

Reminiscence of a political propaganda “Sino-Mongol one and
same family” preserved along the Great Wall
— or the stories of olden times when muslims were rebels —

YANG Haiying, QI Jinjiang

Stretching east and west outside Yulin (榆林) City, Shanxi Province in northern China is the Great Wall (長城). Along that part of the Great Wall, the Hongshixia (紅石峽) Gorge lies with many caves, shrines and temples, chiselled in ancient China. Lots of calligraphy works, namely, stone inscriptions, are found in the Gorge. Many epitaphs inscribed on the stone surfaces during the Ming dynasty are preserved. Quite a few of them describe the historic events in ancient times when strong political antagonism existed between Mongolia and China during the Ming Dynasty. Given this background, as is easily guessed, the Great Wall continued to serve as a natural boundary between Mongolia and China, just as the Rhine played such a role in Europe for many centuries.

A historic change took place, however, when the Qing dynasty was started by Manchurians who came to political power in China. Chinese government officials attempted to be more diplomatically clever than their predecessors, thus changing some ancient names of places along the Great Wall. Those names were used for many years symbolising Chinese discrimination against nomads migrating in northern China. In this context, the epitaphs in the Hongshixia Gorge also changed. The calligraphy works on the stone surfaces created in those days represented the new Chinese approach pursuing the reconciliation between Mongols and the Chinese living in the area to the south of the Great Wall.

Another historic development was recorded at the end of the 19th century, when the north-western part of China under the rule of Qing dynasty was stormed by a Muslim uprising. In order to quell the uproar, Chinese government officials tried to show off their alliance with Mongolia, actively

staging the scenario that Mongols and Chinese people are allies, belong to the one and same family. For example, for celebrating the triumphant return of the allied army to the regional garrison after successfully calming the Muslim rebellion, a stone monument was erected with the phrase of "Sino-Mongolian one and same family" inscribed on its surface. The stone monument was displayed for the first time at the ceremony in which the military troops marched along in front of spectators. In addition, a book was compiled and published, in which the military exploits contributed by Mongols during the war against Muslim rebels were highly commended. In this paper, an analysis is presented focusing on these series of Chinese policies in the past by examining a historical document titled *Tukai shengji* (圖開勝跡). This is an old book in Chinese that was discovered recently.