. Franke states that the *Goryeo sa* "mentions the destruction of nine fortresses built by the Jurchen" and that "the [*Goryeo sa*] repeatedly admits heavy losses suffered by the Koreans." However, my experience with the text has revealed no mention of the Jurchen forts and only rarely mentions a Goryeo defeat. In regards to why the compilers of the *Goryeo sa* may have not included reference to the Jurchen forts, it is possible that they just did not find them to be pertinent to the chronicle. Yet if this was the case, it is surprising that after all of the tactics of siege and encirclement used by the Jurchen, that the armies of Goryeo would not have also attempted to reciprocate by besieging a walled Jurchen fort.

mountains of the northeast, or whether it was Goryeo troops establishing new forts and capturing surrounding villages, the people of Helan Dian were forced to live within a war zone for five out of the six years from 1103 to 1108. During that time, there was great upheaval among both the Jurchens and the subjects of Goryeo. For example, during the war a number of Jurchen groups working and fighting within Helan Dian abandoned the cause of the Anchuhu Wanyan and sought refuge among the people of Goryeo. Late in 1107, a group of 3,230 Eastern Jurchen led by a man named Nyo Eulnae 曩乙乃 approached the borders of Goryeo and chose to ally themselves (*bu* 附) with the kingdom of the peninsula.²³² The fact that this group is labeled as a group of “Eastern Jurchen” strongly suggests that these were subjects formerly under the leadership of Wuyashu and the Anchuhu Wanyan clan.²³³ As for the people of Goryeo, at one point the fighting with the Jurchen became so intense that after receiving word of a recent Jurchen attack, King Yejong commanded that his closest attendants offer up prayers within the temples of the capital city along with sacrificial oils, incense, bows, and swords.²³⁴

Peace is forged

Finally, in 1109, three years after Goryeo’s massive assault on Helan Dian, the desire for peace led to a truce between Goryeo and the Jurchen of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition. However, just as the *Jinshi* and *Goryeo sa* differed in their descriptions of the war, they also

²³² *Goryeo sa* 12.30.253. No other record is given of this particular Jurchen leader and his people. It can only be assumed that it was groups and individuals like Niaoyi’nai that were the subjects of the later demands by the Jurchen to turn over all refugees and others seeking to escape the rule of the Anchuhu Wanyan.

²³³ While Goryeo’s use of an “eastern,” “western” distinction between Jurchen clans is ambiguous and difficult to reconcile to the lack of such a distinction within the *Jinshi* record, the *Goryeo sa* is consistent in labeling the Anchuhu leaders as rulers of the “Eastern Jurchen.”

²³⁴ *Goryeo sa* 12.36.256.

disagree on which side first called for a cessation of hostilities. The *Jinshi* describes Goryeo's desire to surrender in very general terms with no mention of a Goryeo envoy or representative. The *Goryeo sa* on the other hand provides a more detailed narrative involving a named Jurchen leader who presented himself before the Goryeo commander Yun Gwan. Perhaps it is not surprising that each record attributes the other side as being the first to sue for peace. Neither side wanted to present itself as weak or unable to prove victorious in war. Of the scholars that even mention the Jurchen-Goryeo wars of the early 12th century, most attribute victory to the Anchuhu Waynan and imply that the Jurchen desired to make peace with Goryeo in order to better position themselves to confront the Liao and avoid war on two fronts.²³⁵ However, such an interpretation of events seriously distorts the historical picture and assumes that the Anchuhu Wanyan had intentions to move against the Liao as early as 1103. This teleological interpretation fails to take into account the previously cited passage indicating that as late as 1106, a large majority of Wuyashu's closest advisors and clansmen feared angering the Liao and advocated that Goryeo be allowed to retain the land and population of Helan Dian unchallenged. Finally, the record found in the *Goryeo sa* concerning the cessation of hostilities is much more detailed than that of the *Jinshi* and therefore the Goryeo interpretation of events should be given just as much weight as the more general description of the *Jinshi*.

The *Goryeo sa* records that while Yun Gwan and his army were marching from the forts of Jeong-ju to Gil-ju they passed through a village (*chon* 村) in Ham-ju 咸州 called

²³⁵ Tao, *The Jurchen in Twelfth-Century China*, 17-18; Chan, *Legitimation in Imperial China*, 56. In Franke, "The Chin Dynasty," in CHC vol.6, 220-21 mention of the war is given only in passing as the Jurchens under Wuyashu had "achieved sufficient power to be able to stabilize their border with Korea."

Nabokgi 那卜其. While there, a Goryeo official named Yu Wonseo 俞元胥 rushed to commander Gwan and reported that a number of Jurchen leaders were standing outside the village gates and yelling over the wall.²³⁶ Their words are remembered as “We have lately traveled to [Anchuhu] village. The *taishi*, Wuyashu, desires to ask for peace. [He has] sent us to communicate this to the military commanders. 我輩昨到阿之古村太師烏雅束欲請和使我傳告兵馬使”²³⁷ The Jurchen envoy continued his message and after some delicate negotiations involving where the two parties could safely meet, Yun Gwan and the Anchuhu representatives began the process of solidifying a peace between the two sides.

After this initial meeting with Yun Gwan in the field, two of the three named Anchuhu Wanyan envoys were escorted to the Goryeo court where they were allowed to present their message to King Yejong.²³⁸ The names of these two envoys are given as Nyobul 裊弗 and Sahan 史顯, with Nyobul attributed as the leader of the group. Again, because these two Jurchen envoys are unknown in the *Jinshi* record they may have been dismissed by current scholars and ascribed as merely the fancy of *Goryeo* court scribes. Whatever the case, there are multiple entries within the *Goryeo sa* that record the arrival, presentation, and departure of these named envoys who supposedly represented the Anchuhu Wanyan. This is not to say that the Goryeo record is completely without contradiction. For example, four months previous to Nyobul and Sahan’s arrival in the Goryeo capital, two

²³⁶ The names of these Jurchen leaders are given as Gong Hyeong 公兄, Nyobul 裊弗, and Sahan 史顯. None of these names bear resemblance to any particular individual referenced in the *Jinshi* record, but Sahan (ch. Shixian) was a common enough name among the Jurchen. (See chapter one for the story of Shixian 石顯 of the Hailan Wulinda clan who opposed Wugunai and spent his last days within the custody of the Liao Empire.)

²³⁷ *Goryeo sa* 96.23.147.

²³⁸ Nyobul and Sahan are the only named representatives among the Jurchen who attended court in mid-1109. Gongheong remained within political custody as a hostage to guarantee the good faith of Nyobul and Sahan.

Eastern Jurchen men arrived at the capital for the supposedly second time to make another request for peace.²³⁹ However, there is no record of their previous visit in the text, not to mention that there is no reference to a previous peace delegation having been sent prior to Nyobul's audience when this latter party received its audience with King Yejong. Had the Anchuhu Wanyan been trying to halt the war for months previous to Nyobul's successful negotiations in the Goryeo capital? Was this earlier group unaffiliated with the Anchuhu Wanyan and were they instead seeking a peace agreement between Goryeo and one of the regional populations? It is unclear where this earlier party may have come from, but their presence indicates that months prior to the cease fire at Nabokgi village Jurchen representatives may have been seeking an end to the war.

Nyobul's message is recorded in the *Goryeo sa* as follows:

In former times, our *taishi* Yingge often spoke of our ancestors (*jojong* 祖宗) who traveled out from the Great Country (*daebang* 大邦, i.e. Goryeo). And now, their descendants have been united and have pledged allegiance to follow the commands of the *taishi* Wuyashu. In addition, they consider the Great Country (Goryeo) as the country of their fathers and mothers. In 1104, when we heard that the people of Gunghan village 弓漢村 were not obedient, the *taishi* directed those he commanded to raise up soldiers to reprimand/warn (*jing* 懲) them. [Your] kingdom and court (Goryeo) believed that we were transgressing the borders and sent out soldiers to attack [the soldiers] then allowed the restoration of good relations. Court tribute (*gong* 貢) was not cut off or questioned. Last year (1108), there was a great uprising and [soldiers] entered [our territory] and murdered our elderly and our young, and occupied nine forts; causing [people] to flee into exile, or to scattered locations, and stopping their ability to return. Hence, the *taishi* has [commanded] us to come and request the old territory, (i.e. a return to the previous borderlines). If [you] return the requested nine forts, and let the people safely return to their livelihoods, then we will vow to Heaven that from generation to generation our descendants will all respect [the borders?] and resume this generation's

²³⁹ *Goryeo sa* 13.4.260. These two Jurchen envoys were named Sahan 史顯 and Gwansae 款塞. Again, the name Sahan (or Shixian) was relatively common among the Jurchen of this time, but it seems unlikely that two men shared the same name, same mission, but arrived at court with different parties, three months apart.

tribute, moreover none will dare to take worthless things (*wali* 瓦礫, lit. rubble, ruins) to erect on the border.

昔我太師盈歌嘗言我祖宗出自大邦。至于子孫義合歸附令太師烏雅束亦以大邦為父母之國。在甲申年間弓漢村人不順太師指諭者舉兵懲之。國朝以我為犯境，出兵征之，復許修好。故我信之，朝貢不絕不謂。去年大舉而入殺我耄倪，置九城，使流亡靡所止歸。故太師使我來請舊地，若還許九城，使安生業，則我等告天為誓，至于世世子孫恪修世貢，亦不敢以瓦礫投松境上²⁴⁰

Nyobul's address provides a number of salient points concerning the Goryeo-Jurchen conflict of this period. At best, this record contains some of the points actually presented to the Goryeo court during the peace negotiations between the representatives of Yejong and Wuyashu. At worst, the entire passage is fabricated and thus conveys the Goryeo perception behind possible Jurchen motivations driving their hostility and eventual desires for peace. Either way, our understanding of the conflict is enriched by its inclusion in this study.

The first issue raised by this passage is the reference to Yingge's alleged preaching among his clansmen that Goryeo was the homeland of his ancestors. The narrative of the early Jin dynastic lineage does indeed begin within the lands of Goryeo with two of three brothers who migrated north to settle in Jurchen territory. Still, we are unable to identify whether this conception of Goryeo as a "motherland" to the ruling house of the Jurchen was truly an issue for Wuyashu and the other Jurchen leaders, or if instead it was merely an idealized concept of later Goryeo officials seeking to strengthen the connection between the two regimes. After the founding of the dynasty, this connection was glorified in Goryeo chronicles as a way to link the ruling houses of the two states.²⁴¹

²⁴⁰ *Goryeo sa* 13.7.262.

²⁴¹ Chan, *Legitimation in Imperial China*, 55.

Next, the reason for the aggression of the Jurchen Coalition forces in 1104 is ascribed to a mobilization of warriors who marched south to reprimand the inhabitants of a particular village identified as Gunghan 弓漢村.²⁴² No mention is made regarding the desire of some of the Helan Dian inhabitants to join the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition. Nor is there mention of Goryeo's soldiers pursuing and preventing the envoys of these groups from reaching the Anchuhu Wanyan leaders. However, it is possible that the people of Gunghan village were one of these groups that desired to transfer their political allegiance away from Goryeo to the Jurchen Coalition. If this were the case, then the fact that armed Jurchen warriors marched to the defense of villages like Gunghan was later interpreted within the record as the Jurchen warriors arriving not to protect these villages, but to punish them for being "disobedient" to Goryeo. While such a scenario seems unlikely in light of the Jurchen tale of Goryeo aggression against the Anchuhu appropriation/conquest of Helan Dian in 1104, it is possible that Wuyashu and these Jurchen envoys hoped to use the age-old excuse of a "simple misunderstanding" as a way to circumvent the emotions associated with years of war and bloodshed. However, it is more likely that this interpretation of events was utilized by the courts of Goryeo as a way to justify the peace accord to its own subjects; in other words, this was probably a story designed for domestic consumption. Another possibility regarding the region of Gunghan, is that it is possible that this was the term used to identify the region known to the Jurchen as Helan Dian. Neither name appears in both historical records; Helan Dian is a region mentioned in the *Jinshi*, and Gunghan is found in the *Goryeo sa*. As for the validity of claims identifying Gunghan Village as a central component to the motivating

²⁴² The location of this village is unknown, although it was presumably within the contested Helan Dian region, since the arrival of Anchuhu Wanyan warriors was perceived by Goryeo as a transgression of their borders.

factors surrounding this conflict, there are passages within other locations of the *Goryeo sa* that support such a view.

Gunghan Village, or the area of Gunghan (*Gunghan-ri* 弓漢里), was mentioned in the address of a high Goryeo official Geum Injon 金仁存 to King Yejong during the debates that followed the arrival of the Jurchen envoys from Wuyashu. Some of those demands are mentioned in the passage above but the full list of demands included not only the return of land conquered in the most recent campaigns (including the nine walled settlements), but it also stipulated that all Jurchen refugees and exiles be released back into Jurchen custody. King Yejong was undecided on whether or not he should acquiesce to the Jurchen offer of peace. The officials of the Goryeo court disagreed on what should be done and because no consensus could be reached, Yejong invited Geum Injon to give his opinion on the matter. In his lengthy response to the king, Injon identified that the proclaimed purpose of the forts' construction was in order to lay claim to the Gunghan area and to provide a way to protect the inhabitants from bandits and other attackers.²⁴³ Thus, it would seem that the motivation of both sides was to exert a greater presence and control over the land and people inhabiting the Coalition-Goryeo borderlands. Be it that the historical records from each side profess that their intentions were only to protect the people living there. Aside from mentioning the role of Gunghan Village in the decision to build the nine walled settlements, Geum Injon also spoke of why he felt it was important that the land be returned to Jurchen hands; and that reason involved the response such an action would have received from the Liao Dynasty.

²⁴³ *Goryeo sa* 96.5.138.

The role of the Liao in Jurchen-Goryeo Relations: Multi-state System of East Asia

The conflict between the Anchuhu Wanyan and the kingdom of Goryeo took place within a busy multi-state system composed of a hierarchy of multiple emperors (*huangdi* 皇帝), kings, and complex strata of various tributary or auxiliary tribes, groups, and chieftains. This multi-state system has been a recognized feature of the 10th and 11th centuries in Asian history, yet too often it is labeled as an outcome of a powerful process of acculturation or assimilation of Chinese culture, known as sinicization. However, the issue is much more complicated than any process of a slow absorption of one group into another.²⁴⁴ Instead of focusing on how “Chinese” a particular group or regime became, it is more worthwhile to investigate which aspects of Chinese tradition and culture were adopted by these groups and what may have motivated their decisions to do so. In other words, the adoption of foreign customs and systems is in large part a conscious process of selective appropriation.

In the East Asian world of the 10 and 11th centuries, numerous states adopted a political system based on the government structures of the fallen Tang Dynasty. Chinese language was the language of international diplomacy and played a large part in the bureaucratic management of the state but the adoption of Chinese language should not be perceived as an indicator of Chinese acculturation. During the 10 and 11th centuries, the prevalence of new scripts invented to be used in conjunction with Chinese indicates that these groups aspired to elevate their native languages to the status then held by the Chinese

²⁴⁴ For more information on the controversy surrounding sinicization and its prevalence in China’s history see Evelyn Rawski, “Reenvisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing Period in Chinese History,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55.4 (1996): 829-50; Ho Ping-ti, “In Defense of Sinicization: A Rebuttal of Evelyn Rawski’s ‘Reenvisioning the Qing,’” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 57.1 (1998): 123-55; Tao Jing-Shen, *The Jurchen in Twelfth-Century China: A Study of Sinicization* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976).

script.²⁴⁵ Moreover, the fact that classical Chinese texts were translated into these languages does not necessarily indicate that the people were trying to become more “Chinese” in the sense of becoming more like the Song Dynasty and the other native-Chinese speaking populations of China Proper. Rather, it means that these classical texts were valued as the foundations of thought, statecraft, and philosophy in East Asia. Any emulation of their teachings was done in the same spirit of learning that accompanied the study of such texts in areas of China Proper. All participants in the multi-state system utilized the standard pattern of governance and statecraft established by the Tang, and therefore should be considered as having been striving to become more Tang-like, if anything.

The identification of this multi-state system of the 10th and 11th centuries has not been lost on contemporary scholars. In his introduction to the sixth volume of the *Cambridge History of China* dealing with the empires of Kitan-Liao, Tangut-Xia, Jurchen-Jin, and Mongol-Yuan, Herbert Franke recognizes that the long interaction between the Tang and its neighbors facilitated the spread of Tang-style bureaucracy and rule. In addition, he states that “Chinese-style bureaucratic governance became the political norm in East Asia...” However, despite his recognition of the ubiquitous utilization of the Tang-system of governance, Franke still perceived of it as distinctly “Chinese” and ascribed its adoption by non-Chinese populations as a “[lengthy] reverse process” of acculturation that accompanied a

²⁴⁵ The first Kitan script, or “large” script, was created in 920 and like Chinese was primarily logographic (i.e. one character per word). The later “small” script was developed in 925 and was a combination of logographic characters and syllabograms (i.e. phonetic symbols. In Kitan small script, these phonetic symbols were assembled into box-like composite characters). The Tangut script was designed in 1036 following the establishment of the Tangut-Xia Dynasty. Jurchen script was created in 1119 and was in use up through the 14th century. See Atwood, *Encyclopedia of Mongolia*, 314-15, 275; Kane, *Sino-Jurchen Vocabulary*, x.

loss of Chinese-controlled territory to these outside groups.²⁴⁶ Rossabi's 1983 edited volume, *China Among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and Its Neighbors, 10th-14th Centuries*, attempted to raise awareness of the "non-Chinese" states that played a large part in what is considered Chinese history.²⁴⁷ Nearly all studies investigating international relations during this period acknowledge this network of governments that interacted with each other according to shared and established patterns and protocols.²⁴⁸

While this study is not a cultural history of East Asia, it is important to recognize that one's culture and identity is rooted in much deeper stuff than language and political ideology.²⁴⁹ Moreover, the content and message of the cultural marker in question should be evaluated for the impact it would have on one who consciously adopted it. For example, it would be hard to argue that the teachings of Confucius would not be considered central to traditional Chinese culture. And that the adoption of Confucian teachings would mark an adoption of an important component of Chinese cultural identity. Yet, those internalizing the message of the Confucian ethos would not necessarily perceive of themselves as having drawn closer to any particular cultural identity, and certainly they would not have considered

²⁴⁶ Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett, "Introduction," in Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett, eds., *Alien Regimes and Borderstates, 907-1368* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 2.

²⁴⁷ Morris Rossabi, *China Among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and Its Neighbors, 10th-14th Centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

²⁴⁸ To cite only a few, this system was identified as a "Far Eastern state system" that involved a balance of power in Winston Lo, *An Introduction to the Civil Service of Sung China: With Emphasis on its Personnel Administration* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1987), 5; and a "multipolar international system" in Wang Zhenping, *Ambassadors from the Islands of Immortals: China-Japan Relations in the Han-Tang Period* (Honolulu: Association for Asian Studies and University of Hawai'i Press), 227;

²⁴⁹ Michael M. J. Fisher, "Ethnicity and the Post-Modern Arts of Memory," in James Clifford and George E. Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 196; Kenneth Swope, "All Men are Not Brothers: Ethnic Identity and Dynastic Loyalty in the Ningxia Mutiny of 1592," *Late Imperial China* 24.1 (June 2003): 79-129.

themselves more Chinese. The principle of filial piety alone would ensure a renewed commitment to one's heritage and ethnic lineage more than it would obfuscate it.²⁵⁰

The royal line of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan would eventually rise to dominate this East Asian multistate system, but prior to their ascension it was the Kitan-Liao who stood at the pinnacle of the multistate hierarchy. The looming presence of the Liao Dynasty can be felt throughout the entire history of the pre-imperial Jurchen clans, who were fully considered a tributary or subject people by the Liao emperors. The negotiation with the Liao center and the accumulation of local power in the northeast by the Anchuhu Wanyan clan has been at the very heart of this study. And yet, the Liao dominance over East Asia was not limited to the northeast, but included many of the other people and regions. Most notably, the Liao were officially recognized as the diplomatic equals of the Song Dynasty. Yet, even in that relationship, the Liao held the prerogative of being the superior of the two in both discourse and the direction of annual payments, or tribute, between courts.²⁵¹

The Liao Emperor wielded his influence to steer international relations between states in East Asia. The Liao's involvement in the war between the Song Dynasty and the Tangut-Xia mentioned previously is an example of this role of mediator. The Liao not only appointed ambassadors to travel to the two countries, but also sponsored a peace summit within Liao territory.²⁵² In addition to the Song-Xia conflict, the Liao often intruded on the relationship between Goryeo and the Song court in an effort to retain Goryeo's undivided

²⁵⁰ This example of "Confucianization" as opposed to "Sinicization" was treated in John W. Dardess, *Conquerors and Confucians: Aspects of Political Change in Late Yuan China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), 33.

²⁵¹ David Curtis Wright, *From War to Diplomatic Parity in Eleventh-century China: Sung's Foreign Relations with Kitan-Liao* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

²⁵² *Liaoshi* 27.322.

allegiance and tribute. In 1019, following the Liao invasion of Goryeo, the smaller kingdom agreed to reinstate its formal tributary relationship with the Liao, along with an adoption of the Liao calendar (abandoning the previously used Song calendar).²⁵³

In the war between Goryeo and the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition, both sides fully expected Liao intervention and retaliation for the conflict. As cited above, the majority of Wuyashu's advisors and kinsmen advised the *jiedushi* not to raise soldiers to push Goryeo out of the Helan Dian region for fear of Liao punishment.²⁵⁴ Fear of Liao retribution was also an issue raised within the court of Goryeo while the officials discussed whether or not to return the nine walled settlements or forts. In addition to identifying Gunghan Village as a key reason for the construction of the nine forts, Geum Injon advocated that King Yejong return the land and walled settlements to the Jurchen, and to withdraw Goryeo soldiers from the region. Injon said that to not return the land to the Jurchen would surely cause a rift (*heun* 釁) between Goryeo and Liao. When Yejong asked him to explain why that would be, Injon replied that when the forts were first built, they (Goryeo) had announced to the Liao that their construction was due to the fact that the Gunghan area was traditionally claimed by Goryeo.²⁵⁵ Moreover, the forts were meant to protect the region from bandits and thieves who would otherwise prey on the people of that region. However, if the chieftains (*sujang* 首長) of the Gunghan region had indeed accepted Kitan-Liao officials, then the Liao would

²⁵³ Rogers, "The Regularization of Koryŏ-Chin Relations, 52.

²⁵⁴ *Jinshi* 135.2883.

²⁵⁵ *Goryeo sa* 13.4.260. This mission to the Liao to announce the construction of the nine forts was led by a man named Ri Yeorim 李汝霖, and supposedly left Goryeo only four months prior to Nyobul and Sahan's arrival.

think Goryeo's reasons for building the forts were only lies (*mangeon* 妄言) and would surely increase their demands on the country.²⁵⁶

The exact nature of Wuyashu's position as the Liao appointed *jiedushi* over the wild Jurchen may not have been well understood by the government officials in Goryeo. On the one hand, Yingge and Wuyashu had presented themselves to the Goryeo court as independent rulers: sending gifts, announcing victories over rebels, and appealing for less permeable borders for their Jurchen subjects. Yet, on the other hand, the Anchuhu Wanyan were still considered "officials" within the apparatus of the Liao Empire, be it distant officials who were only called upon in times of need. It is unclear if the Liao officials mentioned in Geum Injon's memorial to the King was in reference to the Gunghan (Helan Dian?) region leaders accepting the authority of Yingge and Wuyashu, or if there were in fact Kitan officials accepting the allegiance of regional Jurchen leaders living outside the borders of Goryeo. Due to the nature of the conflict, and the lack of direct Liao interference in the war, I am inclined to believe the former; that the Kitan-Liao authorities mentioned by Injon were in fact the officers under Wuyashu, the Liao "official" in charge of the wild Jurchen.

Conclusion

The details surrounding the process of the Jurchen-Goryeo peace agreement are sometimes contradictory and murky. Yet, a peace agreement was made. In 1109, likely following the missions of the Jurchen envoys to the Goryeo capital, peace was agreed upon by both parties and the battles along the Helan Dian and/or the Gunghan region came to a

²⁵⁶ *Goryeo sa* 96.5.138.

halt. The debates that assuredly took place among Goryeo officials regarding whether or not the land captured by Yun Gwan's massive assault should be returned to the Jurchen resulted in the young King Yejong agreeing to yield up the territory. The repatriation of Jurchen refugees and exiles was another facet of the peace agreement and likely resulted in the (in some cases, forced) relocation of Jurchen groups back into the lands of the north. Those clan leaders within the Goryeo borderlands who aligned themselves with the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition succeeded in pushing out the occupying Goryeo soldiers. However, the peace was not completely one-sided, for in 1109 the warriors of the Anchuhu were also pulled out of the area.²⁵⁷

The war with Goryeo occupied the majority of Wuyashu's reign and was a major campaign in the decade immediately prior to Aguda's pronouncement of the new Jurchen-Jin Dynasty. If the 1102 defeat of the Liao rebel, Xiao Haili, by the Anchuhu Wanyan soldiers was a formative moment in the history of the Coalition when they were able to compare their military strength to that of the Liao, then the successful campaigns against the large armies of Goryeo were surely another boost to Jurchen confidence in their ability to wage war on a large scale. Again, it is surprising how little treatment this period has received in secondary scholarship investigating the establishment of the Jurchen-Jin. The improvement experienced by the Jurchen in their military capability and organization during the years prior to their invasion of the Liao should be seen as a crucial component to Jurchen success in their later conquests. Without a proper understanding of the events of 1103-1109, the reign of Wuyashu as leader of the Jurchen Coalition is almost completely lost, and we are left with a

²⁵⁷ *Jinshi* 1.16.

jump from Yingge's advancements to Aguda's proclamation as an emperor. Such an oversight places the later Jurchen conquests within an almost miraculous light, in which they seemingly transformed overnight from a border auxiliary tribe to the most powerful force in East Asia. Armed with a more thorough understanding of the wars with Goryeo, the success of the Jurchen in their later invasion and occupation of Liao territory in 1114 is much less surprising.

The following chapter will look at the final years of Wuyashu's reign and the transition of power to his younger brother, Aguda. The Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition came out of the war with Goryeo a stronger and more confident power. This confidence was accompanied by an increasingly united Jurchen population under their leadership. The only remaining detractors to Anchuhu Wanyan authority over the Jurchens were held within the protective custody of the Liao Empire. The most notorious of their enemies was the Jurchen leader, Ashu, who had been working to undermine Anchuhu leadership for years and had gone as far as to send one of his men into Helan Dian back in 1103 to try to turn the population against them. Finally, the issue of the Liao Empire as the dominant power in the multistate system will be investigated within the context of the increasingly independent Jurchen Coalition.

Chapter Five: Prelude to Invasion

Introduction

The story of the consolidation of Jurchen power under the leadership of the rulers of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan is a story often presented as a prologue to the greater story of the early 12th century: the establishment of the Jurchen-Jin Dynasty, their conquest of the Liao Empire, and the later invasion of the Song. The Jurchen ascendance to power in East Asia over the Liao was the definitive event of their history, thus giving validation to the recording of their pre-imperial history. Without their eventual conquest of the Liao, the oral traditions of the early Jurchen describing the more distant ancestors of the royal Anchuhu Wanyan lineage would likely not have been written down. However, because of the later success of Aguda and his advisors in establishing a Jurchen empire and dynasty, the story of the pre-imperial Jurchen has had a powerful trajectory pointing toward an ultimate conflict between the newly united Jurchen and the Liao Empire.

For all of its weight as the climax of the pre-imperial Jurchen narrative, the actual causes for the Jurchen invasion and war with the Liao are somewhat murky. More importantly, very little is said explaining *how* the Jurchen were successful in conquering the Liao. Why, after firmly establishing their power as the penultimate authority among the wild Jurchen clans, and holding the sanction and authority of the Liao Empire, did the Anchuhu Wanyan lead their outnumbered warriors against the full might of the Kitan-Liao? More importantly, how did they succeed in such an endeavor? What was it about the Jurchens that made them such a potent foe to the Liao, and eventually Song, Empires? Furthermore, what

factors within the Liao may have contributed to its downfall at the hands of Aguda and his Jurchen generals? This chapter will attempt to answer those questions and investigate events surrounding the ascendance of the Jurchen Coalition over the Liao Dynasty. It will focus on the events leading up to the Jurchen attack on the Liao garrison at Ningjiang Prefecture in 1114 and will try to address the issues of why Aguda and his clan attacked, and how they were so successful.



A quick note on the sources

There are many different interpretations of the events surrounding the Jurchen conquest of Liao. Much of the reason for this confusion is rooted in the discrepancies in the extant sources. The founding of the Jurchen-Jin was vaulted to a position of immense consequence following the successful Jurchen invasions of Liao and Song. Writers both in and outside of the Jin Empire recorded how and why the Jurchen rose in power. However, the details of their rise differ significantly depending on who was doing the recording. The main sources of the period can be divided along the political/cultural lines of the time and separated into sources written by the Liao, the Jin, and finally the subjects of the Song. Within each of these traditions of Jin historiography, the details of motive, prominent individuals, and even dates and chronologies differ greatly. For example, in the main Song Dynasty source of these events, the *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 三朝北盟會編, the Bohai scholar, Yang Pu 楊朴, is credited with fostering Aguda's ambitions to become emperor (*huangdi* 皇帝) of a traditional East Asian bureaucratic empire.²⁵⁸ However, in the *Jinshi* record, Yang Pu is mentioned only briefly as one who functioned like a scribe who polished (*runse* 潤色) Aguda's diplomatic documents to the Liao.²⁵⁹

In recent decades, these many discrepancies have been the cause for a lively debate between historians in China and Japan. The key issues of this debate surround 1) the exact year that Aguda claimed the title of emperor (*huangdi* 皇帝) and announced the creation of a

²⁵⁸ *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 三朝北盟會編, 3.12b.

²⁵⁹ *Jinshi*, 84.1881. Yang Pu is not the only individual to have such discrepancies between records. The man known as Zanzhou 贊謀 of the Wulinda tribe was a key envoy of Aguda's court and yet he too has no biography within the Official History of the Jin, *Jinshi*. By all other account, Zanzhou played a crucial role in the diplomatic relationships between the early Jin and both the Liao and Song courts. For more information on Wulinda Zanzhou see: Zhou Feng 周峰, "Jindai qianqi zhongchen Wulinda Zanzhou tanze 金代前期重臣烏林答贊謀探蹟," *Journal of Inner Mongolia University (Humanities and Social Studies)* 內蒙古大學學報(人文社會科學版) 34.6 (2002): 105-112.

new dynasty and 2) the initial name of this new state.²⁶⁰ The arguments of the scholars on both sides of these debates are sophisticated and have merit. While a full exposition of the evidence put forth by these scholars stands outside the boundaries of this dissertation, when appropriate the implication of their arguments concerning how and why the Anchuhu Wanyan moved against the Liao will be addressed.

Final Years of Wuyashu – Influence of Aguda

Following the peace treaty with Goryeo in 1109, the Anchuhu Wanyan seemed to have experienced a respite of war. There is no record of any campaigns taking place in the final years of Wuyashu's reign, but that is not to say that there was no hardship. The *Jinshi* records that in 1109, the harvests failed and there was a general famine in the northeast. This famine could have been caused by the destructive frost recorded in the *Liaoshi* for that same

²⁶⁰ This academic conversation began in 1998 when scholar Liu Pujiang 刘浦江 re-interpreted the traditional narrative of the establishment of the Jurchen-Jin by giving preference to historical accounts written by former statesmen and envoys of the Song Dynasty who were contemporaries of Aguda and the founding of the of Jin Dynasty, over the narrative contained in the *Jinshi*. His article sparked numerous responses from the historical community in China who were forced to respond to Liu's assertions that the record as contained in the *Jinshi* and *Liaoshi* were inaccurate and secondary to the more primary accounts of the writers of the Song. Put simply, Liu claims that the Song Dynasty writers are historiographically a more reliable source of information on the early Jin and were largely consistent in identifying Aguda's empire as being founded in 1118 (3 years later than the date given in the *Jinshi*) and that it was initially known as "The Jurchen State" or *Nüzhen guo* 女贞国, instead of its later title of Jin 金, or "Gold." Scholarly responses to Liu's article put forth that the confusion can be derived from misunderstandings between the various languages and titles used by Liao, Song, and Jin courts as well as Liu's mistaken conclusions regarding certain Kitan tomb inscriptions. For the purposes of this paper, I have chosen to follow the traditional *Jinshi* dates and name of the state but try to leave room for the possibility that the exact dates of the events are currently being disputed. For more information see Liu Pujiang 刘浦江, "Guanyu Jinchao kaiguo shi de zhenshixing zhiyi 关于金朝开国史的真实性质疑," *Lishi yanjiu* 史研究, no.6 (1998): 59-72; for examples of counter-arguments to Liu's postulations see Aisingioro Ulhicun 爱新觉罗乌拉熙春, "Qidan xiaozhi 'Jindai Bozhou fangyu shi muzhiming' muzhu fei Yila Woliduo 契丹小字'金代博洲防御墓志铭'墓主非移刺斡里朵," *Manyu yanjiu* 研究, 44.1 (2007): 68-72; Li Xiulian 李秀莲, "Aguda cheng dubojilie yu Jinchao kaiguo shi zhi zhenwei yanjiu 阿骨打称都波极烈与金朝开国史之真伪研究," *Shixue yuekan* 史月刊, no.6 (2008): 43-49; Dong Sili 董四禮, "Ye tan Jin chu jianguo ji guohao nianhao 也谈金初建國及國號年號," *Collected Papers of History Studies (Heilongjiang University)* 史學集刊 6 (2008): 94-98.

year which destroyed much of the Liao harvest.²⁶¹ Faced with starvation, many people died or chose to migrate in search of better prospects. The strong took to theft and banditry while others sold wives and children in order to provide for themselves and their shattered families.²⁶² This time of famine and agitation among the population was the backdrop for the final years of Wuyashu's reign and the earliest years of Aguda's as the highest leader of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan. The fact that people were starving and growing desperate must be kept in mind when analyzing the contributing factors of the establishment of Jin. It was a period of upheaval that may have served as a catalyst for additional upheaval in the form of a war against the Liao Empire. One further aspect of these years of famine is that it can serve as an example of the type of government and style of rule within the Jurchen Coalition in the years prior to the founding of the Jin Dynasty. Furthermore, the response of the Anchuhu Wanyan to this hardship demonstrates the influence of Aguda as a leader within the ruling counsels of his clan years before he was actually elected to the seat of leadership.

The records indicate that the Anchuhu discussed what was to be done about the increase in lawlessness that accompanied the famine of 1109. In that council, Aguda, the younger brother of Wuyashu and future founding emperor of the Jurchen-Jin Empire is credited as having been the voice of moderation and compassion. Instead of pursuing a more punitive policy of intolerance towards banditry, Aguda supposedly advocated a policy of

²⁶¹ *Liaoshi* 27.324.

²⁶² *Jinshi* 2.22. See also Hok-lam Chan, "Calamities and Government Relief under the Jurchen Chin Dynasty (1115-1234)," *Papers on Society and Culture in Early Modern China* (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1992): 856. Reprinted in Herbert Franke and Hok-lam Chan, *Studies on the Jurchens and the Chin Dynasty* (Brookfield, Vermont: Ashgate, 1997).

leniency toward those who turned to theft and banditry during such hard times.²⁶³ He recommended that the normal fine of recompense paid to the victims of one's crimes of theft be reduced from ten times the amount stolen to only three times the amount. Aguda also recommend that the collection of taxes be suspended for the following three years, after which collections would return to normal.²⁶⁴ This decision to remit taxes was mirrored in the Liao Empire and may have been the inspiration for Aguda's plan to halt tax collection within the Coalition.²⁶⁵ However, Aguda's plan provided for three years of tax relief while the Liao's granted only one. The similarity between the two regimes suggests that the Anchuhu Wanyan retained close contacts with the Liao and were aware of policy and events within the Empire. Thus, prior to adopting the trappings of the East Asian Dynastic system, the Jurchen under the Anchuhu Wanyan were already applying principles they observed in the Liao system.

Little is said concerning how such policy decisions were made within the Jurchen Coalition, but it can be assumed that Wuyashu, acting as the *jiedushi* and head of the clan, made the final decision. Such counsels between members of the royal Anchuhu Wanyan family regarding the governance of the Coalition probably took place with some regularity. The counsel of kinsmen was a consistent aspect of rule among the Anchuhu Wanyan and seems to have been practiced to good effect in these early years of power.

²⁶³ *Jinshi* 2.22. Wuyashu and Aguda's cousin, Huandu 歡都 (son of Hesun 劬孫) was one of those pushing for greater punishments for those caught stealing, including a plan to kill all of those caught. Aguda's words were judged by Wuyashu to have been the better plan and thus his plan of leniency was the one implemented.

²⁶⁴ One insight provided by this passage is that the government structure under the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition regularly collected taxes from its subjects. This indicates that the "rudimentary government" (as described by Jing-shen Tao in his work, *The Jurchen in Twelfth-Century China*, 11) of the Anchuhu Wanyan prior to the establishment of the dynasty was able to not only keep to a procedure of regular tax collection, but it was also able to adjust its demands to the circumstances of its subjects.

²⁶⁵ *Liaoshi* 27.324. Although the Liao policy seems to have only remitted taxes for one year, 1109.

Aguda and his rulings on state matters continued to be held in very high regard during the reign of his brother Wuyashu. The brothers seemed to have had a close and supportive relationship, devoid of the fratricidal schemes and jealousies that would plague Jurchen rulers in later generations. Aguda's plan to alleviate the consequences of famine in 1109 is only one example of his voice in influencing Coalition decisions. Earlier during the reign of his uncle, Yingge, Aguda led Coalition commanders in the field and also advised his uncle on matters of governance.²⁶⁶ Under the rule of his brother, Wuyashu, Aguda's influence was only made stronger. Aguda's declaration that the Coalition was obligated to raise arms and resist the forces of Goryeo after the latter's invasion of Helan Dian was made in the face of opposition put forth by the other Coalition leaders and clansmen, yet it was his suggestion that Wuyashu implemented. Such examples demonstrate that he was a very powerful figure long before he was raised to the official position of ruler.²⁶⁷

Why did Aguda refuse to dance?

Consistent in all of the sources concerning the foundation of the Jurchen-Jin is the colorful story of Aguda's refusal to dance for the Liao Emperor during an imperial banquet held along the eastern frontier. This refusal to obey the commands of the emperor is usually interpreted as a sign of Aguda's ambition and designs to rebel against the Liao. The story is

²⁶⁶ *Jinshi* 1.12. The campaigns mentioned here were against those Jurchen leaders who opposed the authority of the Anchuhu Wanyan-led coalition of clans. These enemy Jurchen leaders were namely Liuke 留可, Zhadu 詐都, Wuta 塢塔, and Dikude 敵庫德 all of whom were members of various clans belonging to the Wugulun tribe 烏古論部. Aguda gave many suggestions to Yingge concerning the governing of the Coalition. In one, he recommended that all Jurchen leaders be forbidden from claiming the title of *du buzhang* 都部長 "General Chief of the tribes" (presumably to monopolize such titles to the use of sanctioned Coalition leaders). In another, he recommended that all official commands be transmitted using designated tablets, thus regulating administrative directives and limiting the unsanctioned use of authority by Coalition officers. (See *Jinshi* 1.15)

²⁶⁷ For more information on the counsel that deliberated war with Goryeo, see chapter 4.

probably the most widely cited anecdote of Aguda's life and is often presented in the same ominous tone that surely accompanied its original telling by Aguda's contemporaries. If it was not for its inclusion in nearly all of the historical sources, it would be tempting to dismiss the story as a later fabrication or hyperbole because of its dramatic nature. However, the story may go beyond the not-so-subtle message of Aguda as a potential rival and threat to the Liao emperor and may provide key insight into why the Anchuhu Wanyan clan chose to abandon their position as Liao-sanctioned rulers over the wild Jurchen clans and instead take up arms against the empire.

Early in 1112, the Liao emperor, Tianzuo, traveled to the frontiers of the empire where he was given an audience by the many tribal rulers and chieftains living within the region.²⁶⁸ The imperial retinue had a habit of annually camping along the Songhua River so that Tianzuo could fish. It is unclear whether the activity of fishing was the primary purpose for the expedition, but it was definitely a significant component of it.²⁶⁹ Fishing among the Liao emperors was not unheard of and seems to have held a special place within the repertoire of Kitan imperial recreation while traveling in the northeast. Indeed, this particular trip in question is referred to as having occurred annually according to an older tradition among the Kitan rulers.²⁷⁰ Mikami makes a convincing argument that this expedition was

²⁶⁸ The exact date of the expedition is unclear. The *Liaoshi* records that it was in the second month of the second year of the Tianqing 天慶 reign (1111-1120) while the *Sanchao beimeng huibian* says only that it was in the spring of that year.

²⁶⁹ The *Liaoshi* records that the many chieftains of the frontier tribes were assembled to attend an audience with the emperor, but it does not state that they were there specifically for the ritual of the emperor's fishing. While the *Sanchao beimeng huibian* states that the fishing was an established custom of the Liao Emperors and that it was a time for the regional chieftains to present tribute to the court.

²⁷⁰ The Kitan probably fished with a hook (*gou* 鈎) and rope as opposed to a rod and hooked line (*diao* 釣). The Songhua River seems to have been targeted specifically as a prime fishing location and is referred to as having been the place where Liao emperors fished and feasted. It is likely that the exact location along the river for this fishing trip was well-known among the clans, otherwise how would the chieftains have been expected to present

the annual fishing trip mentioned by Hong Hao in his *Songmo jiwén* when describing the area of Ningjiang Prefecture 寧江州.²⁷¹ Hong writes that every year in the spring, when the ice was just beginning to melt, the Liao Emperor would travel to Ningjiang Prefecture to fish and host a banquet that was attended by the many Jurchen chiefs.²⁷² In addition to its prime fishing, Ningjiang Prefecture was also an administrative center of the Liao Empire in the northeast, and a key trading post with the wild Jurchen clans. Thus, it is entirely believable that this would be the location of such an event, where the Liao Emperor could fish the waters of the river and hold court among his distant vassals.

Tianzuo's camp in 1112 is reported to have not only held court with the local tribal leaders, but it also hosted a ritual celebration called the First Fish Feast (*touyu yan* 頭魚宴) wherein the emperor hosted his guests with wine whenever he caught a fish.²⁷³ Tianzuo must have had quite a catch because the records describe the scene in 1112 as one in which all attendants had enjoyed a good amount of wine. It can be imagined that it was during this somewhat festive air that the emperor rose onto his carriage and demanded that each of the assembled chieftains step forward and dance for him and all those present.²⁷⁴ When it was

themselves in audience? Furthermore, this location may have been the same as “the fishing place” (*yusuo* 魚所) where Yingge was received by the Liao Emperor following the Anchuhu Wanyan victory over the Liao rebel, Xiao Haili. See *Jinshi* 1.15.

²⁷¹ Ningjiang Prefecture was located in today's Fuyu County 扶餘縣 in Jinlin 吉林 Province.

²⁷² Mikami Tsugio 三上次男著, *Kindai joshin shakai no kenkyū* 金代女真社會の研究, *Kindai kenkyū* 金代研究 1 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan 中央公論美術出版, 1970), 30.

²⁷³ The First Fish Feast was a type of ritualized banquet in which the emperor participated personally in the catching of a sturgeon or *niuyu* 牛魚. The success of the emperor was believed to carry with it a portent of the fortune of the empire in the following year. While some of the sources record the expedition as having taken place in the spring, the Kitan were well practiced in ice fishing and may have participated in this expedition in the late winter months. Kitan practices of ice fishing involved attracting fish by lighting small fires in depressed hollows of the ice and dropping hooked lines into nearby holes bored through the ice. See Wittfogel and Feng, 128 n31.

²⁷⁴ *Liaoshi* 27.326; 102.1439.

Aguda's turn to dance, he refused by saying that he was unable to do so (*buneng* 不能). He was commanded three times to dance, and three times he refused. Now, it is possible that the emperor's demand to dance was not something that regularly occurred at this type of annual gathering, but there is no indication that this request was particularly unusual or deemed as excessive. In fact, when Tianzuo was angry at Aguda's obstinacy, his advisor Xiao Fengxian 蕭奉先 (d.1122) assuaged the emperor's wrath by saying that Aguda was unrefined and ignorant of proper ritual and propriety, which suggests that perhaps the request to dance was not unheard of and may have even been an expected component of the festivities.²⁷⁵ Whether or not it was expected, Aguda's refusal has long been perceived by Chinese historians as the first clear sign of a schism in the relationship between the Liao and the Anchuhu Wanyan clan. One scholar has gone so far to say that Aguda's refusal to dance was "equivalent to a declaration of rebellion."²⁷⁶

Aguda's refusal to dance for the Liao Emperor in 1112 may have been rooted in more than merely a desire to provide a demonstration of his position and increasing power.²⁷⁷ When the situation is perceived in light of the long-established frontier strategy of the Anchuhu Wanyan, Aguda's refusal can be seen as a type of "lesser evil" of what must have been a difficult choice between two unsavory options. It must be remembered that at this time, Wuyashu was still alive and held the title of *jiedushi* and was thus the court sanctioned leader of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition. Aguda was certainly a high and influential figure, and may have been widely recognized as the successor to Coalition leadership but he was

²⁷⁵ *Liaoshi* 102.1439.

²⁷⁶ Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, 177.

²⁷⁷ Of course, it must be said that Aguda may have refused for a very mundane reason, which was interpreted as having more significance than he ever intended. Perhaps he did not know how to dance properly and did not want to risk losing face among such company.

still only the younger brother of the wild Jurchen *jiedushi*. Wuyashu's absence at the Liao banquet is left unexplained, but it may be assumed that Aguda was chosen to attend the high function and represent the clan.²⁷⁸

Standing as a representative of his clan and as the highest ranking leader of the growing Jurchen Coalition, Aguda likely felt the weight of his position in the mixed company of the Liao banquet. He was surrounded by a diverse body of men and an equally diverse collection of varying perceptions and reputations. To the members of the Jurchen Coalition under his and his brother's leadership, he was a warrior and intermediary between their clans and the frequently intrusive Liao Empire. To those Jurchen leaders who had yet to ally themselves with the Anchuhu Wanyan (such as certain "civilized" Jurchen groups living as registered inhabitants of the Liao) he may have been seen as a threat and rival for Liao favor. And of course to the Liao Emperor and his officials, Aguda represented the clan sanctioned to rule over all of the "wild" Jurchen clans; an ally and auxiliary force that was often utilized to suppress anti-Liao rebellions beyond the reach of the empire's military.

These conflicting and overlapping roles presented Aguda in a compromised position when he was asked to publically submit himself to the half-drunken command of Tianzuo. Prior to the First Fish Feast, the Anchuhu Wanyan had carefully nurtured their position as the primary enforcers of Liao directives toward those populations living along the outer periphery of the northeastern frontier. For decades they had received titles, payments, and prestige above all other wild Jurchen groups. With their recent victory over the armies of Goryeo their power had never been greater. So what was it that could have motivated Aguda

²⁷⁸ It is also possible that Wuyashu's absence for the banquet was due to some type of illness or failing health, but the record does not mention Wuyashu having any form of debilitating condition prior to his death in 1113. The *Jinshi* only states that Wuyashu died somewhat suddenly late in the year 1113. See *Jinshi* 2.22.

to risk their high position in the eyes of the emperor and make such a demonstration of disobedience completely at odds with the more subtle acts of diplomatic subterfuge employed by his father and uncle before him? The standard interpretation is that by 1112, the Anchuhu Wanyan were finally in a position from which they could confront the Liao directly and openly defy the imperial command. However, an alternate interpretation is that Aguda felt pressure from the eyes of his peers and followers in attendance to make a strong showing against Liao authority.

In previous chapters, it has been demonstrated that the power and legitimacy of the Anchuhu Wanyan among the other Jurchen clans was rooted in their ability to present themselves as an alternative to Liao rule. In other words, Aguda's family and clan retained their position of power among the Jurchen clans because they refused to subordinate themselves too fully to the Liao. They presented themselves as protectors and intermediaries between the clans and the might of the Liao Empire. The fact that the Anchuhu Wanyan were perceived as competitors to Liao authority in the northeast can be seen in the number of anti-coalition leaders who fled to the Liao and tried to persuade the empire to turn against them. Aguda was representing his clan and the leadership of the coalition, but the official title of leadership was still held by his brother. If he had chosen to dance, as had the other Jurchen leaders assembled at the feast, his prestige (and that of his clan) may have decreased in the eyes of his followers. There is evidence that Aguda believed that such a situation would have been extremely detrimental to the stability of his family's coalition and rule,

above and beyond the damage that would occur to his clan's position within the Liao system of frontier administration if he refused to dance for the emperor.²⁷⁹

Prior to this incident in 1112, the relationship between the Anchuhu Wanyan, particularly Aguda, and the Liao Empire was not yet strained. As mentioned above, the prestige and power of the Anchuhu Wanyan had never been higher. Part of that success was due to the connections between the clan and representatives of the Liao Empire. Like most connections involving premodern frontier zones, a good portion of these relationships depended on a healthy amount of trade and wealth. In fact, the economic interchange along borders is believed to have been a major component to the rise of powerful frontier groups.²⁸⁰ At least one source reports that for a significant length of time, Aguda was personally involved in the export of pearls, gold, and horses to lands outside of the Songhua River basin, presumably the Liao Empire. Furthermore, Aguda would also use such goods to provide gifts and bribes to nobles of the empire in order to obtain better relations with them.²⁸¹ It is unknown whether or not Aguda's bribes and gifts had any bearing on Xiao Fengxian's decision to dissuade Tianzuo from punishing him, but a history of such activity probably contributed to the Anchuhu Wanyan's ability to accumulate the level of power they did without inciting rebuke from the Liao officials in charge of the frontier regions.

These many factors surrounding Aguda's defiance at the fish feast demonstrate that it is very likely that Aguda did not intend for this incident to inaugurate a campaign of conflict

²⁷⁹ When faced with a similar situation involving the possibility of the Anchuhu Wanyan allowing a slight against their power, as was seen in the invasion and capture of the Helan Dian region by the Goryeo King Yejong in 1106, Aguda made clear his belief that retaining a position of strength among his followers was crucial to retaining their allegiance and loyalty. See *Jinshi* 135.2883.

²⁸⁰ Iwai Shigeki, "China's Frontier Society in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Acta Asiatica* 88 (2005), 7-8.

²⁸¹ *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 3.8b; see also Franke, "Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (I)," 150.

with the Liao. Instead, Aguda's choice to defy Tianzuo was seen as an unfortunate "lesser of two evils" when faced with the possibility of eroding his authority in the eyes of the many Jurchen leaders assembled. Furthermore, the assertion by scholars that by 1112 the Jurchen had reached a level of power enabling them to comfortably defy the Liao and openly attack their cities and garrisons in the northeast is unlikely—as will later be shown. Even at this height of power, the Anchuhu Wanyan were barely able to assemble a force of a couple thousand, far short of the many tens of thousands of soldiers defending the entirety of the Liao Empire. However, following the fish feast and Aguda's return to the Anchuhu River valley, it is very likely that he began to fear the repercussions of his decision before the emperor. The façade of the Wanyan clan as loyal enforcers of the Kitan emperor in the distant northeast was cast into doubt, and Aguda knew it. One passage in the *Sanchao beimeng huibian* records that this fear of repercussion spurred Aguda to begin assembling his troops in preparation for an inevitable Liao attack.²⁸² It reads that one of Aguda's closest advisors, his cousin Nianhan 粘罕²⁸³, recommended that the best way to prepare for a possible attack from the Liao would be to make a pre-emptive strike while the Kitan were still unprepared.²⁸⁴ Thus, it was from this point that the Anchuhu Wanyan began to prepare for a full, large scale war with the Liao Empire and not before. The incident of Aguda refusing to dance may very well have been the event that altered the entire frontier strategy of

²⁸² I have had difficulty finding the original author and source of this story.

²⁸³ Nianhan 粘罕 was his Chinese (and more well known) name. His original name is given as Nianmeihe 粘沒喝. He was also known by the popular moniker Zonghan 宗翰. See *Jinshi* 74.1693.

²⁸⁴ *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 3.10a. The language used in this passage regarding this pre-emptive strike is given as "It would be best to take control [of the situation] while they (the Liao) are unprepared, and first prepare [ourselves by] combining the neighboring states (*linguo* 鄰國) and assembling the masses, while we await their change [in stance toward us]. 不如乘其無備，先併鄰國聚衆為備以待其變。

the Jurchen Coalition and set into motion the events that would eventually bring down the Liao and raise the new, Jurchen-Jin.

Ascension of Aguda – What was his position prior to establishing the Jin?

In 1113, one year after the incident at the First Fish Feast, Aguda's elder brother and *jiedushi*, Wuyashu died at the age of 53.²⁸⁵ Following custom and expectation, Aguda was elected to the position of leadership over the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition. However, like his father and uncles before him, he would not hold the title of *jiedushi* over the wild Jurchen clans until his position was ratified and appointed by the Liao Empire; this recognition as *jiedushi* came only a year later in 1114, despite possible fears that his behavior in front of the emperor two years previously had jeopardized his position in the eyes of the Liao.²⁸⁶ Much has been said regarding the position of *jiedushi*, occasionally translated as “Commanding Prefect,” over the wild Jurchen. For three generations, (since it was first bestowed on Aguda's grandfather, Wugunai) the Anchuhu Wanyan had utilized their position as *jiedushi* of the wild Jurchen to consolidate power over the other Jurchen clans. It was a crucial component of Anchuhu legitimacy and facilitated the expansion of the Jurchen Coalition created by Wugunai and his descendants. Yet, surely there was a title and position for leadership that was granted and recognized by the loyal followers of the Anchuhu Wanyan, beyond what was bestowed on them by the distant Liao Emperor.

By the time of Aguda, the Jurchen had cultivated the legitimacy and authority surrounding their native titles of leadership. This organization of titles is important in

²⁸⁵ Wuyashu died late in 1113 at the age of 53. *Jinshi* 1.16.

²⁸⁶ *Jinshi* 2.23.

understanding the pre-imperial structure of the Jurchen Coalition under the Anchuhu Wanyan and helps illuminate how the ruling clan distributed power among Coalition officials. The title and position of *bojin* 勃堇, or *buzhang* 部長 (the two seem to have been used interchangeably), has already been introduced in this study and was used to identify a chieftain or elected ruler of a clan group. Additionally, within the Jurchen Coalition, individual *bojin* could be appointed by the head of the Anchuhu Wanyan as ruler over a given population or location. Similarly, a *bojin* could also be removed from his position of leadership by the ruler of the Anchuhu Wanyan. For the most part, it seems that *bojin* were the lowest level of clan official and were recognized by the Anchuhu Wanyan leaders when a given clan joined the coalition.

Prior to the creation of the Anchuhu Wanyan coalition, Jurchen clans had occasionally coalesced into larger multi-clan structures that often included clans from a variety of different tribal lineages. The ruler of such an inter-tribal alliance was known as a *dubuzhang* 都部長, or “high” *buzhang*.²⁸⁷ It can be assumed that prior to the hegemony of the Anchuhu Wanyan, these *dubuzhang* were the most powerful leaders among the wild Jurchen. Furthermore, it is likely that it was these *dubuzhang* who were recognized by the Liao and granted the titles of Great King or *dawang* 大王 as listed in the *Liaoshi*.²⁸⁸ Yet, during the reign of Aguda’s uncle, Yinnge, the Anchuhu Wanyan issued a proclamation that no Jurchen leader should take upon themselves the title of *dubuzhang*.²⁸⁹ Thus, by the time

²⁸⁷ The meaning of the Jurchen word written as *du* 都 is believed to have meant “high” or *gao* 高. See Mikami, *Kindai seiji seido*, 82.

²⁸⁸ Wittfogel and Feng, *Liao*, 101; *Liaoshi* 46.756-757.

²⁸⁹ *Jinshi* 1.14. The text records that Aguda recommended this proclamation to Yinnge following Aguda’s successful rout of the followers of the Jurchen leader, Liuke 留可 of the Wugulun tribe 烏古論. Unfortunately

of Aguda's reign, the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition had laid claim to a monopoly on all supra-tribal titles and positions among the Jurchens. However, the title of choice among the Anchuhu Wanyan was not *dubuzhang* but was instead the unique title of *dubojilie* 都勃極烈. The title of *dubojilie* (and therefore the lesser title of *bojilie*) dated back to at least the time of Wugunai and was handed down as the title of rulership within the Jurchen Coalition up to Aguda.²⁹⁰

When Wuyashu died, Aguda inherited the title (*xiwei* 襲位) of *dubojilie* and took his place at the apex of an almost fraternal organization of clan leaders and kinsmen. The structure of power of the Jurchen Coalition in the years immediately prior to the proclamation of the Jin Dynasty was ruled in the same style of the previous coalition leaders like Helibo or Wugunai. These predecessors of Aguda were known for their approachability and willingness to engage with the common Jurchen populace. Aguda continued in this tradition and was quick to coordinate with his powerful kinsmen to accomplish the actions of rule over his people. There is even room to suggest that under Aguda, ultimate power within the Coalition was shared with his closest friend and advisor, the *guoxiang* 國相, Sagai 撒改.²⁹¹

Sagai was granted the title of *guoxiang* by Yingge, after the death of Polashu (who for a time held both titles simultaneously). This means that Sagai held the position of *guoxiang*

for Aguda and his cousin Sagai 撒改 (who held joint-command of the attack), Liuke successfully fled to the Liao Empire for refuge and thus escaped death at the hands of the Anchuhu.

²⁹⁰ *Jinshi* 55.1215. Tsugio Mikami believes that the title of *bojilie* was used by the various Jurchen clan leaders in the days before Anchuhu hegemony, see Mikami, *Kindai seiji seido*, 81-84.

²⁹¹ Sagai was the eldest son of Hezhe 劬者, eldest son of Wugunai. Thus, he was a first cousin to Aguda and a prominent member of the ruling family, but he was not within the direct ruling lineage (which ran through the line of Wugunai's second son, Helibo). Furthermore, since the families of Hezhe and Helibo had been commanded to form a joint-household by their father Wugunai, it is very likely that the friendship of Aguda and Sagai stemmed from a close childhood within the same household.

long before Aguda was raised to his ultimate position as *jiedushi* and *dubojilie*. In describing the relationship between Aguda and Sagai, the *Jinshi* contains a passage that hints at a far closer cooperation and equality between the two men than would otherwise be assumed. It reads:

After [Wuyashu] passed on, [Aguda] was called *dubojilie*, and together with Sagai they divided the administration of the various tribes. Aguda controlled everyone north of the Pituo River, and Sagai controlled the people along the Lailiu River.

康宗沒，太祖稱都勃極烈，與撒改分治諸部，匹脫水以北太祖統之，來流水人民撒改統之。²⁹²

A number of scholars have noted this passage and its implications in signifying Sagai as an extremely important figure during Aguda's reign.²⁹³ Jing-shen Tao has written that prior to 1115, Sagai's territory consisted of "half" of the territory of the Jurchen.²⁹⁴ The scholar Li Xiulian has even put forth the possibility that Sagai's title of *guoxiang* carried with it a mantle as a spiritual leader and judge among the pre-imperial Jurchen clans. Li believes that Sagai's position was considered equal to that of Aguda; the one being a political and military leader, the other, a spiritual authority.²⁹⁵ However, apart from this one passage, there is little evidence to suggest that Sagai's position as *guoxiang* carried with it any sort of equality to Aguda's rule. Furthermore, there are no clear passages to indicate that Sagai held an increased capacity to invoke the supernatural or commune with the Heavens; the sort of evidence that would accompany a perception of his capacity as the leading *shaman* of his

²⁹² *Jinshi* 70.1614. The Lailiu River 來流水(aka 湫流) is the modern Lalin River 拉林河 in today's Jilin Province. The location of the Pituo River 匹脫水 is unknown.

²⁹³ Mikami, *Kindai seiji seido*, 81; Li Xiulian 李秀蓮, "Aguda cheng *dubojilie* yu Jinchao kaiguo shi zhi zhenwei yanjiu 阿骨打稱都勃極烈與金朝開國史之真偽研究," *Shixue yuekan* 史月刊, no.6 (2008): 43-49.

²⁹⁴ Tao, *The Jurchen in Twelfth-Century China*, 27.

²⁹⁵ Li Xiulian, "Aguda cheng *dubojilie*," 48.

clan. Certainly, Sagai was a very close compatriot to Aguda, but his active participation in the campaigns against the Liao along with the lack of any source reinforcing this position of spiritual leader leaves Li's postulation within the realm of intriguing speculation, but not an accepted part of the dominant narrative.²⁹⁶ Moreover, the second half of the passage identifying which regions were controlled by each of the men limits Sagai's jurisdiction to the inhabitants of one tributary river of the much larger territory of the remaining Songhua River system. The consistent mention of this region, the Lailiu River valley, as a prominent location in the pre-imperial record as well as its proximity to the Anchuhu River valley suggests that it was an important region for the Coalition, but it does not qualify as an equal portion of the area controlled by the Coalition at the ascension of Aguda, as claimed by Tao.²⁹⁷

Aguda's relationship to Sagai may not have been one between equals but he relied heavily on relatives like Sagai to effectively manage his government. These close relatives and friends of Aguda were crucial in the success of the later conquest of Liao and continually provided him with advice and support throughout his reign. This was not a new situation for the ruling lineage of the Anchuhu Wanyan, and was consistent with the style of leadership utilized by Wuyashu, Yingge, Polashu, and other family leaders. The exact position and role of these men will be discussed in further detail later, but it suffices to say that Aguda's position prior to his declaration as an emperor (*huangdi* 皇帝) was consistent with that of his

²⁹⁶ Li Xiulian explains this lack of corroborating evidence to a later campaign by Aguda's descendants to exalt their progenitor and erase the status held by Sagai within the historical texts.

²⁹⁷ The first portion of the passage discussed here is widely cited and referenced. However, the second portion that limits the power of Sagai seems to be generally not as well referenced.

immediate forebears and was not a dramatic shift from the style of rule that had gone before him.

Possible motives of the Anchuhu in pursuing a war against the Liao

It is clear that after his defiance at the First Fish Feast, Aguda began to prepare for an attack by the Liao emperor. Yet, his possible fears that the Liao would not continue to sanction the authority of the Anchuhu Wanyan over the wild Jurchen clans were not realized. In 1113, midway through his second year as Coalition ruler and *dubojilie*, Aguda traveled to the area of Jiangxi 江西 and met with a Liao emissary who bestowed upon him the title of *jiedushi*.²⁹⁸ This was an official recognition of his position as successor to Wuyashu and legitimate ruler of the wild Jurchen clans. His position was thus secured by the Liao court with no record of any sanction or reprimand for his actions in the previous year at the First Fish Feast. Why then, did Aguda ultimately continue his preparations for war against the Liao after receiving their approval?

The reasons most often attributed to Jurchen aggression against the Liao are 1) politico-military ambition, 2) abuse or ill-treatment at the hands of Liao representatives, and 3) the Liao emperor's refusal to extradite the Heshilie Jurchen leader, Ashu over to the Anchuhu Wanyan. Of these three proposed motives –ambition, abuse, and Ashu— which were truly utilized by Aguda and the other leaders of the Anchuhu Wanyan to justify their attacks on Liao territory? Or was it a combination of all three, or even more? Jing-shen Tao, for instance, has put forth an intriguing, if somewhat undeveloped theory that a primary

²⁹⁸ *Jinshi* 2.23.

motivation for Jurchen invasion was a drive to obtain more land to be used for agriculture and farming.²⁹⁹ When taken in conjunction with the recurring famines of the time, it is very possible that the Jurchen were hoping to capture more fertile lands, but more research would be needed to better establish this possibility.

Another argument could approach the topic from the direction of the extant sources and historical memory. The fact that the early history of the Jurchen-Jin was constructed by generations of state and private historians cannot be overlooked. The history contained in the *Jinshi* and *Liaoshi* reflect the perspective of Jin and Liao Dynasty writers as filtered through a Mongol-sponsored project of imperial legitimacy.³⁰⁰ Thus, the story of the Jurchen rise to power likely reveals what the later compilers of the history desired, or thought necessary, to include in such a story. Christopher Beckwith has identified a prevalent historical/mythological pattern that forms the origin story, or myth, of many Eurasian groups. He posits that the similarity between these groups concerning their “First Story” can be explained by the influence of a Central Eurasian Culture Complex that in premodern times was prevalent throughout the continent.³⁰¹ Beckwith’s treatment of the Jurchen makes it clear that he does not consider the Jurchen to have been part of the Central Eurasian Culture

²⁹⁹ Jing-shen Tao bases his theory on the fact that in Aguda’s coronation ceremony as emperor of the new Jin Dynasty he displayed nine farming tools (*chen gengju jiu* 陳耕具九), thus indicating to his followers that he “intended [to conquer] good farmland.” See: Tao “The Horse and the Rise of the Chin Dynasty,” 184. See also: *Jinshi* 36.831; 73.1672.

³⁰⁰ Chan, *The Historiography of the Chin Dynasty*, preface. For more information on Chinese historiography during the Jurchen and Mongol periods, see Herbert Franke, “Some Aspects of Chinese Private historiography in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries,” in W.G. Beasley and E.G. Pulleyblank, eds. *Historians of China and Japan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961): 115-34.

³⁰¹ Christopher I. Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road: A History of Central Eurasia from the Bronze Age to the Present* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 11.

Complex.³⁰² Thus, he makes no effort to relate their origin story within the framework of the Central Eurasian “First Story.” However, both the *Jinshi* and *Liaoshi* were written under the supervision of Mongols, who most definitely can be labeled as belonging to Beckwith’s culture complex. It is possible that influence of Mongol culture and perception could have shaped the compilation of the *Jinshi* narrative of the pre-imperial Jurchens and the rise of Aguda to imperial power. Yet, an analysis of the early story reveals that there is very little representation of the Central Eurasian First Story within the narrative of the early Jurchen.

The origin story of the imperial lineage of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan bears very little resemblance to the Central Eurasian First Story.³⁰³ The story lacks a divine birth and the miraculous survival of a warrior leader. While the birth of Hanpu’s children given his advanced age may be considered remarkable, it is of a different caliber than the heavenly wolf ancestors of the Mongols or Turks. The Liao Empire may fill the role of an oppressive group or enemy of the early Jurchens, but for the majority of the pre-imperial narrative, the Liao would be better classified as dupes to be manipulated, not villains to be destroyed. The biggest similarity may be in the presence of a group of warriors loyal to the founder of the dynasty; Beckwith’s *comitatus*, a “crucial element” of the Central Eurasian Culture Complex.³⁰⁴ Aguda certainly formed intimate bonds of friendship and loyalty with a close group of warriors and leaders. Individuals like Sagai, Nianhan, Moulianghu, and others may be viewed as a form of *comitatus*. However, the majority of Aguda’s closest companions

³⁰² Beckwith’s description of the Jurchen-Jin is necessarily left quite brief. Even so, the Jurchen do not fit neatly into his hypothesis of the the Central Eurasian Culture Complex. The region identified as Manchuria is listed as a component of what is considered “Central Eurasia,” and yet the Jurchens who originated in that area, are left out of his discussion on similarities between Central Eurasian groups. See Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road*, preface.

³⁰³ For a list of some of the more prominent facets of the Central Eurasian First Story see, Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road*, 11-12.

³⁰⁴ Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road*, 12.

were relatives and were not organized into a house-guard or vanguard like other *comitatus* groups. Additionally, the style of Aguda's closest cohort was consistent with the style utilized by his predecessors within the Anchuhu Wanyan clan, and was not a new creation or mark of his rule. Thus, any potential influence that the Mongol supervisors may have imposed on the historiographical construction of the *Jinshi* and *Liaoshi* record seems to have avoided the insertion of Central Eurasian Cultural tropes surrounding the Jurchens' origin story.

Ambition and revenge is often the motivation behind the various First Stories of the Central Eurasian Culture Complex. The belief that political and military ambition was at the root of Jurchen aggression is ubiquitous in the literature concerning the establishment of the Jin Dynasty. Not only do these sources ascribe to the Jurchen an ambition to overthrow the Liao, but they also insinuate that this ambition was present within the leaders of the Anchuhu Wanyan long before Aguda's first military successes against the Liao. For example, when describing this period, scholar Jing-shen Tao calls the Jurchen "ambitious Tungus" who stood up to challenge the Kitan and Chinese rulers "when the time was ready."³⁰⁵ Herbert Franke has also given his opinion that the Jurchen long desired to emulate the power and splendor they witnessed while visiting the neighboring Kitan and Chinese courts.³⁰⁶ The problem with assigning ambition as the driving force of Aguda's actions, to say nothing of the projection of that imperial ambition into the more distant past of the pre-imperial Jurchen clans, is that it dismisses all other possible motivations as mere pretext or justification for their eventual military aggression against the Liao. Ambition was surely a factor in the story

³⁰⁵ Tao, *The Jurchen in Twelfth-century China*, 18. The word "Tungus" used here in reference to the Jurchen is a reference to their classification as a people belonging to the Tungusic language family.

³⁰⁶ Franke, "The Chin Dynasty," in *CHC*, vol.6, 217.

of the Jurchen rise to power, but the position of relative weakness that the Jurchen were in immediately prior to their military successes of 1114 casts doubt on these statements that suggest the Jurchen had long planned to invade and conquer the Liao.

The second motivation commonly ascribed to Jurchen aggression is described in a number of the sources as being a violent reaction against a long history of abuse suffered at the hands of Liao officials and other representatives. The history of abuse suffered by the Jurchen clans at the hands of the Liao can date back to the original conquest of Bohai during which hundreds of clans and tribes were forcibly relocated across the empire. The entire theoretical outline of this research examining how the Anchuhu Wanyan were able to successfully consolidate power within the Songhua River basin is founded on the premise that the Anchuhu were able to present their coalition as an alternate and intermediary authority to Liao dominance in the northeast. In other words, by joining the Anchuhu Coalition, one's clan would be protected from the power of the Liao. Yet, despite the increasing power of the Jurchen Coalition in the final years of the 11th century, the individual men of Liao continued to practice violence and discrimination against Jurchens.

Venues of trade and tribute formed the backdrop of Liao maltreatment of Jurchen individuals in the years prior to the establishment of the Jin Dynasty. When new managing personnel were dispatched to the frontier garrisons and administrative centers along the Liao border, those Jurchen clans living within the jurisdiction of the new official were expected to present themselves and pay sums of money and gifts.³⁰⁷ The participation of the Jurchen clans in the tribute and trade system of the Liao frontier was a crucial component of Liao-

³⁰⁷ *Sanchao beimeng huibian*, 3.9b. This passage mentions that these conditions were experienced within the jurisdiction of Huanglong Administration (*huanglong fu* 黃龍府) every time a new commander was given the office.

Jurchen relations. When Jurchens arrived at the frontier posts with items of trade and/or tribute, they would often be received with abuse and derision. Ningjiang Prefecture was the most distant garrison of the Liao Empire in the northeast and has already been mentioned as having been the possible location of the emperor's annual fishing excursion along the Songhua River. In the *Songmo jiwén*, a record of stories and descriptions of the Jurchen lands written by Hong Hao 洪皓 (1088-1155), he tells of a regular practice among the Kitans that occurred when Jurchens brought game animals to Ningjiang to participate in such imperial banquets. Hong Hao would have been familiar with the customs of this region because even though he was originally from Song, he spent fifteen years living in the area of Lengshan 冷山, a region proximate to Ningjiang Prefecture, in the years immediately after the Jin conquest. He records that the animals brought in by these Jurchen leaders were measured and weighed, and the man who brought in the least amount of food was beaten. He reports that this practice was called, “Beating the Jurchen” 傳謂之打女真.³⁰⁸ This custom is also mentioned within the tenth chapter of the *Qidan guozhi* 契丹國志, which is not incredibly surprising given that this later text was based primarily on Song Dynasty sources like the *Songmo jiwén*. However, in the *Qidan guozhi* passage, the practice of “Beating the Jurchen” was said to not be limited to the annual imperial banquets but instead took place with more regularity during standard presentations of tribute.³⁰⁹

In addition to being subjected to abuse when presenting themselves at the border, the sources indicate that the Jurchen were also victims of Liao maltreatment within their own

³⁰⁸ *Songmo jiwén* 松漠記聞, (Lidai xiaoshi 歷代小史 edition, *juan* 63), 8.

³⁰⁹ Mikami, *Kindai joshin shakai* (v.1), 28. The passage is quoted in its entirety within Mikami's work.

lands. The presence of Liao envoys and representatives along the precious Falcon Roads of the northeast has been mentioned previously. Thus there was some level of traffic and interaction between such envoys or merchants and Jurchen households. While traveling through Jurchen lands, certain Liao envoys would abuse their position and take advantage of the hospitality of those they encountered on their journeys. One type of such abuse involved Liao envoys presuming themselves upon young Jurchen women.³¹⁰ One particular passage within the *Sanchao beimeng huibian* mentions that this was a long standing tradition between Jurchen households and traveling envoys of the Liao who held a high enough status (specifically, those carrying an official silver badge of the emperor), wherein virgin women were offered as sexual companions to them. However, supposedly by the time of Aguda, the Liao envoys had become more aggressive in their demands and took to themselves whichever attractive women they pleased, regardless of their social or marital status. It was only after these latter incidences that the Jurchen clans as a whole grew incensed; suggesting that involvement in the older tradition was limited to Jurchen women who belonged to families of low social status.

The practice of Liao envoys demanding goods and services of the Jurchen while traveling through their territory occurs consistently in the sources. It should be remembered that when Yilie 乙烈, the *jiedushi* of the Xi 奚 people, met with Aguda's uncle, Yingge, to discuss the cessation of hostilities between the Anchuhu Wanyan and the followers of their enemy, Ashu, he requested that the Jurchen give into his care several hundred head of

³¹⁰ See Franke, "Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (I): a translation of the Jurchen in the *Sanchao beimeng huibian*," *Zentralasiatische Studien* 12 (Wiesbaden, 1978): 152. Reprinted in Herbert Franke and Hok-lam Chan, *Studies on the Jurchens and the Chin Dynasty* (Brookfield: Ashgate, 1997). This particular passage is found in some editions of the *Sanchao beimeng huibian*, such as that utilized by Franke in his translation, but was not included in the version contained in the *Siku quanshu* edition.

horses.³¹¹ Another instance involved a prominent Liao envoy named Yelü Axibao 耶律阿息保, who was a regular ambassador to the Anchuhu during the reign of Aguda. He was first dispatched to the Anchuhu river valley following the death of the Aguda's elder brother, the *jiedushi* Wuyashu. Upon arriving at the funeral service of the fallen leader, Axibao disregarded custom and rode his horse right up to the steps of the “spirit curtain” (*lingwei* 靈帷)³¹² before dismounting. He then demanded that he be given one of the horses that had been designated as a funerary gift for the deceased Wuyashu.³¹³

The large amount of historical evidence regarding the ill-treatment of Jurchens at the hands of Liao representatives supports the idea that this was likely a prime motivation for Aguda and those who followed him in attacking the Kitan-Liao. In autumn of 1114, Aguda stood at the head of a Jurchen army numbering around 2,500 men, within the boundaries of Ningjiang Prefecture 寧江州. It was the eve of this first assault on a Liao garrison that he spoke to those assembled about why they were marching against the empire. In his speech, as recorded in the *Jinshi*, he spoke of the many services he and those assembled had done for the Liao. He spoke to them of past victories over the anti-Helibo Jurchen leaders Wuchun 烏春 and Womouhan 窩謀罕 during the reign of his father. He also reminded them of their momentous victory in 1103 when they had succeeded where the Liao had failed by defeating

³¹¹ *Jinshi*, 1.14. For a more full treatment of Yilie's visit to Jurchen lands see chapter three of this work.

³¹² The word, *wei* 帷, can also designate a tent, or screen.

³¹³ *Jinshi* 73.1678. Witnessing Axibao's audacity, Aguda apparently flew into a rage and was determined to murder the envoy on the spot. The record says that it was only through the persuasion of his nephew, Moulianghu 謀良虎, eldest son of Wuyashu (known widely by his later Chinese title, Zongxiang 宗雄). The cultural practice alluded to here of sacrificial horses to be given to the deceased among the Jurchen is affirmed in passages of certain versions of the *Sanchao beimeng huibian*. Franke has translated one such passage as “If a nobleman dies they burn alive his favorite slaves and the saddles and horses which he had used for riding as company after death.” Franke, “Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (I),” 137.

and capturing the Liao rebel Xiao Haili 蕭海里 and his allies. After this litany of military success, Aguda then declared that despite their many services to the Liao, “their encroachments and insults are increasing 而侵侮是加.”³¹⁴ In this speech, Aguda declared that one of the main reasons that they were riding against the Liao was because of the abuse and insults they had suffered at Liao hands. Yet, before he completed his speech by appealing to Heaven and Earth, Aguda provided one more significant point of disgruntlement. It was an additional motivation for marching to war with the mighty Liao Empire: “And as for the criminal, Ashu, we have repeatedly asked for him but they have not sent him! 罪人阿疎 屢請不遣”³¹⁵

The extradition of Ashu into the hands of the Anchuhu Wanyan was a key sticking point in the souring of diplomatic relations between the Liao and the rising Jurchen Coalition, and is the third possible motivation evaluated here. More than the other motivations described above, the extradition of Ashu out of Liao custody is most often dismissed as a mere pretext for Aguda’s ambition. While there may be something to that theory in the months immediately prior to Aguda’s invasion of Ningjiang Prefecture, the requests for Ashu had been occurring for years without any other sign of Anchuhu aggression. Indeed, ever since Ashu had fled to Liao custody following his escape from Aguda’s personal army around 1093, the Anchuhu Wanyan had desired to punish him for his attacks against their followers. In the intervening years, he had been an active enemy of the Anchuhu although

³¹⁴ *Jinshi* 2.24.

³¹⁵ *Jinshi* 2.24.

the majority of his plots had failed.³¹⁶ For two decades he had been seen as a major enemy of the Anchuhu Wanyan, and had continually been the subject of diplomatic exchange between the Liao and Aguda's family.³¹⁷ This is not to say that the extradition of Ashu did not become a type of pretext for sending in representatives to scout and gather information on an increasingly militarized border region in the months immediately prior to the Jurchen attacks on the garrison at Ningjiang in late autumn of 1114. However, the request for Ashu's return had only become a hollow pretext after years of sincere appeals for his extradition.

The prelude to invasion

As tensions between the Anchuhu Wanyan and the Liao increased, Aguda and the Jurchen Coalition made ready their preparations to eventually receive an attack from the empire. Following the events of the First Fish Feast of 1112 and the increasing incidences of abuse and/or humiliation of his Jurchen followers at the hands of Liao representatives, Aguda persisted in his plans to prepare for war. However, the evidence provides ample room to interpret his initial actions as having been primarily defensive in nature with no plans to conduct a complete invasion. Midway through 1113, the requests of two Anchuhu envoys for the return of Ashu were once again turned away, although in this instance, it is said that

³¹⁶ It was Ashu who first tried to incite the inhabitants of the Helan Dian region to resist the Anchuhu Coalition and fight against them. Ashu was also the voice behind many appeals to the Liao government calling for punishment and disciplinary measures to be applied to the Anchuhu Wanyan for their forcible expansion of power against his own tribe, the Heshilie.

³¹⁷ Requests for Ashu's return had been initiated by Yingge and had continued under the reigns of his nephews, Wuyashu and Aguda. See: *Jinshi* 1.14; 2.23.

emperor Tianzuo was particularly arrogant in his dismissal of them.³¹⁸ Upon their return, Aguda finally acted on what he had been fearing for the whole year previous.

Therefore, [Aguda] summoned the [Coalition] officers and elders and announced to them his plans to attack the Liao. He ordered them to prepare certain strategic locations, erect walls and fortifications, repair weapons and arms, and to await his further commands.

於是召官僚耆舊，以伐遼告之，使備衝要，建城堡，修戎器，以聽後命³¹⁹

What is significant in this passage is that although there is mention of Aguda planning an attack, the majority of Coalition preparation was to *build defensive structures* within Jurchen lands. It is likely that Aguda fully expected his war with the Liao to be one in which the armies of the Kitan would be forced to battle the Jurchen within their home territory. The Jurchen had a long military history of fortifying and attacking walled settlements and forts. Many of the battles between Jurchen clans involved one group assaulting or besieging the walled settlements (*cheng* 城) of another. It makes sense that Aguda's first imaginings of an eventual war between his people and the large armies of Liao would be a war in which his armies could use the rough and familiar terrain of their homelands to their advantage. Thus, at this early point in Aguda's preparations, there is very little support of his ambitions to overthrow and conquer the Liao.

As the Jurchen Coalition began to prepare for a war and erect fortifications at strategic locations along the border, Liao officials and commanders took notice. The Army

³¹⁸ The names of these two Jurchen envoys were Xigunai 習古迺 and Yinshuke 銀朮可, both were members of the Anchuhu royal family.

³¹⁹ *Jinshi* 2.23.

Commander of the Liao (*tongjunsì* 統軍司)³²⁰ along the eastern border decided to dispatch a *jiedushi* named Niede 捏哥 to approach Aguda and demand an explanation.³²¹ When this nearby *jiedushi* could not get a straight answer out of Aguda, the Liao once again sent Yelü Axibao to demand answers.³²² Needless to say, Aguda did not respond to Axibao's demands very well (although he did slip in yet another request for the Liao to release Ashu) and Axibao was forced to return to the empire without having succeeded in disarming the tension between the two groups. With his envoys returning with little information beyond the increased militarization of the Jurchen Coalition, which they would surely have been able to observe on their journey, the Liao military commander Xiao Tabuye 蕭撻不野³²³ ordered that the various regiments along the border assemble themselves at Ningjiang Prefecture.

It was during these months of coinciding military mobilization that Aguda began to send envoys into Liao territory to scout out Liao positions and movement under the pretense of requesting the extradition of Ashu. One of those envoys was a clansman of Aguda named Hushabu 胡沙補. He was sent to reconnoiter Liao movements after Aguda had doubted the report of a previous scout who said that the Liao did not suspect an attack from the Jurchen. Hushabu traveled to Liao territory and was able to witness firsthand their preparations for military action based out of Ningjiang Prefecture. In fact, while within Liao territory he encountered a contingent of Bohai troops who laughed and mocked him. They said: "We

³²⁰ This title has also been translated as "Office of Military Control" by Wittfogel & Feng in their *History of Chinese Society: Liao (907-1125)*.

³²¹ It is possible that the name given here as "Niede" was not meant as a personal name, but was instead referring to an army of Xi soldiers referred to in the *Liaoshi* as Niede 捏哥.

³²² This was the same Axibao who had previously acted arrogantly at the funeral services of Wuyashu and demanded that he be given one of the funerary horses.

³²³ Tabuye was also known as Xiao Wuna 蕭兀納. See his biography in *Liaoshi*, 98.1413.

hear that the Jurchen desire to revolt. You are all depraved! 聞女直欲為亂，汝輩是邪”³²⁴

Upon his return to Aguda, he advised that if the Coalition was to attack than they should do so immediately and not allow the enemy to consolidate their forces. Furthermore, he advised that the Jurchen should attack before the rivers froze over, which would only allow the Liao to invade and assault Jurchen lands more easily.

Thus it was that in autumn of 1114, Aguda found himself at the head of the largest army of Jurchen warriors ever assembled. They numbered about 2,500 men. In addition to the soldiers Aguda was able to raise from within the Coalition, he also sought the support of Jurchen clans that had not yet submitted to Anchuhu rule. It is recorded that Aguda specifically sent representatives to those Jurchen groups living within the circuits (*lu* 路) of Wohu 斡忽 and Jisai 急賽 in an effort to “soothe” them (*fuyu* 撫諭).³²⁵ Presumably, his purpose was to reassure these “civilized” Jurchen that his aggression would be directed at the Liao, and not them.

Also, in his preparation for war, Aguda dispatched soldiers to detain (*zhi* 執) potential enemies within his reach that may have raised arms against him once hostilities broke out. The two individuals mentioned by name are Cilie 辭列, the Assistant Envoy (*fushi* 副使) of the Dalugu Clan 達魯古 and a man named Dajianu 大家奴 of the Ningjiang 寧江 Bohai. Apparently, Dajianu was at some location within striking distance of Aguda’s men, while Cilie and the Dalugu clan are referred to as Falcon Officials (*yingguan* 鷹官) which may signify that this particular group held a position as official guardians of the tribute falcons

³²⁴ *Jinshi* 121.2634.

³²⁵ Mikami believes that these circuits were located just northeast of Xian Prefecture 咸州. Placing it northeast of today’s Kaiyuan City 開原市, Liaoning. See Mikami, *Kindai kenkyū*, vol.1, 38n.16.

traveling through wild Jurchen lands.³²⁶ The Dalugu provide an illuminating case because after the detention of Cilie, a representative from the clan arrived to speak with Aguda saying, “We have heard that you are raising warriors to assault the Liao. Who should our clan follow? 聞舉兵伐遼，我部誰從”³²⁷ Aguda then tried to draw them to his cause by citing their proximity to Coalition lands and by insinuating that a decision to ally with the Liao would reveal them to be cowards. There is no record of the Dalugu’s response to Aguda’s assessment of their position. The Dalugu were later incorporated into the Jurchen socio-military organization and its leaders were granted Jurchen titles, however it is unclear if they chose to ally themselves with the Anchuhu at this early date.

Thus, after receiving word of Liao preparations and mobilization of the surrounding imperial troops, Aguda chose to strike before his enemy could consolidate its strength. This was crucial to Aguda’s later success because although the Liao commander, Xiao Tabuye, had given the order for the soldiers to ride to Ningjiang Prefecture 寧江州, Aguda was able to attack before they all arrived. In this first battle of what would become a protracted war and invasion lasting over ten years, the Jurchen outnumbered their foes 3 to 1. The Liao and Bohai soldiers manning the defense of Ningjiang numbered only 800 men. The coalition armies of Aguda and his followers soundly defeated the garrison defenders and forced Xiao Tabuye into flight west across the Songhua River.

³²⁶ *Jinshi* 2.24. The name Dalugu is a tricky one for this period because in addition to the clan of registered Jurchen mentioned in this passage, there is also a prominent Liao officer in charge of border defense named Xiao Dalugu 蕭達魯古. The Dalugu clan presumably lived within or near the walled settlement of the same name, Dalugu *cheng* 城, which was located just west of Ningjiang Prefecture and was the location of a later battle between Jurchen and Liao forces.

³²⁷ *Jinshi* 2.24.

How did the Jurchen defeat the Liao?

The Jurchen success at Ningjiang Prefecture in 1114 was the first of many victories over the forces of the Liao Empire, culminating in the capture of their last remaining capital city, the Southern Capital 南京 in 1122.³²⁸ Their invasion was remarkably swift and appears to have been met with very little opposition from the Liao. This impression has led scholars to attribute a number of reasons to the Jurchen success. However, many of these reasons fall short of a close analysis of the historical events and are often presented *fait accompli*, as if the success of the Jurchen invasion was an inevitable consequence of Jurchen vigor and Liao decrepitude. Unsurprisingly, many look at Jurchen success as indicative of a larger failure or deterioration of the Liao. These scholars put forth the idea that by the time of Liao Tianzuo's final years, the empire was in steep decline and no longer able to hold its position of dominance.

Exactly when this decline began is unclear from the existing narratives of Liao history. Wittfogel and Feng put forth that by 1046, the Liao were dealing with consistent rebellion and banditry which led to discontent throughout the empire. Furthermore, they posit that the Liao was experiencing a “decline of military prowess” by that time, which when combined with economic strain, initiated a “vicious circle” that eventually broke down Liao power throughout its domain.³²⁹ Yet, Twitchett and Tietze assert that the strength of the Liao continued up until the death of Liao Daozong 道宗 (r.1055-1101) in 1101, saying that up to that time “[the] empire still enjoyed power, stability, internal peace, and the respect of

³²⁸ The Southern Capital 南京 of the Liao is today's Beijing (lit. Northern Capital 北京).

³²⁹ Wittfogel & Feng, *History of Chinese Society*, 571-72.

the surrounding peoples.’’³³⁰ I would agree with Twitchett and Tietze’s evaluation of the continuation of Liao power into the 12th century by citing evidence of Liao strength in its ability to mediate large-scale conflicts between its neighbors as in the Song-Xia war of 1103-06.³³¹ Furthermore, the ability of the Liao to control its borderlands even into the 12th century was evidenced in the long campaigns against the Zubu 阻卜 tribes of the Mongolian steppe lasting from 1092-1102.³³² Barfield posits that the Liao had an increasingly difficult time controlling the tribal Kitan officers and soldiers along the frontier due to a trend within the empire which disassociated these groups from the promotions and rewards which were their due.³³³ This assertion would hold more weight if it was shown that those Kitan who rebelled against the Liao were from such disassociated tribal lineages. However, the largest most damaging rebellions were led by men of the Xiao clan, who had intimate ties to the imperial house and were in high positions of privilege when compared to the other tribal Kitan officers.

It is no coincidence that the supposed decline of the Liao began (or was exacerbated) during the reign of the final emperor, Tianzuo (r.1101-25). As the final emperor of a fallen dynasty, his reign has been scrutinized for signs of weakness and mismanagement. He thus has a reputation as a man of inactivity and pleasure seeking, who remained oblivious to the Jurchen threat until it was too late to effectively combat them. However, this perception of Tianzuo may have more to do with the lack of sources for his reign, more than the existence

³³⁰ Twitchett and Tietze, “The Liao,” *The Cambridge History of China*, vol.6, 139.

³³¹ *Liaoshi* 27.322.

³³² For more information on the Zubu wars, see Twitchett & Tietze, 138-39.

³³³ Barfield, *Perilous Frontier*, 179.

of definitive historical evidence that supports it.³³⁴ Because there were fewer court records of Tianzuo's reign, (combined with the fact that the empire fell during his watch) he may have been judged more harshly than those who went before him. In looking at the events surrounding the early years of the Jurchen assault on the empire, Tianzuo does not appear to have been a weak ruler, but was instead a man who tried to address the issue of the Jurchen attack in the best ways he knew how. Indeed, he occasionally showed a remarkable ability to adapt in innovative ways. If any failure should be put at his feet, it would be his failure to pull off a miraculous victory in the face of multiple setbacks and betrayals.

When word of the Jurchen victory at Ningjiang Prefecture was reported to Emperor Tianzuo, he was hunting deer within Qing 慶 Prefecture.³³⁵ At that time, he had little reason to be alarmed. After all, Ningjiang Prefecture was in the process of being reinforced by neighboring troops in order to meet the Jurchen threat. It was not unbelievable that the garrison had been sacked by a larger force of Jurchen warriors. Tianzuo ordered that the prefecture be recaptured by a combined force of remaining frontier troops in the region as well as a contingent of Bohai reinforcements from the Eastern Capital, led by the Bohai commander and Prefect (*cishi* 刺使) of Hai 海 Prefecture, Gao Xianshou 高仙壽.³³⁶ This is presumably the same force mentioned in the *Jinshi* that marched north out of Liaoyang 遼陽

³³⁴ Unlike the emperors before him, no Veritable Record, or *shilu* 實錄, was ever compiled for the reign of Tianzuo. Thus, the extant itinerary of his hunting expeditions and travels through his domain may have done much in furthering the perception that Tianzuo was not an active ruler. See Twitchett & Tietze, "The Liao," *The Cambridge History of China*, vol.6, 139.

³³⁵ Qing Prefecture 慶州 was located in modern Baarin Right Banner, Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region.

³³⁶ *Liaoshi* 27.328. Hai Prefecture 海州 was located in today's Haicheng city 海城市, Liaoning. Aside from this passage, nothing else is known of Gao Xianshou or the command of Bohai soldiers he led north to face the Jurchen Coalition.

following Aguda's capture of the garrison at Ningjiang.³³⁷ The question is whether or not Tianzuo's reaction to Aguda's attack on Ningjiang could be seen as having been lackadaisical. In hindsight, it certainly was insufficient to the task of pushing back the Jurchen advance, but again it was not too farfetched to believe that the Jurchen attack on Ningjiang was successful only because the garrison was undermanned. Dispatching reinforcements right away was a sound policy.

There is no detailed record of what happened to Gao Xianshou and his Bohai army, only that they were defeated by Jurchen forces based out of Ningjiang. It is possible that this contingent of Bohai soldiers were the same Bohai that battled the Jurchen war hero and nephew of Aguda, Moulianghu 謀良虎. In his biography, it is recorded that during the fighting around Ningjiang Prefecture, that Moulianghu and his army combated a deadly force of Bohai soldiers. Because of his victory over these Bohai, Moulianghu was eventually granted control of over one hundred households.³³⁸ Just as the Bohai soldiers from Liaoyang were defeated, so were the 300 cavalymen who had fled Ningjiang Prefecture prior to its fall into Jurchen hands. Any stand that the Liao had hoped to make at Ningjiang was lost when these 300 soldiers, led by the garrison commander Xiao Tabuye, abandoned their posts and fled across the Songhua River. Xiao Tabuye and his cavalymen were intercepted at a place

³³⁷ *Jinshi* 80.1807. There seems to be a discrepancy here between the *Jinshi* and *Liaoshi* narratives. In the *Jinshi* passage cited here, the commander of the reinforcing army from Liaoyang was not Gao Xianshou, but is instead ascribed to Xiao Tabuye 蕭撻不野, who in other passages is mentioned as having been the commander of the soldiers at Ningjiang Prefecture who fled west in the face of the Jurchen attack.

³³⁸ *Jinshi* 73.1678. For more information on Moulianghu's life and career see: Wang Wensu 王文素, "Kang Liao mingjiang Wanyan Zongxiong 抗遼名將完顏宗雄," *Xuezhu jiaoliu* 學朮交流 2 (1996): 103-04.

called Chuhedian 出河店, located immediately west of Ningjiang Prefecture, and were defeated there by the armies of the Jurchen Coalition.³³⁹

Jurchen prowess or Liao incompetence?

One of the most common explanations for the successful Jurchen invasion of the Liao is the innate martial prowess of the Jurchen warriors. In other words, the Jurchen won because they were more fierce, efficient, and warlike than their enemies in the Liao and later the Song Empire. At this point, it should be clear that the Jurchen were proficient in the ways of war. They had a long history of inter-clan conflict within the wilds of the northeast, and like all hunting cultures they were familiar with violence and violent activity.³⁴⁰ The Jurchen also had access to large numbers of horses, which provided them with a key military resource that cannot be discounted from their ultimate success in overcoming the armies of Liao and Song.³⁴¹ The horsemanship of the Jurchen was admired by Song visitors who recorded that they had the ability to ride their horses “up and down steep cliffs as if they were flying 騎上下崔壁如飛.”³⁴²

Yet, before these attributes can be considered the reason for Jurchen supremacy in the early 12th century, we must not discount the fact that the Kitan too were considered great horsemen. The size of Kitan herds during this period could have easily numbered around 50

³³⁹ For a full treatment of the battle at Chuhedian, see Mikami, *Kindai kenkyū*, vol.1, 41-45. The region of Chuhedian was located in today's Zhaoyuan County 肇源縣, Heilongjiang Province.

³⁴⁰ For more information on the correlation between hunting and other expressions of violence such as war see Mark Edward Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence in Early China* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1990): 18.

³⁴¹ Jing--shen Tao “The Horse and the Rise of the Chin Dynasty,” 183.

³⁴² *Sanchao beimeng huibian*, 3.3a. Trans. in Franke, “Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (I),” 128.

million head.³⁴³ Like the Jurchens, the Kitan were also hunters of great renown and actively cultivated a hunting culture. The Kitan also recognized the connection between hunting skills and the skills of battle, and encouraged or discouraged the practice accordingly among their subject populations.³⁴⁴ Why then, were the Kitan, a people with an established tradition of dominance as horse-riding hunters, so easily defeated by an army of similar horse-riding hunters? Perhaps, part of the answer can be found in the few passages that hint at a general fading of ability among the Kitan soldiers stationed within the east.

Again, the long campaigns against the Zubu tribesmen of the western Mongolian steppe, surely provided much of the Liao military with experience and capability as soldiers, but during the same period of time that the campaigns against the Zubu were meeting with success in the west, the Liao forces along the eastern frontier were unable to defeat the rebel Xiao Haili and his armed followers.³⁴⁵ This recognition of waning ability among the Liao soldiery was brought to Tianzuo's attention during a court discussion he held following the Jurchen attacks of 1114. At that policy debate, a man named Xiao Taosuwo 蕭陶蘇幹 prefaced his proposal to consolidate the border armies into one large, intimidating force with the following statement:

³⁴³ *Liaoshi* 60.932. This number has been reached by calculating the average number of horses within a herd, with the recorded number of herds within the Liao in 1101.

³⁴⁴ The *Liaoshi* contains a number of passages addressing the Kitan's awareness of hunting as an arena for practicing the skills of war. For example, Liao Taizu (Yelü Deguang, r.926-47) clearly spoke of it in *Liaoshi* 4.48. Additionally, the rulers of Liao consistently sought to limit the practice of hunting among subjects that were perceived as potential dangers to Kitan suzerainty, as seen in the edicts forbidding Chinese or Bohai populations from wielding bows or hunting, see *Liaoshi* 19.232; 22.270. This desire to control the access of civilian subject populations to activities that contributed to the development of martial skills was even extended to an occasional ban on the game of polo within Bohai territories, see *Liaoshi* 81.1285.

³⁴⁵ The conclusion of the Zubu war occurred in 1102. In the eleventh month of that same year, Xiao Haili successfully defeated the Liao force sent against him, and was only defeated after the Anchuhu Wanyan stepped in to assist Liao imperial forces.

The nation of the Jurchen is small, but their people are brave and are excellent archers. Since they captured our rebel, Xiao Haili, their power has continued to increase and expand. Our soldiers have not drilled in a long time, if they encountered a strong enemy and it did not go well, they would have a slight disadvantage, then the various tribes/clans would lose heart and would become uncontrollable.

女直國雖小，其人勇而善射。自執我叛人蕭海里，勢益張。我兵久不練，若遇強敵，稍有不利，諸部離心，不可制矣³⁴⁶

Taosuwo's proposal to consolidate all of the armies in the east was ultimately rejected by Tianzuo, but his words clearly show a concern for the capability of the Liao soldiers to combat a strong foe like the Jurchen. It is possible that the type of "loss of heart" spoken of by Taosuwo was demonstrated by Xiao Tabuye in his flight from Ningjiang Prefecture during the Jurchen attack. However, it must be remembered that Tabuye's force was facing an advancing army three times its size. The battle at the garrison of Ningjiang Prefecture likely had more to do with numbers, and not with evidence of a deteriorating of Liao martial vigor.

Another key factor in Jurchen success during the invasion of Liao can be found in their socio-political organization under Aguda. This organization has been called the *meng'an mouke* 猛安謀克 system, after the Jurchen titles of *meng'an* (leader of one thousand) and *mouke* (leader of one hundred), and mirrored as both a socio-political and military structure. The widespread use of this system was instituted under Aguda, and overlapped with the existing system of clan organization used within the Coalition during Aguda's predecessors. The men holding these titles held simultaneous positions as *bojin*, with the difference in usage originally being applied only in times of large-scale conflict or war. It

³⁴⁶ *Liaoshi* 101.1434.

was even expanded to accommodate non-Jurchen groups who surrendered to the Jurchen following their conquests. Eventually, this system was adjusted in 1151 to accommodate the alternate socio-political environment of the fully established Jurchen-Jin Dynasty, but during these earliest days of Aguda's reign the system was extremely effective in creating a large army composed of small, mobile units of warriors.³⁴⁷ Hok-lam Chan has gone so far to say that this organization, combined with “a formidable, mobile war machine,” made the Jurchens “invincible in their campaigns against Goryeo and the Kitans.”³⁴⁸

Yet, organizing one's subject population within a system that served as both a civil and military organization was not new with the Jurchen *meng'an mouke* system. The Liao had a long established system of organizing households, clans, and tribes within a framework that functioned as a military organization. Without going into too much depth, the Liao military was made up of three separate systems of organization: the imperial *ordo* system, the Tribal system, and the Milita system. The *ordo* system was considered the “backbone” of the Liao military machine and was capable of quickly mobilizing tens of thousands of cavalry soldiers that could then be dispatched to whatever location needed their assistance. The Tribal system was composed of ethnic or cultural groupings of auxiliary groups along the borders of the empire. Many of these groups were Kitan in origin, but this system also included other groups within the empire, such as the Jurchen. In fact, the Anchuhu Wanyan Jurchen theoretically functioned within this tribal system. By receiving the title of *jiedushi* they tacitly acknowledged that they were a part of the Liao military system even if they

³⁴⁷ Much has been written on the *meng'an mouke* system. For a basic outline see: Twitchett & Tietze, CHC vol.6, 273-77.

³⁴⁸ Hok-lam Chan, *Legitimation in Imperial China: Discussions under the Jurchen-Chin Dynasty (1115-1234)* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984), 53.

refused to fully enter into the registries of the empire. The final category, the Liao Militia, was composed primarily of militarized Chinese subjects within the southern regions of the empire and is therefore outside the focus of this discussion about Liao soldiers along the eastern borders.³⁴⁹

The soldiers of the imperial *ordo* system and the Tribal system were the two organizations that the Jurchen fought against. The imperial *ordo* system was established under the first Kitan emperor, Abaoji, who utilized this select group of warriors to serve as his personal household guard. This emphasis on the protection of the emperor continued to be the focus for all *ordo* groups. Each new emperor recruited and formed his own *ordo* that would retain its organization and rough composition of households after his death. Over time, these *ordo* groups became increasingly diverse and were composed of Kitan subjects, prisoners of war, Chinese and Bohai households, and others. In fact, there is record of at least two groups of Jurchen that were recruited into the *ordo* of Liao Shengzong 聖宗 (Yelu Longxu 耶律隆續, r.982-1031).³⁵⁰ While *ordo* populations lived within fixed locations (usually within the Supreme and Central Capital circuits), they were able to mobilize far more quickly than the Tribal armies because of a system of “control bases” (*tixiasi* 提轄司) located within proximity to every *ordo*. Wittfogel and Feng estimate that by the time of

³⁴⁹ For a more detailed treatment of the military system of the Liao Dynasty, see Wittfogel and Feng, *History of Chinese Society*, section XV.

³⁵⁰ These two Jurchen groups are referred to as the Aoyan 奧衍 and Yidian 乙典. Because they were registered populations within the empire they would be considered “civilized” Jurchen, separate from those outside the imperial system. See *Liaoshi* 33.391.

Tianzuo, the Liao had a potential troop strength within the *ordo* system alone of 75,000 mounted soldiers, although it probably never reached that full potential.³⁵¹

As mentioned above, the Tribal system was composed of a multitude of various groups that were brought into the Liao military and seemed to have retained much of their original organization and leadership. These groups were primarily Kitan and were considered economic and political units in addition to their function as military units.³⁵² In this way they were very similar to the *meng'an mouke* system utilized by the Jurchens under Aguda. A basic understanding of the Liao Tribal system is crucial to this study because it was the system responsible for patrolling and policing the empire's border. The Liao troops stationed at Ningjiang Prefecture during Aguda's attack were organized into Tribal units. In addition to the Tribal units, the empire's borders were also protected by "regulars" (*zheng* 正) who seemed to have been drawn from various populations throughout the empire.³⁵³

We are fortunate to have recorded in the *Liaoshi* the theoretical troop strength of the Eastern Border region. With this information, it is possible to see how Aguda's force of 2,500 compared to the number of soldiers they faced when they began their advance westward. Ningjiang Prefecture was manned by only 800 men at the time of the attack. The 300 cavalymen who fled alongside the commander Xiao Tabuye were likely a Tribal contingent. The remaining 500 must have been composed of border "regulars" and the group of Bohai soldiers Aguda was told about. Outnumbered nearly 3 to 1, it is no wonder that Ningjiang fell to that first Jurchen attack. However, Ningjiang Prefecture's troop strength seems to have been nearly equivalent to the reported troop strength of other prefectures in the

³⁵¹ Wittfogel and Feng, *History of Chinese Society*, 516.

³⁵² Wittfogel and Feng, *History of Chinese Society*, 518.

³⁵³ Wittfogel and Feng, *History of Chinese Society*, 522.

region. For example, Xian Prefecture 咸州, which was located south of Ningjiang along a tributary of the Liao River, was regularly manned by 1,000 soldiers.³⁵⁴ With this information, it is even clearer why Tianzuo ordered troop reinforcements to march to Ningjiang after hearing of Aguda's increasing hostility along the border; Ningjiang's force of 800 was not out of the ordinary for a Prefectural center, but it was certainly not enough of a force to prevent a concerted attack by an enemy force, particularly a force that was supposedly an ally, or subordinate group, of the empire. Interestingly, the garrisons located along the Yalu River and therefore defending the border with Goryeo were much larger and housed many thousands more troops.³⁵⁵

The evidence surrounding this first attack of the Liao Empire by the Jurchen Coalition shows that the Jurchen victory was due primarily to the size of their army relative to that of the defenders at Ningjiang. The argument of the Liao official Taosuwo that the quality of Liao soldiers along the eastern border was in decline, would have to wait for a more equal battle between the two armies before being considered a significant factor in the success of the Jurchen conquest. However, both Kitan and Jurchen hailed from horse-riding, hunting cultures. Each utilized a sophisticated socio-military organization that facilitated an efficient mobilization of the population into military endeavors. Aguda was fortunate that he

³⁵⁴ *Liaoshi* 36.434. Xian Prefecture was located just north of today's Kaiyuan city 開元市 in Liaoning 遼寧 Province.

³⁵⁵ The three military installations referenced are Laiyuan City 來遠市 (mod. Geomjeong Island within the Yalu River 鴨綠江), the camp at Xuanyi 宣義軍營 (another name for Bao Prefecture 保州 which was located between the counties of Ui-ju 義州 and Sin Ui-ju 新義州, within Pyeongan Buk Province 平安北道), and the walled settlement of Shenhujun 神虎軍城. The exact location of Shenhujun is unknown, but it is assumed that like the other two locations, it was on or very near the Yalu River. The first two locations had a combined troop strength of 3,600 soldiers, while Shenhujun contained 10,000 border troops. See *Liaoshi* 36.434-35.

attacked Ningjiang Prefecture when he did, for if he had waited for Ningjiang to receive its reinforcements it would surely not have been the rout that it turned out to be.

Conclusion

The ascension of Aguda to leadership of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition followed within the established pattern of Coalition succession. There were no signs that Aguda had harbored long-term designs on perpetrating an invasion and conquest of the Liao Empire. Indeed, in many ways it is surprising that the Coalition chose to attack the Liao when it did, being in a position of complete hegemony over the other wild Jurchen clans of the northeast. From the events of the First Fish Feast of 1112, Aguda began to fear and prepare for an inevitable attack from the Liao. This preparation for war was initially defensive in nature and again, devoid of any ambition to overthrow the Liao imperial government. Among the many reasons that Aguda cited as rationale for his assault on Ningjiang Prefecture, the culture of violence against Jurchens that existed along the Liao frontier as well as the government's refusal to extradite the enemy Jurchen leader, Ashu, seem the most convincing. The initial success of the Jurchen was most likely due to them having chosen to attack locations where they held the numerical advantage, and had little to do with notions of a superior Jurchen martial effort or a relative feebleness among Liao warriors.

The following chapter will address the years immediately following the attack on Ningjiang and the events surrounding the fall of the Liao Dynasty. There was more to the successful conquest than the Jurchens' martial prowess or the Liao's military decline. Other key factors of the invasion included the effect of low morale among the Kitan as well as a

large uprising of the urban Bohai population of the Eastern Capital (*dongjing* 東京). This Bohai uprising not only served to further the elimination of the Liao in the east, but it also reveals that the declaration of Aguda as an emperor was consistent with the political environment of the time. The leader of this Bohai rebellion too proclaimed himself an emperor of a new state.

Chapter Six: The Fall of an Empire

Introduction

When Aguda and his warriors rode west to attack the Liao prefecture of Ningjiang, they did so with knowledge of their numerical superiority. Judging from earlier edicts of Aguda to his advisors and clansmen, it is very likely that he expected the Liao to counter-attack and push the war back into Anchuhu territory. After all, why would Aguda direct his men to build walls and forts if he did not expect the Liao to try and strike at the Coalition in their own homeland? However, Aguda's preparation for a defensive war against the Liao turned out to be unnecessary. Following the capture of Ningjiang, the Jurchen Coalition successfully defeated each of the initial responses and counter-attacks of the Liao military. Thus, the question posed in the previous chapter remains partially unanswered: how were the Jurchen forces able to defeat the more numerous and better equipped Liao military within the imperial borders? The initial success at Ningjiang has been analyzed, but what of the remaining nine years of invasion and occupation? How were the Jurchens able to continually defeat the defenders of the Liao Dynasty?

This chapter will attempt to show that the key factors behind the fall of the Liao Empire occurred in the earliest stages of the Jurchen invasion and crippled the Liao's capability to adequately defend their empire. Moreover, the key events of the early invasion that so crippled the Liao Dynasty were often perpetrated by groups or individuals outside of the Jurchen Coalition. In other words, the Jurchens may have facilitated an opportunity for Liao collapse, but the extent of that collapse was only made possible through the direct

attacks and inadvertent repercussions of the actions of groups in no way associated with Aguda and his Jurchen Coalition. These events that precipitated the fall of the Liao occurred with increasing frequency after the assault on Ningjiang. They are the military failures of the Liao counter-attack –mainly the failed battle lost at Chuhedian; the internal dissent and rebellion of numerous Liao high officials and generals during active campaigns against the Jurchen; and finally the full defection of imperial subjects over to Anchuhu control. Although the Liao was officially destroyed with the capture of Liao Tianzuo in 1126, the empire was effectively crippled by 1117. By that point, resistance against the Jurchen advance was unlikely. This situation was made even more dire by the defection of a number of very prominent Liao generals in 1120-21, and effectively ended the Liao as a military force in East Asia.



Liao Response to the Jurchen attack – The Battle at Chuhedian

The Jurchen capture of Ningjiang Prefecture was an extremely significant event in the rise of the Jurchen Coalition over the forces of the Liao Empire. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the actual sacking of the garrison by the Jurchens was not necessarily an impressive demonstration of military prowess. They outnumbered the Liao defenders 3 to 1, even before the Liao commander Xiao Tabuye retreated across the Songhua River with 300 cavalymen. It was the fact that the Jurchen were able to hold the territory against Liao counter-attack that proved to be the most remarkable achievement of Aguda's forces. The

initial reinforcements ordered to Ningjiang from the Eastern Capital to deal with the Jurchen attack were handily defeated by the larger Jurchen force. Knowing that a more concerted effort would be required to push the Jurchens out of Liao territory, Liao Tianzuo commanded that a special force be assembled to assault the Jurchen position in Ningjiang and reclaim the prefecture. It was the defeat of this larger and more organized force, this military failure on the part of the Liao, which proved to be one of the most pivotal moments of the entire invasion.

Liao Tianzuo was aware that his ordered reinforcements to the area had been defeated, so in order to combat the Jurchen he assembled a large army to put down their rebellion. Tianzuo chose a man named Xiao Sixian 蕭嗣先 to lead the expedition.³⁵⁶ Sixian was appointed Campaign Commander (*dutong* 都統) of the Northeastern Circuit (*dongbei lu* 東北路) and was placed at the head of a multi-ethnic army that numbered 7,000 soldiers strong.³⁵⁷ If the size of this army is accurate, then this force would have been two to even three sizes larger than the size of the Jurchen army that had captured Ningjiang Prefecture. Xiao Sixian was not alone in his command of the army. Appointed as his deputy on the campaign was none other than Xiao Tabuye, the man who failed to hold Ningjiang and had

³⁵⁶ Xiao Sixian is recorded in *Jinshi* 2.25 as Xiao Jiuli 蕭紉里.

³⁵⁷ *Liaoshi* 27.328. This large army was composed of a contingent of Kitan and Xi warriors numbering 3,000, a contingent of 2,000 troops from the Central Capital, as well as an additional 2,000 soldiers drawn from various other circuits within the empire. The *Jinshi* record of this force records it being an army of mixed cavalry and infantry of massive size, numbered at 100,000 men. Due to the comparative specifics found in the *Liaoshi* not to mention that a force of 100,000 would have roughly equaled the combined troop strength of all Liao border regions. Therefore, I have given preference to the more modest description of 7,000 recorded in the *Liaoshi*. For more information on the prominent role of the Xi people during the Jurchen invasion of Liao, see Menggu Tuoli 孟古托力, "Liao-Jin zhanzheng zhong de Xi zu 遼金戰爭中的奚族," *Heilongjiang minzu congkan* 黑龍江民族叢刊 51.4 (1997): 53-58.

fled the prefecture with 300 of his cavalrymen.³⁵⁸ The commanders Xiao Sixian and Xiao Tabuye had close connections to Emperor Tianzuo and the ruling family. Both of the men belonged to the Xiao clan, and thus were a part of the imperial marriage clan to the ruling Yelü family. Sixian was the younger brother of the prominent minister Xiao Fengxian 蕭奉先 who was a close advisor to (and elder brother to the first concubine of) Tianzuo.

Fengxian is also credited as being the minister who advised Tianzuo against executing Aguda for his failure to dance at the First Fish Feast of 1112. This large punitive army approached Ningjiang in early winter of 1114 and camped west of the prefecture, across the Songhua River at a place called Chuhedian 出河店.³⁵⁹

While Tianzuo was discussing what was to be done about the enemy Jurchens in Ningjiang and mobilizing the army under Xiao Sixian, Aguda and his kinsmen were consolidating their hold on the prefectural center. The Jurchen army remained within Ningjiang and awaited the inevitable Liao counter-attack. During that time, Aguda received representatives from groups and settlements within the region that chose to support or ally themselves with the Coalition forces. For example, in the 10th month of that year, leaders of the Tieli tribe 鐵驪 arrived to present their support for Aguda.³⁶⁰ Similarly, Aguda was active in soliciting support from the inhabitants of the northeast borderzone. He dispatched

³⁵⁸ There is no record of Xiao Tabuye receiving any reprimand or punishment for fleeing his post in Ningjiang. It is possible that he was assigned as a key player in this larger expeditionary force because it was his perceived duty and responsibility to push the Jurchens back into their native lands.

³⁵⁹ Chuhedian was located southeast of today's Bali City 八里城, Zhaoyuan County 肇源縣, Heilongjiang Province.

³⁶⁰ The Tieli (aka 鐵利) had formerly composed one of the fifteen administrative districts of the Bohai kingdom and were probably located near the Alechuge River 阿勒楚喀 in modern Jilin. The *Jinshi* records the name of this people as the Tiele 鐵勒; a name usually identified with the Central Asian people known as Tölös who were prominent in the 8th century. I am assuming that the *Jinshi* has mistakenly used the latter in reference to the former. This was the same group that in 1021 presented over 100 captive Wure tribesmen to the officials of Bin Prefecture 賓 and requested Buddhist images and copies of the Chinese classics.

his clansman Wanyan Loushi 完顏婁室 to entice and instruct (*zhaoyu* 招諭) the registered, or “cooked” Jurchen to his side.³⁶¹

This was also the period in which he sent representatives to the prominent Bohai settlements along the border to seek their allegiance against the Liao. Even though Aguda and his army had recently battled with Bohai warriors fighting on behalf of the Liao Empire, one cannot assume all groups who identified themselves with a particular ethnic and cultural heritage shared similar political allegiances. The broad spectrum of loyalty to the Liao Empire that was found among the different classes of Jurchen is a fine example of this reality. The conquered Bohai populations scattered throughout the northeastern regions of the Liao Empire were notorious for their regular resistance against Liao soldiers and officials.³⁶² Over the years of Kitan occupation, the Bohai were regularly forbidden to carry weapons, play polo, and engage in organized hunts. Aguda sought to appeal to the shared experience of the Jurchen and Bohai populations under the Liao and also emphasized their perceived shared heritage.³⁶³ He is recorded as approaching them with the following words, “The Jurchen and Bohai were originally of the same family, we raise armies to punish criminals, [we] do not go overboard to [attack] the innocent. 女直渤海本同一家，我興師伐罪，不濫及無辜也。”³⁶⁴

³⁶¹ *Jinshi* 2.25. For a short discussion on possible aspects of the oath taking ceremony between Aguda and the tribes that allied with the Jurchen Coalition during the years immediately prior to and immediately after the founding of the Jin Dynasty, see Chang Xiaoyu 常曉宇 and Li Xiulian 李秀蓮, “Aguda baitian sheliu 阿骨打拜天射柳,” *Shizhijian yanjiu* 史志鑒研究, Heilongjiang shizhi 黑龍江史志 13 (2008): 25-26.

³⁶² Wittfogel and Feng believe that the Bohai population frequently rebelled because of the harsh conscription and tax rates among them. However, taxes and conscription requirements for the Bohai were consistent with those prevailing in the Chinese territories of the empire. See Wittfogel and Feng, *Liao*, 404-05.

³⁶³ This is reference to the belief that originally, both the Jurchen and Bohai people descended from the northeastern group identified in Chinese sources as the Mohe 靺鞨. See Chapter 1 on a more full analysis of the historical origins of the Jurchens and their early relations with the Bohai.

³⁶⁴ *Jinshi* 2.25. Aguda’s actions in dealing with the Bohai population of the Eastern Capital Circuit seem to suggest that the Jurchen leader sought to capitalize on the dissatisfaction with Liao rule experienced by the subject Bohai. However, I would not go so far as to state that the eventual rebellion within the Eastern Capital

It is very likely that these early diplomatic efforts resulted in an increase in troop strength and numbers. Evidence of this increase can be seen in the increased number of *mouke* and *meng'an* officials within the Coalition administration. Although there is little reference to which groups joined the Jurchen during these first months in Ningjiang, Aguda is recorded as having appointed an additional 300 *mouke*, or “leaders of one hundred” while also promoting ten new *meng'an*, “leaders of one thousand,” up from the position of *mouke*.³⁶⁵ Yet, even with this likely increase in warriors under his command, Aguda’s forces were still miniscule compared to the might of the Liao military. As Xiao Sixian’s forces neared the area of Ningjiang, the Jurchens prepared themselves to face the largest army they had yet encountered.

The exact details of the battle are unclear from the sources, but the result of the encounter set the stage for the later Jurchen conquest. The Battle at Chuhedian may have been the most pivotal battle of the entire campaign against the Liao. The story found in the *Jinshi* tells that Aguda personally led his army out of Ningjiang and rode west toward the approaching Liao troops. After bedding down en route, he was awoken from sleep and felt compelled to continue his march.³⁶⁶ He struck the drums and lit the beacon fires in the night to light their way. When the two armies finally did meet at Chuhedian 出河店 the Jurchens were able to scatter the Liao soldiers to the extent that seven of every ten men were either

and the affiliated Bohai uprisings against the Liao Empire were all part of an overarching plan on Aguda’s part to subvert Liao authority by tapping into ethnic tensions in the region. See Liu Suyong 劉肅勇, “Wanyan Aguda jinzhan Dongjing Liaoyang fu de celüe yu cuoshi 完顏阿骨打進佔東京遼陽府的策略與措施,” *Dongbei shidi* 東北史地 1 (2008): 20-22.

³⁶⁵ *Jinshi* 2.25.

³⁶⁶ *Jinshi* 2.25. In this story, Aguda claims he was roused by the gods, or spirits (*shenming* 神明).

captured or killed.³⁶⁷ Again, the reasons for the Jurchen victory are difficult to enumerate, but both the *Jinshi* and *Liaoshi* agree that the Jurchen were able to catch the Liao soldiers unprepared. The record from the Liao states that the Jurchens mounted a surprise assault (*yan* 掩) against the Liao force. The *Jinshi* record attributes the victory to the Jurchens being able to take advantage of a terrible wind that went before them that darkened the sky and caused chaos in the enemy ranks.³⁶⁸

The victory at Chuhedian was the first major victory for the Jurchens against the Liao Empire and provided the invaders with the means to combat the Liao on a scale previously unavailable to them. Although the Jurchens were outnumbered, they were able to not only scatter the Liao forces but succeeded in eliminating high Liao commanders and officials. Most notably among the slain Liao commanders slain was Xiao Tabuye.³⁶⁹ Furthermore, in their victory they were able to capture a wealth of war materials in the form of carts, horses, armor, and prisoners of war.³⁷⁰ These Liao armaments were able to be quickly put to use, as Jurchen commanders led individual attacks on other prefectural centers. The troop strength of these prefectures had been left relatively vulnerable following the earlier imperial orders to mobilize troops to reinforce Ningjiang and the later order to consolidate forces under Xiao Sixian on the field of Chuhedian. Yet, just as important as the material benefits that

³⁶⁷ *Liaoshi* 27.328.

³⁶⁸ *Jinshi* 2.25.

³⁶⁹ There is a discrepancy here between the Liao and Jin Dynasty records. The *Jinshi* records that Xiao Tabuye was among those slain at Chuhedian in 1115. However, the *Liaoshi* states that he died late in 1118, years after the battle at Chuhedian. (*Jinshi* 2.26; *Liaoshi* 28.337). The other Liao leaders who were slain in the Battle at Chuhedian included Cui Gongyi 崔公義 who held the title of Inspector (*yuhou* 虞候), Xing Ying 邢穎, Yelü Foliu 耶律佛留, and Xiao Geshi 蕭葛十. *Liaoshi* 27.329.

³⁷⁰ *Jinshi* 2.25.

accompanied victory the Coalition also began to profit from their new position as the new power within the Liao borderlands.

Soon after the battle of Chuhedian, regional groups and settlements approached the Jurchen Coalition to submit to their authority. These groups included tribal people that had previously been incorporated into Liao border administrative system as registered auxiliaries. For example, Chuhushi 雛鶻室 of the Wure people 兀惹 arrived to submit, as did Huilibao 回离保, King of the Tieli 鐵驪. In addition to such tribal groups, full Liao administrative regions along the border like Wohu 斡忽 and Jisai 急塞 circuits, also submitted to Aguda's authority.³⁷¹ Thus, the Battle at Chuhedian bolstered more than the Jurchens capacity to wage war, it also afforded them the luxury to avoid war as various groups along the Liao border submitted voluntarily to their authority and control. Furthermore, this was the first battle in which the prowess of the Jurchens as warriors can be mentioned as having been an undeniable factor of their success for they were both outnumbered and fighting outside of a strong defensive position. It is recorded that immediately following their victory at Chuhedian, the Anchuhu Wanyan bestowed gifts upon their followers and the entire force held a large feast.³⁷² When news of the battle reached the court of Emperor Tianzuo, it is doubtful that any feasts were ordered.

The repercussions of Chuhedian were as debilitating to the Liao as they were beneficial to the Jurchens. Although Xiao Tabuye had been slain in the fighting, the campaign commander of the force, Xiao Sixian, survived and successfully escaped the field.

³⁷¹ The location of Wohu and Jisai circuits (*lu* 路) are believed by Mikami to have been located just northeast of today's Kaiyuan City 開原市, Liaoning. See Mikami, *Kindai kenkyū*, vol.1, 38n.16.

³⁷² *Jinshi* 2.26.

Traditionally, a commander who failed so spectacularly was guaranteed to receive a severe punishment, if not a quick execution. However, in the case of Xiao Sixian, he was neither executed nor severely punished, but merely dismissed from his post. The reason for this imperial oversight can be found in the advice of one Xiao Fengxian 蕭奉先, who in addition to being Tianzuo's close confidant and counselor, was also the elder brother of the disgraced Sixian. Fengxian feared that his brother would be punished for the crime of fleeing the field of battle, so in an effort to evade the imperial wrath, Fengxian memorialized to the throne arguing that Sixian and the others who survived Chuhedian should be spared from punishment. The army had been defeated and its supplies had been plundered, but if the emperor did not show mercy to those involved in the battle, then it could result in a calamity of the masses. Sixian was removed from his office as commander, but was otherwise allowed to walk away from his disgrace.

Presumably, the "calamity of the masses" to which Fengxian was referring included a general dissatisfaction with the state and imperial rule. Tianzuo and his court likely recognized the threat to Liao imperial legitimacy that the Jurchen Coalition held in the northeast. Thus, while Fengxian may have been motivated by a personal desire to spare his brother from serious punishment, he played upon the existing fears of the emperor that the Jurchens would lure his subjects out from under him. Unsurprisingly, the decision to provide amnesty to the soldiers and commanders who were defeated at Chuhedian did little to evoke rebellious sympathies within the populace, and could therefore be interpreted as having been "successful." But like all policy decisions aimed at diverting potential catastrophe, the failure of that catastrophe to appear does not bestow any sense of satisfaction or justification

for enacting the original policy. Such was the case with Xiao Fengxian's warning of a potential loss of confidence in the imperial carriage among the subjects of the empire.

Although it was motivated and couched in terms of mercy being extended to Liao soldiers and commanders, the Liao records state that Fengxian's policy had a disastrous effect on the empire's capacity to wage war. Chroniclers of the period cite this decision of Tianzuo as having a crippling effect on the morale of the Liao military establishment. When Liao soldiers and commanders heard of the leniency afforded to Sixian, they lost their willingness to risk their lives on behalf of the empire. The general language among the troops was recorded as follows: "If you fight then you may die and have no success, but if you flee then you can live without blame. 戰則有死而無功，退則有生而無罪"³⁷³ Thus, the issue was not that it would be dangerous for the soldiers to feel oppressed by the state, but instead the danger lay in giving the troops the option to flee when faced with dangerous odds.

Morale and the soldiers of the Liao Dynasty

This implicit authorization to flee the field of battle likely exacerbated the problems of the reputed limited training and experience of the troops in the east that was brought before the emperor by the official Xiao Taosuwo during the initial debates surrounding the rise of the Anchuhu Wanyan in 1114.³⁷⁴ Although this military failure (inadvertently damaging military morale) did not occur on a particular field of battle, it may have done more damage to the empire's ability to wage war than any loss of troops and supplies. The

³⁷³ *Liaoshi* 27.328.

³⁷⁴ *Liaoshi* 101.1434.

maintenance of morale during wartime is a crucial requirement for all successful military organizations. Military historians and theorists have long tried to identify the most important factors that contribute to a soldier's maintenance of morale in the face of mortal combat. Of course it is dangerous to over-generalize factors and trends across time, space, and culture. An analysis of morale in combat is largely a psychological study, and is thus difficult to satisfactorily identify using sources written far from, and long after, the conflicts they describe. However, the circumstances surrounding the Liao military in the northeast were not completely unique to their time and may provide useful insight into the Liao military environment of the early 12th century.³⁷⁵

The established belief that soldiers fight their hardest when those they care about are threatened has recently been coming under re-evaluation. This idea of "small-group solidarity" has been the dominant combat ideology concerning morale in combat for decades and was a prime focus for the United States military when training units to be deployed to Vietnam in the 1960's. We know that during the Liao Dynasty, the troops responsible for patrolling the eastern borders were drawn primarily from the Tribal system of military administration. Thus, each unit was likely composed of men who lived and fought together nearly their whole lives. Many of them were probably related to those they served with. These men then could be considered as a small-group for the purposes of this study, with theoretically a high level of morale because they were fighting alongside and on behalf of their friends and companions. However, the data surrounding the assumption of high morale in tight-knit military units in combat is inconclusive. In fact, Hew Strachan of Oxford has

³⁷⁵ For an argument on the unchanging nature of war and the inability of technological advances to divorce the moral element of lethal human conflict see, Brian R. Reinwald, "Retaining the moral element or war," *Military Review* 78.1 (Jan-Feb, 1998):69-76.

cited studies drawn from modern theaters of war that indicate “the solidarity of the small group can lead it to refuse to fight, to disobey orders and even to mutiny.”³⁷⁶ And that the dynamics of small group solidarity, more often than not, placed loyalty to one’s companions over that of their high command. This willingness to refuse combat can possibly be seen in the numbers describing the rout of Liao forces at Chuhedian as seven out of every ten warriors fled the field or were killed.³⁷⁷

Another assumed factor of military morale is the potency of a political cause or enthusiasm for the state. Patriotism and national feeling were largely absent from the premodern world, but there was a consciousness of a belonging to a particular culture, region, or lineage group. The backbone of the Liao military was composed of Kitan warriors, who were of course fighting under the directives of a Kitan emperor. Although there was unarguably recognition of ethnicity and ethnic identity during this period of East Asian history, it has been shown that a shared ethnicity with that of a ruling family had little correlation to one’s ultimate political allegiance.³⁷⁸ Granted, it is possible that the political reality of the multi-state system prominent during the 10th and 11th centuries of East Asian history promoted a stronger sense of political loyalty; possibly even some form of proto-

³⁷⁶ Hew Strachan, “Training, Morale and Modern War,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, 41.2 (Apr., 2006): 213. However, the data presented in Strachan’s work flies in the face of the dominant military belief and practice regarding military morale since World War II. There are still many who believe that small-group cohesion and trust is the foundation for high-morale among combat troops. In turn, the training of many modern military organizations utilize this prevailing concept of small-group cohesion and direct their efforts at cultivating a high-level of *esprit de corps* among their soldiers. See Reuven Gal, “Unit Morale: From a Theoretical Puzzle to an Empirical Illustration – An Israeli Example,” *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 16.6 (1986): 549-64; Robert J. Rielly, “Confronting the Tiger: Small Unit Cohesion in Battle,” *Military Review* 80.6 (Nov-Dec, 2000): 61-65; Sergio Catignani, “Motivating Soldiers: The Example of the Israeli Defense Forces,” *Parameters* 34 (Autumn 2004): 108-21.

³⁷⁷ *Liaoshi* 27.328.

³⁷⁸ Standen, *Unbounded Loyalty*, 28-30.

nationalism.³⁷⁹ However, this type of national, or ethnic, political loyalty was most prominent along the static and highly militarized border separating the Liao and Song Empires.³⁸⁰ The situation in the northeastern borderlands was much more fluid with various ethnic and cultural groups adhering to multiple political allegiances. In modern studies, the power of a political ideology or patriotism for one's country propels individuals to enlist and move toward battle, but loses potency during combat.³⁸¹

In addition to group solidarity and political ideals, a multitude of other factors have been recognized as contributing to the morale of a military unit in combat. Promised rewards, desire to gain or maintain respect in the eyes of peers, and finally the fear of punishment all play a part in a soldier's willingness to risk everything on the battlefield. In the premodern world, the fear of punishment was often used by governments to motivate their military forces. It was the perceived removal of this fear, when Tianzuo pardoned those who fled the field at Chuhedian that reportedly undermined Liao morale in their war against the Jurchens. While the utility of instilling fear of failure in one's troops (usually by threatening imprisonment, exile, or execution) has been practiced since premodern times, investigations of modern military organizations recognize that there may be some weight to its effect in keeping men in the field, but it is by no means an infallible strategy of maintaining morale.³⁸²

³⁷⁹ Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, "Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China? The Case of Ch'en Liang," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 39.2 (Dec., 1979): 403-428.

³⁸⁰ Standen, *Unbounded Loyalty*, primarily chapter 1.

³⁸¹ Strachan, "Training, Morale and Modern War," 214; Rielly, "Confronting the Tiger," 61-62. Skaff, "Survival in the Frontier Zone," 138.

³⁸² Strachan, "Training, Morale and Modern War," 215.

Instead, scholars like Strachan cite that the most important contributing factor to high morale in battle is preparation and training.³⁸³

During the Liao Dynasty, training indeed was seen as crucial to the war effort and the maintenance of military effectiveness in combat. The words of Xiao Taosuwo warning Emperor Tianzuo of the relative lack of training and experience of those stationed along the eastern border testify that this lack was seen as a dangerous vulnerability in the defenses of the state. The combination of these factors contributed to an erosion of morale among Liao Dynasty troops. This lack of morale and fighting spirit among the Liao troops can be seen in the numerous defections that occurred following these initial Jurchen victories. Perhaps, the best example of this lack of morale can be seen in the “battle” of Changchun Prefecture which took place in 1117. As the Jurchen forces advanced into the prefecture, the Liao forces there surrendered, defected, or retreated from their position before the battle even began.³⁸⁴

Attempts at Negotiation

Liao Tianzuo’s hopes to swiftly put down the invading Jurchen Coalition were destroyed along with his troops at Chuhedian. Although he seems to have proclaimed his intentions of personally marching against Aguda and the Coalition soon after the defeat at

³⁸³ Strachan, “Training, Morale and Modern War,” 216-227; Rielly, “Confronting the Tiger,” 63-65.

³⁸⁴ *Liaoshi* 28.335. The Liao army garrisoned in Changchun was composed of a number of different auxiliary groups. The first group to defect to the Jurchen appears to have been a large number of Bohai warriors, numbering two thousand strong. Following the Bohai, another four divisions of a group called the *Nügu pishi* 女古皮室 which may have meant the “Yellow Diamond” (See: Wittfogel and Feng, 425 n158; 549 n79) also surrendered to the Jurchen. This group seems to have been part of the original *ordo* army created by Yelü Abaoji (Liao Tianzu) to form his personal imperial guard. See *Liaoshi* 35.401.

Chuhedian, he did not begin his march east for almost a full year afterward, late in 1115.³⁸⁵ Instead of immediately sending more troops against the Jurchens, Tianzuo chose to dispatch envoys to Aguda to try and resolve the conflict peacefully. These first attempts at diplomacy, as well as the more protracted negotiations that came a few years later, failed to establish a stable relationship of peace between the two states. The biggest obstacle to a successful peace accord between the two governments in 1115 was Aguda's refusal to accept Tianzuo's truce until the Liao emperor recognized Aguda's initial demands. The demands in question were in some ways consistent with the diplomatic communications prior to the Jurchen attack on Ningjiang Prefecture but in other ways were very different in aim and tone. The consistent feature of the Aguda's demands before and after his invasion of Liao territory was the extradition of the Jurchen leader Ashu. Ashu had remained within Liao custody for years and requests for his extradition had been repeatedly refused. It is difficult to see why Ashu was so protected by the Liao in the face of the imminent danger posed by his enemies, the Anchuhu Wanyan. Was Ashu that well connected within the Liao Empire that he could successfully maintain his position of political asylum despite overt demands for his release? Did the Liao court retain Ashu as a potential rival to Anchuhu hegemony among the Jurchen tribes who could at some point be backed by the Liao throne to fight against Aguda? The speculation behind the Liao rationale in refusing to hand over Ashu to the Anchuhu is afforded no assistance by the historical record. As Aguda's position strengthened, his call for the extradition of Ashu remained consistent.

³⁸⁵ *Liaoshi* 28.331. Wittfogel and Feng believe that the failure of the Emperor to move swiftly against the Jurchens was a main factor in their ultimate defeat. See Wittfogel and Feng, *History of Chinese Society*, 596 n123.

However, Ashu was not the only issue raised by Aguda in the early negotiations of 1115. The success of the Anchuhu Wanyan in establishing their power over the Liao borderlands allowed Aguda to make new demands that were aimed at solidifying his hold over this new territory. He demanded that before serious talks of peace could occur, that the Liao must demobilize and relocate their primary garrison of Huanglong Administration 黃龍府.³⁸⁶ Huanglong Administration was the seat of the tribal administration of much of the northeastern borderlands and had a regular detachment of soldiers numbering five thousand strong.³⁸⁷ As long as the Liao retained a heavy military presence at Huanglong Administration, the territorial gains of the Anchuhu Wanyan would always be under threat. Yet, to demand that the Liao abandon their strongest position in the region in order to merely *begin* peace negotiations with the Jurchen seems audacious at best and an insult to the empire at worst.

Finally, the third issue obstructing Liao-Jurchen negotiations was the Liao refusal to cede Aguda political equality in all diplomatic correspondence. The extradition of Ashu and the relocation of over five thousand soldiers aside, the records indicate that many attempts at peace were aborted when Liao envoys and documents failed to recognize Aguda's proclaimed status and title. Indeed, in the middle of 1115, the Liao envoy Yelü Zhangnu 耶律張奴 not only besmirched Aguda's proper title within the eyes of the Anchuhu Wanyan, but he was then forced to return to his emperor carrying a message from the Jurchen leader in

³⁸⁶ Huanglong Administration (*huanglong fu* 黃龍府) was located in today's Nongan County 農安縣, Jilin Province.

³⁸⁷ *Liaoshi* 36.434. The next largest administrative center in the region was Xian Prefecture 咸州 which had a regular troop detachment of one thousand men.

which Tianzuo's name was likewise degraded.³⁸⁸ This political name calling was more than trivial; it was a crucial component of the international jockeying for power within the existing framework of state relationships. Within the multi-state system of the 10th and 11th centuries, each emperor was expected to adhere to an established hierarchy of power.

This hierarchy determined the amount and direction of annual tribute missions and gifts, but was maintained through the language of frequently exchanged political documents and treaties.³⁸⁹ However, this is not to say that there was a direct correlation between the particular style of language used in documents of international discourse and corresponding levels of tribute and payment. For example, when Weiming Yuanhao 嵬名元昊 (r.1032-48) sought to establish the state of Xia as an imperial polity within the East Asian multi-state system, he entered into negotiations with the then Song Emperor, Renzong 仁宗 (r.1022-63) to solidify his new position as a *huangdi* or emperor. In this case of the Xia, the exact title of Yuan Hao was a crucial component of Song-Xia negotiation and aggression. In the end, and after the intercession of the Liao as mediators, the Xia ruler agreed to be referred to as a "subject" (*chen* 臣) of the Song Emperor in return for an increase in annual tribute and trading privileges.³⁹⁰ The normalization of diplomatic discourse with neighboring states was a very important component to establishing an imperial presence within the multi-state system. Aguda's insistence that he be properly addressed in official Liao documents was consistent with the previous experiences of Weiming Yuan Hao of the Xia. That Aguda

³⁸⁸ *Jinshi* 2.27.

³⁸⁹ Herbert Franke, "Treaties between Sung and Chin," in *Études Song in Memoriam Étienne Balazs*, ed. F. Aubin. (Paris: Mouton & Co., 1970), 56-84.

³⁹⁰ Ruth Dunnell, "The Hsi Hsia," in *Alien Regimes and Border States, 907-1368*, The Cambridge History of China, eds. Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 188. See also: Jing-shen Tao, "Yü Ching and Sung policies toward Liao and Hsia, 1042-1044," *Journal of Asian History* 6.2 (1972): 114-22.

refused to accept Liao documents that failed to provide his proper title and station indicates that such protocol was perceived as extremely important, and should not be interpreted as merely a tactic of posturing or stalling for time. The *Jinshi* records that it was early in 1115, immediately prior to these efforts at negotiation, that Aguda proclaimed himself more than a Liao *jiedushi* or a Jurchen *dubojilie*; he proclaimed himself a *huangdi*, an emperor in the same style and fashion as Liao Tianzuo, and the previous emperors of the Tang Dynasty.³⁹¹

Liao Tianzuo refused to concede on each of Aguda's demands, and instead moved ahead with his original plan of personally leading a campaign against the Jurchen invaders. Aguda similarly advanced his own proposed plan and continued to advance into Liao territory. When the Liao refused to demobilize and relocate Huanglong Administration, Aguda rode at the head of a large Jurchen army to surround and siege it. After a month's time, the Jurchens successfully sacked the garrison at Huanglong Administration.³⁹² Flush with their victory over what had been the largest Liao stronghold in the northeast, Aguda sent the experienced envoy, Saila 賽刺 to present a document to the Liao stating: "If you turn over Ashu and others who rebelled against us, then we will immediately withdraw our troops 若歸我叛人阿疎等即當班師."³⁹³ Again, the consistent demand for Ashu's return, especially in this case in which no other demands were made, suggests that the anti-Anchuhu leaders of the Jurchen held in Liao custody were a key factor in Aguda's aggression.

Establishment of the Jurchen-Jin Dynasty

³⁹¹ The chronology surrounding the establishment of the Jurchen-Jin Dynasty is still being debated within the field. See chapter five.

³⁹² *Jinshi* 2.28.

³⁹³ *Liaoshi* 28.332.

At some point during the early years of the invasion of the Jurchen Coalition, Aguda initiated a major reform in the political structure and flavor of his state. He took upon himself the title of emperor, and made efforts to establish a new imperial Jurchen polity based on the example of the Liao Empire. For generations the Anchuhu Wanyan had participated within the frontier administrative system of the Kitan-Liao Dynasty. Their conscientious position outside of, and removed from, the internal affairs of the Liao did not prevent them from establishing their own supra-tribal state institutions. Indeed, since the time of Wugunai, the Coalition leaders had attempted to maintain some form of record, or register of their population. Laws and regulations for coalition members were propagated among the clans and members were held accountable to them. The ultimate enforcers of coalition law were of course the clan leaders of the Anchuhu Wanyan who were simultaneously known by their Liao and Jurchen titles of rule.³⁹⁴ The political relationship between the Liao Empire and the Jurchen Coalition was mirrored in the personal relationships between the highest of Jurchen leaders and officials of the Liao Dynasty. Aguda's uncle, Polashu, had an intimate understanding of the Liao officials who managed Jurchen affairs and probably spoke fluent Kitan. Aguda himself reportedly had engaged in private business dealings as well as dispensing bribes among prominent Liao officials. These connections facilitated a heavy influence on the Anchuhu Wanyan as their government apparatus matured and expanded. The similar policies proclaimed by both Tianzuo and Wuyashu during the crushing famine of 1109 shows that the Jurchen looked to the Liao as an example in their policies of administration.

³⁹⁴ The Liao title of *jiedushi* or Commanding Prefect, over all of the Raw Jurchens was utilized often by the Anchuhu, as was the native Jurchen title of *dubojilie*.

The defeat of the large Liao army at Chuhedian placed the Jurchen in almost full control of the northeast. As mentioned above, they quickly captured the regional garrisons and prefectural centers along the border regions. From this position of strength, Aguda's closest advisors and kin encouraged him to take on the title and mantle of emperor of a new Jurchen-ruled empire. Exactly who encouraged Aguda to aspire to this more lofty position and politico-military agenda is left ambiguous in the various sources of the period. Jurchen sources attribute the impetus to proclaim a new reign era and imperial title to the high-ranking Anchuhu kinsmen of Aguda.³⁹⁵ However, the *Sanchao beimeng huibian* describes a situation in which an educated Bohai scribe named Yang Pu 楊朴 raised the idea to Aguda and his companions. Furthermore, it ascribes Yang Pu as being the man who instructed Aguda on the proper conduct in establishing a new dynasty within the East Asian tradition of imperial rule.³⁹⁶

The fact that Yang Pu was able to lay out a defined protocol for a new emperor to follow in establishing his dynasty suggests that there was a recognized process of becoming emperor within the East Asian multi-state system of this time. In other words, there may have existed a political rationalization of the multi-state system; a level of ideological sophistication beyond a simple recognition of the political situation in East Asia. This was not a system in which each emperor's court was actively working to ignore the others. There was instead an active recognition of the multi-state system and an effort on the part of political thinkers to reconcile their political ideology with this political reality. However, it

³⁹⁵ Specifically, these men are identified as Aguda's brother, cousins, and uncles: Wuqimai, Sagai, Cibushi, Alihemen, Pujianu, and Zonghan. See *Jinshi* 2.26.

³⁹⁶ *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 3.12b-13. For a translation of this passage see Franke, "Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (I)," 158-59.

must be mentioned that if Yang Pu's "steps to becoming an emperor" were widely known in his time, it is curious that so few rising emperors of his day attempted to follow this plan. Aside from Aguda, the fall of the Liao encouraged a number of men to claim the title of *huangdi* and attempt to lead their own empires. The most prominent of whom was a Bohai leader named Gao Yongchang 高永昌 who proclaimed himself emperor over a new Bohai empire after his followers captured the Liao Eastern Capital early in 1116.

Tianzuo marches east

Having failed in disarming the conflict with political negotiations, Tianzuo acted on his previous announcement that he would personally lead an army east to crush the Jurchen rebellion. Late in 1115, Tianzuo rode at the head of a massive army of Liao soldiers and assembled his forces within Liaoning. The recorded number of men in this army surpassed one million, and 700,000 of those were under the personal direction of Tianzuo.³⁹⁷ Given the size of the army and the fact that it was called and led by the emperor himself, it is very likely that this army was composed of troops drawn from both the *ordo* and tribal military administrations. The 700,000 directly under the command of Tianzuo undoubtedly included a large force of *ordo* troops who held the responsibility of protecting the imperial presence. The recorded size of this army is many times larger than any other army on record during this time. It is possible that the exact numbers have been exaggerated, but it is very likely that this army led personally by the emperor was the largest force assembled during his reign. It was also undoubtedly the largest force the Liao would ever bring to bear against Aguda and

³⁹⁷ *Liaoshi* 28.333. In addition to the 700,000 led by Tianzuo, there were 50,000 cavalry and 400,000 infantry under the joint command of an imperial son-in-law, Xiao Temo 萧特末 and the *linyā* Xiao Chala 萧察刺.

his followers. The last hope of the empire in reclaiming the territory lost to the Jurchen invasion.

Tianzuo had begun assembling this army months before arriving in Liaoning. The troops were drawn from throughout the empire. Under Tianzuo, there were many subordinate commanders and officers who supervised large portions of the combined force. For example, 100,000 “foreigner and Han” soldiers 番漢兵, were put under the command of a Director-in-Chief (*dujian* 都監) named Yelü Zhangjianu 耶律張家奴.³⁹⁸ Zhangjianu is significant in this campaign because prior to being assigned this high position of authority within this large expeditionary army, he was dispatched as an imperial envoy to Aguda during the first stages of failed negotiations.³⁹⁹ Thus, his recognized familiarity with affairs along the border likely qualified him for leadership within this multi-ethnic imperial army. Another Kitan leader, (with a frustratingly similar name), was Yelü Zhangnu 耶律章奴 who held the position of General Chief Administrator of the Mobile Brigades (*zhu xingying dubushu* 諸行營都部署) and likely oversaw the maintenance and staffing of the imperial camp while it traveled. With the formation of this large army under Tianzuo, Zhangnu was appointed as an assistant to Xiao Fengxian and placed in command of 20,000 vanguard soldiers.⁴⁰⁰ Tianzuo’s massive army had the capability to sweep Aguda’s forces out of the empire, and the Jurchens knew it.

³⁹⁸ In the *Jinshi*, Yelü Zhangjianu is referred to as the shortened “Zhangnu 張怒,” not to be confused with Yelü Zhangnu 章奴, assistant to Xiao Fengxian.

³⁹⁹ *Liaoshi* 28.331. Yelü Zhangjianu was the leader of the diplomatic missions that failed to address the Aguda with the respect and title appropriate for his station.

⁴⁰⁰ *Liaoshi* 28.332.

Upon receiving word of the approach of the large Liao army, Aguda assembled his various generals and clansmen to discuss what they should do. Their general sentiment was recorded as follows:

“The Liao soldiers number 700,000. Their vanguard will not be easy to face. Our troops have come from a great distance and both men and horse are weary. It would be prudent for us to temporarily halt our advance. We should prepare strong defenses (lit. dig deep ditches and raise high palisades) and wait.

遼兵號七十萬，其鋒未易當。吾軍遠來，人馬疲乏，宜駐于此，深溝高壘以待。⁴⁰¹

This strategy again reveals that the Jurchen invasion was never expected to be such a swift victory over the Liao. Aguda and his men believed that the Liao counter-attack would fall on them soon after they captured those first territories along the border. Fortunately for the Jurchen Coalition, this decision to “wait-and-see” proved to be an ideal plan, for the huge Liao force under Tianzuo ultimately failed to engage with Aguda’s armies. Indeed, what could have been the most powerful strike at Jurchen positions in the northeast became instead a complete military and political debacle. However, the undoing of Tianzuo’s expeditionary army had nothing to do with the Jurchen.

Before the Liao army could attack the Jurchen positions around Huanglong Administration, rebellion within the ranks fractured the emperor’s expeditionary army. Both of the men mentioned in the previous paragraph, Yelü Zhangnu and Yelü Zhangjianu, each broke away from the main force and marched against the emperor. The first of the two rebels was the Chief Administrator, Yelü Zhangnu, who took those who would follow him and rode

⁴⁰¹ *Jinshi* 2.28.

against the Liao Supreme Capital (*shangjing* 上京).⁴⁰² Yelü Zhangnu's ploy was not limited to a personal grasp at power. Instead, he had designs to initiate a coup against Tianzuo by supporting the emperor's uncle, Prince Chun (Weiguo Wang Chun 魏國王淳) for the position of emperor. Although Zhangnu's plot failed to bring about the coup he desired, it was a dangerous possibility being that Prince Chun was positioned within the Central Capital. If the Prince had chosen to go along with the plot, and if Zhangnu had been successful in capturing the Supreme Capital in the north, Tianzuo would have been in a precarious political position, far from his empire and surrounded by potential enemies. The full story of the conspiracy can be found elsewhere, but for the purposes of evaluating the situation surrounding Tianzuo's army, Zhangnu's rebellion was an unneeded distraction.⁴⁰³

Zhangnu failed to capture the Supreme Capital and the emperor's uncle refused to move against his nephew, but Tianzuo was still forced to send a contingent of soldiers after the rebels. Unfortunately for the emperor, Zhangnu was able to evade capture for weeks as he attacked Liao settlements and sacked prefectural capitals. The exact number of warriors under Zhangnu is not clear, but after he and his followers allied with a large group of Bohai bandits, it is recorded that they numbered in the tens of thousands. Clearly, the presence of a large rogue force within the borders of the empire exacerbated the existing upheaval brought on by the Jurchen invasion. Furthermore, the presence of Bohai bandits suggests that there was an increasing level of lawlessness and defunct administration within the eastern regions of the Liao even at this early date of 1115. In the end, Zhangnu's rampage was halted when

⁴⁰² *Liaoshi* 28.332. The Supreme Capital of the Liao, or Shangjing 上京 was located in the southern region of today's Baarin Banner, Inner Mongolia.

⁴⁰³ For more information on the failed conspiracy of Yelü Zhangnu, see Twitchett and Tietze, "The Liao," *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 6, 143.

he was mysteriously defeated by a much smaller force of Jurchen riders led by the “cooked” Jurchen leader and Liao-loyalist, Ahuchan 阿鶻產.⁴⁰⁴ Ahuchan held the title of Great King (*dawang* 大王) within the Liao tribal system and stood at the head of the Shunguo Jurchen, or Jurchen of the “Submissive State.” Although he had likely received emissaries from Aguda following the victory at Ningjiang along with the other “cooked” Jurchen leaders, it is unlikely that he was enthusiastic to join the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition. Earlier, in 1112, Ahuchan had appealed to the Liao authorities to rebuke the actions of Aguda while the later was expanding his influence among the other Jurchen clans.⁴⁰⁵

As if the rebellion of Yelü Zhangnu was not enough to sap the strength of Tianzuo’s campaign against Aguda, Yelü Zhangjianu took his forces and rode against the emperor only a couple months later. Zhangjianu does not appear to have been acting upon the same agenda of conspiracy as the earlier rebel, but his disruption was just as debilitating to the campaign in the east. Zhangjianu was defeated by the emperor’s remaining forces not long after he rebelled, but the dissent of these prominent imperial clansmen was enough to shake the loyalty of many Liao officials within the borderlands. Immediately in the wake of Zhangjianu’s rebellion, at least one Prefect (*cishi* 刺史) of a border prefecture rebelled and separated itself from the empire.⁴⁰⁶ Thus, Tianzuo’s efforts to tackle the Jurchen threat were undermined and derailed by internal dissent and rebellion. Aguda and his capable warriors had very little to do with the defeat of Tianzuo’s massive military force.

⁴⁰⁴ Ahuchan apparently defeated Zhangnu’s rebel army with only a force of 300 Jurchen riders. It is recorded that he captured over two hundred Kitan noblemen whom he beheaded. Additionally, the wives and children of his prisoners were distributed as servants with many of the women being forced to work within a state-controlled labor camp specializing in embroidery (*jinyuan* 錦院). See *Liaoshi* 28.332.

⁴⁰⁵ *Liaoshi*, 27.326-7.

⁴⁰⁶ *Liaoshi* 28.333.

The loss of the Eastern Capital

Within a couple months of Yelü Zhangnu and Yelü Zhangjianu's rebellions, a far greater uprising occurred within the Eastern Capital of the empire. The Eastern Capital, or Dongjing (東京) was the administrative center for the Eastern Capital Circuit (*dongjing dao* 東京道) which included nearly the whole area of modern Jilin and Liaoning Provinces, as well as large areas of Heilongjiang and parts of North Korea. The city itself had long been established within the region, even before the arrival of the imperial Kitans in 926. The city had been a capital city within the conquered state of Bohai, and it continued to retain a large Bohai population and culture throughout the Liao Dynasty. The uprising that occurred in the city during the ongoing Liao campaign against Aguda was eventually captained by a faction that laid claim to the defunct authority of the lost Bohai kings.

The initial act of revolt in the Eastern Capital was led by an inebriated gang of young bravos who murdered the unpopular Liao Regent (*liushou* 留守), Xiao Baoxian 蕭保先.⁴⁰⁷ The record is not specific regarding the rule of Baoxian in the city of Dongjing, only that he was "severe" in his authority.⁴⁰⁸ The Regent was murdered by the youths who had snuck into his residence by night and after seizing swords, called out to him in alarm saying, "Right now the troops are riled (in revolt)! We request you make preparations! 今軍變,請為備"⁴⁰⁹ Such an announcement likely caused Baoxian to emerge from his chambers in haste, only to meet his death at the hands of these young men. The murderers were quickly rounded up and

⁴⁰⁷ Xiao Baoxian was a close member of the imperial marriage clan and was Tianzuo's brother-in-law.

⁴⁰⁸ *Liaoshi* 28.334. The words used here to describe Baoxian are *yanku* 嚴酷.

⁴⁰⁹ *Liaoshi* 28.334.

beheaded by the other authorities of the city, but the death of the regent provided an opportunity for a faction of Bohai civil and military leaders to seize power.⁴¹⁰ This particular faction was led by a former Assistant General (*pjiang* 裨將) of the city named, Gao Yongchang 高永昌. Under Gao Yongchang, a company of Bohai warriors took control of the Eastern Capital from the inside and severed ties to the Liao Empire.

Thus, the entire administrative hub of the Eastern Capital Circuit was removed from Liao control without any interference or support from Aguda and the Jurchen Coalition. The capture of the Eastern Capital by Gao Yongchang's forces effectively stranded Liao soldiers throughout the eastern portion of the empire. The lines of communication and supply had been removed. This situation forced many isolated Liao companies to either negotiate their vulnerable position with the new political-military centers of the Jurchen or Bohai powers, or to abandon their posts and flee their positions. There were probably many such Kitan companies in the east, who for whatever reason, found themselves in compromised situations that facilitated their surrender or defection to the rebel forces in the region. As early as the first months of 1116, Aguda boasted of the many tribes, clans, and ethnicities that had surrendered and joined the new Jurchen Empire. His list included mention of groups and individuals identified as Kitan, Xi, Han, Bohai, Registered Jurchen of the Liao, Shiwei, Dalugu, Wure, and Tieli.⁴¹¹ However, not all inhabitants of the borderlands joined with the anti-Liao polities under Aguda or Gao Yongchang. Some chose to flee the control of these

⁴¹⁰ Immediately after Baoxian's assassination, order was maintained through the efforts of the other Liao administrators, most notably the Tax Commissioner (*hubushi* 戶部使) Da Gongting 大公鼎 and the Vice Regent Gao Qingming 高清明, both of whom were Bohai.

⁴¹¹ *Jinshi* 2.29. The 'Registered Jurchen of the Liao' (*xiliaoji nuzhi* 係遼籍女直) were of course the "cooked" or "civilized" Jurchen.

new regimes and instead abandon their assigned posts for the relative safety of the countryside. One such group forced into this position was the large number of Liao troops garrisoned near the Goryeo border at Bao Prefecture (*baozhou* 保州). Bao Prefecture had long been a key staging area for Liao aggression into the Korean peninsula. Thus, the capture and control of Bao Prefecture was of prime importance to the kings of Goryeo.⁴¹² During the early years of invasion, this strongly garrisoned settlement was left isolated behind the lines of Jurchen and Bohai rebels and became the focus of both Jurchen and Goryeo aggression in the wake of Liao control in the region.

In the same month that Gao Yongchang's forces obtained control of the Eastern Capital, an envoy from Goryeo arrived at the court of Aguda to provide congratulations for his recent victories. At that time, the Goryeo envoy also requested control of Bao Prefecture.⁴¹³ The official records of the Jin Dynasty state that Aguda had ordered one of his commanders, Sahe 撒喝 of the Jiagu tribe 加古部, to capture Bao Prefecture during autumn of 1115.⁴¹⁴ Yet, for whatever reason, Sahe did not depart for the territory immediately and thus provided Goryeo an opportunity to capture it. For the next few months there was an exchange of guarded but polite diplomatic assurances between the two rulers that was reflected on the ground by a scramble of Jurchen Coalition forces to the area in an attempt to assert their position. However, when Sahe and his warriors finally arrived at Bao Prefecture they saw that the forces of Goryeo were already stationed there, and that the previous soldiers

⁴¹² Rogers, "The Regularization of Koryŏ-Chin Relations," 53. The military installation at Bao Prefecture was also known under the name of the Xuanyi Military Camp 宣義軍營. It included a bridge spanning the Yalu River as well as a fortified position upon the river island of today's Geomjeong Island 黔定島.

⁴¹³ *Jinshi* 2.29; 135.2884.

⁴¹⁴ *Jinshi* 135.2884.

of the Liao had long fled their stronghold.⁴¹⁵ The speed of the Jurchen invasion, as well as the unexpected capture of the Eastern Capital by Bohai rebels, likely left many Liao soldiers in circumstances similar to the one faced by the Liao defenders of Bao Prefecture, and contributed to the general disruption and instability of the region.⁴¹⁶

A new Bohai Emperor

The capture of the Eastern Capital by Gao Yongchang and his followers quickly became more than a mere civil uprising against an unlikable regent. Such uprisings had occurred numerous times during the nearly two hundred years of Kitan rule over former Bohai territory. In fact, one abortive uprising occurred in 1115 within Rao Prefecture 饒州, hardly a year before the assassination of the Kitan Regent in the Eastern Capital.⁴¹⁷ However, Gao Yongchang's rebellion was of a different caliber than those that had gone before. A large reason for this difference was the turbulent political environment of the Eastern regions of the Liao during the successful invasion of the borderlands by the Jurchen Coalition. The fracture of Tianzuo's massive expeditionary army and the fortification of Aguda's forces within Huanglong Administration provided a political turbulence that Gao Yongchang sought

⁴¹⁵ *Jinshi* 135.2884. The language used in the text that describes the actions of the Liao troops is that "the Liao defenders were about to run away 遼守將遁去."

⁴¹⁶ It was in the wake of the disruptions of 1116, that mention is made of the one hundred plus refugee families who arrived within the Song Empire after fleeing their homelands across the sea. The stories of these refugees about the rise of the Jurchen Empire was probably one of the first convincing indications that the Liao was losing control of its northeastern territories. See *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 3.13b; Franke, "Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (I)," 165.

⁴¹⁷ *Liaoshi* 28.331. Rao Prefecture was located in the southwest region of today's Baarin Right Banner in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region. This earlier rebellion was led by a Bohai man named Guyu 古欲, who like Gao Yongchang, aspired to a higher position. However, the political environment of 1115 and the prominence of Rao Prefecture was far removed from that of the Eastern Capital a year later, and Guyu proclaimed himself a new "Great King" (*dawang* 大王) consistent with the titles granted to prominent tribal leaders within the Liao administrative system of the frontier.

to take advantage of. Furthermore, Gao was able to successfully capture one of the imperial capitals of the empire and hold it beyond the first efforts of the Liao to retake it, something that the Bohai had failed to do in previous rebellions. Perhaps the most striking difference between the rebellion of 1116 and those that went before was the style in which Gao Yongchang held power.

Very soon after capturing the city, Gao's followers swelled to include an army of over 8,000. This surge in sympathy may have been due in part to ethnic hostilities between the city's inhabitants. Supposedly, Gao's initial support was drawn from those he commanded while serving as a Deputy General as well as urban Bohai who were angry at the city's Han Chinese population. There are not many details surrounding this conflict, but mention is made to events prior to the rebellion in which many Bohai were killed by, or because of, the animosity of the Han population.⁴¹⁸ This "pro-Bohai" agenda was well received by groups within and without the city and allowed Gao Yongchang a level of prestige unreached by earlier rebel Bohai leaders. In a move consistent with the turbulent political environment mentioned above, Gao took steps to elevate himself and his regime to the level of an East Asian dynastic empire. One month after capturing the city, Gao Yongchang declared himself a emperor (*huangdi* 皇帝) of a new Bohai Dynasty named Da Yuan 大元.⁴¹⁹ As was the custom in such circumstances, he also pronounced the beginning

⁴¹⁸ *Jinshi* 71.1631.

⁴¹⁹ *Goryeo sa* 14.9a.281.

of a new regnal era, titled Longji 隆基 or “Prosperous Founding,” and immediately reached out to neighboring rulers for support and recognition.⁴²⁰

It is not the least surprising that one of the first rulers Gao contacted was Aguda, himself a newly risen emperor. Gao Yongchang’s envoys arrived at Aguda’s court seeking his aid and carrying the message, “We desire to combine our power [with yours] in order to take (attack) the Liao 願併力以取遼.”⁴²¹ Aguda’s reaction to Gao’s announcement and proposition was very skeptical and in no way enthusiastic. Aguda replied that a combination of their efforts would surely succeed in defeating the Liao, but he was not accepting of Yongchang’s new title of *huangdi*. He stated that the multitude of Gao’s followers qualified him for some elevated title, and that if he (Yongchang) handed over to Aguda those he had captured in his expeditionary forays into the regions surrounding the Eastern Capital that Aguda might grant him the “ancient title” of King (*wang* 王).⁴²² While it is left unsaid, it is implied that the captives requested by Aguda were members of Jurchen clans (due to their proximity to the city it is likely that these were various “civilized” tribes). Also, the reference to an “ancient title” of King is probably referring to the former lords of the original Bohai Kingdom (712-926) who called themselves kings (*wang* 王) and not emperors.

⁴²⁰ Perhaps because Yongchang was so desperate to seek out the support of neighboring rulers, he was also the target of at least one fraudulent “ambassador” who sought to take advantage of the new ruler’s naiveté. The *Goryeo sa* includes a story of a Goryeo man who traveled to the Liao Eastern Capital and falsely claimed to be an official Goryeo envoy. Yongchang apparently received him with gratitude and a lavish welcome. Upon returning to his homeland, news of his adventures reached the authorities and he was put in prison. See *Goryeo sa* 14.9b.281. For more information on the general role of the Bohai populations within Liao-Goryeo relations see Wei Zhijiang 魏志江, “Lun 1020-1125 nian de Liao-Li guanxi 論 1020-1125 年的遼麗關係,” *Nanjing daxue xiebao (zhixue-renwen-shehui kexue)* 南京大學學報(哲學-人文-社會科學) 1 (1997): 118-19.

⁴²¹ *Jinshi* 71.1632.

⁴²² *Jinshi* 71.1632.

The relationship between the two new emperors grew increasingly strained as the months went on. The advance of a large Liao army towards the Eastern Capital numbering over 60,000 men must have done little to assuage Yongchang's fears that his new empire would not survive long. In Gao's return missive to Aguda, he conceded on nearly all of Aguda's demands but also insisted that since he (Gao) was forced to turn over his Jurchen followers and captives, Aguda was obligated to similarly hand over all of the Bohai under his rule. This emphasis on ethnic solidarity and claim is interesting given the variety of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic distinctions among the followers of both regimes. Previous rulers of the Anchuhu Wanyan had made claims on those Jurchen living under the protection of the Liao, but in those cases the individuals in questions were "raw" Jurchens and thus technically under the jurisdiction of the appointed *jiedushi* of that group; a position held by the rulers of the Anchuhu Wanyan since the reign of Wugunai. However, Gao Yongchang's demand for a return of the Bohai under Aguda's control may indicate that Yongchang aspired to present himself and his new state as an intrinsically ethnic regime over a multi-ethnic polity; similar to the Kitan-Liao as a Kitan-ruled multi-ethnic empire. Unfortunately for Yongchang, Aguda failed to hand over those Bohai under his command. However, he did agree to send military assistance to ward off the advancing Liao army.

The commander of the Jurchen force sent south to help ward off the large Liao advance was a close clansman of Aguda named Wolu 斡魯. The Liao army fought a number of engagements before finally facing Wolu's force in the land around Shen Prefecture 瀋州.⁴²³ The Liao army was defeated and Wolu captured Shen Prefecture, but Wolu continued

⁴²³ The seat of Shen Prefecture was located in today's city of Shenyang 瀋陽市 in Liaoning Province.

to advance south, toward Gao Yongchang and his new state of Da Yuan.⁴²⁴ Gao's relief that the Liao had been repulsed was quickly replaced with an increasing fear of Wolu and the expansion of the Jurchen-Jin into territory he likely saw as his own. Wolu was in fact acting on the previous orders of Aguda in which the Jurchen emperor directed his cousin to approach the city and try to incite the inhabitants to join with the Jurchen Coalition. In an effort to deflect a possible attack on his city by the Jurchens, Yongchang sent a small mission to Wolu that carried a golden seal and fifty tablets of silver. Yongchang's messengers reported that Gao desired to abandon the name of his new state and instead call it Fan (*fan* 藩), a word meaning "boundary" or "hedge" and often used in the sense of *fanguo* 藩國 or "vassal state."⁴²⁵ We have no record of Wolu's reaction to this missive, but he was advised against taking Gao at his word by a recently captured Bohai native named Gao Zhen 高楨.⁴²⁶ When Wolu continued to approach the city, Gao Yongchang murdered Aguda's envoys within the city and gathered his followers together in an attempt to march out and ward off Wolu's forces. Yongchang marched his warriors to the banks of the Wolihuo River 沃里活水 and awaited Wolu's army to arrive on the other side.⁴²⁷ Whatever strategic position Yongchang hoped to maintain on his side of the river disappeared when his entire army fled at the sight of Wolu's cavalry back to the city's walls. Undeterred by the river, Wolu's forces continued their trajectory and advanced through the water. Without an army capable

⁴²⁴ This battle would be another in which the Liao seemed to have had a massive superiority in numbers, but somehow failed to achieve victory in the field. It is possible that the original number of 60,000 was whittled down by small forays en route to Shen Prefecture, but it is doubtful that the numbers would have decreased enough to equalize it with those under Wolu.

⁴²⁵ *Jinshi* 71.1632.

⁴²⁶ Gao Zhen was an intelligent and educated Bohai man who had obtained a *jinshi* degree under the Liao. It is said that he had been in Shen Prefecture visiting his mother when Wolu's army arrived, and for whatever reason joined his cause. See his short biography in *Jinshi* 84.1889.

⁴²⁷ The Wolihuo River is known today as the Taizi River 太子河 in Liaoning Province.

of standing up to Wolu, Yongchang fled the field with those loyal to him and hid himself on an island off the coast named Changsong 長松島.⁴²⁸

Gao Yongchang's Bohai dynasty of Da Yuan did not last long after the rout suffered at the Wolihuo River. Wolu's army arrived at the Eastern Capital and found that the inhabitants had captured Gao Yongchang's wives and children and were ready to surrender to the Jurchen forces. The record states that the men who took charge of the city and convinced the population to surrender to Wolu were men who had previously been captured by Aguda in the first battles at Ningjiang Prefecture, and had been subsequently released in an effort to win over the support of their Bohai families and clansmen.⁴²⁹ After the Eastern Capital surrendered to Jurchen rule, the surrounding settlements and prefectures that had formerly allied with Gao Yongchang, shifted their allegiance to Aguda.

Thus, by mid-1116 the new Jurchen-Jin Dynasty had obtained control of the entirety of the former Eastern Capital Route of the Liao Empire. The Jurchen had benefitted greatly from the work of Gao Yongchang in capturing Liao territory and further distracting the emperor from bringing a strong defensive force to bear against Aguda in Huanglong Administration. Furthermore, by successfully winning over the support of the city's inhabitants, the Jin Empire obtained control over the heart of the Eastern territories without expending the effort of having to conquer each territory. The successful appropriation of

⁴²⁸ Changsong Island is known today as Changxing Island 長興島, located southwest of Wafangdian City 瓦房店市, Liaoning Province.

⁴²⁹ The names of these former Bohai captives is given as Enshengnu 恩勝奴 and Xiange 仙哥. Supposedly, Aguda's decision to release the Bohai captives at Ningjiang was opposed by many of his generals who believed that the captives should have been executed. Aguda defended his decision to release the men on the precedence of his father, Helibo, who did something similar while fighting against recalcitrant Jurchen clans during his reign as leader of the Anchuhu Wanyan. However, I have been unable to locate this story within the existing record of Helibo's actions as ruler.

Gao Yongchang's rebellion not only "changed the entire strategic situation" of the Jurchen invasion, it effectively crippled the Liao Empire's ability to mount an effective defense of their realm.⁴³⁰ This was a crucial turning point in the conquest of the Liao Dynasty and should be recognized as one of the greatest contributing factors of the Jurchen victory in the east.

The Fall of the Liao Dynasty

The year of 1117 marked a new era for the Jurchen-Jin Empire and their relation to the states around them. It is likely for this reason that Aguda declared 1117 to be the beginning of a new regnal era, despite having declared the establishment of the dynasty only two years earlier.⁴³¹ Although the Liao Dynasty existed in some form or another until the capture of Tianzuo in 1125, the establishment of the Jurchen-Jin had expelled it from its former position of dominance within the multi-state system of East Asia. After 1117, Aguda began to establish the Jurchen-Jin Empire as the successor to Liao hegemony among the various states of the continent. The kingdom of Goryeo abandoned the Liao calendar in 1116 and simultaneously began sending regular envoys to the courts of the Jurchen emperors.⁴³² After the victories of 1117, the distant Song Empire began making efforts to establish regular diplomatic contact with the Jin Dynasty with the aim to establish a joint-alliance against the remaining Liao territories in the region of North China. The first such envoy, Ma Zheng 馬

⁴³⁰ Twitchett and Tietze, "The Liao," in CHC, vol.6, 144.

⁴³¹ The new regnal era beginning in 1117 was named Tianfu 天輔 "Heavenly Assistance."

⁴³² Rogers, "The Regularization of Koryŏ-Chin Relations," 58.

政 arrived at the close of 1117, though it was not until 1123 that an official treaty between the Jin and Song Empires was reached.

Evidence of the degeneration of morale within the Liao military was dramatically displayed in the 1117 attack of Jurchen forces against the far northern garrison of Changchun Prefecture 長春州.⁴³³ At that time, the entire defending army (composed of both Kitan and Bohai soldiers) surrendered or dispersed without raising a weapon against the invading Jurchens.⁴³⁴ The signs of the Liao's loss of prestige had become glaringly obvious to much of the population. The number of defections among Liao soldiers and officers to either the Jin or Song Empires increased dramatically after 1117. Such defections continued unabated until the capture of Tianzuo by Jurchen forces. Of course, these defections were doubly injurious to the Liao because they not only represented a loss of strength to their cause, but also an equal increase to the forces of their enemy.

One of the most prominent of these defections was lead by the imperial Kitan clansman, Yelü Yudu 耶律余覲 in 1121. Yudu was targeted, along with a number of high Kitan officials, by Tianzuo's minister/brother-in-law, Xiao Fengxian, as a member of a widespread conspiracy to replace Tianzuo with his eldest son, the Prince of Jin 晉. Those accused in this plot were executed while Yudu was away from the court on military campaign. Upon hearing of the situation, Yudu chose to not return to the Liao and instead defected to the Jin with over 3,000 households and a vast supply of livestock, armor,

⁴³³ Changchun Prefecture, also referred to as Chun Prefecture, was officially within the Eastern Capital Route but to the far northwest. Its exact location is unclear although possibilities include Qian Gorlos Mongol Autonomous County in Jilin; just northwest of the town of Tazi 塔子城, Tailai County 泰來縣, Heilongjiang Province; or possibly east of Taonan City 逃南市, Jilin Province.

⁴³⁴ *Liaoshi* 28.335.

weapons, and other supplies.⁴³⁵ Yelü Yudu served under the Jurchen emperors as a valuable asset in the final stages of the Liao conquest, and was even sent on campaign against the formidable Yelü Dashi 耶律大石.⁴³⁶ Yudu's defection was an extraordinary boon to the Jin Empire, but again, his defection was just one of many.⁴³⁷

The sea change of 1116-17 brought the Liao Empire out of its position of supremacy, but the final demise of the state was brought about by the mismanagement of its rulers. A full evaluation of the officials and state decisions of the Late Liao is beyond the scope of this project, but it is this author's belief that such a study would reveal that the leaders of the Liao contributed greatly to its eventual destruction. As for the rule of Tianzuo in the post-1117 era, it is clear that he failed to perceive the magnitude of the empire's loss after the fall of the east. In the second bout of failed negotiations between the two emperors, Tianzuo (or those officials managing the production of diplomatic documents to neighboring states) consistently demonstrated a lack of perspective when dealing with Aguda's demands. The fact that he believed Aguda would agree to modify the name of his state (Da Jin, 大金 "Great Jin") to that of Donghuai 東懷 "Eastern Gratitude" is just one of the many missteps taken in attempting to alleviate hostilities between the two rulers.

⁴³⁵ The *Liaoshi* records only that Yudu led over 1,000 cavalry over to the Jin, but his biography contained in the *Jinshi* describes the amount of people and goods that he brought over to the Jurchens. See *Liaoshi* 29.341; *Jinshi* 71.2848.

⁴³⁶ Yelü Dashi had a remarkable career in the final years of the Liao and eventually fled China Proper to establish a Liao Empire in exile, called Xi Liao or "western Liao." Of course, this empire thrived in the regions of Central Asia and became known as the "Qara-khitai" and although Dashi entertained plans to invade the Jin Empire and retake his homeland, all attempts to do so failed.

⁴³⁷ Yelü Yudu served under the Jin until 1133 when he was again suspected of treason and instead of facing charges, chose to rebel against the Jurchen emperor. He was quickly apprehended and executed along with a number of his sons. See *Jinshi* 71.2846-49; 3.64.

When looking at the fall of the Liao Empire, or the fall of any empire, it is tempting to simplify the process into a general recipe, or pattern, of imperial decline. Seeking similarities of imperial decline among various empires may serve to provide a very broad (and shallow) understanding of why premodern empires collapse, but the requisite generalization and simplification needed for such an enterprise blurs the detail and story that makes history human.⁴³⁸ Universal theories of societal decline may be composed of histories similar to that experience by the Liao Dynasty in the early 12th century, but little can come from a reverse application of such theories to the specific story of any particular fall of a single empire.⁴³⁹ While there will always be interest in these types of provocative, and easily digested, universal theories of the human experience, there is much to be gained in the study of complexity and the entangled nature of events that shapes the past and present.

Conclusion

The successful invasion of the Jurchen-Jin over the formerly dominant Empire of the Kitan-Liao was an unlikely event brought about by a series of lesser confrontations, each of which had the potential to rewrite the now established historical narrative. The Liao Empire of 1114 was by no means destined to fall. Similarly, the Jurchen Coalition under the rule of Aguda was not transformed into an unstoppable military machine. The fall of the Liao from its position as hegemon over a network of East Asian dynastic empires was brought about

⁴³⁸ Li Feng, *Landscape and Power in Early China: the Crisis and Fall of the Western Zhou, 1045-771 BC* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 109.

⁴³⁹ For a particularly popular universal theory of general decline, see Joseph A. Tainter, *The Collapse of Complex Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

through the initial military failures of 1115, the prominent internal rebellions within the Liao high command, and the defection and rebellion of Liao subjects, most notably the Bohai of the Eastern Capital under Gao Yongchang.

The position of the Jurchen Coalition shifted towards that of a new, dominant Jurchen-Jin Empire through a combination of its military victories, the Liao's military shortcomings, and the efforts of third party groups like the Bohai who assisted in weakening the Liao presence in the east. The Jurchen Coalition of 1115, preparing to flee back toward the prepared defenses along the Songhua River, could not have foreseen its dominance two years later as the rulers over the entire Eastern Capital Route of the Liao Empire. After attaining the position and strength of 1117, the Jurchen Empire was able to assert its position as the legitimate successors to Liao hegemony over the multi-state system in the following decade. The Jurchen-Jin succeeded in supplanting the Liao as the dominant power on the continent and received homage from Goryeo, Tangut-Xia, and after another campaign of invasion, the Song Dynasty.

Conclusion

The story of the rise of the Jurchen-Jin Dynasty has its beginning in the early inter-clan institutions and organizations established by the imperial ancestors within the Anchuhu Wanyan clan. In most cases, existing clan leaders were incorporated into the expanding coalition under the Anchuhu Wanyan. While this organization was not a strongly centralized institution, the leaders of the Coalition had authority as mediators and judges of disputes between clan members. In its earliest phases, the leaders of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition expanded their control over neighboring groups in a direction away from the borders of the Liao Empire. In this way, the Coalition was able to largely avoid direct confrontation with the Liao and was thus able to cultivate a position within the system of frontier administration as an enforcer of the imperial will among the “raw” Jurchen clans.

The Anchuhu Wanyan utilized a specific form of frontier strategy that allowed them to present themselves to their followers as an alternate power to the Liao in the northeast while simultaneously benefitting from the open support and sanction of the Liao as imperial enforcers. When conflicts of interest did arise between the two powers, the leaders of the Anchuhu Wanyan utilized various methods of deflection, ruse, and subterfuge to maintain their façade as compliant to imperial demands while still accruing power among the Jurchen clans. This situation of frontier politics and society helps illuminate how borderzones functioned within premodern East Asia, and how frontier tributary states utilized imperial frontiers to achieve their own ends. The struggles of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition in achieving a lasting solidarity among the “wild” Jurchen clans reveals that the organization

under Aguda was in no way a “poorly organized confederation” of Jurchen groups, but was instead an institution that had survived numerous threats and had established a working coalition government based on customary laws and hierarchical rule.⁴⁴⁰

The expansion of the Jurchen Coalition into the borderlands of Goryeo set the stage for a critical period in pre-imperial Jurchen history. The ability of the Jurchen Coalition to gain a foothold in a region that was formerly tied to the frontier cities of Goryeo was a major accomplishment. Furthermore, the fact that the Coalition was able to turn the allegiance of some of these groups to the leadership of the Anchuhu Wanyan demonstrates that the Coalition leaders were more than merely aggressive warlords. When the armies of Goryeo invaded the region of Helan Dian in an effort to more fully control the land and drive out their Anchuhu competitors, the Coalition responded with a full mobilization of their military to secure the region. This Jurchen-Goryeo war has been overlooked in most of the literature concerning this period. Yet, without an understanding of how the Coalition fought back against the large armies of Goryeo, it is difficult to understand the proficiency those same warriors manifested on the battlefields against the Liao less than a decade later. Perhaps as important as the military experience of battle with Goryeo was, the establishment of negotiations with the court of Goryeo was another important step in the actualization of a new Jurchen imperial identity.

When open conflict finally did erupt between the Liao Empire and the Jurchen Coalition, it cannot be sufficiently explained through Jurchen ambition. Instead, Aguda and his kin felt that they had reached a point in their relationship with the Liao that an attack

⁴⁴⁰ Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, 178.

against them (the Coalition) was inevitable. Aguda's refusal to dance and lose prestige among his followers may have hastened this feeling of imminent attack. However, when the Jurchen finally did assault the border garrisons of the empire, they did so cautiously with the best odds they could obtain. Moreover, after the initial attack, they fully expected to receive the Liao counter-attack and fall back to their prepared defenses along the Songhua River. The failure of the Liao and the unexpected successes of the Jurchen armies likely surprised the Anchuhu Wanyan as much as the officials of the Liao court.

The year of 1117 was the end of Liao hegemony in East Asia, and the entrance of the Jurchen-Jin Dynasty on the larger stage of the East Asian multi-state system. The Liao loss of the Eastern Capital Route crippled their ability to effectively defend themselves against further Jurchen invasion, much less removed their capacity to retake the territory they lost. While the Jurchen proved remarkably effective in engagements with larger Liao armies, the Liao military seems to have suffered from more systemic problems of morale and leadership. Tianzuo's actions prior to 1117 were not particularly disastrous to the empire, and the mobilization of the massive expeditionary army of 1115 demonstrates that he was actively engaged in confronting the Jurchen threat. However, his efforts were undermined by numerous rebellions by high-level officials and generals who sapped the momentum and strength of Liao resistance. Finally, the successful rise of the Bohai of the Eastern Capital, and their later capitulation to Jurchen forces effectively handed the entirety of the eastern Liao over to Aguda and his followers.

Epilogue

There is so much more material to investigate in the continuing story of the early Jin Dynasty. The full invasion of the Liao with its accompanying disintegration of the empire's administration and infrastructure is a fertile ground for further research. Similarly, the invasion and occupation of the Song Dynasty in 1125 would reveal even more of the evolving character of the Jurchen-Jin and how Jurchen leaders adjusted to the rigors of ruling such a large territory and foreign population. There must be more behind the Jurchen decision to establish the puppet dynasties of Chu 楚(1127) and Qi 齊(1129-1137) and then to dissolve them completely. Finally, I regret that I have been unable to adequately investigate the complexity of the multi-state system that provided the political background for this entire study. The eventual treaty relations between the Jin and Song Dynasties are only one facet of what must have been a dynamic system of international relations and discourse. It is my hope that this dissertation may serve as a first step in further studies of the Jurchen-Jin and their place within the history of premodern East Asia.

GLOSSARY

The following glossary owes much to the work of Herbert Franke whose translation of the first chapter of the *Jinshi* was accompanied by detailed geographic and linguistic annotation. Franke in turn, utilized the work of an earlier translation of the first chapter of the *Jinshi* into Russian by A.G. Maljavkin in 1942. In addition to Franke, I have also relied on the work of Wittfogel and Feng (WF) and their understanding of the people and lands of the Liao Dynasty. Most of the locations given as the modern equivalents of historical places and features were obtained from the *Zhongguo lishi diming da cidian* 中國歷史地名大辭典 (1995), edited by Wei Songshan.

WF Karl A. Wittfogel and Feng Chia-sheng. 1949. *History of Chinese Society: Liao*(907-1125). Philadelphia, The American Philosophical Society: Distributed by the Macmillan Co., New York.

- Adian 阿典: a tribe listed under the Xi'an 係案 Jurchen. The name Adian meant “thunder” in the Jurchen language. The designation of Xi'an 係案 likely signified that this tribe belonged to those Jurchen who were registered under the Liao. The Adian lived in Liaoning province at the Peizhu River 陪朮水⁴⁴¹ which was a tributary of the Liao River.⁴⁴²
- Ageban 阿閣版: a man of the Heshilie tribe of the Taowen and Tulonggu Rivers. Together with Shilu (not the Anchuhu leader) he blocked the falcon roads from the Five Nations and seized and killed the Liao envoys sent to capture the falcons.⁴⁴³
- Agua 阿聒: a member of the Wanyan tribe, sent by Wuyashu to Goryeo to receive the extradited refugees from their control.⁴⁴⁴
- Aguchan 阿鶻產: King of the Shunguo Jurchens (*shunguo nüzhì* 順國女直), a registered group of Jurchens living outside of Xian Prefecture. Prior to Aguda's

⁴⁴¹ *Liaoshi* 27.319.

⁴⁴² *Liaoshi* 27.319; WF, 422 n116; Franke, “Chinese Texts (I),” 185; Franke, “Chinese Texts,” 449.

⁴⁴³ *Jinshi* 1.18.

⁴⁴⁴ *Jinshi* 135.2883.

invasion, Aguchu petitioned the Liao to reprimand Aguda for the aggressive expansion of the Anchuhu Wanyan, and their attacks against his people.⁴⁴⁵

- Aguda 阿骨打: (b.1068, r.1113-1123) second son of Helibo. Leader of the Anchuhu Wanyan and founder of the Jin Dynasty.
- Ahai 阿海: a man of the Heshilie tribe and an ally of the Anchuhu Wanyan. Served the coalition under Wugunai and Helibo. Father of the Heshilie *bojin*, Ashu.
- Ahuchan 阿鶻產: a leader of the *shou* or “cooked” Jurchen who had quarreled with Aguda and fled to the Liao. Possibly named Ahuchan Zhaosan 趙三.⁴⁴⁶
- Alihemen 阿里合懣: (1071-1119) the 8th son of Wugunai. His name is said to have meant “who has a falcon on his arm.” He was sent forth along with Sagai, Cibushi, and Wodai to attack the Wugulun forces led by Liuke and Zhadu during the reign of Yingge.⁴⁴⁷
- Aoyan 奧衍: a group of Jurchens registered with the Liao Empire and part of the imperial *ordo* formed under Liao Shengzong (r.982-1031).⁴⁴⁸
- A Rohwan 阿老喚: a Jurchen leader of a group living within Helan Dian who surrendered himself and over 1,460 of his followers to the armies of Goryeo during the Jurchen-Goryeo War.⁴⁴⁹
- Ashu 阿疎: a man of the Heshilie tribe who obstructed and caused trouble for the forces of Aguda during the latter’s pursuit of the murderous *bojin*, Bate. Ashu fled to the Liao and from his political asylum there, consistently worked to discredit and undermine the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition. Short biography in *Jinshi* 67.1584-1586.

⁴⁴⁵ *Liaoshi* 27.326.

⁴⁴⁶ *Liaoshi* 27.326; Franke, “Chinese Texts (I),” 160.

⁴⁴⁷ *Jinshi, jinguo yujie*, 2893.

⁴⁴⁸ *Liaoshi* 33.391.

⁴⁴⁹ *Goryeo sa* 96.17.144.

- Axi 阿喜: a messenger sent by the *bojin* of the Peiman and Pucha tribes to Helibo to inform him of their distress after the destruction of the Peiman homes by the forces of the brothers Huannan and Sanda.
- Bage 跋葛: a *bojin* of the Tangguo tribe. He got into a feud with Bate of the Wendu tribe and was slain by him.
- Bahei of the Anchuhu Wanyan 跋黑: younger brother of Wugunai and uncle of Helibo. Bahei incited rebellion against Helibo and was recognized among the Jurchen as an alternative successor to leadership following the death of Wugunai. Short biography in *Jinshi* 65.1542.
- Bahei of the Nimanggu 跋黑: leader among the Nimanggu clan living within the village known as Molihai 抹離海村 along the Shuai River 帥水. He and his ally Bolikai were defeated by an army led by Aguda during the reign of Polashu.
- Bahai 跋海: (aka Andi 安帝) son of Wulu.⁴⁵⁰
- Baohuoli 保活里: younger brother of lineage founder, Hanpu, who migrated out of Korean peninsula and settled along the Yelan 耶懶 River. His name possibly meant “dwarf.”⁴⁵¹
- Bashi 拔石: a member of the Pucha tribe who was allied to the anti-Helibo leader, Wuchun. He was defeated and captured along with Gushi by Huandu at Xiedui.
- Bate 跋忒: a man of the Wendu tribe who killed Bage after an argument. Bate fled the forces of Aguda, who sought to bring him to justice, and found assistance in the person of the young Heshilie *bojin*, Ashu.

⁴⁵⁰ *Jinshi* 1.2.

⁴⁵¹ *Jinshi* 1.2; Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 439.

- Beilu 盃魯: a reciprocal envoy of Wanyan sent to Goryeo, during the reign of Wuyashu who was dispatched to the Groyeo court after Wuyashu had received a congratulatory embassy from Goryeo which had been sent to honor Wuyashu's ascension.
- Beinai 盃乃: a member of the Wole 斡勒 tribe who originally submitted to Wugunai, but during the reign of Helibo dissented from the Coalition and joined with Wuchun.
- Biegude 鰲故德: a group presumably proximate to, if not a member of, the Five Nations. During the reign of Yingge, the Commanding Prefect or *jiedushi* of the Biegude was ordered by him to serve as an envoy to the Liao as part of a ruse to distract the Liao from pursuing the issue of compensation for attacks against Ashu and his people.⁴⁵²
- Bolikai 播立開: a leader of the Nimanggu clan living within the village known as Molihai 抹離海村 along the Shuai River 帥水. He and his ally Bahei (also of the Nimanggu) were defeated by an army led by Aguda during the reign of Polashu
- Bugeshu 不歌束: a man of the Wole 斡勒 tribe who claimed to have witnessed Huandu 歡都 and Hutu 胡土 set fire to Beinai's 盃乃 house. He was later executed by Helibo for his lie.
- Buhui 卜灰: a member of the Buchulu tribe who along with Saguchu sent six riders to assist Huannan and Sanda in their campaign against Helibo. After Huannan and his brother's defeat, he refused to submit to Helibo and make peace. He was killed by Shilu 石魯, a man from his own group, who then came and surrendered to Helibo.

⁴⁵² *Jinshi* 1.14, 67.1586.

- Buzhulu 不朮魯部: (aka Bozhulu 孛朮魯) a tribe of which Buhui 卜灰 was a member.⁴⁵³
- Choe Hongjeong 崔弘正: an Assistant Commander of Goryeo, who along with Hwang Gunsang, traveled through Helan Dian to inform Jurchen leaders of an upcoming feast at the border during which a number of Jurchen captives would be released from Goryeo custody. This feast was ultimately a ruse to murder the Jurchen leaders prior to a concerted invasion of the Helan Dian region.⁴⁵⁴
- Chou'a 醜阿: a man from the Tuoman tribe, ordered by Aguda to pacify the various tribes living west of the Yiligu range and the Zhu'amen river during the reign of Yingge.⁴⁵⁵
- Chuhushi 雛鶻室: a leader of the Wure 兀惹 who arrived at the court of the Anchuhu Wanyan to submit to Aguda's authority following the victory at Chuhedian.
- Cibushi 辭不失: (aka Xibushi 習不失, possibly referenced also as Xibuchu, d.1123) Grandson of Shilu (Zhaozu 昭祖) and thus of the royal Wanyan clan, but not within the imperial lineage. He distinguished himself as a war hero in the Jurchen clan wars during the rise of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition. His name is said to have meant "to become sober after wine." Biography in *Jinshi* 70.1617-1619.⁴⁵⁶
- Cilie 辭列: an Assistant Envoy (*fushi* 副使) of the Dalugu Clan 達魯古部 who was captured and detained by Aguda immediately prior to his invasion in order to prevent Cilie from raising arms against the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition.⁴⁵⁷
- Da Gongting 大公鼎: a Bohai official within the Liao administration of the Eastern Capital. Immediately prior to the rebellion of 1116, he served as the city's Tax

⁴⁵³ *Jinshi* 1.9.

⁴⁵⁴ *Jinshi* 135.2883.

⁴⁵⁵ *Jinshi* 65.1538.

⁴⁵⁶ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 444; *Jinshi* 135.2894.

⁴⁵⁷ *Jinshi* 2.24.

- Commissioner (*hubushi* 戶部使). After the assassination of the Liao regent, Xiao Baoxian, he helped maintain order in the interval of time until Gao Yongchang's seizure of power.
- Daji 達紀: a man sent by Ashu in the last year of the reign of Yingge to cause unrest and antagonism against the Anchuhu Wanyan among the inhabitants of the Goryeo borderlands.
 - Dajianu 大家奴: a man of the Ningjiang 寧江 Bohai who was captured and detained by Aguda immediately prior to his invasion in order to prevent Dajianu from raising arms against the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition.
 - Dalugu 達魯骨: a Border General of the Liao.⁴⁵⁸ *See also Dalugu (clan).*
 - Dalugu (clan) 達魯古: 1) a tribe defeated by the Liao in 926 after the invasion of Bohai. 2) the name of a clan living north of the Songhua River that possibly functioned as guardians or overseers of the Falcon Road. The name of the tribe is possibly derived from the river name Talu 撻魯 (mod. Tao'er 洮兒, a tributary of the Nen River 嫩江 in Heilongjiang).⁴⁵⁹ *See also: Dalugu 達魯骨(Liao General)*
 - Digubao 狄故保: a younger brother of Ashu. Traveled between the Liao and Jurchen territory to report on aggressions against his clan by the Anchuhu Wanyan.⁴⁶⁰
 - Digunai 迪古乃: (d.1136) younger brother of Shitumen and descendant of Baohuoli. Leader of a branch of the Wanyan tribe living within Yilan Circuit 移懶路 during Aguda's invasion of Liao territory. Chinese name is given as *zhong* 忠; courtesy name given as Asikui 阿思魁.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁸ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 443.

⁴⁵⁹ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 443; WF, 90, 111.

⁴⁶⁰ *Liaoshi* 27.328; WF, 422; *Jinshi* 67.1585.

⁴⁶¹ *Jinshi* 70.1622. Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 440.

- Digunai 狄古迺: a man of the Pucha Tribe 蒲察部 appointed to assist Wosai in directing Jurchen forces against Goryeo in Helan Dian after the area had been lost to the Goryeo offensive in 1103.⁴⁶²
- Dikude 敵庫德: a member of the Subin River branch of the Wugulun tribe. He raised troops together with Liuke and Zhadu against Yingge.
- Dun'en 鈍恩: a son of Nagennie who fled to the forces of Liuke, Zhadu, and Dikude under the reign of Yingge.
- Duobaozhen 多保真: First wife to Wugunai and member of the Tangguo clan. Mother of Hezhe, Helibo, Hesun, Polashu, and Yingge. Played a large part in the governing of the Coalition alongside her husband. Biography in *Jinshi* 63.1500.
- Gao Qingming 高清明: a Bohai official of the Liao who held the position of Vice Regent over the Eastern Capital during the 1116 rebellion. Along with the Tax Commissioner Da Gongting, he helped maintain civil order in the interval of time before Gao Yongchang's seizure of power.
- Gao Zhen 高楨: an educated Bohai man who had received a *Jinshi* degree under the Liao. He was captured by Jurchen forces during the attack on Shen Prefecture and served as an advisor. See his short biography in *Jinshi* 84.1889.
- Gao Xianshou 高仙壽: the commander and Prefect (*cishi* 刺使) of Hai Prefecture, who led a contingent of Bohai troops under Liao command against the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition warriors occupying Ningjiang.⁴⁶³
- Gao Yongchang 高永昌: a Bohai man and former Assistant General (*pjiang* 裨將) of the Liao Eastern Capital who proclaimed himself emperor 1118 over a new Bohai Dynasty named Da Yuan 大元. Gao initially sought Aguda's aid against the Liao but

⁴⁶² *Jinshi* 65.1547.

⁴⁶³ *Liaoshi* 27.328.

marched against Jurchen forces after they failed to heed his commands to halt their march toward the city. He was eventually captured after fleeing to Changsong Island 長松島.

- Geum Injon 金仁存: a high official of Goryeo who argued that the Jurchen lands captured by Goryeo should be returned to the Jurchen in accordance with Wuyashu's proposal for peace.⁴⁶⁴
- Gong Hyeong 公兄: one of the three Jurchen envoys of the Anchuhu Wanyan who traveled to the court of Goryeo to deliver Wuyashu's message desiring peace.⁴⁶⁵
- Gushe 骨捨 (aka Hushe 胡舍): a grandson of Polashu and nephew of Aguda.⁴⁶⁶
- Gushi 故石: a member of the Pucha tribe. Gushi was allied with Wuchun and was captured by Huandu in battle at Xiedui.
- Gwansae 款塞: possibly an envoy of the Anchuhu Wanyan to the kingdom of Goryeo during the years of war over Helan Dian.⁴⁶⁷
- Haigu 海姑: a onetime supporter of the anti-Helibo leaders, Huannan and Sanda but who later abandoned the cause. While Helibo was preparing to battle Huannan, Cibushi was made efforts to incorporate the warriors under Haigu and Haigu's brothers into his own army.
- Hanguo 含國部: a clan living along the Subin River. During the reign of Wuyashu, the *bojiin* of the Hanguo did not come to the Huoluohai Stream to receive instruction from Wodai and the others members of the Coalition sent by the Anchuhu. This clan

⁴⁶⁴ *Goryeo sa* 96.5.138.

⁴⁶⁵ *Goryeo sa* 96.23.147.

⁴⁶⁶ Franke, "Chinese Texts (I)," 154; WF, 422 n126.

⁴⁶⁷ *Goryeo sa* 13.4.260.

is only mentioned in this passage involving the Huoluohai Stream and its parallel passages.⁴⁶⁸

- Hanpu 函普: (aka Shizu 始祖) First ancestor of the imperial lineage of the Anchuhu Wanyan. Hanpu and his younger brother Baohuoli are said to have migrated out of the Korean peninsula and settled among the Jurchens.
- Heihuanfangshi 黑歡方石: an envoy from Goryeo dispatched to the Anchuhu Wanyan in 1106 to offer congratulations to Wuyashu on his ascension to leadership over the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition.⁴⁶⁹
- Hejia'nu 郝家奴: a *linya* and official of the Liao Dynasty who held the title of Secretary of the Northern Regions (*beimian linya* 北面林牙). He was the first dispatched by the emperor to capture the Liao rebel Xiao Haili, but was unable to do so.⁴⁷⁰
- Helibo 劬里鉢: (aka Helipo 頗, Jiaomen 校門, Shizu 世祖, b.1038, r.1074-1092) second son of Wugunai and Duobaozhen. Leader of the Anchuhu Wanyan Clan.⁴⁷¹
- Helu 曷魯: Liao official who was charged with returning the households of Tieli and Wure who had fled to the Jurchen during the rule of Wugunai. Wugunai convinced him to leave the Liao troops at the border and personally investigate the matter himself.
- Heniwei 和你隈: mother of the great Jurchen general Wosai. She fell ill during the 1107-08 counterattacks against Goryeo, which caused Wosai to leave the war in Helan Dian and return to her side.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁸ *Jinshi* 1.16, 65.1546, 71.1631; Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 450.

⁴⁶⁹ *Jinshi* 1.16; 135.2883. The Korean reading of his name would be Heukhwan bangseok (흑환방석) but because the record was transliterated from the original into Chinese, I have chosen to use the Chinese reading of Heihuanfangshi

⁴⁷⁰ *Liaoshi* 26.312, 314, 27.319. Trans. In WF, 421-422.

⁴⁷¹ Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 443.

- Heshilie 紇石烈部: a large tribe from which a number of prominent Jurchen leaders hailed. The most well-known being Lapei, Machan, and Ashu. Branches of the tribe lived along several rivers in Eastern Manchuria such as the Xingxian, Taowen, and Tulonggu.⁴⁷³
- Hesukuan 曷蘇款: (aka Hesugun 袞, Hesukuan 館, or Hesihan 合斯罕) a term used to identify the households that moved and settled south of Liaoyang and registered there. These are the “cooked *shou* 熟” or “civilized” Jurchens.⁴⁷⁴
- Hesun 劬孫: third son of Wugunai and Duobaozhen.
- Hezhe 劬者: first son of Wugunai and Duobaozhen.
- Hezhe 劬者: a *bojin* of unknown clan who was placed in charge of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition siege of Ashu Town. Later granted the title of *tejin* 特進 or Lord Specially Advanced.
- Huandu 歡都: (1081-1113) a member of the Anchuhu Wanyan, though not of the imperial lineage. Biography in *Jinshi* 68.1591-94.
- Hwang Gunsang 黃君裳: Assistant Commander of Goryeo, who along with Choe Hongjeong, traveled through Helan Dian to inform Jurchen leaders of an upcoming feast at the border during which a number of Jurchen captives would be released from Goryeo custody. This feast was ultimately a ruse to murder the Jurchen leaders prior to a concerted invasion of the Helan Dian region.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷² *Jinshi* 65.1547.

⁴⁷³ See *Jinshi* 67.1581-87.

⁴⁷⁴ Xu Mengxin 徐夢莘 (1126-1207), *Sanchao beimeng huiban* 三朝北盟會編 “Collected Accounts of the Treaties with the North under Three Reigns” (1878, Siku quanshu 四庫全書 edition), 3.2a-b; trans. in Franke, “Chinese Texts (I),” 125.

⁴⁷⁵ *Jinshi* 135.2883.

- Huannan 桓赧: son of Yada 雅達 and brother of Sanda. Jurchen leader persuaded by Bahei to revolt against the leadership of Helibo. Lived among the Wanyan clan within Yitun Village 邑屯村. Biography in *Jinshi* 67.1574-77.
- Hubuda 胡補答: a *bojin* of the Pucha who together with Shazhi, a *bojin* of the Peiman Tribe, sent a messenger named Axi to Helibo to relate the distress of the Peiman after the armies of Huannan and Sanda burned down their houses.
- Huilibao 回离保: King of the Tieli 鐵驪 who arrived to submit to the Anchuhu Wanyan following the Jurchen victory at the Battle of Chuhedian.
- Huoluo 活羅: a man who bore hatred against Polashu following his elder brother's death in the fighting against Huannan and Sanda. He attacked the leaders of the Wanyan coalition before deserting to Beinai. Franke believes his name means 'Raven' or some other type of voracious bird.⁴⁷⁶
- Huonizhuo 活你茁: a man of the Hegu Tribe 劾古部 who assisted Wosai in leading Jurchen forces against Goryeo after the loss of the region in 1103.⁴⁷⁷
- Hushabu 胡沙補: a clansman of Aguda and envoy/scout who traveled to the lands of the Liao and obtained information on troop strength and positions. Biography in *Jinshi* 121.2634.⁴⁷⁸
- Hushahun 忽沙渾: father of Zhadu and member of the Wugulun clan.
- Hushimen 胡十門: (d.1118) a member of the Hesukuan 曷蘇館 or "cooked Jurchen." An educated man who was proficient in Chinese as well as both Kitan scripts. He

⁴⁷⁶ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 442-43.

⁴⁷⁷ *Jinshi* 65.1547.

⁴⁷⁸ *Jinshi* 121.2634.

believed himself a descendent of Agunai (Hanpu's elder brother). Short biography in *Jinshi* 66.1561-62.⁴⁷⁹

- Hulu 胡魯: a *bojin* of the Pucha during the rule of Yingge. He was ordered to serve as escort to an envoy of the Liao who was assigned to stop the fighting between the Anchuhu Wanyan and the forces of Ashu's town.
- Hutu 胡土: likely a member of the Anchuhu Wanyan, and a possible companion to Huandu 歡都. Accused by Bugeshu of the Wole of setting fire to the home of Beinai.
- Huxi, 胡喜: (aka Peiman Huxi) seems to have served as an assistant or second to Cibushi during the battle against Huannan.
- Jiagu 加古部: a clan living along the upper Lalin River, the members of which desired to attack the those carrying the coffin of Shilu back to the Anchuhu River valley.⁴⁸⁰
- Lapei 臘醅: a man of the Heshilie tribe of Helin village at the Huolahun River, a tributary to the Songhua. He and his brother Machan raided some of the members of Helibo's coalition. He was eventually captured and sent to the Liao as a prisoner. Biography in *Jinshi* 67.1581-83.
- Rim Gan 林幹: an officer and general of Goryeo who led an unsuccessful attack against Anchuhu Wanyan forces and its allies in the region of Helan Dian.⁴⁸¹
- Liuke 留可: a man from a branch of the Wugulun tribe residing at the junction of Tongmen and Hunchun rivers. Together with his tribesman, Zhadu, and another member of the Wugulun (though of the clan living along the Subin River) named

⁴⁷⁹ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 440.

⁴⁸⁰ *Jinshi* 1.4.

⁴⁸¹ *Goryeo sa* 12.5 (v.1, 241).

- Dikude, raised troops to attack the Anchuhu Wanyan coalition during the reign of Yingge. Short biography in *Jinshi* 67.1583-84.
- Lousu 婁宿: (aka Loushi 室, original name was Woliyan 斡里衍) a member of the Anchuhu Wanyan, but not of the imperial lineage. Died in 1130 after having taken part in most of the Jurchen campaigns. Lousu was sent to try and win over a number of the registered Jurchen populations to the Anchuhu Wanyan during the initial attacks on the Liao. Biography in *Jinshi* 72.1649-53.⁴⁸²
 - Ma Zheng 馬政: the first Song envoy to the court of the Jurchen-Jin who arrived and spoke with Aguda in 1117. Ma Zheng was instrumental in the establishment of relations between the Jin and Song Dynasties.⁴⁸³
 - Machan 麻產: a man of the Heshilie tribe, from the Helin village at the Huolahun River. He and his brother Lapei raided some Coalition members under Helibo. He fled after he and his brother's forces were defeated by Helibo, but was eventually captured and handed over to the Liao. He was later killed by Aguda. Biography in *Jinshi* 67.1581-83.
 - Manduhe 謾都訶: Member of the Anchuhu Wanyan. His name likely meant “stupid and foolish.” Short biography in *Jinshi* 65.1545.⁴⁸⁴
 - Maodulu 毛睹祿: a *bojin* of the Heshilie tribe. He created trouble and obstructed the forces of Aguda alongside Ashu during Aguda's pursuit of Bate.⁴⁸⁵
 - Miaoxun 邈遜: a *bojin* ordered by Yingge to accompany Hulu, *bojin* of the Pucha, in escorting a Liao envoy who had entered Jurchen territory to attempt to stop the fighting being carried out between the Wanyan and the forces of Ashu's town.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸² Franke, “Chinese Texts (I),” 155.

⁴⁸³ *Jinshi* 2.30; Franke, “Chinese Texts (I),” 121.

⁴⁸⁴ *Jinshi*, *Jinguo yujie*, 2894; Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 447.

⁴⁸⁵ *Jinshi* 67.1585.

- Mohe 靺鞨: a name given to the pre-Jurchen inhabitants of the northeast. Originally called Wuji 勿吉.⁴⁸⁷
- Monian 沒撚: a tribe of the Five Nations, led by a *bojin*, who rebelled against the Liao in 1072.⁴⁸⁸
- Moulianghu 謀良虎: (aka Zongxiong 宗雄) eldest son of Wuyashu. Renowned archer and orator.
- Nagennie 納根涅: father of Dun'en, the man who fled to join the forces of the Wugulun led by Liuke, Zhadu, and Dikude.
- Nalan 拏懶氏: (aka 納蘭) reportedly translated into Chinese as Gao 高. A clan to which Helibo's first wife, the mother of Wuyashu and Aguda, belonged.⁴⁸⁹
- Nasha 那沙: a man of the Tieli who was rewarded by the Liao in 1021 for the capture and relocation of Wure households into Bin Prefecture.
- Nianhan 粘罕: (aka. Zonghan 宗翰, or Nienmeihe 粘沒喝, d.1136) he was the eldest brother of Sagai and member of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan. He was distinguished as a military leader and commander. He was also instrumental in the early diplomatic relations between the Jurchen-Jin and its neighboring states. Biography in *Jinshi* 74.1693-99.⁴⁹⁰
- Niege 捏哥: the Liao Army Commander (*tongjinsi* 統軍司) of the Eastern Border during the earliest years of Aguda's reign. He was commanded to approach the

⁴⁸⁶ Franke misprints this name as "Mosun" in Franke, "Chinese Texts on the Jurchen (II)," 433 n.118.

⁴⁸⁷ See Sei Wada, 1938; WF, 50, 93, 106, 176.

⁴⁸⁸ Franke suggests that they may be the Pennuli 盆奴里 mentioned in *Liaoshi* 33.392. See Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 443.

⁴⁸⁹ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 445.

⁴⁹⁰ Franke, "Chinese Texts (I)," 141; Wang Yulang 王禹浪 and Wang Hongbei 王宏北, "Lun Wanyan Zonghan 論完顏宗翰," *Journal of Harbin University* 哈爾濱學院學報 26.1 (2005):1-10.

Jurchen leader and demand an explanation for the Jurchen defenses prepared in the months prior to the invasion.⁴⁹¹

- Nimanggu 泥龍古部: a tribe located along the Shuai River 帥水.⁴⁹²
- Niu Wenshu 牛溫舒: one of two Liao officials sent to the Song Empire to argue for the return of territory captured by the Song in the 1103-06 war against the Tangut-Xia. At the time he held the office of Southern Establishment Commissioner of Military Affairs (*nanyuan shumishishi* 南院樞密使事).⁴⁹³
- Nyobul 裒弗: the leader of a small party of Jurchen envoys of the Anchuhu Wanyan who traveled to the court of Goryeo to deliver Wuyashu's message desiring peace.⁴⁹⁴
- Nyo Eulnae 裒乙乃: a man of the Eastern Jurchen who led a group of Jurchens, numbering 3,230, in 1107 to the borders of Goryeo to present themselves as allies during the Jurchen-Goryeo War.⁴⁹⁵
- Oeuldal 烏乙達: a man of the Eastern Jurchen who presented himself and 144 others at the court of Goryeo in 1044 to offer tribute and to express thanks for Goryeo's assistance in defending his people from bandits.⁴⁹⁶
- O Jeongchong 吳廷寵: a Goryeo general who was commanded by King Yejong to lead a rescue force to the besieged fort at Ung-ju during the Jurchen-Goryeo War.⁴⁹⁷
- Peiman 裴滿部: (aka Poyouman 婆由滿) a clan that joined with Helibo. The houses of the Peiman were burned down by the passing armies of Huannan and Sanda. They

⁴⁹¹ It is possible that the name given here as "Niege" was not meant as a personal name, but was instead referring to an army of Xi soldiers referred to in the *Liaoshi* as Niege 涅哥.

⁴⁹² *Jinshi* 1.12.

⁴⁹³ *Liaoshi* 27.322.

⁴⁹⁴ *Goryeo sa* 96.23.147.

⁴⁹⁵ *Goryeo sa* 12.30.253.

⁴⁹⁶ *Goryeo sa* 高麗史, *juan* 卷 6.33.138 (Seoul: Asea Muhwasa 亞細亞文化社, 1972).

⁴⁹⁷ *Goryeo sa* 12.36.256.

were possibly allied close with, or located proximate to the Pucha tribe (the Pucha *bojin* Hubuda joined with the Peiman *bojin*, Shazhi in sending Axi, a messenger, to Helibo to inform them of the destruction).⁴⁹⁸

- Pende 盆德: a *bojin* sent by Polashu to discuss terms of peace with Huannan and Sanda when the latter brought troops against the sons of Wugunai.
- Polashu 頗刺淑: (aka Pulashu 蒲刺淑, Suzong 肅宗, b.1042 r.1092-1094) fourth son of Wugunai and Duobaozhen.⁴⁹⁹
- Pozhukan 婆諸刊: son of Shixian of the Wulinda, sent to the Liao court and later returned to his homelands during era of Wugunai. Later allied with Lapei (and Lapei's brothers) against Helibo before being defeated and presented as a captive to the Liao.
- Prince Chun 王淳: (aka Yelü Chun 耶律淳, Weiguo Wang Chun 魏國王淳) uncle of Tianzuo and rival to the Liao throne, although Chun did not participate in rebellion until 1122, when Tianzuo fled the court to the Western Capital. At that time, Chun was raised as a rival Liao Emperor in the Southern Capital, but his position was not recognized by the Jurchen or the Song courts.⁵⁰⁰
- Pucha 蒲察部: a tribe that submitted to Wugunai. The name may mean “forest.”⁵⁰¹
- Puhu 蒲虎: a man of the Jiagu tribe who desired to confiscate the coffin of Shilu while it was being carted back to Anchuhu territory.
- Pujianu 蒲家奴: (d.1139) a son of Hesun, the younger brother of Helibo. Cousin and close confidant of Aguda. An influential leader during the Jurchen invasion of Liao. He had the Chinese name Yu 昱. Short biography in *Jinshi* 65.1543.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁸ *Jinshi* 1.8; Franke, “Chinese Texts (I),” 140.

⁴⁹⁹ Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 445.

⁵⁰⁰ WF, 362.

⁵⁰¹ Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 442.

- Punie 蒲聶部: a tribe that is defined as one of the Five Nations. The ruler during the time of Wugunai was named Bayimen 拔乙門 and held the title of *jiedushi*, or “Commanding Prefect.” Bayimen discontinued tribute to the Liao, halting the importing of falcons from this area. Approximate location would be near today’s Ning’an city 寧安市, Heilongjiang.⁵⁰³
- Qin’ai, Liao Empress 欽哀皇后: (aka Qin’ai 親愛) second wife of emperor Shengzong 聖宗 (r.982-1031). She held considerable political influence in the Liao court following the death of her husband in 1031.⁵⁰⁴
- Sagai 撒改: (d.1121) son of Hezhe, the oldest son of Wugunai. Given the title of *guoxiang* (Chancellor of State) in 1094. Made *dutong* (commander) in 1096, and was sent to attack the forces of the Wugulun under Liuke and Zhadu. Held a close relationship with Aguda and administered over the inhabitants of the Laliu River. Biography in *Jinshi* 70.1613-15.
- Saguchu 撒骨出: a member of the Pucha tribe who along with Buhui sent six riders to Huannan and Sanda to assist them in their campaign against Helibo. After the defeat and submission of Huannan and his brothers he refused to submit to Helibo and make peace. When Shilu of the Buzhulu killed Buhui and deserted, Saguchu pursued them. While pursuing them he was shot by an arrow loosed by a man hiding at the road-side. It is recorded he was hit in the mouth and died.
- Sahan 史顯: one of the Jurchen envoys of the Anchuhu Wanyan sent to the armies of Goryeo to proclaim Wuyashu’s desire for peace. It is possible that he made multiple trips to the Goryeo court as an envoy for the Anchuhu Wanyan.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰² *Jinshi* 65.1543-44.

⁵⁰³ Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 46.

⁵⁰⁴ WF, 200, 207.

⁵⁰⁵ *Goryeo sa* 96.23.147, 13.4.260.

- Sahe 撒喝: a member of the Jiagu tribe 加古部 and officer within the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition. He was assigned by Aguda to lead warriors to capture Bao Prefecture, located along the Liao-Goryeo border.⁵⁰⁶
- Saihan 賽罕: a man who died in the fighting against Huannan and Sanda. His younger brother, Huoluo, bore a secret hatred against Polashu because of this.
- Saila 賽剌: a prominent member of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition who served primarily as an envoy and army commander. He was killed by the Liao after arriving at the imperial court as an envoy.⁵⁰⁷
- Sanda 散達: son of Yada and brother of Huannan, a leader persuaded by Bahei to revolt against the leadership of Helibo. Short biography in *Jinshi* 67.1574-76.
- Shazhi 沙祗: a *bojin* of the Peiman Tribe, who together with Hubuda, *bojin* of the Pucha, sent a messenger, Axi, to Helibo to relate their distress after Huannan and Sanda's armies had burned down the houses of the Peiman.
- Shemu 闍母: (aka Chanmu 蟾目) a younger brother of Aguda. Died in 1129.⁵⁰⁸
- Shengguan 勝管: a leader within the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition, ordered by Aguda to pacify the various tribes living west of the Yiligu mountains and Zhu'amen river during the reign of Yingge.
- Shengkun 勝昆: younger brother of Zibunai 滓不乃, who was forcibly held within his house by soldiers of Wuchun when the latter advanced against Helibo and took residence with Zibunai. When the soldiers were withdrawn, Shengkun captured his older brother and handed him over to Helibo. This is possibly the same Shengkun of

⁵⁰⁶ *Jinshi* 135.2884.

⁵⁰⁷ *Jinshi* 84.1881.

⁵⁰⁸ Franke, "Chinese Texts (I)," 155.

the Wulinda tribe who was sent with Aguo to Goryeo to receive extradited refugees. Mentioned as being of the Wulinda tribe.⁵⁰⁹

- Shilu of the Anchuhu Wanyan 石魯: (aka 實魯, or Shilun 石倫) son of the Anchuhu Wanyan leader Suike. He had desires to establish regulations and laws for all of the “raw” Jurchen and did so only after resistance from the elder members of his clan. He was the first to forge Anchuhu Wanyan hegemony over neighboring groups and even received the official office/title from the Liao of *tiyin* (*tegin*), meaning prince of royal blood.⁵¹⁰
- Shilu of the Buzhulu 石魯: During the reign of Helibo, he killed Buhui and surrendered to Helibo’s forces.⁵¹¹
- Shilu 石魯: a man who together with Ageban of the Heshilie, blocked the Falcon Road to the Five Nations and killed Liao envoys sent to retrieve the falcons. It is possible that this man was the same Shilu of the Buzhulu, but it is unclear.
- Shilu of the Wulinda 石魯: a man ordered by Yingge to go and assist Hezhe who was stationed around the town of Hezhe while the latter was seeking refuge among the Liao.
- Shilu 石魯: *bojin* of the Wole 斡勒 during the reign of Helibo.
- Shishihuan 石適歡: a man sent originally by Yingge, but confirmed by Wuyashu, to pacify and annex the people of Helan Dian, near the border of Goryeo. He later obtained many victories over the forces of Goryeo.⁵¹²

⁵⁰⁹ *Jinshi* 135.2883.

⁵¹⁰ *Jinshi* 1.3-4. For more information on the title of *tiyin* see WF, 432.

⁵¹¹ *Jinshi* 67.1577.

⁵¹² *Jinshi* 135.2882-83.

- Shitumen 石土門: (aka Shentumen 神徒們, ~1062-1122) a 5th generation descendent of Baohuoli (younger brother of Hanpu). Leader of a Wanyan clan living along the Yelan River.⁵¹³
- Shixian 石顯: a man of the Hailan 孩懶 Wulinda clan who resisted the control of Wugunai. Short biography in *Jinshi* 67.1573.⁵¹⁴
- Shizu 世族: see Helibo.
- Shizu 始祖: “First Ancestor” of the Jin Emperors. See Hanpu.
- Shunhua Wang 順化王: “Submissive and transformative King,” a title granted by early Liao emperors to the rulers of a registered Jurchen group referred to as the Jurchen State (*nüzhì guó* 女直國). By the time of Aguda’s invasion, the title is absent from the record and instead is given as Great King (*dawang* 大王).⁵¹⁵
- Sile 廝勒: possibly a son of Bahei, he was requested along with Xiege to be sent to Wuchun during deliberations over the armor of Wubutun.
- Suike 綏可: son of Bahai, and progenitor of the Jin Emperors. Moved his residence to the Haigu River and engaged in cultivation and farming. Attributed as the first to build houses (as opposed to covered pits in the ground) and as the first to settle permanently around the Anchuhu River.⁵¹⁶
- Sukjong 肅宗: (1054-1105) king of Goryeo who first established diplomatic relations with the court of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition.
- Tangguo 唐括部: a tribe closely allied with the ruling lineage of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan. The tribe of Wugunai’s powerful wife, Duobaozhen 多保真.

⁵¹³ *Jinshi* 59.1376; 70.1613. Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 440.

⁵¹⁴ *Jinshi* 1.5.

⁵¹⁵ *Liaoshi* 27.326-7.

⁵¹⁶ *Jinshi* 1.3; Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 441.

- Tianzuo 天祚: (r.1101-1125) last emperor of the Liao Dynasty. His given name was Yelü Yanxi 耶律延禧.
- Tieli 鐵驪: (aka Tieli 鐵利) a regional name that first appeared during the Tang. Became one of fifteen administrative units (*fu* 府) of the Bohai. After the conquest of Bohai, the region continued as an administrative unit under the Liao. Located near the Alechuke River 阿勒楚喀 in Jilin Province. In 1021, a Tieli man, Nasha, presented more than a thousand Wure captives to Bin Prefecture 賓州 and asked for Buddhist images and Chinese classics in return. This request was granted.⁵¹⁷
- Tonggan 同幹: Liao envoy sent to the Punie people of the Five Nations after they ceased sending tribute. He was convinced by Wugunai to not advance on the Punie with Liao troops.
- Wanyan 完顏部: a tribe with various branches living throughout the Songhua river system. The most notable of which was the Wanyan clan living along the Anchuhu River whose ruling lineage traced their descent to a man named Hanpu who had migrated north out of the Korean peninsula.
- Weiming Yuanhao 嵬名元昊: (aka Li Yuanhao 李元昊, Xia Jingzong 夏景宗, r.1032-48) founder of the Tangut-Xia, or Xi Xia Dynasty.
- Wendihen 溫迪痕部: a tribe living along the Tongmen River 同門水 that submitted to Wugunai.⁵¹⁸
- Wendu 溫都部: a tribe living near the Abasi River 阿跋斯水 a tributary of the upper Mudanjiang.

⁵¹⁷ WF, 105; A record of the transaction regarding the gift of Buddhist items is found in *Liaoshi* 15:171; 70.1152. A translation of *Liaoshi* 15:171 is recorded in WF, 303.

⁵¹⁸ *Jinshi* 1.6.

- Wodai 斡帶: An uncle of Wuyashu and Aguda who died at the age of 34. Aguda favored him above his other uncles and wept at his death. Biography in *Jinshi* 65.1545-47.⁵¹⁹
- Wole 斡勒部: a tribe to which Beinai 盃乃 was a member. The name of the tribe was possibly related to the river name Wola.⁵²⁰
- Wolu 斡魯: (aka E'lu 訛魯 in the *Da Jin guozhi* and *Songmo jiwen*) the youngest son of Hanpu, earliest ancestor of the Jin Emperors.⁵²¹
- Wolu 斡魯: (possibly the same as Yilie 移烈 in the *Sanchao beimeng huibian*) a member of the Anchuhu Wanyan who served in key positions during the reigns of Wuyashu and Aguda. He was a close companion of Wosai 斡賽 and assisted him in governing the people of the Subin River. He also was appointed with Wosai to lead the Anchuhu counterattack on Goryeo following the loss of Helan Dian in 1103. He later led a Jurchen army south against the Liao army threatening the Eastern Capital then under the leadership of the Bohai emperor, Gao Yongchang. Biography in *Jinshi* 71.1631.⁵²²
- Woluhan 斡魯罕: an envoy sent to Goryeo in 1103 who announced Yingge's victory against the Liao rebel, Xiao Haili.
- Wohuo 斡豁: a *bojin* of the Hanguo clan 含國部 along the Subin River during the reign of Wuyashu. Wohuo refused to answer Wuyashu's summons and was subsequently attacked.

⁵¹⁹ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 447.

⁵²⁰ *Jinshi* 1.9; Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 444; WF, 386.

⁵²¹ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 440.

⁵²² Franke, "Chinese Texts (I)," 155.

- Womouhan 窩謀罕: Jurchen leader persuaded by Bahei to revolt against the leadership of Helibo. His name meant “egg of a bird.”⁵²³
- Wosai 斡賽: a man of the Anchuhu Wanyan who defeated Goryeo forces invading from the nine walled towns of Helan dian.⁵²⁴
- Wozhun 斡准部: a tribe identified with the tribe Aozhun 奧准. The leader of this clan, along with that of the Zhide clan 職德, arrived at the Huoluohai Stream in answer to Wuyashu’s command to receive instruction from Wodai and others at, but left secretly after arriving.⁵²⁵
- Wubutun 烏不屯: a blacksmith of the Jiagu 加古 clan who sold armor to Helibo within a region claimed by Wuchun. This transaction was used as a pretext for Wuchun to take up arms against Helibo.⁵²⁶
- Wuchun 烏春: an iron smelter of the Wendu 溫都 living along the Abasi River. Took up arms against Helibo in support of Helibo’s uncle, Bahei.
- Wuguchu 烏骨出: member of the Anchuhu Wanyan. The son of Shilu and brother of Wugunai. Father of Cibushi.
- Wugulun 烏古論部: a tribe with a number of prominent members who resisted Anchuhu Wanyan authority during the reign of Yingge.
- Wugunai 烏古迺: (r.1021-1074) son of Shilu and grandfather of Aguda. Lead the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition. The first Anchuhu leader to hold the Liao title of *jiedushi* of the “Raw” Jurchen (*sheng nüzhen* 生女真).

⁵²³ Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 444.

⁵²⁴ *Jinshi* 65.1547.

⁵²⁵ For more information on this connection see Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 450.

⁵²⁶ *Jinshi* 67.1578.

- Wulinda 烏林答: a tribe inhabiting the northeast that resisted the control of Wugunai. One branch of the tribe lived near the Hailan River 孩懶水.⁵²⁷
- Wulu 烏魯: eldest son of Hanpu.⁵²⁸
- Wure 兀惹: (aka Wure 烏惹, Wushe 烏舍, or Wurezhe 兀熱者) A group comprised of remnants from the Bohai state, which after the fall of Bohai in 926 set up an independent state called Dingan 定安. The capital of Dingan was located on the former Supreme Capital of Bohai (mod. Dongjing 東京, Jilin Province) The Wure “rebelled” against the Liao in 975.⁵²⁹ They fought the Liao again in 994.⁵³⁰ In 995 they invaded Tieli territory and successfully repulsed another Liao attack.⁵³¹ This campaign lasted until 999 when the Wure leader, Wuzhaodu 烏昭度(aka Wuzhaoqing 慶) came to the Liao court for an audience.⁵³² Wure captives taken by the Tieli and Liao army were settled in Bin 賓 Prefecture and were called the Wurezhe. As an aside, in 995 a group of Jurchen came to report that the Song Empire had offered bribes to them and to the Wure to rebel against the Liao.⁵³³
- Wusazha 烏薩扎部: a clan living along the Heishui River who were won over to the Wanyan coalition through the efforts of Shilu of the Anchuhu Wanyan 石魯 and his uncle Xielihu 謝里虎.⁵³⁴
- Wushi 兀室: (aka 兀室) a member of the Anchuhu Wanyan but not of the imperial lineage. Wushi was a trusted advisor to Aguda and Wuqimai. He was also instrumental in the creation of the Jurchen script.⁵³⁵

⁵²⁷ *Jinshi* 1.5; 67.1573.

⁵²⁸ *Jinshi* 1.2.

⁵²⁹ *Liaoshi* 8.95.

⁵³⁰ *Liaoshi* 13.146.

⁵³¹ *Liaoshi* 13.147.

⁵³² *Liaoshi* 14.165.

⁵³³ *Liaoshi* 13.146. See also WF, 585.

⁵³⁴ *Jinshi* 65.1540.

- Wushui 五水之民: “People of the Five Rivers,” a group referenced as belonging under the control of Goryeo.⁵³⁶
- Wuta 塢塔: Jurchen leader who fought against the forces of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition led by Sagai, Cibushi, Alihemen, and Wodai under the reign of Yingge.
- Wuyashu 烏雅束: (aka Kangzong 康宗, b.1061, r.1103-1113) eldest son of Helibo, older brother of Aguda, and a leader of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition.
- Wobu 斡不: a *bojin fu* 勃堇附, or Assistant *Bojin*, of the Peiman tribe living along the Poduotu River.
- Xi 奚: descendants of the Xianbei and distant relatives of the Kitan. Like the Bohai, the Xi were primarily an agricultural society. The Xi were incorporated into the early Kitan state and retained their native political structures and monarchy. This incorporation continued throughout the duration of the Liao Empire and resulted in the Xi king holding a salaried position within the Liao bureaucracy and supervising a population administered in a way similar to the Han-Chinese populations. The Central Capital (*zhongjing* 中京) of the Liao was originally the capital city of the former Xi kingdom.⁵³⁷
- Xiao Baoxian 蕭保先: regent of the Eastern Capital who was unpopular with the city’s Bohai inhabitants. He was murdered by insurgents during the rebellion of 1116.⁵³⁸
- Xiao Chala 蕭察刺: a *linya* and Liao official who served alongside Xiao Temo as joint-commander of a large Liao force during Tianzuo’s expeditionary campaign aimed at pushing the Jurchen out of Liao territory.⁵³⁹

⁵³⁵ Franke, “Chinese Texts (I),” 151.

⁵³⁶ *Jinshi* 1.16, 135.2882.

⁵³⁷ CHC v.6, 98.

⁵³⁸ *Liaoshi* 28.334.

- Xiao Delidi 蕭得里底: one of two Liao officials sent to the Song Empire to argue on behalf of returning the territory captured by the Song in the 1103-06 war against the Tangut-Xia. At the time he held the office of Northern Establishment Commissioner of Military Affairs (*beyuan shumishi* 北院樞密使事).⁵⁴⁰
- Xiao Fengxian 蕭奉先: brother-in-law to Liao Tianzu (elder brother of Tianzu's first concubine). High official and close advisor of Liao Tianzuo. He convinced Tianzuo not to execute Aguda for refusing to dance at the First Fish Feast. He also encouraged Tianzuo's amnesty for all military commanders and soldiers who were defeated at the battle of Chuhedian. For some time he was in charge of military affairs, but was executed in 1122 for alleged treason.⁵⁴¹
- Xiao Haili 蕭海里: a former official of the Liao. He rebelled against the Liao Empire in 1102 and fled to the lands of the Adian Jurchens. He contacted Yingge with propositions for an alliance against the Liao, which Yingge refused. Eventually captured by Jurchen warriors under the command of the Anchuhu Wanyan.
- Xiao Sixian 蕭嗣先: (aka Xiao Jiuli 蕭紕里) a younger brother of Xiao Fengxian. He was given command of a large Liao army that was ultimately defeated at the Battle of Chuhedian in 1114. Despite his failure, his life was spared due to the intervention of his brother.⁵⁴²
- Xiao Tabuye 蕭撻不野: (aka Xiao Wuna 蕭兀納) Liao Military Commander along the eastern border during Aguda's initial attacks against the Liao. He was in command during the attack on Ningjiang Prefecture and fled with a company of cavalrymen. He was a recurrent figure in the early years of Jurchen invasion.

⁵³⁹ *Liaoshi* 28.333.

⁵⁴⁰ *Liaoshi* 27.322;

⁵⁴¹ WF, 426 n.183.

⁵⁴² *Jinshi* 2.25.

- Xiao Taosuwo 蕭陶蘇斡: a Liao official who warned Tianzuo on the declining ability of soldiers stationed along the eastern border and the need for the empire to consolidate its troops into a massive army to push back Aguda and his Jurchen army.⁵⁴³
- Xiao Temo 蕭特末: an imperial son-in-law of Tianzuo who served as joint-commander of a large contingent of Liao troops during Tianzuo's expeditionary campaign to push the Jurchen out of Liao territory.⁵⁴⁴
- Xiao Wodala 蕭斡達刺: a clansman of Xiao Haili, sent to negotiate an alliance with Yingge to jointly attack the Liao. Possibly identical to Wotela, 斡特刺 mentioned in *Liaoshi* 90.1358.⁵⁴⁵
- Xianzu 獻祖: see Suike.
- Xiege 斜葛: likely a son of Bahei. Wuchun requested Xiege be sent to him during the deliberations over the armor of Wubutun.
- Xiege 斜葛: a kinsman (*zudi* 族第) of Yingge who was sent by him to Goryeo to act as an envoy of the Anchuhu Wanyan. He also acted as administrator and representative of the Anchuhu leadership within Helan Dian.⁵⁴⁶
- Xielie 斜列: a leader within the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition. His name meant “blade.” It is possible that this individual is identical to Xiele 勒, a *bojin* of the Wuyan people.⁵⁴⁷

⁵⁴³ *Liaoshi* 101.1434.

⁵⁴⁴ *Liaoshi* 28.333.

⁵⁴⁵ *Jinshi* 1.15; Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 449.

⁵⁴⁶ *Jinshi* 135.2882.

⁵⁴⁷ *Jinshi*, 67.1584, *Jinyu yujie*, 2895; Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 446.

- Xielihu 謝里虎: (aka 謝里忽) uncle of Shilu of the Anchuhu Wanyan, who rescued Shilu from death at the hands of the elders and others. Also mentioned as having assisted Shilu in organizing the tribes. Biography in *Jinshi* 65.1540.⁵⁴⁸
- Xieye 斜也: fifth son of Helibo and youngest brother of Wuyashu and Aguda. Xieye participated heavily in the early wars with the Liao and Song, and played a crucial role in the foundation and organization of the Jin Dynasty.⁵⁴⁹
- Xieye 謝野: a *bojin* of the Monian, one of the Five Nations.
- Yada 雅達: a *guoxiang* 國相 and father of Huannan and Sanda, the rebel brothers who fought against Helibo.
- Yang Pu 楊朴: (aka 楊璞, or Yang Chao 楊抄, d.1132) a Bohai man from Tie Prefecture. The Yang family was one of the great Bohai clans. His profession seems to have been one of a librarian or scribe. Held high offices within the Jin Empire. He may have been instrumental in aiding Aguda in proclaiming the dynasty and the establishment of court ritual.⁵⁵⁰
- Yanmujin 獻母堇: a Kitan princess, second daughter of Empress Qin'ai 欽哀皇后 and Emperor Shengzong 聖宗 (r.982-1031).
- Yehe 冶訶: a member of the Anchuhu Wanyan, a close confidant of Helibo and friend of Huandu.
- Yejong 睿宗: (b.1079, r.1105-1122) king of Goryeo and son of Sukjong. Yejong ordered the attacks on the Helan Dian region in 1106. He later stabilized relations with the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition.

⁵⁴⁸ *Jinshi* 1.3.

⁵⁴⁹ Wang Wensu 王文素, "Lun lishi shang de Wanyan Xieye," *Journal of Shaoxing University* 紹興文理學院學報 28.3 (2008): 102-04.

⁵⁵⁰ Franke, "Chinese Texts (!)," 159.

- Yelü Abaoji 耶律阿保機: (aka Abuji 布, Abaojin 謹, 872-926) First Emperor of the Kitan Empire.
- Yelü Axibao 耶律阿息保: a somewhat regular envoy of the Liao to the court of the Anchuhu Wanyan during the reign of Aguda. He was not liked by the Jurchen leader and was seen as overstepping himself in a number of instances.⁵⁵¹
- Yelü Dashi 耶律大石: a capable general of the Liao in its final years. Dashi eventually abandoned Tianzuo during the latter's flight into the Western regions of the empire, and established a new dynastic state called the Xi Liao, or "Western Liao." After a few failed attempt to conquer the ascendant Jurchen-Jin, Daji solidified his power within Central Asia and became the first emperor of the empire of the Qara-khitai.
- Yelü Yudu 耶律余覲: Liao general accused of conspiracy against Emperor Tianzuo by Xiao Fengxian. Yudu defected to the Jurchen-Jin with over 3,000 households and a vast supply of livestock, armor, weapons, and other supplies. Under Jurchen leadership, he later led a successful campaign against the Liao Central Capital, although in his final years he was accused of treason against the Jurchen-Jin and executed.⁵⁵²
- Yelü Zhangjianu 耶律張家奴: (aka Yelü Zhangnu 張怒, a shortened form of his full name, usually used in the *Jinshi*) a Liao official who served as one of the first Liao envoys to Aguda during the intial, failed, negotiations between the two rulers. He later served as a general or Director-in-Chief (*dujian* 都監) during Tianzuo's expeditionary campaign aimed at pushing the Jurchen out of Liao territory, and an

⁵⁵¹ *Jinshi* 73.1678.

⁵⁵² *Jinshi* 71.2846-49; 3.64.

- assistant to Xiao Fengxian. While on the campaign, Zhangjianu rebelled against the emperor and rode against him, but was defeated.⁵⁵³
- Yelü Zhangnu 耶律張奴: A former Liao envoy to the Anchuhu Wanyan who later defected against the Liao with a large company of soldiers and marched against the Liao Supreme Capital.
 - Yidian 乙典: a group of Jurchens registered with the Liao Empire and part of the imperial *ordo* formed under Liao Shengzong (r.982-1031).⁵⁵⁴
 - Yingge 盈歌(aka Yangge 揚割, Yangge 哥, Muzong 穆宗) youngest son of Wugunai and uncle of Wuyashu and Aguda. Leader of the Anchuhu Wanyan.⁵⁵⁵
 - Yilie 乙烈 (Xi): commanding prefect of the Xi 奚 sent by the Liao to prevent further attacks against the people of Ashu by the Anchuhu Wanyan. Franke notes that Yilie was a personal name for both Kitan and Jurchens.⁵⁵⁶
 - Yilie 移烈 (Jurchen): Possibly an “aberrant orthography” for Aguda’s cousin, Wolu 斡魯. The name Yilie is found in *Liaoshi* 27.328, translated in WF, 422.⁵⁵⁷
 - Yun Gwan 尹瓘: (d.1111) a high general of Goryeo and commander general of the massive attack on Helan Dian during 1106-07.
 - Yu Wonseo 俞元胥: an officer within the Goryeo army that occupied Helan Dian. While near the walls of the Jurchen settlement, Nabokgi Village, he heard of Wuyashu’s desire for peace from Jurchen envoys within and subsequently delivered the message to his commander, Yun Gwan.⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵³ *Liaoshi* 28.331, 28.333.

⁵⁵⁴ *Liaoshi* 33.391.

⁵⁵⁵ Franke, “Chinese Texts (I),” 149.

⁵⁵⁶ *Jinshi* 1.14; Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 448; WF 422, 621.

⁵⁵⁷ Franke, “Chinese Texts (I),” 155.

⁵⁵⁸ *Goryeo sa* 96.23.147.

- Zhadu 詐都: a man of the Wugulun clan living within the junction of Tongmen and Hunchun rivers. A son of the *bojin*, Hushahun 忽沙渾. Zhadu raised troops with Liuke and Dikude of the Subin River Wugulun, to attack the Wanyan coalition during the reign of Yingge.
- Zhaosan 趙三: listed along with Ahuchan as a leader of the *shou* Jurchen who fled to Liao after quarreling with Aguda.⁵⁵⁹
- Zhide 職德部: a tribe whose leader secretly left a meeting at the Huoluohai Stream within the company of the leader of the Wozhun tribe. Both of these leaders had arrived at the location in accordance with Wuyashu's command to arrive and be instructed.⁵⁶⁰
- Zhubao 主保: a man of the Zhuhu tribe 朮虎部 who perished in Helibo's attack on the residences of Huannan and Sanda. He is described as being a "former general" (*jiujiang* 舊將).⁵⁶¹
- Zhuliesu 朮烈速: a *bojin* allied with Helibo and summoned to battle following the death of Bahei.
- Zhusiban 注思板: daughter of Hanpu.⁵⁶²
- Zibunai 滓不乃: a man of Aliai village 阿里矮 who gave shelter to Wuchun when the latter advanced to attack Helibo. Due to his ability to detain his younger brother, Shengkun 勝昆, it is possible he was a clan or family leader. Shengkun later captured Zibunai and handed him over to Helibo.

⁵⁵⁹ *Liaoshi* 27.326; Franke, "Chinese Texts (I)," 160.

⁵⁶⁰ *Jinshi* 1.16.

⁵⁶¹ *Jinshi* 65.1538-39; Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 447.

⁵⁶² *Jinshi* 1.2.

- Zubu 阻卜: a conglomeration of tribes living within the Mongolian steppe who fought an extended war with the Liao Empire from 1092-1102.⁵⁶³

Locations

- Abasi River 阿跋思水: (aka 阿跋斯水) a small tributary of the upper Mudan Jiang 牡丹江, along the border of what is today's Dunhua City 敦化市, Jilin Province. Home of the Wendu Tribe 溫都部.⁵⁶⁴
- Abuwan 阿不彎: location near the battle between the forces of Helibo and Huannan.⁵⁶⁵
- Aliai Village 阿里矮村: home village of Zibunai, who gave shelter to Wuchun on his march against Helibo.⁵⁶⁶
- Aluganchu Village 阿魯紺儲村: village seized by Saguchu during the wars with Huannan and Sanda. Its exact location has yet to be confirmed. Possibly located south of the Songhua River between modern Bin 賓 and Mulan 木蘭 counties.⁵⁶⁷
- Anchuhu River 按出虎水: (aka Alechuka River 阿勒楚喀河) homeland of the Anchuhu Wanyan clan. Known today as the Ashen River (aka Ashi River) 阿什河, a branch of the Songhua River 松花江, south east of Harbin, Heilongjiang.⁵⁶⁸

⁵⁶³ For more information on the Zubu wars, see Twitchett & Tietze, 138-39.

⁵⁶⁴ Wei, *diming da cidian*, 587.

⁵⁶⁵ *Jinshi* 1.9.

⁵⁶⁶ *Jinshi* 1.7; 67.1578.

⁵⁶⁷ Wei, *diming da cidian*, 587.

⁵⁶⁸ Wei Songshan 魏嵩山, ed., *Zhongguo lishi diming da cidian* 中國歷史地名大辭典 (Guangzhou 廣州: Guangdong jiaoyou chubanshe 廣東教育出版社, 1995), 791.

- Anryuk-su 安陸戍: border garrison through which the Left Wing of Yun Gwan's Goryeo army entered Jeong-ju during the 1106 campaign into the region of Helan Dian.⁵⁶⁹
- Ashu's Town 阿疎城: a fortified settlement of the Heshilie leader, Ashu, who fought against Yingge. The town itself was under siege for two years by Wanyan warriors led by the commander Hezhe. Located in the region near Tingji City 延吉市, Jilin Province.⁵⁷⁰
- Azhuhuo 阿朮火: another orthography for the Anchuhu River 按出虎水.⁵⁷¹ *See Anchuhu River.*
- Bao Prefecture 保州: Liao military garrison along the eastern border with Goryeo. Located between today's Ui-ju 義州 and Sin Ui-ju 新義州, within Pyeongan Buk Province 平安北道, North Korea.⁵⁷²
- Beiaidian 北隘甸: the location to which the forces of Helibo pursued the defeated soldiers of Huannan and Sanda. Located northeast of today's Acheng City, Heilongjiang.⁵⁷³
- Beiqin Sea 北琴海: Known today as Xingkai Lake 興凱湖 (aka Khanka Lake) positioned along the border between Heilongjiang Province and Russia.⁵⁷⁴
- Bihan Village 苾罕村: the location to which Lapei, Machan and their brothers migrated during Helibo's conflict with Wuchun and Womouhan. The village was located in the territory inhabited by the Yeju Jurchen 野居 or "Jurchen living within

⁵⁶⁹ *Goryeo sa* 96.12.142.

⁵⁷⁰ Wei, *diming da cidian*, 586.

⁵⁷¹ Franke, *Chinese Texts (I)*, 123.

⁵⁷² WF, 555; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 823.

⁵⁷³ *Jinshi* 1.9; 67.1576; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 282.

⁵⁷⁴ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 282.

- the wilds.” The exact location of Bihan is unclear, but it is possible that it was somewhere along the northern portion of today’s Hulan River 呼蘭河.⁵⁷⁵
- Bilaji Village 逼刺紀村: the village where Shilu fled to when ill and where he subsequently died of sickness. Located along the border of today’s Hailin County 海林縣, Heilongjiang Province.⁵⁷⁶
 - Bin Prefecture 濱州: located near the juncture of Songhua and Yitong 伊通 Rivers. Populated by Wure 兀惹 settlers formerly associated with the Bohai Kingdom.⁵⁷⁷
 - Bok-ju 福州: an area within the Helan Dian region. Located in today’s Tapdong village 塔洞里, Joyang township 朝陽面, Sinheung county 新興郡, North Korea. One of the nine forts constructed by the forces of Goryeo was built in this area.⁵⁷⁸
 - Central Capital 中京: One of five capital cities of the Liao Empire, located in today’s Ningcheng County 寧城縣, west of Daming Town 大明城, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. Formerly the capital city of the recognized king of the Xi, the Kitan-Liao named it their Central Capital in 1006.⁵⁷⁹
 - Changbai Mountains 長白山: Prominent mountain range along the southeast border of Jilin Province.⁵⁸⁰
 - Changchun Prefecture 長春州: also referred to as Chun Prefecture, was officially within the Eastern Capital Route but to the far northwest. Its exact location is unclear although possibilities include Qian Gorlos Mongol Autonomous County in Jilin; just

⁵⁷⁵ *Jinshi* 67.1581; Wei, *Dimong da cidian*, 629.

⁵⁷⁶ Wei, *diming da cidian*, 1102.

⁵⁷⁷ Mikami, *Kindai kenkyū* v.1, map.

⁵⁷⁸ Jiang, “War of Helan Dian,” 88.

⁵⁷⁹ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 148.

⁵⁸⁰ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 166.

- northwest of the town of Tazi 塔子城, Tailai County 泰來縣, Heilongjiang Province; or possibly east of Taonan City 逃南市, Jilin Province.⁵⁸¹
- Changsong Island 長松島 : the island to which the fallen Bohai Emperor, Gao Yongchang fled from the forces of the Jurchen. Known today as Changxing Island 長興島, located southwest of Wafangdian City 瓦房店市, Liaoning Province.⁵⁸²
 - Chuhedian 出河店: location of a large Liao defeat at the hands of the invading Jurchen forces under Aguda. Located directly west of Ningjiang Prefecture in the area of today's Zhaoyuan County 肇源縣, Heilongjiang Province.⁵⁸³
 - Daehwa-mun 大和門: a pass through which the Goryeo general, Yun Gwan, led the central column of his army into the area of Jeong-ju during the 1106 advance into the region of Helan Dian.
 - Daenaepaji Village 大乃巴只村: a village located within Jeong-ju. During Yun Gwan's advance through the village, all of the inhabitants had fled in fear.⁵⁸⁴
 - Dongeum Town 冬音城: a walled settlement within the Jurchen region of Jeong-ju that staunchly defended the Goryeo armies that came against them during the 1106 Goryeo campaign into the Helan Dian. The town was eventually conquered and all inhabitants were slain.⁵⁸⁵
 - Dun'en Village 鈍恩城: a walled settlement among the Heshilie tribe located southwest of today's Yanji City 延吉市, Jilin Province. Presumably the settlement

⁵⁸¹ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 171.

⁵⁸² Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 170.

⁵⁸³ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 287.

⁵⁸⁴ *Goryeo sa*, 96.14.142.

⁵⁸⁵ *Goryeo sa*, 96.15.143.

was named after Dun'en, a leader who fled Coalition rule to join the anti-Anchuhu Wanyan forces of Liuke, Zhadu, and Dikude during the reign of Yingge⁵⁸⁶

- Dun Gwan 屯關: Border pass and garrison separating Goryeo from the region of Helan Dian.
- Eastern Capital 東京: Eastern Capital of the Liao Empire. Known today as Liaoyang 遼陽.⁵⁸⁷
- Gil-ju 吉州: a region of the Helan Dian. Its exact location is unknown but it is believed to have been within Hakcheon township 鶴泉面, in Hongwon county 洪原郡 in the mountains known today as the Cheongyebong Mountains 天雞峰山. One of the nine forts constructed by the forces of Goryeo was built in this area.⁵⁸⁸
- Gongham-jin 公嶮鎮 : an area within the region of Helan Dian. Its exact location is unknown but it may have been near today's Sangdae village 上岱里, Deoksan township 德山面, in Hamheung County 咸興郡, North Korea. One of the nine forts of Goryeo was constructed in this area.⁵⁸⁹
- Gunghan Village 弓漢村 (aka Gunghan-ri 弓漢里) a village or district mentioned in the *Goryeo-sa* that was located within (or was synonymous with) the region known as Helan Dian within the *Jinshi* record. Considered by the courts of Goryeo as the flashpoint of the Jurchen-Goryeo War.⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸⁶ *Jinshi* 67.1584-6; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 815.

⁵⁸⁷ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 247.

⁵⁸⁸ Jiang, "War of Helan Dian," 88.

⁵⁸⁹ Jiang, "War of Helan Dian," 88.

⁵⁹⁰ *Goryeo sa* 13.7.262, 96.5.138.

- Guli dian 故里甸: a village that was located in the north of today's Ning'an County 寧安縣, slightly southwest of Mudanjiang city 牡丹江市. This was the location where Shilu fell ill after returning from a campaign.⁵⁹¹
- Haigu River 海古水: (aka Haigu 海姑) a tributary of the Anchuhu River. This river was near the site of the later Jin Supreme Capital, Huining Administration. Known today as the large (*da* 大) and small (*xiao* 小) Hai Channels (*haigou* 海溝), northeast of Acheng city 阿城市, Heilongjiang.⁵⁹²
- Hailan River 孩懶水: River upon which a clan of the Wulinda Tribe lived, led by Shixian during the time of the imperial ancestor, Shilu. Known today as the Hailang River 海浪河, a branch of the Mudan River along the border of Hailin County 海林縣, Mudanjiang City, Heilongjiang Province.⁵⁹³
- Hai Prefecture 海州: this prefecture was located in today's Haicheng city 海城市, Liaoning.⁵⁹⁴
- Ham-ju 咸州: a region within the Helan Dian, north of the border of Goryeo. It was located near today's Hamheung City 咸興市, Hamjin-nam Province, North Korea. One of the nine forts of Goryeo was constructed in this area.⁵⁹⁵
- Helan Dian 曷懶甸: an area of undetermined size located north of today's Hamheung region in North Korea. The area was populated by Jurchens living just beyond the northern border of Goryeo. The region was pacified and occupied by the Anchuhu general, Shishihuan. It was later recaptured by Goryeo forces who built nine walled

⁵⁹¹ Wei, *diming da cidian*, 733.

⁵⁹² Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 441; Wei, *diming da cidian*, 957.

⁵⁹³ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 872.

⁵⁹⁴ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 956.

⁵⁹⁵ Jiang, "The War of 'Helan Dian,'" 88.

towns in this area. Helan Dian became the major site of contention between the early Jin and Goryeo.⁵⁹⁶

- Helin Village 訶隣鄉: inhabited by a branch of the Heshilie tribe. Possibly located along the central portion of today's Hulan River 呼蘭河.⁵⁹⁷
- Helan River 曷懶水: a tributary of today's Tumen River 圖們江.⁵⁹⁸
- Honghwa-mun 弘化門: a pass through which the Right Wing of Yun Gwan's Goryeo army entered Jeong-ju during the 1106 advance into the region of Helan Dian.⁵⁹⁹
- Hongte's Town 泓忒城: a walled settlement attacked and occupied by Wanyan forces directed by Wodai under the reign of Wuyashu. Probably named after a chieftain, Hongte. The exact location of Hongte's Town is unclear, but it may have been located along the middle course of a river known in Chinese as Mala River 馬拉河 within Binhai district 濱海區 of the Far Eastern Federal Circuit.⁶⁰⁰
- Huanglong Administration 黃龍府: the Liao administrative center of subordinate tribal groups along the northeastern borderlands. Located in today's Nongan County 農安縣, Jilin Province.⁶⁰¹
- Hubu Village 胡不村: residence of Shengkun, younger brother of Zibunai, who was placed under house arrest by Wuchun's advancing troops. Exact location is unknown.⁶⁰²

⁵⁹⁶ Jiang Xiusong 蔣秀松, "The War of 'Helan Dian' between the Jurchens and Goryeo 女真与高丽间的 '曷懶甸之战,'" *民族研究*, no.1(1994):83-89.

⁵⁹⁷ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 572.

⁵⁹⁸ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 443.

⁵⁹⁹ *Goryeo sa* 96.12.142.

⁶⁰⁰ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 450; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 707.

⁶⁰¹ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 999; WF, 552.

⁶⁰² *Jinshi*, 1.7.

- Hunchun River 渾蠢水: known today as the Hunchun River 琿春河, a tributary of the Tumen River 圖們江 that borders on Hunchun City 琿春市, Jilin. A branch of the Wugulun tribe made their home near this juncture.⁶⁰³
- Huntong River 混同將: Another name for today's Songhua River. This name was used primarily under the Liao.⁶⁰⁴
- Huolahun River 活刺渾水: known today as the Hulan River 呼蘭河, a tributary of the Songhua within Heilongjiang Province.⁶⁰⁵
- Huolun River 活論水: a tributary of today's Lalin River 拉林河 along the border of Wuchang County 五常縣, Heilongjiang Province. The Huolun was one of two rivers forded by Wuchun when he marched against Helibo, a few years after his initial discontent over the armorer Wubutun.⁶⁰⁶
- Huoluohai River 活羅海川: known today as the Mudan River 牡丹江.⁶⁰⁷
- Huonie River 活湟水: a river of unknown location, although it was within or proximate to Helan Dian. The Huonie River is given as the location at which Shishihuan and his recently recruited warriors fought against an army of Goryeo soldiers.⁶⁰⁸
- Jang-ju 長州: a frontier settlement within the Helan Dian region. Located near Jeong-ju and Wonheung-jin 元興鎮 along the northern border of Goryeo.⁶⁰⁹
- Jeong-ju 定州: a frontier settlement within the Helan Dian region located in today's Jeongpyeong 定平 region of North Korea.⁶¹⁰

⁶⁰³ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 855.

⁶⁰⁴ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 438.

⁶⁰⁵ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 849.

⁶⁰⁶ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 849.

⁶⁰⁷ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 849.

⁶⁰⁸ *Jinshi* 135.2882.

⁶⁰⁹ Jiang, "The War of Helan Dian," 86.

- Jinyang-jin 真陽鎮 : an area of the Helan Dian region. Located in today's Oro village 五老里, Sanggicheon township 上岐川面, in Hamheung county 咸興郡, North Korea. One of the nine forts of Goryeo was constructed in this area.⁶¹¹
- Jisai Circuit 急賽路: a region within the Liao eastern borderlands inhabited by groups of “cooked” Jurchens. Aguda sent representatives to this area in an effort to win them over to his cause. Mikami believes that this circuit was located just northeast of Xian Prefecture 咸州. Placing it northeast of today's Kaiyuan City 開原市, Liaoning.⁶¹²
- Lailiu River 涑流河: Known today as the Lalin River 拉林河, a tributary of the Songhua River.⁶¹³
- Laiyuan City 來遠市: Liao settlement and garrison along the Goryeo border. Located on today's Geomjeong Island 黔定島, within the Yalu River 鴨綠江.⁶¹⁴
- Liang River 梁水: known today as the Taizi River 太子河, within Liaoning Province.
- Lingdong 嶺東 location where Helibo desired to meet with Huandu's victorious troops after the battle against Wuchun at Xiedui. It is recorded that all of the armies assembled here during this occasion.⁶¹⁵
- Maji Mountains 馬紀嶺: known today as the Zhangguangcai Mountains 張廣才嶺, located southeast of Wuchang County 五常縣, Heilongjiang. This differs from

⁶¹⁰ Jiang Xiusong 蔣秀松, “The War of ‘Helan Dian’ between the Jurchens and Goryeo 女真与高丽间的‘曷懒甸之战,’” *民族研究*, no.1 (1994):83.

⁶¹¹ Jiang, “War of Helan Dian,” 88.

⁶¹² Mikami, *Kindai kenkyū*, vol.1, 38n.16.

⁶¹³ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 954.

⁶¹⁴ WF, 555; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 519.

⁶¹⁵ *Jinshi* 1.10.

Franke's citation of Shiratori claiming that the Maji Mountains equated with today's Laoye Mountains 老爺嶺 east of Mudanjiang.⁶¹⁶

- Milimishihan Town 米里迷石罕城: a walled settlement located near today's Chunhua Town 春化鎮, northwest of Hunchun City 琿春市, Jilin Province. This was the location where Liuke, Zhadu, and Dikude of the Wugulun raised troops against the Wanyan coalition under the reign of Yingge.⁶¹⁷
- Nabokgi Village 那卜其村: a village located within Ham-ju of the Helan Dian region. Possibly the location in which the commander of Goryeo forces in Helan Dian, Yun Gwan, first heard of Wuyashu's desires to end the war and request peace.⁶¹⁸
- Ningjiang Prefecture 寧江州: location of a garrison built along the Jurchen border to facilitate trade and house Liao Dynasty troops. The first Liao territory conquered by the armies of the Anchuhu Wanyan Coalition under Aguda. Located in today's Fuyu County 夫餘縣 in Jinlin 吉林 Province.⁶¹⁹
- Peizhu River 陪朮水: the river upon which the Adian Jurchen resided. Also, the area that Xiao Haili fled to for refuge after rebelling against the Liao. The Peizhu was located within today's Liaoning Province, and was a tributary of the Liao River.⁶²⁰
- Pigudun River 匹古敦水: a river tributary of the Songhua, that marked a rough boundary between the forces of Helibo and the disparate tribe opposing him, that were aligned with Sagachu of the Pucha and Buhui of the Buzhulu. Exact location is unclear, but it may be today's Erdao River 二道江, tributary of the Songhua within Jilin Province.⁶²¹

⁶¹⁶ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 96; Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 450.

⁶¹⁷ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 464.

⁶¹⁸ *Goryeo sa* 96.23.147.

⁶¹⁹ Franke, "Chinese Texts (I)," 156; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 327.

⁶²⁰ WF, 422.

⁶²¹ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 146.

- Poduotu River 婆多吐水: (aka 破多吐水) A river reached by Helibo after he crossed the Shehen and Tiede rivers on his way to the territory of Huannan and Sanda to try and lay an ambush for Wuchun. This was also the river valley in which a group of the Peiman tribe (with Wobu as *bojin*) lived. Known today as the Feiketü River 蜚克圖河, a tributary of the Songhua located along the border of Bin County 賓縣, Heilongjiang.⁶²²
- Poduotui River 破多退水: the river to which Helibo's victorious forces pursued the troops of Huannan, during which the waters became red.⁶²³
- Pugan River 僕幹 location where Hanpu originally lived among the Wanyan. It is not listed elsewhere but is presumably near the Anchuhu river valley.⁶²⁴
- Qian Prefecture 乾州: located southwest of today's Guanyin Dong in Beizhen County 北鎮縣, Liaoning.⁶²⁵
- Qidouman River 起豆滿江: known today as the Tumen River 圖們江.
- Qingling Mountains 青嶺山: Mountain range west of the Mudan River, Jilin Province.⁶²⁶
- Qing Prefecture 慶州: Located in today's Baarin Right Banner, Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region.⁶²⁷
- Rao Prefecture 饒州: located in the southwest region of today's Baarin Right Banner in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region.⁶²⁸

⁶²² *Jinshi* 1.8; 67.1575; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 1076.

⁶²³ *Jinshi* 67.1576.

⁶²⁴ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 439.

⁶²⁵ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 990.

⁶²⁶ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 441.

⁶²⁷ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 430.

⁶²⁸ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 836-37.

- Sa'ala Village 撒阿辣村: village guarded by the Pucha during the war with Huannan and Sanda. Located south of the Songhua River, between Bin 賓 and Mulan 木蘭 Counties.⁶²⁹
- Sanchan River 三潺水: location in which Shishihuan established his administrative office over the inhabitants of the Helan Dian region. Known today as the Dae River 大川 in Korea's Bukcheong 北青 region.
- Seondeok-jin 宣德鎮: area through which an army of 44,000 Goryeo soldiers entered Jeong-ju during the 1106 campaign into the region of Helan Dian.⁶³⁰
- Shehen River 舍很水: A river crossed by Helibo in his shortcut to set an ambush for Wuchun. The exact location is unknown, although it is believed that the Shehen was one of the small tributaries of the Anchuhu River.⁶³¹
- Shenhujun Town (fort) 神虎軍城: a walled settlement along the Liao-Goryeo border. Its exact location is unclear, but it is assumed that it was located on or near the Yalu River.⁶³²
- Shen Prefecture 瀋州: located in today's city of Shenyang 瀋陽市 in Liaoning Province.⁶³³
- Shenyin River 神隱水: a river settled by a branch of the Wanyan Tribe who submitted to Wugunai during his rise in military power. Known today as the Sha River 沙河, a tributary to the Mudan River bordering Dunhua City 敦化市, Jilin Province.⁶³⁴

⁶²⁹ *Jinshi* 67.1576. Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 1248.

⁶³⁰ *Goryeo sa* 96.12.142.

⁶³¹ *Jinshi* 1.8; 67.1575; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 672.

⁶³² WF, 555.

⁶³³ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 567.

⁶³⁴ *Jinshi* 1.6; 68.1595;

- Shuai River 帥水: known today as the Tongken River 通肯河, tributary of the Hulan River 呼蘭河, Heilongjiang. The name of the river likely meant “fish.”⁶³⁵
- Shumo River 束沫江: Another name for the Songhua River.⁶³⁶
- Subin River 蘇濱水: known today as the Large Suifen River 大綏芬河 dividing Heilongjiang Province from Russia. Also the name of a Circuit in the Jin Administrative System.⁶³⁷
- Sungnyeong-jin 崇寧鎮: an area of Helan Dian. Located in today’s Unheung village 云興里, Cheonsoo township 川西面, in Hamheung county 咸興郡, North Korea. One of the nine forts of Goryeo was constructed in this area.⁶³⁸
- Susuhai Dian 蘇素海甸: location where Helibo met with Polashu before the battle against Wuchun’s forces.⁶³⁹
- Taishen Tebao River 泰神忒保水: river along which a branch of the Wanyan lived. This branch submitted to Wugunai. Name of the river may mean “High Tebao” River. Location of the river is unknown.⁶⁴⁰
- Taowen River 陶溫水: (aka Tuwen River 土溫水) known today as the Tangwang River 湯旺河, a tributary of the Songhua, Heilongjiang Province. The people of the Taowen River joined the coalition after the capture and execution of Machan, who had fortified himself along the Zhiwukai. Possibly within the territory of the Heshilie

⁶³⁵ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 276; *Jinshi, jinguo yujie* 金國語解.2896, under the entry of *nimanggu* 尼忙古.

⁶³⁶ Franke, “Chinese Texts (I),” 125.

⁶³⁷ Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 441; Wei, *diming da cidian*, 505.

⁶³⁸ Jiang, “War of Helan Dian,” 88.

⁶³⁹ *Jinshi* 1.11; 70.1618; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 505.

⁶⁴⁰ *Jinshi* 1.6; Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 442;

- tribe, for Ageban is said to be a man of the Heshilie of the Taowen and Tulonggu Rivers.⁶⁴¹
- Tieg River 貼割水: one of two rivers forded by Helibo in his shortcut to set an ambush for Wuchun. The exact location is unknown, although it is believed that the Shehen was one of the small tributaries of the Anchuhu River.⁶⁴²
 - Tongmen River 同門水: Known today as the Tumen River 圖們江, and comprises part of the boundary between Jilin Province and North Korea. It was along this river that members of the Wendihen 溫迪痕 tribe lived.⁶⁴³
 - Tongtae-jin 通泰鎮: an area within the region of Helan Dian. Located in today's Unseong village 云城里, Unheung township 云田面, in Hamheung county 咸興郡, North Korea. One of the nine forts of Goryeo was constructed in this area.⁶⁴⁴
 - Tuda River 秃答水: a river within the territory of the Five Nations. The people of this river, along with those on the Zhuwei River were ordered by Yingge to feign blocking passage of the Falcon Road in order to distract the Liao from pressing the issue of compensation for the attack on Ashu. Its exact location is unknown, but it was likely proximate to the Zhuwei (mod. Jiayin River 嘉蔭河) a tributary of the Mudan River south of Jiayin County 嘉蔭縣, Heilongjiang Province.⁶⁴⁵
 - Tulonggu River 徒籠古水: a river region inhabited by a branch of the Heshilie. Known today as the Dulu River 都魯河, a tributary of the Zhan River 沾河, itself a

⁶⁴¹ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 975.

⁶⁴² Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 805.

⁶⁴³ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II), 442.

⁶⁴⁴ Jiang, "War of Helan Dian," 88.

⁶⁴⁵ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II), 448.

- tributary of the Heilong River. The Dulu River is located southwest of Xunke County 遜克縣, Heilongjiang Province.⁶⁴⁶
- Tuohuogai Plain 脫豁改原: Plains where Helibo commanded the troops of Cibushi to wait, in the conflict against Huannan and Sanda. Located near today's Nanzu Mountains 南祖嶺 in the south of Bin County 賓縣, Heilongjiang Province.⁶⁴⁷
 - Tuwen River 土溫水: another name for the Taowen River 陶溫水, known today as the Tangwang River 湯旺河.⁶⁴⁸
 - Ung-ju 雄州 : area within Helan Dian. Located near today's Seongdong village 城洞里, West Toejo township 退潮面, in Hamheung county 咸興郡, North Korea. One of the nine forts that Goryeo constructed was located in this area.⁶⁴⁹
 - Wohu Circuit 斡忽路: a region within the Liao eastern borderlands inhabited by a groups of “cooked” Jurchens. Aguda sent representatives to this area in an effort to win them over to his cause. Mikami believes that this circuit was located just northeast of Xian Prefecture 咸州. Placing it northeast of today's Kaiyuan City 開原市, Liaoning.⁶⁵⁰
 - Wolihuo River 沃里活水: (aka Liang River 梁河) known today as the Taizi River 太子河 in Liaoning Province.
 - Woluganchu River 斡魯紺出水: the river where Polashu organized his defenses against the forces of Huannan and Sanda. Modern equivalent is unknown.⁶⁵¹

⁶⁴⁶ *Jinshi* 1.18; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 927.

⁶⁴⁷ *Jinshi* 1.8, 70.1628; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 1038.

⁶⁴⁸ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 975; Franke, “Chinese Texts (II),” 448.

⁶⁴⁹ Jiang, “War of Helan Dian,” 88.

⁶⁵⁰ Mikami, *Kindai kenkyū*, vol.1, 38n.16.

⁶⁵¹ *Jinshi* 67.1575.

- Womin River 斡泯水: The river along which the Pucha lived during the time of Wugunai. The exact location is not known, but it may be known today as the Hani River 哈泥河, tributary to the Hun River 渾江, bordering Tonghua City 通化市, Jilin Province.⁶⁵²
- Xian Prefecture 咸州: located just north of today's Kaiyuan City 開元市, Liaoning Province.
- Xinghe Village 興和村: Village where Yingge received the Commanding Prefect of Xi, Yilie, who was sent by the Liao to try and dissuade further Wanyan attacks against the people of Ashu. The exact location is unknown, but it was likely somewhere along the Lailiu River.⁶⁵³
- Xingxian River 星顯水: Area to which Bate fled after killing Bage of the Tangguo clan. Known today as the Buerhatong River 布爾哈通河, a tributary of the Tumen River, bordering Yanji County 延吉縣, Jilin.⁶⁵⁴
- Xiedui 斜堆: (aka Xiedui Dian 斜堆甸) the location where Huandu finally defeated Wuchun and captured Gushi and Bashi. Located in the region between today's Xinzhan Town 新站鎮 and Jiaohe City 蛟河市, Jilin Province.⁶⁵⁵
- Xuanyi Military Camp 宣義軍營: military designation for Bao Prefecture 保州.⁶⁵⁶ *See Bao Prefecture.*
- Yelan River 耶懶水: (aka Yalan 押懶) a river in Russia's Far Eastern Federal District. The Chinese name of the river is Damehei 塔馬黑河, and is located in a region

⁶⁵² Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 1215.

⁶⁵³ *Jinshi* 1.14; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 461.

⁶⁵⁴ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 807.

⁶⁵⁵ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 1036.

⁶⁵⁶ WF, 555.

- known to China as the Binhai district 濱海區. Supposedly, this was the river upon which Hanpu's younger brother, Baohuoli settled.⁶⁵⁷
- Yeong-ju 英州: a region within the Helan Dian. Located near today's Gon Heung-ri 東興里 in Gapyeong township 加平面, Sinheung county 新興郡, North Korea. One of the nine forts constructed by Goryeo was located in this area.⁶⁵⁸
 - Yiligu Mountains 乙離骨嶺: known today as the Macheon Mountains 摩天岑, within the Hamgyeong 咸鏡 region of North Korea.⁶⁵⁹
 - Yiligu River 乙離骨水: A river within the Helan Dian region. Franke believes this river must have been north of Gyeongseong 鏡城 in Northeastern Korea. Its exact location is unknown, but it may have been the river known today as the Nam Dae River 南大川. This river was also the home region of the Pusan tribe.⁶⁶⁰
 - Yitun Village 邑屯村: a village within the realm of the Wanyan where the rebel Huannan dwelled. Its exact location is unknown but it is believed to have been near today's Acheng City 阿城市, Heilongjiang Province.⁶⁶¹
 - Zhiwukai River 直屋鎧水: This river was held by Machan, brother of Lapei, an enemy to Helibo and his brothers. Its exact location is unknown, although it may have been one of the upper tributaries of the Tongken River 通肯河, Heilongjiang Province.⁶⁶²

⁶⁵⁷ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 623.

⁶⁵⁸ Jiang, "War of Helan Dian," 88.

⁶⁵⁹ Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 448; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 1.

⁶⁶⁰ Jiang, "The War of 'Helan Dian,'" 83; Franke, "Chinese Texts (II)," 448; *Jinshi* 135.2883.

⁶⁶¹ *Jinshi* 67.2; Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 531; Sun Hao 孫昊, "完顏部邑屯村考略," *Journal of Tonghua Normal University* 通化師範學院學報 31.9 (2010): 30-33.

⁶⁶² Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 625. This entry contains a typo "肯通" should read "通肯."

- Zhu'amen River 注阿門水: the exact location of the Zhu'amen River is unknown, but was likely nearby the Yiligu Range, located within the Hamgyeong 咸鏡 region of North Korea
- Zhuwei River 主隈水: A river within the territory of the Five Nations. The people of this river, along with those on the Tuda River were ordered by Yingge to feign blocking passage of the Falcon Road in order to distract the Liao from pressing the issue of compensation for the attack on Ashu. Known today as the Jiayin River 嘉蔭河, bordering the south of Jiayin County 嘉蔭縣.⁶⁶³

⁶⁶³ Wei, *Diming da cidian*, 324.

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