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**Landscape Practices and Representations
in Eighteenth-Century Dongchuan,
Southwest China**

Proefschrift

Ter verkrijging van
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Contents

Acknowledgements	i
Figures	iii
Introduction: Landscape studies of the empire's margin	1
Chapter 1 From 'Black' Area to New Imperial Territory	25
1.1 Dongchuan and northeastern Yunnan: 'nominal' administration	
1.2 Transport routes into Yunnan	
1.3 Dongchuan and northeastern Yunnan during the Qing dynasty	
1.4 Copper transport and the Jinsha channel excavation project	
Chapter 2 From Indigenous Capital to Qing Walled City	51
2.1 Indigenous capital in the late seventeenth century	
2.2 The first rammed-earth walled city of Dongchuan in the early eighteenth century	
2.3 The stone-walled city	
2.4 The upper and lower city of Dongchuan: Cui Naiyong's personal experience	
2.5 Ritual buildings: educating and civilizing functions	
2.6 Mining businesses and the guild halls: wealthy merchant groups	
2.7 The walled city in the late Qing dynasty	
Chapter 3 'The Picturesque Empire's Land'? Ten Views of Dongchuan	80
3.1 The tradition of 'best views'	
3.2 Perceiving the ten views of Dongchuan	
3.3 Civilization: the hot spring and Creeper Sea	
3.4 The ten views, roads and landmarks	
3.5 Other sets of eight views in northeastern Yunnan	

Chapter 4 Zhenwu Statues or Dragon Pools? Change in the Religious Landscape	110
4.1 Black Dragon Mountain, Black Dragon Temple and Zhenwu shrine	
4.2 Replacing the dragon cult in northeastern Yunnan	
4.3 The dragon cult of indigenous people	
4.4 Worshipping at the dragon pool: praying for rain, entertainment and ancestor worship	
4.5 Granting amnesty to indigenous people and their dragon deity	
Chapter 5 Contested Spaces: Wenchang Temple and Meng Da Shrine	134
5.1 Scholastic fortune? Wenchang temples in Dongchuan	
5.1.1 Wenchang Palace on Golden Bell Mountain	
5.1.2 Geomancy? The Relocation of Wenchang Temple	
5.1.3 Stories of Western and Eastern Wenchang Temple	
5.2 Meng Yan or Meng Da? The indigenous ritual space at the foot of Golden Bell Mountain	
5.2.1 The cult of Meng Yan: indigenous general who surrendered to the Han	
5.2.2 Meng Da and Shesai: the story about the origin of the Lu family	
5.2.3 'Fake' Han Chinese people	
Conclusion	162
Abbreviations	171
Bibliography	172

Acknowledgements

In 2005, I went to Yunnan for the very first time. I remember how impressed I was when I arrived at the old walled city area of Dongchuan (present-day Huize county), with the majestic Confucius temple compound, magnificent merchant mansions and unpretentious vernacular dwellings. Since then, I started to devote myself to this remote town, and eventually I finished my doctoral thesis which concerns the interdisciplinary study of landscape, space and architecture in eighteenth-century Dongchuan. This could have never happened without the support and encouragement of many institutions and individuals.

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Figures

Fig. I.

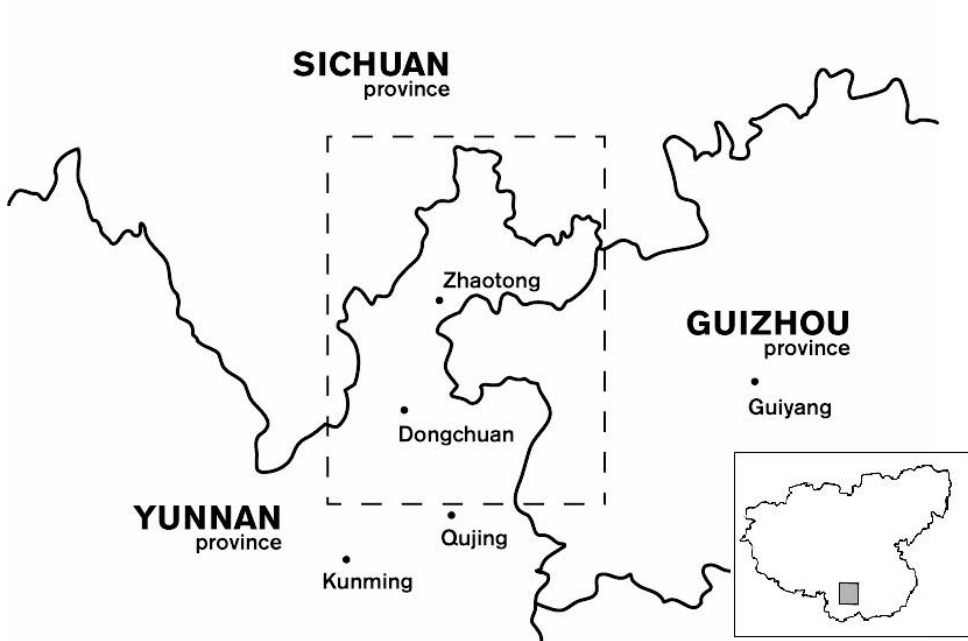


Fig. 1.1 Zhuti 朱提 prefecture during Jin dynasties (266-420).



Fig. 1.2 Nanzhao 南詔 kingdom (738-937)



Fig. 1.3 Dali 大理 kingdom (937-1253)



Fig. 1.4 Northeastern Yunnan in the Yuan dynasty



Fig. 1.5 Transport routes into Yunnan

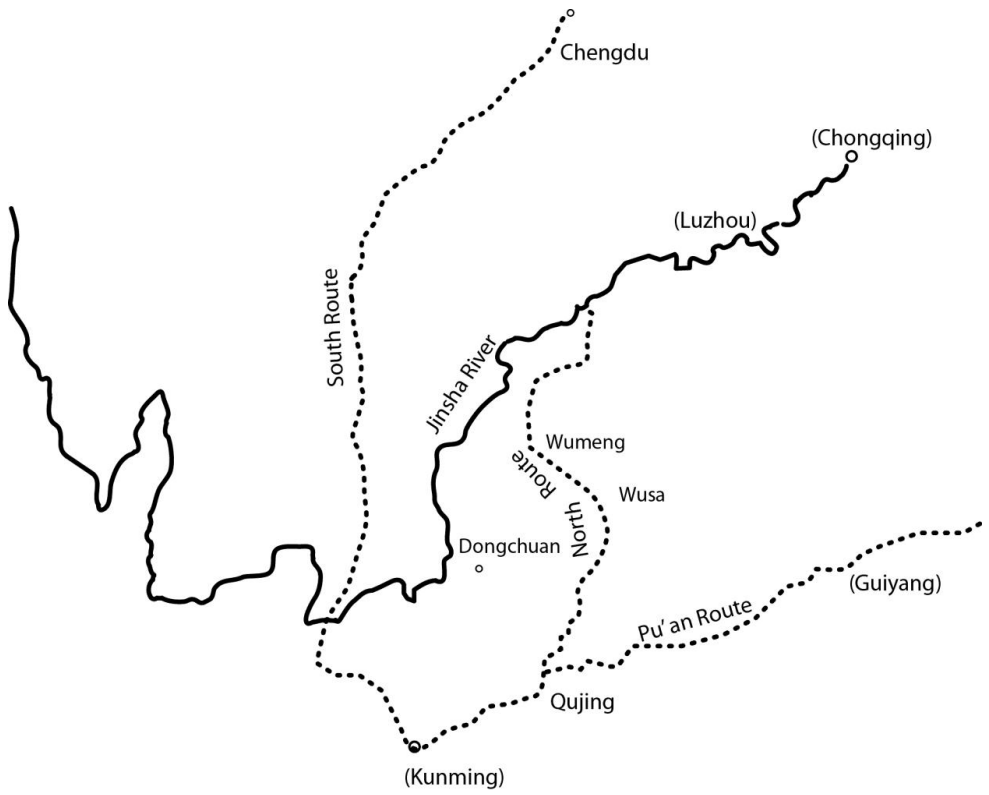


Fig. 1.6 Northeastern Yunnan in the Ming dynasty



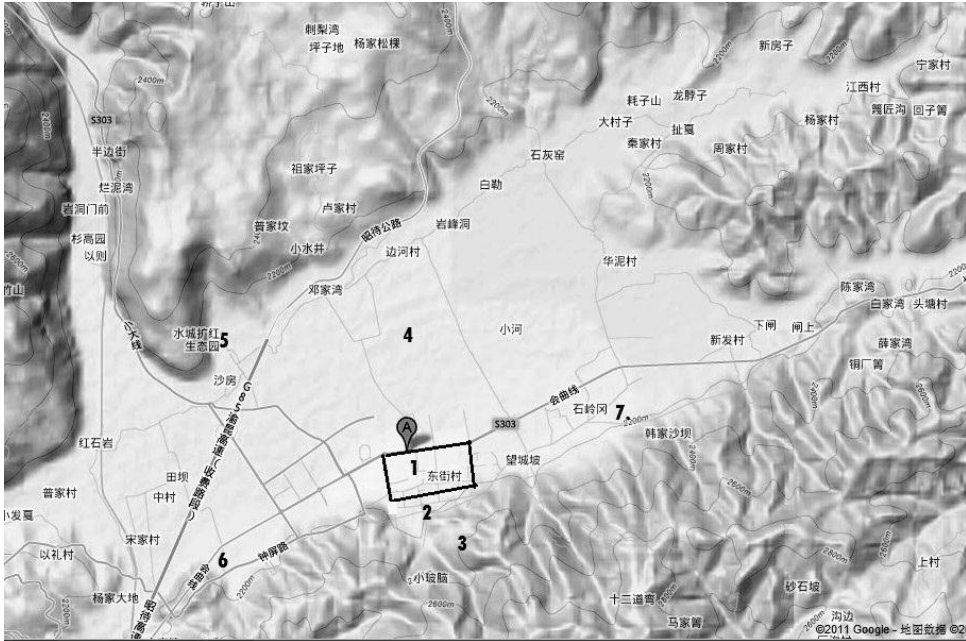
Fig. 1.8 Northeastern Yunnan in the Qing dynasty



Fig. 1.9 Copper transport routes



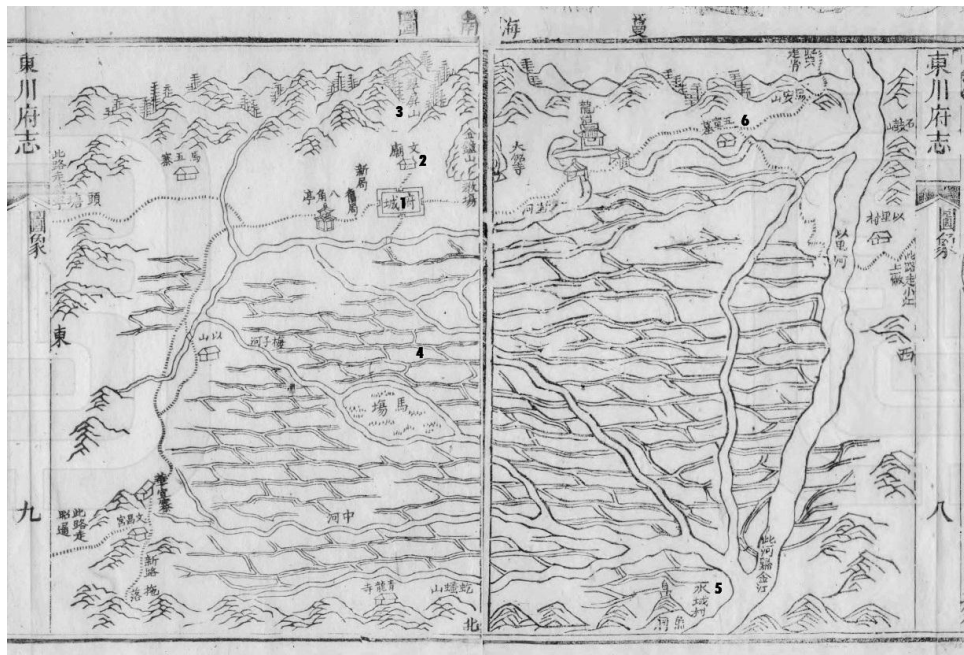
Fig. 2.1 the walled city of Dongchuan on the Google map of Huize County, 2012



1. The walled city
2. Confucius Temple
3. Green Screen Mountain
4. Creeper Sea
5. Water Capital Village
6. Wu Longmu (the Earth Capital)
7. Tucheng Village (the Earth Capital)



Fig. 2.2 the map of Creeper Sea in the Dongchuan gazetteer, 1761.



1. the walled city
2. Confucius Temple
3. Green Screen Mountain
4. Creeper Sea
5. The Water Capital
6. Wu Longmu (the Earth Capital)

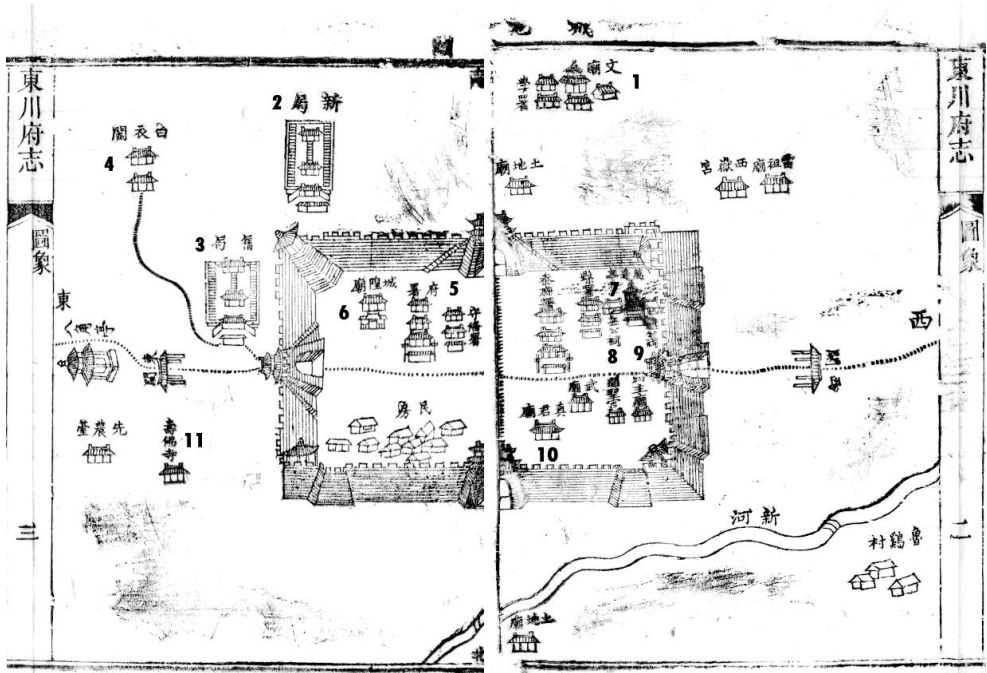


Fig. 2.3 the map of Zhaotong in the Zhaotong gazetteer, 1762 (1911)



1. Tianti (the unfinished old walled city of the Qing government)
2. Ermuna (the old indigenous capital and the new walled city of the Qing government)

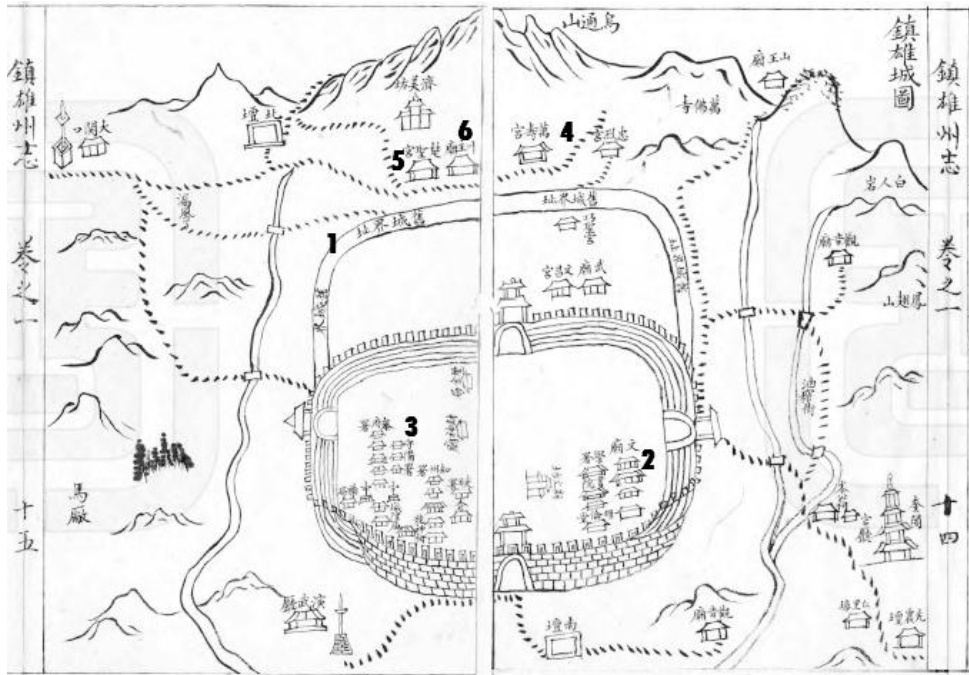
Fig. 2.4 the map of the walled city of Dongchuan in the Dongchuan gazetteer, 1761



- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Confucius Temple | 6. City God Temple |
| 2. The Old Mint Factory | 7. Longevity Pavilion |
| 3. The New Mint Factory | 8. Yue General Shrine |
| 4. White Cloth Pavilion | 9. Wei General Shrine |
| 5. The office of prefect | 10. Jiangxi Guild Hall |
| | 11. Huguang Guild Hall |



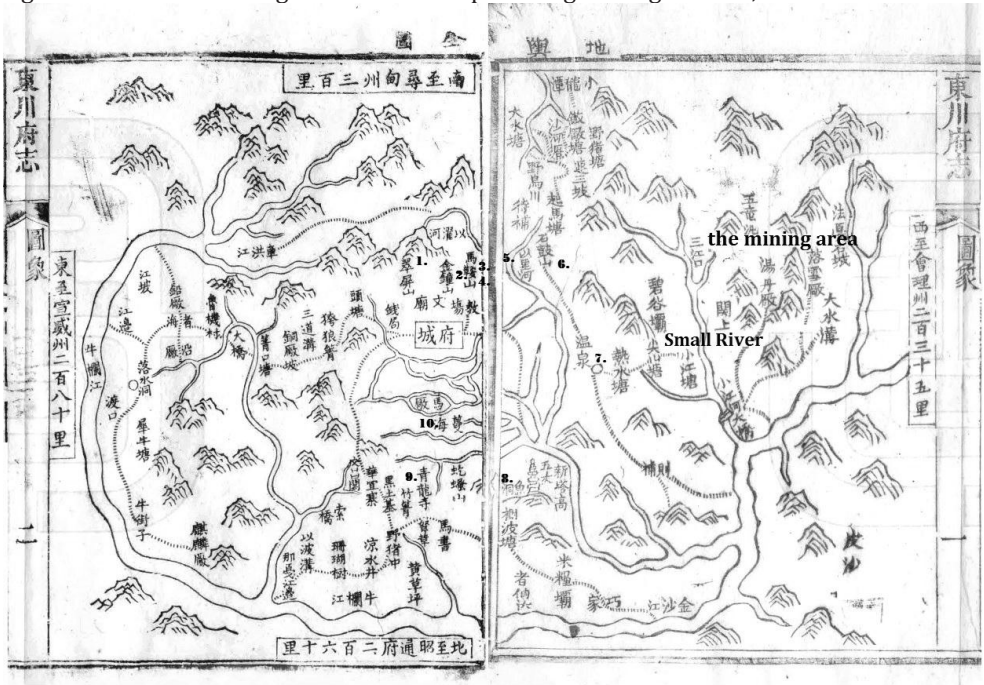
Fig. 2.5 the old walls and the new walls drawn on the map in the Zhenxiang gazetteer. 1762.



1. The old walls (unfinished by Cui Naiyong)
2. Confucius Temple
3. The office of sub prefect
4. Jiangxi Guild Hall
5. Huguang Guild Hall
6. Sichuan Guild Hall



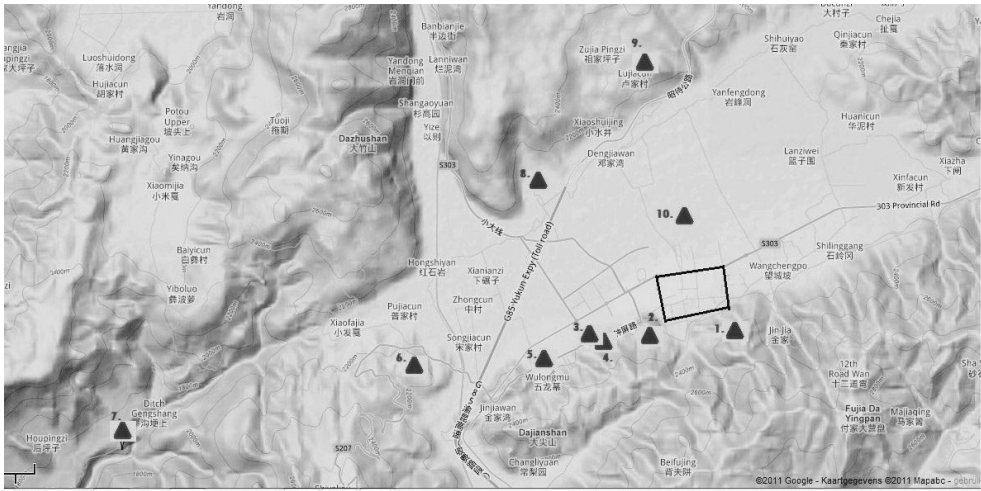
Fig. 3.1 Ten views of Dongchuan on the map of Dongchuan gazetteer, 1761



1. 'Spring Dawn at Green Screen Mountain' (*cuiping chunxiao* 翠屏春曉);
2. 'Evening Glow over Golden Bell Mountain' (*jinzhong xizhao* 金鐘夕照);
3. 'Midnight Moon in the Dragon Pool' (*longtan yeyue* 龍潭夜月);
4. 'Cloud Formations over Rainbow Mountain' (*yinhong yunzhen* 飲虹雲陣);
5. 'Peach Blossoms at Wulongmu Village' (*longmu taohua* 龍霧桃花);
6. 'Woodcutters' Song from Stone Drum Mountain' (*shigu qiaoge* 石鼓樵歌);
7. 'Willow Waves at the Hot Spring' (*wenquan lilang* 溫泉柳浪);
8. 'Fisherman's Flute from Water Capital Village' (*shuicheng yudi* 水城漁笛);
9. 'Remnants of Snow on Black Dragon Mountain' (*qinglong canxue* 青龍殘雪);
10. 'Autumn Harvest at Creeper Sea' (*manhai qiucheng* 蔓海秋成).



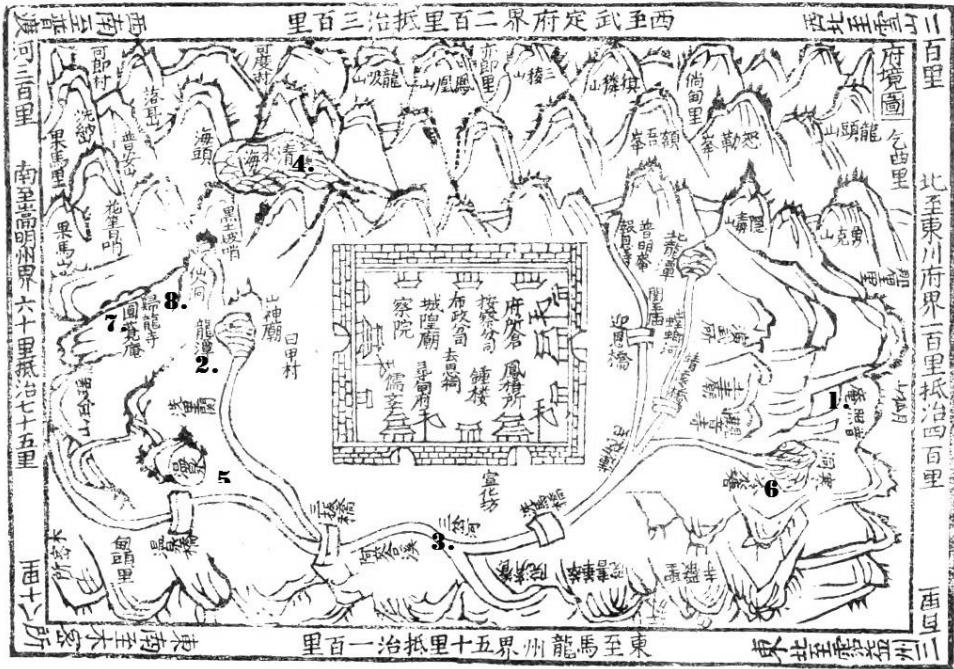
Fig. 3.2 Ten views of Dongchuan on the Google map of Huize County, 2012



1. 'Spring Dawn at Green Screen Mountain' (*cuiping chunxiao*翠屏春晚);
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10. 'Autumn Harvest at Creeper Sea' (*manhai qiucheng*蔓海秋成)



Fig. 3.3 Eight views of Xundian on the map of Xundian gazetteer, 1550



1. 'The Phoenix and the Wutong Tree Facing the Clouds' (*fengwu chaoyun* 鳳梧朝雲),
2. 'Midnight Moon in the Dragon Pool' (*longtan yeyue* 龍潭夜月),
3. 'The Eastern River Twists and Turns' (*dongjiang quche* 東江曲折),
4. 'The Lake in the West Clears Up' (*xihai chengqing* 西海澄清),
5. 'Hot Spring in the Southern Valley' (*nangu wenquan* 南穀溫泉),
6. 'Cold Cave on North Creek' (*beixi handong* 北溪寒洞),
7. 'Dark Green Pine at Perfect Enlightenment Monastery' (*yuanjue cangsong* 圓覺蒼松),
8. 'Returning Dragon Ancient Temple' (*guilong gusi* 歸龍古寺)



Fig. 3.4 Eight views of Zhenxiong on the map of Zhenxiong gazetteer, 1784


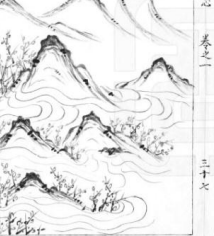
<p>鎮雄州志 卷之一 三十一</p> <p>馬家營草</p> 	<p>八景圖</p>	<p>鎮雄州志 卷之一 三十二</p> <p>仙人仙影</p> 	<p>數處丹珠象借恩宅省五 名顯運通義得碧螺錫雲 月都虛黃芙蓉春種森數 蒙雲觸瑞霖雨覺生蓬巖 寧雅潤滋翠植景選詩如 便呈城頭姑景景接山如 擬演連珠圖</p>
<p>鎮雄州志 卷之一 三十三</p> <p>月窟禪光</p> 	<p>萬翅出頭白髮跳富身之斯渺望 之巖然空骨何有豐稔周遊 主空月路亭道盡鏡佛火任祥 無取眾生禮讀不台口是科 殿春先禱之靈得常存如 範全成 贊 畫</p>	<p>鎮雄州志 卷之一 三十三</p> <p>一星拱斗</p> 	<p>眼宵月擲懷古 弄卷危果蘇葛 艸吐脫片錫鏡 生似子紅氣化 門乃贈濟意盡 牙長 贊 畫</p>
<p>鎮雄州志 卷之一 三十四</p> <p>平堤春耕</p> 	<p>為控耕牛行步力狀轉尋不 轉危在乳氣沈灌漑包將抱 一星少一人人馬馬可 皆仙首視何可轉莫不矢 研江修農苗與阜文化是 一星二星道大受仰祝俯望 贊 畫</p>	<p>鎮雄州志 卷之一 三十五</p> <p>二水像珠</p> 	<p>謝沃正勃動段後新水生燒 羅古勃蛇果戲罪開鳴水燒 婦子勤澤果豐才井歲計維 在春驚躍基秋成飽上衷 夫饑騰米燧橫古百各資 昏不無遠濤上雲燭爾勞屢 須用聆明對歡喜克敬 贊 畫</p>
<p>鎮雄州志 卷之一 三十六</p> <p>柱磯綵釣</p> 	<p>水雙環并嵌園侶涉世非蘇 湖西域寶明主權合浦金麻 垂遠胡尚能互攫寒湧後教 或爭喧水自流自百閩千古 未不相問漁子藕春驪眼懷 寶照宜暢然 銘 贊 畫</p>	<p>鎮雄州志 卷之二 三十七</p> <p>蘇均流雲</p> 	<p>雙肅驕神麟臥鬱壓誰 蚩十樽繫印舌銀鈞鑿 鍊嵌擊金鬚嵌兩唱乘 叱響百回裁裁來撫把 不是官類一片箇箇露 闕窈窕 韻 贊 畫</p>

Fig. 4.1 Chao'an hill in the geomantic theory

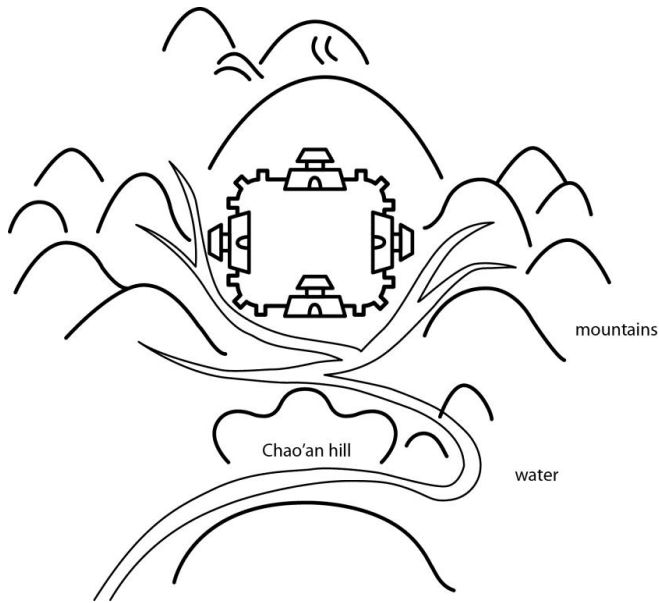


Fig. 4.2 Black Dragon Mountain on the map of the Dongchuan gazetteer, 1761.

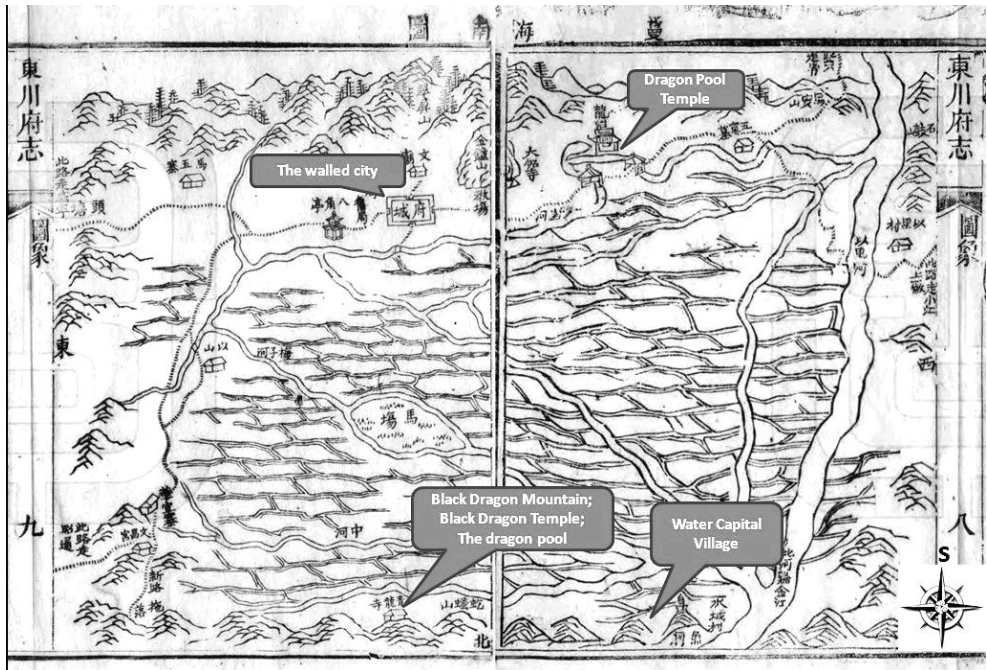


Fig. 5.1 Wenchang temples on the Google map of Huize County, 2012

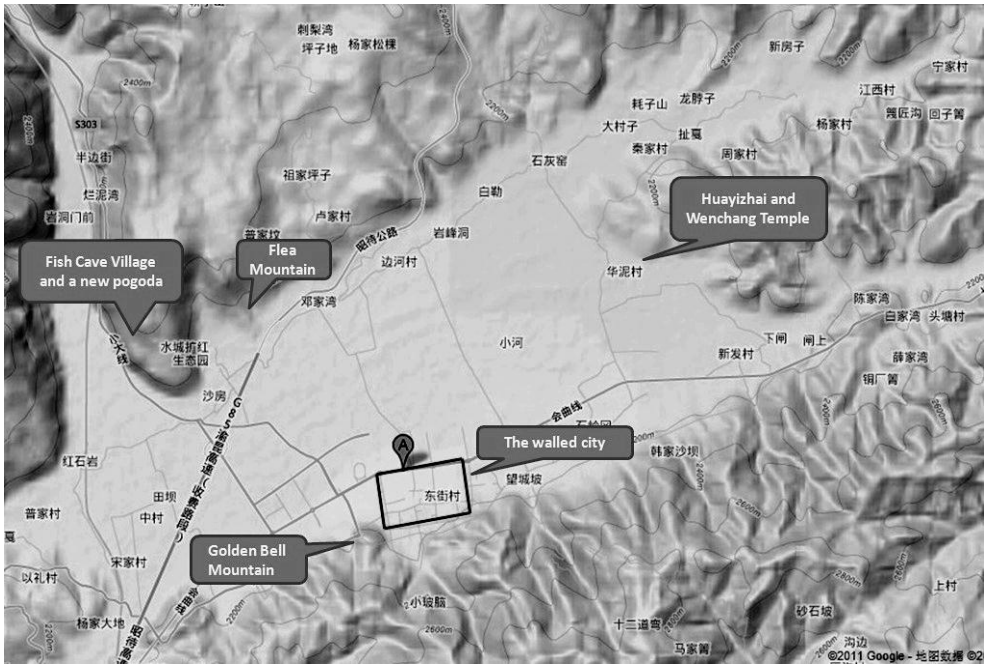


Fig. 5.2 Wenchang temples on the map of the Dongchuan gazetteer, 1761.

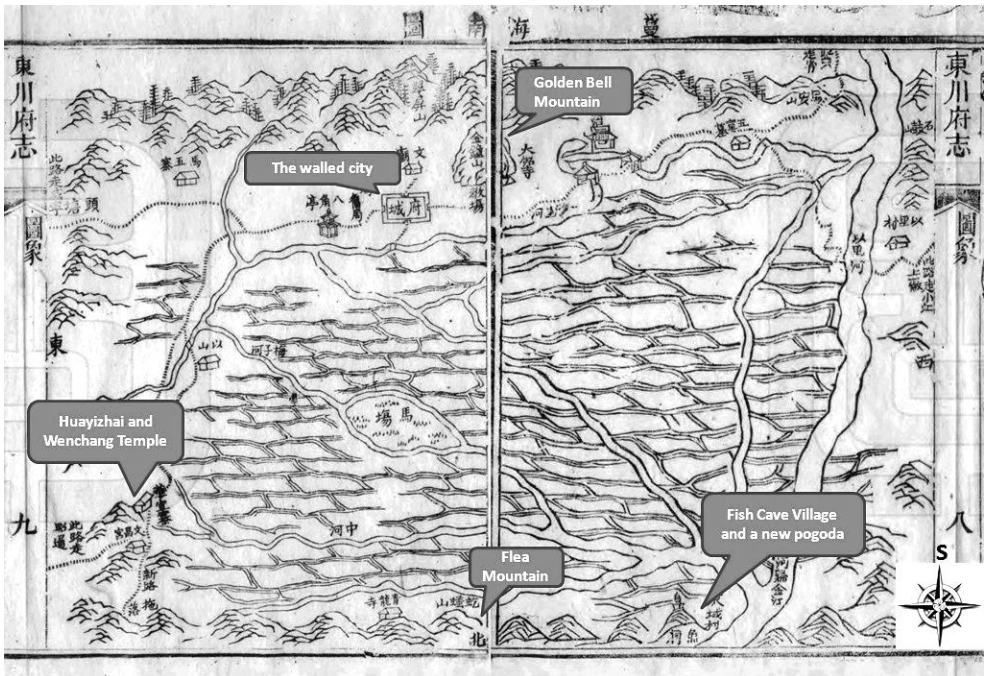


Fig. 5.3 The new pagoda on the map of the Dongchuan gazetteer, 1761



Nevertheless, their minds were fixed on the city and its people, for as Pollard lifted his eyes to the apparently endless ranges of mountains which surrounded him, they can have been to him nothing more than magnificent scenery. It was wonderful to see them from a distance; but they were dark and foreboding, known only as the region of wandering bands of brigands, and the haunts of wild animals, and of a wild people.¹

Introduction: Landscape studies of the empire's margin

When the Yongzheng 雍正 emperor (1678-1735) of the Qing dynasty came to the throne in 1723, he immediately realized that much of the land in the southwestern part of his territory was controlled by powerful indigenous chieftains. Unlike his father, the Kangxi 康熙 emperor (1654-1722), he wanted to subjugate these indigenous chieftains in order to fully control this area. To help accomplish this, He Shiji 何世璠, associate provincial governor of Guizhou, cautiously suggested that it would be better to settle quarrels and avoid armed conflict by appeasing the indigenous chieftains. He was deeply worried about the Qing army having to face the difficulties and dangers of a rather harsh climate and the perilous terrain of the deep river-carved gorges and mountains where the indigenous communities of the Southwest lived. However, Emperor Yongzheng soon began to lose his patience after He Shiji's diplomatic attempts at a peaceful solution proved fruitless. At this time, in 1726, a radical suggestion proposed by E'ertai 鄂爾泰, the new governor-general of Yunnan and Guizhou provinces in 1725, attracted Emperor Yongzheng's attention. E'ertai claimed that the disobedient barbarians would have to be suppressed by force. And his first target in the Southwest was the indigenous people living in Dongchuan, Wumeng, and Zhenxiong, an area covering present-day

¹ Kendall, R. Elliott, *Beyond the Clouds: The Story of Samuel Pollard of South-West China* (London: Corgate Press, 1948), p. 6. Samuel Pollard (1864-1915) was a British Methodist missionary to China.

southeastern Sichuan, northeastern Yunnan and northwestern Guizhou provinces.² (Fig. 1)

Yongzheng was not the first emperor to be troubled by the ungoverned inhabitants of the Southwest. With its perilous and unwelcome environment, the Southwest had always been populated by indigenous groups and had long remained outside of fully administered involvement by the central state, except for the nominal submission of the indigenous chieftains. Since the Han dynasty (202 BC to AD 220), each successive central regime had tried to build connections and penetrate their power into the Southwest. Step by step, the central state gradually established effective control in the Southwest, especially in the cities and towns near the capital and along the transport routes. Still, before the eighteenth century, there were many 'blank' areas inside the Southwest that remained beyond the reach of the central state. Dongchuan and other parts of present-day northeastern Yunnan formed one of these 'blank' areas.

Situated in the most inaccessible part of the Southwest, with deep river gorges and mountains, Dongchuan had been located within the nominal boundaries of the empire for many centuries; nevertheless, it continued to be ruled by powerful indigenous chieftains and stayed out of reach of effective central control. As E'ertai predicted in his suggestion to Yongzheng, by using efficient forceful and bloody means, the Qing state was able to overpower the indigenous chieftains of Dongchuan, Wumeng and Zhenxiong in 1726–1730. After that, the Qing established their own government with Han or Manchu officials, and Qing garrisons were distributed around the area. By means of institutional and military force, Dongchuan and other parts of northeastern Yunnan came under the effective control of the Qing.

Among the important consequences of conquering Dongchuan after investing heavily in military expenditures was not only that the rebellious indigenous chieftains had been put down, but also that Dongchuan's rich copper deposits began to be exploited on a large scale by the Qing government. The main purpose for the copper mines was to use the metal for minting copper coins, which was a major currency in the market exchange of the Qing state. For copper coins, the Qing needed around 1,000,000 kg of copper each year. Since the second half of the seventeenth century copper had been imported mainly from Japan. But Japanese copper exports had been greatly reduced in the early eighteenth century because of strict limitations imposed by the Tokugawa

² *QSG*, vol. 34, *juan* 288, p. 10230.

regime. The Qing state had no choice but to undertake a massive effort to exploit copper and other metal deposits in the Southwest.³ As soon as Qing administrative control was achieved, copper exploitation immediately started in Dongchuan. This area quickly became the main source of copper for Qing coinage because Dongchuan contained almost seventy percent of the copper deposits of what is present-day Yunnan province. Dongchuan was transformed in the eighteenth century from a remote hinterland into a pivotal player in the imperial economic network.

Along with copper transport, there was a series of construction projects by the Qing government in the area, such as roads and waterways, a new stone-walled city, official and ritual buildings, and all daily facilities needed for the walled city. Meanwhile, following the flourishing mining business, increasing numbers of Han Chinese immigrants from other parts of China hurried to Dongchuan. Tens of thousands of people were engaged in mining, forging, and transporting copper, as well as supplying all of life's necessities and leisure pursuits. As a small and remote city that was at the same time 'directly' connected to the imperial Qing economy of the eighteenth century, Dongchuan remains relatively unexplored by academics. The important role of Dongchuan in the imperial economy has been researched by modern scholars of industrial and economic studies. They focus on the production and circulation of copper coins and silver both domestically and internationally, to understand the bureaucratic management and control of the monetary system in the early modern period.⁴ However,

³ Yan Zhongping 嚴中平, *Qingdai Yunnan tongzheng kao* 清代雲南銅政考 (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1948), pp. 3-5.

⁴ Yan Zhongping 嚴中平, *Qingdai Yunnan tongzheng kao*; Wang Yejian 王業鍵, *Zhongguo jindai huobi yu yinhang de yanjin* 中國近代貨幣與銀行的演進(1644-1937) (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jingji yanjiusuo, 1981); Peng Weixin 彭信威, *Zhongguo huobi shi* 中國貨幣史 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1949); Xia Xiangrong 夏湘蓉, Li Zhongjun 李仲均, Wang Genyuan 王根元, *Zhongguo gudai kuangye kaifashi* 中國古代礦業開發史 (Taipei: Mingwen shujū, 1989); Zhongguo renmin daxue qingshi yanjiushi 中國人民大學清史研究室, *Qingdai de kuangye* 清代的礦業 (Beijing: Zhonghua shujū, 1983); Peng-sheng Chiu 邱澎生, Shiba shijie diantong shichang zhong de guanshang guanxi yu liyi guannian 十八世紀滇銅市場中的官商關係與利益觀念, *Zhongyang yanjiu yuan lishi yanjiusuo jikan* (Taipei, 2001), vol. 72, no.1, pp. 49-119; Nakajima Satoshi 中島敏, 'Shinchō no dōsei ni okeru yōdō to tendō' 清朝の銅政における洋銅と滇銅, *Tōyōshigaku ronshū* 東洋史學論集 (Tokyo: Kyūko Shoin 汲古書院, 1988), pp. 161-177; Kawakatsu Mamoru 川勝守, 'Shin-Kenryūki unnandō no kyōun mondai' 清・乾隆期雲南銅の京運問題, in *Min Shin Kōnōsei to kyōkudaitoshi rensa—Chōkō to Daiungawa* 明清貢納制と巨大都市連鎖 - 長江と大運河 (Tokyo: Kyūko Shoin 汲古書院, 2009), pp. 526 - 629; Hans Ulrich Vogel, 'Cowry Trade and Its Role in the Economy of Yunnan: From the Ninth to the Mid-Seventeenth Century, Part 1', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* (1993), 36. 3: 211-252; 'Cowry Trade and Its Role in the Economy of Yunnan: From the Ninth to the Mid-Seventeenth Century, Part 2', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* (1993), 36. 4: 309-353; 'Chinese Central Monetary Policy, 1644-1800', *Late Imperial China* (1987), 8.2: 1-52; 'Chinese Central Monetary Policy and the Yunnan Copper Mining Industry in the Early Qing (1644-1800)' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Zurich, 1983); Helen Dunstan, 'Safely Sipping with the Devil: The Qing State and Its Merchant Suppliers of Copper', *Late Imperial China* (1992), 13. 2: 42-81; E-Tu Zen Sun, 'The Transportation of Yunnan Copper to Peking in the Ch'ing Period', *Journal of Oriental Studies* (1971), 9: 132-148; *Metals, Monies, and Markets in Early Modern Societies: East Asian and Global Perspectives, Monies, Markets, and Finance in China and East Asia*, ed. by Tomas Hirzel and Nanny Kim, vol.1 (Berlin: Lit verlag Dr. W. Hopf, 2008).

their focus on the mining industry and the monetary system tends to ignore Dongchuan's local society. Apart from a few local amateur historians, no one seems to have studied the tremendous transformation in local society that took place in Dongchuan in the eighteenth century. Meanwhile, as an important area formerly inhabited by indigenous people, especially the present-day Yi, Dongchuan has also been neglected by anthropologists concentrating on the Southwest because nowadays only a small number of Yi reside there. Most research on Yi communities focuses on the Liang Mountain area of southern Sichuan, or on the centre or south of Yunnan and western Guizhou, where more Yi are presently living. In addition, studies of the history of China's southwestern frontier focus on southern and western Yunnan, along the border between China and Southeast Asian countries such as Burma, Laos and Vietnam. Located in the hinterland of northeastern Yunnan, Dongchuan is on the periphery, forming a 'blank' area inside the imperial territory, and has been overlooked by researchers focusing on Southwest China.

I believe that Dongchuan deserves closer scrutiny of its local situation instead of only treating it as part of the economic network of the mining industry and the monetary system. My research presents the local society of Dongchuan during its tremendous transformation in the eighteenth century. It is concerned with the study of landscape, space and architecture in eighteenth-century Dongchuan and other parts of northeastern Yunnan, where indigenous people had been living for many centuries. Here the Qing empire overthrew the indigenous regimes and created new cities and landscapes – new both materially and as representation. The new landscapes overlapped with the territory where indigenous communities lived, yet they did not wipe out all traces of the indigenous past. I found that indigenous conceptions of space and landscape have survived in these communities' stories and myths. Taking into account both state and indigenous perspectives in the eighteenth century, my intention is to explore the interaction between the various discourses on the one hand and, on the other hand, the physical construction of space and landscape by different local groups. This endeavour is innovative both in landscape studies and in pre-modern Chinese society studies, especially for the southwest margin of the empire.

Research on the imperial margins

One of the fundamental issues in studies of pre-modern Chinese society concerns the expansion of the Chinese empire and how this was carried out by military, political, economic and cultural conquest. The dynamic interactive relationship between the state and local societies, between the central government and peripheral indigenous groups, during this period of expansion has drawn the attention of several scholars. The term 'sinicization' (*hanhua* 漢化) seems unavoidable for the study of non-Han groups in China. It implies that the history of the periphery of the empire is mainly the process of the superior Han Chinese culture transforming and assimilating the non-Han peoples situated in the empire's margins. The term 'sinicization' has been debated since the 1990s, one of the best-known exchanges being between Evelyn Rawski and Ping-ti Ho.⁵ Following the rise of 'New Qing history', studies published since the 1990s suggest that the sinicization of non-Han groups does not fit in the Qing dynasty whose rulers were Manchu.⁶ The main participants in the debate, Pamela Crossley, Mark Elliott, Edward Rhoads and James Millard, focus on the Manchu centre to reconstruct the conventional knowledge of the Qing dynasty.⁷ They argue that the Manchu emperors consciously tried to keep their Manchu identity. In the Qing dynasty, Confucian principles are seen in the emperor's outstanding position as Son of Heaven (*tianzi* 天子). The purpose of sinicization was not just teaching indigenous people the cultural values of Han Chinese, but most importantly to teach them to view the emperor as the figurative centre of the empire.

Meanwhile, the term 'colonization' is used in most of the studies of pre-modern China in the Western academic world. Since the Qing is considered a Manchu empire, Western scholars see the Qing as having colonized central Asia, Tibet, the south, and the southwest, as these were areas where other ethnic groups predominated. This concept of colonization corresponds with the characteristics of most Western colonial powers, such as the Romans, the Ottomans, the British, and the United States. Western scholars

⁵ Evelyn S. Rawski, 'Re-envisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing Period in Chinese History', *Journal of Asian Studies* (1996), 55.4: 829-50; Ping-ti Ho, 'In Defense of Sinicization: A Rebuttal of Evelyn Rawski's "Re-envisioning the Qing"', *Journal of Asian Studies* (1998), 57.1: 123-55.

⁶ *New Qing Imperial History: The Making of Inner Asian Empire at Qing Chengde*, ed. by James Millard, Ruth Dunnell, Mark Elliott and Philippe Forêt (London: Curzon Routledge, 2004).

⁷ Pamela Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Crossley, *The Manchus* (Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1997); Crossley, *Orphan Warriors: Three Manchu Generations and the End of the Qing World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990). Rawski, 'Re-envisioning the Qing: the significance of the Qing period in Chinese history', *Journal of Asian Studies*, (1996) 55. 4: 829-850. Mark Elliott, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001); Edward Rhoads, *Manchus and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China, 1861-1928* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2000).

suggest that we should consider Manchu colonialism in a global perspective instead of as a regional empire, to emphasize that the Qing should be situated in the pre-modern era and not in the late-imperial age. These scholars attempt to overcome the borders drawn on present-day national maps, to retell the history of how the Qing (the Manchus) conquered and established their sovereignty in such a big territory. By highlighting the similarities between the Qing empire and European expansion of overseas peoples and cultures, such parallels are easily identified by Western scholars, yet are difficult to be accepted by Chinese scholars, who are then labelled by Western scholars as 'nationalist' or 'traditionalist' historians. Using the term 'colonization' suggests 'coercion', which is emphasized by Western scholars who suggest that we should not overstate the cultural assimilation between China's central plain and areas colonized by China such as central Asia, the south, and the southwest.⁸

In their recent studies on Southwest China, both John Herman and Laura Hostetler support this argument based on their studies of Guizhou's indigenous people and their communities or kingdoms in imperial China. Herman's intention was to present a different story of indigenous society in the gradual process of the powerful central state militarily conquering and colonizing the southwest frontier between 1200 and 1700, especially Guizhou province during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). Herman argues that the indigenous history of the Nosu Yi people in the Southwest deserves to be reconstructed based on recently published Yi historical documents. He traces this history back to the indigenous kingdoms that dominated most of Guizhou province from the fourth century onwards, and how they continually resisted or negotiated with the central state to keep the colonizers out of their homeland. For Herman, Han Chinese in the Southwest dominated both political institutions and economic enterprises, which were not open to indigenous people. Instead of 'civilizing' or 'transforming' the non-Han people into Han, the Ming seems more likely to have intensified the institutional barriers between them. In short, Ming colonization of the Southwest was not a 'civilizing mission'. In Herman's argument, the purpose of using the term sinicization is simply to whitewash the merciless colonization of the Southwest as a noble 'Confucian civilizing mission'.⁹

⁸ Peter C. Perdue, 'Comparing Empires: Manchu Colonialism', *The International History Review* (1998), 20. 2: 255-262; Nicola Di Cosmo, Qing Colonial Administration in Inner Asia, *The International History Review* (1998), 20. 2: 287-309; Joanna Waley-Cohen, 'Religion, War, and Empire-Building in Eighteenth-Century China', *The International History Review* (1998), 20. 2: 336-352; Michael Adas, 'Imperialism and Colonialism in Comparative Perspective', *The International History Review* (1998), 20. 2: 371-388.

⁹ John Herman, *Amid the Clouds and Mist: China's Colonization of Guizhou, 1200-1700* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and

Laura Hostetler's research focuses on Qing ethnography and cartography to understand how the Qing represented their territory and the various indigenous groups of the Southwest, especially in Guizhou province. Another main goal of her research is put the Qing empire into a global context, and she shows that the techniques of expansion that the Qing employed were similar to those used in early modern European expansion; how Qing practices of mapping both territory and people were in many ways comparable to those used by European colonial powers. Influenced by recent studies of New Qing history, Hostetler points out that in the Southwest, the Qing's promotion of sinicization of non-Han groups was not limited to Confucian ideology, considering their Manchu background. She emphasizes the production of knowledge, such as detailed maps and ethnographic accounts both in text and image, about the frontier area and its people, as an important way for the Manchus to maintain their control. In this way, the Qing unified their territory and the ethnic groups by representing in mapping and ethnographic description.¹⁰

Another noteworthy recent study of the Southwest comes from C. Patterson Giersch, *Asian Borderlands: The Transformation of Qing China's Yunnan Frontier*. He focuses on the border area of the Qing state in southern Yunnan and Guangzhou and southeastern Yunnan, and Southeast Asian indigenous regimes in Burma and Siam. It is a region of constant tension and negotiation between the ongoing Qing efforts to gain control and the persistent struggle of local groups to resist this. Giersch argues that the Manchu empire had no historical tradition of interaction with the Southwest, and that many elite Yunnan officials appointed by the central state were not Han Chinese but Manchu. He believes that Qing officials who were appointed to the frontier region never made an effort to achieve the outcome of sinicization and that sinicization was not even part of Qing political ideology. The Qing could not completely overpower the indigenous groups but had to negotiate with indigenous elites in this 'middle ground' or meeting place. Meanwhile, the Han Chinese settlers, especially the merchants who were running international trade and interacting with the indigenous community in many ways, are treated as the important factor in forming this dynamic borderland.¹¹

In short, recent studies have argued abundantly against the concept of

London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007).

¹⁰ Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise: Ethnography and Cartography in Early Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

¹¹ Patterson C. Giersch, *Asian Borderland: The Transformation of Qing China's Yunnan Frontier* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 2006).

sinicization and instead have used the concept of colonization in their special focus on the imperial borderlands. By questioning the concept of sinicization, studies of New Qing history emphasize that the Manchu emperors tended to view their empire as consisting of various ethnic groups, such as Manchu, Tibetan, Mongolian, Muslim and Han, instead of simply dividing the population into Chinese (*hua* 华) and barbarian (*yi* 夷). However, in the case of the Southwest, the rhetoric of civilization was not much different between the Ming dynasty and the Qing dynasty; scholars admit that this basic division between civilization and barbarity exists in the discourse of the Qing.¹² On the other hand, suspicion from most of Chinese scholars and some western scholars falls on using the concept of colonization for the Qing period. Comparing the Chinese situation to Europeans and their overseas colonies, scholars have had to admit that there had been substantial interaction and historical connections among a diverse population groups in China for ages. Compared with Europe, China seems always to have been a unified political entity over the long term with a huge territory and great diversity of local cultures.¹³

More importantly, the concepts of sinicization and colonization both imply a dichotomy between the state and local or indigenous society. The central state cannot have established its administration of the new territory overnight, although the official records make it sound as though it had. The active role of local society in the process of state-building deserves more attention, as has been emphasized since the 1980s in research on South China, especially the Pearl River delta during the period between 1600 and 1800, carried out by David Faure, Helen Siu, Liu Zhiwei, Chen Chunsheng, Zheng Zhengman. Referring to the sinicization model that had already been challenged, they point out that it is a one-way narrative because it neglects the active role of local society and indigenous groups in the process of cultural change. Instead of only analysing the expansion of irresistible state power or 'Chinese culture', these researchers believe that there were adaptations and accommodation between the state and the various population groups in the periphery. They try to avoid the dichotomy of state and local society. Being located far away from the centre, the Chinese empire at the margins largely appears to be a cultural construct instead of a 'real' empire. The scholars indicate

¹² *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China*, ed. by Pamela Kyle Crossley, Helen F. Siu, and Donald S. Sutton (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2006), p. 8.

¹³ Michael Adas, Imperialism and Colonialism in Comparative Perspective, *The International History Review* (1998), 20. 2: 371-388, especially pp. 384-387.

that for the people living in this vast empire in the pre-modern period, a Han Chinese identity was usually of little significance to them, but they did acknowledge the existence of something that we now call 'state' or 'empire', a centre of power that was located far away but which they recognized they had to take into account. Moreover, they knew that there were other people like them who all lived under the rule of the central state. And they did have an ideological model of unified empire. This 'unified' was not an unchangeable fact. 'Unifying' may be a better word to describe the ongoing process of state-building.¹⁴

In studies of state-building in South China, scholars have noticed that, situated in the periphery far away from the central court, there was inevitable distortion in the way local actors identified themselves with the state. Questions that should be raised are who represented the 'state' in local society, how did they tell the story of 'state', and how did local people get to know the 'state' and come to treat it as authority. A policy coming out of the central court can only be carried out by local agents, such as local officials appointed by the central court, a local elite who believed they were the agents of the state, or other local groups willing to cooperate with the state, no matter whether the civilized centre was real or imagined. The state-building process largely depended on how local actors understood, imagined and engaged with the imperial metaphor in their society from bottom to top, and not simply by top-down coercion. In other words, the process of establishing state authority is the process of local or indigenous agents finding ways to connect themselves to the centre, the empire, the civilization, while they themselves also establish their own authority or pursue their own interests at the same time.

As the above-mentioned scholars of state-building in South China describe it, the representation of empire was improvised and expressed in kinship records, in daily rituals and religious texts for local deities, and in community festivals by the agency of local persons and communities. In other words, local actors manipulated the concept of 'state', and it was under the interpretation of these local actors that local society was brought into the imperial enterprise. In this way, the state and local or indigenous society are not contrasting concepts but are participants in the same process through their respective local agents. Therefore, the scholars mentioned earlier believe we should pay more attention to the spaces at the margins of empire which allowed

¹⁴ 蕭鳳霞(Helen Siu), 'Nian zai huanan yanjiu zhi lü' 廿載華南研究之旅, *Qinghua shehui xue pinglun* (2001), 1: 181-190.

negotiation for both sides. Instead of asking how the frontier populations were sinicized or colonized, we should emphasize how local actors turned into the makers of Han identity and state authority.¹⁵

Inspired by these studies, another important work on the Southwest comes from Wen Chunlai. Wen's research focuses mainly on northwestern Guizhou, from the tenth to the nineteenth century, and presents the transformation of the institutional system that was established by the central state in the Southwest and the indigenous institutional system within the Yi community. Wen discusses economic development and the changeability of cultural identity in the Southwest during this long process of institutional transformation. He shows the historical process by which northwestern Guizhou was integrated into imperial territory, especially after two hundred years under the rule of the Ming dynasty. Wen points out that whether from the state or the indigenous perspective, most researchers on the Southwest still set up a dichotomy between the active central state conquering and the passive indigenous people responding. Wen argues that not only did the powerful central state directly expand its territory from the top down, but that there were also powerful local or indigenous groups who were willing to join in the imperial system. Wen notes that the indigenous community was not a single, homogeneous unit. Within the indigenous community there were multiple interest groups competing with each other. Some indigenous leaders negotiated with the central state and made use of the concept of the central state to establish their own authority within the indigenous community. During this process of interaction and negotiation, each side took what it needed and formed the 'great unity' (*dayitong* 大一統) in the Southwest.¹⁶

From a different angle, ethnographical studies of Southwest China and Southeast Asia have attempted to reveal the history of indigenous groups from an anthropological

¹⁵ David Faure, *Emperor and Ancestor: State and Lineage in South China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007); *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity and Frontier in Early Modern China*, ed. by Pamela Kyle Crossley, Helen Siu and Donald Sutton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); *Down to Earth*, ed. by Helen Siu and David Faure (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995). 科大衛 (David Faure), 'Gaobie huanan yanjiu 告別華南研究', *Xuebu yu chaoyue: Huanan yanjiu lunwen ji* 學步與超越: 華南研究論文集, ed. by Huanan yanjiu hui 華南研究會 (Hong Kong: Wenhua chuangzao chubanshe, 2004), pp. 9-30; *Minjian xinyang yu shehui kongjian* 民間信仰與社會空間, ed. by Zheng Zhengman 鄭振滿 and Chen Chunsheng 陳春聲 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2003); Liu Zhiwei 劉志偉, 'Diyu shehui de jiegou guocheng: zhujiang sanjiaozhou yanjiu de lishixue yu renleixue de duihua' 地域社會的結構過程: 珠江三角洲研究的歷史學與人類學的對話, *Lishi yanjiu* 歷史研究 (2003), 1: 54-64; Liu Zhiwei, *Zai guojia yu shehui zhi jian: Mingqing guangdong huji fushui zhidu yanjiu* 在國家與社會之間: 明清廣東戶籍賦稅制度研究 (Guangzhou: Zhongshan daxue chubanshe, 1997).

¹⁶ Wen Chunlai 溫春來, *Cong 'yiyu' dao 'jiujiang': song zhi qing guizhou xibei bu diqu de zhitu, kaifa yu rentong* 從'異域'到'舊疆': 宋至清貴州西北部地區的制度、開發與認同 (Shanghai: shenghuo dushu xinzhishi san lian shudian, 2008).

perspective. James Scott's latest contribution to Southeast Asian studies introduces the term 'Zomia', which covers a vast region of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Burma as well as Yunnan, Guizhou, Guangxi and parts of Sichuan. In Scott's discussion 'Zomia' is the largest remaining region of the world today whose population has not yet been fully incorporated into nation-states.¹⁷ Focusing on the encounter between the hill peoples and valley peoples of mainland Southeast Asia, Scott interprets it as the encounter between a settled, state-governed population and a frontier of less governed 'state-fleeing' groups. The non-state space in the ungoverned periphery was treated as a threat to the state; the state wished to integrate the land, people and resources in the periphery in order to benefit the central state. However, Scott insists that this non-state space actually provided an alternative life for those who chose to stay in the hills of 'Zomia' in order to flee state oppression in the valleys. Similarly, livelihoods, social organization, ideologies and oral culture should all be considered strategies for how state-fleeing people can keep their distance from the state. Although the state's expansion seems inescapable, it is still a choice of local or indigenous people's free will to place themselves within or outside the state. In the long view, many groups are mobile and fluid, they have moved strategically within or outside the state, back and forth between the valleys and the hills. In this way, Scott challenges the standard story of civilization or social evolution from state centre to non-state space in the periphery, since he sees people living in the periphery as still holding the initiative.¹⁸

A landscape studies approach

The process of state-building in the eighteenth century by military occupation, administrative management, economic exploitation and cultural reconstruction has been widely examined in studies of pre-modern China, both from the perspective of the state and from that of local and indigenous groups. However, the natural surroundings of the Southwest are treated in most of these studies merely as background information. As Scott points out in his study of mainland Southeast Asia, an important geographical theme is that hill areas are for state-fleeing people and valleys are for the state. Studies on environmental issues of the frontier lands in the eighteenth century have only just

¹⁷ The term 'Zomia' was first coined by Willem van Schendel; see Willem van Schendel, 'Geographies of knowing, geographies of ignorance: Jumping scale in Southeast Asia', In *Locating Southeast Asia: Geographies of Knowledge and Politics of Space*, ed. by P. Kratoska, R. Raben, and H. Schulte Nordholt (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2005).

¹⁸ Scott, James C. *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

started to appear.¹⁹ My research takes the perspective of landscape studies, not only dealing with the natural environment, but also considering the interrelations between landscape, space and architecture.

Landscape studies today are most often viewed as belonging to the domain of fine art, architectural design and city planning, for landscapes are most explicitly represented visually in paintings, architecture and cities. On the other hand, because of their close relationship to place, space and environment, landscapes are normally put in the category of geographical phenomena. With the rise of studies of material culture in the last half century, landscape studies have been carried out in such diverse disciplines as art history, archaeology, anthropology, sociology, and historical or cultural geography.

The concept of 'landscape' originated in medieval Germany. The term *Landschaft* meant a feudal peasant landholding – a small, familiar place.²⁰ The word 'landscape' was introduced into English in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as a technical term to describe the artistic representation of a scene, while in the nineteenth century landscape came to denote a genre of painting.²¹ Not until the mid-twentieth century were landscape studies viewed as a distinct field – by W.G. Hoskins and J.B. Jackson. Hoskins's *The Making of the English Landscape* is considered the starting point of landscape studies in Europe. His concern is to 'take the landscape of England as it appears today, and to explain as far as I am able how it came to assume its present form, how the details came to be inserted'. For him, landscapes are the richest historical record of human activities.²² About the same time, the journal *Landscape* was established by J.B. Jackson, who is considered the forerunner of landscape studies in American academia. Jackson views landscape as composed of the human society and its environment which mutually influence each other. In his works the individual dwelling is seen as the main focus. Thus, understanding a landscape in living terms requires giving primary attention to vernacular architecture.²³ In this way, Hoskins and Jackson outlined a new approach for studying landscape history. As part nature and part culture, landscapes pose tension between objective materials and subjective culture, and it is this that was the focus of discussion in studies of material culture at mid-century.

¹⁹ Robert Mark, *Tigers, Rice, Silk, and Silt: Environment and Economy in Late Imperial South China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2004).

²⁰ Alan R.H. Baker, *Geography and History: Bridging the Divide*, Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 109.

²¹ Baker, p. 204.

²² William G. Hoskins, *Making of the English Landscape* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1955), pp.13-15.

²³ John B. Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).

Landscape Discourse in Material Culture

The study of material culture, as we know it now in the British tradition, was promoted in the 1980s by a diverse group of Marxist-inspired archaeologists and anthropologists.²⁴ Having been built by people and involved in people's lives, architecture, town and city planning and all aspects of the human-shaped landscape fall within the field of material culture. Artefacts, objects or things are the principal concerns of contemporary material culture studies: 'objects made or modified by man reflect, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, the beliefs of individuals who made, commissioned, purchased, or used them, and by extension the beliefs of the larger society to which they belonged.'²⁵ Through these material things, scholars attempt to understand the beliefs, values, ideas and attitudes of a particular community or society at a given time. They emphasize 'how apparently inanimate things within the environment act on people, and are acted upon by people, for the purposes of carrying out social functions, regulating social relations and giving symbolic meaning to human activity.'²⁶ Inevitably, the field of material culture sees a dialectical relationship between people and things, and most importantly, not only that people make and use things but also that the things make and use people. Associated with the rise of post-structural and interpretive theory, studies of material culture in the past ten years have been more focused upon 'the diversity of material worlds which become each other's contexts rather than reducing them either to models of the social world or to specific sub-disciplinary concerns... Studies of material culture may often provide insights into cultural *processes*.'²⁷

Compared with studies of material culture in the British tradition, studies of material culture in America fell into the category of folklore and cultural geography, and emphasized vernacular objects. Studies in folklore and folk life have made especially effective use of material evidence, for they see vernacular objects as offering the

²⁴ Ian Woodward, *Understanding Material Culture* (London: SAGE, 2007); *The Material Culture Reader*, ed. by Victor Buchli (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2002); Daniel Miller, *Material Cultures: Why Some Things Matter* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Judy Attfield, *Wild Things: The Material Culture of Everyday Life* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2000); Christopher Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths, and Monuments* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994); *Landscape, Heritage and Identity*, ed. by Christopher Tilley, Special Double Issue of the *Journal of Material Culture*, SAGE (2006), 11: 1/2. Arjun Appadurai, *The Social life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

²⁵ Jules D. Prown, *Art as Evidence: Writings on Art and Material Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), p. 70.

²⁶ Ian Woodward, *Understanding Material Culture* (London: SAGE, 2007), p. 1.

²⁷ Daniel Miller, *Material Cultures: Why Some Things Matter* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 3.

opportunity to understand the mind of non-literate societies. Vernacular architecture or folk housing in Middle Virginia is the subject of one of the most important early studies of material culture in America.²⁸ There are multiple approaches to landscapes, each with different ways of viewing the relationship between physical space and cultural imagination, practice and representation, which is the central issue of studies of material culture in America. Although not all approaches to landscapes claim to belong to the field of material culture, landscape studies have been demonstrated to be broad and interdisciplinary by scholars such as Denis Cosgrove, Barbara Bender, Christopher Tilley and Eric Hirsch, who have been involved in material culture studies since the 1980s.

Landscape as Symbol and as Process

Taking landscape as a genre of art, it can be used to represent the world visually where people inhabit or imagine, a focus not only of art historians but also of geographers. Following pioneering inquiries into landscapes by Hoskins and Jackson, Raymond Williams' *Country and City* was the most important work of the 1970s.²⁹ His aim is to turn the 'real' history of 'land' into an 'ideological' history of 'landscape'.³⁰ Art history and geography directly affected a series of studies by Cosgrove on the social implications of imagery and symbolic landscape. To emphasize landscape as 'a way of seeing' – as a new politics of vision, Cosgrove's research on landscape owes much to the ideas of art history. The emergence of landscape art as described by Cosgrove is connected with the development of linear perspective, which was established such as in sixteenth-century Venice in Italy, and industrial Capitalism in European and American from seventeenth century. 'The landscape idea represents a way of seeing – a way in which some Europeans have represented to themselves and to others the world around them and their relationship with it'.³¹ Landscape is thus a way of seeing that has its own history and techniques of expression. Cosgrove's intention is to explore 'landscape interpretation within a critical historiography, to theorize the idea of landscape within a broadly Marxian understanding of culture and society, and thus to extend the treatment of landscape beyond what seemed to me a prevailingly narrow focus on design and

²⁸ Henry Glassie, *Material Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), pp. 227-354.

²⁹ Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1973).

³⁰ Raymond Williams, 'Between Country and City,' in *Reading Landscape, Country, City, Capital*, ed. by Simon Pugh (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), p. 5.

³¹ Denis E. Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), p. xiv.

taste.³² His views have been promoted in the collected volume *Iconography of Landscape*, with essays discussing the status of landscape as image and symbol.³³

Cosgrove contributes significantly to the study of cultural expressions of landscapes, inspiring many scholars to engage in landscape studies and to debate with him in interdisciplinary approaches. Tim Ingold accurately points out that Cosgrove's idea about 'ways of seeing' implies a separation between inner and outer worlds. For Ingold, the landscape is the more familiar domain where we live, in contrast to the formless outside world. Thus, 'the landscape becomes a part of us, just as we are a part of it'.³⁴ In short, landscape emerges as a cultural process. Looking for a discipline that would somehow close the gap between the humanities and the natural sciences, Ingold focuses on the temporality of the landscape. He argues that 'the landscape is the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey along the paths connecting them'.³⁵ For Ingold, landscapes are 'temporary dwelling activities [which he called the 'takescape'] and never complete – neither "built" nor "unbuilt" – it is perpetually under construction'.³⁶ Similarly, the process of human life is the process of formation of the landscapes in which people have lived.

Like Ingold, Eric Hirsch argues that Cosgrove's definition 'neglects what exists as a part of everyday social life. Their definition only captures one half of the experience intrinsic to landscape, ignoring the other half and the cultural processes of which both poles of experience are a part and through which both are brought into relation'.³⁷ Hirsch and Michael O'Hanlon collected a series of essays exploring how the concepts of landscape form an anthropological perspective. Hirsch further argues that the concept of landscape with the several juxtaposed concepts of foreground actuality and background potentiality, place and space, inside and outside, image and representation are all 'moments or transitions possible within a single relationship'.³⁸ Defined in this way, landscape entails 'the relationship seen to exist between these two poles of experience in any cultural context', and therefore as a dynamic cultural process. For Hirsch, the way

³² Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, p. xiii.

³³ *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments*, ed. by D.E. Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

³⁴ Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment: essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 191.

³⁵ Ingold, p. 193

³⁶ Ingold, p. 199.

³⁷ *The Anthropology of Landscape: perspectives on place and space*, ed. by Eric Hirsch and Michael O'Hanlon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 5.

³⁸ Eric Hirsch and Michael O'Hanlon, p. 4.

to a productive analytical application of the concept of landscape is through ethnography, to provide a framework for cross-cultural comparative study linking anthropology and related disciplines.

Landscape in Stratification and Movement

In Barbara Bender's collected volume *Landscape: Politics and Perspectives*, landscapes are created by people through their conscious or unconscious experience and their engagement in everyday existence. The landscape is a unity and is continually open to change, thus it should be treated as a process or a continuous record of human behaviour. People engage with the landscape and are empowered by it in different ways.³⁹ Bender says that we should look at the gender, age, class, caste, and social and economic situation of people to recognize the multiplicities of experience in the landscape. Her close colleague, Christopher Tilley focuses on prehistoric landscapes in his 1994 book 'A Phenomenology of Landscape'. Considering 'why were particular locations chosen for habitation and the erection of monuments as opposed to others?'⁴⁰ He elaborates the postmodern idea of landscape of Bender and other scholars – where a landscape is a series of named locales, a set of relational places, as well as the events and activities whose meaning is derived from particular places.

Bender develops her ideas further in *Contested Landscape: Movement, Exile and Movement*, in which the landscape of movement, migration, exile and homecoming is given more attention. She notes that most landscape studies focus on familiar places, rather than on 'the density and complexity of landscapes-in-movement'. Landscapes can retain 'the movement of people, labour and capital between town and country, between colony or factory and home country',⁴¹ but she also insists that 'there are always other places, including real ones or those encountered through hearsay, story and imagination', even in the same place 'where people have lived for generations'.⁴² Thus a new question is how people deal with unfamiliar places. To answer this question, Bender points out that 'we need to think about the experiences of place and landscape for those on the move, experiences that are always polymeric (they work at many different levels), contextual (the particularities of time and place matter) and biographical (different for

³⁹ *Landscape: Politics and Perspectives*, ed. by Barbara Bender (London: Berg Publishers, 1993), p. 19.

⁴⁰ Christopher Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths, and Monuments* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994), p. 1-34.

⁴¹ *Landscape: Politics and Perspectives*, ed. by Barbara Bender, p. 3.

⁴² *Landscape: Politics and Perspectives*, ed. by Barbara Bender, p. 6.

different people and always in process, happening)'. In addition to this, the landscape of movement is not the end of it: 'Those on the move affect the landscapes of those being moved through. And they affect the landscapes of those being left behind.'⁴³

A recent important work of landscape studies is *Landscape, Heritage and Identity*, edited by Tilley. As a special double issue of the *Journal of Material Culture*, it collects the most important contemporary landscape studies, by scholars including Cosgrove, Hirsch, Massey and Tilley, especially about the themes of landscape, place, heritage and social identity. All the articles, Tilley says, reflect 'that landscapes are contested, worked and re-worked by people according to particular individual, social and political circumstances. As such they are always in process, rather than static, being and becoming. Landscapes are on the move, peopled by diasporas, migrants of identity, people making homes in new places. Landscapes are structures of feeling, palimpsests of past and present, outcomes of social practice, products of colonial and post-colonial identities and western gaze, they are places of terror, exile, slavery and of the contemplative sublime. They get actively re-worked, interpreted and understood in relation to differing social and political agendas, forms of social memory, and biographically become sensuously embodied in a multitude of ways.'⁴⁴

In short, landscapes are always centred in relation to people, where they experience or imagine their life activities; studying this requires cross-disciplinary communication. The model of landscapes has evolved from just an external material object into social and cultural productions. During the last thirty years, landscape studies have been more than a static inquiry into what these landscapes mean and why they are created in human societies, but also consider the dynamics of landscapes by exploring the processes of making such landscapes and, conversely, how landscapes make people and societies. Landscapes are no longer treated as documentary sources or illustrations, but have become a principal issue of interdisciplinary studies today that contribute creative theories and debates to the social sciences and humanities.

Dongchuan: Landscape practices and representations

Most works of landscape studies so far have concentrated on the contemporary period and are limited to the western world. On the other hand, most studies of pre-modern

⁴³ *Contested Landscapes: Movement, Exile and Place*, ed. by Barbara Bender and Margot Winer (London: Berg Publishers, 2001), p. 13.

⁴⁴ *Landscape, Heritage and Identity*, ed. by Christopher Tilley, p. 7.

China have not given enough attention to the landscape. Part of the problem is the lack of obvious written or material sources, resulting in very few researchers focusing on pre-modern Chinese landscape. The handful of exceptions is limited to the imperial political or economic centre, where comparatively well preserved architectures and landscapes are situated. One such exception is Philippe Forêt's *Mapping Chengde: The Qing landscape enterprise*.⁴⁵ His book focuses on landscape, architectural and religious aspects of the summer residence of Chengde, which was built by the Kangxi and Qianlong emperors. The imperial gardens, landscape paintings, maps, Tibetan church, Buddhist temples, and hunting area of the summer residence are Forêt's main concern. He argues that the landscape was a technique employed by emperors for representing their private experience with the imperial metaphorical environment. Corresponding with the studies of New Qing history, Forêt tries to show how the Qing emperors promoted their unique Manchu identity and their sovereignty in Central Asia through the representation of landscape in the summer residence. Focusing on an imperial landscape, Forêt's research is a novelty in pre-modern Chinese history. Another important work comes from Tobie Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture in Early Qing Yangzhou*.⁴⁶ Although Meyer-Fong does not emphasize a 'landscape studies' approach, her research focuses on four famous scenic city sites in late seventeenth-century Yangzhou, just after the Manchu army had conquered this area. She examines the local Han elite affiliated with these sites through their writing, visiting, and promoting, which in turn became anecdotes about the city during the decades after the Qing conquest. Thus, the local elite expressed themselves through the symbolic meanings of buildings and sites and then rebuilt their own community and post-conquest culture in Yangzhou. On the topic of Chinese sacred geography, James Robson recently published a new book *Power of Place: The Religious Landscape of the Southern Sacred Peak (Nanyue 南嶽) in Medieval China*. In this book, Robson looks at the complex history of the sacred mountain Nanyue's religious landscape. He examines the Nanyue and religious sites at the mountain both in terms of physical geography and their representation in historical and literary sources. Then he compares the religious images of Nanyue Mountain in Buddhist and Daoist sources and traces the influences of those co-present religious

⁴⁵ His landscape studies can also be seen in *New Qing Imperial History: The Making of Inner Asian Empire at Qing Chengde* ed. by James Millard, Ruth Dunnell, Mark Elliott and Philippe Forêt.

⁴⁶ Tobie Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture in Early Qing Yangzhou* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).

traditions on the national and regional history of medieval China.⁴⁷ Such research contributes to the discussion of the experience of and interaction with the physical world in pre-modern Chinese studies. However, so far, the most noticeable characteristic of Qing imperial expansion in the frontier lands and its impact on local physical and cultural landscapes has been overlooked. More importantly, indigenous concepts of landscape in the ‘barbarian’ lands conquered later, remain unmentioned. What happened between the different groups in the Southwest – Qing officials, new immigrants and indigenous people – who lived in and reshaped the landscape through physical practice and cultural representation, and how did this cultural product of landscape in turn affect the lives of local people and societies in the empire’s margins? These questions are still unanswered.

Since the inhospitable geography of the Southwest served as a protective barrier for indigenous people and at the same time formed a major obstacle for the Qing state, reconstruction of the landscape was an important issue for the Qing. I believe this factor played an active role in the history of frontier expansion in eighteenth-century Southwest China. A landscape studies approach leads us to rethink a ‘black’ area such as Dongchuan in the Southwest as not just a static place, but also as an imaginary landscape in the eyes of the central state in the past, especially when officials discovered that it would be very hard to enter this area because of indigenous groups and dangerous geographical conditions. Placing the landscape of the Southwest in a dynamic historical process, in the words of Tim Ingold, my research also pays attention to how different discourses of the landscape gradually developed. And my research treats landscape in stratification and movement, as emphasized by Bender, by considering the large population mobility in Dongchuan in the eighteenth century and analysing how people coming from different areas, classes, and ethnicities made their own landscapes in order to create communities and build a local society. My research focuses on the landscape of Southwest China during the eighteenth century in various discourses, to discuss how different groups – both in the imperial government and in local society – understood, memorized, constructed, and represented the landscape.

For my landscape studies in Dongchuan and other parts of northeastern Yunnan, the main sources are the local gazetteers. Compiled by local officials and elites, local

⁴⁷ James Robson, *Power of Place: The Religious Landscape of the Southern Sacred Peak (Nanyue 南嶽) in Medieval China* (Cambridge and London: Harvard East Asian Monographs, 2009)

gazetteers are treated as the standard of local information on the geography, economy, history, administration, and culture. The earliest popularity of local gazetteers in China can be traced back to the Song dynasty, and the genre flourished in the Ming and Qing dynasties. Local gazetteers are a rich source for local history studies, and are used by most researchers of local history of China. They are also a rich source for landscape studies, but have been overlooked in other studies, or treated only as the source of a few facts. In local gazetteers the natural and constructed landscape – rivers and mountains, buildings, roads, bridges, drains, shrines, temples, government offices and the layout of cities – are carefully recorded, and they also include maps and other illustrations, as well as poems and literature that portray the local landscape. As an additional source, memorials, reports and travelogues of Qing officials and other members of the elite also reveal how they imagine and portray the local landscape. And the travelogues of western missionaries and businessmen later in time, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, provide yet another perspective on the local situation in northeastern Yunnan.

The only three local gazetteers of the Dongchuan area – 1735, 1761 and 1809 – are the main archival sources for my investigation.⁴⁸ As an indigenous area newly occupied by the Qing, the landscape of Dongchuan was physically reshaped in the eighteenth century. All kinds of new construction, such as roads and waterways, the walled city, warehouses, schools, temples, and shrines, became important ways to build connections between local society and the imperial government. It was through the new landscape that the Qing orthodox ideology and imperial order was presented to local society. During this early period of imperial control, most of the sites, spaces and landscapes where indigenous groups once lived vanished. In the middle of the eighteenth century, local officials proudly claimed that Dongchuan now was no longer ‘a nest of barbarians’ but a ‘metropolis’ in imperial territory.

Meanwhile, this new landscape, as I use the term, refers not only to the physical building and material forms, but also to what is conveyed by the representations of the landscape in the records of local officials and scholars in the local gazetteers. In my research, I do not treat these descriptions of landscape in the local gazetteers as a source of facts, but rather as a subjective representation of the landscape. Local officials and

⁴⁸ *Dongchuan fuzhi* 東川府志, 1735 (handwritten copy), Yunnan sheng tushuguan, Kunming; *Dongchuan fuzhi* 東川府志, 1761, Zhongguo guojia tushuguan, Beijing; *Dongchuan fu xuzhi* 東川府續志, 1897, Zhongguo guojia tushuguan, Beijing.

literati recorded the landscape that they intended to show; they did not record things in the sense of modern scientific cartography that ideally reflects every detail. In this way, the Qing state not only transformed the landscape by creating a new (physical) cityscape, but also created a new ideological image of this landscape that was a political-cultural product of various strategies of knowledge.

Even more important, inspired by research on the local history writing of South China, I am not only concerned with how the empire extended its power into the frontier area by building infrastructure, but also with how local agents manipulated and re-interpreted the imperial landscape. My research deals with the question of how local agency represented the imperial landscape in the southwest frontier regions. Besides that, considered from the perspective of the indigenous side, I argue that the new landscape of Dongchuan did not – as local Qing officials claimed – simply take over and overwrite the territory where indigenous chieftains had previously kept a tight rein. Notwithstanding the reconstruction and representation of these local officials and elites, I found out during my fieldwork that indigenous conceptions of space and landscape have survived up until today, in the epic stories and myths of indigenous people. From 2005 to 2009, I had the opportunity to stay in Yunnan for a couple of months each year, mainly based at the Chuxiong Yi Cultural Research Institute (楚雄彝文研究所), which collaborates with Sun Yat-sen University. During these periods, I searched the Yi archives collected at the Institute, and studied and discussed these with several local scholars of Yi studies. I visited Huize 会泽 County, the present-day name of the former Dongchuan prefecture, in the winters of 2005, 2007, and 2011.⁴⁹ During my fieldwork, I collected stele inscriptions dating from the eighteenth to the twentieth century that are now kept in local temples, guild halls, and the local archaeology administration department. I collected oral history, local legends, and indigenous stories by interviewing people and by searching local publications. In the Yunnan provincial library in Kunming, I examined the local archives of the main cities and towns of northeastern Yunnan, the earliest items dating from the eighteenth century. These materials helped me to uncover the indigenous conceptions of space and landscape that are hidden in local oral history, legends and written sources. I noticed that the previous indigenous landscapes, still today, were actually also interacting with the new landscape. In addition, as a frontier

⁴⁹ I participated in several research projects led by Dr. Jian Xū of Sun Yat-sen University during this period, such as the British Library, preservation and digitization of Yi archives in public and private collections in Yunnan.

zone where indigenous and newcomer communities encounter each other, conflicting and interacting, the cultural landscape can also be fluid, as the different groups negotiate the local context.

My dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 places Dongchuan in the geographical context of the area along the Jinsha River (part of the river that is known in the West as the Yangtze) and the ever-changing borderlands of Southwest China from the Han dynasty (202 BC –AD 220) to the early Qing dynasty in the eighteenth century. Located along the Jinsha River on the north and south sides, the indigenous people living in present-day areas of southern Sichuan, northeastern Yunnan and northwestern Guizhou were closely connected to each other on a local scale, and the central state incorporated them in the official records only in a strictly administrative sense. By building roads in the Southwest, the central state gradually extended its power into the region, especially in the cities and towns near the capital and along the main transport routes. Far away from these main routes, Dongchuan and other parts of present-day northeastern Yunnan remained 'blank' areas of the imperial territory in the eyes of the central state. Eventually, these blanks were filled in and the region was put under direct control of the Qing state after successfully replacing the indigenous rulers in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Chapter 2 traces the history of indigenous politics in Dongchuan since the late seventeenth century, and the Qing government's establishment of the stone-walled city in the eighteenth century. Dongchuan was transformed from a marginal indigenous area to a booming copper mining town set in the political, economic, and geographic context of northeastern Yunnan. Focusing on how sites were selected for the walled city and for important buildings, this chapter considers the symbolic patterns of the walled city and buildings, designed according to principles of geomancy by Qing local officials and an immigrant Han elite. In the process of city building, the local Han elite, who believed that they represented the Qing state, became key figures in city planning and building projects. In so doing, the Qing seems to have successfully reconstructed this 'barbarian' landscape into a new 'metropolis'. Still-surviving buildings built in or near the walled city of Dongchuan from the mid-eighteenth century onward by Han Chinese immigrants, especially by powerful Han Chinese officials, testify to the area's impressive economic and social development at that time.

Chapter 3 focuses on the 'ten best views' of the surroundings of the new walled city,

which were recorded in local gazetteers and in poetry anthologies edited by the local poetry society. After the walled city was built and imperial institutions were established in Dongchuan, local scholars identified the ten most beautiful views in the surroundings of the walled city. Regardless of the actual locations of these scenic spots, the descriptions of these beautiful views are not only a sign of literary appreciation, but were also consciously written to represent the wild frontier to a 'civilized' Han Chinese world. In this way, the set of best views came to constitute important evidence of the local government's achievements. Beyond that, the basis for the selection of best views is examined in the context of geographical descriptions in the local gazetteers that involved complex political, military and economic interests. In the case of Dongchuan and other parts of northeastern Yunnan in the eighteenth century, the connection between the walled city and copper production forms the key background for the selection of best views.

Chapter 4 emphasizes the religious space and landscape of Dongchuan to present an unconventional explanation of cultural integration. The Qing officials' new landscape was overlaid on the territory where indigenous chieftains had previously kept a tight rein. In the process of institutional reform, most of the sites where indigenous groups had lived were erased, especially their religious and political spaces in the mountains. Zhenwu shrines and dragon pool cults on Black Dragon Mountain outside of Dongchuan's walled city are analysed as a case study. As the protector of the Qing walled city, the Zhenwu deity occupied the space of the dragon deity worshipped by indigenous groups. This Qing's Zhenwu shrine soon dominated the image of Black Dragon Mountain, as constructed in myths and ritual activities and as given material form in the statue and the building. At the same time, dragon pool cults coexisted in the same space but held different meanings for various local groups. Here, religious space and landscape were reconstructed by the Qing government to establish its legitimacy, but multiple images of the same religious landscape continue to exist today in local society.

Chapter 5 analyses the architectural space of Dongchuan's ritual buildings, especially the temples for the deity Wenchang and the shrines devoted to the local hero Meng Da. This architectural space is explored in order to discover how indigenous people and immigrants created special spaces for expressing their beliefs and identities, and in what way these ritual spaces at the same time brought about changes in local society. The case study of Wenchang temples and Meng Da shrines in Dongchuan shows

how the story of buildings established by city officials and Han immigrants can be retold by local people in a totally different narrative. Indigenous conceptions of space and landscape have survived in present-day stories and myths, illustrating how pre-existing indigenous landscapes interacted with the new official landscapes.

While most studies have treated the natural surroundings of the Southwest simply as static background information, I argue in my conclusion that these landscapes played an active role in the history of frontier expansion in eighteenth-century southwestern China. Notwithstanding the efforts of local officials and elites to recreate the local landscape, previous indigenous landscapes actually interacted with this new landscape. New spaces and landscapes, then, were created not only by the builders, but also by the local people who interacted with them in their everyday life and through their memories of the old days. A diversity of people created multiple interpretations of their landscape and space, instead of simply adopting official representations.