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Chapter 1 From 'Black' Area to New Imperial Territory

Dongchuan is located in the area where present-day northeastern Yunnan adjoins southern Sichuan and northwestern Guizhou. Like other areas of Southwest China, it has deep, river-carved gorges and rugged mountains with large local differences in climate, and it continued to be occupied by indigenous groups and escaped effective control of the central state for many centuries. For a very long time, the central state incorporated this area in official records only in a strictly administrative sense. Because of the construction of official roads and by sending envoys into the Southwest, this area had been recorded before the eighteenth century in standard histories, geographic works and travelogues, which mention different roads and place names, and describe surrounding landscapes, but which still contain very limited information.

Presenting Dongchuan in the context of the ever-changing borders of the Southwest, this chapter examines how outside observers portrayed and discussed Dongchuan and other parts of present-day northeastern Yunnan. A hinterland along the Empire's southwestern border, Dongchuan gradually drew more and more attention from the central state, eventually coming under the direct control of the Qing state after it imposed thorough reforms on the indigenous chieftain system in the first half of the eighteenth century. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the booming copper business and the copper transports from Dongchuan to the capital Beijing created a close connection for the very first time between Dongchuan and the central state.

1. Dongchuan and northeastern Yunnan: 'nominal' administration

Dongchuan is first recorded as Tanglang 堂螂 (or 堂狼, 堂瑯, 堂琅) county in Qianwei 犍为 prefecture and later Qianwei dependant State (*shuguo* 属国) during the Han (B.C. 202-A. D.220) and then in Zhuti 朱提 prefecture during Jin dynasties (266-420).¹ The name ‘Tanglang’ came from Tanglang Mountain, which the records place in Zhuti prefecture. According to *Huayang guozhi* 華陽國志, the oldest extant gazetteer that focuses especially on the Southwest, compiled by Chang Qu 常璩 (291-361), Tanglang Mountain was a mountain with silver deposits, lead ore, and copper mines, and was a good place to harvest medicinal plants.² According to *Shuijingzhu* 水經注, a classical geographic work from the sixth century that describes waterways and their surrounding landscapes throughout China, Tanglang and other parts of northeastern Yunnan, where indigenous peoples lived, are said to be ‘the most dangerous area’ for outside travellers. It records that Tanglang county was located around two hundred Chinese miles (*li*) to the southwest of the capital of Zhuti prefecture. Walking northwest from there, one encountered countless high mountains that needed to be climbed. The mountain ranges, extending around eighty *li*, looked like the intestines of sheep and twisty ropes. The high mountains with craggy peaks and upright rocks were separated by narrow gorges. Travellers had to climb trees or use ropes to pull themselves up the mountain. The climbers seemed to be setting the stage for reaching the heavens.³ (Fig. 1.1)

Apart from the rugged terrain, awful air quality in the summer brought virulent malaria, making this area less accessible to outside travellers.⁴ According to a tenth-century account of Tanglang Mountain, people believed that there were lots of poisonous weeds on this mountain, and that during the high summer season even birds couldn’t survive trekking through the area and died on the mountain.⁵ Furthermore, Jinsha River running through the mountains in this area was also full of danger. The Jinsha is the main tributary of what in the West is known as the Yangzi River. Nowadays

¹ Fang Guoyu 方國瑜, *Zhongguo xinan lishi dili kaozhi* 中國西南歷史地理考釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), pp. 103-104. Fang Guoyu, ‘Diandong diqu Cuanshi shimo’ 滇東地區爨氏始末, *Tianshi luncong* 滇史論叢, vol.1. (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1982), p. 128.

² *Huayang guozhi* 華陽國志, ca. 348-354, comp. by Chang Qu 常璩, *Huayang guozhi jiao bu tu zhu* 華陽國志校補圖注, comm. by Ren Naiqiang 任乃強 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), p. 271. P. 281.

³ *Shuijingzhu* 水經注, comm. by Li Daoyuan 酈道元, ca. 386-534, *Shuijingzhu jiaozheng* 水經注校正, ed. by Chen Qiaoyi 陳橋驛 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), p. 671.

⁴ For more discussion of malaria in southwest China, see David A. Bello, ‘To Go Where No Han Could Go for Long: Malaria and the Qing Construction of Ethnic Administrative Space in Frontier Yunnan’, *Modern China*, 31. 3 (2005), 283-317.

⁵ *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽, ca. 984, comp. by Li Fang 李昉 (Guangdong: Xuehaitang, 1892), *juan* 22, p. 6b.

it flows from the southwestern border of Sichuan province into Yunnan province. The name Jinsha comes from the tenth or twelfth century and literally means 'golden sand', because it is said that people were panning for gold in the river, which also suggests that there were rich mineral resources to be found on both sides of Jinsha River.⁶ With a deep parallel gorge, submerged rocks and sudden turns, the Jinsha was extremely difficult to navigate and posed a huge natural obstacle to transport, adding yet more risks for travellers entering the area (Fig. 1.1).

This difficult environment resulted in a lack of contact with the outside world and meant that the indigenous community long remained autonomous. Located along the Jinsha on the north and south sides, present-day southern Sichuan, northeastern Yunnan and northwestern Guizhou were closely connected to each other locally.⁷ Tanglang Mountain, at one point, was attached to the early memory of some southwestern indigenous groups who after 1949 were called the Yi people. According to Yi historical texts and oral history, the Yi people spread throughout the Southwest and can all be traced back to the 'branches of the six ancestors' (*liuzu fenzhi* 六祖分支), which refers to a famous Yi legend. In this epic, 'Zhongmuyou' 仲牟由 (also written 'Zhuming' 祝明, 'Dumuwu' 瀆母吾 and 'Dumu' 篤慕), an Yi ancestor hundreds of generations back, lived on Luoni Mountain (洛尼山, or *Luoyi shan* 洛宜山, *Luoyebai* 羅業白, *Luoyibai* 洛宜白) in northeastern Yunnan. Zhongmuyou had six sons; two of them moved to present-day southern Sichuan, two of them moved to present-day western Guizhou, and two of them stayed in present-day northeastern Yunnan. The six sons of Zhongmuyou thus became the patrilineal ancestors of the Yi communities throughout the Southwest.⁸ The connection between Luoni Mountain and Tanglang Mountain can be found in only one of the Qing dynasty gazetteers of Guizhou province, and states that Zhongmuyou lived on Tanglang Mountain, which he also called Luoyi Mountain in his indigenous language.⁹ Luoyi Mountain (written 羅衣) is drawn on the map in the 1761 Dongchuan gazetteer, but without further explanation in the main text.¹⁰ The Yi ancestor's mountain also

⁶ *Yuanshi* 元史, ca.1381, comp. by Song Lian 宋濂 and others (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976), vol. 5, *juan* 61, p. 1464.

⁷ Fang Guoyu 方國瑜, *Yizu shigao* 彝族史稿 (Chengdu: Sichuan minzu chubanshe, 1984), pp. 385-386.

⁸ Ma Changshou 馬長壽, *Yizu gudai shi* 彝族古代史 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1987), pp. 3, 7-9; Herman, pp. 20-21; Fang Guoyu, *Yizu shigao*, pp. 145-150, 172-180; Wen Chunlai, p. 7.

⁹ Ma Changshou, *Yizu gudaishi*, p. 7.

¹⁰ *DCFZ*, 1761, *tuxiang*, p. 12b. Ma Changshou also mentions this in *Yizu gudaishi*, but he attributes it to the Dongchuan gazetteer during the reign of Guangxu 光緒 (1875-1908), see Ma Changshou, *Yizu gudaishi*, p. 33.

appears in the Yi ritual manuscript (*Bimo jing* 畢摩經) written by the Bimo, who were intellectuals and ritual priests in traditional Yi society.¹¹ In the 'Direction-giving sutra' (*zhilujing* 指路經), one of the Bimo texts used during funerals for leading the ghost of the deceased in the direction of the hometown of their ancestors, present-day northeastern Yunnan is mentioned as the place where their ancestor father had lived.¹² Many scholars nowadays believe that Luoni Mountain refers to Tanglang Mountain in northeastern Yunnan, which is a mountain located in present-day Huize or Qiaojia 巧家.¹³ Tanglang Mountain, then, is considered the holy place of origin of the 'branches of the six ancestors' of the Yi community.

Although Tanglang was recorded as one of the counties of the central state, it was not actually administered by the central state and neither were many other areas in the Southwest before the thirteenth century. After the Han dynasty had gradually declined in the second century, the Southwest had been ruled by the Cuan 爨 family from the fourth century onwards. In the fifth century it was divided into two parts, Eastern Cuan (*dongcuan* 東爨) in present-day northeastern Yunnan, and Western Cuan (*xicuan* 西爨) in the central part of present-day Yunnan. Around the seventh century Eastern Cuan extended its sphere of influence into Western Cuan.¹⁴ After the Cuan family declined, many indigenous tribes fought each other and could not form a unified Eastern Cuan. From the eighth century, most parts of present-day Yunnan, southern Sichuan and western Guizhou were occupied by a local regime called the Nanzhao 南詔 kingdom (738-937) and its successor regime the Dali 大理 kingdom (937-1253). During the confrontation between the central Tang state (618-907) and the local regimes of Nanzhao and Dali, the power of the indigenous tribes in southern Sichuan, northeastern Yunnan and northwest Guizhou was so strong that neither the central state nor the local

¹¹ Wu Gu, 'Reconstruction Yi History from Yi Records', in *Perspectives on the Yi of Southwest China*, ed. by Stevan Harrell (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 2001), pp. 21 -34.

¹² *Yiwen zhilujing yiji* 彝文《指路經》譯集, trans. by Guoji Nongha 果吉寧哈, Ling Fuxiang 領福祥 (Beijing: Zhongyuan minzu xueyuan chubanshe, 1993), pp. 602, 606, 616, 619, 622, 625, 639, 642, 643, 645, 648, 650, 656, 661, 662, 690, 693.

¹³ Fang Guoyu, *Yizu shigao*, p. 150; Ma Changshou, *Yizu gudai shi*, p. 7; Herman, p. 21. There is still debate about the exact location of the mountain. For example, another opinion suggests that Luoni Mountain should be located in the adjoining areas of Luquan, Huize and Huili, see Ma Changshou, *Yizu gudaishi*, p. 23, footnote 8; another opinion holds that Luoni Mountain was located in Luquan 祿勸, see *Yiwen zhilujing yiji*, pp. 616, 619.

¹⁴ More precisely, Western Cuan included Qujing, Makong, Luliang, Lunan, Yiliang, Songming, Kunming, Chenggong Jingning, Kunyang, An'ning, Chengjiang, Jiangchuan, and Lufeng counties, and Eastern Cuan included Zhaotong, Huize, Zhenxiang, Weining, see Ma Changshou, *Yizu gudai shi*, pp. 64-68.

regimes could fully control that area.¹⁵ (Fig. 1.2 and 1.3) The whole area of Yunnan remained outside of the control of the Song dynasty (960-1279) until the coming of the Mongol army in the thirteenth century.

There is little historical information about northeastern Yunnan's indigenous communities because of their isolated location. During the Tang dynasty, the name Cuan gradually transformed from a surname into a general term for indigenous groups. In the records of *Man shu* 蠻書 or *Yunnan zhi* 雲南志, which is the most important work about present-day Yunnan, written by Fan Chuo 樊綽 in 864, Western Cuan was inhabited by the 'white barbarians' (*baiman* 白蠻) and Eastern Cuan was home to the 'black barbarians' (*wuman* 烏蠻).¹⁶ Before the Mongol army conquered the Southwest, four main indigenous groups had formed in northeastern Yunnan. They were 1) Dongchuan (or Bipan 閩畔) and 2) Wumeng 烏蒙 in present-day Zhaotong in Yunnan province, 3) Wusa 烏撒 in Weining, and Hezhang in present-day northwest Guizhou province, and 4) Mangbu 芒布 in present-day Zhenxiang of Yunnan province. All these names were used by imperial observers as names of ethnic groups but also as place-names.¹⁷ These indigenous groups were known as 'black barbarians' and were classified as the descendants of Zhongmuyou. 'Dongchuan' was then called 'Nazha nayi' 那紮那夷 which came from the indigenous language. The name was given by an indigenous chieftain called Matan 罵彈, who was one of the descendants of Zhongmuyou and who established his regime around the eighth or ninth century.¹⁸ In the Yi language, 'Nazha' means 'on the other side of' and 'Nayi' means 'Black Water', referring to the Jinsha River. So 'Nazha nayi' means the place across the Jinsha, which implies it had connections to other

¹⁵ Fang Guoyu, 'Diandong diqu Cuanshi shimo', p. 132. According to fifteenth-century geographic records Emperor Meng Shilong 蒙世隆 (859-877) established Dongchuan prefecture here during his reign, which is probably the first time 'Dongchuan' was used as the official name of this region, but very soon the area was recaptured by indigenous forces. Daming yitong zhi 大明一統志, comp. by Wei Junmin 魏俊民 and others, in *SKQS*, vol. 473, *juan* 72, p. 40a; In eighteenth-century Dongchuan, a mountain named Wulong (五竜 or 烏龍), which was located in western Dongchuan, particularly connected Dongchuan to the Nanzhao kingdom. It is said that Wulong Mountain was located along the Jinsha River and was 112 *li* in height. During the Nanzhao kingdom this mountain was declared by the Meng family to be the 'Highest Mountain in the East' (*Dongyue* 東嶽) and to be connected to the heavens. In this record, during the Nanzhao kingdom, Wulong Mountain was considered to be one of the highest mountains located in the borderlands, which suggests that the power of the Nanzhao kingdom did not reach beyond the mountain, see *DCFZ*, 1731, p. 6.

¹⁶ Fan Chuo 樊綽, *Manshu* 蠻書 (*Yunnan Zhi* 雲南志), ca. 863, in *YSC*, vol. 2, p. 12; Fang Guoyu, *Yizu shigao*, pp. 194-204.

¹⁷ Fang Guoyu, *Yizu shigao*, pp. 184-185.

¹⁸ Cao Xuequan 曹學佺, *Shu zhong guang ji* 蜀中廣記, n. d.(1778), in *SKQS*, vol. 591, *juan* 36, p. 14b-22b.

indigenous tribes north and south of the Jinsha.¹⁹

The Yuan dynasty (1271-1368) is the first period of official central control and administration in the Southwest. The Yuan state set up a new bureaucratic system, the 'indigenous officials system' (*tuguan* 土官), giving official titles to the powerful indigenous chieftains in return for their loyalty to the Yuan. The indigenous officials were obliged to offer tribute and they governed the land and population for the central state. In that way, the Yuan gained local allegiance and indirectly administered the Southwest.²⁰ In the late thirteenth century the Pacification Commission of Luoluosi 羅羅斯 was established in southern Sichuan in 1275, and the Pacification Commission (*xuanweisi* 宣慰司) of Wusa 烏撒 and Wumeng 烏蒙 in northeastern Yunnan under the rule of Yunnan province in 1287, covering Wusa Lu 烏撒路, Wumeng Lu 烏蒙路, Mangbu Lu 芒部路 and Dongchuan Lu 東川路.²¹ (Fig. 1.4) However, within a few years, anti-Yuan activity was on the rise and indigenous officials became less willing to be governed by the Yuan. By the beginning of the fourteenth century, the indigenous elites and their tribes in northeastern Yunnan, just like other indigenous tribes in the Southwest, stopped cooperating with the Yuan and reclaimed their autonomy.²²

After that, the close connections between the different groups in northeastern Yunnan were recognized by the central state. The Ming dynasty (1368-1644) adapted the Yuan administrative system in the Southwest by formalizing the indigenous chieftain system (*tusi* 土司) and introducing different administrative levels, such as indigenous prefect (*tuzhifu* 土知府), indigenous sub-prefect (*tuzhizhou* 土知州), and indigenous magistrate (*tuzhixian* 土知縣), who were responsible for governing the non-Han population in their territory. In the process of occupying most of Yunnan, Emperor Hongwu (1368-1398) of the Ming dynasty noticed that the different ethnic groups in northeastern Yunnan all claimed to be descendants of one indigenous ancestor and that they had a close relationship with each other: 'Dongchuan, Mangbu and other indigenous groups, were all the descendants of *Luoluo* 羅羅 [the most common name for

¹⁹ Fang Guoyu, *Zhongguo xi nan lishi dili kao shi*, p.715.

²⁰ Fang Guoyu, *Yizu shigao*, pp.253-258; Gong Ying 龔蔭, *Zhongguo tusi zhidu* 中國土司制度 (Kunming: Yunnan minzu chubanshe, 1994), pp. 2-22.

²¹ *Yuanshi*, vol 5, pp. 1466-1467; 1471-1476; 1483.

²² Herman, pp. 45-70.

Yi people before 1949]; they had multiplied into the different groups and occupied different areas, which are now called Dongchuan, Wusa, Wumeng, Mangbu, Luzhao 祿肇 and Shuixi 水西. They fought each other in the absence of external pressures, and supported each other if there was an attack from outside.²³ The Ming state also established the prefectures of Dongchuan, Wusa, Zhenxiong 鎮雄 (called Mangbu Lu in the Yuan), and Wumeng. But with strong indigenous ruling families living in these areas, the central state's control was nominal, that is, limited to the establishment of prefectures and their names. In the eyes of the Ming, the indigenous people were the most stubborn barbarians. In the fifteenth century, the central government decided to directly control the Southwest by replacing the indigenous chieftains with state-appointed Han Chinese officials (*gaitu guiliu* 改土歸流). But the power of the central state could not reach every corner of the Southwest at once, so only the capital area and other places along the transport routes into Yunnan fell under direct Ming rule. In areas such as Dongchuan and other parts of northeastern Yunnan, the power of the indigenous chieftains could not be taken over by the central state until the early Qing dynasty in the eighteenth century.

2. Transport routes into Yunnan

After establishing an administrative system of sorts, another important way for the central state to penetrate the Southwest was to explore and to construct transport routes entering Yunnan. Being so remote, Yunnan stayed out of reach for the longest time. Since the Western Han dynasty (202–9 BC), road construction had been a crucial task in the exploitation of the Southwest. The routes into the Southwest not only served traffic, but also indicated the extent of the central state's power and how it visualized these areas. Especially in the perilous journey across the mountains, once the routes were blocked the central state would lose its connection with the Southwest. The limited road infrastructure in the Southwest meant that the central state mainly focused on the areas directly surrounding the roads, while most other areas stayed out of reach of the state.

²³ *Mingshi* 明史, c.a. 1739, comp. by Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), v.26, *juan* 199, pp. 8003-8004; 8009-8011.

In general, there were two main routes into Yunnan before the tenth century, called the 'North Road' (*beilu* 北路) and the 'South Road' (*nanlu* 南路) by Fan Cuo.²⁴ For a short time during the Qin dynasty (221-207 BC), the starting point of the North Road was based on the 'Bo Road' (*bodao* 燧道) in southern Sichuan.²⁵ Later, the Han state prolonged this road to the south, perhaps passing through northeastern Yunnan and reaching the Kunming area, but the details of this part of the route are not recorded. It was named the 'Five Chi Road' (*wuchi dao* 五尺道) because it was said that it was only five *chi* in width, and alternatively the 'Stone Gate Road' (*Shimen dao* 石門道) during the Tang dynasty.²⁶ The South Road started from present-day western Chengdu 成都, crossed the Min River 岷江 and passed through Qionglai 邛崃 and Xichang 西昌 in Sichuan province, and then Huili 會理 before reaching Kunming City in Yunnan province.²⁷ But both roads were reported to be too difficult to navigate and too dangerous for use by the central state. Especially the details of the route in northeastern Yunnan were not clearly recorded, which shows that the North Road was never or rarely effectively used.²⁸ (Fig. 1.5)

The South and North Roads continued to be the main routes connecting Yunnan to the central state at the beginning of the Yuan dynasty. Later, cooperation by indigenous chieftains in the Southwest offered an opportunity for the Yuan to start a new route. In 1291 a new route opened up, starting from present-day Chenzhou 辰州 in Hunan, passing through Zhenyuan 鎮遠 county in eastern Guizhou province, Guiyang in the central part of Guizhou, present-day Pu'an 普安 in western Guizhou, reaching Qujing 曲靖 and Kunming in Yunnan.²⁹ Importantly, the new route into Yunnan was from Guizhou instead of from Sichuan. Named the Pu'an Route (*pu'an dao* 普安道), this road was

²⁴ Fan Cuo, pp. 12–13.

²⁵ Fang Guoyu, *Zhongguo xinan lishi dili kao shi*, pp. 539-544.

²⁶ Tan Zhongyi believes 'wu chi' is not the specific name but only a description of the difficulty of the road, which could be anywhere. Tan Zongyi 譚宗義, *Han dai guo nei lu lu jiaotong kao* 漢代國內陸路交通考 (Hong Kong: Xin ya yanjiu suo, 1966), p. 59.

²⁷ Fan Guoyu, *Zhongguo xinan lishi dili kao shi*, p. 543; Tan Zongyi, pp. 45-62.

²⁸ Many scholars believe that North Road passed Dongchuan to reach Kunming, but the part of the route described in the records is limited to the route connecting present-day southern Sichuan to Zhaotong. The route going south from Zhaotong passing Dongchuan and Kunming is not clearly recorded, and it is also not clear whether or not this route was really used. I believe that even though the route may have passed through Dongchuan, it was never really used by the central state. Lan Yong 藍勇, 'Yuandai Sichuan yizhan huikao 元代四川驛站考', *Chengdu daxue xuebao*, (1991), 4: 53-61; Fang Tie 方鐵, 'Tang song yuan ming qing de zhibian fanglue yu yunnan tongdao bianqian 唐宋元明清的治邊方略與雲南通道變遷', *Zhongguo bianjiang shidi yanjiu*, (March, 2009), 19. 1: 73-88.

²⁹ Lan Yong, 4: 53-61; Fang Tie, 19. 1: 73-88.

slightly better because it steered relatively clear of some of the steep, high mountains. The Pu'an Route remained the main route into the Southwest during the Ming and Qing dynasties. Another route which developed during the late Yuan and Ming dynasties was from the Yangzi River to Luzhou in Sichuan, then turning south to reach (present-day) Xuyong, Bijie, Weining, Xuanwei, Zhanyi, Qujing and then arriving in Kunming.³⁰(Fig 1.5)

The routes in the Southwest were very important to the central state in its attempts to establish authority. Using these routes, the central state started to extend its power. The Yuan had started officially controlling and managing the Southwest, and the Ming state developed a system of garrisons (*weisuo* 衛所) in strategic locations along the main routes. The Ming guard garrisons controlled the areas directly along the routes. However, beyond these areas, indigenous elites still ruled.³¹ Along the main route, the state gradually extended its power into the rest of the Southwest. Even though the Pu'an Route was frequently reported to be difficult to navigate, not only because of the harsh environment but also because of troublesome indigenous communities along the road, the Ming maintained the road through Guizhou and Yunnan to keep an eye on the indigenous communities. As long as this road was continually used, the indigenous communities along this road could stay under the supervision of the central state.³²

On the north side of the Jinsha River, southern Sichuan, like northeastern Yunnan, managed to stay outside of central control for a long time. The area along the South Road in Sichuan only gradually fell under the control of the central state. In the Ming dynasty, Jianchang 建昌 and five other guard garrisons were established along the old South Road. After two hundred years of management by the Ming state, these areas along the South Road gradually came under the complete control of the Ming state. However, the Liangshan area on the north side of the Jinsha beyond this route still remained in the hands of powerful indigenous communities.³³ In Wusa and Shuixi, which were located

³⁰ These two routes also constituted the marching routes of the Ming army for conquering Yunnan. In the ninth month of 1381, Emperor Hongwu 洪武 sent General Fu Youde 傅友德 to deploy troops in Huguang 湖廣 province. Hu Haiyang 胡海洋 was sent to lead a surprise attack from Yongning 永寧 county in Sichuan province into Wusa. After Qujing had been conquered, Lan Yu 藍玉 and Mu Ying 沐英 led the army to occupy the Dali area. Fu Youde's army started off in a northern direction to attack Wusa and the Wumeng area. see *MSL, juan* 139, p. 1a. (HW. 14/9). Apart from these main routes, there were also alternate routes from Guangxi province to Yunnan. See *Dianzhi* 滇志, comp. by Liu Wenzheng 劉文征, 1621-27, in *YSC*, vol. 7, *juan*4, pp. 31-34.

³¹ Wen Chunlai, pp. 83-106.

³² *Wanli yehuo bian* 萬曆朝野獲編, c.a. 1606, comp. by Shen Defu 沈德符 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), *juan* 24, p. 617-618.

³³ Fang Guoyu, *Yizu shigao*, pp. 380-391; 467-481.

close to the official Pu'an Route south of the Jinsha River, indigenous communities started to interact with the Ming government in economics, politics, education and culture.³⁴ But areas such as Wumeng, Dongchuan, Mangbu, which were beyond Wusa and Shuixi, were further from the main road and could not be reached easily. The Ming state could not establish garrisons there, and the indigenous chieftains kept their power and autonomy.

This spatial understanding of the Southwest can be seen in the Ming dynasty administrative division of these areas. Present-day northeastern Yunnan, which was out of reach of the main routes in the Southwest, was administered under Sichuan province; Dongchuan thus became the southernmost part of Sichuan province. However, it remained far outside the control of the Sichuan government during the Ming dynasty, and likewise could not be reached by the Guizhou government. (Fig.1.6) For instance, on the map of Sichuan province in the Sichuan gazetteer published during the reign of Jiajing (1522-1566), Dongchuan is drawn completely in the wrong place, while other sites are identified relatively correctly.³⁵ This shows that the official compiler had only a very vague impression of Dongchuan (Fig. 1.7). Beyond the reach of the central state, the indigenous communities in Dongchuan, Wumeng and Mangbu were thought of as uncivilized barbarians who either obeyed or rebelled capriciously. In 1610, during the reign of Wanli 萬曆 (1572-1620), Deng Mei 鄧美, the governor of Yunnan province at the time, described the barbarian situation on the border between Yunnan and Sichuan provinces. He tells that, apart from the barbarian communities living in western Yunnan (the border between present-day southwestern Yunnan and Southeast Asia), there were also barbarians in the northeast (between Yunnan, Sichuan and Guizhou). Among them, Dongchuan was separated from Xundian in central Yunnan only by a mountain range. Xundian 尋甸, which was located along the Pu'an Road between Guizhou and Kunming, the capital of Yunnan, lost its indigenous rulers when they were replaced by Han Chinese officials in 1476.³⁶ In the report of the Xundian local government, the indigenous people in Dongchuan were cruel and crafty barbarians, who were too fierce

³⁴ Wen Chunlai, pp. 83-106; Herman, pp.103-189.

³⁵ *Sichuan zongzhi* 四川總志, c.a. 1541, comp. by Liu Damo 劉大謨 and Yang Shen 楊慎, in *Beijing tushuguan gu zhenben congkan* 北京圖書館古珍本叢刊(Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 1998), p. 14.

³⁶ *Xundian fuzhi* 尋甸府志, c.a. 1550, comp. by Wang Shangyong 王尚用, in *Zhongguo xinan wenxian congshu: Xinan xijian fangzhi wenxian* 中國西南文獻叢書: 西南稀見方志文獻 (Laizhou: Lanzhou daxue chubanshe, 2004), vol. 22, juan b, pp. 251-258.

to conquer. The indigenous chieftains of Dongchuan, Lu Shou 祿壽 and Lu Zhe 祿哲, were said to be heartless and provocative. Their tribes did not know how to cultivate, and they made their living as bandits. They infested Yunnan province. What's more, they were right on Xundian's doorstep and could march there in a single day. Deng Mei then pointed out that law and order could not be established in Dongchuan. Although Sichuan province had arranged for officials to govern this area, these officials never personally went into the area. The indigenous chieftains and headmen thus retained authority and control.

Given this situation, Deng Mei suggested that the governor of Yunnan should also be in charge of Dongchuan, because it was outside the effective control of the Sichuan government. He believed that if the Yunnan government, which was closer to Dongchuan, were to co-supervise, this new arrangement would make the threat by bandits in the borderlands gradually recede. Moreover, with this peaceful solution, the government would not need to resort to violence, which was beneficial to the inhabitants: a win-win situation. Deng Mei said: 'Some people say that this area belongs to another province and is irrelevant to Yunnan. However, Dongchuan is a barren land, blocked from the enlightenment of our Emperor because the Sichuan government only nominally supervises this area.'³⁷ Deng Mei's description of Dongchuan indicates that the area was still seen as a borderland for the central state at this time. Deng Mei's suggestions were approved by the Ming court, and in the late Ming dynasty Dongchuan came under the supervision of both Sichuan and Yunnan provinces.

3. Dongchuan and northeastern Yunnan during the Qing dynasty

In mid-seventeenth century, the Qing state (1644 -1912) already controlled most of the Ming territory. Emperor Yongli 永曆 (1625-1662), the last emperor of the Southern Ming dynasty, was executed in 1662 in Kunming, Yunnan, by Wu Sangui 吳三桂 (1612-1678). Wu Sangui was a famous Ming general who turned to the Qing; later he was bestowed with the title of 'West Pacifying King' (*pingxi wang* 平西王) and held administrative power over the provinces of Yunnan and Guizhou until this feudal power

³⁷ Deng Mei 鄧美, 'Qing xunfu jianzhi dongchuan shu 請巡撫兼制東川疏', *DCFZ*, 1761, *juan* 20a: pp. 10a -14a.

was recalled by Emperor Kangxi in 1680.

During this period, northeastern Yunnan still belonged to Sichuan province and was controlled neither by the rebel armies of local power of Wu Sangui nor by the central state. An unexpected event happened in Dongchuan in 1679. The conflict happened within the indigenous chieftain Lu's family. Two parties fought each other for power, but power was soon lost by both sides: in the end, the widow of the former indigenous chieftain decided to give up her power to the Qing government in exchange for protection. In this way, the Qing government took charge of Dongchuan in 1679, and placed it again under the administration of Sichuan province.³⁸

However, in the early period of Qing government in Dongchuan, Dongchuan was still in the hands of the powerful indigenous headmen (*tumu* 土目) and their communities. Not only did they hinder the Qing administration in Dongchuan, but they also invaded Wuding and Xundian, to the southwest of Dongchuan. Most of the Qing officials appointed to govern Dongchuan actually still lived in the capital of Sichuan. The Manchu or Han prefects and other officials who were sent to Dongchuan were not really governing local society. This nominal administration finally ended during the reign of Yongzheng (1723-1735).³⁹

In 1725, Emperor Yongzheng was eager to explore his southwestern territories. He gave this difficult mission to one of his most trusted officials, E'ertai 鄂爾泰 (1677-1745). E'ertai was an eminent official during Yongzheng's reign. He was appointed governor (*xunfu* 巡撫) of Guangxi province, and later became governor-general (*zongdu* 總督) of Yunnan and Guizhou in 1725. Unlike other officials who attempted to appease the rebellious indigenous communities, he took an aggressive military stance to improve the standing of the Qing government in the Southwest.⁴⁰ In his memorial, E'ertai reports that there was no bigger problem in Yunnan and Guizhou than the Miao barbarians (*miaoman* 苗蠻), who harboured bandits and all sorts of other criminals. It was the most dangerous borderland of Yunnan, Guizhou and Sichuan.⁴¹ If Emperor Yongzheng wanted to pacify this area, he first had to suppress the barbarian forces. And for that, he would

³⁸ DCFZ, 1761, *juan* 3: p. 5b-8b; QSL, *juan* 191, p. 20. (KX. 37/11/12)

³⁹ E'ertai, 'Qing tianshe dongchuan liuguang shu 請添設東川流官疏', DCFZ, *juan* 20a: pp. 24a-25b, especial 24b.

⁴⁰ QSG, vol. 34, *juan* 288, p. 10230.

⁴¹ YZZPZZ, vol. 7, pp. 11-12. (YZ. 4/3/20.)

have to forcibly impose reforms on the indigenous chieftains.

Moreover, although never admitted by Yongzheng himself, the huge deposits of copper in the area were definitely another important reason for the Qing state to spend so much effort to conquer this area. The central state had started to notice the mineral resources of the Southwest long before this, as evidenced by the descriptions of Tanglang Mountain and the Jinsha River mentioned above. During the Yuan dynasty the abundant local gold and silver deposits provided nearly half of China's total production. The Ming state especially focused on the silver mining industry; silver production in Yunnan reached its peak in the sixteenth century. However, except for a few adventurous merchants, the mining industry of the central state before the Qing dynasty did not go further into Dongchuan and other parts of northeastern Yunnan. Whereas the Ming dynasty mainly used silver as currency, copper coin became an important medium of exchange for the Qing government in the eighteenth century and was used for commercial exchange of agricultural and craft commodities in local economies. At the beginning of the Qing dynasty, the Qing mainly relied on importing Japanese copper. When the Japanese Tokugawa regime started to strictly control copper exports in the early eighteenth century, the Qing government had no choice but to undertake a massive effort to develop and exploit copper and other metal deposits required for copper cash production in China's remote southwest border regions. As a result, the central government became interested in Dongchuan because of its rich copper mines. Yunnan's copper mines officially became the only source for the imperial mints in Beijing from the 1730s onwards, and almost seventy percent of Yunnan's copper came from the copper deposits west of Dongchuan, especially Tangdan 湯丹.⁴²

Before the reform of the indigenous chieftain system in northeastern Yunnan, the debate about in which province to place Dongchuan and other parts of northeastern Yunnan for administrative purposes had to be addressed again. Dongchuan and other parts of northeastern Yunnan were still outside effective control – in many cases, co-administration by three provincial officials did not make things better, only worse. Emperor Yongzheng realized that unclear provincial, prefectural and county boundaries posed a growing problem: 'Whenever a crime such as robbery or murder was committed, the different local officials all tried to put the responsibility on each other.

⁴² Yan Zhongping, pp. 1-5.

However, if there is potential profit in mines, salt or tea, the different local officials will fight each other over these resources, which will make peaceful coexistence impossible.⁴³ Thus, the first thing Emperor Yongzheng needed to do was to redraw the boundaries in the Southwest and clarify the authority and responsibilities of the different levels of local governments. The fact that Dongchuan owned the biggest copper mines in the Southwest made it necessary to clarify the duties of local officials, though that was never directly mentioned by E'ertai when he proposed to bring Dongchuan, Wumeng, and Zhenxiong into Yunnan province.

In his statement, E'ertai specifically pointed out that Dongchuan, Wumeng, and Zhenxiong all belonged to Sichuan province, but should be put under the control of Yunnan. Dongchuan, for instance, was located only four hundred *li* away from Kunming, the capital of Yunnan, but 1,800 *li* away from Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan. In the winter of 1724, the indigenous chieftain of Wumeng led an army to attack the Qing walled city of Dongchuan. Letters requesting military support were immediately sent to both the Sichuan and Yunnan governments. Only after Yunnan's army had already defeated the rebellious indigenous forces did the Sichuan government receive the letter. Wumeng, north of Dongchuan, was just six hundred *li* from Kunming. If Dongchuan, Wumeng and Zhenxiong were placed under Yunnan province, E'ertai would have the opportunity to execute his reforms of the indigenous chieftain system. A new Qing local government would be established and the area would be peaceful.⁴⁴ The Yongzheng Emperor agreed with him wholeheartedly.

Dongchuan was the first area of northeastern Yunnan that was brought into Yunnan. E'ertai immediately sent investigators to Dongchuan to collect information on the military situation (*xingshi* 形勢), mountains and rivers, city walls, government offices, garrisons (*yingxun* 營汛), soldiers and male adults (*bingding* 兵丁), households, rice payment (*liangxiang* 糧餉), tax and corvée (*fuyi* 賦役) and customs, as well as details about mines in Dongchuan.⁴⁵ The reform of the indigenous chieftain system in Dongchuan started in 1726. E'ertai started to deploy troops in Dongchuan, and then removed the indigenous chieftains in Dongchuan by force and replaced them with Han

⁴³ *QSL*, *juan* 30, p. 23a, b. (YZ. 3/ 3/)

⁴⁴ *QSG*, vol. 34, *juan* 288, pp. 10230-10232.

⁴⁵ *YZZPZZ*, vol. 7, pp. 491-492. (YZ. 4/6/20.)

officials.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, E'ertai also started reforms in Wumeng and Zhenxiong which were incorporated into Yunnan province in 1726. In early 1727, E'ertai sent troops to arrest the chieftains and to occupy Wumeng and Zhenxiong. The indigenous chieftain in Wumeng and Zhenxiong and many indigenous headmen in Dongchuan were overpowered by the Qing army. The remaining headmen and other rebellious groups in Dongchuan, Wumeng and Zhenxiong all retreated to the north side of Jinsha River. Soon they joined forces with the indigenous armies from the Liangshan area of Sichuan to start another round of attacks, but this too ended in failure. As a result, the Qing officially started their administration of Wumeng and Zhenxiong in 1727.⁴⁷

However, the situation in northeastern Yunnan was not fully stable. Only three years later, in the eighth month of 1730, the indigenous forces started another rebellion.⁴⁸ This time the rebellion was led by Lu Wanfu 祿萬福, son of Lu Dingkun 祿鼎坤, who lived in Ludian 魯甸, located between Dongchuan and Wumeng. Soon after, his troops took over the walled city of Wumeng and killed the Qing military chief Liu Qiyuan 劉起元 and other local Qing officials. Later, the indigenous forces in Dongchuan, Zhenxiong and northwestern Guizhou all joined this revolt. The Qing suddenly lost control in the area: "They damaged all the passages into Dongchuan; the bridges and roads are all blocked, breaking off any contact with the area."⁴⁹ Later, the rebellious groups in Wumeng also formed an army in the Liangshan area of Sichuan province, and crossed the Jinsha River into northeastern Yunnan in support of the attack on the Qing army.⁵⁰ Until the eighth month of that year, E'ertai deployed six thousand soldiers from Yunnan, Guizhou and Sichuan to put down this rebellion. Eventually, the indigenous troops were defeated and the rebellion was put down in the twelfth month of 1730.⁵¹

To increase its control over the area, the Qing conducted a bloody massacre between 1726 and 1730. E'ertai stated that he intended to eradicate the criminal indigenous chieftains and headmen. He ordered important strategic posts and military bases to be set on fire, in case the rebels were hiding and planning to attack the Qing again. Hundreds of indigenous stockade villages (*yizhai* 夷寨) were massacred. This

⁴⁶ YZZPZZ, vol 8, pp. 113-114. (YZ. 4/9/19.)

⁴⁷ YZZPZZ, vol 8, pp. 923- 926. (YZ. 5/1/25.)

⁴⁸ YZZPZZ, vol 19, pp. 299- 305. (YZ. 8/10/ 17.)

⁴⁹ YZZPZZ, vol 19, pp. 299a. (YZ. 8/10/17.)

⁵⁰ YZZPZZ, vol 19, pp. 299a. (YZ. 8/10/17.)

⁵¹ YZZPZZ, vol 19, pp. 518- 530. (YZ. 8/11/28.); YZZPZZ, vol 19, pp. 665- 667. (YZ. 8/12/17.)

bloody strategy extended into average people's houses and buildings, which were all burned down.⁵² An extreme tragedy happened in Mitie 米帖, a town located between Dongchuan and Wumeng. In 1728, within one month, almost thirty thousand indigenous people disappeared. They were probably all killed, though some may have escaped.⁵³ After that, the name of Mitie was ironically replaced by Yongshan 永善, literally meaning 'friendly forever'. This bloody war remained in local memory until the twentieth century, evidenced by sites such as the 'ten thousand tomb' (*wanrenzhong* 萬人塚), which contained the remains of rebellious indigenous people killed by the Qing government later, and it is said that people quite often dug up all sorts of old weapons and arms around such sites.⁵⁴ As for the survivors of the defeated indigenous forces, they escaped to other mountain areas and most of them retreated back to the north side of Liangshan along the Jinsha. Still, during their rushed retreat, tens of thousands of people died in combat or drowned in the river.⁵⁵ The Qing then officially settled down in northeastern Yunnan. Since then, the part of northeastern Yunnan that is the focus of my discussion did not see any large-scale revolt in the eighteenth century.

After the reform, Wumeng was renamed Zhaotong 昭通 prefecture, literally meaning 'manifest and clear'. The capital of Zhaotong prefecture was situated in En'an 恩安 county, meaning 'favour (of the Emperor) and peace', where the administrative offices of Zhaotong prefecture and En'an county both resided in the same walled city. Zhaotong prefecture administered En'an county, Yongshan county, Jingjiang county 靖江, as well as Ludian 魯甸廳, Daguan 大關廳 and Zhenxiong sub-prefectures 鎮雄州.⁵⁶ Dongchuan prefecture administered Huize county and Qiaojia county. The capital of Dongchuan prefecture was in Huize county, sharing the same walled city.⁵⁷(Fig. 1.8)

In order to consolidate its authority, the Qing government stationed large forces in northeastern Yunnan after the war, based on a system of *xun* 汛 and *tang* 塘 military units. *Xun* and *tang* were the basic units of the Green Standard army (*lü ying* 綠營), in the Qing dynasty. Instead of the Eight Banner army which included Manchus,

⁵² YZZPZZ, vol. 19, pp. 518- 530. (YZ. 8/11/28.); YZZPZZ, vol. 19, pp. 665- 667. (YZ. 8/12/17.)

⁵³ *Dian yuan li nian zhuan Yunnan shilue* 滇雲歷年傳雲南事略', selected from *Dian yuan li nian zhuan* 滇雲歷年傳, 1737, comp. by Ni Tui 倪蜨, in *YSC*, vol. 11, p. 100.

⁵⁴ *Zhaotong deng ba xian tu shuo* 昭通等八縣圖說, 1919, comp. by Chen Bingren 陳秉仁, in *ZTJZ* 2006, vol. 2, p. 497.

⁵⁵ YZZPZZ, vol. 19, p. 519; 528. (YZ. 8/11/28)

⁵⁶ *En'an xianzhi* 恩安縣誌, 1762(1911), comp. by Wang Bingqian 汪炳謙 and Dai Fang 戴芳 in *ZTJZ*, vol.1, pp. 76-77.

⁵⁷ *DCFZ*, 1761, *juan* 3: 4a, b.

Mongolians and Han, the Green Standard army consisted only of Han soldiers and was intended to support the Eight Banner army. The Qing divided their troops into many connecting *xun* in the main cities and towns where a commander and his forces were stationed, and every *xun* set up several *tang* where soldiers were stationed at strategically important places. There might be anywhere from a few to a few hundred soldiers in a *tang*. *Tang* were settled in remote villages in the hinterland instead of only along the main routes. Their main mission was to maintain public order and serve as guards. Meanwhile, the soldiers and their families would do part-time farming on state-owned land, and populate and cultivate areas to provide food supplies for frontier military units. Compared to the garrison system of the Ming dynasty, the *xuntang* system had more influence in local society, especially in the new territory in the Southwest. However, since the *xun* and *tang* were spread over a large area and did not contain too many soldiers, they could be easily defeated. Moreover, considering the complex geographical conditions of the Southwest, a single *xun* or *tang* could end up totally cut off from communications.⁵⁸ Therefore, a walled city had to be built at an important location as the central gathering place in the event of a possible war with indigenous people.⁵⁹

The Qing government started to build walled cities in this area after gaining full control over the local situation. E'ertai and his successor Zhang Yunsui envisioned the walled cities of northeastern Yunnan as a defence infrastructure for all of Yunnan, Guizhou and Sichuan provinces, not limited to protecting the cities and towns of northeastern Yunnan itself. A similar conception can be found in all walled cities built in northeastern Yunnan, such as Dongchuan, Zhaotong, Yanjing, Dagan, Qiaojia. More importantly, the bases of the Qing forces were also intended for defence against the fierce indigenous people based on the other side of the Jinsha. The Jinsha River was considered to be the frontier between the 'dangerous barbarian areas' and the Qing territory, which can be clearly seen in the descriptions of 'frontier guards' (*bianfang* 邊防) in the local gazetteers of Dongchuan. They state that the important frontier counties were located along the Jinsha River. Because the indigenous people living 'outside' the

⁵⁸ Qin Shucui 秦樹才, *Yunnan luying bing yanjiu: yi xuntang wei zhongxin* 雲南綠營兵研究: 以汛塘為中心 (Kunming: Yunnan jiaoyu chubanshe, 2004).

⁵⁹ E'ertai, 'Qing she zhaotong wubian bingshu 請設昭通武弁兵疏', *En'an xianzhi*, 1762(1911), pp. 77–78. The same situation had been continued in the nineteenth century. see 'Cen Rangqin gong zougao youguan Yunnan shiji, 岑襄勤公奏稿有關雲南事蹟', in *YSC*, vol. 9, p. 485.(GX. 9/4/10.)

Jinsha River (*jiang wai* 江外) were very familiar with the roads and the river crossings, they could sneak up to Zhaotong and Dongchuan quite often without being noticed at all, especially at sites such as Leibo 雷波, Pingshan 屏山, and Mabian 馬邊 in the Liangshan area situated just across the Jinsha River. The sites they inhabited were always in the high mountains, difficult to reach and dangerous to climb. Moreover, they knew secret roads to northwestern Yunnan and Tibet. These indigenous forces were heavily armed. 'Without any exaggeration, if one of them was guarding a pass, even ten thousand people couldn't get through, for the barbarians were very fierce and tough.'⁶⁰

Similar descriptions can be found about other areas of northeastern Yunnan. The gazetteer of Zhaotong states that there were continual troubles on the frontier of Zhaotong with the Babu 巴布 who lived in the mountains across the Jinsha. They always crossed the river into Zhaotong in the autumn in groups. They were in league with the indigenous people living along the Jinsha River, and they robbed the (Han) merchants and inhabitants of Yunnan. They did not just steal livestock and all kinds of products but also kidnapped Han people and kept them as lifelong slaves. Apart from the Babu, there were also bandits with an indigenous background living in Zhaotong who kidnapped people and sold them to the Babu to earn a great deal of money, which was really a big danger for travellers. The area from the capital of Zhaotong to the Jinsha River was clearly not under the full control of the Qing government.⁶¹

These descriptions sound very reminiscent of how the Ming state described Dongchuan and other parts of northeastern Yunnan in the seventeenth century. Jinsha River, in the eighteenth century, became the new border between the Qing state and the indigenous area, and then as a division marking the different policies applied to indigenous communities. The importance of the river can also be seen in E'ertai's strategy to reform the indigenous chieftain system, especially his concept of 'inside the river' (*jiang nei* 江内) and 'outside the river' (*jiang wai* 江外). In his suggestions to Emperor Yongzheng, he compared the two sides of the river and considered that the indigenous chieftain system could be kept in the territory outside the river, but in the territory inside the river, it would be better to replace the indigenous chieftains by Han

⁶⁰ DCFZ, 1761, *juan* 4: pp. 23a,b.

⁶¹ *En'an xianzhi*, 1762(1911), p. 30.

officials.⁶² In this text, the 'river' refers to Lancang 瀾滄 River in southern Yunnan which separated China from Southeast Asia. However, this terminology was also used by E'ertai to describe the Jinsha River in northeastern Yunnan:

In the tenth month of the tenth year of Yongzheng's reign (1732), E'ertai proposed: 'In the Dongchuan area, the Black Luoluo are the most stubborn people and the prime leader of all barbarian groups in the revolt against the government. They collude with gangs such as A Lü 阿驢, living at the foot of Liang Mountain outside of [Jinsha] River (*jiangwai* 江外), and collaborate with the subordinate indigenous chieftains in Qiaojia, Zhejiahai 者家海 in Dongchuan. The revolt was planned by Lu Dingkun 祿鼎坤 and was started by Lu Dingxin 祿鼎新. All those belonging to Lu's family took part in the revolt.'⁶³

A similar distinction between 'inner' and 'outer' can be found in many Qing documents. The idea was embodied in the reconstruction of northeastern Yunnan after the Qing army won the war against the indigenous forces. Emphasizing the line between 'inner' and 'outer' served to define the level of engagement of the government in its different territories, and to make a distinction between 'foreign areas' (*yiyu* 異域), 'normal administrative areas' (*jimi* 羈縻), 'new territories' (*xinjiang* 新疆) and 'former territories' (*jiujiang* 舊疆).⁶⁴ Areas like Dongchuan were 'new territories', recently incorporated in the 'inner' imperial territory, in which the state needed to invest energy and administrative effort. The area along the north side of the Jinsha, on the other hand, remained a 'normal administrative area' for the Qing. For these 'outer' areas, the Qing did not really show much determination in their political considerations to overthrow the indigenous powers. This differential treatment is clearly illustrated in later developments, such as the copper transports from Dongchuan to Beijing and the project to construct a channel in the Jinsha River.

4. Copper transport and the Jinsha channel excavation project

⁶² *QSG*, vol34, *juan* 288, p. 10230.

⁶³ *QSL*, *juan* 99, 17a.(YZ. 8/10.) ; *YZZPZZ*, vol 19, pp. 299. (YZ. 8/10/17.)

⁶⁴ More discussion about these four concepts of territory, see Wen Chunlai, pp. 310-312.

Immediately after the Qing established its authority in Yunnan, Qing officials started the official exploitation of copper mines and the minting of coins, and later, during Qianlong's reign, copper transport from Dongchuan to Beijing got under way in 1738.

The routes of copper transports from Dongchuan to Luzhou were formed in the second half of the eighteenth century and consisted of two main routes. The first was called the 'Dongchuan route': it started from the Tangdan copper mine in the western part of Dongchuan prefecture, to the walled city of Dongchuan, then from Dongchuan north to Ludian, Zhaotong, Dagan to Yanjing and then changed to ferry transport from Yanjing to Luzhou, or alternatively from Ludian to Zhenxiong to Xuyong, or from Zhenxiong then by ferry from Luoxingdu 羅星渡 to Luzhou. The other road was called the 'Xundian route': it went from the Tangdan copper mine south to Xundian, and then northwest towards Weining, Bijie in Guizhou, then to Xuyong to Luzhou (Fig 1.9). In general, the routes of the copper transports started from Dongchuan, passed through northeastern Yunnan to Luzhou 瀘州 in Sichuan on the Yangzi River, and followed the Yangzi River to Chongqing, Hankou, Yangzhou, Tianjing, Tongzhou and then on to Beijing⁶⁵. Thus, in the eighteenth century, Dongchuan for the first time became the starting point of the copper transport route to Beijing. In the eyes of the central state, Dongchuan was no longer an unreachable barbarian area but had now turned into an important region for the nation's economy. Meanwhile, for northeastern Yunnan, the mining industry became the engine of a remarkable population growth, especially of immigrants, and of increased agricultural and industrial production, and it turned the city into an important regional market.

Road conditions were always problematic. Details of this situation are recorded in the memorials of Zhang Yunsui 張允隨 (1692-1751). Zhang Yunsui went to Yunnan in 1718 as a local official, and was later recognized by E'ertai. In 1730, he became the new governor of Yunnan province. When he left in 1750, he had stayed in Yunnan for 32

⁶⁵ Yan Zhongping, pp. 31-32; Nakajima Satoshi, pp. 161-177; Kawakatsu Mamoru, pp. 526 - 629; Nanny Kim, 'Copper Transports out of Yunnan, ca. 1750-1850: Transport Technologies, Natural Difficulties and Environmental Change in a Southwestern Highland Area', in *Metals, Monies, and Markets in Early Modern Societies: East Asian and Global Perspectives*, ed by Tomas Hirzel and Nanny Kim (Berlin: Lit. verlag Dr. W. Hopf, 2008), pp. 191-220, especially p. 193. Geographers at Tübingen University have begun an ambitious project to construct a GIS database on copper transport routes in the Qing period since 2009. see Dieball, S. and H. J. Rosner, "GIS Applications and Web Map Service for the 'Monies, Markets, and Finance in China and East Asia 1600-1900'-Project", GIS in the conference of Humanities and Social Sciences in October, 2009, Taipei, Taiwan.

years and had managed and experienced the social transformation in the Southwest.⁶⁶ In his report, Zhang Yunsui emphasizes the difficult transport situation. He describes that when people travelled from Guizhou province to other parts of the Southwest, almost every step was on a mountain range, especially around Dongchuan and Zhaotong. The copper industry had attracted many people. They all needed food and other supplies, but there was only limited farmland in these mountain areas. Meanwhile, the harsh conditions made it difficult to import the basic necessities from other areas, which caused inflation in northeastern Yunnan.⁶⁷ The increasing prices raised the costs of the local government, increased the potential for crisis during the latter half of the eighteenth century, and directly increased the costs of transporting copper for the central government.

To save on transport costs, the Qing government started to consider excavating a channel in the Jinsha River, as suggested by Zhang Yunsui. He proposed the Jinsha channel excavation project just after being promoted to governor-general of Yunnan province in 1741, which was the most important political achievement of his career. His plan was to create a new waterway in the Jinsha River starting from Xiaojiangkou 小江口 in Dongchuan and going to Xuzhou 叙州 in Sichuan (Fig 1.9). Ideally, this new waterway would be more convenient than the river and would reduce the costs of copper transport, and thereby promote local and national economic growth.⁶⁸ According to Zhang Yunsui, the channel would be the best long-term solution to the economic and social problems of northeastern Yunnan.

As one of the largest public projects in eighteenth-century China, the Jinsha channel project has been discussed by many researchers from an economic prospective.⁶⁹ Here I want to emphasize that the project not only brought economic

⁶⁶ QSG, vol 35, juan 307, pp. 10555-10558.

⁶⁷ 'ZYSZG', in YSC, vol 8, pp. 617-618(QL.6/11/15);636-637.(QL.7/7/15)

⁶⁸ 'ZYSZG', p. 615-617. (QL.6/10/19)

⁶⁹ Nanny Kim, 'River Control, Merchant Philanthropy, and Environmental Change in Nineteenth - Century China', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 52. 4 (2009), 660-694; Nanny Kim, 'Copper Transports out of Yunnan, ca. 1750 -1850: Transport Technologies, Natural Difficulties and Environmental Change in a Southwestern Highland Area', in *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 vol1 (Berlin: Lit verlag Dr. W. Hopf, 2008); Helen Dunstan, 'Safely Supping with the Devil: The Qing Merchant Suppliers of Copper', *Late Imperial China*, (1992), 13. 2: 42 - 81; Hans Ulrich Vogel, *The Complete Map of the Jinshajiang (jinshajiang quantu): An Extraordinary Document Relating to a River Dredging Project in the Chinese Province of Yunnan, 1741-1749* (München: Bruckmann Verlag, 1991); Lan Yong 藍勇, 'Qingdai Diantong jingyun luxian kaoshi 清代滇銅京運路線考釋', *Lishi yanjiu* (2006) 3: 86-97. Guo Songyi 郭松義, and Zhang Zexian 張澤鹹, *Zhongguo hangyunshi 中國航運史* (Tapbei: Wenjin chubanshe,

benefits to the Qing, but that it also illustrates political considerations, especially how the Qing dealt with the indigenous communities along the Jinsha River. As I mentioned above, the Jinsha was treated as the new borderline with the indigenous territories in southern Sichuan after the Qing government took over northeastern Yunnan. If the channel project became a success, the north side of the Jinsha would no longer be unreachable, and the Qing would have an opportunity to extend their power to the other side of the Jinsha River.

Around the middle of the eighteenth century, the Qing government gradually became more confident in governing Yunnan. In the eyes of Zhang Yunsui, at that moment the influence of the empire reached all corners of the territory. It was not like the previous situation any more, in which the central state had to put the project of civilizing remote places on the back corner. Finally the central state could continue its project of 'civilizing' its remote territories. Zhang Yunsui tried to convince Emperor Qianlong that the Jinsha project did not serve Yunnan province merely in terms of transport, but would bring lasting political stability to the Southwest.⁷⁰ The Jinsha channel project can be seen as a further step towards conquering the isolated indigenous lands along the north side of the Jinsha River after the Qing government fully controlled northeastern Yunnan.

As with all proposals dealing with indigenous groups, the Jinsha project also caused intensive debate among Qing officials. The main arguments focused on three key points. Firstly, it was pointed out that the dangerous conditions of the Jinsha River made this project almost impossible. The Jinsha was dangerous because of many hidden rocks, which are very unpredictable in falling and rising water levels (Fig 1.14). In addition, the cliffs on both sides of the river and innumerable twists created dangerous and unexpected swirling currents.⁷¹

Secondly, the difficult Jinsha channel project required a great financial investment and tremendous human and other resources, which would constitute a huge burden on the national treasury. This was pointed out by Huang Tinggui 黃庭桂, who was a former governor of Sichuan province. Huang Tinggui's worries were later proven to be well-

1997).

⁷⁰ 'ZYSZG', p. 607.(QL. 6/8/6)

⁷¹ 'ZYSZG', p. 609.(QL. 6/8/6), 618(QL. 6/11/15), 623- 624(QL. 7/2/17).

founded. Because of the many difficulties, a huge number of side-projects needed to be undertaken.⁷² The costs of the Jinsha channel project were extremely high. This ambitious project was officially carried out from 1741 to 1748. In these eight years, it took over 200,000 *liang* (Chinese tael) from the imperial treasury and involved many local officials and hundreds of thousands of labourers.⁷³

Thirdly, Huang Tinggui worried that when the copper transports on Jinsha River started, they would go through the barbarian areas, which could be dangerous. During the building project, workers could easily sneak off into the barbarian tribes and collaborate with them to cause trouble for the local government. The governor-general of Sichuan and Shanxi province Yin Jishan 尹繼善 shared the same opinion: he believed that the Jinsha River should continue to be treated as a borderline with the barbarians, and the Qing government should not disturb the indigenous tribes.⁷⁴ Apparently, the Sichuan officials did not want to be involved in the troublesome job of controlling the indigenous stockade villages located along the north side of the river.

It seems that these opinions forced Zhang Yunsui to give more consideration to his project. Zhang Yunsui said that he also noticed the problem of 'barbarian stockade villages' (*yizhai* 夷寨) along the river.⁷⁵ Considering the large scale of the project, in his 1741 memorial he said that the Qing state had to cooperate with local officials to ensure the project's success. The local officials would help to gather artisans and supply goods such as rice and salt. Normally, in similar projects in other areas, the Qing government could just hire local artisans and pay them wages and let them buy rice, salt and vegetables for themselves. However, in this case the arrangements with labourers were a more delicate matter. Because most inhabitants living in the villages alongside the Jinsha River were indigenous people, they were not considered appropriate for hiring. Skilled artisans and unskilled labourers and servants therefore needed to be hired from other areas. And the government needed to pay them high salaries. In addition, considering that this was an indigenous area, all these life necessities needed to be transported from other areas, which was not an easy job.⁷⁶

⁷² 'ZYSZG', p. 636.(QL.7/7/15)

⁷³ Nanny Kim, 'Copper Transports out of Yunnan', pp. 206-211.

⁷⁴ 'ZYSZG', p. 636. (QL.7/7/15)

⁷⁵ 'ZYSZG', p. 617. (QL. 6/10/19)

⁷⁶ 'ZYSZG', p. 608-609.(QL.6/8/6)

After a large number of imported workers entered the Jinsha River area, local officials not only had to supervise their work, but also needed to prevent these labourers from mingling with the indigenous communities without official permission. Zhang Yunsui forbade the workers to enter the barbarian area without permission. Meanwhile, he would offer awards to the indigenous chieftains who stayed along the Jinsha River if they came to welcome the Qing officials.⁷⁷ Later, according to the official report from Zhaotong, once the Jinsha channel project started, 'the soldiers and labourers are all restricted. No one can sneak into the barbarian stockade villages; the Luo barbarian people (*luoyi* 徠夷) living on both sides of the [Jinsha] River are also very obedient.'⁷⁸

It seems that the indigenous people living along the Jinsha River were not encouraged to be hired for the Jinsha channel project. One of the reasons is that the Qing state still considered the area to be dangerous. Only in the main cities of northeastern Yunnan, which they had already conquered and brought under their control, such as Dongchuan, Zhaotong, and Zhenxiong, was the Qing government willing to hire indigenous labourers for public projects, as will be discussed in Chapter 2.⁷⁹ As a result, the Qing government would rather spend more money and energy to hire artisans from other areas. The local officials of Guizhou and Sichuan provinces also assisted in gathering and transporting labourers into the Jinsha area to work on the project.⁸⁰

Under these conditions, the Qing government started the Jinsha project in what was still considered to be a very dangerous frontier area.⁸¹ Zhang Yunsui had to compromise his great ambition in his channel project, but still he wished that the Qing could make use of this opportunity to settle many Han inhabitants into this area after the project was finished, so that they could turn this remote barbarian land into a more accessible area in the future. The Jinsha project was divided into two parts. The upstream project from Dongchuan to Yongshan, and the downstream project from Yongshan to Xuzhou in Sichuan. The upstream project lasted from 1741 to 1743; copper transports started in 1743, which turned out to be safe and without blockades, according to Zhang Yunsui. The downstream project lasted from 1744 to 1748.⁸²

⁷⁷ 'ZYSZG', p. 617. (QL. 6/10/19)

⁷⁸ 'ZYSZG', p. 628. (QL. 7/5/24)

⁷⁹ For more details see Chapter 2.

⁸⁰ 'ZYSZG', p. 629-630. (QL. 7/5/24)

⁸¹ 'ZYSZG', p. 662. (QL. 9/9/28)

⁸² Nanny Kim, *Copper Transports out of Yunnan*, pp. 207-209.

According to Zhang Yunsui's report, it was quite a success at the beginning. It seems that navigation conditions were improved for copper transports.⁸³ However, although Zhang Yunsui kept up his optimistic tone, this project was only partly successful because in fact the ships sank quite frequently. Emperor Qianlong gradually lost his patience and feared that the project would only deplete his treasury instead of decreasing the costs of copper transports.⁸⁴ In 1749, Emperor Qianlong sent investigator officials to evaluate the conditions of the waterways on the Jinsha River. In the end, part of the downstream segment was found fit for continued use and the upstream segment was deemed still too dangerous; copper transports would have to use the land routes again. The project was stopped, and Zhang Yunsui had to take responsibility and was punished for his failed project. He left Yunnan in 1750 and died one year later.⁸⁵ The Qing's effort to extend its direct control into the indigenous areas along the Jinsha River did not succeed. Until the twentieth century the Jinsha River was thus treated as a borderline, not just between Yunnan and Sichuan provinces, but also between the indigenous and the imperial territory.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed how different central governments understood the local situation and gradually extended their power into Dongchuan and other parts of northeastern Yunnan. The traffic routes connecting the central state and the Southwest were one of the important ways to understand this remote area of complex geographical and climatic conditions for the outsiders who came into this area. For the central state, the traffic routes were not just a neutral part of the environment, but represented a reshaped landscape which changed the perception of the central government and affected their strategy in the Southwest.⁸⁶ Because of these routes into Yunnan and their historical expansion into the local territories, Dongchuan and other parts of

⁸³ 'ZYSZG', p. 642.(QL.7/11/17)

⁸⁴ 'ZYSZG', p. 752-753.(QL.14/6/26)

⁸⁵ 'ZYSZG', p. 757-758.(QL.14/8/12)

⁸⁶ There is another supplement which I don't fully discuss so much in this chapter but it also very important. This changing way to view Southwestern China was also because the starting point – the location of the capital of the central government – was different in different dynasties. Obviously, the different strategies of road building in the Yunnan area were also affected by the location of the central capital.

northeastern Yunnan gradually became better known to the central state. After the Qing dynasty conquered this area, Dongchuan became the starting point of a new road for transporting copper to Beijing in the eighteenth century, which forced the central government to deal directly with Dongchuan for the very first time. During this process, the new road, the new walled city, and the surrounding landscapes were reconstructed and represented in various discourses, which will be shown in later chapters.