

and a special branch (別族 *pieh-tsu*) of the 渤海 P'o-hai. Some say that they belong to the Na (?) clan (拏氏; the text is corrupt; cf. VASIL'EV, *loc. cit.* 197) of the division 辰韓 Ch'ên-Han of the 三韓 San-Han (the San-Han, 'or Three Han', were three small kingdoms in Corea in the first centuries of our era). They were the weakest and the poorest among the tribes of the northern region. In the [period] *chêng-kuan* (627-649), the 靺鞨 Mo-ho came [to render homage] to the Court; the Middle Kingdom (*i. e.* China) [then] heard for the first time of the name of the Nü-chên. For generations [the Nü-chên] lived east of the 混同江 Hun-t'ung-chiang (Hun-t'ung River, the Sungari), at the foot of the Ch'ang-pai-shan (the 'Long White Mountain'); this mountain is [the place where] the Ya-lu-shui (Ya-lu River) takes its rise. To the south, they bordered on Kao-li (Corea); to the north, they adjoined the 室韋 Shih-wei; to the west, they bordered on P'o-hai and 鐵離 T'ieh-li; to the east, they reached the sea. What the *San kuo chih* calls 抱婁 Pao-lou (read 挹婁 I-lou), what the Wei of the Yüan [family] called 勿吉 Wu-chi, and what the T'ang called Hei-shui Mo-ho ('Mo-ho of the Black River', *i. e.* of the Sungari), is at present their territory. The [people] in their dependency were divided into six tribes (*pu*); [amongst them] there was the tribe (*pu*) of the Black River, which is the same as the present Nü-chên. If one should take in the hand water of this [River], its colour is slightly black; the Ch'i-tan gave it the name of Hun-t'ung-chiang. . . . ».

Ma Tuan-lin's chapter on the Nü-chên (327, 2-3) begins thus : «The Nü-chên are the Su-shên clan of ancient times. For generations they lived east of the Hun-t'ung-chiang, [at] the Ch'ang-pai-shan, [where] the Ya-lu-shui takes its rise. To the south, they bordered on Kao-li; to the north, they adjoined the Shih-wei; to the west, they bordered on P'o-hai and 鐵甸 T'ieh-tien (read 'T'ieh-li'); to the east they reached the sea. The Later Han called them I-lou; the Wei of the Yüan [family] called them Wu-chi; the Wei and T'ang called them Mo-ho. Their clan name (*hsing*) was Na 姓拏氏; among the northern Barbarians, they were the weakest and the poorest. In [the period] *k'ai-huang* (581-600) of the Sui, they offered tribute; their clans (*tsu*) were divided into six tribes (*pu*); [amongst them] there was the tribe (*pu*) of the Black River, which is the same as the present Nü-chên. If one should take in the hand water of this [River], the colour is slightly black; it was given the name of Hun-t'ung-chiang. . . . In [the period] *chêng-kuan* (627-649) of the T'ang, the Mo-ho came [to render homage] to the Court. [The Emperor] T'ai-tsung inquired about their customs, and so the talk touched on the affairs of the Nü-chên. It was at that [moment] that the Middle Kingdom (= China) first heard of their name (*i. e.* of the Nü-chên). The Ch'i-tan called them Lü-chên. . . . In [the period] *k'ai-yüan* (713-741) of the T'ang, their leader (*i. e.* apparently of the Nü-chên, but in fact of the Mo-ho) came [to render homage] to the Court, and he was appointed prefect (*tz'ü-shih*) of the department of 勃利 Po-li. Subsequently, a clan (部 *pu*, an error for 府 *fu*, 'department'; on the Hei-shui-fu, cf. GIBERT, *Dictionnaire*, 220) of Hei-shui ('Black River') was established, and the leader of the clan (*pu*) was made its governor (*tu-tu*); the Court established there a *ch'ang-shih* to control him. . . . At the time of the Five Dynasties (907-960), [these tribes] were for the first time called Nü-chên. Later on, to avoid the personal name Tsung-chên of the Ch'i-tan leader (*chu*; Hsing-tsung of the Liao), this name was changed to 女直 Nü-chih, which became 女質 Nü-chih through popular corruption. . . . ».