



AN LU-SHAN

AN LU-SHAN, frontier general of mixed Sogdian and Turkish ancestry who rose to high rank during the latter part of the reign of Hsüan-tsung (713-56); he was one of a number of officers of non-Chinese ancestry who were given supreme command over frontier armies. According to the somewhat mythologized account of his birth that is found in his biography in the T'ang histories, he was the son of a Turkish shamaness and a Sogdian father. The surname An, deriving ultimately from the Chinese name for Parthia, *An-hsi*, was one of a number of surnames used by Sogdians in China at this period and referred specifically to Bokhara. The name Lu-shan (Middle Chinese *lok-šan*) has been identified by W. B. Henning as standing for Sogdian *roxšan* "light." The same name in this and other transcriptions has been found belonging to other persons of Sogdian origin in China during the T'ang period. An Lu-shan's family belonged to a group of Sogdians who had been incorporated into the Northern Turks at the time of their rise to power in the 6th century. They were settled in the Ordos region after the defeat of the Northern Turks by T'ai-tsung in A.D. 63. When the Northern Turks rose again under Qutlug Qaghan and his successor Qapaghan, some of these Sogdians, including An Lu-shan's family, joined them, but they returned to Chinese allegiance after the death of Qapaghan. An Lu-shan's father An Yen-yen (Yānēn?) and his cousin An Ssu-shun also served in Chinese frontier armies and rose to high rank. Generals of non-Chinese origin came to be in command of large standing frontier armies after 742 partly as a result of the dynasty's imperialist policies, which caused great strains on its military resources and led to greater reliance on non-Chinese auxiliaries; in addition, power struggles at court led the chief minister,



Li Lin-fu, to prefer alien generals to Chinese so as to prevent his rivals from gaining prestige from which to challenge his own position. An Lu-shan, though lacking the Chinese education needed for high civil office, became a great favorite of the aging emperor and his consort, the beautiful Yang Kuei-fei. He was an enormously fat man with a talent for buffoonery; rumor had it that he even became Yang Kuei-fei's lover. If so, this did not prevent him from becoming the bitter rival of Yang Kuei-fei's cousin, Yang Kuo-chung, who, after Li Linfu's death, sought to take over the dictatorial power that Li had accumulated. The power struggle between the chief minister and the frontier general grew more and more intense as each sought to undermine the other's position, until finally An Lu-shan sought to settle the matter by force of arms. An Lu-shan proclaimed a new Yen dynasty in 756 after capturing Lo-yang and went on that summer to take Ch'ang-an, driving the T'ang emperor into exile. By this time, however, he was ailing, possibly with diabetes, and he was nearly blind and exceedingly irascible. At the beginning of 757 he was murdered at the instigation of his son. The rebellion dragged on for a number of years, and the chronic militarism that it began came to an end only after the founding of the Sung dynasty in 960.

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