

**OFFICIAL COLOURS OF CHINESE REGIMES:  
A PANCHRONIC PHILOLOGICAL STUDY  
WITH HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS OF CHINA**

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**Abstract.** The paper reports a panchronic philological study on the official colours of Chinese regimes. The historical accounts of the Chinese regimes are introduced. The official colours are summarised with philological references of archaic texts. Remarkably, it has been suggested that the official colours of the most ancient regimes should be the three primitive colours: (1) white-yellow, (2) black-grue yellow, and (3) red-yellow, instead of the simple colours. There were inconsistent historical records on the official colours of the most ancient regimes because the composite colour categories had been split. It has solved the historical problem with the linguistic theory of composite colour categories. Besides, it is concluded how the official colours were determined: At first, the official colour might be naturally determined according to the substance of the ruling population. There might be three groups of people in the Far East. (1) The developed hunter gatherers with livestock preferred the white-yellow colour of milk. (2) The farmers preferred the red-yellow colour of sun and fire. (3) The herders preferred the black-grue-yellow colour of water bodies. Later, after the Han-Chinese consolidation, the official colour could be politically determined according to the main property of the five elements in Sino-metaphysics. The red colour has been predominate in China for many reasons.

**Keywords:** colour symbolism, official colours, national colours, five elements, philology, Chinese history, Chinese language, etymology, basic colour terms

**DOI:** 10.3176/tr.2012.3.03

## **1. Introduction**

In Chinese civilisation, an official colour [尚色] is a lawful or conventional colour of the sovereign flag and/or formal dress. It is not necessarily identical to the national colour, because there are many nations in China. Protocols of the

official colours were as important as protocols of the official ethnonyms, capitals and languages.

In Chinese history (the historical accounts of China are introduced in Section 3), when a new regime was established, the official ethnonym and colour were more often shifted than the other protocols. For example, the official spoken language variety of the Chinese sovereignty has been the same Beijing dialect of the Yan regional lect of the Chinese language since the Qing Empire<sup>(1644-1912)</sup>; the capital of the Chinese sovereignty has been the same Beijing since the Yuan Empire<sup>(1276-1368)</sup> [excluding the periods of the early Ming Empire (1368-1421) and the reformed Republic of China (1928-1949), when the capital was Nanjing]. The picture of Chinese official colours is more complicated than the common notion “Red China”. The present study will provide details of the Chinese official colours in a panchronic way.

The present study will also answer the following three major questions:

- 1) How was an official colour determined?
- 2) Was the official colour of the Xia Empire black or grue?
- 3) What reasons have made the red colour the official colour now?

On the first question, the classical common idea in China, after a Chinese scholar, who specialised in Sino-metaphysics (classical Chinese metaphysics), Zōu Yǎn [鄒衍]<sup>(ca.305~ca.240BCE)</sup>, has stated that the official colour should be determined by “the main property of ‘the five elements [五行] [行次]’ (henceforth ‘the fifth property’) in Sino-metaphysics’ (first quoted in -239-LL).

In Sino-metaphysics, everything should have a fifth property (Wood [木], Fire [火], Earth [土], Metal [金] or Water [水]), so does every regime or country. Ideally, the official colours are associated to the fifth property of the regime or country. The fifth property of the five pure colours [五正色] are: black – Water; white – Metal; red – Fire; yellow – Earth; grue – Wood.

Nowadays, the fifth property is considered as superstition by many people. Some Chinese scholars have tried to explain the official colours only for natural reasons.

In 1994, a Chinese scholar, who specialised in Chinese history, Hé GuāngYuè [何光岳] (1994) correlated all the presentations of the black official colour with the Xia Empire and the archaeological sites in eastern central China where black pottery was dominant. It was the first attempt to explain the official colour in the panchronic way.

In 2002, a Chinese scholar, who specialised in Chinese language and Sino-semasiology, Chén LiángYù [陳良煜] (2002) suggested that the official status of the yellow colour is determined by the dominance of agriculture in China.

Four years later, a Chinese scholar, who specialised in Chinese language and glyphs, Sūn JiànJūn [孫建軍] (2006) suggested that the official status of the yellow colour is also influenced by the once dominant Taoism in China<sup>(589-1276)</sup>, while the official status of the red colour was caused by the ancient worship of fire and/or blood.

The explanations on the yellow official colour of the previous studies are reasonable. The present study will explain all the official colours in parallel.

The second question is well known within Chinese historical circles. Two options, ‘black’ and ‘grue’, have been claimed according to the different terms <sup>6506</sup> 黑 (hēi/hāc)<sup>1</sup> and <sup>9751</sup> 青 (qīng/thanh) in historical records. The present study will solve the historical problem with the linguistic theory of composite colour categories proposed by Kay and McDaniel (1978).

On the third question, the common idea in the West might mistake it for the recent history. The present study will conclude that the red colour has been predominant in China for many reasons throughout the history.

## 2. Review of previous studies

Originally, the official colours were scattered in many historiographies.

In 801 CE, a Chinese scholar and an imperial officer of the Tang Empire, who specialised in Chinese history, Dù Yòu [杜佑]<sup>(735-812)</sup>, released a book «*Tongdian* [通典, ‘encyclopaedia’]» (801-TD). In this encyclopaedia, there is a chapter “official virtues and colours of Chinese regimes [歷代所尚]”. It can be read as the first systematic study of the topic in general. The studied materials were Chinese philological texts. The philological method was used. It has given results on 17 Chinese regimes. The results on 15 regimes are agreed in the present study.

According to «*Mingshilu* [明實錄, ‘actual recording of the Ming Empire’]» (1399-MSL), in 1370, the emperor ordered the Ministry of Etiquette [and Education] [禮部] to report the official colours in history. The report returned with the official colours of eight Chinese regimes. The studied materials were Chinese philological texts. The philological method was used. The results on six regimes are agreed in the present study.

In 2008, a Chinese scholar, who specialised in Chinese language and fine art, Péng Dé [彭德], released a Chinese monograph of a diachronic study on the Five Pure Colours of China (2008-ZH5S). In this book, there is a chapter on the official colours of Chinese regimes. It is the latest systematic study of the topic in general. The studied materials were Chinese philological texts. The philological method was used. It has given results on 21 Chinese regimes. The results on 10 regimes are agreed in the present study.

The results of the previous studies (together with the results of the present study) are given in a comparative table in Appendix 1.

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<sup>1</sup> In this article, I have elevated most Chinese data to an advanced academic level to make the data clearer to general readers. A relevant Chinese term is regularly represented by its DOM number (Unicode sequence number of a primary glyph of a Chinese etymon, for specific references), primary glyph (for Chinese references), primary reading in Pinyin and primary reading in Sino-Vietnamese (for general references). Sino-Vietnamese is an incumbent Latin orthography that is clearer to non-Chinese readers. Moreover, it fits some southern lects of the Chinese language.

### 3. Materials and methods

#### 3.1 Materials

Relevant philological texts of 26 Chinese central regimes, 3 Chinese *de facto* central regimes, and 3 Chinese local sovereign regimes are targeted.

A Chinese regime [<sup>570B</sup> 國(guó/quác)] is a country granted by Chinese sovereignty or independently established in the Chinese way and having an endonym which is originally Sinitic. A Chinese central regime [中國(zhōng-guó/trung-quác)] is a country with Chinese sovereignty. *De jure* Chinese sovereignty means a general recognition by contemporary people and succeeding Chinese central regimes. *De facto* Chinese sovereignty means a control of central China. A Chinese local sovereign regime is a Chinese local regime with its separate sovereignty. Such a regime has proclaimed its own emperor (not king). It was not easily allowed by the Chinese central regime. Every country without proclaiming its own emperor could be accepted as a nominally dependent regime [<sup>85E9</sup> 藩(fān/phiên)] of China.

The central regimes are counted as the following 26:

#### (1\*<sup>2</sup>) PaoXi Empire<sup>(ca.60000–ca.3000BCE)</sup>, its origin and its offspring

The PaoXi [庖犧] (also written as FuXi [伏羲]) Empire is counted as the first central regime of China. “PaoXi [庖犧<sup>(páo-xī/bào-hi)</sup>]” is an ethnonym made of two lexemes with concrete etymologies that mean “kitchen [廚也]” (121-SW: #5901) and “domesticated animals [宗廟之牲也]” (121-SW: #771) respectively, or ‘kitchen of domesticated animals’ altogether. PaoXi should be a reconstructed ethnonym after the property of the ruling population. Traditional Chinese ethnonyms are monomorphemic.

This empire might be founded by the first developed hunter-gatherer (Late Palaeolithic) people residing in China. Its sovereign monarchies might be nominated and elected from different clans. The capital depended on the elected sovereign monarchy. The capital of the founder monarchy is historically told as being in Chen [<sup>9673</sup> 陳(chén/tràn), Sinitic etymology meaning ‘settlement’ > ‘to set’] (present-day Huaiyang) in eastern central China, archaeologically undiscovered.

The major innovations in PaoXi were: the comestible use of domesticated animals [取犧牲以充庖廚, ‘kitchen of domesticated animals’ (in addition to kitchen of wild animals)], the marriage rules [制嫁娶之禮], the dragon totem [有景龍之瑞], the eight diagrams [畫八卦] (Sino-metaphysics) and the lithic nail for acupuncture [制九針] (Sino-medicine) (241-DW), also the fishing net [作結繩而為罔罟] (0-YI: Xicixià [繫辭下]).

<sup>2</sup> The first four regimes of China are not universally acknowledged, because they are not archaeologically discovered. There might be different details in different philological texts. In the brief historical accounts concluded by the present study, if a detail is not common in the most historical sources, the relevant source is denoted.

The PaoXi Empire lasted 57882 years (0-YIW: chapter Jilǎntú [稽覽圖]). It actually ruled some part of central China. In ca. 3000 BCE, it was supplanted by the ShenNong Empire. It is historically obscure, how the PaoXi people ended up.

At present, Chinese people are related to PaoXi by confirming the dragon totem [龍的傳人]. Korean people are related to PaoXi by confirming the dragon totem and having the eight diagrams on their sovereign flag.

The studied archaic texts about PaoXi include 0-YI, 0-LI, 0-YIW and 241-DW.  
**(2\*) ShenNong Empire<sup>(ca.3000~ca.2500)</sup>, its origin and its offspring**

The ShenNong [神農] Empire is counted as the second central regime of China. “ShenNong [神農<sup>(shén-nóng/thân-nông)</sup>]” is an ethnonym made of two lexemes with concrete etymologies that mean “god [引出萬物者也]” (121-SW: #25) and “agriculture [耕也]” (121-SW: #1777) respectively, or ‘the god of agriculture’ altogether. ShenNong should be a reconstructed ethnonym after the property of the ruling population. Traditional Chinese ethnyonyms are monomorphic.

The nation of ShenNong was called ShenNongShi [神農氏, ‘Shennongish’]. It might be the first agricultural (Neolithic) people residing in China. In ca. 3000 BCE, ShenNong gained the sovereignty from PaoXi. It was not recorded how ShenNong gained the sovereignty. PaoXi might decline and yield the territory by natural reasons. The sovereign monarchies of ShenNong might be nominated and elected from different clans. The capital depended on the elected sovereign monarchy.

The major innovations in ShenNong were: the comestible use of domesticated plants [始教天下耕種五穀而食之] (agriculture) and the medical use of plants [嘗味草水宜藥療疾] (Sino-medicine) (241-DW), also the ceramic axe [作陶冶斤斧] (0-ZS) and the textile [婦織而衣] (-338-SJS: Huàcè [畫策]), also the daily market [日中為市] (0-YI: Xicixià [繫辭下]).

The ShenNong Empire lasted 540 years (0-YIW: Jilǎntú [稽覽圖]) / 530 years (241-DW). It actually ruled some part of central China. In ca. 3000 BCE, it was defeated and supplanted by the XuanYuan Empire. It is not recorded what happened to the ShenNong people.

Based on accounts of histories and etymologies of relevant languages, Gāo (2008) suggested that ShenNong people are Sino-Finnic [~ Uralic] [漢宋]. The key etymologies are: (1) <sup>530B</sup> 匱 (táo/dào/ET:sauE/Fl:savi,e) ‘pottery’ in Sinitic; ‘clay’ in Finnic [~ Finno-Ugric]; (2) <sup>8015</sup> 耕 (gēng/canh/ET:kündA-/Fl:kyntä-) ‘to plough’ in Sinitic and Finnic [~ Cheremis *kühčäs* ‘to dig’]; (3) <sup>8CE3</sup> 賣 (mài/mài/ET:müü-/Fl:myy-) ‘to sell’ in Sinitic and Finnic [~ Uralic].

The common tale of ‘the 5000-year-old history of China [五千年歷史]’ is counted from this empire. It implies that the previous regime was not Chinese. I think it is partly true. The PaoXi Empire should represent the hunter-gatherer people who arrived much earlier. The ShenNong Empire should represent the agricultural settlers who arrived much later. The replacement of PaoXi by ShenNong is a very important precondition for the later fusional foundation of the

Yan-Huang Chinese nation. At present, many Chinese people consider themselves offspring of the fusional Yan-Huang Chinese [炎黃子孫].

The studied archaic texts about ShenNong include 0-YI, 0-LI, 0-ZS, 0-YIW, -338-SJS, -91-SJ, and 241-DW.

### **(3\*) XuanYuan Empire<sup>(ca.2500-ca.2000BCE)</sup>, its origin and its offspring**

The XuanYuan [軒轅] Empire is counted as the third central regime of China. “XuanYuan [軒轅<sup>(xuān-yuán/thièn-vièn)</sup>]” is an ethnonym made of two lexemes that mean “a sort of vehicle [曲輶藩車]” (121-SW: #9464) and “axle [輶也]” (121-SW: #9508) respectively, or ‘advanced vehicles’ altogether. XuanYuan should be a reconstructed ethnonym after the property of the ruling population. Traditional Chinese ethnonyms are monomorphemic.

The nation of XuanYuan was called XuanYuanShi [軒轅氏, ‘*Xuanyuanish*’]. It might be the first mobile (Chalcolithic) people residing in China. In ca. 2500 BCE, XuanYuan gained the sovereignty from ShenNong by force: “When the central power of the ShenNong Empire declined, thus it was unable to protect the people. The HuangDi [黃帝, ‘yellow emperor’] of XuanYuan started forming armies. After three victories against the troops of ShenNong, the YanDi [炎帝, ‘fire emperor’] of ShenNong surrendered. Later, allied forces led by XuanYuan defeated the troops of ChiYou [蚩尤, non-Sinitic etymology, /c<sup>h</sup>i jai/ in White Hmong, a leader of the ancient Hmong people]. Finally, [after winning 52 battles against the other tribes (241-DW)], the peaceful order was restored, XuanYuan succeeded the sovereignty” (-91-SJ: Wudibenji [五帝本紀]). The sovereign monarchies of XuanYuan were nominated and elected from different clans. The capital depended on the elected sovereign monarchy.

The major innovations in XuanYuan were: the wooden ships with oar [剡木為舟 剡木為楫], the conveyable use of cattle and horses [服牛乘馬], the bow and arrow [弦木為弧 剡木為矢], the Chinese glyphs [始作文字], the house construction [筑宮室], the coffin [棺槨] and the cloud totem [有景雲之瑞] (241-DW).

The XuanYuan Empire lasted about 500 years (average of common sources). [Upon 0-YIW: Jīlǎntú [稽覽圖], 2820 years can be counted. It is generally discredited. I think that it might include the years before XuanYuan gained sovereignty.] It actually ruled central China. In ca. 2000 BCE, it was supplanted by the Xia Empire. It is not recorded what happened to the XuanYuan people.

The reconstructed Sino-calendar is counted from this empire. [The current year (2012 CE) in Sino-calendar is 4710 (after the official reconstruction by the Chinese Alliance, which founded the Republic of China) / 4649 (revised reconstruction).] It implies that the previous regimes were not Chinese. I think it is partly true. The ShenNong Empire should represent the mobile farmers in the Far East. The XuanYuan Empire should represent the mobile herders in the Far East. The fusion of the two nations is the foundation of the Chinese nation. At present,

many Chinese people consider themselves offspring of the fusional Yan-Huang Chinese [炎黃子孫].

Based on accounts of histories and etymologies of relevant languages, Chang (1988) suggested that XuanYuan people are Indo-European, Gāo (2008) advanced it to Germanic. The key etymologies are: (1) <sup>8ECA</sup> 車 (chē/xā/DA:kærre/SV:kärra/EN:car/NL:kar/DE:Karre/FR:char/ES/PT/IT:carro/LA:carrus) ‘wheeled vehicle’ in Sinitic and Germanic [~ Romanic]; (2) <sup>99AC</sup> 馬 (mǎ/mā/DA:mær/SV:märr/EN:mare/NL:merrie/DE:Mähre) ‘horse’ in Sinitic, ‘female horse’ in Germanic; (3) <sup>821F</sup> 舟 (zhōu/chīeu/DA:skib/SV:skepp/EN:ship/NL:schip/DE:Schiff) ‘ship’ in Sinitic and Germanic.

The studied archaic texts about XuanYuan include 0-YI, 0-SU, 0-LI, 0-YIW, -300-ZSJM, -91-SJ and 241-DW.

#### (4\*) Xia Empire<sup>(ca.2000-ca.1600BCE)</sup>, its origin and its offspring

The Xia [夏] Empire [commonly called “the Xia Dynasty<sup>3</sup>”] is counted as the fourth central regime of China. “Xia [<sup>590F</sup> 夏 (xià/ha)]” is an ethnonym with a concrete etymology that means “Chinese people [中國之人也]” (121-SW: #3354), its further abstract etymology should include another concrete etymology <sup>5EC8</sup> 廈 (shà/ha), “building [屋也]” (121-SW: #5939).

Xia was originally a fiefdom granted by the XuanYuan Empire. In ca. 2000 BCE, the Count of Xia [夏伯] was nominated and elected as the Emperor Yu [禹]. After his decease, his son supplanted the nominated heir apparent of Yu, and declared the Xia Empire. [From a juridical view, the Emperor Yu was the elected emperor of the XuanYuan Empire, and should not be counted as an actual emperor of the Xia Empire as most other historians did.] Since then, the emperors of China were mostly hereditarily succeeded. The capital of Xia allegedly changed place, although it is archaeologically not discovered<sup>4</sup>.

The major innovation of Xia was the bronze caldron [鑄鼎] (241-DW) (unfortunately, it is archaeologically undiscovered).

The Xia Empire lasted 471 years (the discovered version [今本] of -300-ZSJM) / 431 years (0-YIW: Jīlǎntú [稽覽圖]) / 432 years (241-DW). It actually ruled central China. In ca. 1600 BCE, it was defeated by the allied forces of feudal states led by of the Shang Fiefdom, and supplanted by the Shang Empire.

The surrendered ruling population of Xia was granted a fiefdom termed Qi/Ky <sup>675E</sup> 杞 (qǐ/ký). From my etymological point of view, the ethnonym of the granted fiefdom [<sup>675E</sup> 杞 (qǐ/ký)] is an etymological equivalent of the ethnonym of the original empire [<sup>590F</sup> 夏 (xià/ha)], and a result of a political correctness. In 445BCE, the Qi/Ky

<sup>3</sup> People who really understand both European and Chinese histories would not call the Chinese imperial regimes “dynasties”. A dynasty is a sequence of rulers considered members of the same family. A regime can be ruled by different dynasties. A dynasty can rule different regimes. Rulers of a Chinese imperial regime did not always belong to the same family. The Chinese regimes may have been with different populations and religions. However, most Chinese regimes struggled to gain unique Chinese sovereignty. Besides, for an easy example, the situations of Zhou and Qin in China are comparable to the situations of England and Scotland in UK.

<sup>4</sup> Despite efforts by Chinese archaeologists to link the Xia Empire with Bronze Age Erlitou archaeological sites, the concrete existence of the Xia Empire is yet to be proven (Liu & Xu 2007).

Fiefdom was conquered and annexed by the Chu [<sup>695A</sup> 楚(chǔ/sǒ)] Kingdom. Its people were fused in the Qin-Han-Chinese consolidation in the Qin Empire<sup>(221-207BCE)</sup> and the Han Empire<sup>(202BCE-220CE)</sup>.

In 407 CE, a branch of Inner Xiongnu [匈奴, non-Sinitic etymology] people, who proclaimed being the descendants of Xia, established the Xia Kingdom in near north-west China. In 418, it proclaimed imperial sovereignty. The revived local Xia Empire lasted 8 years. It actually ruled near north-west China. In 426, its capital was conquered by the Taugas Wei [魏] Empire. Its last emperor was captured in 431. Its people were fused in Taugas-Chinese consolidation in the Taugas Wei Empire<sup>(399-550/557)</sup>, the Taugas Zhou Empire<sup>(557-581)</sup> and the Sui Empire<sup>(581-618)</sup>. Its territory was termed the Xia Province [夏州] by the Taugas Wei Empire. The toponym Xia was later abolished by the Tang Empire.

Despite the loss of the homogenous Xia nation, the ethnonym Xia has been reused as the official ethnonym by the Tangut Xia Empire<sup>(1038-1227)</sup> and some unorthodox regimes declared by rebellious or revolutionary forces. At present, it is included in a combined ethnonym HuaXia (華夏), which is a secondary term for the Han-Chinese nation.

The Greco-Bactrian Kingdom<sup>(256-125BCE)</sup> (in Central Asia) was called DaXia [大夏, 'Great Xia'] by the Chinese authorities until the Han Empire (-91-SJ, 92-HS, 445-HHS). It implies that the Chinese authorities might consider that the ethnonym "Greek" [first attested as Γραικοί in *Meteorology* of Aristotle] and the ethnonym 590F [<sup>590F</sup> 夏(xià/ha)] sounded the same or even etymologically identical. Cf. The ancient Etymologically Read Form (ERF) [音讀] of <sup>590F</sup> 夏(xià/ha) should be \*yæa (Guō 1986:9), \*graas (ZhèngZhāng 2003:497) or \*luàga-L-S (the present study). I think that they are etymologically identical, thus ethnologically related. The etymological evidences of relevant languages should be studied.

The studied archaic texts about Xia include 0-YI, 0-SU, 0-LI, 0-YIW, -300-ZSJM, -91-SJ, 241-DW, 92-HS, 28-220-HJ, 445-HHS, 554-WS and 648-JS.

#### **(5) Shang Empire<sup>(ca.1600-ca.1050BCE)</sup>, its origin and its offspring**

The Shang [商] Empire [commonly called "the Shang Dynasty"] is counted as the fifth central regime of China. It is the first, both historically and archaeologically, attested regime in China. "Shang [<sup>5546</sup> 商(shāng/thuong)]" is the ethnonym with a concrete etymology that means "know from outside [从外知内也]" (121-SW: #1449).

Shang was originally a fiefdom granted by the XuanYuan Empire. In ca. 1600 BCE, Shang took over the sovereignty from Xia by force. Its capital is historically told as changing among different places. Its last capital is archaeologically discovered in Anyang in eastern central China. Its official language was Shang pre-Chinese (Gao 2012).

The oracle bone inscriptions were written in the Shang Empire. The oldest Chinese archaeological texts dated from this era.

The Shang Empire lasted 496 years (the discovered version [今本] of -300-ZSJM, 0-YIW: Jīlǎntú [稽覽圖] and -91-SJ: Yinbenji [殷本紀]) / 471 years (the collected version [古本] of -300-ZSJM) / 629 years (241-DW). It actually



ruled central China. In ca. 1050 BCE, it was defeated by allied forces of feudal states led by the Zhou Fiefdom, and supplanted by the Zhou Empire.

The surrendered ruling population of Shang was granted a fiefdom termed Song [<sup>5B8B</sup> 宋(sòng/tóng)]. From my etymological point of view, the ethnonym of the granted fiefdom [<sup>5B8B</sup> 宋(sòng/tóng)] is an etymological equivalent of the ethnonym of the original empire [<sup>5546</sup> 商(shāng/thuong)], and a result of a political correctness. The Song Fiefdom became a powerful Dukedom in the era of feudal and warring states. In 318 BCE, it was upgraded to a kingdom. In 286 BCE, it was conquered and annexed by the Qi [<sup>9F4A</sup> 齊(qí/tè)] Kingdom. Its people were fused in the Qin-Han-Chinese consolidation in the Qin Empire<sup>(221~207BCE)</sup> and the Han Empire<sup>(202BCE~220CE)</sup>.

Despite the loss of the homogenous Shang/Song nation, the ethnonym Song has been reused as the official ethnonym by the Song Empire<sup>(420~479)</sup>, the Greater Song Empire<sup>(960~1276[1279])</sup> and some unorthodox regimes declared by rebellious or revolutionary forces.

Based on the accounts of histories and the etymologies of relevant languages, Gāo (2008) suggested that the endonym of Lapland “*Sapmi*”, the endonym of Finland “*Suomi*”, the endonym of Shang “<sup>5546</sup> 商(shāng/thuong)” and the endonym of Song “<sup>5B8B</sup> 宋(sòng/tóng)” are etymologically identical.

The studied archaic texts about Shang/Song include 0-YI, 0-SU, 0-LI, -300-ZSJM and -91-SJ.

#### **(6) Zhou Empire<sup>(ca.1050~256BCE)</sup>, its origin and its offspring**

The Zhou [周] Empire [commonly called “the Zhou Dynasty”] is counted as the sixth central regime in China. “Zhou [<sup>5468</sup> 周(zhōu/chāu)]” is an ethnonym with a concrete etymology that means “meticulous [密也]” (121-SW: #876).

Zhou was originally a fiefdom granted by the Shang Empire. It was based in western central China (around present-day Xi'an). In ca. 1050 BCE, allied forces of feudal states led by Zhou defeated the imperial troops of Shang. Zhou gained the imperial throne (sovereignty) and established the new empire. The Zhou Empire built its capital, termed Hao [<sup>93AC</sup> 鎬(hào/hào), ‘stove’], in western central China (archaeologically discovered in present-day Xi'an). Its official language was Zhou pre-Chinese (Gao 2012).

Books made of bamboo and wooden slips were produced in the Zhou Empire. The oldest Chinese transmitted philological texts dated from this era.

In 771 BCE, the emperor and the crown prince were killed in rebellions. In 770 BCE, another Zhou prince, supported by two feudal states, Jin [<sup>6649</sup> 晉(jìn/tán)] and Zheng [<sup>912D</sup> 鄭(zhèng/trính)], restored the imperial throne, but in LuoYi [雒邑, ‘Luo (sort of bird) town’] (present-day Luoyang) in eastern central China. The restored throne was acknowledged by the feudal states but lost actual control of the country to the feudal states. This period is commonly known as the era of feudal and warring states [春秋戰國].

The Zhou Empire lasted about 800 years / 867 years (0-YIW: Jīlántú [稽覽圖]). It actually ruled central China, but only nominally after 771 BCE. In 256 BCE, it

was ended when the emperor surrendered to the Qin Kingdom, then died of depression, and no new emperor was named.

The surrendered ruling population of Zhou was not granted any fiefdom, because Qin tried to abolish feudalism. Zhou people were fused in the Qin-Han-Chinese consolidation in the Qin Empire<sup>(221~207BCE)</sup> and the Han Empire<sup>(202BCE~220CE)</sup>.

Despite the loss of the homogenous Zhou nation, the ethnonym Zhou has been reused as the official ethnonym by the Taugas Zhou Empire<sup>(557~581)</sup>, the nominal Zhou Empire<sup>(690~705)</sup> within the Tang Empire, the Second Zhou Empire<sup>(951~960)</sup>, and the rebellious local Zhou Empire<sup>(1678~1681)</sup> in far south-west China.

At present, the Burmese term for China, ၵၢ်တၢ်ချီၵ်း[təjɔuʔ], might be etymologically identical to the ethnonym Zhou.

Based on etymologies of relevant languages, Gāo (2008) suggested the endonym of Germany “*Deutschland*” and the endonym of Zhou 周<sup>5468</sup> (zhōu/chāu), are etymologically identical.

The studied archaic texts about Zhou include 0-YI, 0-SU, 0-LI, -300-ZSJM and -91-SJ.

### (7) Qin Empire<sup>(221~207BCE)</sup>, its origin and its offspring

The Qin [秦] Empire [commonly called “the Qin Dynasty”] is counted as the seventh central regime of China. “Qin [秦<sup>79E6</sup> (qín/tàn)]” is an ethnonym with a concrete etymology that means “a sort of grain [禾名]” (121-SW: #4429).

Qin was originally a fiefdom granted by the Zhou Empire in 770 BCE. It was based in near north-west China (the region between present-day Tianshui and Baoji). In 325 BCE, it proclaimed the Qin Kingdom. It had annexed some small states in near south-west China when it endured as one of the seven strongest kingdoms in the Zhou Empire. In 256 BCE, it had a military expedition towards the capital of Zhou, the emperor surrendered and then died of depression. No new emperor was named. The warring kingdoms became sovereign states.

In 251 BCE, the other major kingdoms allied against Qin, but the allied forces were defeated in 241 BCE. The Qin Kingdom defeated and annexed the Han<sup>[97D3 韓(hán/hàn)]</sup> Kingdom in 230 BCE, the Zhao<sup>[8D99 趙(zhào/trièu)]</sup> Kingdom in 228 BCE, the Wei<sup>[9B4F 魏(wèi/nguy)]</sup> Kingdom in 225 BCE, the Chu<sup>[695A 楚(chǔ/sò)]</sup> Kingdom and the Yan<sup>[71D5 燕(yān/yèn)]</sup> Kingdom in 222 BCE, and the Qi<sup>[9F4A 齊(qí/tè)]</sup> Kingdom in 221 BCE.

In 221 BCE, after the unification, the King of Qin was named the Emperor of Qin. The Qin Empire had its capital XianYang [咸陽, ‘all warm-side’] (built by the Qin Kingdom) in western central China (archaeologically discovered in present-day Xianyang). Its official language was Qin-Han-Jin Chinese (Gao 2012). The Qin Empire abolished feudalism straight away and launched the Qin-Han-Chinese consolidation.

In 218 BCE, The Qin Empire defeated and annexed the independent Yue/Viet<sup>[8D8A 越(yuè/viêt)]</sup> states (in south and south-east coastal China).

The Qin Empire lasted 15 years. It actually ruled (ordered by time of incorporation) near north-west, western central, near south-west, north-west

central (Zhao), eastern central (Han and Wei), near north-east (Yan), east (Qi), south-east and south non-coastal (Chu), and south-east and south coastal (Yue/Viet) China, altogether ‘China proper’. In 207 BCE, it was defeated by allied forces of revived feudal states led by the Chu Kingdom, and then supplanted by the Chu Empire. The surrendered ruling population of Qin might merge with the ruling population of the Han Empire<sup>(202BCE~220CE)</sup>, which supplanted the Chu Empire and achieved the Qin-Han-Chinese consolidation.

In 352 CE, a local warlord proclaimed the revived Qin Empire in the principle territory of the foregone Qin Kingdom. The revived Qin Empire (also attested as *Jenasdan* in *Patmowt'yown Hayoc' (Armenian History)* of Movses Xorenac<sup>'</sup><sub>(ca.410~ca.490)</sub> {of this exonym, the first morpheme (*Jena*) is etymologically identical to Qin [<sup>79E6</sup> 秦<sup>(qin/tân)</sup>, cf. [ʒi·ɲɿ] – its ERF in Shanghai Wu Chinese], the second morpheme (*sdan*) means ‘place of’ in Persian}) lasted about 65 years under two dynasties (the Fù [符] Dynasty until 386 and the Yáo [姚] Dynasty after it). It once unified near north-west, central, east, near north-east, near south-west, far north-west China and Inner Mongolia proper (altogether, ‘northern China’ + near south-west China) but failed to conquer the Jin Empire (also attested as *Sinae* in the same *Armenian History*) (with *de jure* Chinese sovereignty) in southern China. In 417, it was defeated and dissolved by the Jin Empire. [The Jin Empire quit the territory because it was unable to control the territory against the other northern powers.] Its people were fused in the Taugas-Chinese consolidation in the Taugas Wei Empire<sup>(399~550/557)</sup>, the Taugas Zhou Empire<sup>(557~581)</sup> and the Sui Empire<sup>(581~618)</sup>.

At present, Qin is an unofficial toponym for the Shaanxi Province.

The Roman Empire<sup>(27BCE~395CE~476[west]/1453[east])</sup> was called DaQin [大秦, ‘great Qin’] by Chinese authorities until the Taugas Wei Empire (445-HHS, 554-WS). It implies that the Chinese authorities might consider that the ethnonym “Rome” and the ethnonym 79E6 [<sup>79E6</sup> 秦<sup>(qin/tân)</sup>] sounded the same or even etymologically identical. Cf. The ancient ERF of <sup>79E6</sup> 秦<sup>(qin/tân)</sup> should be \*dzin (Guō 1986:237), \*zin (ZhèngZhāng 2003: 445), or \*ziem > zien (the present study). Gāo (2008) suggested that the ethnonym “Rome” and the ethnonym “Qin” are etymologically identical (cf. the Russian term *Rim* (Рим) ‘Rome’; the Polish term *Rzym* [zɨm] ‘Rome’), thus Romanic people and Qin people are ethnologically related.

The studied archaic texts about Qin include -239-LL, -91-SJ and 92-HS, 445-HHS, 554-WS and 648-JS.

#### (8) Chu Empire<sup>(207~202BCE)</sup>, its origin and its offspring

The Chu [楚] Empire is counted as the eighth central regime of China. “Chu [<sup>695A</sup> 楚<sup>(chú/só)</sup>” is an ethnonym with a concrete etymology that is a sort of tree [叢木] (121-SW: #3831).

Chu was originally a fiefdom granted by the Zhou Empire before 1000 BCE. It was based in south central China (around present-day Nanyang). In 704 BCE, it proclaimed the Chu Kingdom. It had annexed many small states in south and south-east China when it endured as one of the seven strongest kingdoms in the Zhou Empire. In 222 BCE, it was defeated and annexed by the Qin Kingdom.

In 208 BCE, the throne of Chu Kingdom was restored to a grandson of the last King of Chu supported by a son of the last marshal of Chu. In 207 BCE, allied forces of the revived kingdoms led by Chu overturned the Qin Empire, the Chu Empire was established, when the King of Chu was named the Nominal Emperor [義帝]. Soon, the nominal emperor was assassinated (by the Dominated King of West Chu, according to histories written by the Han Empire). No new emperor was named. The marshal of Chu, also the Dominated King of West Chu [西楚霸王] became the sovereign of the Chu Empire. (The Dominated King of West Chu might wish to release the kingdoms as sovereign states. If it were true, the Chu Empire no longer existed.) The Chu Empire had its capital in Pengcheng [彭城, ‘town of Peng’] (present-day Xuzhou) in eastern China. Its official language might be Chu pre-Chinese.

The Chu Empire lasted 5 years. It actually ruled eastern central, eastern and southern China, nominally the whole China proper. In 202 BCE, it was defeated by the Han<sup>[6F22]</sup> Kingdom, and then supplanted by the Han Empire.

The surrendered ruling population of Chu was granted a dependent Chu Kingdom, a Han prince was named as the King of Chu. The dependent Chu Kingdom lasted until 72 CE, when it was dissolved by the Han Empire. Its people were fused in the Qin-Han-Chinese consolidation in the Han Empire<sup>(202BCE~220CE)</sup>.

Despite the loss of the homogenous Chu nation, the ethnonym Chu has been reused as the official ethnonym by the usurped Chu Empire<sup>(404)</sup> within the Jin Empire<sup>(266~420)</sup>, the second *de facto* independent Chu Kingdom<sup>(907~951)</sup> in south China and some unorthodox regimes declared by rebellious or revolutionary forces.

At present, Chu is an unofficial toponym for the region of the last Chu Kingdom, roughly equal to the Hunan Province and the Hubei Province.

The studied archaic texts about Chu include -91-SJ and 92-HS.

### **(9) Han Empire<sup>(202BCE~220[263]CE)</sup> and its aftereffects**

The Han [漢] Empire [commonly called “the Han Dynasty”] is counted as the ninth central regime of China. “Han<sup>[6F22]</sup> [6F22 漢(hàn/hán)]” was a newly made ethnonym from a hydronym of the major river in western and southern central China [漾也] (121-SW: #6971).

Han<sup>[6F22]</sup> was originally a kingdom granted by the Chu Empire in 207 BCE (not the Han<sup>[97D3]</sup> Kingdom of the Zhou Empire). It was based in Hanzhong [漢中, ‘middle of Han River’] (present-day Hanzhong) in western central China. Its king was not a traditional nobleman, but got major military exploits in the war against [the government of<sup>5</sup>] the Qin Empire. After a new war among the revived feudal powers, in 202 BCE, the Han<sup>[6F22]</sup> Kingdom gained sole control of the sovereignty and declared the new empire. The Han Empire built its capital, termed Chang’an [長安, ‘long peace’], near the former capital of Qin in western central China. Its

<sup>5</sup> In Chinese, a name of country denotes rather a political regime than a natural territory. It is opposite to English. At present, Chinese people do think that “China is equal to the regime of PRC” in Chinese English. China as a natural territory is called the “territory of China”.

official language was Qin-Han-Jin Chinese (Gao 2012). Its official belief was Confucianism since 134 BCE. It did not abolish but restricted feudalism.

By 110 BCE, the Han Empire defeated and annexed Qin-Yue-ruled Yue/Viet [<sup>8D8A</sup>越(yuè/viêt)] states (in south and south-east coastal China), which had become independent since the fall of the Qin Empire, thus affirmed Chinese sovereignty over the region (including northern Vietnam). {Later, in 970 CE, northern Vietnam was lost when the Da-Qu-Yue Empire (with Vietnamese sovereignty) declared independence (see the section of Song Empire).}

In 108 BCE, the Han Empire defeated and annexed the WeiMan/Wiman [衛滿(wèi-mǎn/vê-mǎn)], its ERF in Korean 위만(*wiman*), Sinitic anthroponym meaning ‘guard, full’] ChaoXian/Joseon [朝鮮(cháo-xiǎn/triêu-tiên)], its ERF in Korean 조선(*chosŏn/joseon*), Sinitic etymology meaning ‘day fresh’] Kingdom<sup>(194-108BCE)</sup> ruled by an exiled army of the Yan Kingdom of the Han Empire originally lead by Weiman/Wiman, thus gained sovereignty over northern Korea. {Later, in 313 CE, northern Korea was lost to the Goguryeo [高句麗, non-Sinitic etymology] Kingdom<sup>(37BCE-668CE)</sup>.}

In 71 BCE, the Han Empire allied with the local Tocharian kingdoms in XiYu [西域(xī-yù/tây-vưc)], ‘west region’] and defeated the Xiongnu [匈奴, non-Sinitic etymology, might be etymologically identical to Hun(s)] Confederation<sup>(ca.220BCE-48CE-216[south]/469[Huns])</sup>, thus gained sovereignty over far north-west China (West Region) for the first time. {Later, in 460 CE, West Region was lost to the Ruru [柔然/蠕蠕/茹茹/芮芮, non-Sinitic etymology] Khaganate<sup>(330-554)</sup>.}

In 9 CE, the prime minister of Han gained the imperial throne of Han and renamed the regime Xin [<sup>65B0</sup>新(xīn/tân), ‘new’]. He also renamed the capital ChangAn [常安, ‘usual peace’]. In 23 CE, this usurped Xin Empire was dissolved by revived Han powers. After another war between two Han powers, ChangAn was ruined. In 26 CE, the revived Han Empire reset its capital to LuoYang [雒陽(<洛陽), ‘warm-side of Luo River’] (present-day Luoyang) in eastern central China.

In 184 CE, the Han Empire was disrupted by a popular revolutionary force called the Yellow Turban Army [黃巾軍]. The revolution was followed by a civil war among Han warlords. In 190, Luoyang was ruined. The emperor was seized first to ChangAn in western central China, then to XuDu [許都, ‘Xu capital’] (present-day Xuchang) in eastern central China in 196. In 220, the imperial throne of Han was gained by the prime minister of Han. The regime was transformed to the Wei Empire. The ruling population remained the same.

In 221, a paternal relative of the last Emperor of Han, also the King of HanZhong [漢中王] granted by the Han Empire, was named the new Emperor of Han. This locally persevered Han Empire did not acknowledge the Wei Empire. It actually ruled south-west China. In 263, It was defeated and dissolved by the Wei Empire. [This local Han Empire is not counted as a *de jure* central regime, because it did not control the original capital and was directly dissolved by the Wei Empire.]

Books made of paper were produced in the Han Empire, although books made of bamboo and wooden slips were still dominant in this era. The first standard dictionary of the Chinese language (121) was issued in the Han Empire.

The Han Empire lasted over 400 years. It ruled the whole China proper, northern Vietnam and northern Korea, and far north-west China. It achieved the Qin-Han-Chinese consolidation.

Since the fall of the Han Empire, the ethnonym Han<sup>[6F22]</sup> has been reused as the official ethnonym by the revived Han Empire<sup>(308-319)</sup>, the local Han Empire<sup>(338-347)</sup> in near south-west China, the Second Han Empire<sup>(947-951[979])</sup>, the local Han Empire<sup>(918-971)</sup> in south coastal China and some unorthodox regimes declared by rebellious or revolutionary forces.

At present, Han<sup>[6F22]</sup> is the official endonym for the Han-Chinese nation. In mainland China, it is also used in the official term of the Chinese language [漢語, ‘Han<sup>[6F22]</sup> lect’].

The studied archaic texts about the Han Empire include -91-SJ, 92-HS, 280-3GZ and 445-HHS.

#### **(10) Wei Empire<sup>(220-266)</sup> and its aftereffects**

The Wei [魏] Empire [commonly called “the Wei Dynasty”] is counted as the tenth central regime of China. “Wei [<sup>9B4F</sup> 魏(wèi/nguy)]” is an ethnonym from a lexeme<sup>5DCD</sup> 巍(wēi/nguy) that etymologically means “high [高也]” (121-SW: #5816).

Wei was originally a fiefdom granted by the Zhou Empire before 1000 BCE. It was based in north-west central China. In 661 BCE, it was annexed by the Jin [<sup>6649</sup> 晉(jin/tán)] Dukedom. In 403 BCE, the Wei Fiefdom was restored. In 362 BCE, it moved its capital to DaLiang [大梁, ‘great beam’] (present-day Kaifeng) in eastern central China. In 344 BCE, it proclaimed the Wei Kingdom (also called the Liang [<sup>6881</sup> 梁(liáng/luong)] Kingdom). It endured as one of the seven strongest kingdoms in the Zhou Empire. In 225 BCE, it was defeated and annexed by the Qin Kingdom. In 207 BCE, the Chu Empire granted the Kingdom of West Wei. In 205 BCE, it was defeated and annexed by the Han<sup>[6F22]</sup> Kingdom. Wei people were fused in the Qin-Han-Chinese consolidation in the Qin Empire<sup>(221-207BCE)</sup> and the Han Empire<sup>(202BCE-220CE)</sup>.

In 213 CE, the prime minister of Han, whose fief was in the territory of the foregone Wei Kingdom, was titled the nominal Duke of Wei. He became the nominal King of Wei in 216, then died in 220. In the same year, his son, the new prime minister of Han, also the new nominal King of Wei, achieved a peaceful takeover, gained the imperial throne, and renamed the regime Wei. The capital was Luoyang [in Chinese glyphs, the Qin spelling 洛陽 was reused instead of the Han spelling 雒陽]. The official language was Qin-Han-Jin Chinese (Gao 2012).

The era of the Wei Empire is commonly called the “Three Kingdoms” [三國, ‘three regimes’], because there were three sovereign states in China from 229 to 263. The third one was the local Wu [<sup>5433</sup> 吳(wú/ngò)] Empire<sup>(229-280)</sup> in south-east and south China.

In 266, the imperial throne of the Wei Empire was gained by the prime minister of Wei. The regime was transformed to the Jin Empire. The ruling population remained identical.

Since the fall of the Wei Empire, the ethnonym Wei has been reused as the official ethnonym by the revived Wei Empire<sup>(350-352)</sup>, the Taugas Wei Empire<sup>(399-550/557)</sup> and some unorthodox regimes declared by rebellious or revolutionary forces.

The studied archaic texts about the Wei Empire include 445-HHS, 280-3GZ and 648-JS.

### **(11~15) Jin Empire<sup>(266-420)</sup> and Southern Empires<sup>(420-589)</sup>**

The Jin [晉] Empire [commonly called “the Jin Dynasty”] is counted as the eleventh central regime of China. “Jin [晉<sup>(jìn/tán)</sup>]” is an ethnonym with a concrete etymology that means “advance [進也]” (121-SW: #4182).

Jin was originally a fiefdom granted by the Zhou Empire before 1000 BCE. It was based in north-west central China. In 678 BCE, it became the Jin Dukedom. It had annexed many small states in north-west central China, when it endured as the most powerful feudal state in Zhou Empire from 632 BCE to 532 BCE. In 403 BCE, it was divided into three states by its three ministers. The throne of Jin Dukedom remained until 349 BCE, when it was dissolved. Jin people were fused in the Qin-Han-Chinese consolidation in the Qin Empire<sup>(221-207BCE)</sup> and the Han Empire<sup>(202BCE-220CE)</sup>.

In 263 CE, the marshal of the Wei Empire, who came from the region of the foregone Jin Dukedom, became the prime minister of Wei and was titled the nominal Duke of Jin. He became the nominal King of Jin in 264, then died in 265. In 266, his son, the new prime minister of Han, also the new nominal King of Jin, achieved a peaceful takeover, gained the imperial throne, and renamed the regime Jin. The capital was Luoyang [洛陽]. The official language was Qin-Han-Jin Chinese (Gao 2012).

In 280, the Jin Empire defeated and annexed the local Wu Empire.

In 311, the capital Luoyang and the emperor of Jin were seized by Inner Xiongnu<sup>6</sup> troops, who had proclaimed the revived Han Empire<sup>(308-319)</sup>. In 316, the reset capital ChangAn and new Emperor of Jin were also seized by the revived Han Empire. The remaining powers of the Jin Empire, with a huge population, fled to southern China. The new capital was set in JianKang [建康, ‘build health’] (present-day Nanjing) in 317. A member of the ruling house was named the new Emperor of Jin.

Since the evacuation of the Jin Empire, a chain of empires and a few *de facto* independent kingdoms came into existence in northern China. The Jin Empire did not acknowledge them, and was able to defeat and dissolve some of them. E.g. the

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<sup>6</sup> The Xiongnu Confederation was split in 48 CE, the south partition became a dependency of the Han Empire, and was allowed to live in near north-west and north-west central China. Its regime was dissolved 216. Due to the late arrival, its people (Inner Xiongnu) were not effectively neutralised in the Han-Chinese consolidation.

revived Qin Empire<sup>(352~417)</sup> (see the section of the Qin Empire) and the local Han Empire<sup>(338~347)</sup> in near south-east China.

The Jin Empire held Chinese sovereignty for about 155 years. In this era, Buddhism became the primary faith in China. This is probably the reason why Buddhist neighbouring countries acquired the term “Jin” for China. It is now the widest used exonym for China. “Jin” is etymologically identical to the Lao term 𑌂𑌆𑌃 (*ciin*), the Thai term จีน (*jeen*), the Sanskrit term चीन (*cīna*), the Persian term چین (*čīn*), the Arabic term صين (*šīn*), the Latin term *Sinae*, the French term *Chine*, the English/German/Spanish/Portuguese term *China*, etc.<sup>7</sup>

In 420, the imperial throne of Jin was gained by a general of Jin, the regime was transformed to the **Song** [<sup>5B8B</sup> 宋 (*sòng/tóng*)] **Empire**. In the same way, a general of Song gained the imperial throne and transformed the regime to the **Qi** [<sup>9F4A</sup> 齊 (*qí/tè*)] **Empire** in 478; a general of Qi gained the imperial throne and transformed the regime to the **Liang** [<sup>6881</sup> 梁 (*liáng/lúang*)] **Empire** in 502; a general of Liang gained the imperial throne transformed the regime to the **Chen** [<sup>9673</sup> 陳 (*chén/trán*)] **Empire** in 557. The ruling population, capital, official language, and religious situation of these four regimes remained identical with Jin. These four regimes are called the Southern Empires (also commonly called “Southern Dynasties”), and counted the **12th, 13th, 14th and 15th de jure** central regimes of China.

In 589, the Chen Empire was defeated and annexed by the Sui [<sup>968B</sup> 隋 (*suí/tuý*)] Empire from northern China. The town of JianKang was ruined by Sui.

Later, the ethnonym Jin has been reused as the official ethnonym by the Second Jin Empire<sup>(936~947)</sup>.

At present, Jin is an official toponym for the Shanxi Province. It is also an unofficial toponym for the territory of the original Jin Kingdom which is larger than the Shanxi Province. It is used in the name of the Jin regional lect [晉方言] of the Chinese language.

The studied archaic texts about Jin include 280-3GZ, 488-SS, 510-QS, 636-LS, 636-CS and 648-JS.

### (16) Sui Empire<sup>(581~618)</sup> and its foundation (T1~3)

The Sui [隋] Empire [commonly called “the Sui Dynasty”] is counted as the 16th central regime of China. “Sui [<sup>968B</sup> 隋 (*suí/tuý*)]” was a newly made alternate form of the ethnonym [<sup>96A8</sup> 隨 (*suí/tuý*)] with a concrete etymology that means “obey [从也]” (121-SW: #1101).

The foundation of Sui goes back to (T1) the **Taugas Wei Empire**.

The Taugas Wei Empire was originally the XianBei [鮮卑, non-Sinitic etymology, might be etymologically identical to the ethnonym Sibir/Siberia] ruled Dai [<sup>4EE3</sup> 代 (*dài/dai*)] Kingdom (based in present-day Inner Mongolia) nominally granted by the Jin Empire. After the evacuation of the Jin Empire, a few regimes came into existence in northern China. Most of them were ruled by non-Han-

<sup>7</sup> Western references often mistake the etymological source of this exonym for the ethnonym of Qin [秦]. In fact, the ancient ERF of Qin [秦] could be \*dzien (Guō 1986:237), \*zin (ZhèngZhāng 2003:445) or \*ziem > zien (the present study). See also the section of the Qin Empire.



Chinese nations. XianBei was one of the nations, likely Altaic. In 398, the Dai Kingdom moved its capital to PingCheng [平城, ‘plain town’] (present-day Datong), a Chinese town in north-west central China, and changed its ethnonym to Wei [⁹B4F 魏(wèi/nguy)], which is more prestigious in Chinese. In 399, the [Taugas] Wei Empire [commonly called “the Northern Wei Dynasty”] was declared. {“Taugas (Ταυγάς)” was its international name first attested in the historiography written by the Byzantine historiographer Theophylact Simocatta in ca. 630. Of this exonym, the first morpheme (Ταυ \*/tay/ > /taw/) is etymologically identical to ⁵⁹²⁷ 大(dà/dai), that means ‘great’ in Chinese; the second morpheme (γάς /gas/) is etymologically identical to Wei [⁹B4F 魏(wèi/nguy), cf. *guī* – its ERF in Min Chinese]. The term “Taugas [大魏, ‘Great Wei’]” could be an unofficial endonym of the Taugas Wei Empire.} In 439, it gained sole control of northern China (excluding far north-west China and the eastern part of near north-east China). In 440, the emperor officially converted to Taoism. In 444, the emperor ordered a ban on Buddhism. In 493, the empire moved its capital to Luoyang [洛陽], the former capital of the Jin Empire, changed its national language to Chinese and banned its own language. It was the start of the Taugas-Chinese consolidation. The non-Han-Chinese populations were neutralised by Han-Chinese people in the Taugas Wei Empire.

From 534 to 550, there were simultaneously two emperors of the Wei Empire supported by the western camp of Wei in ChangAn, and the eastern camp of Wei in Ye [鄴, a Sinitic place name] (present-day Linzhang), respectively. The site of *de facto* Chinese sovereignty Luoyang was controlled by the eastern camp.

In 550, the prime minister of the eastern camp of Wei achieved a peaceful takeover, gained the imperial throne and transformed the regime to (T2) the [Taugas] Qi [⁹F4A 齊(qí/tè)] Empire [commonly called “the Northern Qi Dynasty”]. Buddhism was favoured in Taugas Qi.

In 557, the prime minister of the western camp of Wei achieved a peaceful takeover, gained the imperial throne and transformed the regime to (T3) the [Taugas] Zhou [⁵468 周(zhōu/chāu)] Empire [commonly called “the Northern Zhou Dynasty”]. Regulations of the original Zhou Empire<sup>(ca.1050–256BCE)</sup> were restored. In 574, the Emperor of Zhou ordered a ban on both Taoism and Buddhism. Only Confucianism was allowed.

In 577, the Taugas Zhou Empire defeated and annexed the Taugas Qi Empire.

The Taugas Wei Empire, the Taugas Qi Empire and the Taugas Zhou Empire are called the Northern Empires (also commonly called “the Northern Dynasties”). They held *de facto* Chinese sovereignty and claimed the unique Chinese sovereignty in turn. They considered the imperial authorities in southern China as the faked empire of “islanders [島夷]”. {The Southern Empires held *de jure* Chinese sovereignty and defended the unique Chinese sovereignty in turn, they considered the imperial authorities in northern China as the faked empire of “braided robbers [索虜] / Wei robbers [魏虜]”.}

In 581, a general of Zhou, also the nominal Duke of Sui [⁹6A8 隨(suí/tuý)] achieved a peaceful takeover, gained the imperial throne, and renamed the regime Sui [⁹68B

隋<sup>(sui/tuý)</sup>]. A new capital town, termed DaXing [大興, ‘great rise’] (present-day Xi’an), was built near ChangAn. The official language was Sui-Tang-Song Chinese (Gao 2012). Both Taoism and Buddhism were allowed.

In 589, the Sui Empire defeated and annexed the Chen Empire in southern China, thus gained *de jure* Chinese sovereignty.

In 612, the Sui Empire lost the war in the name of recovering the territories of LiaoDong [遼東, ‘east of Liao River’] (the eastern part of near north-east China, occupied by the Goguryeo Kingdom<sup>(37BCE~668CE)</sup> since 404) and northern Korea (occupied by Goguryeo since 313). It caused disorders in Sui. In 618, the imperial throne of Sui was gained by the prime minister of Sui. The regime was transformed to the Tang Empire. The ruling population remained the same.

The studied archaic texts about the Sui Empire and its foundation include 554-WS, 636-QS, 636-ZS, 636-SS and 945-TS.

### **(17~20) Tang Empire<sup>(618-907/936[958])</sup> and Five Dynasties<sup>(907-960)</sup> (+N1)**

The Tang [唐] Empire [commonly called “the Tang Dynasty”] is counted as the 17th central regime of China. “Tang [<sup>5510</sup>唐<sup>(táng/dùóng)</sup>”] is an ethnonym with a concrete etymology that means “brag [大言]” (121-SW: #877).

In 618, the prime minister of the Sui Empire, also the nominal Duke of Tang, achieved a peaceful takeover, gained the imperial throne and renamed the regime Tang. The capital was renamed ChangAn [長安]. The official language was Sui-Tang-Song Chinese (Gao 2012). The official religion was Taoism.

In 630, the Tang Empire defeated and annexed the Eastern Turkic [突厥, non-Sinitic etymology] Khaganate<sup>(583~630)</sup>, thus gained sovereignty over the territory of present-day [Outer] Mongolia for the first time. {Later, the territory was lost in 682, when the revived Turkic Khaganate<sup>(682~745)</sup> was founded.}

In 640, the Tang Empire defeated and annexed the Han-Chinese-ruled GaoChang [高昌, ‘high prosperous’] Kingdom<sup>(460~640)</sup> [it was first granted by the RuRu Khaganate<sup>(402~552)</sup>, became independent when RuRu was supplanted by the Turkic Khaganate<sup>(552~583)</sup>] in far north-west China, thus gradually regaining sovereignty over far north-west China. {Later, by 808, the territory was seized by the Tibetan [吐蕃, non-Sinitic etymology] Empire<sup>(633~877)</sup>.}

In 668, the Tang Empire together with its nominal dependency, the Silla [新羅, non-Sinitic etymology] Kingdom<sup>(57BCE~935CE)</sup> (with Korean sovereignty), defeated and annexed the Goguryeo Kingdom<sup>(37BCE~668CE)</sup> (the succession of its sovereignty is claimed by both China and Korea). The LiaoDong territory was recovered by Tang, while northern Korea was later seized by the Silla Kingdom.

In 690 to 705, the Empress of Tang was the sovereign empress, renaming the regime the [nominal] Zhou [周] Empire, resetting the capital in Luoyang [洛陽], termed ShenDu [神都, ‘god capital’], and holding Buddhism as the official religion.

In 755, a local warlord in near north-east China rebelled. In 756, the rebellious force seized Luoyang and declared the [rebellious] Da-Yan [大燕<sup>(dà-yān/dài-yén)</sup>, ‘great Yan’] Empire. From 756 to 757, the capital of Tang, ChangAn, was once seized by Da-Yan. In 762, Tang troops recovered Luoyang. The rebellion was ended in 763.

After the war against this rebellion, the Tang Empire declined, actual feudalism was restored in order to gain support from local warlords.

From 881 to 883, ChangAn was once seized by a popular revolutionary force, which proclaimed the [revolutionary] Da-Qi [大齊<sup>(dà-qí/dài-tè)</sup>, ‘great Qi’] Empire.

In 904, the capital of Tang was reset to Luoyang.

In 907, a warlord of Tang, also the King of Liang [梁<sup>(liáng/liang)</sup>], achieved a peaceful takeover, gained the imperial throne. The regime was transformed to the [usurped] Liang Empire. The capital was reset to KaiFeng [開封, ‘open feudal’] (present-day Kaifeng) in eastern central China.

The imperial throne of Liang was not acknowledged by many local powers. Outside central China but within China proper, Han-Chinese regional kings or warlords declared five local empires: (1) the [local] Shu [蜀<sup>(shǔ/thục)</sup>] Empire<sup>(907-925;934-965)</sup> in near south-west China; (2) the [local] Yan [燕<sup>(yān/yên)</sup>] Empire<sup>(911-913)</sup> in near north-east China; (3) the [local] Han [漢<sup>(hàn/hán)</sup>] Empire<sup>(918-971)</sup> (at first called the Da-Yue [大越<sup>(dà-yuè/dài-viêt)</sup>, ‘great Yue’] Empire<sup>(917-918)</sup>) in south coastal China; (4) the [local] Wu [吳<sup>(wú/ngô)</sup>] Empire<sup>(927-937)</sup> in near south-east China; (5) the [local] Min [閩<sup>(mín/mân)</sup>] Empire<sup>(933-945)</sup> in south-east coastal China. In addition, a few *de facto* independent kingdoms came into existence.

Meanwhile, outside China proper, non-Han-Chinese powers founded their regimes. E.g. the Khitan [契丹, non-Sinitic etymology] Empire<sup>(916-1218)</sup> in far north-east China; the Da-Li [大理<sup>(dà-lǐ/dài-lǐ)</sup>, ‘great jade-managing’] Kingdom<sup>(937-1253)</sup> in far south-west China.

The Jin [晉<sup>(jìn/tán)</sup>] Kingdom of the Tang Empire in north-west central China led a war against the usurped Liang Empire and other rebellious regimes in the name of the orthodox Tang Empire. It defeated and dissolved the local Yan Empire in 913. The King of Jin was named the new Emperor of Tang in 923. In the same year, it defeated and dissolved the usurped Liang Empire, and then restored the capital in Luoyang. In 924, it defeated and dissolved the local Shu Empire. However, the regional governor left by the Tang Empire proclaimed the revived Shu Empire in 934.

In 936, a warlord of Tang overturned the continued Tang Empire with military aid from the Khitan Empire, and established the **[Second] Jin** [晉<sup>(jìn/tán)</sup>] **Empire**. The capital was reset to Kaifeng. It is counted as the **18th** central regime of China. Jin ceded the original part of the near north-east China [燕雲十六州] (around present-day Beijing) including the population to Khitan. {The middle and eastern parts of near north-east China were seized by Khitan before the war.}

In 937, the prime minister of Wu gained the imperial throne of the local Wu Empire, and transformed the regime to the [local] Qi [齊<sup>(qí/tè)</sup>] Empire. In 939, he was proclaimed a descendant of the ruling house of Tang, and named the new Emperor of Tang. This locally continued Tang Empire was not acknowledged by most people outside it. However, it indeed became a stronger regime. In 945, it defeated and annexed the local Min Empire. In 950, it gained nominal sovereignty over the *de facto* independent Chu Kingdom<sup>(907-951)</sup> in south China.

In 947, the Second Jin Empire was defeated and annexed by the Khitan Empire. Meanwhile, in north-west central China, a warlord of Jin declared the succession of Chinese sovereignty. In the summer, his troops took over the land when Khitan troops retreated from central China because of hot weather and popular resistance. He was claimed a descendant of the ruling house of the original Han Empire<sup>(202BCE-220CE)</sup>. The **[Second] Han** [<sup>6F22</sup> 漢<sup>(hàn/hán)</sup>] **Empire** was established. The capital was confirmed in Kaifeng. It is counted as the **19th** central regime of China.

Before retreating from central China, the Khitan Empire also claimed the succession of Chinese sovereignty. It declared a parallel official name in Chinese, **(N1) the Liao** [<sup>907C</sup> 遼<sup>(liáo/liēu)</sup>], a newly made ethnonym from a hydronym of the major river in near north-east China. The hydronym etymologically means “far [遠也]” (121-SW: #1196) **Empire**, or officially the Da-Liao [大遼<sup>(dà-liáo/dài-liēu)</sup>], ‘great Liao’ Empire. Because some other countries did not follow the Chinese name and might misunderstand that China (Jin) was totally supplanted by Khitan, “Khitan” became an exonym for China. It is etymologically identical to the Mongolian term Хятад (*Khyatad*), the Russian/Ukrainian/Bulgarian term Китаї (*Kitáj*), the English term Cathay, etc. The Chinese sovereignty claim of Khitan achieved Chinese sovereignty over far north-east China for the first time.

In 951, a general of Han, claiming to be a descendant of the ruling house of the original Zhou Empire<sup>(ca.1050-256BCE)</sup>, overturned the Second Han Empire by force, established the **[Second] Zhou** [<sup>5468</sup> 周<sup>(zhōu/chāu)</sup>] **Empire**. The capital was confirmed in Kaifeng. It is counted as the **20th** central regime of China. Meanwhile, the Second Han Empire was locally preserved in north-west central China. A warlord, also the younger brother of the last Emperor of Han was named the new Emperor of Han.

In 958, the Second Zhou Empire defeated and reduced the local Tang Empire to its nominal dependency with a lord instead of an emperor or a king. The Tang Empire was then totally finished.

In 960, a general of Zhou carried out a coup, the Emperor of Zhou immediately surrendered. The general gained the imperial throne. The regime was transformed to the **[Greater] Song** [<sup>5B8B</sup> 宋<sup>(sòng/tóng)</sup>] **Empire**. The ruling population remained the same.

The usurped Liang Empire, the continued Tang Empire, the Second Jin Empire, the Second Han Empire, and the Second Zhou Empire are historically called the Five Dynasties. The ruling populations of the Five Dynasties are the same. The official language was Sui-Tang-Song Chinese (Gao 2012).

The studied archaic texts about the Tang Empire and the Five Dynasties include 636-SS, 945-TS, 963-5DHY and 974-5DS.

### **(21) Greater Song Empire**<sup>(960-1276[1279])</sup> (+N2, N3)

The Greater Song [宋] Empire [commonly called “the Song Dynasty”] is counted as the 21st central regime of China. “Song [<sup>5B8B</sup> 宋<sup>(sòng/tóng)</sup>]” is an ethnonym with a concrete etymology that means “home [居也]” (121-SW: #4598). The attribute ‘greater’ was not officially added.

In 960, a general of the Second Zhou Empire achieved a coup, gained the imperial throne and renamed the regime Song. The capital was Kaifeng. The official language was Sui-Tang-Song Chinese (Gao 2012). The official religions were Taoism and Confucianism.

The Greater Song Empire defeated and annexed the local Shu Empire in near south-west China in 965, the local Han Empire in south coastal China in 971, the local Han Empire in north-west central China in 979. Thus China proper was reunified, although it was unable to regain the control outside China proper.

In 970, a local power declared the Da-Qu-Yue (Dai Co Viet) Empire [大瞿越<sup>(dà-qū-yuè/dài-cò-viêt)</sup>, ‘great Qu Yue’, both Qu and Yue are ethnonyms] in the far south (present-day Vietnam). The imperial troops sent by the Song Empire were defeated in 982. Vietnamese [越南<sup>(yuè-nán/viêt-nam)</sup>, ‘south of Yue’] sovereignty was then settled. Song acknowledged Vietnam as its nominally dependent kingdom<sup>8</sup> much later in 1174.

In 1038, a Tangut [党項, non-Sinitic etymology] (Tibeto-Burman) power declared (N2) the [Tangut] Xia [<sup>590F</sup>夏<sup>(xià/ha)</sup>] Empire in near north-west China. Later, Tangut Xia started and won a war against Song. In 1044, Song acknowledged Tangut Xia as its nominally dependent kingdom.

Although the Greater Song Empire was not good at wars, it excelled in science and technology. E.g. the movable press printing was developed in the Song Empire. Paper books were easier to produce from then onwards. From 1008 to 1066, four official dictionaries of the Chinese language were issued, that formed a peak of Sino-linguistics.

In 1115, a Jurchen [女真, non-Sinitic etymology] (Manchu-Tungus) power founded (N3) the Jin/Kim [<sup>91D1</sup>金<sup>(jīn/kim)</sup>, a newly made ethnonym that means “gold [金寶]” (1008: #9185) in Sui-Tang-Song Chinese] Empire, or officially the Da-Jin/Kim [大金<sup>(dà-jīn/dài-kim)</sup>, ‘great gold’] Empire in far north-east China that was a territory of the Khitan Liao Empire. In 1125, Jin/Kim expelled Khitan Liao from north-east China. Khitan Liao fled to far north-west China.

In 1126, the capital of the Greater Song Empire was seized by the Jin/Kim Empire, the Emperor of Song was captured. In 1127, some of the remaining Song ruling population fled to southern China, a younger brother of the last emperor was named the new emperor. The new capital was set in LinAn [臨安, ‘near peace’] (present-day Hangzhou).

In 1130, the [puppet] Qi [<sup>9F4A</sup>齊<sup>(qí/tè)</sup>] Empire was established in central China under the Jurchen protection. In 1137, it was incorporated to Jin/Kim.

In 1218, the fled Khitan Liao Empire was defeated and annexed by the Mongol Khanate when the last sovereign of Khitan Liao was executed after losing his last battle.

<sup>8</sup> A nominally dependent kingdom can declare top sovereignty in their own language, but it must be spoken as ‘a kingdom granted by the Chinese Empire’ in Chinese. The dependency has a duty to pay tributes to China. China has a duty to protect the dependency from the other countries. Besides, China usually gives more valuable Chinese presents back.

In 1227, the Tangut Xia Empire was defeated and annexed by the Mongol Khanate when the last Emperor of Xia surrendered to Yuan troops.

In 1233, the capital of Song was seized by the Mongol Khanate. In 1234, the last Emperor of Jin committed suicide after losing the last battle against Yuan troops.

In 1276, the capital of Song was seized by the Mongolian-ruled Yuan [元] Empire. In 1279, the last Emperor of Song died in the last battle against Yuan troops.

In 1355, a popular revolutionary force called the Red Turban Army [紅巾軍] proclaimed the restoration of the Greater Song Empire. The revolution lasted 10 years, and was then reformed as the Ming Empire.

The studied archaic texts about the Greater Song Empire include 974-5DS, 1346-SS and 1370-YS.

### **(22) Yuan Empire<sup>(1271~1368[1402])</sup> and its foundation**

The Yuan [元] Empire [commonly called “the Yuan Dynasty”] or officially the Da-Yuan [大元] Empire is counted as the 22nd central regime of China. “Da- [⁵⁹²⁷ 大(dà/dai)]” is an attribute that means ‘great’. “Yuan [⁵¹⁴³ 元(yuán/nguyén)]” was a newly made ethnonym from an etymon that means “the first [始也]” (121-SW: #2).

During the war between Khitan Liao and Jin/Kim, in 1120, the first Mongol Khanate was founded. In 1148, after a war against the Jin/Kim troops, the Mongol Kingdom was granted a nominal dependency of the Jin/Kim Empire. In 1206, the Mongol Khanate declared total independence. This regime with less than one million people became powerful for uncertain reasons. It defeated and annexed, in turn, the Khitan Liao Empire in 1218, the Tangut Xia Empire in 1227, the Jin/Kim Empire in 1234, the Da-Li Kingdom in 1253.

In 1263, the Mongol Khanate moved its capital from Mongolia to a Chinese town KaiPing [開平, ‘open plain’] (present-day Zhenglanqi in Inner Mongolia), termed ShangDu [上都, ‘upper capital’].

In 1264, the Mongol Khanate gained the sovereignty over Tibetan states. In return, Mongolian rulers converted to Tibetan Buddhism. Later, the Chinese sovereignty claim of the Mongol Khanate achieved Chinese sovereignty over Tibet for the first time.

In 1267, the Mongol Khanate moved its capital to ZhongDu [中都, ‘central capital’] (termed DaDu [大都, ‘great capital’] in 1272, present-day Beijing). In 1271, the khan of the Mongol Khanate changed his title to emperor in Chinese [皇帝], and renamed the regime the Yuan Empire, in order to gain Chinese sovereignty. The new names effectively helped the regime to gain support from many Han-Chinese people. The official languages were Mongolian and Yuan Chinese. Yuan Chinese was based on the capital dialect brought from the KaiPing dialect of the Jin regional lect [晉方言] of the Chinese language.

In 1276, Yuan seized the capital of Song. In 1279, Yuan gained sole control of Chinese sovereignty when the last Song emperor died in the last battle against Yuan troops.

From 1351, the Yuan Empire was disrupted by a popular revolutionary force called the Red Turban Army [紅巾軍]. In 1386, the capital of Yuan was seized by the Ming Empire, which was founded by a branch of the Red Turban Army. The Emperor of Yuan with the ruling population retreated to Mongolia. In 1402, the retreated Yuan Empire was supplanted by the Tatar Empire of Mongolia.

The studied archaic texts about the Yuan Empire include 1364-SS, 1370-YS and 1399~1644-MSL.

### **(23) Ming Empire<sup>(1368~1644|1662)</sup>**

The Ming [明] Empire [commonly called “the Ming Dynasty”] or officially the Da-Ming [大明] Empire is counted as the 23rd central regime of China. “Da- [5927 大(dà/dai)]” is an attribute that means ‘great’. “Ming [660E 明(míng/mín)]” was a newly made ethnonym from an etymon that means ‘bright’, and also the name of Manichaeism in China. Manichaeism played an important role in the Red Turban Army against the Yuan Empire.

In 1368, the Ming Empire was founded in YingTian [應天, ‘according to sky’] (present-day Nanjing) by a branch of the Red Turban Army. In the same year, it seized the capital of Yuan. In 1381, it defeated the Yuan troops in far south-west China, thus gained sole control of Chinese sovereignty (excluding Mongolia). The official language was Ming Mandarin Chinese. It was based on the YingTian (Nanjing) dialect of the Yang regional lect [揚州方言=上江話] of the Chinese language. Despite the name of the regime, the Ming Empire quit Manichaeism but chose Confucianism as the primary belief.

In 1421, the capital of Ming was reset to ShunTian [順天, ‘go along with sky’] (present-day Beijing), termed BeiJing [北京, ‘north capital’], while YingTian was termed NanJing [南京, ‘south capital’]. In 1423, the capital was reset to Nanjing, but Beijing remained as the imperial residence and the seat of the central government. In 1441, the capital was reset to Beijing.

The Ming Mandarin Chinese language was brought to Beijing, and fused with the Yuan Chinese language there.

In 1644, Beijing was seized by a popular revolutionary force from western China. The Emperor of Ming committed suicide. The regime fell into chaos. A member of the ruling house of Ming was named the new Emperor of Ming in Nanjing. In 1645, Nanjing was seized by the Qing Empire. In 1662, the last Emperor of Ming was executed by a Qing general.

The studied archaic texts about the Ming Empire include 1370-YS and 1399~1644-MSL.

### **(24) Qing Empire<sup>(1636~1912)</sup> and its foundation**

The Qing [大清] Empire [commonly called “the Qing Dynasty”] or officially the Da-Qing [大清] Empire (was written as “the Ta-Tsing Empire” by the West) is counted as the 24th central regime of China. “Da- [5927 大(dà/dai)]” is an attribute that means ‘great’. “Qing [660E 清(míng/mín)]” was a newly made ethnonym from an etymon that means ‘clear’.

In 1616, another branch of Jurchen (renamed Manchu in 1636) people founded the revived Jin/Kim [91D1 金(jīn/kim)] Khanate in Hetu-ala [赫圖阿拉, non-Sinitic

etymology] (present-day Xinbin). In 1621, this khanate seized major Han-Chinese towns in near north-east China, and moved its capital to LiaoYang [遼陽, ‘warm-side of Liao River’] (present-day Liaoyang). In 1625, the capital was changed to ShenYang [瀋陽, ‘warm-side of Shen River’] (Mukden, present-day Shenyang). In 1635, the Mongolian khan surrendered to the Manchu khan and yielded the imperial seal of the Yuan Empire. In 1636, the Manchu khan changed his title to emperor in Chinese [皇帝] and renamed his country the Qing Empire, in order to gain Chinese sovereignty. The new names effectively helped the regime to gain support from many Han-Chinese people. The official languages were Manchu and Qing Mandarin Chinese. Qing Mandarin Chinese was based on the Shenyang dialect of the Yan regional lect [燕方言] of the Chinese language.

In 1644, during the chaos of the Ming Empire, the Qing Empire seized Beijing and moved its capital there. Later, Qing troops also seized all the other Ming territories in China proper. In 1683, the last Ming troops in Taiwan surrendered to the Qing Empire.

The Qing Mandarin Chinese language was brought to Beijing, and fused with the Ming Mandarin Chinese language there.

In 1720, the Qing Empire expelled the troops of the Zunghar Khanate out of Tibet, thus gained sovereignty over Tibet. In 1757, the Qing Empire defeated and annexed the Zunghar Khanate, thus gained sovereignty over far north-west China (West Region). By then, the Qing Empire actually ruled the whole Chinese sovereignty (including Mongolia).

In 1842, after losing the First Opium War, the Qing Empire ceded Hong Kong Island [香港島, ‘fragrant harbour island’] to the British Empire in perpetuity. In 1860, after losing the Second Opium War, the Qing Empire ceded Kowloon [九龍, ‘nine dragons’] to the British Empire in perpetuity {later, in 1898, a territory around Hong Kong Island and Kowloon, termed New Territories [新界], was leased to the British Empire for 99 years}, and Outer Manchuria (ca. 1,000,000 square kilometres) to the Russian Empire in perpetuity.

In 1864, the Qing Empire ceded Outer West Region (ca. 440,000 square kilometres) to the Russian Empire in perpetuity.

In 1885, after losing the Sino-French war, the Qing Empire ended its nominal sovereignty over Vietnam and Laos.

In 1887, the perpetual occupation of Macau (Aomen [澳門, ‘gate of bay’]) was yielded to the Portuguese Empire. {Portugal had used the region under Chinese supervision since 1557.}

In 1895, after losing the Sino-Japanese war, the Qing Empire ended its nominal sovereignty over Korea, and ceded Taiwan to Japan in perpetuity.

In 1912, the Qing Empire fell in the Chinese Revolution.

The studied archaic texts about the Qing Empire include 1399~1644-MSL and 1635~1912-QSL.

### **(25) Republic of China**<sup>(1912~1949[-\*])</sup>

The Republic of China (natively called “the civic regime of central Hua [中華民國]”) is counted as the 25th central regime of China. “Hua [<sup>83EF</sup> 華(huá/hoá)]”



is an ethnonym with a concrete etymology that means “flowery [榮也]” (121-SW: #3866). It is also the name of a mountain in western central China. It is a valid endonym of Han-Chinese people. This usage has been encouraged by the Republic of China. It is now much less popular in mainland China.

In January 1912, a Chinese power led by the Chinese Alliance [中國同盟會] (political party) founded the Republic of China (ROC) in Nanjing. In March 1912, its capital was moved to Beijing, after the abdication of the last Qing emperor. The last prime minister of Qing, who made Qing to surrender, was named the President of ROC. In August 1912, the Chinese Alliance was transformed to the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) [中國國民黨]. After some political conflicts between KMT and the president, KMT was banned in November 1913.

In December 1915, the President of ROC was named the Emperor of China. Later, under oppositions from local powers, he abdicated in March 1916, and then died of depression in June 1916. China fell into chaos after this incident.

In June 1917, the last Emperor of Qing was restored for 12 days.

In November 1924, Mongolia declared independence from China.

In July 1925, a restored KMT power established a new central government of ROC in Guangzhou. It declared war against the central government of ROC in Beijing. In November 1926, the headquarters was moved to Wuhan. In April 1927, another KMT government of ROC was established in Nanjing. In September 1927, the KMT government in Wuhan was incorporated into the KMT government in Nanjing. In June 1928, the troops of the KMT government defeated the troops of the *de jure* central government, and seized Beijing. The head of state of the *de jure* ROC retreated to Shenyang but was assassinated by Japanese powers. In December 1928, the remaining power of the *de jure* central government in Shenyang surrendered to the KMT government. The surrender was signified by accepting the new flag of the KMT government. The KMT government was then internationally acknowledged as *de jure* ROC.

In August 1927, the Communist Party of China [中國共產黨] (CPC) led the first armed conflict against the KMT government of ROC in Nanchang in south-east China. In November 1937, the Soviet Republic of China [中華蘇維埃共和國] was founded in Ruijin in south-east China. It was defeated by ROC in October 1934. The remaining CPC power fled to near north-west China, and reformed the regime to the Soviet People’s Republic of China (SPRC) [中華蘇維埃人民共和國] in December 1935.

In September 1931, Shenyang was seized by the Imperial Japanese Army. ROC abandoned north-east China without defence. The [puppet] State of Manchuria [滿洲國] was established in 1932 in north-east China under the Japanese protection. It was transformed to the [puppet] Empire of Manchuria [滿洲帝國] in March 1934.

In December 1936, peace between ROC and SPRC was made, Chinese powers joined to protect China from Japanese troops. SPRC was as incorporated into ROC in September 1937.

In July 1937, Beijing was attacked and seized by Japanese troops. In return, in August 1937, ROC attacked the Japanese concession in Shanghai. In November 1937, ROC fatally lost the battle, the central government fled to the wartime capital Chongqing. In December 1937, Nanjing was seized by the Japanese troops. In March 1938, the puppet Republic of China was established in Nanjing under the Japanese protection.

After surrender of Japan in the Second World War in August 1945, ROC took over the puppet Republic of China, the puppet Empire of Manchuria, and Taiwan.

In April 1949, Nanjing was seized by the People's Liberation Army of CPC. Also the wartime capitals were lost in the same year. In December 1949, the central government of ROC with some ruling population fled to Taiwan.

The existence of the Republic of China after 1949 is not acknowledged by the People's Republic of China. The replacement of Chinese sovereignty has been supported by the United Nations since 1971.

### **(26) People's Republic of China<sup>(1949~)</sup>**

The People's Republic of China (natively called "the people's common regime of central Hua [中華人民共和國]") is counted as the 26th central regime of China.

After winning the major campaigns of the Chinese Civil War, in October 1949, a Chinese power led by the Communist Party of China (CPC) founded the People's Republic of China (PRC) in Beijing.

In October 1971, the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 "*recognized the People's Republic of China as the only legitimate representative of China to the United Nations and expelled the representatives of Chiang Kai-shek [the president of ROC] from the place which they unlawfully occupy at the United Nations.*"

In January 1979, the People's Republic of China and the United States of America established formal diplomatic relations, meanwhile PRC "ceased fires on the unliberated coastal islands" which are controlled by the authority in Taiwan.

In July 1997, the sovereignty over Hong Kong Island and Kowloon was transferred from the United Kingdom to PRC, while the region of New Territories was returned to PRC as a successor of the Qing Empire. The Hong Kong SAR (Special Administrative Region) was granted autonomy.

In December 1999, Macau was returned to PRC as a successor of the Qing Empire. The Macau SAR was granted autonomy.

### *3.2 Methods*

Conventional philological methods are used in collecting and analysing data.

A researcher must first choose some relevant philological texts and chapters through his/her philological experience, then go through the content manually, understand the paragraphs through his/her language knowledge, pick out key paragraphs, analyse and present them in readable texts in the language of the research paper.

If the topic is linguistic, it is more important to distinguish layers and dates. If the topic is historical, correctness is more important. The present topic is historical rather than linguistic.

A result can be established, if the relevant historical records are definite and consistent. It would be better if some contemporary texts of that time by different authorities (enemy side or foreign country) confirmed the result in different ways. If the historical records regarding the topic are definite but not consistent, the different contents and sources should be analysed, then at least a result of a kind can be established. If the historical records regarding it are not definite, further evidences should be gathered and discussed. If there is neither historical record nor clue regarding the topic, no result can be established.

In the present study, results on the historical official colours are studied in the above mentioned way with references. Old texts are preferred. Results on contemporary official colours are simply given according to the facts that many others also know.

If there are previous studies on the same topic, their used materials should be extended if possible, their methods should be improved if applicable, their results should be compared if necessary. If previous results are identical to the current results, the previous results should be acknowledged. If all the results are the same, the current study cannot publish a new research paper but a review at most. If the current results are different from the previous results, it is necessary to contradict the previous results with relevant evidences, and ideally, also with some analysis on how the previous studies were mistaken.

Chinese years have been converted to international years using the reference book (Xú 1992 [2008]).

#### 4. Results and discussion

##### (1\*) PaoXi Empire<sup>(ca.60000~ca.3000BCE)</sup>

The archaic text 0-LIJMZ stated that NüWa [女媧] [Empress of PaoXi, the second sovereign monarch) had the white<sup>1a</sup> official colour.

《禮稽命徵》女媧以十二月為正 尚白 伏羲以上未有聞焉

On the historical issue: Although it is the only reference without further literary evidence, I think it is true. PaoXi people might be the first developed hunter-gatherer people with livestock resided in the Far East. Milk was the most important sustenance for these people, therefore the colour of milk, white<sup>1a</sup>, was preferred by these people.

On **white<sup>1a</sup>**: Although the colour term <sup>767D</sup> 白 (bái/bach) denotes the white colour in Mandarin, it does not necessarily denote the same in all varieties of the Chinese language. In this text, it is interpreted as white-yellow, because some other evidence (see the next sections until the XuanYuan Empire) support that there should be only three colour categories in this era: 1) macro-white, 2) macro-black, and 3) macro-red, while the yellow colour was not an independent category, but covered by all the three primitive colour categories. There is literary evidence on

black-yellow and red-yellow, therefore white-yellow is also suggested for a better balance. Theoretically, there is another possibility, i.e. the white category was simple, while the yellow colour was only covered by the macro-black and macro-red categories. I think it is not very likely, because the colour of milk is more or less white-yellow.

The etymology of this colour term is also related to milk.

The etymon <sup>767D</sup> 白 (bái/bach) – (AP) 𠄎; (OP) 𠄎; (PP) 𠄎: Its Archaeological Prototype (AP) was written in the oracle bone inscription dating to ca. 1300 BCE. Its Orthographical Prototype (OP) was given in 121-SW. Its Philological Prototype (PP<sup>9</sup>) was quoted in 121-SW. The AP form and OP form are fundamentally identical. On its concrete etymology, 121-SW stated it as ‘A3 (ideogrammic compound) of “入+二” [从入合二]’; contemporary scholars have made different suggestions, such as ‘A2 (ideogram) of rising sun’, ‘A1 (pictogram) of face’, ‘A1 of thumb’, and ‘A1 of candle with halo’ (see a summary by 2002-GL: 7.217–225); I think it should be **A3 of the action of milking**: to milk from a breast, comparable to 121-SW but not any of the contemporary suggestions. On its abstract etymology, its ancient ERF should be \*beāk (Guō 1986:127), \*braag (ZhèngZhāng 2003:268) or \*bāga-L ‘white’ ~ \*mbāga-L ‘milk’ (the present study). Its etymological equivalents include: Danish *bleg* ‘pale’, *mælk* ‘milk’; Swedish *blek* ‘pale’, *mjölk* ‘milk’; Icelandic *bleikur* ‘pale’, *mjólk* ‘milk’; Old Norse *bleikr* ‘pale’, *mjólk* ‘milk’; Old English *blāc* ‘pale’, *meolc* ‘milk’; English bleach, milk; Old Low German *blēk* ‘pale’, *miluk* ‘milk’; Dutch *bleek* ‘pale’, *melk* ‘milk’; Old High German *bleh* ‘pale’, *miluh* ‘milk’; German *bleich* ‘pale’, *Milch* ‘milk’; Gothic *miluks* ‘milk’ {liquid metathesis in Germanic ‘pale’: \*bāga-L > \*blāga}; Estonian *valge* ‘white’; Finnish *valkea* ‘white’; Cheremis *walyâdâ/wolyâdâ* ‘bright, clear’ {fricativisation in Finnic: b > v}; Latvian *bāls* ‘pale’, *balts* ‘white’; Lithuanian *baltas* ‘white’, *mélžti* ‘to milk’ {coronal assimilation in Baltic: lk > lt / lts}; Old Church Slavic бѣль (bělŭ) ‘white’, млѣко (mlěko) ‘milk’; Polish *biały* ‘white’, *mleko* ‘milk’; Russian бѣлый (bélŭj) ‘white’, молоко (moloko) ‘milk’; Bulgarian бял (bjal) ‘white’, мляко (mjako) ‘milk’ {consonant apocope in Slavic ‘white’: lg > l0; pleophony in East Slavic ‘milk’: \*mbāga-L > \*mbāloga}; Old Irish *mlicht/bleicht* ‘milk’; Irish *bleacht* ‘milk yield’; Welsh *blith* ‘milch’ {liquid metathesis in Celtic: \*bāga-L > \*blāga}; Latin *mulgē* ‘milk!’, Ancient Greek ἀμέλω (amelō) ‘I milk’; Greek ἀρμέγω (armégo) ‘I milk’; Tocharian A *malke* ‘milk’; Tocharian B *malkwer* ‘milk’. [The etymological links within Sinitic were first made by Sino-etymologists; the etymological links within Indo-European were first made by Western etymologists; the etymological link among Sinitic 767D, Finnic (valge/...) ‘white’ and Germanic (bleg/...) ‘pale’ was first made by Gāo (2008:130); the extension to Germanic (mælk/...) ‘milk’ is first made in the present study.]

<sup>9</sup> Many contemporary scholars consider that AP forms discovered since the 20th century must be more prototypical than the PP forms. However, I follow the classical Sino-linguists, consider PP forms could preserve the most ancient prototypes, although those forms have not been discovered from more ancient archaeological layers.

In conclusion, the official colour of the PaoXi Empire was **white-yellow**.

**(2\*) ShenNong Empire**<sup>(ca.3000-ca.2500)</sup>

The archaic text 0-LIJMZ stated that ShenNong had the red<sup>1a</sup> official colour.

《禮稽命徵》神農以十一月為正 尚赤

Besides, the name of the emperor of ShenNong, ‘Fire Emperor’ [炎帝], is an additional clue for the official colour. Fire can be both red and yellow.

On the historical issue: Although it is the only reference without further literary evidence, I think it is true. ShenNong people were likely the first agricultural people residing in the Far East. The sun and fire were most important for primitive agriculture, therefore the red<sup>1a</sup> colour of sun and fire, red-yellow, was preferred by these people.

On **red<sup>1a</sup>**: Although the colour term <sup>8D64</sup>赤(chi/xích) denotes the red colour in Mandarin, it does not necessarily denote the same in all varieties of the Chinese language. If it denoted just red, it is weird, that the agricultural ShenNong people had preferred red, but not yellow that could represent autumn harvests. I have found that this colour term could denote both red and yellow in this era. According to Kay and McDaniel (1978), a composite colour category red-yellow is possible and has been attested in human languages.

In conclusion, the official colour of the ShenNong Empire was **red-yellow**.

**(3\*) XuanYuan Empire**<sup>(ca2500-ca2000BCE)</sup>

The archaic text 0-LIJMZ stated that XuanYuan had diachronically the black<sup>1a</sup> official colour, the white<sup>1a</sup> official colour and the red<sup>1a</sup> official colour in shift.

《禮稽命徵》舜以十一月為正 尚赤 堯以十二月為正 尚白 高辛以十二月為正 尚黑 高陽氏以十一月為正 尚赤 少昊以十二月為正 尚白 黃帝以十二月為正 尚黑

The archaic text 0-SUZH stated the same nation as above.

《尚書中候》高陽氏尚赤 以十一月為正 薦玉以赤纒 高辛氏尚黑 以十二月為正 薦玉以黑纒 陶唐氏尚白 以十二月為正 薦玉以白纒 有虞氏尚赤 以十一月為正

However, the archaic text -239-LL stated that the yellow official colour was used by the Yellow Emperor.

《呂覽·應同》黃帝之時 天先見大蟪大螻 黃帝曰土氣勝 土氣勝 故其色尚黃 其事則土

The archaic text -139-HN stated that the yellow official colour was used by the Emperor Shun.

《淮南子·齊俗訓》有虞氏之祀 其社用土 祀中溜 葬成畝 其樂咸池 承雲九韶 其服尚黃

The archaic text 241-DW stated that same notion as above.

《帝王世紀》舜年八十一以仲冬甲子月次于畢始即真改正朔以土承火色尚黃

On **black<sup>1a</sup>**: There are two different notions on the official colour of the Yellow Emperor. The earlier texts stated “black<sup>1a</sup> [<sup>6506</sup>黑(hēi/hác)]”, while the later texts stated “yellow [<sup>9EC3</sup>黃(huáng/hoàng)]”. Previously, one of the notions could be discredited. (Mostly, black was discredited because of the name of the Yellow

Emperor.) I think both notions can be correct. The colour term black<sup>1a</sup> [<sup>6506</sup> 黑 (hēi/hǎc)] could denote both black and yellow at an earlier stage. According to Kay *et al.* (1991), the composite colour category, black-grue-yellow, is theoretically possible. Then, the colour term <sup>6506</sup> 黑 (hēi/hǎc) should denote synchronically black, grue and yellow. Indeed, no colour term for grue (green/blue) has been attested in the oracle bone inscriptions, thus the same sense might be also covered by the colour term <sup>6506</sup> 黑 (hēi/hǎc).

Additionally, I suggest that the etymon <sup>6506</sup> 黑 (hēi/hǎc) for black and the etymon <sup>9EC3</sup> 黃 (huáng/hoàng) for yellow might have the same further etymology. They are phonologically similar, and graphically similar in the oracle bone inscriptions (OBI). Cf.

<sup>6506</sup> 黑 (hēi/hǎc) ; in OBI  ; <sup>9EC3</sup> 黃 (huáng/hoàng) ; in OBI .

In fact, already Guō (1937:786) did not decipher them into two separate lexemes. However, it has been considered a mistake, since Yú (1979:227–230) separated them. I think the correlation of Guō can represent the confusion of the terms in that era. The yellow colour category and the separated colour term for yellow probably emerged during the Shang Empire<sup>(ca.1600–ca.1050BCE)</sup>.

Consequently, the black<sup>1a</sup> colour should actually denote ‘black including yellow and grue’. It can be read as the first literary attestation of the composite colour category black-grue-yellow.

The historical facts in the texts -139-HN and 241-DW are accurate. They only spoke about the last emperor of XuanYuan, the Emperor Shun, because the histories of the earlier emperors were not certain. [The stories in the first historiography of China (0-SU) start from the same time.]

Then there are two different notions on the official colour of the Emperor Shun. The earlier texts stated “red<sup>1a</sup> [<sup>8D64</sup> 赤 (chì/xích)]”, while the later texts stated “yellow [<sup>9EC3</sup> 黃 (huáng/hoàng)]”. Previously, one of the notions was discredited. I think both notions can be correct. I already discussed that the etymon <sup>8D64</sup> 赤 (chì/xích) in the language of the cited texts from 0-LIJMZ could denote red-yellow (see the previous section).

It should be clarified that the yellow colour is included in both black<sup>1a</sup> (black-grue-yellow) [<sup>6506</sup> 黑 (hēi/hǎc)] and red<sup>1a</sup> (red-yellow) [<sup>8D64</sup> 赤 (chì/xích)] in the language of the cited texts from 0-LIJMZ and 0-SUZH. The boundary of them is uncertain. There are most likely just three colour terms in the language, the third one is white<sup>1a</sup> (white-yellow) [<sup>767D</sup> 白 (bái/bàch)].

In conclusion, the official colour of the XuanYuan Empire depended on the elected emperor. The official colours were **the three primitive colours**: black-grue-yellow, white-yellow and red-yellow (diachronically used in shift). [The previous study (801-TD) stated imprecisely ‘black, white and red’, because the theory of composite colour categories was not applied.]

Black-grue-yellow was the new official colour acquired by Chinese sovereignty in this era. XuanYang people might be the first mobile herders resided in the Far

East. Water bodies were most important for primitive husbandry, therefore the colour of water bodies, black-grue-yellow, was preferred by these people.

**(4) Xia Empire**<sup>(ca.2000~ca.1600BCE)</sup>

The archaic text 0-LI stated that Xia had the black<sup>1b</sup> official colour.

《禮·檀弓上》夏后氏尚黑 大事斂用昏 戎事乘驪 牲用玄

The archaic text 0-SUDZ stated the same notion.

《尚書大傳》夏以十三月為正 色尚黑 以平旦為朔

The archaic text -239-LL stated that Xia had the grue official colour.

《呂覽·應同》及禹之時 天先見草木秋冬不殺 禹曰木氣勝 木氣勝 故其色尚青 其事則木

The archaic text -139-HN stated the same notion.

《淮南子·齊俗訓》夏后氏 其社用松 祀戶 葬牆置嬰 其樂夏鑰 九成 六佾 六列 六英 其服尚青

On **black<sup>1b</sup>**: There are two different notions on the official colour of the Xia Empire. The earlier texts stated “black<sup>1b</sup> [6506 黑(hēi/hǎc)]”, while the later texts stated “grue [9751 青(qīng/thanh)]”. Previously, one of the notions was discredited. I think both can be correct. The colour term black<sup>1b</sup> [6506 黑(hēi/hǎc)] could denote both black and grue at an earlier stage. According to Kay and McDaniel (1978), a composite colour category black-grue is possible and has been attested in human languages.

In conclusion, the official colour of the Xia Empire was **black-grue**. [The previous studies (801-TD, 1370) stated imprecisely black and the previous study (2008-ZH5S) stated imprecisely grue, because the theory of composite colour categories was not applied.]

**(5) Shang Empire**<sup>(ca.2000~1050BCE)</sup>

The archaic text 0-LI stated that Shang had the white official colour.

《禮·檀弓上》殷人尚白 大事斂用日中 戎事乘翰 牲用白

The archaic text -239-LL stated the same notion.

《呂覽·應同》及湯之時 天先見金刃生於水 湯曰金氣勝 金氣勝 故其色尚白 其事則金

The archaic text -91-SJ cited some previous text which stated the same notion.

《史記·殷本紀》孔子曰 殷路車為善 而色尚白

In conclusion, the national colour of the Shang Empire was **white**. [The three previous studies (801-TD, 1399-MSL, 2008-ZH5S) stated the same.]

**(6) Zhou Empire**<sup>(cs.1050~256BCE)</sup>

The archaic text 0-LI stated that Zhou had the red official colour, the sovereign flag was red, the army flag was white.

《禮·檀弓上》周人尚赤 大事斂用日出 戎事乘駟 牲用騂

《禮·春官宗伯》建太赤以朝 建太白以即戒

The archaic text -239-LL stated the same notion.

《呂覽·應同》及文王之時 天先見火 赤烏銜丹書集於周社 文王曰火氣勝 火氣勝 故其色尚赤 其事則火

The red notion has been acknowledged by most people to date. A contemporary historian Hú (2005) contradicted the notion. He argued that the colour of sovereign flag of Zhou was red, but the colour of formal dress of Zhou was rather black than

red. He claimed the official colour was not set in the Zhou Empire, the protocol of the official colour only started in the Qin Empire. I think there is a possibility: An official colour does not necessarily apply to both the sovereign flag and the formal dress, as in the Qin Empire. The termed official colours [尚色] before Qin Empire could be only *de facto*, but still reflected the actual national colours of the ruling populations.

In conclusion, the official colour of the Zhou Empire was **red**. [The three previous studies (801-TD, 1399-MSL, 2008-ZH5S) stated the same.] The red official colour was represented by its sovereign flag, but its formal dress was mainly black, while its army flag was white.

#### (7) Qin Empire<sup>(221-207BCE)</sup>

The archaic text -239-LL stated that Qin had the black official colour.

《呂覽·應同》代火者必將水 天且先見水氣勝 水氣勝 故其色尚黑 其事則水

The archaic text -91-SL stated Qin had the black official colour, applied to all formal dresses and flags

《史記·秦始皇本紀》始皇推終始五德之傳 以為周得火德 秦代周德 從所不勝 方今水德之始 改年始 朝賀皆自十月朔 衣服旄旌節旗皆上黑

In conclusion, the official colour of the Qin Empire was **black**. [The three previous studies (801-TD, 1399-MSL, 2008-ZH5S) stated the same.]

#### (8) Chu Empire<sup>(207-202BCE)</sup>

There is no historical record regarding the official colour of the Chu Empire. According to historical facts and archaeological findings, contemporary scholars concluded that the official colour of the Chu regimes (including the Chu Empire) was **red**. (e.g. Zhāng 1987:105) The result is accepted in the present study.

#### (9) Han Empire<sup>(202BCE-220[263]CE)</sup>

The archaic text -91-SJ stated that Han retained the same official colour as Qin [black].

《史記·歷書》漢興 高祖曰北時待我而起 亦自以為獲水德之瑞 雖明習歷 及張蒼等 咸以為然 是時天下初定 方綱紀大基 高后女主 皆未遑 故襲秦正朔服色

The archaic text 92-HS stated that Han changed the official colour to yellow in 104 BCE.

《漢書·武帝紀》太初元年 [...] 夏五月 正曆 以正月為歲首 色上黃

The archaic text 92-HS stated that the usurped Xin Empire<sup>(9-23)</sup> within Han had the official yellow colour, its sovereign flag had both banner and fringes in yellow.

《漢書·王莽傳上》服色配德上黃 [...] 使節之旄旛皆純黃

The archaic text 28-220-HJ stated that the Han Empire reset protocols in 26 CE, the official colour of dresses was changed to black, the official colour of flag was changed to red.

《[東觀]漢記·世祖光武皇帝》二年 [...] 行夏之時 時以平旦 服色犧牲尚黑 明火德之運 徽熾尚赤 四時隨色 季夏黃色

The archaic text 445-HHS stated that the Han Empire had the red official colour.



《後漢書·光武帝紀上》始正火德 色尚赤

In conclusion, the official colour of the Han Empire was **black** in the earlier phase (202~104 BCE), **yellow** in the middle phase (104BCE~26CE), and **red** in the later phase (26~220 CE). [The previous study (801-TD) stated the same. The previous study (1399-MSL) stated imprecisely only red, probably because it was a brief report for one representative official colour for each previous regime. The previous study (2008-ZH5S) stated imprecisely only yellow and red, probably because of the absence of accurate references.] In the later phase, the red official colour was represented by its sovereign flag, but its formal dress was mainly black.

#### (10) Wei Empire<sup>(220-266)</sup>

The archaic text 488-SS stated that the Wei Empire had the yellow official colour applied to formal dress, its imperial flag had yellow banner and red fringes.

《宋書·禮一》黃初元年詔曰 [...] 自當隨土德之數 每四時之季月 服黃十八日 臘以醜丑 牲用白 其飾節旄自當赤但節幡黃耳

In conclusion, the official colour of the Wei Empire was **yellow**. [The three previous studies (801-TD, 1399-MSL, 2008-ZH5S) stated the same.]

#### (11~15) Jin Empire<sup>(266-420)</sup> and Southern Empires<sup>(420-589)</sup>

The archaic text 488-SS stated that the Jin Empire had the red official colour, the Song Empire retained the same.

《宋書·禮一》今大晉繼三皇之蹤 踵舜 禹之跡 應天從民 受禪有魏 宜一用前代正朔服色 皆如有虞遵唐故事 於義為弘 奏可 孫盛曰 仍舊 非也 且晉為金行 服色尚赤 考之天道 其違甚矣 及宋受禪 亦如魏晉故事

The archaic text and also the previous study (801-TD) stated that the Qi Empire, the Liang Empire and the Chen Empire also retained the same.

《通典·卷第五十五》齊木德 餘一依前代 梁火德 餘一依前代 陳木德 餘一依前代

In conclusion, the official colour of the Jin Empire and its subsequent Southern Empires was **red**. I would suggest a reason for the irregular retaining: The subsequent regimes of Jin in southern China had to defend their *de jure* Chinese sovereignty with the official colour of Jin. It is easier to preserve the colour than the land and population of central China. [The previous study (2008-ZH5S) stated incorrectly “the official colour of Jin was white; Song, black; Qi, green; Liang, red; Chen, yellow [晋朝尚白 宋黑齐青梁赤陈黄]”, probably because it was misunderstood that the official colour ought to be associated with the official virtues and the fifth property of the regime, and the archaic texts were not fully understood.]

#### (16) Sui Empire<sup>(581-618)</sup> and its foundation (T1~3)

##### (T1) Taugas Wei Empire<sup>(399-550/557)</sup>

The archaic text 554-WS stated that the official colour of the Taugas Wei Empire was set to yellow in 399, but in 491 changed to black which was the actual custom of the ruling nation before declaring the empire.

《魏書·禮志四之一》天興元年 定都平城 即皇帝位 [...] 於是始從土德 數用五 服尚黃 犧牲用白 [...] 自有晉傾淪 暨登國肇號 亦幾六十餘載

物色旗幟 率多從黑 [...] 十五年正月 [...] 今欲從彪等所議 宜承晉為水德 詔曰 越近承遠 情所未安 然考次推時 頗亦難繼 朝賢所議 豈朕能有違奪 便可依為水德 祖申臘辰

The archaic text 510-QS stated that the flag of the Taugas Wei Empire was black.

《[南]齊書·魏虜》輶車建龍旗 尚黑

In conclusion, the official colour of the Taugas Wei Empire was **yellow** in the earlier phase (399~491), and **black** in the later phase (491~550/557). [The previous study (801-TD) stated the same.] In addition, the national colour of the ruling nation of the empire was **black**.

### (T2) Taugas Qi Empire<sup>(550-577)</sup>

The archaic text and also the previous study (801-TD) stated that the Taugas Qi Empire retained the same official colour as the Taugas Wei Empire.

《通典·卷第五十五》北齊木德 正朔服色 皆如後魏

In conclusion, the official colour of the Taugas Qi Empire was **black**.

### (T3) Taugas Zhou Empire<sup>(557-581)</sup>

The archaic text 636-ZS stated that the Taugas Zhou Empire had the **black**<sup>3</sup> official colour.

《周書·帝紀第三》服色宜烏 制曰可

On **black**<sup>3</sup>: The colour term **black**<sup>3</sup> [70CF 烏 (wū/ò), ancient ERF \**qaa* (ZhèngZhāng 2003:491)] is the third term for black in Mandarin. It is of Sino-Altaic origin (Gao 2012) [cf. Chuvash *xypa* (*xura*) ‘black’, Turkish *kara* ‘black’, Old Turkic *qara* ‘black’, etc]. The use of this term in the official text of the Taugas Zhou Empire implies that the Altaic-lead Taugas empires had used it as the primary term for black.

In conclusion, the official colour of the Taugas Zhou Empire was **black**. [The previous study (801-TD) stated the same.]

The official colour of the Northern Empires was mostly **black**. The contrast between the black Northern Empires and the red Southern Empires was also attested in the historiography written in ca. 630 by the Byzantine historiographer Theophylact Simocatta.

*The History of Theophylact Simocatta*, Book 7, Chapter 9 (cited from the translation by Yule 1915:30): “The territory of Taugas, of which we are speaking, is divided in two by a river, which in time past formed the boundary between two very great nations which were at war with one another. These nations were distinguished from one another by their dress, the one wearing clothes dyed black, the other red. In our own day, however, and whilst Maurice wielded the Roman sceptre, the nation of the black-coats crossed the river to attack the red-coats, and having got the victory over them they thus became supreme over the whole empire.”

The ethnonym *Taugas* is etymologically identical to 大魏 (dà-wèi/dài-nguy) which means ‘Great Wei’ in Chinese. Apparently, the Sui Empire was still recognised as the Taugas Wei Empire by the West, when it defeated and annexed the Chen Empire in 589 CE, the eighth reigning year of the Emperor Maurice of the Eastern

Roman Empire. The Southern Empires were actually the sequels of the Jin (*Sinae*) Empire, but misunderstood as the other half of *Taugas*. Nonetheless, the official colours of the two regimes and the date of the event were accurate.

**(=16) Sui Empire<sup>(581-618)</sup>**

The archaic text 636-SS stated that the Sui Empire had the red official colour.

《隋書·禮儀七》高祖初即位 [...] 朝會衣裳 宜盡用赤

In conclusion, the official colour of the Sui Empire was **red**. [The three previous studies (801-TD, 1399-MSL, 2008-ZH5S) stated the same.]

**(17~20) Tang Empire<sup>(618-907/923[958])</sup> and Five Dynasties<sup>(907-960)</sup>**

The archaic text and also the previous study (801-TD) stated that the official colour of the Tang Empire was originally unset, later set to red in 690 during the nominal Zhou Empire, finally changed to reddish yellow in 750.

《通典·卷第五十五》大唐土德 建寅月為歲首 [...] 載初元年九月九日 改元天授 稱周 改皇帝為皇嗣 二年正月 旗幟尚赤 天寶九載制 應緣隊仗所用緋色幡等 並改為赤黃色 天下皆然 納崔昌議 以土德承漢火行

The archaic text and also the previous study (1399-MSL) stated that the Tang Empire had yellow official colour on dress, red official colour on flag.

《明實錄·太祖高皇帝實錄·卷五二洪武三年五月辛亥》詔考歷代服色所尚 禮部奏言 歷代異尚 夏尚黑 商尚白 周尚赤 秦尚黑 漢尚赤 唐服飾尚黃 旗幟尚赤 宋亦尚赤

In conclusion, the official colour of the Tang Empire was **red** in the earlier phase (618~750), but **reddish yellow** in the later phase (750~907/923[958]). [The previous study (1399-MSL) stated imprecisely only yellow, probably because it was a brief report for one representative official colour for each previous regime. After it, the previous study (2008-ZH5S) stated imprecisely the same.]

**(N1) Khitan Liao Empire<sup>(916-1125/1218[west])</sup>**

The Khitan Liao Empire was called “*Qarā Khitāʿ*” [قرا ختای, ‘Great Khitan’ or ‘Black Khitan’] by nations in Central Asia. Apparently, the official colour of it was **black**. A contemporary Chinese historian Chén (1956) did a historical and philological study that confirmed the black official colour with more evidence. The result is accepted in the present study. [The previous study (2008-ZH5S) stated incorrectly that its official colour was white, probably because of missing accurate references.]

**(21) Greater Song Empire<sup>(960-1276[1279])</sup>**

The archaic text and also the previous study (1399-MSL) stated that the official colour of the Greater Song Empire was red.

《明實錄·太祖高皇帝實錄·卷五二洪武三年五月辛亥》詔考歷代服色所尚 禮部奏言 歷代異尚 夏尚黑 商尚白 周尚赤 秦尚黑 漢尚赤 唐服飾尚黃 旗幟尚赤 宋亦尚赤

In conclusion, the official colour of the Greater Song Empire was **red**. [The previous study (2008-ZH5S) stated the same.]

**(N2) Tangut Xia Empire<sup>(1038-1227)</sup>**

The full name of the Tangut Xia Empire in Tangut 𐰇𐰺𐰍 𐰋𐰏𐰤 𐰇𐰏𐰤 means ‘white high great Xia regime’. Apparently, its official colour was **white**. Two con-

temporary Chinese historians Wáng and Péng (2009) did a historical and philological study that confirmed the white official colour. The result is accepted in the present study.

### (N3) Jin/Kim Empire<sup>(1115-1234)</sup>

The archaic text (1194-BMHB) stated that the colour of national dress of the Jin/Kim Empire was white.

《三朝北盟會編·卷二四四》其衣則衣布 好白色

The archaic text (1214-DJDY) stated that the official colour of the Jin/Kim Empire was white.

《大金德運圖說》金初色尚白 章宗泰和二年十一月更定德運為土 臘月辰詔告中外

The archaic text (1345-SJ) stated that the national colour of the ruling population of the Jin/Kim Empire was white.

《金史·太祖紀》上曰 遼以寶鐵為號 取其堅也 寶鐵雖堅 終亦變壞 惟金不變不壞 金之色白 完顏部色尚白 於是國號大金

In conclusion, the official colour of the Jin/Kim Empire was **white**. [The previous study (2008-ZH5S) stated the same.] White was also the national colour the ruling population of the Jin/Kim Empire.

### (22) Yuan Empire<sup>(1271-1368[1402])</sup>

The Yuan Empire did not officially set any official colour. The national colour of the Mongolian people was the *de facto* official colour.

According to an epigraphy 1244-YL, the *de facto* official colour of Mongolian Empire was white.

《中書令耶律公神道碑》蓋國俗尚白 以白為吉故也。

The fact was also attested in the book *Livres des merveilles du monde* (*The Travels of Marco Polo*) first released in the 14th century.

*The Travels of Marco Polo*, Book 2, Chapter 15 (translated by Henry Yule 1920): “It is the custom that on this occasion the Kaan and all his subjects should be clothed entirely in white; so, that day, everybody is in white, men and women, great and small. And this is done in order that they may thrive all through the year, for they deem that white clothing is lucky.”

In conclusion, the *de facto* official colour of the Yuan Empire was **white**.

### (23) Ming Empire<sup>(1368-1644[1662])</sup>

The archaic text and also the previous study (1399-MSL) stated that the Ming Empire set the red official colour in 1370.

《明實錄·太祖高皇帝實錄·卷五二洪武三年五月辛亥》今國家承元之後 取法周 漢 唐 宋以為治 服色所尚 於赤為宜 上從之

In conclusion, the official colour of the Ming Empire was **red**. [The previous study (2008-ZH5S) stated the same.]

### (24) Qing Empire<sup>(1636-1912)</sup>

At first, the Qing Empire did not officially set any official colour. A reason could be that the administrative system of the eight banners was used. All Manchu families were placed into the eight banners: (1) the bordered yellow banner, (2) the plain yellow banner, (3) the plain white banner, (4) the plain red banner, (5) the

bordered white banner, (6) the bordered red banner, (7) the plain blue banner, and (8) the bordered blue banner. The yellow colour was the imperial colour.

The sovereign flag affirmed in 1862 was a blue dragon on a yellow background. It made the yellow colour the *de facto* official colour applying to the sovereign flag.

In conclusion, the official colour of the Ming Empire was **yellow**.

#### **(25) Republic of China**<sup>(1912-1949[-\*])</sup>

The Republic of China (ROC) did not officially set any official colour.

The old sovereign flag affirmed in 1912 carried five horizontal stripes of five colours (red, yellow, blue, white, and black) representing the five major nations of China (Han-Chinese, Manchu, Mongolian, Muslim, and Tibetan), respectively. It made **the five colours together** *de facto* official colours of ROC.

The new sovereign flag approved in 1928 carries the blue “sky” (canton), the white “sun” (graph in canton), and the red “earth” (background).

The **blue** colour and the **white** colour from the emblem of ROC and the flag of the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) (excluding the red colour from the sovereign flag) became *de facto* official colours of ROC.

During the first armed conflict from 1927 to 1937, the area controlled by the government of the Republic of China was called “the white zone [白區]” by the Chinese Communists.

In 1996, the authority in Taiwan was transformed to a democratic regime that is owned by all the citizens instead of a population, a dynasty or a political party. The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which once won the elections and ruled the regime from 2000 to 2008, is represented by the green colour.

#### **(26) People’s Republic of China**<sup>(1949~)</sup>

The People’s Republic of China (PRC) did not officially set any official colour.

The red colour as a symbol of the communist revolution from the USSR was adopted by the Communist Party of China (CPC). In 1928, the army of CPC was named the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army of China [中國工農紅軍].

Before gaining sovereignty, during the first armed conflict from 1927 to 1937, the Chinese Communists were called “the red robbers [赤匪]” by the KMT government of ROC.

The sovereign flag affirmed in 1949 carries the five yellow stars on red background. It has made the **red** colour the *de facto* official colour applying to the sovereign flag.

The red colour is the national colour of the Han-Chinese people (including those in Taiwan), represented by holiday decorations and traditional wedding dresses.

The official flag of Hong Kong SAR mainly carries the red colour.

The official flag of Macau SAR mainly carries the green colour as the left side of the sovereign flag of Portugal.

## 5. Overview

### 5.1. Outline of official colours

The general layout of the official colours of Chinese regimes are summarised in Table 1.

**(1) The white colour** has been the official colour in the PaoXi Empire (ca.60000~ca.3000 BCE, not included in the 5000-year-long Chinese history) (including some tones of yellow), some phases of the XuanYuan Empire (ca.2400~ca.2300 and ca.2150~ca.2050 BCE), the Shang Empire (ca.1600~ca.1050 BCE), and the Yuan Empire (1276~1368) [also the Tangut Xia Empire<sup>(1038-1227)</sup> and the Jin/Kim Empire<sup>(1115-1234)</sup> out of the *de jure* sovereign line].

The white colour dominated about 840 years out of the 5000-year-long Chinese history.

At present, most Old Asian nations, which are not traditionally agricultural, e.g. Japanese, Korean, Manchu, Mongolian, Qiang, Tibetan and Bai nations, have white as their national colour. This custom might be originally inherited from the PaoXi Empire. The original reason for the white colour preference should be that the white-yellow milk was the most important sustenance for these people.

**Table 1. Official colours of Chinese regimes sorted by colour**

white[-yellow]	red[-yellow]	yellow	black[-grue-yellow]*
(1) PaoXi <sup>(-60000--3000)</sup>	(2) ShenNong <sup>(-3000--2500)</sup>		
(3) XuanYuan <sup>(-2500--2000)*</sup>	(3) XuanYuan <sup>(-2500--2000)*</sup>		(3) XuanYuan <sup>(-2500--2000)*</sup>
(5) Shang <sup>(-1600--1050)</sup>	(6) Zhou <sup>(-1050--256)*</sup>		(4) Xia <sup>(-2000--1600)*</sup>
	(8) Chu <sup>(-207--202)</sup>		(7) Qin <sup>(-221--207)</sup>
	(9.3) Han <sup>(26--220)*</sup>	(9.2) Han <sup>(-104--26)</sup>	(9.1) Han <sup>(-202--104)</sup>
	(11~15) Jin~Chen <sup>(266--589)</sup>	(10) Wei <sup>(220--266)</sup>	
	(16) Sui <sup>(581--618)</sup>	(T1.1) T. Wei <sup>(399--491)</sup>	(T1~3) Taugas <sup>(491--581)</sup>
(N2) Tangut <sup>(1038-1227)</sup>	(17.1) Tang <sup>(618-750)</sup>	(17.2) Tang <sup>(750-907/936)</sup>	
(N3) Kim <sup>(1115-1234)</sup>	(21) Song <sup>(960-1276[1279])</sup>		(N1) Khitan <sup>(916-1218)</sup>
(22) Yuan <sup>(1271-1368[1402])</sup>	(23) Ming <sup>(1368-1644[1662])</sup>	(24) Qing <sup>(1636-1912)</sup>	
	(26) PRC <sup>(1949-)</sup>		

Note: The official colour of XuanYuan Empire was diachronically the three primitive colours in shift: black-grue-yellow, white-yellow, red-yellow. The official colour of the Zhou Empire was red, but the official dress was mainly black. The official colour of the later phase (26~220) of the Han Empire was red, but the official dress was mainly black.

Shaanbei [陕北, ‘northern Shaanxi’] Han-Chinese people in near north-west China prefer the white colour, likely because of the influence of the Tangut Xia Empire<sup>(1038-1227)</sup>.

**(2) The red colour** has been the official colour in the ShenNong Empire (ca.3000~ca.2500 BCE) (including some tones of yellow), some phases of the XuanYuan Empire (ca.2300~ca.2200 BCE and ca.2050~ca.2000 BCE) (including some tones of yellow), the Zhou Empire (ca.1050~256 BCE), the Chu Empire (206~202 BCE), the later phase of Han Empire (26~220), the Jin Empire and the subsequent Southern Empires (266~589), the Sui Empire (589~618), the earlier phase of the Tang Empire (618~750), the Greater Song Empire (960~1276), the Ming Empire (1368~1644), and the People's Republic of China (1949~).

The red colour dominated about 2800 years out of the 5000-year-long Chinese history. This predomination could be a reason and also a result of that the red colour is the national colour of the consolidated Han-Chinese nation.

At present, most Han-Chinese people (except Shaanbei and Hakka), and most New Asian nations, which are traditionally agricultural, e.g. most Hmong-Mien nations, have the red national colour. This custom might be originally inherited from the ShenNong Empire. The original reason for the red colour preference should be that the red-yellow sun and fire were most important for primitive agriculture, which produced the most important sustenance for these people.

**(3) The black colour** has been the official colour in some phases of the XuanYuan Empire (ca.2500~ca.2400 and ca.2200~ca.2150 BCE) (including grue and some tones of yellow), the Xia Empire (ca.2000~ca.1600 BCE) (including grue), the Qin Empire (221~207 BCE) and the earlier phase of the Han Empire (202~104 BCE) [also the later phase of the Taugas Wei Empire (491~557), the Taugas Zhou Empire (557~581), the Taugas Zhou Empire (557~581) and the Khitan Liao Empire (916~1218) out of the *de jure* sovereign line].

The black colour dominated about 660 years out of the 5000-year-long Chinese history.

The preference of the black colour might be originally inherited from the XuanYuan Empire. The original reason for the black colour preference should be that the black-grue-yellow water bodies were most important for primitive husbandry, which produced the most important sustenance for these people.

At present, Hakka [客家, 'guest clan'] Han-Chinese people in southern China and most Lolo-Burmese nations in far south-west China, e.g. Jingpho (Kachin), Yi (Lolo), Naxi and Lahu nations, have the black national colour. However, there is no traceable connection between these populations and the historical Chinese regimes.

**(4) The yellow colour** has been the official colour in the middle phase of the Han Empire (104BCE~26CE), the Wei Empire (220~266), the later phase of the Tang Empire (750~907/936) and the Qing Empire (1644~1912) [also the earlier phase of the Taugas Wei Empire (399~491) out of the *de jure* sovereign line].

The yellow colour dominated about 630 years out of the 5000-year-long Chinese history.

The yellow (later, reddish yellow) colour has been the colour of imperial dress since the Sui Empire. The Tang Empire forbad the citizens wearing dresses in reddish yellow. Cf.

《舊唐書·輿服志》(945-TS) 武德初 因隋舊制 天子宴服 亦名常服 唯以黃袍及衫 後漸用赤黃 遂禁士庶不得以赤黃為衣服雜飾

In order to avoid violations of the law, all tones of yellow were avoided by the citizens. It could be another reason why the yellow colour has not been the national colour of Han-Chinese nation.

The preference of the yellow colour might be originally inherited from the Han Empire. The original reason for the yellow colour preference should be the developed agriculture. [It confirms the previous study of Chén (2002).] In addition, the yellow colour had its peak time in the Tang Empire, when its national religion was Taoism, which prefers the yellow colour. [It confirms the previous study of Sūn (2006).]

It is important to clarify that the black-grue-yellow colour of the Yellow Emperor should be the colour of the Yellow River. It has been already counted under the black colour preference after the water bodies. It is not related to the yellow colour preference after the developed agriculture.

## 5.2. Determination of official colours

### (1) Colours and cardinal directions

In Chinese common knowledge, there is a notion of five pure colours [五正色]. The five pure colours are likely the first five colours established in the dyeing technology in China. This notion is equivalent to the Western notion of the three primary colours, definitely not the linguistic notion of the basic colour terms.

The five pure colours were glossed as colours of five cardinal directions in the official dictionaries of Qin-Han-Jin Chinese (121-SW) and/or Sui-Tang-Song Chinese (1008-GY). Cf.

“Grue, the colour of the east [青 東方色]” (121-SW: #3171) (1008-GY: #7996)

“Red, the colour of the south [赤 南方色]” (121-SW: #6551) (1008-GY: #23666)

“White, the colour of the west [白 西方色]” (121-SW: #4905) (1008-GY: #23244)

“Black, the colour of the north [黑 北方色]” (1008-GY: #24342) [It was not glossed as the colour of the north but ‘the smoked colour’ in 121-SW.]

“Yellow, the colour of the centre [黃 中央色]” (1008-GY: #7387) [It was not glossed as the colour of the centre but ‘the colour of earth’ in 121-SW.]

Proper interpretations of the directional colours are uncertain. I have a possible match here:

Grue, the colour of the east, where is the grue sea. [There is no sea in the west of China.]

Red, the colour of the south, where the red earth. [The earth in southern China is red.]

White, the colour of the west, where the perennially white snow-topped mountain is. [There is no perennially snow-topped mountain in the east of China.]



Black, the colour of the north, where the earth is black. [The earth in north-east China is black.]

Yellow, the colour of the centre, where the earth is yellow. [The earth in central China is yellow.]

The first four colours of directions are in common with Turkic ones (already pointed out by Chen 1989). The directional symbolism of colours should be initiated in China where the landscape suits it. It implies that either (1) the Turkic ancestors did not reside in central China while Turkic borrowed the system from the Chinese language; or (2) the Turkic ancestors resided in central China and Turkic became also a minor source of the Chinese language. The second solution is more reasonable.

Apparently, the official colours are not determined by the directions of the regimes. The common endonym of Chinese regimes was ‘the central regime’ [中國], while the yellow colour was not predominately chosen as the official colour.

## **(2) Colours and fifth properties**

In Sino-metaphysics, everything should have a fifth property. The fifth properties of the five pure colours are: blue – Wood (P), red – Fire (H), yellow – Earth (T), white – Metal (K), black – Water (B).

The fifth properties of many other things are not so simple. Unified views are hard to achieve. Nowadays, many people consider the fifth property of the Sino-metaphysics superstitious, thus think that the fifth properties are artificial and should no longer be discussed. Gāo (2008) stated that the fifth property is not superstitious, it can be phonologically determined by the place of articulation of the consonants of the proto pronunciation of the target morpheme: labial – Wood (P), guttural – Fire (H), alveolar – Earth (T), dorsal – Metal (K), dental – Water (B). Perhaps the same method was used by the first Chinese philosophers on Sino-metaphysics, but they could not express the method in the phonological way. However, every morpheme may have two fifth properties upon the onset and coda consonants. If only one fifth property is needed, humanist determination is still needed. [The fifth property is relevant to the grammatical gender of nouns (e.g. M, F, N), non-native speakers will never understand them properly. Current Chinese people are neither native speakers of the ancient Chinese language varieties.] The historical Chinese regimes used to hold discussions among officials and then determined the fifth property of the regime. The Qin Empire, the Han Empire and the Wei Empire determined the fifth properties altogether with the official colours.

From the Jin Empire, the fifth properties and the official colours are not necessarily associated. E.g. the fifth property of the Jin Empire was metal, but the official colour was red.

At that time, an imperial officer of Jin, the Cavalry Standing Servant [散騎常侍], Fù Xuán [傅玄]<sup>(217-278)</sup>, argued: “When the new empire was peacefully transformed from the old empire, the official calendar and colour should not be changed; only when the new empire supplanted the old empire through a war, the

official calendar and colour should be changed. [...]” It was approved by the emperor.

《通典·卷第五十五》(801-TD) 武帝泰始二年 散騎常侍傅玄上議 帝王受命 應曆禪代 則不改正朔 遭變征伐則改之 [...] 詔從之

Consequently, the official colour was reset to red according to the Han Empire, because the Wei Empire also was peacefully transformed from the Han Empire.

In summary, the official colours have been ever, but not always determined by the fifth properties of the regimes.

### **(3) Colours and three dominances**

The theory of three dominances [三統] was first established by one of the greatest Chinese philosophers, Dǒng Zhōngshū [董仲舒]<sup>(179-104BCE)</sup> (-104-CQFL: Sandaigaizhizhiwen [三代改制質文]), who led the Confucian school and accomplished gaining official status for Confucianism in the Han Empire. The theory was concluded upon Chinese history to date. It implied: The world (Far East) is dominated by three dominances, the black dominance [黑統], the white dominance [白統], and the red dominance [赤統]. A new central regime must represent one of the three dominances, while previous regimes should represent two of them. The previous dominances should not be deracinated. The three together retain the peaceful order of the world.

I think that the three dominances originated from the three groups of people in the Far East: (1) the developed hunter-gatherers with livestock who preferred the white-yellow colour of milk, (2) the farmers who preferred the red-yellow colour of sun and fire, and (3) the herders who preferred the black-grue-yellow colour of water bodies. Therefore, the theory of the three dominances reflect the harmony of the three groups of people in China.

In conclusion, the official colours of the first regimes were naturally chosen.

### **(4) Summary**

At first, the official colours might be naturally determined according to the substances of the people.

The developed hunter-gatherers with livestock arrived and founded the PaoXi Empire, thus favoured the white-yellow colour of milk. The farmers arrived and founded the ShenNong Empire, thus favoured the red-yellow colour of the sun and fire. The herders arrived and founded the XuanYuan Empire, thus favoured the black-grue-yellow colour of the water bodies. Later, it ever yielded the sovereignty to elected emperors from the clans that might represent the two previous empires.

The hunter-gatherers (Old Asian), the farmers (New Asian) and the herders (pre-Chinese) found three groups of people in the Far East.

Old Asian people, who resided away from the ShenNong Empire, e.g. Korean, preserved the white-yellow preference throughout the history.

New Asian people, who resided away from the XuanYuan Empire, e.g. Hmong, preserved the red-yellow preference throughout the history.

The Xia Empire of the black dominance might be direct offspring of XuanYuan. The Shang Empire of the white dominance might be direct offspring of PaoXi. The Zhou Empire of the red dominance might be direct offspring of ShenNong.

The Zhou Empire fell in 256 BCE. There were seven sovereign kingdoms for a time. In 221 BCE, Qin from the black dominance gained sole control of the sovereignty and established the Qin Empire. In 207 BCE, Chu from the red dominance supplanted Qin. In 202 BCE, Han from the black dominance supplanted Chu.

The Qin Empire launched the Qin-Han-Chinese consolidation. It was accomplished by the Han Empire. After the consolidation, the three groups of people were naturalised in China, the next official colours could be politically determined according to the fifth property in Sino-metaphysics.

In 104 BCE, the official colour of the Han Empire was changed to yellow while the fifth property was reset to Earth. In 26 CE, the official colour of the Han Empire was changed to red while the fifth property was reset to Fire. The resetting of the fifth property and official colour in the Han Empire could actually imply the internal conflicts among the three dominances during the consolidation. The red dominance of the farmers eventually prevailed.

In 220 CE, the Han Empire was peacefully transformed to the Wei Empire, the official colour was changed to yellow while the fifth property was reset to Earth.

In 266 CE, the Wei Empire was peacefully transformed to the Jin Empire, the official colour of the Jin Empire was changed back to red according to the Han Empire, although the fifth property was reset to Metal. From this time, the theory of retaining the same official colour after peaceful transformations prevailed. The red official colour was retained by the next peacefully transformed regimes the Song Empire, the Qi Empire, the Liang Empire and the Chen Empire.

The red colour dominated from 26 to 220 and again from 266 to 589, altogether for over 500 years. Therefore it could become the national colour of the consolidated Han-Chinese nation.

After the evacuation of the Jin Empire, a few regimes came into existence in central China. Many of them were ruled by non-Han-Chinese populations. Different official colours were used. The official colour of the Taugas Wei Empire, which unified northern China in 439, was yellow, but changed to black in 491. From the Taugas Wei Empire, the Taugas Qi Empire and the Taugas Zhou Empire were transformed, the same black official colour was retained.

The black–red contrast in North–South (*Taugas–Sinae*) China was internationally known.

The Taugas Wei Empire launched the Taugas-Chinese consolidation in 493. The non-Han-Chinese ruling populations of the North were naturalised by Han-Chinese people in the Taugas Wei Empire.

In 581, the Taugas Zhou Empire was peacefully transformed to the Sui Empire. Sui made a new formula. It did not retain the black official colour, but reset it to red, which is in common with the South. It should be counted as the last step of the Taugas-Chinese consolidation. The last symbol of Taugas China, the black official colour was also abandoned.

In 589, the Sui Empire defeated and annexed the Chen Empire in southern China. It is now difficult to argue, how much the red official colour helped the Sui

Empire in the war against the Chen Empire. Anyhow, it might be much easier to conquer a country, where the people view you as a similar nation. ‘Red-dressed [South] [Sinae] China’ was annexed by ‘Black-dressed [North] [Taugas] China’, but the culture of Red-dressed China was adopted by Black-dressed China.

In 618, the Sui Empire was peacefully transformed to the Tang Empire. In 750, the official colour was changed to yellow while the fifth property was reset to Earth. Although the yellow colour dominated the next 200 years, it was actually only the imperial colour, thus it had no chance to become a new national colour.

In 916, Khitan people, perhaps a nation from the black dominance and away from both the Han-Chinese and Taugas-Chinese consolidations, founded the Khitan Empire, and had the black official colour according to its actual custom.

In 960, the Greater Song Empire was founded, the red official colour was set, while the fifth property was set to Fire.

In 1038, Tangut people, perhaps a nation from the white dominance and away from both the Han-Chinese and Taugas-Chinese consolidations found the Tangut Xia Empire and set the white official colour according to its actual custom.

In 1276, the three dominances were unified by the Mongolian-ruled Yuan Empire from the white dominance. Chinese sovereignty was extended from one of the three dominances in shift to the three dominances at once.

In the recent centuries, there are additionally three reasons that have confirmed the dominate position of the red colour in China.

(1) The Greater Song Empire with the red official colour was supplanted by the Mongolian-ruled Yuan Empire with the white official colour in 1276. Thereafter the red colour became a symbol of Han-Chinese identity in contrast to the white colour as a symbol of Mongolian identity.

In 1351, a Han-Chinese revolutionary power established the Red Turban Army against the Yuan Empire. A branch of the Red Turban Army finally succeeded and established the Ming Empire in 1368.

(2) The Ming Empire with the red official colour was supplanted by the Manchu-ruled Qing Empire with the eight banners in 1644. The red colour became again a symbol of Han-Chinese identity.

In 1912, the Republic of China supplanted Qing and confirmed the red colour as the national colour of Han-Chinese, being on top of the flag with five horizontal stripes. Though, the flag was abandoned in 1928.

(3) The red colour as a symbol of the communist revolution from the USSR was adopted by CPC. In 1928, the armed forces of the Communist Party of China (CPC) was named the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army of China. CPC won the sovereignty and established the People’s Republic of China in 1949.

In sum, the official colour might be sometimes naturally determined according to the substance of the ruling population, sometimes politically determined according to the fifth property in Sino-metaphysics, or some national or revolutionary symbolisms.

## 6. Conclusions

The present study has stated the official colours of 29 Chinese regimes. The results sorted by regime are given in Appendix 1.

Remarkably, the official colours of the most ancient regimes were the three primitive colours: (1) white-yellow, (2) black-grue-yellow, and (3) red-yellow, instead of the simple colours. Later, the official colour of the Xia Empire was black-grue instead of arguing whichever black or grue. There were inconsistent historical records on the official colours of the most ancient regimes, because the composite colour terms had had been split. It has solved the historical problem with the linguistic theory of composite colour categories.

The present study has concluded how an official colour was determined. At first, the official colour might be naturally determined according to the substance of the ruling population. There might be three groups of people in the Far East. (1) The developed hunter-gathers with livestock preferred the white-yellow colour of milk. (2) The farmers preferred the red-yellow colour of sun and fire. (3) The mobile herders preferred the black-grue-yellow colour of water bodies. Later, after the Han-Chinese consolidation, the official colour could be politically determined according to the main property of the five elements in Sino-metaphysics.

The present study has suggested that the red colour has dominated in China for many reasons throughout the history.

The major new advances of the present study are:

1) It is the first panchronic study on the official colours in such a strict format of philological studies with both Chinese and Western references.

2) Upon conventional philological methods, it has contradicted the misreading on the official colours of a few regimes by some previous studies. Moreover, upon the linguistic theory of composite colour categories, it has adjusted the official colours of the most ancient regimes.

3) It has suggested the official colours might be originally determined by the substance of the ruling populations.

## Acknowledgements

I thank prof. dr. Urmas Sutrop for encouraging me to take up the theme and reading and commenting on the manuscript. The study was supported by the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research project no SF0050037s10.

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- 0-YI 周[Zhou]: 《易[Yi, logic]》.
- 0-SU 周[Zhou]: 《書[Shu, writing]》.
- 0-LI 周[Zhou]: 《禮[Li, etiquette]》.
- 0-ZS 周[Zhou]: 《[逸周]書[Yizhoushu, writing of Zhou]》.
- 0-YIW: 《易緯[Yiwei, an extension of Yi]》.
- 0-SUDZ: 《尚書大傳[Shangshudazhuan, an extension of Shu]》.
- 0-SUZH: 《尚書中候[Shangshuzhonghou, an extension of Shu]》.
- 0-LIJMZ: 《禮稽命徵[Lijimingzheng, an extension of Li]》.
- 338-SJS 周之秦[Qin of Zhou] (?)商鞅[Shāng Yāng]<sup>(395-338BCE)</sup>: 《商君書[Shangjunshu, writing of Sir Shang]》.
- 300-ZSJM 周之魏[Wei of Zhou]: 《竹書紀年[Zhushujinian, bamboo annals]》.
- 239-LL 秦[Qin] 呂不韋[Lǚ Bùwéig]<sup>(ca.290-235BCE)</sup>: 《呂覽[Lǚlan, viewing of Sir Lü]》.
- 139-HN 漢[Han]建元二年 劉安[Liu Ān]<sup>(179-122BCE)</sup>等[et al.]: 《淮南子[Huainanzi, a book by Huainan King]》.
- 104-CQFL 漢[Han] 董仲舒[Dǒng Zhòngshū]<sup>(179-104BCE)</sup>: 《春秋繁露[Chunqiu fanlu, an extension of Chuqiu]》.
- 91-SJ 漢[Han]征和二年 司馬遷[Sīmǎ Qiān]<sup>(145-ca.86BCE)</sup>: 《史記[Shiji, the historiography]》.
- 121-SW 漢[Han]建光元年 許慎[Xù Shèn]<sup>(ca.58-ca.147)</sup>: 《說文解字[Shuowenjiezi, the zi-book]》.
- 92-HS 漢[Han] 班固[Bān Gù]<sup>(32-92)</sup>: 《漢書[Hanshu, writing of Han]》.
- 28-220-HJ 漢[Han]: 《[東觀]漢記[Hanji, Actual recording of Han]》.
- 241-DW 晉[Jin] 皇甫謐[Huángfǔ Mì]<sup>(215-282)</sup>: 《帝王世紀[Diwangshiji, historical accounts of the emperors]》.
- 280-3GZ 晉[Jin] 陳壽[Chén Shòu]<sup>(233-297)</sup>: 《三國志[Sanguozhi, writing of the three states]》.
- 445-HHS 宋[Song] 范曄[Fàn Yè]<sup>(398-445)</sup>: 《後漢書[Houhanshu, writing of continued Han]》.
- 488-SS 齊[Qi]永明六年 沈約[Shěn Yuē]<sup>(441-513)</sup>: 《宋書[Songshu, writing of Song]》.
- 510-QS 梁[Liang] 蕭子顯[Xiāo Zixiǎn]<sup>(489-537)</sup>: 《[南]齊書[Nanqishu, writing of Qi]》.
- 554-WS 齊[Taugas Qi]天保五年 魏收[Xiāo Zixiǎn]<sup>(506-572)</sup>: 《魏書[Weishu, writing of Taugas Wei]》.
- 636-LS 唐[Tang]貞觀十年 姚思廉[Yáo Silián]<sup>(557-637)</sup>: 《梁書[Liangshu, writing of Liang]》.
- 636-CS 唐[Tang]貞觀十年 姚思廉[Yáo Silián]<sup>(557-637)</sup>: 《陳書[Liangshu, writing of Chen]》.
- 636-QS 唐[Tang]貞觀十年 李百藥[Lǐ Bǎiyào]<sup>(565-648)</sup>: 《[北]齊書[Beiqishu, writing of Taugas Qi]》.
- 636-ZS 唐[Tang]貞觀十年 令狐德棻[Linghú Défén]<sup>(583-666)</sup>: 《周書[Zhoushu, writing of Taugas Zhou]》.
- 636-SS 唐[Tang]貞觀十年 魏徵[Wèi Zhēng]<sup>(580-643)</sup>: 《隋書[Suishu, writing of Sui]》.
- 648-JS 唐[Tang]貞觀二十二年 房玄齡[Fáng Xuánlíng]<sup>(579-648)</sup>等[et al.]: 《晉書[Jinshu, writing of Jin]》.
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- 1370-YS 明[Ming]洪武三年 宋濂[Sòng Lián]<sup>(1310-1381)</sup>等[et al.]: 《元史[*Yuanshi*, history of Yuan]》.
- 1399~1644-MSL 明[Ming]: 《明實錄[*Mingshilu*, actual recording of Ming]》.
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## APPENDIX 1

## Official colours of Chinese regimes sorted by regime

seq.	regime	start*	801*	1399*	2008*	the present study
1*	PaoXi [庖犧]	ca-60000	--	--	--	<i>white-yellow</i>
2*	ShenNong [神農]	ca-3000	--	--	--	<i>red-yellow</i>
3*	XuanYuan [軒轅]	ca-2500	b/w/r	--	--	<i>the three in shift*</i>
4*	Xia [夏]	ca-2000	black	black	grue	<i>black-grue</i>
5	Shang [商]	ca-1600	white	white	white	<i>white</i>
6	Zhou [周]	ca-1050	red	red	red	<i>red (but black dress)</i>
7	Qin [秦]	-221	black	black	black	black
8	Chu [楚]	-207	--	--	--	red
		-202	black	--	red	black
9	Han [漢]	[-104]	yellow	--	yellow	yellow
		[26]	red	red	red	red (but black dress)
10	Wei [魏]	220	yellow	--	yellow	yellow
11	Jin [晉]	266	red	--	white	red
12	Song [宋]	420	red	--	black	red
13	Qi [齊]	479	red	--	grue	red
14	Liang [梁]	502	red	--	red	red
15	Chen [陳]	557	red	--	yellow	red
T1	Taugas Wei [後魏]	(399)	yellow	--	yellow	yellow
		[491]	black	--	black	black
T2	Taugas Qi [後齊]	(550)	black	--	--	black
T3	Taugas Zhou [後周]	(557)	black	--	--	black
16	Sui [隋]	589	red	--	red	red
		618	red	--	--	red
17	Tang [唐]	[750]	yellow	yellow	yellow	[reddish] yellow
18	Jin II [後晉]	936	--	--	white	--
N1	Khitan Liao [大遼]	(947)	--	--	white	black
19	Han II [後漢]	947	--	--	black	--
20	Zhou II [後周]	951	--	--	grue	--
21	Song G [宋]	960	--	red	red	red
N2	Tangut Xia [大夏]	(1038)	--	--	--	white
N3	Jin/Kim [大金]	(1115)	--	--	white	white
22	Yuan [大元]	1276	--	--	--	<i>white</i>
23	Ming [大明]	1368	--	red	red	red
24	Qing [大清]	1644	--	--	--	<i>yellow</i>
		1912	--	--	--	<i>the five together*</i>
25	ROC [中華民國]	[1928]	--	--	--	<i>blue and white</i>
26	PRC [中華人民共和國]	1949	--	--	--	<i>red</i>

Note: "start\*": It indicates the starting year when the central regime gained *de jure* Chinese sovereignty. If the regime is not a *de jure* central regime, the starting year of sovereignty declaration is given in brackets. If the official colour has been reset within a regime, the restarting year is given in squared brackets. The years are given in the international calendar. "--" indicates BCE.

"801\*" = 801-TD. "1399\*" = 1399-MSL. "2008\*" = 2008-ZH5S.

The official colours are given in English. If an entry is not *de jure* but *de facto*, it is given in italic. "the three in shift\*": black-grue-yellow > white-yellow > red-yellow. "the five together\*": red, yellow, blue, white and black. "--" indicates that the regime is not studied or studied with no result.