The early history of China's northern frontiers is a litany of war and peace between the agriculturalists of the Chinese or Han people in the Huang He (Yellow River) basin, and the non-Han pastoral tribes who roamed across the Mongolian deserts and grassland. For thousands of years the Han farmers and the non-Han nomads fought over the more fertile and productive land in China's northern frontiers. When the pastoralists were united and strong, they would invade the Han people. When they were disunited, the Han people would subjugate them. However, military alliances and cultural interaction are also a significant feature in the history of China's northern frontiers. These Han and non-Han alliances have broken down the dichotomy of the northern nomads and southern agriculturalists in Chinese history.