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Chapter 3 'The Picturesque Empire's Land'? Ten Views of Dongchuan

Introduction

After the walled city was built and imperial institutions were established in Dongchuan, a set of the ten most beautiful views in the surroundings of the walled city was recorded in the local gazetteers. This set of views had been identified by local scholars during the Qing dynasty. These ten views became the main theme in the literature written by these local scholars. The views were given elaborate and delicate names, which were recorded in local gazetteers and in poetry anthologies edited by the local poetry society.

Interest in selecting and describing local best views was not limited to Dongchuan. The practice of selecting best views (*shengjing* 勝景) started in the eleventh century. Here, 'best views' can be explained as scenic spots and viewpoints. Later, this practice of selecting best views spread to every city and town throughout China and East Asia. Normally, 'eight views' (*bajing* 八景) is the standard number of best views for an administrative unit, although there are exceptions consisting of another even number, such as four, six, ten or twelve.

The phenomenon of 'eight views' in Chinese landscape painting has been discussed from the perspective of art history.¹ So far, however, very few studies have treated this topic from the perspective of local Chinese history. There are a few articles about Taiwan, such as Kai-shyh Lin's research on eight views (which he translates as 'eight scenes') in nineteenth-century Yilan, Taiwan. Lin indicates that the selection of 'eight scenes' was based on the aesthetic experiences of local scholars who created a new social and spatial consciousness in order to construct a civilized world. They used the genres of Chinese poetry and landscape painting to project a traditional cosmological order on the newly

¹ See Alfreda Murck, 'Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers by Wang Hung,' in *Images of the Mind: Selections from the Edward L. Elliott Family and John B. Elliott Collections of Chinese Calligraphy and Painting*, ed. by Wen Fong (Princeton: The Art Museum, Princeton University, 1984), pp. 213-235 and 'The Eight Views of Xiao-Xiang and the Northern Song Culture of Exile,' in *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* (1996), 26:113-144. Richard M. Barnhart, 'Shining Rivers: Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang in Sung Painting,' in *International Colloquium on Chinese Art History, Proceedings: Painting and Calligraphy, Part 1* (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1991), pp. 45-95. Kathlyn Liscomb, 'The Eight Views of Beijing': Politics in Literati Art', *Artibus Asiae*, (1988-1989), 49. 1/2: 127-152.

acquired lands in Qing territory.² Lin's article underlines the main argument of this chapter, which focuses on the ten views of Dongchuan.

The main questions in this chapter are about the criteria used: what kinds of sites were chosen as 'scenery'? How and why were the best views selected? Like Lin, I conclude that the criteria for selecting best views are a convergence of political, military, commercial, and geomantic concerns rather than simply beautiful scenery, and that the selection of best views created a discourse of social and spatial consciousness of the elite class which mapped the civilized world. Beyond that, I point out that the selection of best views should be seen in the context of geographical descriptions in the local gazetteers. Also, I maintain that the study of the selection of best views should not be limited to one isolated case such as Yilan in Lin's research, but should be treated in a wider context. The towns of northeastern Yunnan shared similar social, political, economic and even literary considerations since they all experienced the same tension between different cultures of which Han culture was only one more recent addition. So in the final part of this chapter, I focus not only on Dongchuan, but on other cities in northeastern Yunnan as well.

1. The tradition of 'best views'

The earliest record of eight-view series can be found in *Dream Pool Essays* (Mengxi bitan 夢溪筆談) by Shen Gua 沈括 (ca. 1031-1095). He indicates that a famous series of landscape paintings called 'Eight Views of Xiao-Xiang' (*Xiao Xiang bajing tu* 瀟湘八景圖) by Song Di 宋迪 (ca. 1015-1080) got a lot of attention at that time. Song Di was a government official in Changsha 長沙 in Hunan province, and he was especially good at landscape painting.³ His most masterful paintings were eight views of the Xiang River (nowadays in Hunan province): 'Geese Descending to Sandbar' (*pingsha luoyan* 平沙落雁), 'Returning Sails from Distant Shore' (*yuanpu guifan* 遠浦歸帆), 'Mountain Market in Clearing Mist' (*shanshi qinglan* 山市晴嵐), 'River and Sky in Evening Snow' (*jiangtian*

² Kai-shyh Lin 林開世, 'Fengjing de xingcheng he wenming de jianli' 風景的形成和文明的建立: 十九世紀宜蘭的個案, *Taiwan Journal of Anthropology* 台灣人類學刊 (2003), 1/2: 1-38. Song Nanxuan 宋南萱, "Taiwanbajing: cong qingdai dao rizhi shiqi de chuanbian," '台灣八景': 從清代到日治時期的轉變 (Taipei: Guoli zhongyang daxue yishuxue yanjiusuo, unpublished master's thesis, Graduate Institute of Art Studies, National Central University, 2000).

³ On the theme of *Eight Views of Xiao-Xiang* in Chinese painting, see Alfreda Murck and Richard M. Barnhart's publications.

muxue 江天暮雪), 'Autumn Moon on Dongting Lake' (*dongting qiuyue* 洞庭秋月), 'Night Rain on Xiao Xiang' (*xiaoxiang yeyu* 瀟湘夜雨), 'Evening Bell from Mist-Shrouded Temple' (*yansi wanzhong* 煙寺晚鐘), and 'Fishing Village in Evening Glow' (*yucun xizhao* 漁村夕照).⁴

Although Song Di's paintings have unfortunately not been preserved, they have drawn a lot of attention since then. Similar sets of best views were painted elsewhere in China as well. And because the theme of 'eight views' was taken up by many other scholars and poets, it became a popular tradition of poetry in many parts of China.

In general, Chinese poetry presents experiences as occurring at a specific place and time. The emotional experience of nature is a facet which was well captured by scholars in the landscape painting genre, a genre that achieved prominence starting in the Song dynasty. Their landscape poetry and painting provide a sense of how they perceived, imagined and constructed nature. And quite often, poetry and painting complemented each other: 'a poem alive with graphic description and a painting full of poetic grace' (*shi zhong you hua, hua zhong you shi* 詩中有畫·畫中有詩). Images of nature play an important role in the writing and painting of scholars, and their concentration on objective images in nature are associated with subjective thoughts and feelings.⁵

Best views should either be beautiful, or be closely intertwined with history or with educational or agricultural achievements. Each of the eight views of Xiao-Xiang has an aesthetic title with four characters that bears a connection to the poem and the painting, such as 'Geese Descending to Sandbar' (*pingsha luoyan* 平沙落雁). The eight views are divided into four pairs, the two paintings of each pair are poetically related. For instance, 'Geese Descending to Sandbar' (*pingsha luoyan* 平沙落雁) and 'Sails Returning from Distant Shore' (*yuanpu guifan* 遠浦歸帆) form one pair dealing with absence and thinking of absent friends, and 'Mountain Market in Clearing Mist' (*shanshi qinglan* 山市晴嵐) and 'River and Sky in Evening Snow' (*jiangtian muxue* 江天暮雪) form another pair. While initially the eight views were presented in eight separate scrolls, the form gradually turned from scroll paintings with panoramic scope into a bound volume that had one view per page. The dominant type of paintings and books up to the Song

⁴ Shen Kuo 沈括, *Mengxi bitan* 夢溪筆談, ca. 1086-1093, *Mengxi bitan jiaozheng* 夢溪筆談校正, comp. by Hu Daojing 胡道靜 (Shanghai: Gujichubanshe, 1987), vol. 1, p. 549.

⁵ For more discussion about objective images in nature and subjective thoughts and feelings in Chinese literature, see Hans H. Frankel, *The Flowering Plum and the Palace Lady* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976).

dynasty was horizontal or vertical scrolls made of silk or paper. During the Song dynasty, following a new type of bookbinding, people started to make paintings as single pieces and assemble them as a number of folded or unfolded sheets of paper together, which was called an album (*ceye* 冊頁). Later, in the Ming and Qing dynasties, this album genre became very popular. This new development in bookbinding brought with it a serial presentation of landscape paintings.⁶

Meanwhile, following this development, the image and poetry of eight views started to appear in local gazetteers since the Ming dynasty. Selecting and printing the images of best views in local gazetteers became very popular and spread to almost all cities and towns in late imperial China. Normally, the images of eight views are put together with other images, such as a map of the territory showing the layout of the walled city and its main buildings, in the first section of the local gazetteer. And the poems about the eight views, written by local officials and scholars at different times, are usually put into a chapter called 'collected local literature' (*yiwenzhi* 藝文志). While the painters of the eight views remain anonymous in the local gazetteers, the identity of the poets is usually mentioned. (Fig. 3.4)

Because in imperial China almost every educated person composed poetry, the number of poets was remarkably large. However, only a few poems were selected for inclusion in local gazetteers. Apart from the literary talent reflected in the poems, the most important reason for selecting a specific poem was whether it described a local scene that was officially recognized in that city or town. So the theme of local best views was the theme of most of the poetry collected in local gazetteers. Such poetry was published in local gazetteers for promotional reasons. It emphasized the peaceful, beautiful and harmonious nature of local scenery and strengthened consciousness of the achievements of local government. Therefore, in the context of local gazetteers, the theme of eight views was not just an expression of the personal feelings of scholars and literati. Over time, original artistic creation became less important, and the genre

⁶ Normally, an album has an even number of pages, between eight and sixteen. And a painting on one page corresponds to the poem (written in calligraphy) on the next page. On the history of bookbinding, see Ma Heng 馬衡, 'Zhongguo shuji zhidu bianqian zhi yanjiu' 中國書籍制度變遷志研究, *Tushuguan xue jikan* (1926): 199-213; Li Yaonan 李耀南, 'Zhongguo shuzhuang kao' 中國書裝考, *Tushuguan xue jikan* (1930), 4.2: 207-216; Edward Martinique, *Chinese Traditional Bookbinding: A Study of Its Evolution and Techniques* (Taipei: Chinese Materials Center, 1983); *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China*, ed. by Cynthia J. Brokaw and Kai-wing Chow (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). On folding albums, see Jerome Silbergeld, *Chinese Painting Style: Media, Methods, and Principles of Form* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), pp. 13-14.

became transformed into a rigid format that had to be included in local gazetteers independent of the quality of the poems.

Although the descriptions of best views were often based partly on aesthetic considerations and literary conventions, scholars' poems and paintings included in the gazetteers still needed to connect with the natural landscape that actually existed. Their writings in the gazetteers provide a sense of how these scholars perceived place and nature, and the descriptions of the best views clarify their significance in the context of local society. In new territories of the Qing Empire such as Dongchuan, the selection and description of best views might not have had the same significance as in well-developed and 'civilized' areas of the empire with their long literary tradition. Compared to more developed and civilized areas such as the Central Plain and the middle and lower regions of the Yangzi River, the landscape in southwestern China is characterized primarily by steep and lofty peaks and rocks. For people of that time, these wild, 'primitive' views were very different from scenery in the well-developed and civilized areas, and had rarely been noticed by earlier scholars.⁷

In general, narratives in the local literature of northeastern Yunnan all point out that the main impression of landscapes here is that they are wilder than in other parts of China. The main reason given for this is that, firstly, there are not so many historical sites in this area, and secondly, there is no famous literary record of these beautiful landscapes. The description of Qiaojia's landscape in the local gazetteer of Qiaojia in the first half of the twentieth century is a typical description of northeastern Yunnan's landscape. The compiler is apologetic, stating that the process of civilization had started here far later than in other areas because Qiaojia was located in the borderlands. Therefore there are not so many historical sites that deserve to be recorded; only Jinsha River in this area is well known. Still, he thinks that the landscape here is majestic and awe-inspiring. He is sorry that almost no famous scholars had written poems about them, with the result that these best views remained unknown to others.⁸

Similar descriptions appeared in the local gazetteers of northeastern Yunnan since the eighteenth century and this impression of the landscape of this area continues up to

⁷ The appreciation of scenic spots in developed cities was created by urban elites based on popular venues for their social gatherings and leisure-time touring. The most important recent research on this topic can be found in Tobie Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture in Early Qing Yangzhou*; Si-yen Fei, *Negotiating urban space*, especially chapter 3, 'Imaging Nanjing: A Genealogy', pp. 124-187.

⁸ *Qiaojia xianzhi gao* 巧家縣誌稿, comp. by Lu Chongren 陸崇仁 and Tang Zuo 湯祚, 1942, Beijing, Guojia tushuguan, juan 2: pp. 37a -37b.

today.⁹ Since there exists no literary tradition of writing poetry about local landscapes in Yunnan, most descriptions of landscape stem directly from local officials and the compilers of gazetteers themselves. Very few among the social elite here were interested in writing such poems. Most of the local officials (appointed by the central government) were not native to the area but came from other provinces, and later left the area for their next assignment to another place. The way of writing about the local landscape in the poetry and essays of these officials was based on their own experience in their hometown or in cities they had stayed in before. For the representation of the local landscape of Dongchuan and other areas in northeastern Yunnan, a small group of local officials and scholars who discovered and defined the local landscape in their writings became important. And their essays and poems dominated knowledge of this local landscape. Who were the local officials that selected the best views and how did they understand the landscape in the new territory? How did they choose a set of scenes to represent the best views of the area? In what way is their selection described in the local gazetteers? And what influence did these descriptions have on later periods? How did they change the way local people thought about the landscape in their place of residence? Based on the case study of Dongchuan and other parts of northeastern Yunnan, all these questions are treated in the rest of this chapter.

2. Perceiving the ten views of Dongchuan

The ten best views of Dongchuan are recorded in the 1761 gazetteer with their poetic names as well as their geographical locations. The poetic names are 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* 龍募桃花); 6. 'Woodcutters' Song from Stone Drum Mountain' (*shigu qiaoge* 石鼓樵歌); 7. 'Willow Waves at the Hot Spring' (*wenquan liulang* 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

⁹ Yanjing xianzhi 鹽津縣誌, comp. by Chen Yide 陳一得, 1948, in *ZTJZ*, *juan* 3, pp.1682-1683.

Mountain' (*qinglong canxue* 青龍殘雪); 10. 'Autumn Harvest at Creeper Sea' (*manhai qiucheng* 蔓海秋成).¹⁰

Locating the ten views of Dongchuan according to their poetic names, the ten scenes can be recognized as the following geographical locations: Green Screen Mountain, Golden Bell Mountain, the Dragon Pool that lies at the foot of Rainbow Mountain, Rainbow Mountain, Wulongmu Village, Stone Drum Mountain, the hot spring, Water Capital Village, Black Dragon Mountain, Creeper Sea, all of which are marked on the 1761 map of Dongchuan, and nowadays can also be found on Google maps.¹¹(see Fig 3.1 and Fig. 3.2)

The description of ten views of Dongchuan was initiated in 1734 during Yongzheng's reign. In the spring of that year, the Dongchuan prefect Cui Naiyong invited a group of local officials and scholars to visit Black Dragon Mountain and Black Dragon Temple. It seems to have been a joyful meeting. Cui Naiyong 崔乃鏞, according to his own words, was inspired to write ten poems on the top of Black Dragon Mountain. These poems, he says, represent what he saw while standing on Black Dragon Mountain. Moreover, he also describes the well-known landscape such as peaceful and magnificent Wumeng Mountains and Jinsha River in northeastern Yunnan which are actually beyond his views on Black Dragon Mountain.¹² His ten poems do not correspond exactly to the ten views of Dongchuan of later times, but Black Dragon Mountain, Creeper Sea, and Green Screen Mountain are all already mentioned. Normally, in literature written by local officials in this period, the content of their poems is determined by the wish to emphasize how peaceful and beautiful is the landscape of the area they administer, as evidence of the local government's political achievements.

Later, the meeting on Black Dragon Mountain became a tradition for local officials and scholars. They took Cui's ten poems with their ten rhymes (*shilü* 十律) as an example to create ten new poems. In 1735, one year after Cui visited Black Dragon Mountain, the Huize county magistrate Zu Chengyou 祖成佑, who had accompanied Cui the year before, came to this same place again. He also wrote ten poems according to the rhyme scheme Cui used. In Zu's poems six of the ten views of Dongchuan from later

¹⁰ DCFZ, 1761, *juan* 4: pp. 22b-23a, pp. 48-49. I assigned the numbers according to the order of the ten views as listed in the gazetteer.

¹¹ There are fifteen maps in the 1761 DCFZ. Here I use the first one, 'yudi quantu' 輿地全圖, in DCFZ, 1761, *tu*: pp. 1b-2a.

¹² Cui Naiyong 崔乃鏞, 'Yongzheng jiyuan chunri', DCFXZ, 1897, *juan* 3: pp. 21b-23b. It also lists the names of nine local officials who participated in this tour.

times are mentioned, namely Black Dragon Mountain, Water Capital Village, Golden Bell Mountain, Creeper Sea, Green Screen Mountain, and Rainbow Mountain.¹³

The 'ten views of Dongchuan' were officially recorded as the set of best views in the 1761 Dongchuan gazetteer. In the same gazetteer, the section on local literature includes ten poems about the ten views of Dongchuan written by the prefect Fang Gui 方桂, which suggests that Fang Gui may have been the first person to select the definitive ten views of Dongchuan and bestow on them their poetic names.

Fang Gui was transferred from Lin'an 臨安 prefecture of Yunnan province to Dongchuan prefecture in 1757. His biography can be found in *Qingshigao* 清史稿, which shows that Fang was not just a minor official in a remote area, but one of a small number of local officials who received a brief biography in the Qing dynasty standard history. This is due mainly to the fact that his father was Fang Xian 方顯, who was an important local official during the reform period in the early Qing, when indigenous chieftains were removed from power. Fang Xian came from Baling 巴陵 in Hunan 湖南 province, and was promoted to become prefect of Zhenyuan 鎮遠 in Guizhou province. During the same time of reform of northeastern Yunnan, E'ertai was carrying out a similar reform in the rebellious indigenous communities of Guizhou. Fang Xian became one of the assistants of E'ertai. Between 1726 and 1729, Fang Xian led his army to successfully suppress many rebel groups in indigenous communities of Guizhou. In 1738 during Qianlong's reign, he was promoted to chief secretary (*buzhengci* 布政使) of Sichuan province and governor (*xunfu* 巡撫) of Sichuan province a year later. Then he was transferred to Guangxi province as provincial governor. Fang Xian's main assignment was to deal with the local indigenous communities in Sichuan and Guangxi provinces.¹⁴ As the oldest son of Fang Xian, Fang Gui joined his father during the battles with indigenous forces in Guizhou. After his father died, he was a magistrate in Guangdong province for a brief time before being transferred to Yunnan to become the prefect of Lin'an 臨安 prefecture, and from there coming to Dongchuan in 1755. He left Dongchuan four years later when his mother died.¹⁵

¹³ Zu Chengyou 祖承佑, 'Qianlong yuannian chunyou qinglong si yi junbo cuifu jun yuan yun' 乾隆元年春遊青龍寺依郡伯崔府君元韻 *DCFZ*, 1897, *juan* 3: pp. 23b-25a.

¹⁴ *QSG*, v. 35, *juan* 308, pp. 10582-10583.

¹⁵ After Fang Gui left Dongchuan and spent three years mourning the death of his mother, he was promoted to *taidao* 台道 in Ningshao 寧紹 of Zhejiang 浙江 province in 1768. However, later he was accused of corruption and was banished far away to Yili 伊犁 in Xinjiang 新疆 province. Finally, he was sent back to his hometown and died right

Although Fang Gui stayed in Dongchuan for only four years, he actually had great influence on the official representation of Dongchuan because he edited a new Dongchuan gazetteer published in 1761. In the preface to this gazetteer he writes that he has stayed now in Dongchuan for half a year and has surveyed the whole of his prefecture, which is located at the strategic defensive juncture of the three provinces Sichuan, Guizhou and Yunnan, where rich natural resources are available, specifically five kinds of metals. He then turns to describe the huge transformation of this area after the reform of the indigenous chieftain system dozens of years earlier. A massive influx of people moved into this area and it became rich and populous; the land became fertile and well cultivated. The currency system and institutions of Dongchuan all proved Dongchuan to be a metropolitan city within Yunnan province. Therefore, Fang Gui was not satisfied anymore with the old version of the Dongchuan gazetteer, for it only covered very limited content. He states that there was a continuous improvement in the past thirty years, which actually form Dongchuan's heyday. Apparently, in his view, Dongchuan had already changed into 'a new metropolis in Yunnan province' (*diansheng yi daduhui* 滇省一大都會) resembling the developed cities of the Central Plain (*zhongtu* 中土). According to him, the description in the old gazetteers did not fit this new landscape. So, a new gazetteer was needed to reflect this new situation of prosperity. For this purpose, Fang Gui decided to collect materials widely. Thereupon he presented his new gazetteer, consisting of twenty volumes, and claimed it was a truthful reflection of the real circumstances of Dongchuan. He is proud and asserts that people who want to research Dongchuan will have a better understanding of it once they open this gazetteer. He uses a nice metaphor, that one can touch this book and deeply feel that this savage and wild land that used to be crude, suddenly became a flourishing area to match the famous capital cities of the empire.¹⁶

Fang Gui's personal experience of involvement in the reform of the indigenous chieftain system gave him a very strong motivation to reshape local society, which used to be considered a 'barbarian area'. One of his tools was the transformation of the landscape of Dongchuan into a new landscape that resembled the cities of China's Central Plain.

In the new gazetteer, the selection of ten views of Dongchuan had reached its

after that in 1772.

¹⁶ DCFZ, 1761. *Ba* 跋: pp. 2a -4a.

definitive form. In the preface to his poems Fang Gui explains why he wanted to present these ten views. He says that after he researched the poems written by Cui, he wanted to imitate Cui's style. When he passed Green Screen Mountain, he was impressed by the amazingly beautiful landscape. Then he created ten poems and assigned them the ten names listed earlier in this chapter. He writes that after the remaining descendants of the Wumeng (indigenous people) were driven away by imperial order, the local government made a great effort to gradually change Dongchuan in many ways. He boasts that the old black clouds surrounding the mountains are all gone, new canals are flowing, beautiful houses, pavilions, and chambers face each other, surrounded by green trees and red flowers. He indicates that these new views of Dongchuan are just like the 'territory of the central part of the country resembling beautiful brocade' (*zhonghua jinxiu* 中華錦繡).¹⁷

So the process of establishing the ten views of Dongchuan that began with Cui Naiyong writing ten poems on top of Black Dragon Mountain was completed by Fang Gui, who made the final selection. After that, the writing of poems or essays associated with the ten views became a local tradition for scholars and officials.¹⁸ Fang Gui was a key figure in the process of establishing the ten views of Dongchuan. The titles and poems of the ten views of Dongchuan indicate that this local official intended to describe this newly imperial territory by using familiar literary conventions and his own aesthetic experience. These poems follow the pattern of descriptions of local landscapes in other areas, especially those of developed and 'civilized' cities.¹⁹ In their poems, the scholars and officials of Dongchuan connected the local landscape with landscapes in better-

¹⁷ Fang Gui, 'Dongchuan shijing bing yin' 東川十景並引, *DCFZ*, 1761, *juan* 20b: p. 69a.

¹⁸ In 1882 of the Guangxu reign, Cai Yuanbian 蔡元變, who was prefect of Dongchuan at that time, followed his predecessors by writing poems about the ten views. However, the real meaning of the name Wulongmu had already been lost by that time. In Cai Yuanbian's day a new pagoda was built on top of Saddle Mountain. When he went to Wulongmu, which was located at the foot of Saddle Mountain, he did not understand the meaning of 'longmu 龍募'. To him, it was a very strange name. He thought that since this village was embraced by multiple hills, it would make more sense to change the character 募 to 幕, which means screen. Moreover, he mentioned that he had not seen any peach trees here, so he did not understand why there was a view called 'Peach Blossoms at Longmu Village' (*longmu taohua* 龍募桃花). Although he suggested that peach trees should be planted here to create a nice atmosphere, he corrected the name of the view to 'Pagoda at Longmu Village' (*longmu futu* 龍募浮屠), which seemed to him much more appropriate. Cai Yuanbian 蔡元變, 'You qinglong si ganshi shuhuai cheng shilü ci qian taishou Cui Bo'ao yuan yun' 遊青龍寺感事書懷率成十律次前太守崔伯璣元韻 *DCFZX*, 1897, *juan* 4: p. 25b. For more discussion about Wulongmu Village, see Chapter 2.

¹⁹ Other essays and poems about the ten views in Dongchuan gazetteers include: Feng Yucong 馮譽聰, 'Zhang Zhongliang canrong, Gu Mingxuan shourong zhao yin qinglong si' 張仲良參戎、顧名軒守戎招飲青龍寺 (it includes ten poems that follow the rhyme of Cui's poems. It also lists the names of eleven local officials who visited Black Dragon Temple together), *DCFZX*, 1897, *juan* 4: pp. 19b -21a; Song Peihou 宋培厚, 'Dongchuan zashi' 東川雜詩, *DCFZX*, 1897, *juan* 4: p. 27a; Feng Qingbang 馮慶榜, 'Dongchuan zashi' 東川雜詩, *DCFZX*, 1897, *juan* 4: p. 27a-27b; Xie Hongzhao 謝鴻詔, 'Cuipingchunxiao' 翠屏春曉, 'Jinzhongxizhao' 金鐘夕照, *DCFZX*, 1897, *juan* 4: pp. 28a-29a; Shi Guanghua 史光華, 'Dongchuan zashi' 東川雜詩, *DCFZX*, 1897, *juan* 4: p. 29a; Xie Jiashu 謝家樹, 'Dongchuan zashi' 東川雜詩, *DCFZX*, 1897, *juan* 4: pp. 29b -30a; Zhang Rui 張瑞, 'Dongchuan zashi' 東川雜詩, *DCFZX*, 1897, *juan* 4: p. 30a.

known areas of the country. By using this unifying concept, they represented the newly acquired territory of Dongchuan with the peaceful landscapes that had belonged to the empire for a long time.

3. Civilization: the hot spring and Creeper Sea

Based on the order of the ten views as described in the 1761 gazetteer, and as I have marked them on the maps (see Fig. 3.1 and Fig. 3.2), the route for touring all ten locations started at the south gate of the walled city, going further south to Green Screen Mountain, there turning to the west, passing Golden Bell Mountain, Rainbow Mountain, Stone Drum Mountain, Saddle Mountain, and the hot spring, then turning north to Water Capital Village and Black Dragon Mountain, then heading south to Creeper Sea, and from there to the north gate of the walled city. It seems that the ten views of Dongchuan separated the nearby surroundings of the walled city from the outer area. In the ten views of Dongchuan, the hot spring lies the furthest to the west, marking the outermost border of the nearby surroundings of the walled city. Connected with nobility and purity, the hot spring in my view should be seen as a symbolic landmark dividing the nearby surroundings of the walled city from the outer area.

According to the description in the local gazetteers, the hot spring was located thirty *li* west of the walled city. It lies at the foot of Yunnong Mountain 雲弄山 with its sharp peak. On top of this mountain there was a clear pool where according to local legend mandarin ducks (*yuanyang* 鴛鴦) gathered.²⁰ The name 'Willow Waves at the Hot Spring' comes from a story telling that Cui Naiyong planted the willow trees around the hot spring and built a pavilion and guest rooms. Because of this, the area became a beautiful and relaxing place during Yongzheng's reign.²¹ In Fang Gui's poem included with the ten views, the Dongchuan's hot spring was even connected to Hua Qing chi 華清池, an important imperial hot spring in Xi'an since the Tang dynasty.²² According to local scholars, by the nineteenth century no sign remained of the willow trees and buildings. Only recently was the inscription on the cliff behind the hot spring discovered, eight big characters in beautiful calligraphy, 'Spirit Cave and Immortals' (*ling ku xian gao* 靈窟仙

²⁰ DCFZ, 1761.juan 4: p. 6a.

²¹ DCFZ, 1735, p. 7; It can also be found in DCFXZ, 1897, juan 3: pp. 17a-17b.

²² Fang Gui, 'Dongchuan shijing bing yin' 東川十景並引, DCFZ, 1761.juan 20: pp. 71a -71b.

膏) and 'Special Beauty and Exotic Circumstances' (*bie xiu qi jing* 別秀奇境) and the inscription says the big characters all were written by Cui Naiyong.²³

Regardless of whether these characters were really written by Cui Naiyong, the hot spring apparently left a deep impression on people who passed by this area. The hot water, like other bathing water whether freshwater or saltwater, was excellent for both physical and spiritual cleaning, which had been common practice among scholars. Confucius himself sanctioned bathing of groups of young men in rivers, particularly in connection with the purification ceremonies of springtime.²⁴

Apparently, the hot spring drew attention and was described as a beautiful and peaceful scene that seems to have been the favourite place of local officials and scholars of Dongchuan. Apart from their fondness for hot water, local officials and scholars of Dongchuan also liked to compare the Dongchuan spring with the hot spring at An'ning 安寧, located west of Kunming, which was known as the best hot spring in the Empire (*Tianxiadiyiquan* 天下第一泉). The hot spring at An'ning was discovered and promoted by Yang Shen 楊慎, a famous scholar in Yunnan during the late Ming dynasty. A local scholar in Dongchuan, Zhu Song 朱松, insisted that the hot spring in Dongchuan was much softer and more peaceful than the hot spring in An'ning, and that the landscape along the path that twists and turns up to the hot spring had its own winding and circling beauty. The scholar sighed over the location of the hot spring, for he thought that if it had been situated in the more developed Central Plain, it would have gained a better reputation. And poems would have been written by many more scholars astonished by its peculiar beauty. However, this hot spring was lying abandoned and hidden in this remote area where no great scholars visited.²⁵ Similarly, another local official of Dongchuan, Cai Yuanxie 蔡元燮, indicated that this hot spring was concealed in uncultivated woods and was frequented only by woodcutters, herdsmen, savage people (*yeren* 野人), travelling women (*younü* 遊女), 'barbarians' and the like. So Cai Yuanxie was sad about the misfortune of this clear hot spring that had been misused for such a long period.²⁶

It seems that, even though the hot spring was located in a remote area, it still got

²³ 'Wenquan moya shike' 溫泉摩崖石刻, *Huize xian wenwu zhi*, ed. by Tao Zhengming and Mei Shibing, pp. 128-129.

²⁴ Hot springs are widespread throughout China. On bathing customs and their relation to springs, see Edward H. Schafer, 'The Development of Bathing Customs in Ancient and Medieval China and the History of the Floriated Clear Palace', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, (1956), 76. 2: 57-82.

²⁵ Zhu Song 朱松, 'Dongchuan Wenquan ji' 東川溫泉記, *DCFZ*, 1761, *juan* 20: pp. 39a-40b.

²⁶ Cai Yuanbian, 'Chongxiu wenquan yu ting ji' 重修溫泉浴亭記, *DCFZ*, 1897, *juan* 4: pp. 4a-6a.

some people's attention because of its beauty and purity.²⁷ The scholars who wrote in the Dongchuan gazetteers not only expressed their personal feelings in describing the situation of the hot spring, but also emphasized that the hot spring should be a 'civilized' site instead of a 'barbarian' place. As a civilized landscape near the walled city, it marked the boundary between civilization and the wild mountains and 'barbarian' areas to the west.

From the 1761 map, it can be seen that the hot spring was located between the copper mines and the nearby surroundings of the walled city (Fig 3.1). Moreover, the hot spring was the dividing line between two different geographical situations. The area to the west of the hot spring was full of high mountains and lofty peaks. The road between the copper-mining area and the walled city was actually very rough and difficult to pass, especially the first part between the copper mines and the hot spring. According to the official records, transport teams, after coming out from the mining area, first had to pass the dangerous waters of the auspiciously named Small River (xiaojiang 小江), and then had to face the most difficult part of the route. The distance between Small River and the hot spring was fifty *li*. Along the way, mountains on each side of the road rose steeply like walls. The road between the mountains was very narrow, sandy, and full of stones. In addition, it rained quite often and a dense fog (*zhang* 瘴²⁸) rose in the summer and the autumn.²⁹ The copper carriers, merchants and travellers all suffered from this tough situation, which was witnessed by an official, Zhang Heng 張恒, while travelling from Xundian to Dongchuan.³⁰

Coming from the west, after passing over Yunnong Mountain and the hot spring, transport teams and other travellers would reach the valley (*bazi* 壩子³¹) and then the

²⁷ Other essays and poems about the hot spring in Dongchuan gazetteers include: Liao Ying 廖瑛, 'Dongchuan wenquan shuo' 東川溫泉說, *DCFZ*, 1761, *juan* 20: pp. 42a-43b; Yi Ning 義寧, 'Wenquan' 溫泉, *DCFZ*, 1761, *juan* 20: pp. 65a-65b; Anonymous (*qianren* 前人), 'Dongchuan Wenquan', *DCFZ*, 1761, *juan* 20: pp. 72b-73a; Jian Nianxian 蹇念咸, 'Fuxiu wenquan ji' 復修溫泉記, *DCFZX*, 1897, *juan* 4: pp. 13b-15a; Feng Yucong 馮譽聰, 'Wuyue shijiu ri xie shu zhong zhu you you wenquan' 五月十九日偕署中諸友游溫泉, *DCFZX*, 1897, *juan* 4: pp. 18b-19a; Li Qinyong 李慶鏞, 'Yunnong shan wenquan he yuqiao xiantai yuanyun' 雲弄山溫泉和兩樵憲臺原韻, *DCFZX*, 1897, *juan* 4: pp. 24a-24b; Li Chonghua 李重華, 'Yunnong shan wenquan' 雲弄山溫泉, *DCFZX*, 1897, *juan* 4: pp. 27a-27b; Liu Xiangyun 劉翔運, 'Yunnongshan wenquan' 雲弄山溫泉, *DCFZX*, 1897, *juan* 4: pp. 27b-28a.

²⁸ Zhang 瘴 is a typical 'bad air' in southwest China which may come from gas rising from wetlands and which is conducive to the spread of malaria. 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*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Jul, 2005), pp. 283-317.

²⁹ 'ZYSZG', p. 574. (QL 3/5/30)

³⁰ Zhang Heng 張恒, 'Yili di lu ji' 以禮堤路記, *DCFZ*, 1735, p. 52.

³¹ *Bazi* 壩子 is a typical term in southwest China referring to the fertile valleys between mountains or along rivers, which normally are the agricultural and economic centres.

walled city. Another difficulty they had to face was muddy ground, especially after a heavy summer rain. One of the biggest muddy grounds was Creeper Sea, which was located just outside the walled city (see Fig 3.1 and 3.2).

According to the 1735 Dongchuan gazetteer, Creeper Sea was about twenty *li* in length from west to east, and about ten *li* in width from north to south. Prolific reeds and water caltrop (a type of water chestnut resembling black buffalo horns) grew in and around the lake, which is the reason for its name 'Creeper Sea'. The parts of the reeds under water rotted and intertwined. People could walk on it but it kept swaying because it was not steady. A bamboo pole almost one *zhang* 丈 and five *chi* 尺 long, inserted in the lake, could still not reach the bottom. During the rainy season in the fifth and sixth months, this area would rise to become like a lake and the water overflowed, causing the surrounding farmland to suffer from flooding.³²

In the 1761 Dongchuan gazetteer, it is mentioned that Creeper Sea was a low-lying area providing the indigenous community with fish and shrimp. But when the new walled city was built, the problem of flooding was obviously a danger for the people living inside the walls. The Qing government encouraged the cultivation of this area since there was not much farmland in Dongchuan. Since 1728 during Yongzheng's reign, local officials gradually transformed part of this area into farmland by digging canals to drain away the water of Creeper Sea into the Yili River.³³ The 1761 gazetteer says: 'Since then, the water country (*shuixiang* 水鄉) has been turned into fertile fields forever. The local people used to call this area 'Autumn Wind at Creeper Sea' (*manhai qiufeng* 蔓海秋風). Now the name has been changed to 'Autumn Harvest at Creeper Sea' (*manhai qiucheng* 蔓海秋成), which is based on the truth (*jishi* 紀實).'³⁴ This passage clearly shows that the ten views are part of a Qing government cultural project to transform the wild, indigenous landscape of the Dongchuan area into a typical Han Chinese farming landscape. In 1761 Creeper Sea was given a new, more literary name, Zuoying Lake 濯纓湖, which means 'washing the tassel of the hat in clean water'. This name comes from Mengzi 孟子 and symbolizes the transcendence of vulgarity and the preservation of personal integrity and nobility.³⁵

³² DCFZ, 1735, p. 6.

³³ 'Xin he' 新河, DCFZ, 1761, *juan* 4, p. 12b; Yi Ning 義寧, 'Chongxiu longtan shenci ji' 重修龍潭神祠記, DCFZ, 1761, *juan* 20 b, pp. 8b-9b.

³⁴ DCFZ, 1761, *juan* 4: pp. 21b-22b.

³⁵ Yang Bojun 楊伯峻, *Mengzi yi zhu* 孟子譯註, (Beijing: Zhonghua shujū, 1960), p. 170.

The result of this transformation could still be observed by Archibald Little in the late nineteenth century:

On reaching the bottom we found ourselves upon the edge of paddy-fields, the rice being grown right up to the limestone rock; across these our way led to the city, where we were to repose a couple days before going further....The plain, or more correctly, 'hai-tse' [Haizi 海子], of Tung-chuan [Dongchuan] we found to be still in part un-drained marsh; it and the paddy-fields, reclaimed from it, being intersected by drainage canals flowing between high tree-planted dykes, with a practicable pathway, about 18 inches wide, along the top. The high road traversing the valley thus meanders between paddy-fields and swamps, the remains of the old 'hai-tse' or lake, are reached. These drainage canals provide water intercommunication to the small villages nestling on their banks, and we noticed many scows conveying loads of peat to the back doors of the houses. The population were all busily occupied planting out the young rice in the flooded fields, this work here, as generally in Yunnan, being performed by women; and it was pitiful to see them stumping about in the slush with their tightly-bound, mutilated feet; yet they were singing at their work, happy to earn sixty iron cash per day, for what is eminently skilled labour.³⁶

Farming activity in Creeper Sea and in the area at the foot of the mountains around the walled city is also reflected in the descriptions of some of the ten views. For instance, several of the ten views were situated between the hot spring and the walled city -- Dragon Pool, Rainbow Mountain, and Stone Drum Mountain. The descriptions of these mountains all mention praying for rain during a period of drought (see Fig 3.2). Rainbow Mountain lay three *li* outside of the walled city. At the foot of the mountain, there was a spring coming out named Dragon Pool. Local officials built a dragon shrine near it around 1734. During a period of drought, a worship service to pray for rain was held here.³⁷ Stone Drum Mountain was located ten *li* outside of the walled city. It lay to the west of Yili River and opposite to Saddle Mountain. Among the many white stones on this mountain, there was a stone about five *chi* in length, two *chi* in width, and one *chi* in thickness. It was said that when people beat this stone drum during a drought, it would rain.³⁸ These descriptions of praying for rain all indicate the necessity of rain, which is indeed indispensable to farming.³⁹ Little gives further details of the difficulties of travel by road and of farming:

³⁶ Little, *Across Yunnan*, p.45.

³⁷ DCFZ, 1761, *juan* 4: p. 4a.

³⁸ DCFZ, 1761, *juan* 4: p. 4a.

³⁹ For more discussion of dragon cults in northeastern Yunnan, see Chapter 4.

The narrow valley was well cultivated with paddy and maize, water being drawn off from the river into side irrigating channels and the river itself being endyked in places with solid stone embankments. Where the river impinged upon the valley walls, forming cliffs, these had, as usual, to be surmounted by steep up and down paths, which our ponies, now accustomed to the rough foothold, negotiated without difficulty. The hill slopes exhibited patches of purple shale alternating with jointed limestone. At one point in the valley, a river of clear water gushed forth from under the rock-wall, and thus we had the spectacle of two rivers flowing down the same valley, each on its own side, one of clear and one of muddy water.⁴⁰

I propose that an important criterion for choosing the best views was to show evidence of the Qing's civilizing project in this remote area inhabited by indigenous people. In the ten views of Dongchuan, 'Willow Waves at the Hot Spring' and 'Autumn Harvest at Creeper Sea' are the best examples of views that display the new civilized atmosphere which was promoted by local officials and literati. In that sense, the description of best views was not only used as a proper literary genre to appreciate local scenic sites, but also redefined the frontier landscape and therefore represented an important political achievement of the local government. Apart from the literary perspective, geographical factors also played an important role in the selection of the ten views, as discussed in the next section.

4. The ten views, roads and landmarks

Although the selection of the ten views is closely related to the personal interests of the local officials and scholars who chose them, the ten views should be treated in the context of local geographical writings. Besides being the main topic of poems and essays written by local officials and literati, the ten views are also mentioned in the section on 'mountains and waters' (*shanshui* 山水) of local gazetteers, which reflect more geographical observation and less literary interests.

In saying so, I want to emphasize that the 'mountains and waters' in the text should be treated as a subjective observation instead of as a mere objective geographical condition as in most of the literature on Chinese historical geography. Though people may not know the exact geographical facts about the landscape of the city or area they

⁴⁰ Little, *Across Yunnan*, pp. 48-49.

live in, everyone has his own personal image of these places, some parts may be very clear to him, other parts easily ignored. The image of landscape is a combination of the real environment and personal knowledge. When inspecting the relevant descriptions of local landscapes in the gazetteers of late imperial China, these should not be treated as simply representing objective outside nature, but also as reflecting the subjective understanding and observation of local scholars. Therefore, images or descriptions of the landscape should not just be conceived as a mere presentation of the environment at that time, but also as how people perceived or imagined the landscape.

Descriptions of the mountains and waters of Dongchuan can be found in historical and geographical records on southwestern China since the third century, such as Tanglang Mountain discussed in Chapter 1. However, these descriptions of the landscape of Dongchuan are very one-sided and incomplete. The first detailed description of local mountains and waters is included in the 1735 gazetteer of Dongchuan, and this was much expanded in the 1761 gazetteer of Dongchuan. In the following table made by me based on the 1761 gazetteer, the mountains and waters of Dongchuan are listed according to type, number, and location with respect to the walled city⁴¹:

⁴¹ *DCFZ*, 1761, *juan* 4: pp. 2a-21b.

	N	NE	W	NW	S	SW	E	SE
Mountains (shan 山)	3	1	9	17	2	6	1	4
Peaks (feng 峰)	1			4				
Rock (yanshi 岩石)		1	3	2		1	1	
Hillside (po 坡)			7		4		1	
River (jiang 江)			2	2		1	1	
River (he 河)	3		9	4	8			
Stream (xi 溪)		1				2		
Spring (quan 泉)	1				1	1		
Valley stream (jian 涧)	1		7	2	2	1	4	
Water (shui 水)			1		1			
Channel (gou 沟)	2	1	6	8	1	1	2	
Cave (dong 洞)	2		4		1	1	1	
Pool (tan 潭)			1		1			
Weir (yan 堰)		1	1	2				
Pond (tang 塘)				2			1	
Dam (di 堤)			1	1				
Gully (jian 涧)	2							
Other	1				1			
Total	16	5	51	44	22	14	12	4

In short, the east side of Dongchuan, which is just as mountainous as the other three sides, is neglected by the compiler of the gazetteer, while the west and north sides are the main focus. The same neglect shows up in the selection of the ten views of Dongchuan in the same gazetteer. Apart from Green Screen Mountain in the south, and Creeper Sea, Black Dragon Mountain, and Water Capital Village in the north, the other six views are all located in the west. Clearly, the east side was neglected in the selection of the ten views (see Fig. 3.1 and Fig. 3.2). The ten views in fact correspond to the

'mountains and waters' that were recorded in the 1761 gazetteer. The views that were chosen for description in the local gazetteer were the most important geographic locations based on economic, political and social considerations, rather than for the beauty of the natural scenery.

In the political sense, the selection of the ten views corresponds to the larger border issues mentioned in Chapter 1. The Qing government considered the areas northwest of Dongchuan, including the Liang Mountain area, to be the most dangerous indigenous region of the southwest. It was in these areas that the fiercest 'barbarians' were living. Dongchuan had a key position for protecting Kunming, the capital of Yunnan, which was south of Dongchuan. So the west and the north sides of Dongchuan naturally became a major concern of the Qing government.

This situation is recorded in the section of the 1761 Dongchuan gazetteer entitled 'strategic situation' (*xingshi* 形勢). Here it says that to the west and to the east, Dongchuan borders Sichuan and Guizhou provinces. Dongchuan is described as corresponding to Zhaotong and Ludian in the north, and as closely related to Weining in Guizhou and mutually dependent on Ningyuan 寧遠 in Sichuan. It is said to form the frontier with barbarian territory and to be a strategic location that needs to be controlled.⁴²

We have seen that, because of its location, Dongchuan was considered to be an important area for the defence of Kunming, the capital of Yunnan province, located south of Dongchuan. Being at a higher altitude than the capital Kunming, Dongchuan formed, as it were, the north gate of the capital. As such, Dongchuan during the eighteenth century was considered to be the most important barrier protecting the capital of Yunnan. Since the areas to the north and west of Dongchuan had formerly been a 'den of insurgent barbarian tribes' (*yiku* 夷窟)⁴³, these areas became the main focus of local and provincial officials.

These strategic considerations are relevant to the selection of one of the ten views of Dongchuan 'Spring Dawn at Green Screen Mountain'. In the description of the local gazetteer, Green Screen Mountain is the main mountain (*zhenshan* 鎮山 or *zhushan* 主山)

⁴² DCFZ, 1761, *juan* 4: p. 3b.

⁴³ 'Den of insurgent barbarian tribes' (*yiku* 夷窟) is a word describing an area of indigenous communities which was used quite often in the local gazetteers of northeastern Yunnan. For example, Qiaojia, is considered a 'yiku' to the west and north of Dongchuan; see description in Cui Naiyong, 'Qiaojia chuangshe jianzhi ji' (巧家創設建制記), DCFZ, 1735, pp. 47-48, Yunnan sheng tushuguan, Kunming. Dongchuan itself was formerly mentioned as a 'yiku' by the Qing government. See preface to the Dongchuan gazetteer, DCFZ, 1735, p. 1.

in the vicinity of the walled city, its peak located only one *li* south of the Fandian 藩甸 Gate (South Gate).⁴⁴ Green Screen Mountain was also named Spirit Jade (*lingbi* 靈璧)⁴⁵, both typical names for mountains in geomancy.

According to geomancy, the mountains surrounding a city function as shelter and protection, and the mountains rise like a huge screen or barrier against unwanted influences, especially the main mountain, ideally located to the north of the city.⁴⁶ Green Screen Mountain was so named because it was located at the 'back' of the walled city, and was shaped like a screen. However, in the case of Dongchuan, the local government had chosen to build the walled city on the north side of the mountain, facing north. One reason is that there was little available land suitable for building a walled city. I suggest that another reason is that the walled city of Dongchuan was built as a bulwark to protect the capital Kunming, and therefore had to face the more dangerous barbarian area to the north.

Green Screen Mountain was treated as an important mountain not just from the perspective of geomancy, but was also of great significance in Dongchuan's political life.⁴⁷ The southern part of the city occupied the most important space both geographically and symbolically. For the people who lived inside the walled city, what they called Green Screen Mountain dominated their view when looking south.⁴⁸ So Green Screen Mountain was selected as one of the ten best views: 'The peaks of this mountain rise one higher than another, sheltered by lush foliage and wild bamboo. This mountain stays green throughout all seasons, just like a painting.'⁴⁹

The area to the west of Dongchuan, which was also emphasized in the official records, was connected to local economic life. This side of the city was closely associated with the copper industry. Tangdan 湯丹, Lulu 碌碌 and Daxue 大雪 were all factories located in the west part of Dongchuan prefecture. The copper industry started at the end of Yongzheng's reign, after the Qing government put down the rebellion of indigenous groups. During the mid-eighteenth century, production and trade of copper developed rapidly to the benefit of the central state, which desperately needed the copper for

⁴⁴ DCFZ, 1761, *juan* 4: pp. 2a -2b.

⁴⁵ DCFZ, 1761, *juan* 4: 2b.

⁴⁶ Stephan Feuchtwang, p.121.

⁴⁷ The relationship between Green Screen Mountain and the walled city is also discussed in Chapter 2.

⁴⁸ This geographic position also affected the orientation of all the important official and ritual buildings inside the walled city, as I argue in Chapter 2. The Confucius temple, Baoyun coin-minting factory, and other official and ritual buildings were all located in the southern part of the city and represented cultural and political achievements of the local government.

⁴⁹ DCFZ, 1761, *juan* 4: p. 2a.

minting coins. The starting point of copper transport to the capital Beijing was Tangdan and other copper mines in this area. Copper was transported from the mining area to the coin-minting factories located south of the walled city. A large number of local residents were involved in some way in the copper industry. Thus, the transport route between the walled city and the area to the west was crucial to local economic life (see Fig. 3.1).

If we follow the route passing through all ten views of Dongchuan, the emphasis on the west side seems very natural. The order of the ten views starts from Green Screen Mountain in the south; moving westward, the next views are Golden Bell Mountain, Dragon Pool, Rainbow Mountain, Longmu Village, Stone Drum Mountain, and the hot spring. After passing the hot spring, which lay the furthest to the west, the road led into the mining area. (see Fig 3.1) From Dongchuan walled city, two main roads were used for copper transport. After leaving the west gate of the walled city, arriving at Wulongmu (烏龍募 or 五竜墓), the main road branched off into two roads. On the map, we see the hot spring at the fork of two roads. One went in a southwesterly direction and passed through Xundian on its way to Kunming. Another road went in a northwesterly direction to the mining area. The road connecting the mining area with the walled city became a busy road by the mid-eighteenth century.

More important, because of the rainy days and the fog in the summer and the autumn, copper could only be transported in the winter and the spring. This caused economic loss because of inefficiency.⁵⁰ The muddy conditions of the road from the hot spring to the walled city made it necessary to improve this part of the road. Reconstruction of the road started in 1731, following the project of building the walled city. Because of a shortage of funds, the project was delayed until 1733. In 1733 a big earthquake wreaked havoc on Dongchuan. Cui Naiyong finally managed to find enough funds, which were contributed by the copper mining industry, for reconstructing the damaged buildings as well as this road.⁵¹ According to Zhang Heng, the road was not just built straight and flat, but two wooden bridges and five water drains were also added.⁵²

Still, these roads west of the walled city were difficult to pass, well into the nineteenth century (and even nowadays), as is noted in 1910 by Archibald Little during his travels through Yunnan:

⁵⁰ 'ZYSZG', p. 574.(QL.3/5/30)

⁵¹ Cui Naiyong, 'Dongchuan fu dizhen jishi'東川府地震紀事, DCFZ, 1735, pp. 48-51.

⁵² Zhang Heng 張恒, 'Yili di lu ji'以禮堤路記, DCFZ, 1735, p. 52.

The path at first led west towards a steep range, about 2000 feet above the valley, and turned sharp south up a side ravine, down which flowed a swift, muddy river; 80 yards wide and 3 or 4 feet deep, the path pleasantly sheltered from the now hot sun by many large trees. We passed large stacks of firewood from the mountains piled along the river bank for conveyance in the flat-bottomed boats of the city.⁵³

When the copper transport reached the walled city, it continued from there northwards to Luzhou in southern Sichuan. This road was also the main route for transporting salt from Sichuan to support the large population of the walled cities and mining areas of Zhaotong and Dongchuan. So, besides copper transport, the connection between Dongchuan and Zhaotong also had a second important economic function for the people living in Dongchuan. Correspondingly, the rest of the ten views, i.e. Water Capital Village, Black Dragon Mountain and Creeper Sea, were all located on the routes leading north, since they yielded the most impressive landscapes when people travelled north.⁵⁴

The routes connecting Dongchuan with the outside world were not limited to the roads mentioned above. There was also another main road from the east gate of the walled city passing Zhehai 者海 and Niulan River 牛欄江 to reach Xuanwei sub-prefecture (see Fig 3.1). However, compared to the roads leading west and north, this road leading east was less important. Although Xuanwei was near the east side of Dongchuan prefecture, no transfer station for copper had been set up here. Xuanwei was also not included in the main transport infrastructure of Yunnan province. Thus, from a political and economic perspective, the landscape to the east was largely neglected, and no special views or sights were identified there, although there is no lack of mountains and impressive scenery. The ten views and other landscapes lying to the north and the west clearly dominated the image of Dongchuan.

⁵³ Little, *Across Yunnan*, p. 48.

⁵⁴ One route starts from the west gate of the walled city, then follows the Yili River 以禮河 to the north, passing Water Capital Village and Fish Cave (*Yudong* 魚洞) Village, and coming into the Rice Basin (Miliangba 米糧壩), which was one of several fertile valleys between the mountains, then entering Qiaojia, which lies on the banks of Jinsha River (see Fig 3.1). Another road, starting from the east or north gate of the walled city going northeast, went to Huayizhai 華宜寨, where it passed the wide lowlands east of Black Dragon Mountain, then passed Black Soil Ground (Heituji 黑土基) and Mud Valley (Lanni qing 爛泥箐), before entering Zhaotong prefecture. This road was the principal road used for copper transport from Dongchuan to Zhaotong. The copper was transported from Dongchuan to Zhaotong, and was then taken to Dagan 大關 and loaded onto boats at Yanjing 鹽津 port on Heng River (Hengjiang 橫江).

5. Other sets of eight views in northeastern Yunnan

This correspondence between the best views of Dongchuan and its strategic situation as well as the main route of copper transport is not an exceptional case. If we examine the best views of other cities and towns in northeastern Yunnan, similarities soon become evident in the way these cities and towns were incorporated into the central empire's frontier region and how this determined local perceptions of best views.

One good example showing the correspondence between the selection of best views and the city's strategic situation is Xundian. Located between Dongchuan and the capital Kunming, Xundian was established in 1476 in the middle of the Ming dynasty, during the period when the indigenous chieftains were removed from power.

The eight views of Xundian can be found in the earliest local gazetteer of Xundian, compiled in 1550. They are: 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)⁵⁵ (see Fig. 3.3).

The eight views of Xundian can be located on the map included in the 1550 Xundian gazetteer. It is clear from looking at their distribution that half of the eight views are located south of the city (although according to the description, 'Midnight Moon in the Dragon Pool' is located ten *li* east of the city⁵⁶). The main focus of the eight views is clearly on the south, on the roads leading to Songming 嵩明 and Kunming. In the fifteenth century Xundian was located on the boundary between Yunnan province and the indigenous areas, while Dongchuan at that time was still inhabited by indigenous communities. During that period it was still difficult to reach the Dongchuan area from Xundian, because the road was not fully controlled by the Ming government. But the roads between Xundian, Songming, Yangling 楊林 and Kunming had already been constructed.

The first view, 'The Phoenix and the Wutong Tree Facing the Clouds', was a view

⁵⁵ 'Xun yang ba jing' 尋陽八景, *juan a*, *Xundian fuzhi*, 1550, pp. 48-51.

⁵⁶ *Xundian fuzhi*, 1550, *juan a*, pp. 48-49.

from Moonfox (*Yuehu* 月狐) Mountain, which was eight *li* from the walled city. The top of this mountain was the highest site in the vicinity, from where all the mountains and rivers in Xundian could be seen. Moonfox Mountain was looked upon as the main mountain protecting the city and the Xundian walled city was built at the foot of this mountain. The Xundian walled city was initially built in 1483, and in 1514 the walls were rebuilt in stone. The name 'The Phoenix and the Wutong Tree' (*fengwu* 鳳梧) referred to the north gate, and come from a poem in the *Book of Odes*, where phoenixes are described singing on the top of a high mountain with *wutong* trees growing on the sunny side of the mountain, which denotes harmony and peace in society.⁵⁷ However, the walls of Xundian city were forced by the troops of an indigenous chieftain, An Quan 安銓, in 1527. This rebellion started in Wuding and Xundian, and later expanded to Songming, Yangling, and even reached the west gate of the walled city of Kunming. After the rebellion the government considered this location to be very unsafe.⁵⁸ The new stone-walled city was moved south of the old one in 1532.⁵⁹ And the name of the old north gate, 'The Phoenix and the Wutong Tree', was then given to the administrative centre of the defensive garrison containing a thousand households (*fengwu shouwu qianhusuo* 鳳梧守衛千戶所). This administrative centre was built inside the walls in the northeastern part of the city. Meanwhile, the army training compound (*yanwuting* 演武廳), which was used for local government training and inspection of troops, was also located in the north, but outside of the walled city.⁶⁰ In view of the danger of rebellion and the location of military buildings in Xundian, the selection of 'The Phoenix and the Wutong Tree Facing the Clouds' near Moonfox Mountain as a prominent scenic spot is not surprising. This became the first and most important of the eight views of Xundian.

One of the main worries of the Xundian government was the rebellious indigenous community surrounding the walled city. Most of the indigenous threats came from the west and the north, from Wuding and Dongchuan. The dangerous situation of the government was just like 'sleeping beside tigers'.⁶¹ As written in the gazetteer, these barbarians came to kidnap Han Chinese people (to serve as slaves) and steal cattle in the

⁵⁷ *Shijing zhuxi* 詩經注析, comm. by Cheng Junying 程俊英 and Jiang Jianyuan 蔣見元 (Beijing: Zhonghua shujū, 1991), p. 835.

⁵⁸ *Xundian fuzhi*, 1550, *juan a*, pp. 26-28.

⁵⁹ Liu Dao 劉道, 'Qian xundian fu zhu cheng ji' 遷尋甸府築城記, *Xundian fuzhi* 尋甸府志, 1550, (*Zhongguo xinan wenxian congshu* 中國西南文獻叢書, Lanzhou: Lanzhou daxue chubanshe, 2003), Vol. 22, pp.196-206.

⁶⁰ *Xundian fuzhi*, 1550, *juan b*, pp. 134, 137-139.

⁶¹ *Xundian fuzhi*, 1550, *juan b*, p. 260.

spring, and to steal rice, pigs, and goats in the autumn.⁶² The best view located west of the city is entitled ‘The Lake in the West Clears Up (*xihai chengqing* 西海澄清)’, and was located thirty *li* to the west. It is described as a beautiful lake that was so clear that one could see the bottom, and all kinds of fish in the lake benefited fishermen a lot.⁶³ However, another description of this lake, ‘Clear Water Sea’ (*Qingshuihai* 清水海) in the mountains and waters section of the 1550 gazetteer, tells a different story. It says that Clear Water Sea was a place where rivers flowed together surrounded by mountains; these mountains were inhabited by barbarian people who made their living by stealing, thus constituting a danger for Xundian.⁶⁴ This view, then, marked a politically and militarily important spot in the surroundings of Xundian.

In short, similar to Dongchuan, the selection of the eight views of Xundian from among the landscapes surrounding the walled city should be considered against the background of establishing political and military control, especially the most important local issue of fighting off frequent indigenous rebellions. The history of establishing the government administration in Xundian almost seems to prefigure the reform of the indigenous chieftain system in Dongchuan almost two hundred years later. Like Dongchuan, the main cities and towns of northeastern Yunnan in any case all experienced a similar process of selecting a set of best views after being incorporated into the empire.

So far, the sets of eight views of the walled cities in northeastern Yunnan are all focused on landscapes surrounding the city. Even the most distant view, namely the hot spring in Dongchuan, was no further than thirty *li* from the city. However, in the case of Zhenxiong, a city located northeast of Dongchuan, things were a little different.

In the 1784 Zhenxiong gazetteer, the eight views were selected and pictured (see Fig. 3.4). Considering the location of the best views on the map in this gazetteer, notice that only two of them were close to the walled city: Black Passing (*Wutong* 烏通) Mountain [the view is entitled ‘Black Passing Mountain Is Towering and Green’ (*Wushan congcu* 烏山聳翠)] was located two *li* to the northeast of the walled city and was the most important mountain near the city; White Man Rock (*Bairen yan* 白人岩) [the view was entitled ‘The Immortal Shadow of the White Man’ (*Bairen xianying* 白人仙影)] was

⁶² *Xundian fuzhi*, 1550, *juan b*, p. 260.

⁶³ *Xundian fuzhi*, 1550, *juan a*, p. 49.

⁶⁴ *Xundian fuzhi*, 1550, *juan a*, p. 42.

located one *li* to the east of the walled city.

According to the descriptions of the eight views in the section on ‘mountains and waters’ in the gazetteer, the other views were located at a considerable distance from the walled city: ‘Moon Cave and Meditation Light’ (*Yueku changuang* 月窟禪光) was 150 *li* north of the city; ‘One Star Turning towards the North Star’ (*Yixing gongdou* 一星拱鬥) was twenty *li* east of the city; ‘Plain Dike in Spring Cultivation’ (*Pingba chungeng* 平壩春耕) was fifteen *li* south of the city; ‘Two Rivers Embrace a Pearl’ (*Ershui huaizhu* 二水懷珠) was fifty *li* to the south; ‘Autumn Fishing from a Boulder next to the Cassia Tree’ (*Guiji qiudiao* 桂磯秋釣) was 150 *li* to the east; ‘Plum Blossom Hollow with Floating Clouds’ (*Mei’ao Liuyun* 梅坳流雲) was a hundred *li* to the east.⁶⁵

Clearly most of the eight views are located far away from Zhenxiong. A similar pattern of distance is found throughout the section on mountains and waters in the gazetteer. After counting the numbers of mountains and waters in each direction, the following table gives a general impression of the local landscape⁶⁶:

Table 3.2

	E	S	W	N
0-50 <i>li</i>	4	12	2	3
51-100 <i>li</i>	5	1	1	3
101-200 <i>li</i>	8	2	4	9
201-300 <i>li</i>	13	0	7	8
301-400 <i>li</i>	3	0	4	2

This table gives the distance of mountains and waters from the walled city in four directions. It turns out that most of the mountains and waters mentioned in the gazetteer were at a distance of more than one hundred *li* from the city. The furthest of them even reached over three hundred *li*. Only the mountains and waters to the south seem to be an exception here. The relatively close positions to the south are not so

⁶⁵ *Zhenxiong zhouzhi* 鎮雄州志, comp. by Tu Sulian 屠述濂, 1784, Beijing: Guojia tushuguan, *juan* 1: pp. 30a-38b.

⁶⁶ *Zhenxiong zhouzhi*, 1784, *juan*1: pp. 39a-46a.

surprising when one considers this territory on a wider scale. It takes three hundred *li* going east to reach Yongning in Sichuan province, 340 *li* to reach En'an 恩安 to the west, 310 *li* to reach Bijie 畢節 in Guizhou province to the north, but only thirty *li* to reach Weining in Guizhou province to the south.⁶⁷ Given this description of the territory of Zhenxiong, the exceptional situation of the south in the table above can be easily understood. In fact, some of the landscapes described in the section on mountains and waters regarding the south of Zhenxiong even lie at the borderlands and reach as far as Weining in Guizhou province. In short, it seems that the compilers of the gazetteer focused more on landscapes in the far distance than those nearer the city. But when we look at the natural landscape, we find that mountains and rivers are distributed quite evenly around the walled city, yet only some of them are mentioned in the gazetteer.

Again, the selection made by the compilers of the gazetteer of the geographical features of Zhenxiong's landscape is related to the eighteenth-century copper transport routes. Zhenxiong is closely connected to Weining, Bijie and Yongning geographically as well as economically. One of the eight views, 'Two Rivers Embrace a Pearl', exactly reflects this situation. This view is situated fifty *li* to the south of the walled city. Two rivers from south and north come together here, then go through the Seven Stars Pass (Qixingguan 七星關), which was the border crossing between Zhenxiong, Weining and Bijie.⁶⁸

Since the start of copper transport to Beijing, Zhenxiong was a crucial connection point. The two main copper transport routes were the 'Dongchuan route' and the 'Xundian route'. The Dongchuan route started from Dongchuan and went to Zhaotong, Zhenxiong, Xuyong. The Xundian route started at Xundian and went to Xuanwei, Weining, Zhenxiong and Xuyong. (Fig 1.9)⁶⁹ Both routes passed through Zhenxiong, which was an important transfer station. Officials in Zhenxiong had the responsibility to take care of the transport from Zhenxiong to Yongning in the north; meanwhile, they also needed to go to the copper storage places in Weining in the south to supervise the transport on the way. Zhenxiong officials were also responsible for recruiting and organizing people to carry the copper from Zhenxiong to Weining because of a shortage of horses during that period.⁷⁰ Since copper transport was their primary administrative concern, the views

⁶⁷ *Zhenxiong zhouzhi*, 1784, *juan* 1: pp. 51a-51b.

⁶⁸ *Zhenxiong zhouzhi*, 1784, *juan* 5: pp. 47a-48b.

⁶⁹ See Chapter 1.

⁷⁰ Later, these difficulties prompted the Qing government to open up a new route in 1775. In 1816, the route from

nearby the walled city were less important to the officials of Zhenxiong than were the views farther away. Poems about the eight views of Zhenxiong happened to be written by a local official Rao Mengming 饒夢銘 during his supervision of copper transport.⁷¹

For another important city in northeastern Yunnan, Zhaotong, unfortunately no eighteenth-century official gazetteers remain. Although the earliest local gazetteer of Zhaotong can be traced back to 1762 during Qianlong's reign, the original printed version was lost, and only a handwritten copy made in 1911 is preserved. Later, two other Zhaotong gazetteers were compiled and printed, in 1924 and in 1938.⁷² In the preface to the 1938 Zhaotong gazetteer, the compiler complains that much of the content of the handwritten copy made in 1911 of the 1762 gazetteer is a mess.⁷³ Moreover, except for one poem related to local geomancy, there are no literary essays or poems recorded in this copy. Although the eight views can be found in all three Zhaotong gazetteers, one must take into account that the descriptions of the eight views in the handwritten copy made in 1911 may not date back as far as 1762 but rather may have been added at a later date.

One of the eight views, 'Phoenix Mountain and Floating Red Clouds' (*Fengling feixia* 鳳嶺飛霞), is described as a beautiful view of Phoenix Mountain, which lies to the south of the walled city.⁷⁴ It is said that at the foot of Phoenix Mountain and on the bank of the river dam, local officials built the Enbo Pavilion, and that this pavilion was visited and named by General Aixinga 愛星阿 during his visit in the eighteenth century during Qianlong's reign. This is also said to be the origin of the name of another of the eight views, 'Enbo Pavilion like a Mirage' (*enbo shenyong* 恩波蜃影). Aixinga was a Manchu general who served under Wu Sangui's command in Yunnan. However, he in fact died in 1664 during Kangxi's reign.⁷⁵ It is hard to believe that the original compiler of the local

Weining was divided in two: one still from Weining to Zhenxiong, another one directly from Weining to Bijie then to Yongning. Copper transport on both routes was the responsibility of the officials of Weining. Zhenxiong officials were only responsible for transport from Zhenxiong to Yongning on the 'Dongchuan route'. Fu Kang'an 福康安, 'Gai zhan tongyun zou gao' 改站銅運奏稿, *Zhenxiong zhouzhi*, 1784, *juan* 6: 44a-46b.

⁷¹ Rao Mengming 饒夢銘, 'Mangbu tong yun ge' 芒部銅運歌, *Zhenxiong zhouzhi*, 1784, *juan* 6: 11a-12b; Rao Mengming, 'Deng jie qian yi ri, fu zi zhen fu zhao cheng, you weining cui du tongyun, tuzhong ji jing shu huai' 燈節前一日, 複自鎮赴昭城, 由威寧催督銅, 途中即景書懷, *Zhenxiong zhouzhi*, 1784, *juan* 6: 18a-19a.

⁷² *Zhaotong zhigao* 昭通志稿, comp. by Fu Tingquan 符廷銓 and Yang Lúqian 楊履乾, 1924, *Zhongguo guojia tushuguan*, Beijing; *Zhaotong xian zhi gao* 昭通縣志稿, comp. by Lu Jingxi 盧金錫 and others, 1938, *Zhongguo guojia tushuguan*, Beijing.

⁷³ *Zhaotong xian zhi gao*, 1938, *juan* 1: p. 32.

⁷⁴ In this version of Zhaotong gazetteers, the geomancy of the walled city is emphasized in the three maps. Since the walled city and surrounding landscape were drawn on the maps in the gazetteers mainly for the purpose of showing the geomantic layout, only a few mountains and waters are indicated and named on these three maps.

⁷⁵ *Qingshi liechuan* 清史列傳 (Shanghai: Zhonghua shujū, 1928), *juan* 4, pp. 48b-50a.

gazetteer would have made such a mistake regarding Qianlong's reign. This is one more indication that the handwritten copy is probably not identical to the original Qianlong-period gazetteer. The inclusion of the story about the general suggests that the eight views of Zhaotong in this handwritten copy may have been added at a later date.⁷⁶ Still, the story about Aixinga visiting Zhaotong shows that local scholars intended to reconstruct their beautiful landscape by referring to the visits of famous Qing general, even if such visits never happened.

Conclusion

The selection of local 'best views' was not a free-floating aesthetic appraisal, but rather an important cultural activity in the complex process of governing. This new description of the landscape corresponded with the new political and economic situation of Dongchuan prefecture. As the starting point of the copper transport route, Dongchuan became crucial to the economy of the Qing state during the eighteenth century. Local officials adapted existing literary conventions to present the landscape of Dongchuan to make it sound familiar and attractive to people accustomed to the more 'civilized' parts of the Qing state. Therefore, the appearance of the 'ten views of Dongchuan' in this period is not a coincidence.⁷⁷

The descriptions of the so-called 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 achievement. Furthermore, not only the personal interests of local scholars, but political, military and economic concerns all

⁷⁶ Still, some of the eight views were located on the copper transport routes, such as Spraying Fishing River (Saiyü River 灑漁河) ['Spraying Fishing and Willow in the Mist' (*Saiyü yanliu* 灑漁煙柳)], which was located around forty *li* to the west of the walled city. The headwaters of Spraying Fishing River rise near where Zhaotong, Yongshan and Ludian join. This river was used to irrigate thousands of *mu* of farmland. And Spotted Deer Plain, the location of the view called 'Spotted Deer Eating Grass' (*Hualu shicao* 花鹿食草), was located to the east of Zhaotong, between that city and Kuixiang 奎鄉, which was an important station for copper transport between Ludian and Zhenxiang.

⁷⁷ During the eighteenth century, only the larger cities of northeastern Yunnan such as Dongchuan, Zhaotong and Zhenxiang had gazetteers. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the small towns of northeastern Yunnan such as Qiaojia, Dagan, Yanjing, Ludian each had their own gazetteers and collected their own sets of eight views. Before this period, sets of eight views had also been named and described by members of the local elite; however, some new ideas such as 'love your country and love your hometown' came along with modern nationalism and became the standard for local gazetteers. In Dagan, the eight views were not just carefully selected, written about and painted, they were also fitted into a new musical composition which could be easily remembered by local people as a way of teaching them to love their town, 'Dagan shijing' 大關十景, in *Dagan xianzhigao*, *juan 2*, vol. 5, pp. 1415-1417.

contributed to the selection of local best views. In the case of Dongchuan and other parts of northeastern Yunnan in the eighteenth century, the connection between the walled city and copper production form the key background for the selection of best views. Moreover, these best views, such as Black Dragon Mountain and Golden Bell Mountain, were also deeply connected with the historical relationship between indigenous communities and the Qing state during the reform of the indigenous chieftain system in the first half of the eighteenth century. This will be discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5.