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Cao Wei Emperor Wen's Idea of the International Order:
In the Steps of the Han Dynasty's Diplomatic Tradition

ITOH Mitsunari

The Cao Wei 曹魏 Dynasty was a polity that faced a contradiction between its standing as a bona-fide Chinese dynasty and the reality of the Three Dynasties Period triumvirate. This article examines the idea of an international order envisioned by the Dynasty's founder Emperor Wen 文帝 (Cao Pi 曹丕) and the background to its conceptualization.

To begin with, throughout the Later Han Period the relationship between that Dynasty and the peoples on its periphery had changed. In the north, the decline of the Xiongnu 匈奴 saw the rise of the Wuwan 烏丸 and the Xianbei 鮮卑; in the east, there was the establishment of tributary relations with the "Eastern barbarians" (Dongyi 東夷); and in the west, there was a rupture in relations with the kingdoms of the West (Xiyu 西域). Under such circumstances, newly enthroned Emperor Wen decided to follow the precedents set by the diplomacy practiced by an idealized Han Dynasty, focusing on the eras when that Dynasty was most influential in each of the three peripheral regions.

Accordingly, in the north, an equestrian nomadic hierarchical order was established placing the emirs of the Wuwan and Xianbei under the Chanyu 單于 of the Xiongnu, as during the reign of Later Han Emperor Shun 順帝; in the east, a system of receiving tribute was set up by giving special treatment to the Gongsun 公孫 Clan regime in Liaodong, which exerted strong influence on such "Eastern barbarian" tribes as the Fuyu 夫餘, in the tradition of Later Han Emperor Guangwu 光武帝; and in the west, Former Han Emperor Yuan's 元

帝 Wuji Xiaowei 戊己校尉 military order was reinstated and Han Dynasty accomplishments in the region compiled, together with efforts to stabilize relations with the region through special treatment of the oasis city state of Jushi Houbuguo 車師後部國, which had caused the original break with the region during the Xin and Later Han Periods.

It was in this way that Emperor Wen devoted himself to inheriting the “Han Dynasty international order,” although his policies were often at odds with reality. Consequently, it is difficult to conclude that such diplomacy functioned effectively in the midst of uncertainty on all sides of the periphery. That being said, even if not fully in sync with the realities of the situation, there is no doubt that Emperor Wen attempted to gain legitimacy and authority for his Dynasty by assuming a posture of being the successor to the powerful Han Dynasty.

Leading Clans of the Guannei Circuit Jimizhou around the An Lushan Rebellion Period

HATATE Hitomi

The aim of the present article is to examine the chieftains of three Tang Dynasty Jimizhou 羈糜州 protectorates in the Guannei 關內 Circuit—the heads of the Murong 慕容 Clan of Tuyuhun 吐谷渾, the Tuoba 拓拔 Clan of Tangut 党項 and the Lun 論 Clan of Tibet—tracing their activities during the Kaiyuan 開元 and Tianbao 天寶 Eras (713–756) in an attempt to clarify the impact they made on the An Lushan 安祿山 Rebellion, which began in 755. The author begins with an analysis of the bureaucratic titles conferred by the Tang Dynasty on the members of each clan during the period in question, finding that 1) not only family heads, but also their brothers, uncles and cousins were appointed to administrative positions; 2) there were clan members who utilized the accomplishments of their fathers to begin their careers at the central Tang Court; and 3) the heads of the three clans were made vice-commanders of the Shuofang Army (Shuofang Jiedu-fushi 朔方節度副使).

Next, the author turns to the activities of the three clan members in the An Lushan Rebellion based on examples from the Murong and Lun Clans,

confirming that those who either served the central Tang Court or were stationed at Tongguan 潼關 for its defense on the outbreak of the Rebellion, afterwards returned to their own protectorates or went to the defense of Emperor Suzong 肅宗 at his temporary palace in Lingwu 靈武, leading regiments of their Jimizhou subjects in the expedition. Such actions, in the author's view, were indicative of the movements of other Jimizhou chieftains of Guannei during the Rebellion.

The author concludes by arguing that the foundation for such action taken by Jimizhou chieftains during the An Lushan Rebellion was built by their activities during the previous Kaiyuan and Tianbao Eras, in that through administrative management of their protectorates along with their kinsfolk, they were able to hold influence over those regions in peacetime and thus make possible quick cohesion between them and the region's inhabitants in responding to emergency situations. Moreover, their vice-commanderships in the Shuofang Army, which were conferred upon them owing to their experiences and potential military power, enabled the Tang Dynasty to ally the Army with the region's inhabitants under their command.

The Tribal System Under the Liao Dynasty as Seen From the Formation of the Emperor Shengzong's Thirty-Four Tribes

WATANABE Miki

In the research to date on the history of the Liao Dynasty, the reign of Emperor Shengzong 聖宗 (982–1031) is regarded as the turning point in the Dynasty's tribal system, based on the facts that Shengzong 1) reorganized the six nomadic tribes under the leadership of Xiwang 奚王 that had existed since the founding of the Dynasty and 2) formed subjects not of Qidan 契丹 ethnic origin—the Ordo 斡魯朶 people and imperial slaves—into tribes. Since there is no record of any new tribal formation in the *Liaoshi* 遼史 histories from that time on, Shengzong's reign is regarded as marking the completion of the Dynasty's tribal system.

Referred to in the *Liaoshi* as “Shengzong's thirty-four tribes” (Shengzong Sanshisibu 聖宗三十四部), the research to date has inferred that this

tribal collectivity was formed for the specific purposes of firmly establishing a centralized system of governance and expanding the tribal defense forces on the borders, despite the fact that no attempt have yet been made to ascertain the circumstances under which each individual tribe was formed. In order to fill this gap, the present article examines from which tribe each of Shengzong's thirty-four tribes originated through a careful survey of the background and motivation for each tribe's formation.

What this survey reveals is the possibility of classifying the thirty-four tribes into two distinct groups: those people already under the Liao rule prior to Shengzong's reign and those people organized on the occasion of the acquisition of human resources in the expeditions during Shengzong's reign. Furthermore, the purposes behind formation varied from tribe to tribe: for example, compensating for population scarcities, accounting for war captives, the restoration of order on the frontier, and appeasing groups of people to submit to Dynasty rule. In other words, Shengzong's thirty-four tribes were not formed collectively under a consolidated policy of political centralization and border defense, but rather formed separately and incrementally in the process of the Liao Dynasty attempting to solve domestic and foreign problems that had arisen during Shengzong's reign.

Despite the fact that the research to date has viewed the Liao tribal system as depicted in the *Liaoshi* as a self-evident conclusion and has avoided any discussion other than the aims of creating the system as a whole, the author concludes that tracing the circumstances of formation tribe-by-tribe casts doubt on the argument of the research to date that Shengzong conceived his own master plan when reorganizing the tribal system. In the future, only careful examination of conditions evolving over time promises to reveal the actual *raison d'être* of the tribes formed under the Liao Dynasty.