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*The Nan-chao kingdom and  
T'ang China's southwestern  
frontier*

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**For Sandra**





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## PREFACE

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From my earliest exposure to Chinese history, I have been interested in the interaction between China and the peoples on its frontiers. It seems to me that much can be learned about China, or any other civilization, through a thoughtful examination of the ways it has treated and regarded its peripheries. What makes a civilization unique unto itself is partly the manner in which it views other peoples and cultures and thereby distinguishes itself from them. The very spirit with which a society thinks of and relates to its frontiers is an important element of its character at that point in time.

The implication, however, is that one's understanding of these things cannot properly be ahistorical. To be cogent, such lessons have to be learned from detailed, comprehensive examinations of that civilization's frontiers in specific temporal and geographical contexts.

This book recounts and analyzes the long and eventful relationship between China and the Nan-chao kingdom, an independent political and cultural entity based in the Ta-li plain region of modern Yunnan province. Specific events are seen in the pattern of China's evolving policy toward the southwestern frontier, especially under the Sui and T'ang dynasties (late sixth to late ninth centuries). The subject is intrinsically important. It is also well suited for one of the many focused and detailed studies without which a thorough understanding of the significance of the frontier in Chinese history is, I think, impossible.

The reader should be forewarned that China's southwestern frontier has always been an area of great ethnic and geographical complexity. This makes for a complicated story at times, but it also gives us opportunities to enhance our appreciation of the often complex dynamics of frontier relationships. Other significant problems are associated with the various sources on which this study is based, some of which, it can be shown, are more reliable than others. Although the narrative that has survived from contemporary accounts is sometimes surprisingly detailed, in many important areas about which we would like to know a great deal more the sources are hardly what we would hope for. Archaeological discoveries may eventually contribute greatly to our

understanding of such issues as trade and economic patterns in this region, and indeed modern studies of the history of southwest China are all indebted to the archaeological research that has been accomplished so far; as yet, however, not all that much can be learned from published reports. Our sources also contain typical culturalistic and moralistic biases as well as historiographical conventions that can obscure as much as they reveal. The reader must be made aware of these special problems, though again I think that such historiographical idiosyncrasies can themselves tell us a lot about contemporary Chinese attitudes toward the southwestern frontier. Where appropriate, all of these problems will be noted and discussed in this study.

While I would like for this account to contribute toward a better general understanding of the role and importance of the frontier in Chinese history, my primary hope is that the story itself is full enough and occasionally exciting enough to sustain the reader's interest. The book begins with a Prologue, a translation of a satirical poem which manages to encapsulate much of the early history of China's relationship with the Nan-chao kingdom and to provide a good deal of its flavor as well.

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## PROLOGUE

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*The Southerners Pay Court*

(A Satire on the Vainglory of Frontier Commanders  
and the Uselessness of Court Ministers)

by Po Chü-i  
(772–846)

The Southerners<sup>1</sup> pay court :

Floating on leather boats, yes, crossing rope bridges,

They come via Sui-chou,<sup>2</sup> over remote roads and paths.

Entering our borders, they first pass through Szechwan.

The Szechwan commander<sup>3</sup> garners merit, quickly sending in a congratulatory report :

‘I have heard that

The Man peoples of the Six Chao<sup>4</sup> of Yunnan

To the east adjoin the Tsang-ko,<sup>5</sup> to the west abut on Tibet.

At first the Six Chao were strewn about like the stars;

United into a single state, they gradually grew stronger.

Although the K'ai-yuan Emperor<sup>6</sup> was a sagely genius,

These Southerners alone did not come to pay respect.

Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung,<sup>7</sup> with sixty thousand troops,

In a single battle of a campaign against them – the entire army was lost.<sup>8</sup>

The banks of the Hsi-erh Ho,<sup>9</sup> to this very day,

Are covered with parched bones – chipped by arrows, scarred by blades.\*

Who could have known that today,<sup>10</sup> in admiration of Chinese ways,

The Southerners on their own would make contact, without our  
wasting a single soldier?

Truly it is because of Your Majesty's resplendent virtue –

As well as Your reliance on this petty official to win them over.'

Reading the memorial, Emperor Te-tsung learns what has happened.

Laughing out loud,<sup>11</sup> he sends a eunuch to welcome the Southerners.

\*[Po Chü-i's note:] In 754, Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung led sixty thousand soldiers in a campaign against the King of Yunnan, Ko-lo-feng, at the Hsi-erh Ho; but the entire army was routed.

And who comes along in the Southerners' train?  
Their Moso<sup>12</sup> *su-yü* with double *wei-ch'ieh* badges,<sup>13</sup>  
Their *ch'ing-p'ing kuan*<sup>14</sup> officials holding red cane staffs;  
Their great generals wearing golden leather belts.<sup>15</sup>  
I-mou-hsün's son, Hsün-ko-ch'üan,<sup>16</sup>  
Is specially summoned to an audience in the Yen-ying Palace.  
The Emperor's mind is set on coddling the distant Man.  
He draws him near the jade throne, close to the Heavenly visage;  
He foregoes wearing the pendants on His crown,<sup>17</sup> personally coaxing  
him on;  
He grants him robes and gives him food, in an audience lasting for hours.  
    An audience lasting for hours!  
    It cannot be so!  
The great ministers gape at one another, looks colored with envy.  
    Well may we pity  
The Chief Ministers, dangling their purple tassels and wearing their  
golden badges,  
Who at morning's court are merely heard in a half-hour's audience.<sup>18</sup>



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## THE SOUTHWESTERN FRONTIER UNDER THE SUI AND EARLY T'ANG

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The Sui period (581–607) began a new phase in China's relations with the peoples on all of its frontiers. The process of reunification by the Sui emperors stirred renewed confidence and curiosity among the Chinese; geo-political and economic motives blended to create a conscious policy of expansion on many fronts. Once again, great emphasis was placed upon the opening of routes of contact and the establishment of at least a nominal hegemony over lands and peoples which had been for centuries but vaguely known. These efforts were modelled on the more glorious epochs of the Han period (206 B.C. to A.D. 220), when successful expeditions had been sent as far afield as what are now Korea, Central Asia, and the northern tier of Southeast Asia. This was in great contrast to the general trend of China's foreign relations from the third century A.D. down to the founding of the Sui dynasty, when even nominal control over distant regions had vanished and when even the peoples within what had come to be regarded as Chinese territory itself were continually resistant, often successfully, to Chinese domination.

It is not within the scope of this study to analyze the causes of that overall change. However, the effects of those developments as they occurred in the specific region of southwest China during the brief Sui period will be shown in some detail. Those developments were important, for they set a pattern for that area's relations with the center of China that was to be more fully realized under the T'ang.

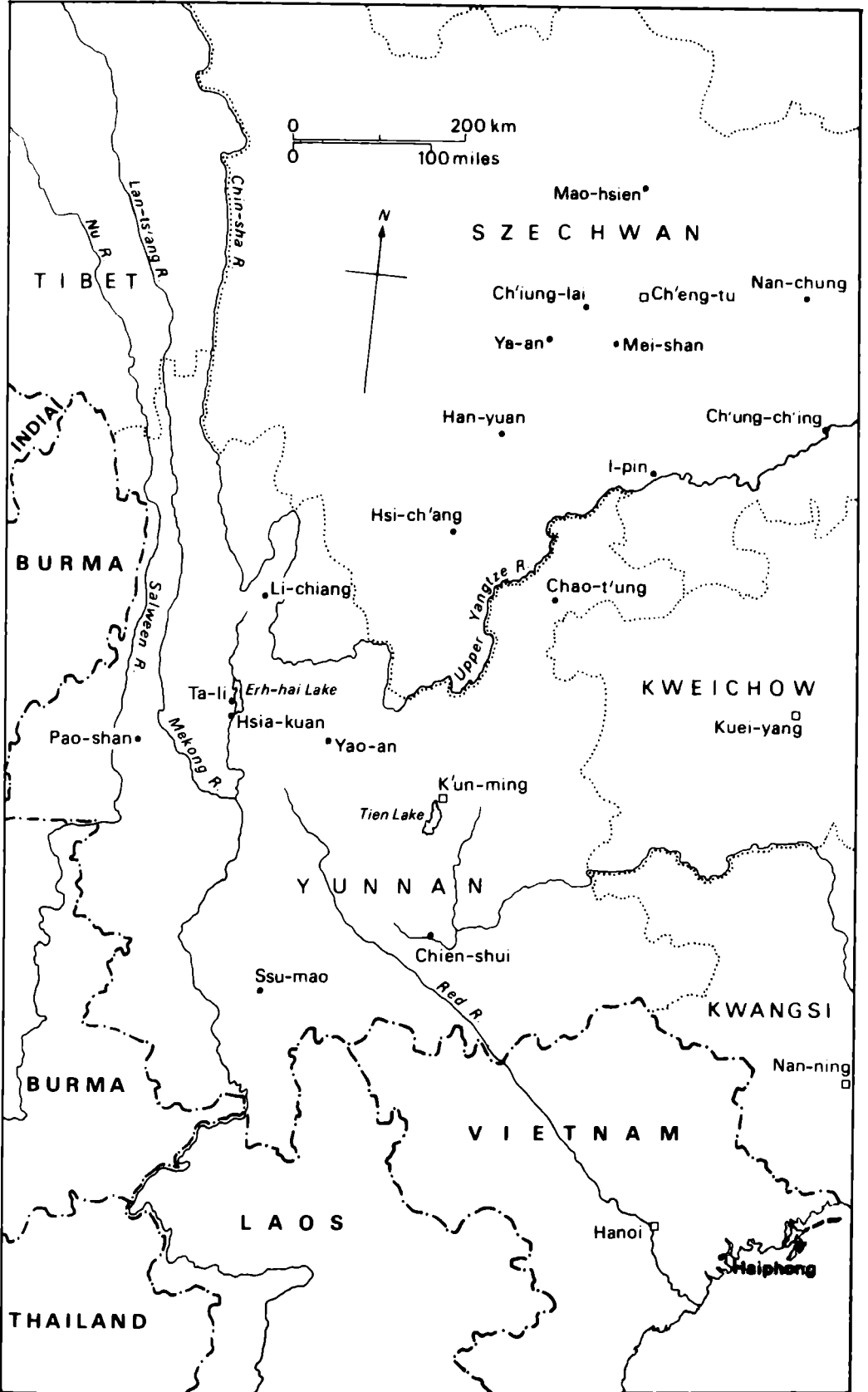
It may be useful first to recount the prior history of this area, which has been clarified somewhat in recent decades by several remarkable archaeological excavations.<sup>1</sup> It appears that modern Yunnan province and its peripheries, the region of southwest China with which this study is most directly concerned, were inhabited by neolithic peoples as late as the first millennium B.C. Yunnan advanced rapidly during that millennium, however, with strong cultural influences coming from at least three sources: the civilization of the state of Ch'u centered in modern Hupei and Hunan to the east; the Pa and Shu cultures in Szechwan to the north; and the Dongson culture

centered on northern Vietnam to the south.<sup>2</sup> Although usually regarded as non-Chinese in origin, Ch'u, Pa, and Shu were each directly involved in the developments and struggles of China during the Warring States period (403 to 221 B.C.). Evidently, however, Yunnan's location kept it isolated from any direct influence or incursion from Chinese civilization, at least until the fourth century B.C.<sup>3</sup>

During the middle of the first millennium B.C., Yunnanese civilization appears in a rather advanced form, based on irrigated farming, domesticated animals, fortified towns, and the use of iron implements.<sup>4</sup> This local culture probably corresponds to that of the so-called 'K'un-ming' and 'Ai-lao' peoples described in Chinese documents of the Han period; more will be said about these peoples and their culture later in this study. The real climax of early Yunnanese civilization, however, was reached in the highly sophisticated Tien kingdom, which was centered on the Tien Lake region of eastern Yunnan. Spectacular archaeological discoveries have revealed a very high level of artistic and industrial attainment, but the most interesting feature of Tien civilization is its unmistakable links to the famous Dongsonian 'bronze drum' culture, which seems to have had a very wide influence over much of south China and northern Southeast Asia.<sup>5</sup>

Early Chinese contacts with Yunnan were highly tenuous. One of the earliest of these is recorded in the perhaps apocryphal story of a Ch'u general named Chuang Ch'iao who reportedly succeeded in conquering Tien late in the fourth century B.C., only to be cut off from returning to his native state by the Ch'in conquest of Pa and Shu in 316 B.C. Subsequently, Chuang is said to have made himself King of Tien, a title which his descendants kept for generations.<sup>6</sup> Later, after its conquest of Ch'u and unification of China late in the third century B.C., the short-lived Ch'in dynasty (221 to 206 B.C.) showed little interest in Yunnan, concentrating its southward attention instead on the south China coastal region near modern Canton (known as Nan-yueh in Ch'in and Han times).<sup>7</sup> With the fall of the Ch'in and the subsequent reunification of China under the Han dynasty, the entire southwestern frontier escaped any serious Chinese initiative for almost a century. The Han court was content with a non-interventionist policy toward Yunnan and even granted an official seal to the King of Tien, symbolizing that peaceful relationship.<sup>8</sup>

The Chinese, however, had not entirely forgotten about the riches of the far southwest. Important trade in many items, including slaves, had existed from Szechwan into Yunnan, Kweichow, and beyond for centuries, and many Szechwanese merchants had made great fortunes by that trade.<sup>9</sup> During the reign of the great Han Emperor Wu-ti (140 to 87 B.C.), renewed knowledge of that trade precipitated expansive initiatives throughout the



Map 1 The borders of modern southwest China

southwest, as will be shown in some detail later in this chapter. Those initiatives did extend nominal Han control over the entire region; that control, however, was never consolidated but remained superficial except in a few frontier administrative seats. The predominant policy was one of indirect control whereby local rulers were acknowledged and given title as overlords for the Chinese in their own territories.<sup>10</sup>

Later, after the fall of the Han, control of the southwest again briefly became a critical issue for the state of Shu Han, one of the Three Kingdoms from which the period A.D. 220 to 265 takes its name. Its renowned statesman Chu-ko Liang led a major expedition into Nan-chung, an area which included most of modern Yunnan province. That campaign yielded a significant amount of captured manpower, livestock, and riches with which to maintain the threatened position of the Shu Han kingdom, which was based in Szechwan. However, in one of the most celebrated foreign policy decisions in Chinese history, Chu-ko Liang chose not to try to maintain direct control over this area, fearing that any such attempt would provoke troublesome resistance and would ultimately be counter-productive. Instead Chu-ko settled for the security of cordial patronage of the peoples at his kingdom's back door. It was assumed that their chiefs would not only be grateful for being spared but would also be stimulated to some extent by Chu-ko's active sponsorship to adopt certain Chinese ways — which to the Chinese meant that they would be that much less of a threat.<sup>11</sup>

This policy of nominal sponsorship of local chiefs in the far southwest continued under subsequent Chinese dynasties, but the process became increasingly fictitious. For one thing, no subsequent major dynasty was based in Szechwan and thus had such a compelling need to take an active interest in the security or the exploitation of the southwestern frontier.<sup>12</sup> Hence, by the sixth century, and especially after the disruptive Hou Ching rebellion, most of the southwest was independent of any direct Chinese control; and local leaders seemed hardly grateful for the privileges of Chinese appointments and titles, which were purely hereditary in any case.<sup>13</sup> This was particularly true of the most interesting and probably the strongest and richest of those local ruling clans, the Ts'uan.

As is typical for many of the peoples of southwest China, the origins of the Ts'uan are obscure, surrounded by a controversy which probably is at least partially of their own making. The southwestern Ts'uan first appear in Chinese sources of the third and fourth centuries, already as an elite clan among the native peoples of Nan-chung. It is not certain how early the written character *ts'uan* had been adopted to represent their name; but it is in fact reported to have been one of the surnames that Chu-ko Liang granted (or at least ceremonially confirmed), as part of his pacification policy, to the local

elite in the third century.<sup>14</sup> It seems likely that it was first the personal name of one of their chiefs, given as exotic a written form as possible by the Chinese to represent the native sound, and that it later came to be used, by the Chinese at least, to refer to the entire group of peoples under his and his successors' control.<sup>15</sup>

Most modern scholars regard the Ts'uan as native inhabitants of the southwest and identify them with the Yi (previously, more commonly known as the Lolo) of that area.<sup>16</sup> However, there is an early tradition, which the Ts'uan themselves fostered, that they were descendants of Chinese who had come from the Han period district of An-i, located in modern Shansi. According to this account, as China fell into disunion after the Han and contacts with the Chinese in the north became more tenuous, these Chinese émigrés established themselves as rulers over their adopted home and its peoples.<sup>17</sup>

There is some independent support for this claim, in that the great early ninth-century social register *Yuan-ho hsing-tsuán* does record a rather obscure Chinese clan named Ts'uan from An-i in the north.<sup>18</sup> Yet this may simply be a reflection of how well informed these local southwestern peoples were about the Chinese. In reality, rather than being descendants of a Chinese clan transplanted to the southwest, it seems much more likely that the Ts'uan were native inhabitants whose own culture and perhaps language had been greatly affected by extensive contacts with the Chinese, for the following reasons.

In the first place, none of the surprisingly detailed descriptive accounts of the area found in the early dynastic histories contains a record of any sizeable migration of Chinese to the southwest in pre-T'ang times; nor does even a work devoted especially to the history and description of the region, such as *Hua-yang kuo-chih*. It is unlikely that any important movement of Chinese peoples into this area would have gone so unnoticed and unrecorded.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, the only surviving local records, two outstanding funerary inscriptions associated with Ts'uan chiefs of the fifth century, only further complicate the issue. It is true that these inscriptions, which came under the great French sinologue Chavannes' scrutiny in the early part of this century, are written in Chinese and are highly regarded for their literary and calligraphic style.<sup>20</sup> They thus implicitly reveal the high degree of Chinese cultural influence among the Ts'uan. Yet they in fact weaken the Ts'uan claim to Chinese ancestry by their bald but hardly credible attempt to link themselves genealogically to the renowned Pan family of Han times (to which the great historian Pan Ku belonged) instead of to the mere Ts'uan clan of the less prominent northern city of An-i.<sup>21</sup>

This problem of the claim to prestigious Chinese roots by peoples of the

southwest is a rather pervasive one. Two other quite similar claims, one associated with the Chuang kings of the ancient Tien kingdom and one with the Tuan clan of Nan-chao and Ta-li times, can also be effectively challenged.<sup>22</sup> In the case of the Ts'uan and the Tuan at least, this may reflect a trend also prevalent among the Chinese themselves during the socially disruptive period between the Han and the early T'ang, when it was not unusual for government officials to exaggerate or even to invent illustrious ancestries in order to enhance their positions at court and in society.<sup>23</sup> It is certainly possible that the Ts'uan, who seem to have been strongly influenced by contacts with the Chinese, might have sought in a similar manner to heighten their own social status, both in the eyes of the Chinese courts with whom they had dealings and in relation to the other native peoples of the southwest, by use of such a bogus claim. But the location of the Ts'uan and some of their cultural traits, especially the shaman-like designation of their leaders as *kuei-chu*, or 'spirit masters,' point strongly to an affiliation with the modern Lolo, now preferably known as the Yi peoples, who still maintain similar practices.<sup>24</sup> Thus even if there once were a Chinese official and his family who settled among the Ts'uan and gave them their name, the peoples themselves almost certainly were not Chinese. Those Chinese records which report the Ts'uan claim to Chinese ancestry themselves deliberately show a measure of disbelief by prefacing the claim with the formulaic phrase *tzu-yun*, *i.e.*, 'they themselves say' that they are Chinese descendants.<sup>25</sup> Without further and consistent supporting evidence, there is no good reason to accept that claim.

What is more certain is that by the fifth century the Ts'uan were firmly established as hereditary rulers over the area corresponding to the northeastern portion of modern Yunnan. During the first half of that century, internal troubles about which we know next to nothing split the Ts'uan into eastern and western halves, the eastern centered on modern Chien-ning, the western on modern Chin-ning.<sup>26</sup> The Chinese dynasties in the north, however, were preoccupied with their own troubles and were not prepared to take advantage of this opportunity. That situation did not change until late in the sixth century, when China had again been united by the Sui and could once again afford to think about extending its hegemony over the southwest.

### **Early Sui initiatives in the southwest**

As in the case of other Chinese dynasties before and after, the Sui first became interested in the region of modern Yunnan as an extension of their conquest and annexation of Szechwan. It is thus not surprising that the earliest indication that has survived of Sui interest in pushing further into the southwest is a rather long and detailed proposal made by Liang Jui, who had

completed Sui pacification of the Szechwan region late in 580, prior to the official founding of the dynasty in 581.<sup>27</sup> Liang's efforts there had also convinced the local native peoples, especially those known as the Lao (a name still in use), to offer their submission to this powerful new Chinese force.<sup>28</sup> Only the peoples of Nan-ning, the northeastern region of modern Yunnan, under their Ts'uan chiefs, had not sent in necessary tokens of submission. This deficiency Liang proposed to correct.

In his memorial to the future Sui emperor, Liang Jui recounted the administrative history of this well populated area, emphasizing its wealth and its great natural resources, especially its excellent horses and salt wells.<sup>29</sup> He related the history of the Ts'uan, who had established pre-eminence in the area from early Chin times (late third century A.D.) and who had come to receive Chinese confirmation of their position in the form of official appointment to the post of *tz'u-shih*, an administrative term usually translated as 'prefect.' Later on, however, succeeding Chinese dynasties had become pre-occupied with internal problems and the exigencies of defense against northern steppe invaders so that these local Ts'uan chiefs, while continuing to receive hereditary appointment, had in fact become independent. The current chief, Ts'uan Chen, according to Liang, was haughty and negligent in the submission of tribute payments. Unfortunately, the exact nature of these expected payments is left unclear; but Liang did note that by this period the Ts'uan leaders were willing to submit only a few dozen horses a year.<sup>30</sup>

At any rate, Liang continued, this region was not so distant from Ch'eng-tu, the principal city of Szechwan. Moreover, it was said, the peoples of the area were oppressed by harsh Ts'uan rule and would be eager to accept Chinese imperial intervention.<sup>31</sup> Fortunately, the Sui already had close-by a large army used in the pacification of Szechwan, so there would be no need to raise another; local Lao leaders had also pledged their help. Liang urged that the Sui should take advantage of these favorable circumstances to take over direct administration of this area, garrison it, and tax the local peoples, enough at least to provide sufficient funds for the maintenance of Sui rule there.<sup>32</sup> This last point was a crucial one, and indeed all of Liang's arguments tended both to emphasize the ease with which the Sui could subjugate the area and to minimize the expense, immediate and long-term, of such an endeavour.

When there was no reply to his proposal, Liang sent in another very interesting memorial in which he reminded the emperor that it was in fact his *duty* to expand Chinese territorial control.<sup>33</sup> This rich region was the source of treasures and prized horses, and there were many Chinese peoples who had settled there. Its annexation would both propagate the imperial majesty of the new Sui dynasty and add to state revenues.<sup>34</sup>

The future Sui Wen-ti, it is said, gave Liang's analysis and proposal serious consideration; but fearing to disrupt the settled and peaceful circumstances only just achieved, he took no action at that time.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, as Liang's biographer is careful to point out, the Liang proposal was destined to attain fruition several years later with the expedition of Shih Wan-sui, which will be recounted shortly.

It was apparently a few years later, in 583 or 584, that the first direct Sui initiative into Nan-ning was made. The noted Sui diplomat, Wei Shih-chung, was sent to negotiate with the Nan-ning leaders.<sup>36</sup> Wei was well known to favor a reasoned, conciliatory approach in China's dealings with all foreigners; he believed that mediation could easily be used to settle disputes without the need for sending expeditionary armies. He seems to have objected, to little avail, when in addition to his mission of negotiation Emperor Wen-ti also sent out an army under Wang Ch'ang-shu. However, it is likely that Wang's forces turned back when Wang himself became ill and died *en route*.<sup>37</sup> In any case, Wei's diplomacy had some temporary success, for Ts'uan Chen and other Nan-ning leaders agreed to a form of diplomatic relations acceptable to the Chinese.<sup>38</sup>

Unfortunately for Sui interests, just when conciliation had been achieved, these frontier peoples were given some cause for disillusionment with the Chinese when members of the mission, led by Wei's own son, reportedly kidnapped some of the local women.<sup>39</sup> There were no immediate repercussions, but such behavior was apparently not untypical and could not have promoted continued smooth relations.

In 589, after the completion of the unification of the Sui empire, Ts'uan Wan, who had succeeded his father Ts'uan Chen, found it prudent to send a mission with appropriate gifts to the Sui court. In return, Ts'uan Wan was given appointment as *tz'u-shih* of K'un-chou, one of three newly created nominal administrative units that were established by the Sui over tribal territories in northeastern Yunnan.<sup>40</sup> Despite this auspicious start, however, Ts'uan Wan subsequently chose to resist Chinese control.<sup>41</sup> It was this act of resistance, of which we know neither the immediate causes nor the details, that provoked the great Sui expedition into Yunnan, led by Shih Wan-sui.

### The Shih Wan-sui expedition

The career of Shih Wan-sui, who was certainly one of the most outstanding of the Sui military commanders, is extremely colorful and well represents both the opportunities and the risks which presented themselves to the Chinese who lived during that period. Shih was a native of the Sui capital region, near modern Sian. His youth seems to have been devoted largely to developing martial skills and aspirations. His own father had died heroically



and, in reward, had been granted posthumous military titles, which Shih Wan-sui inherited. Before long, however, Shih lost those titles when he was indirectly implicated in an attempted coup against the Sui founder. This was but the first setback in a truly checkered career. As punishment, Shih was banished to the important but remote outpost of Tun-huang as a common garrison soldier. It was there, however, that he found the opportunity to distinguish himself in individual combat with the champion warrior of the Turkish forces. Shih was victorious; his single-handed valor is credited with intimidating the Turks, who subsequently broke off the attack and fled. However exaggerated that may be, Shih was clearly an accomplished soldier who sought out glorious deeds. Rewarded for those deeds with promotion to the rank of general, Shih showed himself also to be a skillful commander.<sup>42</sup>

Subsequently, Shih Wan-sui was named to lead an expeditionary force sent against the Nan-ning peoples of the southwest and their intractable chieftain Ts'uan Wan.<sup>43</sup> In the spring of 597, Shih's troops set out on this mission of chastisement. The route which Shih's force and subsequent Sui expeditions took from Szechwan into this region followed the Ch'ing-ch'i road, sometimes called the 'southern road,' which was to be the primary route of contact between Szechwan and Yunnan throughout the T'ang period as well.<sup>44</sup> (See the map on p. 111). The Shih expedition seems to have proceeded smoothly along that route across northern and central areas of modern Yunnan, including both the Tien and the Erh-hai Lake regions, near modern Kunming and modern Ta-li respectively. In the process, Shih smashed the resistance of more than thirty local tribes, reportedly taking more than twenty thousand captives, despite the strategic fastness of their mountainous locations.<sup>45</sup> The great success of Shih's expedition accomplished just what was hoped for; all of these peoples were coerced into offering their submission. Shih did not miss the opportunity to erect a commemorative stone (as had Chu-ko Liang before him), extolling the Chinese imperial virtue.<sup>46</sup>

It was at this point, however, that Shih's triumph turned to personal misadventure that would dog him until the end of his life. Shih dispatched a report of his victory to the emperor and asked permission to take the defeated leader, Ts'uan Wan, to the Sui court. This request was approved. In the meantime, however, Ts'uan (who inwardly maintained his disloyal ways, we are told) had offered rich bribes to Shih. Obviously, Ts'uan was not eager to pay court to the Sui, where his fate could not be certain. As a result, Shih pardoned Ts'uan Wan on his own authority. Then Shih began his triumphal return.<sup>47</sup>

Unfortunately, somehow at this juncture Sui Wen-ti's fourth son Yang Hsiu, who as the Prince of Shu maintained his own court in Ch'eng-tu, learned of the bribe. Possibly he had attached an observer to the Shih

expedition, just as he did with a subsequent campaign into the same area a few years later.<sup>48</sup> In any case, he sent out an official to investigate. Shih, however, had been forewarned. He disposed of the evidence of bribery and, thus, no charges could be brought against him at that time. Indeed, additional honors were given him for his triumph, and he was transferred to a comfortable post at the court of the Prince of Chin.<sup>49</sup>

The next year, however, things took a bad turn. Ts'uan Wan again showed his unwillingness to submit to Sui suzerainty. The Prince of Shu (who was generally considered to be an ambitious, irascible, and dangerous fellow)<sup>50</sup> then charged that Shih had been bribed to let Ts'uan off and that it was this breach of duty that had led to new frontier troubles. What followed, Wen-ti's wrathful personal questioning of Shih and Shih Wan-sui's spirited defense, need only be summarized here. Shih maintained that the only reason that he had left Ts'uan Wan in Nan-ning was that he feared subsequent disorder otherwise and felt that he had to retain Ts'uan in his position there to keep things under control. He claimed that he had already crossed back into Szechwan by the time that the imperial edict authorizing Ts'uan's trip to court had arrived. Above all, he insisted that he had not taken any bribe.<sup>51</sup>

Far from being convinced, the emperor was even further enraged by what he regarded as Shih's disingenuous defense and was about to have him executed. Shih was saved only by the pleas of high court officials, who pointed out his meritorious service to the Sui and his unsurpassed qualities as a general. Wen-ti's wrath was slightly assuaged, and he decided merely to degrade Shih for the second time to commoner status — which was nonetheless a very stern punishment.<sup>52</sup> Barely a year later, however, Shih's titles were returned to him and he was once again put into service for the Sui against the Turks. We are told that the very news of Shih Wan-sui's presence intimidated the Turkish army and forced them to retreat.<sup>53</sup>

But the Ts'uan bribery case was still to haunt Shih. Not long thereafter he was wrongly and spitefully implicated by Yang Su, 'the "hatchet man" of the first Sui reign,'<sup>54</sup> in an abortive palace plot. Once again Shih's forthright defense angered the emperor, who recalled that Shih's avarice in the southwest had allowed further troubles to arise and had necessitated the sending of another punitive campaign, to be discussed shortly. This time there was no hope of averting the death sentence. When news of Shih Wan-sui's execution became known, his biographer tells us, all were indignant and grieved by this injustice.<sup>55</sup>

Yet quite aside from punishing Shih Wan-sui for his alleged irresponsibility, it was necessary to deal decisively with the situation which, in the eyes of the Sui court, he had encouraged. Thus, in the spring of 602, another punitive expedition was sent out against the Ts'uan, this time led by Liu Hui and Yang

Wu-t'ung.<sup>56</sup> Our sources for this expedition are sparse, but according to Yang's short biography there may in fact have been a number of campaigns launched at this time against the peoples of the far southwest, each of them achieving its goal.<sup>57</sup> Some of these campaigns were carried out a little closer to home and were directed toward the suppression of various Lao groups in Szechwan. Their 'rebellious' actions may well have been stimulated in part because the aforementioned Prince of Shu had kidnapped many of them from their mountainous homeland and had cruelly used them to expand the ranks of eunuchs at his extravagant court.<sup>58</sup> In one later campaign against the Lao of Chia-chou, Yang Wu-t'ung was himself killed, despite heroic efforts.<sup>59</sup>

One certain result of the 602 expedition into Ts'uan territory was that this time Ts'uan Wan was dealt with harshly. He himself was executed, all of his family were taken off in captivity to the Sui capital, and control of Ts'uan territory was taken away from them.<sup>60</sup> It was the restoration of Ts'uan's son to power in Nan-ning many years later that was to mark the first step in T'ang policy toward the southwest.

Little more can be gleaned from the sources concerning Sui relations with the peoples of the far southwest. Yang-ti's accession in 605 marked the beginning of Sui preoccupation with more distant frontier campaigns. In addition to the well known, disastrous campaigns against Korea, Sui forces also looked further south. In 605, Liu Fang led his spectacular but very costly expedition against 'Lin-i,' *i.e.*, Champa, which at that period controlled the southern and central portions of modern Vietnam. (The Chinese maintained a fitful sort of administrative control in the northern portion of Vietnam, called Chiao-chou by the Sui.<sup>61</sup>) Apparently, however, no further action was taken in the southwest against the Ts'uan or any other local peoples for the remainder of the Sui dynastic era.

It seems that very little real benefit had been gained from the Sui campaigns into Nan-ning, except for forcing the nominal submission of those peoples. There is no evidence of any lasting Sui administrative presence there or of the imposition of taxes. Unfortunately, the sources do not provide enough information for even the most tentative speculation on whether either tribute or trade was opened up by (or continued despite) Sui initiatives there.

Yet the Sui campaigns into Nan-ning did have lasting importance. They were the first large-scale, aggressive actions taken by a Chinese government against this region in centuries. They signalled the reformation of a Chinese state which both showed interest in extending its control into this area and possessed the resources to sustain such an interest. The fall of the Sui and the formation of the T'ang dynasty did nothing to change this new set of conditions. Thus, early T'ang policy toward the southwest exhibits remarkable continuity with that of the Sui.

**Early T'ang policy toward the southwest**

After the T'ang founding in 618, Chinese activity in the far southwest picked up where Sui policy had left off nearly two decades before. One key to that policy was the realization of the importance of the Ts'uan to the maintenance of a lasting, stable relationship with the area. Thus the first step taken soon after Kao-tsu's accession was to reinstate Ts'uan Hung-ta, who was the son of the Ts'uan chief executed by the Sui, as *tz'u-shih* or 'prefect' of K'un-chou.<sup>62</sup>

Ts'uan Hung-ta must have been one of those taken captive in the major Sui campaign of 602; he, along with the others, had presumably been kept hostage at the Sui capital for some sixteen years. Those years were no doubt enormously influential in the lives of these Ts'uan elite, and their return to the southwest probably had some effect on the further spread of Chinese cultural patterns in that region.<sup>63</sup> In any event, Ts'uan Hung-ta was given the privilege of taking his executed father's remains home for burial.<sup>64</sup> That all of this was probably calculated by the T'ang court to engender a friendly and submissive attitude from the Ts'uan leaders is shown by the follow-up mission into Ts'uan territory by a representative of the T'ang regional commander in Ch'eng-tu, Tuan Lun, not long thereafter.<sup>65</sup> This goodwill mission produced favorable results: late in the summer of 620 all of the Ts'uan peoples capitulated, inaugurating a series of tribute missions to the T'ang capital.<sup>66</sup>

The following year another diplomatic mission was sent into the southwest, this one headed by Chi Hung-wei, a T'ang official in the important Szechwan frontier post of Sui-chou. Chi's mission went beyond Ts'uan territory into the region of western Yunnan occupied by the so-called K'un-ming peoples.<sup>67</sup> Perhaps influenced by the Ts'uan example, the K'un-ming leaders also submitted and sent in tribute.<sup>68</sup> Thereafter, a detachment of T'ang troops was sent to garrison the area. For many years, peaceful relations were maintained with the peoples of this region. Thus within a few years of the T'ang founding, a degree of direct Chinese administrative presence was achieved, entirely by diplomatic means, across the northeastern and north central portions of modern Yunnan. This accomplishment was symbolized by the establishment in 621 of the frontier prefecture of Yao-chou, modern Yao-an, which was destined to serve as the chief administrative outpost in the far southwest throughout the first half of the T'ang period.<sup>69</sup>

At this point, however, what was to become an axiom of T'ang frontier history began to manifest itself in the southwest: that is, that the moral character and personality of officials chosen for frontier service would often play a fundamental role in the success or failure of the T'ang goal of peaceful control. Indeed, this principle seems so firmly rooted in the intellectual consciousness of contemporaries and subsequent historians alike and is so

often invoked as an explanation for the vicissitudes of frontier relations that it must be regarded as a true *topos*, or cliché, of Chinese historiography, whatever the period. As such, it should serve to alert the modern reader against an uncritical acceptance of what often seems to be a naive and moralistically forced interpretation of the dynamics of frontier relations. No doubt the personal character of Chinese frontier officials did affect the course of border relations. However, other less ethical factors normally were equally or more important, though our sources often give little or no mention to them. Once stated, unfortunately, these facile, moralistic explanations of sometimes complex and crucial events were usually perpetuated in Chinese historical writings. This often makes a more sophisticated analysis of frontier events difficult or impossible, since perhaps more telling factors which did not fit the interpretation were not given their due. The reader is intentionally forewarned; numerous such examples will occur in the following narrative and, while special attention will be drawn to some cases, it will be good to maintain a generally judicious perspective.

After the reinstatement of Ts'uan Hung-ta, and after the peoples of southwest China who had previously come under Ts'uan leadership had submitted to the new Chinese dynasty, the T'ang court assigned several officials to frontier posts to maintain these renewed friendly relations. Those selected, however, were evidently poor choices, 'all avaricious and unrestrained in character, so that the distant peoples suffered from them, and there were those who rebelled.'<sup>70</sup> It so happened that there was a former Sui official named Wei Jen-shou, who was then serving the T'ang in the remote southwestern frontier post at Sui-chou. In contrast to those others, Wei had an outstanding reputation as a fair and just official. His treatment of criminal matters, for instance, was so thorough and impartial that, reputedly, not even those whom he sentenced to death could ever begrudge his decision. To the T'ang court, Wei seemed the perfect man to restore harmonious relations in the Nan-ning area.<sup>71</sup> So, apparently, he was.

Wei Jen-shou was given concurrent appointment as governor-general of Nan-ning, but with his administrative seat still at Sui-chou. He was instructed to visit the Nan-ning region once each year to smooth out relations. On the first of his official visits, Wei went all the way to the Erh-hai Lake area, impressing all the peoples along his route with his wise and magnanimous policies. Wei set up a network of seven *chou*, or prefectures, and fifteen *hsien*, or districts, in this area, appointing the local chiefs to head them.<sup>72</sup> We are told that all the native peoples were so gratified by Wei's liberal treatment that they begged him not to leave. When after much pleading Wei still insisted that he must return, they saw him off reluctantly, each of the chiefs sending along relatives to submit tribute to the T'ang court.<sup>73</sup>

After Wei Jen-shou had returned, the T'ang emperor was naturally pleased. Thus when Wei subsequently petitioned to move the administrative seat to Nan-ning, occupying it with a garrison force of T'ang soldiers, Kao-tsu gave him extraordinary powers to administer the region according to local conditions, as he saw fit.<sup>74</sup> The emperor further ordered the head official in Ch'eng-tu to provide troops for Wei's use. Unfortunately, this official was resentful of these extraordinary privileges and powers granted to Wei and found excuses not to provide Wei with the necessary troops.<sup>75</sup> (The frustration of Chinese administration in frontier regions because of such jealousy and lack of cooperation among rival officials is another theme which will recur more than once in the following narrative.) Apparently, Wei Jen-shou never did return to Nan-ning before his death a little more than a year later.<sup>76</sup>

What happened after this is not altogether clear. However, the fact that upon Ts'uan Hung-ta's death, the date of which is uncertain, his successor Ts'uan Kuei-wang was himself named governor-general of Nan-ning indicates that the T'ang had given up the idea of direct Chinese administration of this area.<sup>77</sup> Instead, they settled for an indirect style of control, usually called a *chi-mi* or 'loose rein' policy, through hereditary appointment of the local Ts'uan chief as nominal T'ang representative. This has led the contemporary scholar Wang Chi-lin to speculate that the breakdown of direct T'ang control may have come when Wei Jen-shou's reappointment to Nan-ning went unfulfilled, resulting in continued harsh treatment of the native peoples by other less enlightened officials in the Szechwan area.<sup>78</sup> It is clear that throughout this period exploitation and enslavement of the Lao peoples, still far from accustomed to Chinese rule, by T'ang officials in Szechwan provoked a whole series of rebellious acts, which the Chinese found very difficult to quell completely. Indeed, T'ai-tsung in 626 declared that it was useless to continue the campaigns against the Lao and lamented that if only local officials would gain their respect and trust they would surely be submissive.<sup>79</sup> Wang wonders if perhaps Ts'uan Hung-ta too might not have reinitiated Ts'uan resistance to direct Chinese control, forcing the T'ang to abandon for a while such pretensions of hegemony and to appoint Ts'uan himself to take over official command in this region.<sup>80</sup> This is certainly a credible hypothesis, one which would help to explain the hiatus of direct T'ang initiatives in the far southwest for the next two decades, until the Liang Chien-fang expedition of 648.

In the meantime, however, in other areas of the southwest developments favorable for the T'ang were taking place. As early as 620, a group known as the Tsang-ko sent in tribute to the T'ang court.<sup>81</sup> These peoples of the north-eastern portion of modern Kweichow province possessed a well developed agricultural economy, though not a very strong political cohesion, according to Chinese accounts.<sup>82</sup> The Tsang-ko chief was rewarded for his submission

with impressive titles and appointment as *tz'u-shih* of the newly created *chi-mi* prefecture of Tsang-chou. Then in 629, two other tribes of this same area, the Eastern Hsieh and the Southern Hsieh, both sent missions to the T'ang court, as did the Nan-p'ing Lao of the modern Kwangsi region.<sup>83</sup> Their tribute gifts and exotic costumes, especially those of the Eastern Hsieh (black bear-skin caps with extensive gold and silver ornamentation over the brow, and fur capes with leather bindings), must have made a stunning impression at court, for they provided the immediate motivation for the readoption of the practice of having portraits made of all the foreign kings and emissaries who came to court, depicting their costumes and unusual features.<sup>84</sup> Of course, this was the beginning of a glorious, cosmopolitan era for the T'ang, and peoples of outlandish appearance, customs, and dress must have been a rather frequent sight in the T'ang capital.

By the late 640's, the Western Chao, yet another tribal group from the same area, similar in culture to the Eastern Hsieh though more remote and inaccessible, also submitted, and they too were given official recognition by the T'ang.<sup>85</sup> All of these peoples of the region known as Ch'ien-chou (the northern portions of modern Kweichow and Hunan) were to become regular and dependable protégés of the T'ang. Diplomatic contacts and the submission of tribute were faithfully maintained, with minor exceptions, throughout the T'ang period. There seems not to have been any trouble even when a road was opened up in 639 through Tsang-ko and Western Chao territory, connecting eastern Szechwan with Kwangsi and beyond to Hanoi, though this was something that often led to resistance from the native peoples of other areas.<sup>86</sup> In short, the Ch'ien-chou border region was to remain one of the quietest and most trouble-free of any of the T'ang frontiers. One suspects that this was so largely because this region was less attractive and more difficult to exploit economically than adjacent frontier areas, reducing the likelihood of strains arising from Chinese attempts to intervene directly.

### **Liu Po-ying's proposal and the Liang Chien-fang campaign**

Late in the 640's, however, T'ang policy toward the region of Nan-ning and beyond again took an aggressive turn. This change was at least partially in response to a memorial from the governor-general of Sui-chou, Liu Po-ying. In essence, Liu's memorial proposed that since 'all of the Man peoples of Sung-wai are sometimes submissive but then at other times rebel, I request that we send out an expeditionary force to chastise them. In so doing we can establish communications along the route through the Hsi-erh region [*i.e.*, the Erh-hai Lake region] to India.'<sup>87</sup> This is quite a fascinating justification: Yunnan was to be pacified in order to secure the route to India. Although it

will cause a slight digression in the course of the narrative, this explicit enunciation of Chinese interest in trade and communication along the route through western Yunnan into India deserves special consideration.

By T'ang times, the Chinese had definitely known of the wealth and the natural resources of the region of modern Yunnan for at least a millennium. Indeed, one major reason given in very early Chinese historical sources for the great wealth of Szechwanese merchants was their control of the trade in southwestern riches and slaves. In one of the first great classics of Chinese historiography, the *Shih-chi* of the first century B.C., already we read that the natives of Szechwan engaged in private trade with the peoples of Yunnan, especially in livestock and slaves, and that 'it is for this reason that Pa and Shu [ancient names for the Szechwan region] are wealthy.'<sup>88</sup> It is, however, rather difficult to find detailed, specific information concerning this trade, to what extent it was relatively localized and to what extent it was part of a much larger international trade.

However, that there were international trade routes from Szechwan through Yunnan was twice definitively demonstrated by Han dynasty representatives in far-off lands. In 135 B.C., an official named T'ang Meng was sent on a mission to Nan-yueh, in the modern Canton region. There he was fed a special sauce, one which he knew to be made in Szechwan. After he returned to the capital at Ch'ang-an, he asked some Szechwanese merchants about this and was told that many of their number carried on a private trade at Yeh-lang, in the area of modern Kweichow. T'ang Meng subsequently used this intelligence as the basis for a proposal for the conquest of Yeh-lang, which he himself carried out soon thereafter.<sup>89</sup> Further indications of contacts across this route can be found in the arrival at the Han capital in A.D. 120 of a troupe of musicians and entertainers from Hai-hsi (the western Asian portion of the Roman empire),<sup>90</sup> who are said to have traveled across what is now Burma to get there.<sup>91</sup> Later, in post-Han times, this region experienced a great increase in the trade in Buddhist-related 'holy objects,' and Buddhist teachers and pilgrims also occasionally used this route.<sup>92</sup>

By far the most famous and startling proof of these trade routes, however, was that provided by the great Han envoy, Chang Ch'ien. While in Central Asia attempting to establish allies for the Han, Chang claimed to have seen articles of unmistakable Szechwanese manufacture: a special type of cloth and a distinctive bamboo staff. Upon inquiring, Chang was told of a route from Central Asia through India by which one could reach markets run by Szechwanese merchants.<sup>93</sup> Such a route necessarily would have proceeded through the Yunnan region.

It is well to remember the formidable difficulties, even today, of travel over this route and thus the prohibitive cost of supporting a long-distance



trade across it in anything but light, precious goods.<sup>94</sup> Yet Chang's report, which led indirectly to the subjugation of other areas of the southwest by the Han, is persuasive evidence that the route, however difficult and infrequently traveled, did exist from ancient times.<sup>95</sup> It is thus both plausible and extremely interesting to note Liu Po-ying's specifically stated goal of gaining control over this route, setting out to accomplish what the Han had been not quite able to do.

It would be very illuminating to isolate the origin of this proposal. Of Liu Po-ying himself we know very little, from the more obvious sources at least, except that he served as the T'ang governor-general of the frontier prefecture of Sui-chou and later was assigned to similar frontier posts in the Kwangsi and Canton areas.<sup>96</sup> His native place is not revealed, and there is no compelling reason to believe that he himself was from Szechwan. However, it is possible, even likely, that in his official capacity there he would come to identify to some extent with Szechwanese interests, which it may have been worth his while to promote. One assumes that this ancient trade route had never been entirely shut off. Could the impetus for Liu's proposal have come from Szechwanese mercantile interests, which could be better developed if the T'ang were to conquer and pacify the peoples of Yunnan, who periodically were a bottleneck to this potentially rich trade?

As supporting evidence, it is interesting to note that the builder of the road, mentioned above, which was opened up in the summer of 639 from Yü-chou in eastern Szechwan through Tsang-ko and Western Chao territory, connecting finally with Hanoi, was indeed a Szechwan native.<sup>97</sup> Hou Hung-jen, who is given credit for the construction of this route, seems not even to have been a T'ang official, but is rather identified simply as a 'man from Yü-chou,' *i.e.*, from the modern Chungking basin area in Szechwan.<sup>98</sup> It is very unlikely that the sources would have failed to provide his title if he had been a T'ang official. But if he was not an official, what sort of private citizen would have sufficient wealth and incentive to undertake such a responsibility? Did this represent another attempt by Szechwanese commercial interests to cash in on frontier trade, in this case the then burgeoning and fabulously rich Nan-hai trade with its terminus at Hanoi?

Admittedly, the hypothesis that merchant motives may have played a strong role in early T'ang activity in the southwest is speculative. The sources will probably never permit anything more than a tentative answer to these questions. But the plausibility of the hypothesis increases with each new instance where the possibility of similar motives can legitimately be raised. Thus, I will return to this issue when the narrative reaches the feverish attempts in the 730's and 740's by certain T'ang officials in Szechwan, who can definitely be shown to have had close local ties, to open up the so-called

Pu-t'ou road, connecting Ch'eng-tu with Hanoi via eastern Yunnan, an event which was to have very serious repercussions for T'ang foreign policy.<sup>99</sup> What is at stake, ultimately, is a much broader and perhaps unanswerable issue: to what extent did local interests affect not only the implementation but also the formulation of Chinese foreign policy?

Whatever his motives, Liu Po-ying's proposal elicited a vigorous response from T'ang T'ai-tsung. In the summer of 648, he ordered the general Liang Chien-fang to lead a punitive expedition of troops from Szechwan against the so-called Sung-wai Man.<sup>100</sup> These peoples occupied the territory southwest of the Szechwan frontier at Sui-chou and west of the area controlled by the Ts'uan. They bordered on the Hsi-erh Ho Man (also called Erh-ho Man or simply Ho Man), who occupied the modern Erh-hai or Ta-li basin area.<sup>101</sup> These two broad groupings of peoples had much in common, and sometimes the distinction between them seems rather hazy. Both were well-advanced culturally, and both were literate to some degree. There is little likelihood that this refers to anything other than literacy in Chinese, a further indication of the extensive penetration of Chinese cultural influence in this region. They had walled cities, with economies based largely on agriculture and, interestingly, sericulture. Yet they are said not to have been so well organized politically as were the Ts'uan to the east.<sup>102</sup> These Sung-wai and Erh-ho peoples, especially their elite clans (the Chao, Yang, Li, Tung, and Wang, among others), should be remembered, for they were subsequently to play a major role in the Nan-chao kingdom, after its unification of the area. In 648, though, they were regarded simply as an annoying block to trade and communication through western Yunnan.

At first, Liang Chien-fang's expedition encountered some resistance from a local chief named Shuang-she.<sup>103</sup> But ultimately Shuang-she's forces were routed, and the severity of his defeat by the T'ang army apparently dissuaded other local groups from further active opposition.<sup>104</sup> Instead, they fled to the hills, we are told, to where Liang sent an emissary to reason with them. Having once displayed T'ang might, Liang was highly successful in his negotiations with these peoples. Altogether some seventy tribes with a reported population of 109,300 households (an unlikely figure, corresponding to something like a half million people) submitted to Liang. In typical fashion, Liang appointed two of their chiefs, Meng Lien and Ho She, as local officials for the T'ang, and he seems to have made them less anxious about their continuing relationship with the Chinese.<sup>105</sup>

Liang then sent an envoy to pay an official call on the Hsi-erh Ho peoples. This ominous visitation (one source says that it was in fact a surprise attack) caused great alarm.<sup>106</sup> Their leader Yang Sheng was about to flee by boat (most likely down the Erh-hai Lake, one of the few navigable bodies of water

in that region), but was dissuaded by the Chinese envoy who convinced him, we are told, through 'awe and good faith.' Yang thereupon capitulated, as did the numerous other component groups of these peoples, each controlled by a dominant clan.<sup>107</sup> Among these, three prominent chiefs (named Yang T'ung-wai, Yang Lien, and Meng Yü) actually journeyed to the T'ang court in 648, where they were rewarded with official appointments.<sup>108</sup> Liang's accomplishment was completed in the spring of the following year with the further submission of the T'u-mo-chih Man and the Chien-wang Man, both also located to the west of the territory controlled by the Ts'uan.<sup>109</sup> A number of nominal T'ang prefectures were then created in this area.

Thus by the end of T'ai-tsung's reign, T'ang power had been extended as far as the Erh-hai Lake region of western Yunnan. Unfortunately, again the sources tell us nothing concerning any measures subsequently imposed on the peoples of this area or to what degree if any T'ang trade through the southwest may have been facilitated through these efforts. At any rate, the ethnic diversity of this region and the seeming lack of any overall political organization among these peoples made dealing with them effectively more difficult than had been the case with the Ts'uan.<sup>110</sup> Further resistance would be forthcoming, and T'ang attempts to assert control over this area were far from over

#### Further T'ang penetration into the far southwest

In the summer of 651, a group of peoples known as the Pai-shui Man rose against recent T'ang attempts at domination of the area, attacking one of the newly created T'ang administrative outposts, Ma-chou.<sup>111</sup> Very little is known about the Pai-shui peoples; they too seem to have been one of the small tribes occupying the area between the Ts'uan and the Erh-hai Lake region. Like many of the peoples of the southwest then and now, they held a strong belief in spirit forces within nature and in the need to propitiate them regularly. Indeed, their political organization seems to have been centered on shamanistic leaders, known throughout the area as *kuei-chu*.<sup>112</sup>

What sparked this specific act of resistance by the Pai-shui peoples is not known, but it is clear that the T'ang response was immediate and large scale. A general named Chao Hsiao-tsu was appointed by T'ang Kao-tsung to head a punitive expedition. Chao at first encountered surprisingly stiff opposition from these peoples but finally overcame them. In fact, with the help of a great snowfall, the sources say that he virtually annihilated them.<sup>113</sup>

As was not uncommon in such cases, Chao then proposed to take advantage of this victory to extend T'ang control further into this area. He reported that west of Nung-tung, the administrative seat of Yao-chou, were two groups of peoples known, from the names of two rivers in that area, as the Big Po-nung and the Little Po-nung.<sup>114</sup> Chao complained that they were constantly

attempting to stir up other local peoples in the Yao-chou area to resist T'ang control. Their territory bordered on the Hsi-erh Ho region and was populous and extremely rich, richer even than Szechwan itself, Chao's memorial asserts, perhaps with intentional hyperbole. Despite this, the area was politically disorganized and the people there were given to feuding among each other.<sup>115</sup> In short, Chao painted a picture of a region ripe for conquest and proposed using his forces, fresh from victory over the Pai-shui peoples, in a free-style campaign of pacification further to the west. This proposal was approved.

Thus the Chao expedition pushed on in the summer of 652, vanquishing the Little Po-nung forces in a great cavalry battle and executing their chief. When the Big Po-nung chief also resisted, Chao besieged his fortress, captured him, and forced the submission of all of these peoples. This campaign seems to have been a decisive one, stabilizing the region in China's favor for many years to come.<sup>116</sup> This was well symbolized in 656 by the submission of the Hsi-erh Ho peoples and their mission of tribute to the T'ang court.<sup>117</sup>

The final stage of early T'ang policy toward the modern Yunnan region came in the early 670's when Liang Chi-shou led a punitive campaign against the peoples of Yung-ch'ang, modern Pao-shan, who reportedly had rebelled against T'ang control.<sup>118</sup> Liang's expedition was successful in pacifying that region, which lay beyond the Erh-hai Lake. At about the same time, another large group of K'un-ming peoples submitted to the T'ang, and three prefectures were set up in their midst.<sup>119</sup>

In sum, early T'ang policy toward the southwest had been successful in establishing Chinese presence and at least a measure of indirect control across the entire northeastern and central portions of modern Yunnan province. This was the furthest extension of Chinese power and influence in that region since Han times. That fact was emphasized by the symbolic upgrading of Yao-chou to governor-generalship (*tu-tu fu*) status in 664.<sup>120</sup> Previously, T'ang policy toward this area had been directed from one or another of the three less distant outposts of Lang-chou (in modern Hunan), Jung-chou (modern I-pin, in Szechwan), and especially Sui-chou (modern Hsi-ch'ang, in Szechwan).<sup>121</sup> The transfer of the administrative center for the implementation of T'ang policy in the far southwest to Yao-chou in one sense represented the extent and the confidence of Chinese penetration into the area. Yet in another, perhaps more important sense, it may also have been meant to represent the priority of the T'ang claim to this region, a defense against the rapidly increasing danger of Tibetan expansion in that direction.<sup>122</sup>

By mid-century, the rise of Tibet to the role of a major military power of the Asian continent was well established. This presented an ominous threat to T'ang interests all along its western borders. The southwest too was considered fair game by the Tibetans. Routes of communication, while not easy,

did exist directly from Tibet to western Szechwan and down into Yunnan.<sup>123</sup> Contact was soon established between the Tibetans and the numerous small tribal groups on this frontier, with some of whom the Tibetans had quite a lot in common. In the southwest the Sui-chou region early became a site of contention between the expanding T'ang and Tibetan empires. Apparently, each of them saw the advantages and the opportunity for expanding into the Yunnan region, and each was anxious to prevent the other from doing so. The small tribes around Sui-chou were caught right in the middle and had to be skilled in playing off both sides.

The earliest recorded manifestation of this growing contention in the southwest came in 652, when the T'ang general Ts'ao Chi-shu led a punitive campaign against three of these tribes, who though nominally attached to Sui-chou and yearly receiving subsidies which amounted to bribes to maintain their allegiance to the T'ang nevertheless (claimed the Chinese righteously) kept up friendly relations with the Tibetans. In consequence, the Ts'ao expedition captured several of their towns, executed some seven hundred people, and plundered great numbers of their livestock.<sup>124</sup>

This marked the beginning of a significant transition in T'ang policy toward the southwest. Until this time, T'ang motives for expansion into this region had not gone beyond those of economic exploitation, the facilitation of trade, and expansion for its own and glory's sake. Now for the first time, T'ang policy toward the peoples of the southwest had become inextricably involved with a larger and more formidable issue — the containment of Tibet.

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## THE TIBETAN CONNECTION

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Of all the foreign policy predicaments faced by the T'ang dynasty in its nearly three centuries of rule, the Tibetan menace was surely the most chronic. The problem arose suddenly within two decades of the founding of the Chinese dynasty in 618, and perennial difficulties were not finally resolved until the almost as sudden dissolution of Tibetan political unity and military power in the middle of the ninth century. Unlike the relatively unstable confederations of Turks and other nomadic, pastoral peoples that had periodically raised havoc along T'ang China's frontiers, the Tibetan kingdom was truly a rival territorial empire with a more or less settled population, some towns, a partly agricultural economy, and a fairly stable governmental system.<sup>1</sup> While other peoples often threatened the security of T'ang frontier regions and overran outlying possessions, the Tibetans took over large tracts of what had been actual Chinese provinces in the northwest, shrinking the distance between the frontier and the T'ang capital at Ch'ang-an to within one hundred miles.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, until the closing years of the T'ang dynasty, only the Tibetans succeeded in capturing the capital itself and setting up their own puppet as emperor, as they did for fifteen extraordinary days in 763.<sup>3</sup>

Hostilities between China and Tibet, however, were not constant. Diplomatic contacts were always maintained; and, frequently, one side or the other was eager to work out an amicable settlement of disputes and to maintain friendly, or at least peaceful, intercourse. In all, three T'ang princesses were sent to Tibet in marriage, and cultural influences quite certainly went with them.<sup>4</sup> In many periods of this relationship, Tibet held the upper hand, demanding and receiving equal diplomatic treatment from the T'ang court. Sometimes Chinese gifts and concessions to the Tibetans amounted to tribute in reverse.<sup>5</sup> Yet even when the Tibetans were most submissive and relations between these two great powers were least troubled, frontier skirmishes and incursions continued apace.

This was a back-and-forth struggle, in which first one side would gain the upper hand and then the other. This inconstancy makes for a rather confusing analysis of the pattern of relations between China and Tibet. Yet we

must make a conscientious attempt to understand that pattern, for from the latter half of the seventh century on, it had a direct and intimate bearing on the realities of what we have defined as T'ang China's southwestern frontier as well.

### **The rise of Tibet**

The origins of the Tibetan kingdom are not well recorded. The Chinese were frankly baffled by its quick rise to major power status. Chinese sources were able to identify the Tibetans only under the general grouping of the Western Ch'iang peoples of Han times, or at least as occupants of Western Ch'iang territory, but a branch of those peoples with whom the Chinese had never before had direct dealings.<sup>6</sup> Their sudden appearance as a truly formidable military power became one of the most perplexing concerns of early T'ang foreign policy. Still, as H.E. Richardson has perceptively remarked, 'great powers do not spring up overnight; the Tibetan Kingdom was the fruit of centuries of growth and consolidation.'<sup>7</sup>

Fortunately, Tibetan chronicles recovered from Tun-huang several decades ago provide us with a fuller picture of very early Tibetan history.<sup>8</sup> They sketch the process by which the ancestors of the Tibetan kings gradually extended authority over the area between modern Lhasa and the Kokonor or Ch'ing-hai Lake region. Evidently, the unification of the entire Tibetan plateau had been accomplished by the time of Songtsen Gampo (died 649), the first of the historically verifiable Tibetan kings.<sup>9</sup> Chinese records pick up their story in the 630's, when diplomatic contacts were first made. Soon after, the Tibetans learned of the marriage alliances that the T'ang had granted to the Turks and to their own close neighbors, the T'u-yü-hun.<sup>10</sup> The Tibetan monarch demanded that he be given a Chinese princess as well. The T'ang court initially refused, but in 641 it was decided that it would be wiser to grant the Tibetans this request, since they had been striking hard at the T'u-yü-hun and other peoples located on the T'ang borders, implicitly threatening China itself.<sup>11</sup> The Wen-ch'eng Princess (who, like almost all T'ang 'princesses' granted in marriage to foreign peoples, was actually a collateral relative rather than a true imperial daughter) was sent off to Lhasa and, along with her retinue, subsequently proved to be a strong cultural influence on the Tibetans.<sup>12</sup> At the Wen-ch'eng Princess's insistence, the Tibetans put aside some of their more distinctive customs, especially the hideous (to Chinese eyes) practice of painting their faces red.<sup>13</sup> Naturally, the Chinese entourage also introduced the Tibetans to many T'ang artistic, literary, and religious forms.<sup>14</sup>

Still, Tibetan military expansion continued in all directions. To the south, Tibet reportedly subjugated the region of Nepal and extended its control

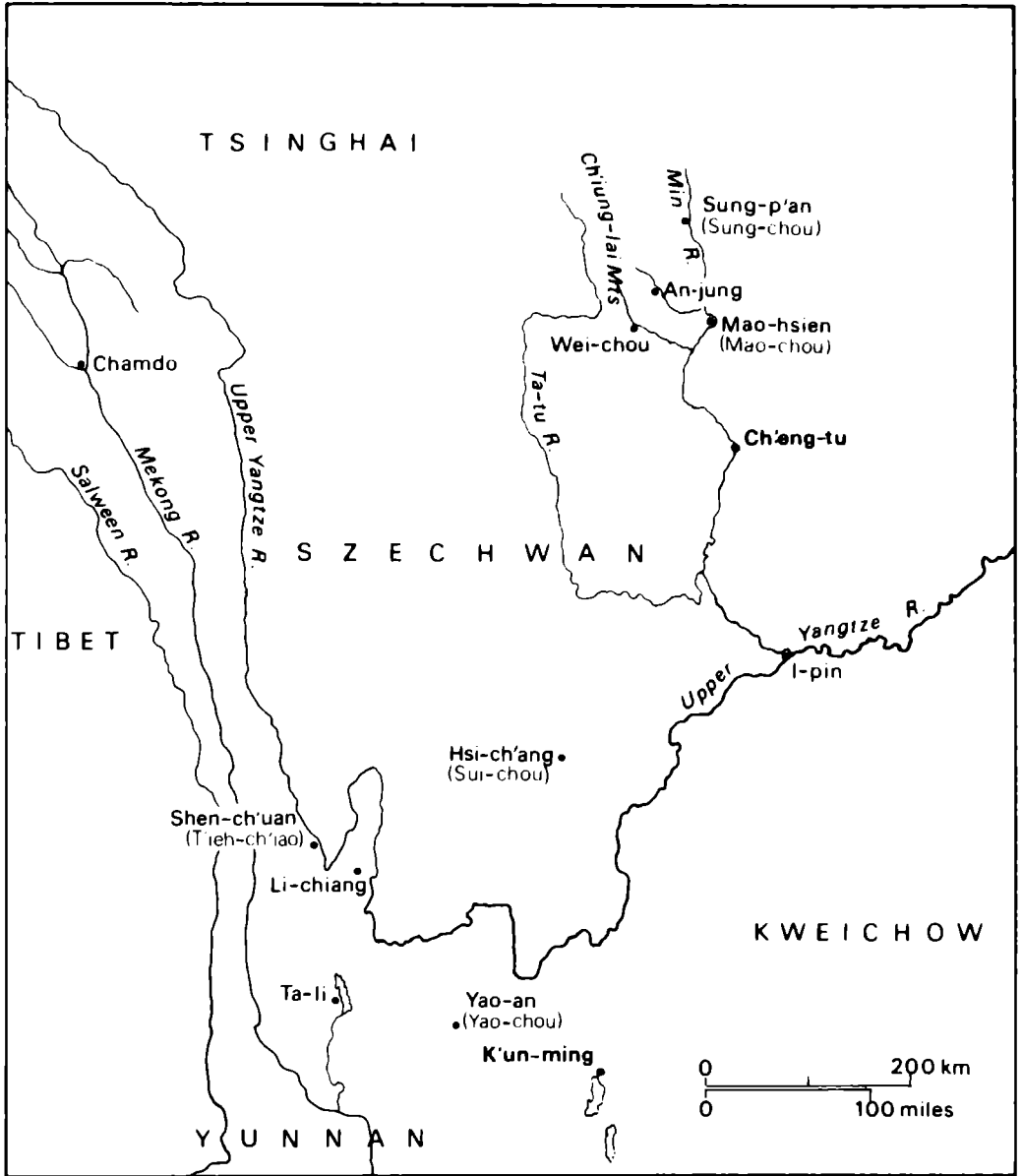
down to the borders of the Indian kingdoms of that period. To the north, they began to encroach on lands occupied by various Turkish confederations. Their westward expansion put them in conflict with T'ang interests in Central Asia; there, in 670, they captured the four T'ang protectorates of Kucha (Ch'iu-tz'u), Khotan (Yü-tien), Kashgar (Su-le), and Karashar (Yen-ch'i), thus temporarily blocking Chinese communication and trade with the far west. Soon thereafter, they completed the destruction of the T'u-yü-hun kingdom, subjugated the various Ch'iang and Tangut peoples of that region, and annexed virtually all of the territory between Tibet and the T'ang borders to the east.<sup>15</sup> Altogether, theirs was a vast territorial empire. To the Chinese, it represented an unprecedented threat to the security of the western frontiers.<sup>16</sup>

It is thus not surprising that in this period the Chinese sought to improve defenses all along their western borders. In particular, one spot which was of critical importance to the security of the Szechwan region was the area around Mao-chou, modern Mao-hsien,<sup>17</sup> northwest of Ch'eng-tu. In T'ang times, this was the terminus of a major route which connected Tibet via the modern Hei-shui River valley with the province of Chien-nan. Even today, this is the course of the only major highway between Szechwan and the Ch'ing-hai region. It has always been a rather difficult route but certainly a passable one, so long as strategic mountain passes are not blocked.<sup>18</sup> It was to control this route that the T'ang court in 678 ordered the augmentation of garrison strength in Mao-chou and the construction of a fort at one of the most strategically indomitable spots along the route, a place northwest of Mao-chou which the Chinese sanguinely called An-jung-ch'eng ('fortress for the pacification of the Tibetans').<sup>19</sup>

The strategic location and impregnable position of An-jung are repeatedly emphasized in T'ang sources. Emperor Hsüan-tsung himself would later have occasion to observe that 'its location is very difficult; it is not a place that force [alone] can subdue.'<sup>20</sup> Certainly, the construction of this fortress was intended to block further Tibetan intrusion along this route and thus to increase the general security of the entire Szechwan frontier.<sup>21</sup> Yet it is important and very interesting to note that one of its specifically stated purposes was to 'cut the route of communication between Tibet and the Man,'<sup>22</sup> *i.e.*, the same frontier peoples of the far southwest that, as we have seen, the T'ang had been trying so hard to subdue. This is a clear indication of the increasingly strong Chinese concern that Tibet be prevented from establishing control over the peoples and the territory southwest of Szechwan.

It should be pointed out, however, that something seems not quite right here. An-jung was indeed the crucial spot for the control of this particular route between Tibet and China — but this was certainly not the only such route. In fact, this road itself had another branch, for which the strategic pass





Map 2 An-jung and Szechwan's western frontier

was located to the south, at Wei-chou; and, subsequently, control of Wei-chou was also to be a recurring source of vigorous contention between China and Tibet.<sup>23</sup> In any case, both branches of this route went through territory inhabited by the Ch'iang peoples, and neither linked directly with what is usually thought of as Man territory, located further to the south. Moreover, directly west of Ch'eng-tu, there were at least three specified routes which also connected with Tibet. Here, in fact, dwelled various Man peoples, some forty-six tribes in all, each loosely and indirectly controlled through chieftains who received hereditary T'ang official appointments.<sup>24</sup> There were, in addition, direct routes connecting Tibet with the region of what is now north-

western Yunnan, routes that did not pass through T'ang territory at all.<sup>25</sup> According to one ninth-century source, there were paths across the magnificent mountains there, however formidable, by which Tibetan traders frequently came to exchange goods.<sup>26</sup>

Although all of these routes were over very difficult terrain, later events clearly show that they were passable, even for large armies. It is thus unlikely that blocking Tibetan access to any one of them could have totally shut off Tibetan encroachment into the T'ang southwest. This seems especially true of the An-jung route, since it was so much further north and did not abut directly against areas identified as Man territory. Yet the sources insist on An-jung's crucial importance. One can only conclude that the easiest and most natural 'direct' route from Tibet into Yunnan must have been first due east across the Chamdo region into the area around modern Mao-hsien and then south down the western edge of Szechwan, through territory inhabited by various Ch'iang and Man peoples, territory that was never securely under T'ang control. It was to shore up that control and prevent uninhibited Tibetan activity along that entire periphery that fortresses at key points such as An-jung and Wei-chou were established.

An-jung was built by the Chinese in 678. Almost immediately, however, it came under Tibetan attack. In 680, with the help of Ch'iang peoples of this area who served as guides to the local terrain, Tibet succeeded in capturing An-jung from the T'ang.<sup>27</sup> Thus, Chinese construction of this easily defended outpost actually worked to Tibetan advantage, for once they had occupied it with their own forces the Tibetans were able to use it as a secure base for their continued domination of this region. It would be several decades before T'ang forces could dislodge them.

Moreover, we are told, the capture of An-jung had the immediate effect of inducing all of the peoples of the southwest, specifically including the Hsi-erh Ho Man of the Ta-li plain region of Yunnan, to submit to the Tibetans.<sup>28</sup> As noted above, there are geographical reasons to doubt the direct cause-effect relationship of these events. Yet there is much evidence to corroborate the basic fact that many of the peoples on China's southwestern frontier did ally themselves with the Tibetan camp during this period.

In the first place, it must be remembered that Tibet was by this time a dominant military power in Asia, whose subject peoples extended great distances in all directions. It is true that periodically the Tibetans were willing to submit to Chinese forms in exchange for a T'ang princess and various such cultural perquisites.<sup>29</sup> Chinese cultural influence clearly did affect Tibet during this period, yet the pre-existing cultural and economic basis of the Tibetan kingdom was not fundamentally altered.<sup>30</sup> Tibet was never subdued or 'transformed' by T'ang China. Instead, Tibet fully retained its indepen-

dence, and the Tibetan court frequently demanded, and usually received, treatment from the Chinese as an equal. Indeed, on a purely military basis, for most of the period down to the beginning of the ninth century Tibet was probably a stronger and more dangerous adversary than T'ang China itself.<sup>31</sup>

Viewed from this aspect, the Tibetan capture of An-jung may have held temporary psychological significance for the peoples on China's southwestern frontier. It could well have been regarded as a further and perhaps decisive indication of Tibetan military pre-eminence over the T'ang. This would have provided a strong inducement to join the Tibetan side. Moreover, many of the peoples of this region had much more in common with the Tibetans than with T'ang China, ethnically, economically, and culturally. Caught in a position between two great powers, where they could hardly hope to retain full independence all the time in any case, these peoples may indeed have preferred to submit temporarily to Tibet rather than to the T'ang, for as long as they felt that it was in their best interest to do so.

Moreover, it is also quite clear that Tibetan actions in these years were not limited to the An-jung region. Rather, throughout this period Tibet was actively engaged in campaigns aimed at establishing domination over the peoples and territory located all along the frontier southwest of Szechwan. Here again, the Chinese record, which is relatively sparse, can be supplemented and enhanced by the Tibetan annals discovered at Tun-huang. Fortunately, these annals, which cover the years from 650 to 763 (with some lacunae), were long ago translated by F.W. Thomas (*Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents Concerning Chinese Turkestan*) and by Bacot, Thomas, and Toussaint (*Documents de Touen-houang relatifs à l'histoire du Tibet*). They confirm that by 703 the Tibetans had extended their domination through campaigns as far as the Erh-hai Lake region of modern northwestern Yunnan.

These were some of the last exploits of King Tüsong (676–704), who in the winter of 703 personally led an expedition against this area. According to the annals, 'he established his authority over the 'Jan, he imposed tribute on the White Myava (Myava Blanc), he subjugated the Black Myava (Myava Noir), and so forth.'<sup>32</sup> Here it is essential to realize that these bizarre names can all be linked to the inhabitants of the area occupied partially by the Hsi-erh Ho Man, the same peoples whose submission the Chinese sources report was lost to Tibet after the fall of An-jung.

The 'Jan, whose name seems to have been applied by the Tibetans to the entire northwest Yunnan region (*'Jan yu'*), have been equated with the Moso peoples (the modern Na-hsi) of that area.<sup>33</sup> Myava, or more properly Myva,<sup>34</sup> seems to have been the Tibetan equivalent of 'Man.'<sup>35</sup> Thus the 'Myava Blanc' were the Pai Man (White Man) and the 'Myava Noir' were the Wu Man (Black Man), the two principal ethnic categories of the Nan-chao populace.<sup>36</sup> These

annals thus reveal the extent of early Tibetan subjugation of the northern portions of what was to become the Nan-chao kingdom. Indeed, the annals make it clear that King Tüsong met his death in 704 while on campaign against the Myava,<sup>37</sup> rather than in an expedition against mutinous subject peoples in the Nepal region, as the Chinese sources make it seem.<sup>38</sup>

The motives for Tibetan expansion in this direction were probably numerous. The basic ethnic, economic, and cultural similarities between the Tibetans and the peoples of this region could have encouraged the hope of annexing this area. More importantly, the Tibetans were probably as well aware as the Chinese of the natural wealth of this region, and just as eager to exploit it. Perhaps the most essential resource that the Tibetans hoped to acquire was salt, of which there were major deposits in the frontier region southwest of Sui-chou as well as in several areas within what is now Yunnan itself.<sup>39</sup> There is strong evidence to show that, despite comparatively primitive techniques of decoction, the Tibetans fully utilized one of these salt wells, located at a spot known in T'ang times as K'un-ming (modern Yen-yuan in southwestern Szechwan, not to be confused with the present Kunming, capital of Yunnan province), once it became theirs. Certainly they fought mightily to maintain control of it even after their domination of this region was shattered.<sup>40</sup>

The Tibetans could also have hoped to gain additional horses and other livestock as well as extensive pasturelands in what is now northwest Yunnan, in addition to agricultural products and textiles from the plains regions.<sup>41</sup> Manufactured items from this area, especially swords, were later to be quite famous; they too may have been a Tibetan objective.<sup>42</sup> The Tibetan annals are not specific about the tribute reportedly imposed on the Pai Man in 703, but probably some or all of these items were included. It is also very likely that the Tibetans viewed these peoples themselves as a valuable resource, an additional source of manpower to fight in their far-flung campaigns, for Tibetan armies relied heavily on levies of soldiers from all of the peoples that they subjugated.<sup>43</sup>

Whatever the Tibetan motives, from the 670's at latest they had begun an active program of expansion all along the frontiers of Szechwan, and local peoples had begun to submit to their control. This process, however, which would continue down to the beginning of the ninth century, was by no means a totally smooth and uninterrupted one. There were to be periodic setbacks for the Tibetans, just as there were for the T'ang.

### **T'ang setbacks in the southwest**

In chapter 1, it was noted that Yao-chou, the furthest major T'ang outpost in the southwest, which was established as early as 621, was raised to the

status of a governor-generalship (*tu-tu fu*) in 664. However, sometime thereafter (probably after the fall of An-jung in 680), the Chinese began to experience great trouble in maintaining control there. Two senior officials were killed by local peoples, and when the T'ang court sent out a punitive expedition of troops from Szechwan, under the command of Chao Wu-kuei, it was defeated at every turn, apparently with very heavy casualties.<sup>44</sup> A subsequent T'ang campaign against this region also met with failure, and Yao-chou was abandoned.<sup>45</sup> It seems quite probable, though the sources are not explicit, that those local peoples of the Yao-chou area who so completely defeated the T'ang forces were actively supported by the Tibetans.<sup>46</sup> Evidence from the Tun-huang annals, cited above, of direct Tibetan campaigns into this region a few years later is certainly consistent with this conjecture.

In 688, however, events in this region began to turn in favor of the T'ang. In that year, two local chiefs, Ts'uan Ch'ien-fu and Wang Shan-pao, who had nominal T'ang appointments as *tz'u-shih*, or 'prefect,' in Chin-ning and An-ning respectively, sent in a memorial requesting that the governor-generalship at Yao-chou, recently abandoned, be re-established.<sup>47</sup> It is interesting to note that, in a manner reminiscent of Liang Jui's proposal to the Sui emperor over a century before, they assured the T'ang court that funds for the support of Yao-chou could be obtained from within that region, so that there would be no need to tax Szechwan any further.

Ts'uan's name is a familiar one, representing the same dominant tribal leaders of the eastern portion of modern Yunnan with whom the T'ang had had a long and largely stable relationship. On the other hand, most of what we know of Wang Shan-pao comes from a commemorative inscription which he had written, with assistance from a Chinese native of Ch'eng-tu named Lü Ch'iu-chün, for his father Wang Jen-ch'iu, who had died in 674.<sup>48</sup> In this rather refined Chinese inscription, Wang traces his and his father's hereditary position as *tz'u-shih* in that locale and claims, in a familiar fashion, a remote Chinese ancestry originating in the T'ai-yuan area of northwest China. There seems to be no better reason to accept this claim than there is for the quite similar ones made by the Ts'uan and the Tuan.<sup>49</sup> Rather, like the Ts'uan, the Wang clan should be regarded as one of the most prominent native groups of the eastern Yunnan region who had long cultivated cooperative relations with the Chinese in order to preserve and strengthen their position in that area.<sup>50</sup> Wang Chi-lin has speculated that both Ts'uan and Wang had been alarmed by the rapid spread of Tibetan power and influence into their area, regarding it as a grave threat to their continued virtual independence and high standard of culture. The re-establishment of Yao-chou might have served as a check to further Tibetan encroachment, and this was probably the real reason for their proposal.<sup>51</sup> Their request was granted and Yao-chou was re-established,

but as will be discussed below, not without a great deal of continuing troubles.

The following year, 689, was marked by the submission of the Lang-ch'iung peoples, who occupied the area just to the northwest of Erh-hai Lake. We are told that they had previously allied themselves with the Tibetans, perhaps after the fall of An-jung in 680.<sup>52</sup> Their defection into the T'ang camp at this time was potentially very influential for other peoples of the southwest, and their leaders were thus warmly received.<sup>53</sup> Their chief, P'ang-shih-hsi, a name to remember, received official appointment and was formally authorized by the T'ang to command this region.

Whatever direct influence the submission of the Lang-ch'iung peoples may have had, it was followed rather closely by the submission of the Yung-ch'ang peoples.<sup>54</sup> They too had previously broken away from the T'ang, provoking the Liang Chi-shou expedition against them in 674, as described in chapter 1. Liang's campaign, however, does not seem to have had lasting success, for in the early 690's there were further T'ang attempts to win their submission. This time an official named P'ei Huai-ku was sent out to conciliate them. Our primary sources describe P'ei's mission in florid, moralistic terms. P'ei is said to have treated these peoples with such magnanimity that they submitted to him daily by the thousands. After he had left their area, these native peoples reportedly erected a commemorative stone in his honor; a little later, they requested that P'ei again be sent out to govern their region.<sup>55</sup> Although this request was honored, P'ei's ill health evidently kept him from taking up that post. (Later he successfully handled a revolt of local peoples in the region of modern Kwangsi that had been provoked by harsh T'ang officials. There he displayed the time-honored virtues of sincerity and good faith so effectively that these peoples, who we are told were normally two-faced in their dealings with the Chinese, now happily and whole-heartedly surrendered.<sup>56</sup>)

Although these sorts of entries in the sources do not actually tell us very much, it does seem certain that between 688 and 694 the T'ang recovered much ground in the southwest, for the moment reversing a trend of the previous decade. In fact, these years saw a number of important setbacks for the Tibetans, culminating during the winter of 692–693 in the T'ang recapture of its four protectorates in Central Asia.<sup>57</sup> There were also several serious Tibetan defections during these years. One major defection by a chieftain named Ho-su, who reportedly led over thirty thousand allied troops, was found out and prevented at the last minute; but soon thereafter another chief succeeded in leading some eight thousand Ch'iang and Man soldiers over to the T'ang side.<sup>58</sup> Thus Tibet seems to have had its hands full in other areas during these years, perhaps lessening its ability to maintain control over some

of the peoples southwest of Szechwan. Nor could the failures and defections have done anything but lower their stock in the eyes of those same peoples. All this may have contributed to the temporary decline of Tibetan influence in this area.<sup>59</sup>

Whatever advantages this may have given to T'ang interests in the southwest, however, seem on the basis of the sources that have survived to have been offset by the actions of corrupt Chinese officials in the area, especially those assigned to the newly re-established Yao-chou. They evidently paid far more attention to their own enrichment than to dynastic interests. This situation was compounded by the presence of many Chinese vagrants from Szechwan who had fled into this region. Our knowledge of both aspects of this situation is largely due to the survival of a long memorial written in 698 by the then prefect of Shu-chou (located just west of Ch'eng-tu), Chang Chien-chih.<sup>60</sup>

Chang was a native of Hupei who had studied at the National University, earning a reputation as one of the foremost scholars of this period. His prominent career at court, however, was interrupted when he strongly opposed what he regarded as Empress Wu's unnatural variation of the Chinese policy of *ho-ch'in* 'rapprochement through marriage,' by granting a Chinese *prince* in marriage to the *daughter* of a Turkish khan.<sup>61</sup> 'Since ancient times,' he protested, 'there has never been a case of the Son [or Daughter?] of Heaven seeking to match a foreign woman in marriage with a Chinese prince!'<sup>62</sup> Chang's vehement objection was an embarrassment to the Empress, who had him sent down to Shu-chou, this relatively insignificant post in the provinces.

Almost immediately, it seems, Chang turned his attention to the long-standing mismanagement of the southwestern frontier and sought to rectify what he regarded as an almost hopeless situation in Yao-chou. His initial point of focus was the established practice of sending five hundred conscripted soldiers a year to garrison Yao-chou; the difficulties of the mountainous route they were forced to take were said to have resulted in a very high casualty rate among these men.<sup>63</sup> But Chang's analysis went much further, pointing out a number of serious disadvantages which he believed went along with the maintenance of T'ang control in Yao-chou.

Formerly, according to Chang, after the Later Han had established its administrative presence in this region, 'prized riches and exotic treasures were submitted as tribute on a yearly basis without fail.'<sup>64</sup> And later, Chu-ko Liang's expedition into Nan-chung (including the area of modern Yunnan) netted gold and silver, salt and textiles, as well as good soldiers to fill the ranks and augment the military funds of the state of Shu Han. Speaking from this basis,

the benefits which former dynasties derived from establishing their administration here were quite profound. Now, however, taxes in salt and textiles are not contributed, and tribute in precious oddities is not submitted. Military material [acquired from this region] is not of any real value for warfare, and the wealth of precious merchandise is not transferred to our great country. Yet [for the sake of this territory] we vainly exhaust our treasury, and we drive out our people [as soldiers for this region], where they become enslaved by these alien peoples, or spill out their guts on the battlefield. The bodies of Your Majesty's children fertilize the wild grasses, their bones are not returned [for proper burial]. Old mothers and infant sons cry out, wanting to carry out sacrifices a thousand *li* away. For our country, this area holds not the slightest advantage; for our people, it means a lifetime of cruel oppression. I grieve over this, for our country's sake.<sup>65</sup>

Chang then gives his analysis of what had gone wrong in Yao-chou. According to him, officials sent there had all been exceedingly avaricious and totally unconcerned about the best interests of the T'ang. They had even instigated corruption among the local chiefs, forming cliques with them, and fawning after them unashamedly. Moreover, there were more than two thousand households of Chinese vagrants from Szechwan who had fled into this region, and who now reportedly were living exclusively from plunder.<sup>66</sup>

Chang's memorial then recounts the administrative history of Yao-chou in T'ang times, the great troubles that it had experienced from 664 on, and its eventual abandonment, as described above. In 688, Wang Shan-pao and Ts'uan Ch'ien-fu had begged that Yao-chou be reinstated and had pledged that it would cause no further troubles for the region of Chien-nan. Yet after it was re-established, further troubles did break out, resulting in the death of one of its officials. In 694 or 695, it had been necessary to request that seven garrisons be set up in the region of Lu-nan, just south of the Upper Yangtze, and that soldiers from Szechwan be sent to guard these areas. All of this had caused great disturbance and agitation in Szechwan, which still had not subsided. In addition, Chang re-emphasizes, the lawless vagrants in this region were innumerable. Both Chinese and non-Chinese alike were guilty of killing and highway robbery, and seemed to be beyond control. Given this state of affairs, greater troubles could erupt at any time.

Chang Chien-chih therefore requested that Yao-chou again be abandoned and that all the territory under it be attached administratively to Sui-chou. He suggested that from now on this region should be treated just like a subordinate kingdom (*fan-kuo*), required to attend court once a year.<sup>67</sup> As for the garrisons established at Lu-nan, *i.e.*, south of the Lu River (a section of



the Upper Yangtze), they should also all be disbanded.<sup>68</sup> A customs barrier should then be set up at Lu-pei, *i.e.*, north of the Lu River, probably at Lu-chin-kuan.<sup>69</sup> Such an arrangement would take advantage of the danger and the great difficulty of crossing the usually raging Lu River, which in T'ang times was accomplished mostly on rafts made from inflated animal skins.<sup>70</sup> Except for emissaries on official business, no one should be allowed to travel or to communicate across this barrier. In addition, the quota of troops for Sui-chou should be increased, and only incorruptible officials should be chosen to administer it. In this manner the region would be stabilized.<sup>71</sup>

Chang's memorial presents an admittedly one-sided view. It is, of course, only through a chance political struggle that Chang became involved in this area and that such a detailed point of view concerning the far southwest in this period has survived at all. Unfortunately, it is not now possible to reconstruct a full picture of the dynamic interrelationships between local officials in Yao-chou and the leaders of the surrounding native peoples. What Chang regarded as collusion and fawning might have been the most effective way of administering the delicate situation in that area, especially given the prevalence and the aggressiveness of Tibetan contacts during these years, about which Chang says nothing. Nor is it likely that Chang would have taken anything but an unsympathetic view toward the Chinese émigrés in this area, whom he regarded as vagrants and brigands.

Yet this memorial is certainly useful. As Wang Chi-lin has observed, it clearly reveals that at least part of T'ang officialdom in Szechwan was resentful of the demands which maintaining the security of Yao-chou and the far southwestern frontier placed upon them and the Chien-nan populace.<sup>72</sup> Moreover, it represents a recurring tendency of one segment of Chinese court opinion to regard the Yunnan region as all too troublesome and not worth the effort required of China to maintain control there. According to this point of view, China should withdraw behind some natural, easily defended border closer to the interior of Szechwan, garrison it heavily, and regulate contacts across the frontier as closely as possible. As we will see, the Chinese were to have more than one occasion to consider the wisdom of this strategy. And ultimately, Chang's viewpoint would be vindicated by the founder of the Sung dynasty, Emperor Sung T'ai-tsung himself.<sup>73</sup>

In 698, however, Chang Chien-chih was not in favor with the current ruler, Empress Wu. (Indeed, Chang would eventually become one of the prime movers in the successful plot to depose her.<sup>74</sup>) Chang's memorial seems not to have been given serious consideration. Thus the generally unfavorable situation in the Yao-chou frontier region must have continued. In conjunction with the lukewarm support that Chang's memorial indicates Yao-chou was

then getting from other officials in Szechwan, the stage was set for more dramatic events, which occurred a decade or so later.

By 707, the same year in which the Tibetan request for another Chinese princess was approved,<sup>75</sup> hostilities had again broken out between the T'ang and the peoples of Yao-chou. Chinese sources label the Yao-chou peoples as the aggressors in this case; according to one source, they were joined in this attack by the Tibetans.<sup>76</sup> There is certainly good reason to believe that they had Tibetan support at least, as we have seen. In any case, in the summer of that year, a Chinese official named T'ang Chiu-cheng led a punitive expedition against the Yao-chou peoples, defeating them and killing or capturing more than three thousand.<sup>77</sup>

Fortunately, what the standard sources have to say concerning the T'ang Chiu-cheng campaign can be supplemented with a bit of detailed information that has survived in an early ninth-century source called *Ta-T'ang hsin-yü*. This interesting account shows that T'ang Chiu-cheng carried his attack far past Yao-chou in an attempt to destroy the route of communication between Tibet and the peoples of the Yunnan region.

By this time Tibet had spanned the Yang and P'i rivers with bridges made from iron cables, thereby establishing communication with the Hsi-erh Ho Man, who had built fortresses to guard the bridges. T'ang Chiu-cheng hacked down all the ramparts of the fortresses and razed both bridges. He ordered the archivist Lü Ch'iu-chün to engrave a stone at Chien-ch'uan and to erect an iron pillar at the Tien Lake, thereby to commemorate his achievements. T'ang took captive their leaders and returned.<sup>78</sup>

Many significant points are raised by this passage. Not least of these is the additional evidence which is here provided for the existence and the provenance of iron-chain suspension bridges in the border region between southwest China and Tibet, an issue of some importance for the general development of civil engineering in world history.<sup>79</sup> This passage is also important because it confirms the close contacts which existed throughout this period between the Tibetans and the peoples of T'ang China's southwestern frontier, specifically along this direct route through northwestern Yunnan. It also shows how eager the Chinese were to block that route of contact. Moreover, the iron pillar erected by T'ang Chiu-cheng was to be of more than passing importance, for the T'ang court would refer to it again and again as proof of the Chinese claim to control over this region.<sup>80</sup>

As Tibetan contacts and collusion with the peoples of this region continued, it appears that a segment of T'ang officialdom grew impatient and vindictive toward these local leaders. One official in particular, Li Chih-ku,

sought to reverse this state of affairs. In 710, he proposed a punitive campaign to subjugate the peoples around Yao-chou once and for all; this being accomplished, he would then build fortresses and administrative posts and force these peoples to send in their full share of taxes.<sup>81</sup>

Another segment of T'ang court opinion, however, was strongly opposed to the adoption of such an aggressive policy. A prominent court official named Hsü Chien expounded this point of view: 'Alien peoples are made subject to China through [the indirect means of] bridling and haltering; they should not be held accountable to the same laws as are in effect within China. I fear to exhaust our troops in a far off expedition; the benefits will not compensate for the injuries done.'<sup>82</sup> This is highly reminiscent of similar objections offered by another very prominent official (and poet), Ch'en Tzu-ang. In 688, Ch'en responded to a proposal to open up a road through the mountains to the west of Ch'eng-tu, for the purpose of attacking the unsubmissive Ch'iang peoples of that region and, subsequently, of mounting an invasion of Tibet itself. There was very little to be gained from such a venture, Ch'en argued effectively, and much to be risked by stirring up these dangerous peoples and facilitating Tibetan access through these mountainous barriers into the heartland of Szechwan.<sup>83</sup> Hsü Chien's objections also remind one very much of Chang Chien-chih's proposal of 698, quoted above, which urged that the T'ang should cut losses and abandon Yao-chou. All of these officials were representatives of an apparently vocal minority of court opinion, advocates of prudence and caution along the southwestern frontier. Like the Chang proposal, however, Hsü's warning went unheeded. Li Chih-ku's expedition proceeded as planned.

Initially, Li seems to have accomplished just what he had proposed. Local forces were defeated, and T'ang outposts were built in the area. It was when Li subsequently tried to impose harsh discipline on some of the local leaders that he ran into trouble. Li wanted to execute certain local chiefs and to take their children as slaves — a practice which, as we have seen, was not uncommon in T'ang frontier areas.<sup>84</sup> Such severe measures naturally caused alarm and anger among the local leaders. It was then, the sources tell us, that one of them, called P'ang-ming, solicited Tibetan support.<sup>85</sup> T'ang forces were attacked, Li Chih-ku was himself killed, and his corpse was cut into pieces in a ritual sacrifice to the spirits of heaven. All the peoples of the Yao-chou and Hsi-erh Ho regions joined in wholesale revolt, again blocking the route between Sui-chou and Yao-chou. As a result, Yao-chou is said to have been totally cut off from T'ang control for the next several years.<sup>86</sup>

Interesting as it is, however, this is not the whole story. According to another T'ang source,<sup>87</sup> one of the local chiefs executed by Li Chih-ku was a certain Feng-mieh, leader of a group known as the Teng-t'an Chao. This was

one of six small kingdoms, the so-called Six Chao, which eventually were to be unified by one of their number, the Meng-she Chao, into the Nan-chao kingdom. Originally, however, each of these six kingdoms was an independent entity. The long and complicated process by which they were united will be analyzed fully in chapter 3.

Here it is only necessary to point out that, according to this source, Feng-mieh of the Teng-t'an Chao was the younger brother of Feng-shih, who was ruler of the Lang-ch'iung Chao, another of the Six Chao.<sup>88</sup> It should be recalled that in 689 the T'ang court had accepted the submission of the Lang-ch'iung peoples (Lang-ch'iung-chou Man), who previously had been allied with the Tibetans.<sup>89</sup> The source that reports this capitulation calls their chief by the name of P'ang-shih-hsi.<sup>90</sup> It seems likely that these Lang-ch'iung peoples are identical with the Lang-ch'iung Chao and that P'ang-shih-hsi is simply another Chinese approximation of the name given for the ruler of the Lang-ch'iung Chao, Feng-shih. In T'ang period pronunciation, as reconstructed by Karlgren, the discrepant characters P'ang and Feng were pronounced 'b'wang' and 'p'iung,' a somewhat closer correlation than the modern pronunciations.<sup>91</sup> As for the additional character 'hsi,' Ma Ch'ang-shou explains it as equivalent to a modern Lolo word meaning something like 'master,' *i.e.*, Master P'ang-shih.<sup>92</sup>

The key point is that it is not at all uncommon for different Chinese sources to have slightly different approximations for the native sounds in non-Chinese personal and place names from frontier regions. In this case, the correlation is so close and supporting evidence is so substantial that there can be little doubt that the two names refer to one person. Feng-shih, leader of the Lang-ch'iung Chao, was almost certainly identical with P'ang-shih-hsi, chief of the Lang-ch'iung peoples.

That being so, the case of Feng-mieh, Feng-shih's younger brother, is even more interesting. In the period around 689, the Lang-ch'iung Chao seems to have been a powerful and influential force in the Erh-hai Lake region, whose support was cultivated by both Tibet and T'ang China. Later on, probably in 710 or soon before, its ruler's brother, Feng-mieh, attacked and took over the Teng-t'an area (modern Teng-ch'uan), forming his own kingdom, which became known as the Teng-t'an Chao.<sup>93</sup> It is not clear whether he had his brother's support in this venture, but it would seem that he did. What is more certain is that it was this act of invasion and usurpation which provoked Li Chih-ku's harsh response. In keeping with his stringent policies toward the often troublesome peoples of this area, Li reportedly ordered Feng-mieh's execution.<sup>94</sup> Thus it is curious that the local chief who is said to have called in Tibetan support and, with their help, to have attacked and killed Li Chih-ku is called P'ang-ming.<sup>95</sup>

Is it possible that P'ang-ming and Feng-mieh were the same person? Again, the correlation between the names is fairly close. 'P'ang' and 'Feng' have already been shown to have been similar in T'ang pronunciation. Karlgren's reconstruction of the T'ang sound for the character 'ming' is 'miäng,' which seems rather closer to 'mieh,' for which the T'ang pronunciation should read 'mie.'<sup>96</sup> Yet if these two names do represent the same person, then one of our sources has to be wrong in its account of these events, for P'ang-ming/Feng-mieh could hardly have led the attack on Li Chih-ku if he had already been executed.

Ma Ch'ang-shou thinks that Feng-mieh and P'ang-ming were in fact the same person. Although Li Chih-ku may have sought to discipline him for what the T'ang could have regarded as his unauthorized attack and usurpation in Teng-t'an, he certainly never succeeded in executing him, according to Ma. Instead, Feng-mieh (and, presumably, his brother Feng-shih, whose previous connections with Tibet were evidently well established) called in Tibetan support and prevented Li Chih-ku from checking his (or their) expansion into this area.<sup>97</sup>

Wang Chi-lin, however, favors another explanation. He does not seem willing to reject the account in *Man-shu* of Feng-mieh's execution. Rather, he regards P'ang-ming as another brother of Feng-mieh and Feng-shih. If 'P'ang' and 'Feng' do in fact represent the same sound, then this explanation is consistent with the laws of the patronymic linkage system, which is one of the distinctive traits of these peoples (see chapter 3), whereby the first syllable of the names of brothers should be the same.<sup>98</sup> Wang thus believes that Li Chih-ku did execute Feng-mieh and that his subsequent killing and ritual dismemberment at the hands of P'ang-ming (or Feng-ming) was in fact an act of fraternal vengeance and atonement.<sup>99</sup>

Both of these interpretations are plausible, but neither is fully consistent with all of the accounts concerning these events. The important point is that there does seem to have been a direct connection between Li Chih-ku's attempt to contain the expansion of Lang-ch'iung and Teng-t'an power and the subsequent uprising of these peoples, with Tibetan support, which is said to have had such disastrous results for T'ang interests in the far southwest during those years. This incident, moreover, may have reconfirmed the Lang-ch'iung and Teng-t'an leaders in their orientation toward Tibet; certainly, it did nothing to further cooperative relations between T'ang China and the peoples of this area. As we will see in the following chapter, this development was to have some significance for the rise of the Meng-she Chao, located further to the south, which the Chinese may have believed, mistakenly, to be innocent of any political contact with Tibet.

Although more than one source declares that the Li Chih-ku debacle

resulted in the blocking of communications between Ch'eng-tu and Yao-chou and the loss of all control in this region for years to come, there are indications that some degree of nominal Chinese presence continued, at least until 713. In that year, local peoples again attacked Yao-chou, and in that attack the T'ang governor-general Li Meng was killed.<sup>100</sup> Then two years later, the Sui-chou Man (probably also a reference to these same peoples, located in the Sui-chou region) are reported to have beset the T'ang frontier. In response, a T'ang general named Li Hsüan-tao led an expedition against them, reportedly employing some thirty thousand troops mostly from eastern Szechwan, along with the garrisons already along the frontier.<sup>101</sup> There is, unfortunately, no information available concerning the outcome of this expedition, nor of any subsequent relations with this area for the next decade or so. Probably, this is itself an indication that T'ang contacts with this area from 710 down to the late 720's were minimal and mostly defensive in nature. There thus seems to be little support for Fujisawa's conclusion that the Li Hsüan-tao expedition of 715 inaugurated a new, more aggressive Chinese policy toward the far southwest, which he associates with the dynamic reign of Emperor Hsüan-tsung (713–755) and especially with the establishment of a military governorship (*chieh-tu shih*) in Chien-nan in 719.<sup>102</sup> While such a general characterization can be made, this was a later development, for which there seems to be little direct substantiation until the 729 expedition of Chang Shen-su, to which we will now turn.

### **T'ang policy and Nan-chao's links with Tibet**

In the spring of 729, the governor-general of Sui-chou, Chang Shen-su (called Chang Shou-su in some sources), is reported first to have vanquished the southwestern Man peoples and then to have captured K'un-ming and Yen-ch'eng, the 'city of salt.' In all, it is said that he killed or took captive ten thousand people.<sup>103</sup> K'un-ming, modern Yen-yuan in southwest Szechwan, is the site of a major salt deposit, which the Tibetans had taken over in the latter part of the seventh century and were loath to give up; Yen-ch'eng was probably part of this same salt-spring complex. Later the K'un-ming area (not to be confused with modern Kunming, the capital of Yunnan province) would revert to Tibetan control and would remain in their possession at least until the 790's.<sup>104</sup> Nevertheless, the Chang expedition against K'un-ming might be viewed as the start of a T'ang campaign to recover strategic territory previously lost to the Tibetans in the southwest, a campaign which was to culminate in the late 730's and early 740's with concerted and ultimately successful Chinese efforts to recapture An-jung.<sup>105</sup>

There is one other very suggestive but rather questionable piece of information concerning this campaign. Two Ch'ing period sources on the history

of Yunnan, *Tien k'ao* by Feng Su (ca. 1662) and *Tien-yün li-nien chuan* by Ni Shui (ca. 1736), have it that P'i-lo-ko, the first of the great Nan-chao kings, cooperated in this T'ang venture by sending a force under his minister Chang-lo-p'i to join in the Chang Shen-su expedition against the K'un-ming area. Subsequently, according to these sources, Chang-lo-p'i was rewarded for his services with nominal appointment to T'ang office.<sup>106</sup> The reliability of this information, however, is very much in doubt, since there is no indication of what it is based upon. None of the earlier standard sources, which tend to treat this period of relations between Nan-chao and the T'ang rather fully, offers any corroboration whatever for this story, or even for Chang-lo-p'i's reported appointment to T'ang office. More surprisingly, I have found no mention of this aspect of the Chang Shen-su campaign in any of the numerous Yuan and Ming period sources on Yunnanese history, which often embellish the earlier historical record with local tradition and legendary elaboration. The validity of this particular piece of information is further put in doubt by the assertion in *Tien k'ao* that it was Sheng-lo-p'i, ruler of the Meng-she Chao, who had called in Tibetan support and had attacked Li Chih-ku in 710 – not P'ang-ming or any other Lang-ch'ung or Teng-t'an chief.<sup>107</sup> Clearly this is wrong, since it is totally inconsistent with the more reliable sources cited above. Perhaps this shows a tendency of the authors of these Ch'ing period works, or their unspecified sources, to insert the deeds of the early Nan-chao kings and their ancestors into the historical account wherever possible. In any case, one must be wary of Fujisawa's use of this claim of direct Nan-chao participation in the 729 T'ang campaign against the Tibetans to expand the theme that the early Meng-she or Nan-chao kings consistently supported the T'ang position in the southwest.<sup>108</sup>

This is not to deny that the early Nan-chao kings, both before and after unification, maintained close contacts with the T'ang court. (See the table of T'ang–Nan-chao diplomatic relations in the Appendix.) Nor can it be said that they never engaged in hostilities with Tibet. There is solid evidence that Sheng-lo-p'i's son, P'i-lo-ko, in the process of extending Nan-chao control over all of the peoples in the area surrounding the Erh-hai Lake, did 'attack and defeat Tibet,' sometime around 738.<sup>109</sup> There will be much more to say about this in chapter 3, in connection with the long process of Nan-chao unification and consolidation. What must be considered here is the question of the relationship between the early Nan-chao rulers and Tibet during the first half of the eighth century and how that relationship in turn may have affected the developing involvement between the Nan-chao kings and the T'ang court.

There is an interpretation of T'ang relations with Nan-chao in this period, perhaps first enunciated in Ming period sources, that while the other peoples

of the far southwest were uniformly troublesome and frequently colluded with Tibet, the early Nan-chao rulers 'alone followed the T'ang calendar,' *i.e.*, they alone were loyal to the T'ang.<sup>110</sup> Recently, important studies by Fujisawa Yoshimi and Wang Chi-lin have supported and developed this hypothesis. They reason that T'ang China, fearing further Tibetan encroachment into the southwest and unable to prevent contacts and collusion between Tibet and most of the peoples of this region, sought out a strong and reliable ally in this area. Other peoples periodically submitted to the T'ang, yet they also maintained furtive contacts with the Tibetans; and frequently (especially when provoked), they would call in Tibetan support and turn against the T'ang. According to this view, it was only the early Nan-chao rulers who, both before and after their unification of the Ta-li plain region, did not become friendly with Tibet but consistently maintained diplomatic contacts with the T'ang and genuinely supported Chinese interests in this area. Accordingly, the T'ang court patronized the early Nan-chao rulers and favored their rise to power as a reliable counterpoise to the extension of Tibetan influence among the otherwise two-faced and vexsome peoples of the southwest.<sup>111</sup>

On the face of it, there is both evidence and logic to support this hypothesis. It fits in well with the age-old Chinese foreign policy ideals of using one group of foreigners to control another (*i-I chih-I*) and of allying with distant peoples to attack those close by (*yuan-chiao chin-kung*).<sup>112</sup> Further, the early Nan-chao rulers, including the leaders of the Meng-she Chao, did maintain continual contacts with the T'ang court from 653 on; and there was some direct Chinese support for Nan-chao's unification and consolidation of control in this area. (All of this will be analyzed and substantiated in chapter 3.) Yet this hypothesis is faulty because it is based partially on the false assumption that the early Nan-chao rulers, being further away from Tibet geographically, were not so vulnerable as other peoples in this region to Tibetan domination and that they thus never submitted to Tibet or even maintained contacts with them during these years, when their orientation was set consistently toward China.

Judging solely from the standard Chinese sources, there is no compelling reason to doubt this mistaken notion. In fact, it seems that the T'ang court truly believed that the Nan-chao rulers, and P'i-lo-ko in particular, had been singularly loyal allies. The Sung period encyclopedia, *Ts'e-fu yuan-kuei*, in one of the few instances where it provides substantive information not found in other standard sources on T'ang foreign relations, contains the following paean in an imperial decree justifying the granting of additional titles to P'i-lo-ko for his above-mentioned defeat of Tibetan forces in 738:

Kuei-i [P'i-lo-ko's honorific name] has established his prominence in the southwest and may rightly be called a heroic chieftain. He is



benevolent but valiant; he combines loyalty with filial respect. He cherishes the enduring qualities of a leader of men; he maintains the strong principles of a servant to his Prince. He keeps watch over the various tribal groups. If perhaps there are villains who would secretly collude with the wolfish Tibetans and would dare to loose their waspish swarm, then he is able personally to don armour and helmet, to take command of his intrepid braves, to penetrate deeply [into their territory] and drive them far away, [annihilating them like a whirlwind] encircling them from the left and flinging them out to the right. Any of this vile type would be promptly exterminated. So meritorious a barbarian deserves to receive additional favors from the court.<sup>113</sup>

There are, furthermore, two surviving letters addressed directly to P'i-lo-ko that were written in the emperor's name by the famous statesman Chang Chiu-ling, presumably at roughly the same time as the above decree. Here Nan-chao is also singled out as sincerely submissive to China, 'and so it has been for generations.' Nan-chao's earnest loyalty in defense of T'ang interests, one letter remarks, is a great solace to the emperor: 'What further worry need We have?'<sup>114</sup>

One can read these passages with a great sense of irony, however, for a close analysis of the Tibetan annals for this period makes it clear that, intentional literary hyperbole aside, if the Chinese really believed the substance of this acclaim then they were very much deceived.

These Tibetan annals strongly suggest that by the early part of the eighth century Tibet had already achieved temporary domination over the north-western Yunnan region, probably as far down as the Erh-hai Lake, that they had 'established authority over the 'Jan, imposed tribute on the White Myava, and subjugated the Black Myava.'<sup>115</sup> The 'Jan, sometimes written Hjan or Jang, are usually identified by Tibetan scholars as the Moso peoples of north-west Yunnan. Rock, the modern authority on the Moso, confirms that this term was used by the Tibetans to refer to these peoples.<sup>116</sup> Thomas, however, has suggested a broader use of this term, inferring that

the Hjan with whom the Tibetan State first came into contact were those occupying the present Hjan [*i.e.*, the Moso, now usually referred to as the Na-hsi] region . . . west of the Man State of Nan-chao. When their further advance brought them into touch with Nan-chao, or perhaps in consequence of a prior absorption of the Hjan territory by Nan-chao, they used the term Hjan to cover also that hinterland.<sup>117</sup>

Thomas' latter explanation is impossible, for by the first half of the eighth century the Nan-chao rulers definitely had not absorbed the Hjan, or Moso, territory. However, his other explanation is credible, for there certainly is

evidence that the Tibetan advance had brought them into direct contact with the early Nan-chao rulers.

For one thing, the 'White Myava' and the 'Black Myava' can hardly be anything but the equivalent of the Pai Man (White Man) and the Wu Man (Black Man) that appear in Chinese sources as the principal ethnic constituents of the Nan-chao kingdom.<sup>118</sup> The reconstructed T'ang pronunciation of the character for Man, 'mwan,' certainly does not lessen the similarities between these ethnic terms.<sup>119</sup> However, this is still not conclusive evidence of direct connections between Tibet and the early Nan-chao rulers themselves, for they are not specifically mentioned at this point in the annals.

But later, in 733 ('année de l'oiseau'), the annals tell us that, 'while the King was residing in the Dron Palace, the Chinese envoy "Li zan-so" and "Myava-la-kag", along with their entourages, presented to him their homage to Tibet.'<sup>120</sup> That the T'ang court sent a mission to Tibet in 733 led by Li Hao ('zan-so' seems to be the Tibetan approximation of Li's title *Shang-shu*, or 'President' of the Board of Works) is confirmed by Chinese sources.<sup>121</sup> The reference to 'Myava-la-kag' or La-kag of the Myava, on the other hand, is unique and intriguing.

This is almost undoubtedly the Tibetan approximation of the name of the Nan-chao king, P'i-lo-ko. The correlation between the Tibetan 'la-kag' and the Chinese 'lo-ko,' both approximations of the native sound, is too close to be coincidental, especially in the T'ang pronunciation, 'la-kak.'<sup>122</sup> It is not altogether clear why the Tibetans should have dropped the first syllable from his name. Under the laws of the patronymic linkage system, the first syllable was an element passed down from the last syllable of the father's name (in this case the 'p'i' of Sheng-lo-p'i), signifying generational attachment. The Tibetans may have regarded only the last two syllables as the personal name, and this may explain why they alone appear in the Tibetan records. Whatever the explanation, it is clear that P'i-lo-ko did go on a personal mission to the Tibetan court in 733, presumably via one of the direct routes through north-west Yunnan into Tibet. This is very strong evidence that Nan-chao had established at least a superficially submissive relationship with the Tibetans and that the Nan-chao ruler was maintaining such relations with Tibet just at the time that the T'ang court was attempting to cultivate Nan-chao as the principal Chinese ally in the southwest.

Nor is this the only occurrence in the Tibetan annals of a Nan-chao mission to Tibet during this period. In 742 ('année du cheval'), 'during the winter . . . the Chinese envoy "An-da-lan" and an envoy of the Black Myava [myava nag-po] named La-bri presented homage.'<sup>123</sup> In addition, there also seems to be a reference to Nan-chao in the Tibetan account of the major treaty between Tibet and China negotiated near the Kokonor Lake in 730. According to the

Tibetan treaty inscription, there were in fact four parties to the negotiations, referred to as the 'four exalted kings,' and one of them is said to have been the Hjan.<sup>124</sup> Thomas concludes that this is a reference to Nan-chao, noting that it must by this time have been 'sufficiently important to participate in the pact of four great states.'<sup>125</sup> What is also extremely interesting is that the son of king Trhide Tsukten is called 'Hjan tsha Lha dban' in the Tibetan treaty inscription. According to Thomas again, he was 'so named, "Hjan grandson," because the queen, his mother, Khri-brsun, was a Hjan-mo, a Hjan woman.'<sup>126</sup> Neither the Chinese sources nor the one surviving Nan-chao document of roughly this period, the Te-hua inscription of 766, gives any indication of marriage relations between Nan-chao and Tibet during this or any other period. This reference to the Tibetan queen as a 'Hjan woman' is not specific enough to prove that there was a marriage alliance between Tibet and the Nan-chao court itself; yet, given all these other indications of close relations between the two kingdoms during these years, such a relationship does not seem unlikely.

In any case, there is indisputable evidence of extensive Nan-chao contacts with Tibet throughout the first half of the eighth century. It is strange that Chinese sources should not have picked this up, especially since they frequently and righteously point out instances of contact between Tibet and other peoples in the southwest. Presumably, the Nan-chao missions to Tibet mentioned in the Tibetan annals were not at the Tibetan court at precisely the same time as the Chinese missions of those years. Yet even so, if Nan-chao did participate in the negotiations for the treaty of 730, the Chinese must have taken note of their presence. How could they have been so deluded about the 'meritorious' and 'heroic chieftain' P'i-lo-ko and his own contacts with the Tibetans? Were they willing to overlook all such connections as part of their cultivation of Nan-chao support? Or did they simply not know? That the Chinese sources have nothing at all to say about these contacts remains a puzzle.

Nevertheless, the data gathered from the Tibetan annals seems unimpeachable. It is misleading to characterize Nan-chao as steadfastly loyal to T'ang interests in the southwest during this period, whether or not the T'ang court believed them to be. Given the realities of Tibetan might and its rapid extension into this region, it would also be somewhat naive to think that Nan-chao alone could have remained aloof. The Tibetan presence in the southwest was real and imposing, for the early Nan-chao rulers as for all the other peoples of this region. It was vitally important for the outcome, as well as for the formulation, of T'ang policy toward the southwest during this era; and it would remain a major factor both in the formation and in the long struggle for consolidation of the Nan-chao kingdom.

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## THE FORMATION OF THE NAN-CHAO KINGDOM

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The process by which the Nan-chao kingdom was established was a long and complicated one. As early as the middle of the seventh century, the so-called Six Chao, the basic entities which eventually were united to form the Nan-chao state, were already in existence in western Yunnan. These groups themselves seem to have been based economically and culturally on vaguely known but apparently sophisticated societies that had inhabited that region for centuries. However, one can hardly speak of a unified 'Nan-chao kingdom' before the 730's, and the final conquest and consolidation of control over all the peoples and territories associated with the Nan-chao state would not be possible until the 790's.

This study is concerned primarily with T'ang China's southwestern frontier and with the vicissitudes of the relationship between the Chinese and the peoples who inhabited that frontier region. Because the Nan-chao kingdom was the chief political and cultural entity among those peoples and the one group in the southwest with whom the T'ang had the most profound and far-reaching relationship, it is necessary to give an account of its formation and to describe the basic outlines of its institutions, economy, and social composition, where they are pertinent. However, the primary focus of this book will remain on the evolution of Chinese policies and attitudes toward this southwestern region as a key problem of T'ang China's frontier history. Therefore, analysis of the numerous and often perplexing questions of the history of the Nan-chao kingdom itself will necessarily be limited to general points that are essential for a fuller understanding of that frontier relationship. To do otherwise would, in fact, be to undertake two studies, closely related but nevertheless distinct.

### **The ethnography of the Nan-chao kingdom**

Probably the most vexed of all the issues of Nan-chao history is also one of the most fundamental: just who were the peoples who made up the Nan-chao kingdom? The diversity of opinion concerning this question has been truly amazing.<sup>1</sup> One source of the problem is that the Nan-chao king-

dom came to control a wide variety of ethnic groups, about most of whom there is too little detailed information, especially physical and linguistic description, to permit conclusive identification. Our knowledge of these peoples is limited almost entirely to what the Chinese chose to write about them – their location, their basic economy, and their outstanding or, to Chinese eyes, curious cultural traits. So far, archaeological reports from this region have not provided much supplementary ethnological evidence.<sup>2</sup>

A rigorous attempt to identify these peoples is not possible within the scope of this study. Even to summarize all of the relevant information from T'ang sources, along with the extremely divergent views of modern scholars, could well be the subject for a rather long monograph in itself. Here my intention is simply to indicate what is most likely to have been the ethnic affiliation of the major groups that made up the Nan-chao population and to point out that the most popular theory concerning their ethnic identity has been shown to be wholly untenable.

It has long been customary to speak of the Nan-chao kingdom as a Thai state and of its ruling core, if not its entire population, as Thai peoples. This theory goes back well into the nineteenth century; it seems to have been formulated first by Lacouperie,<sup>3</sup> but it was quickly adopted by other European scholars, such as Saint-Denys, Rocher, Parker, and Davies.<sup>4</sup> Considering how pervasive this theory was to become, it is surprising how little and how tenuous was the evidence adduced to substantiate it. It was noted that the Nan-chao rulers claimed descent from the Ai-lao, peoples who had inhabited southern Yunnan in late Han times and who were commonly thought to be ancestors of the Thai. Further, two or three words in the Nan-chao lexicon, out of the several dozen that have survived, were seen to be similar to terms in the modern Thai language. Most notable among these is the word *chao* itself, for which the Nan-chao meaning of 'prince/king' or 'princedom/kingdom' is the same as a Thai word with similar pronunciation.<sup>5</sup>

This very limited linguistic identification was used to support a much more elaborate ethnographical theory concerning the early history of the Thai peoples.<sup>6</sup> That theory posits that the original homeland of the Thai was in northern China, but that successive waves of migration brought them to the southwest by the beginning of the Christian era. By the seventh century, they had putatively taken refuge in the plains of Yunnan, where they eventually established the powerful and sophisticated kingdom of Nan-chao. There they remained, despite dynastic changes in the tenth century, down to the time of the Mongol conquest of this region in 1253.

It was the Mongol conquest of Yunnan that clinched the argument, for it was just at this time, in the middle of the thirteenth century, that the first of the fully historical Thai kingdoms, Sukothai, was founded in the northern

plains of modern Thailand.<sup>7</sup> It seemed obvious to advocates of this theory that the Mongol conquest of the supposedly Thai kingdom in Yunnan had resulted in a 'wholesale emigration' of its inhabitants southwards and that it was they who subsequently established Sukothai.<sup>8</sup>

This theory was widely circulated in the first half of the twentieth century, especially after the publication in 1926 of W.A.R. Wood's *A History of Siam*, which immediately became the standard source and remains influential to this day. Wood accepted the theory enthusiastically, despite serious reservations concerning this grand hypothesis which had been expressed by more critical scholars such as Pelliot.<sup>9</sup> But further, totally without original source documentation of his own, Wood gave this theory rather pointed political overtones. He went so far as to suggest that the long history of relations between Nan-chao and China, in which Nan-chao successfully resisted T'ang encroachment and launched a great period of independent cultural development, showed that 'the Chinese had as much to learn from the ancient Tai as their descendants have to learn from the Siamese of today.'<sup>10</sup> Indeed, Wood seemed eager to draw contemporary lessons from the history of this allegedly Thai kingdom of Nan-chao. 'Even at the present time,' he remarked, 'the population of South China shows signs of a strong Tai strain of blood. The Yunnanese are more Tai than Chinese.'<sup>11</sup> It is not surprising that many modern Chinese have found the expression and perpetuation of this notion quite disturbing. They regard it as a clear manifestation of Western imperialist encouragement of pan-Thai nationalism, aimed against the security of their southwestern frontier provinces.<sup>12</sup>

It seems to have been primarily through Wood that modern Thai intellectuals absorbed this interpretation of their own country's origins.<sup>13</sup> Thus, before long, the putative identification between Nan-chao and the modern Thai was made virtually sacrosanct in Thailand and the glorious epoch of Nan-chao history became a matter of mistaken pride to many Thai people.

Thereafter, most scholars throughout the world seem to have accepted the equation of Nan-chao with the early Thai peoples, without further question. This was even true among some native Chinese historians of southwest China.<sup>14</sup> Also in Japan and especially in the West, many scholars uncritically perpetuated the notion that Nan-chao was a Thai kingdom. This is still true in most general histories of China and of Southeast Asia to this day, even in their most recent editions.<sup>15</sup> Nor has a recent specialized study, which many may take as authoritative, avoided giving the impression that at least the ruling class of the Nan-chao state and a sizeable portion of its population were unquestionably Thai.<sup>16</sup> This is unfortunate, for in the past two decades numerous books and articles in Chinese and Japanese, and a few articles in English, have demonstrated and reiterated that neither the rulers nor the great

majority of the Nan-chao population can in any way be equated with the Thai peoples.<sup>17</sup>

There is a wide range of evidence to show that this is so. In the first place, most of the Nan-chao words that have survived in Chinese transcriptions from that era reveal no similarity at all to the Thai language. Moreover, the three or four terms that do resemble the sounds of words which have the same meaning in modern Thai are all political in nature, like *chao*, terms such as are readily borrowed from one language and culture to another.<sup>18</sup> It should further be pointed out that in pre-T'ang times the Ti peoples of China's north-western frontier region also had a term pronounced *chao*, meaning 'king,' which was used in a very similar fashion.<sup>19</sup> Simply on this basis, the Nan-chao rulers can be linked as closely to the Ti peoples as they can to the Thai, though to do so in either case would seem to be a mistake.<sup>20</sup>

On the other hand, fairly convincing correlations have been made between as many as seventy-five per cent of these Nan-chao words and similarly pronounced lexical items in the Tibeto-Burman languages of the Yi peoples (also known as the Lolo) and the Pai peoples (also known as the Minchia).<sup>21</sup> The dichotomy of this correlation (*i.e.*, this lexical equation with both the Lolo and the Minchia) is probably a reflection of the basic division within the Nan-chao population between peoples who are labelled in T'ang sources under the categories of Wu Man and Pai Man, the 'black' and 'white' Man.<sup>22</sup> T'ang sources describe the language of the Pai Man as being the more correct, *i.e.*, closer to Chinese. In contrast, the language of the Wu Man peoples was said to be far behind, *i.e.*, much less (or not at all) intelligible to the Chinese. The Six Chao, the principal constituent groups which eventually were unified to form the Nan-chao kingdom, are described as a variant type of Wu Man. Their language was said to be inferior to that of the Pai Man but not so unintelligible as that of the Wu Man.<sup>23</sup>

Modern scholars have taken all this to mean that the Pai Man probably had a longer and closer relationship with the Chinese than did the Wu Man and thus had a relatively sophisticated culture, more strongly influenced by contacts with China. The Six Chao, though belonging to the Wu Man ethnically, are seen as being comparatively advanced, themselves highly influenced by contacts with the Pai Man peoples.<sup>24</sup> This seems to have been especially true of the ultimately dominant Meng-she Chao, originally located furthest to the south and therefore called 'Nan-chao' or the 'Southern Chao.'<sup>25</sup> Evidently they were the only one of the six whose ruling elite, the Meng clan, had a surname.<sup>26</sup> After the unification of the Six Chao, their Wu Man leaders, especially the ruling Meng family, naturally formed the top social stratum of the Nan-chao kingdom. However, the Pai Man were also relied upon for their political and cultural expertise, serving in the majority of official posts in the

Nan-chao government.<sup>27</sup> In addition to the Yang, Chao, Wang, and Chang clans, this Pai Man elite included the Tuan, whose vague claims to Chinese ancestry do not disprove their Pai Man affiliation.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, the basic population of the Nan-chao kingdom was a combination of Wu Man and Pai Man peoples. Although culturally they must have grown much closer to each other during the course of Nan-chao history, they seem to have remained ethnically distinct, for the Wu Man evidently practised endogamy.<sup>29</sup> This social hierarchy naturally remained in effect throughout the Nan-chao period, but the Pai Man elite seem to have grown increasingly powerful. With the overthrow of the Nan-chao dynasty early in the tenth century, the Pai Man established the dominant position within Yunnan and retained it for centuries thereafter.<sup>30</sup>

Most modern scholars classify both the Pai Man and the Wu Man in the Tibeto-Burman ethnolinguistic family.<sup>31</sup> The Pai Man are equated with the modern Pai-tsu peoples, who still inhabit the area of western Yunnan centered on the Ta-li plain. These are highly cultured peoples, whose language reveals a great deal of Chinese admixture.<sup>32</sup> The Wu Man, on the other hand, are identified with the modern Yi peoples, who still occupy the hilly regions of Szechwan, Yunnan, and Kweichow. More commonly known as the Lolo, these peoples have always put up strong resistance to Chinese cultural influences.<sup>33</sup>

These ethnic identifications and cultural characteristics are entirely consistent with the above-mentioned linguistic equation of the Nan-chao population with the modern Yi and Pai peoples. On virtually every count, therefore, the linguistic proof, one of the few supporting arguments for the theory that the Nan-chao peoples were related to the modern Thai, does not hold.<sup>34</sup> To the contrary, the principal native languages of the Nan-chao population were almost certainly Tibeto-Burman, not Thai.

The supposed Ai-lao ancestry of the Nan-chao peoples, another assertion basic to the commonly accepted theory, also cannot withstand close scrutiny, for what we know of Ai-lao and Nan-chao cultural traits do not match.<sup>35</sup> Rather, it is more likely that the Nan-chao founders simply adopted the Ai-lao as illustrious ancestors and took over Ai-lao myths and legends as their own.<sup>36</sup> Some early Chinese sources themselves indicate skepticism of this link by stating carefully that the Nan-chao founders originally inhabited Ai-lao territory or that they 'themselves say' (*tzu-yen*) that they were Ai-lao descendants.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, most modern authorities now deny that the Ai-lao and the Thai are in any way related in the first place.<sup>38</sup>

Nor is there any indication at all in the Chinese sources to support the hypothesis of large-scale migration by Thai peoples, either from north to south China or from southwest China down into modern Thailand, at any



time in history.<sup>39</sup> In particular, it can be shown that the Mongol conquest of Yunnan did not displace any sizeable body of native peoples. We know that the Pai Man ruling elite of the Ta-li kingdom, successor to Nan-chao in Yunnan, did not flee after their conquest by the Mongols in the middle of the thirteenth century but were appointed to administer the western portions of the province for the Mongols in hereditary official posts.<sup>40</sup> There they remained throughout the Yuan and Ming periods.<sup>41</sup> There is simply no evidence of any great movement of peoples from Yunnan into modern Thailand at that time.

On the other hand, a great deal of additional cultural data exists to show that the Nan-chao peoples could not have been related to the Thai but must have been Tibeto-Burman peoples. Probably the most important and conclusive bit of evidence is the so-called patronymic linkage system, which in one form or another was shared as a basic cultural trait by most of the population of the Nan-chao kingdom.<sup>42</sup> Stated simply, the patronymic linkage system is a device for showing generational order and affiliation, whereby the name of a son always contains an element from the name of his father. Thus, under the common form of the system used by the Nan-chao rulers, the first syllable of the son's name was always identical with the last syllable of his father's name: *e.g.*, Sheng-lo-p'i, P'i-lo-ko, Ko-lo-feng, Feng-ch'ieh-i, and so on.<sup>43</sup> Most scholars associate this cultural trait primarily, if not exclusively, with the Tibeto-Burman peoples. Many of the Yi groups in this region still exhibit this characteristic, and some of them through it trace their ancestry back to the Nan-chao kings.<sup>44</sup> Yet most experts agree that this fundamental custom is now and always has been totally uncharacteristic of the Thai peoples.<sup>45</sup>

In a similar manner, other distinct cultural characteristics of the Nan-chao peoples (burial practices, hair styles, and the like) can be linked readily with the Tibeto-Burman peoples but show no affinity with Thai culture.<sup>46</sup> Although those people who do share these traits are not necessarily closely related, those who do not have them as part of their cultures, especially the patronymic linkage system, almost certainly cannot be ethnically linked to the Nan-chao peoples.<sup>47</sup>

This is not to deny that there were some peoples at the southern and southwestern extremes of Nan-chao territorial control (see the map on p. 61) who perhaps can be identified as 'proto-Thai' peoples: *e.g.*, the Mang Man, Chin-ch'ih Man, Hsiu-mien Man, and other groups.<sup>48</sup> These lowland peoples were best known to the Chinese for their distinctive customs of capping their teeth with precious metals or lacquer, or of tattooing various parts of their bodies.<sup>49</sup> They were also feared by the Chinese as fierce fighters, for the Nan-chao rulers made effective use of them in their armies, especially in

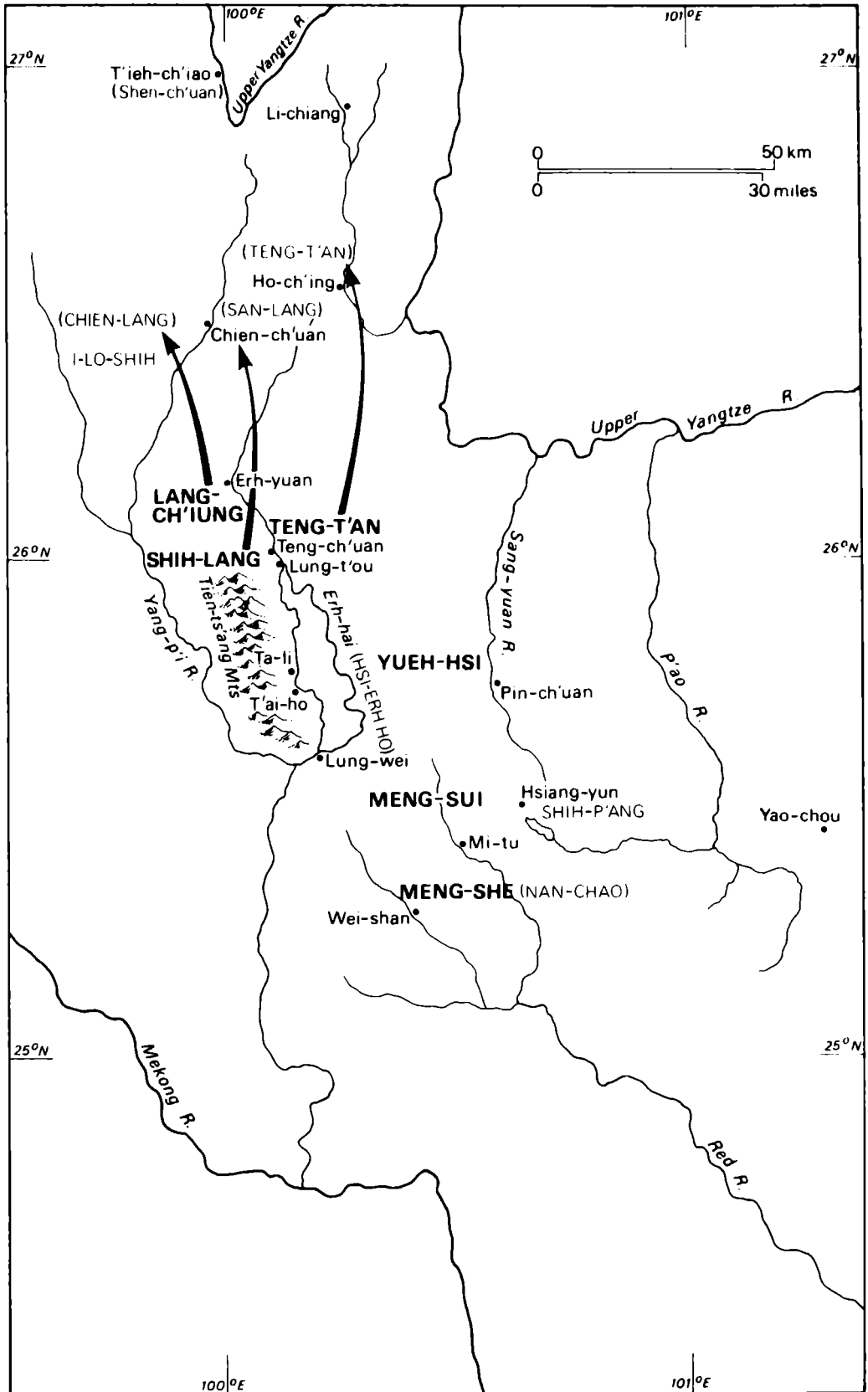
extensive campaigns against the Chinese in the ninth century.<sup>50</sup> Thus it is clear that Nan-chao did exercise some degree of administrative authority over them and that they levied troops from among their number. However, whether or not these peoples can be identified as ancestors of the Thai, it is certain that in this early period they remained a peripheral frontier minority and were not part of the core of the Nan-chao population.<sup>51</sup> Indeed, there is limited evidence to show that in later times these peoples reasserted independent control over this southern periphery and even pushed *northwards*, at the territorial expense of the Ta-li kingdom, the Nan-chao successor state in Yunnan.<sup>52</sup>

Thus there is little reason to maintain the theory that Nan-chao was a Thai kingdom, either in rulership or in population, and much cause to abandon it. However, although almost all specialists deny any significant link between Nan-chao and the Thai, there is unfortunately no uniformity of opinion about exactly what ethnic group or groups the Nan-chao population did belong to. A few reputable scholars contend that many of the Nan-chao peoples were related to the Ti and the Ch'iang peoples of the northwest.<sup>53</sup> Again, however, the evidence in support of this hypothesis seems contrived and circumstantial, and most specialists reject this theory as well.<sup>54</sup> Instead, the basic population of the Nan-chao kingdom is generally thought to have been Tibeto-Burman and is tentatively identified with the modern Yi (Lolo) and Pai-tsu (Minchia) peoples. In any case, there is scarcely any expert scholarly support left at all for the old equation between Nan-chao and the Thai.

### **T'ang and Tibetan rivalry and the rise of Nan-chao**

Beginning around the middle of the seventh century, six petty kingdoms arose in the region surrounding the Erh-hai Lake. These were the so-called Six Chao: Meng-sui, Yueh-hsi, Teng-t'an, Shih-lang, Lang-ch'iung, and Meng-she, also known as 'Nan-chao.'<sup>55</sup> Some Chinese sources of the T'ang period give different names to three of the six, and there has been some scholarly disagreement concerning the identification of these variant names. However, the six names given above are the most commonly used, and the identifications of variant names and specific locations given in the table on p. 54 seem to be the most reliable.<sup>56</sup> (See also the map on p. 53.)

In addition to the Six Chao, there were two other short-lived groups, one established by Shih-p'ang, who was related by marriage to the rulers of Meng-she, or 'Nan-chao,' and the other founded by a chieftain named I-lo-shih (sometimes mistakenly written I-ch'uan-lo-shih).<sup>57</sup> Their attempts to set up their own independent kingdoms were unsuccessful, but nevertheless their short-lived political entities are also sometimes referred to as *chao*, thus bringing the total number to eight.



Map 3 The Six Chao. Names in bold capitals are the Six Chao, and names in light capitals are either short-lived or displaced entities that are sometimes also referred to as *chao*.

*The Six (or Eight) Chao*

Name (variants)*	Probable modern locations	Probable dates of conquest
Meng-she Chao	Wei-shan (formerly called Meng-hua)	
Meng-sui Chao (Meng-yueh Chao)	Mi-tu or Hsiang-yun	Around 730
Yueh-hsi Chao (Moso Chao)	Pin-ch'uan	Around 732
Lang-ch'iung Chao† (Chien-lang Chao)	Erh-yuan; later fled to Chien-ch'uan	Fled in 737; conquered in 794
Teng-t'an Chao† (Yueh-t'an Chao)	Teng-ch'uan; later fled to Ho-ch'ing vicinity	Fled in 737; conquered in 794
Shih-lang Chao† (Yang-p'i Chao)	Southwest of Erh-yuan; descendants resettled at Chien-ch'uan	Fled in 737; conquered in 794
Shih-p'ang (Chao)	Teng-ch'uan; later resettled in Hsiang-yun vicinity	Late 730's
I-lo-shih (Chao)	Chien-ch'uan	Late 730's

\*Identifications of variant names are my own attempt to reconcile conflicting interpretations. See Ma Ch'ang-shou, Suzuki Shun, Ts'en Chung-mien, and Fujisawa Yoshimi.

† Known collectively as the San-lang Chao or the Lang-jen.

Sources: MSCC, 55–74; HTS, 222b, 6293–5; *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao*; Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 41–68; Suzuki Shun, 'Nanshō no igi oyobi Rokushō no juchi ni tsuite,' 267–82; Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 172–84; Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 129–43; Ts'en Chung-mien, 'Liu-chao suo tsai chi Nan-chao t'ung-tao i-tuan chih chin-ti,' 350–65.

The ruling groups of all of these small kingdoms were Wu Man, as described in the preceding section, but not all of the populations under their control were Wu Man. In fact, Ma Ch'ang-shou and Fujisawa Yoshimi have shown that the bulk of the population of four of the Six Chao (Yueh-hsi, Teng-t'an, Shih-lang, and Lang-ch'iung) were Pai Man.<sup>58</sup>

According to both Ma and Fujisawa, the Six Chao were established on the economic and cultural foundations of the 'K'un-ming kingdom,' which evidently controlled western Yunnan from late Han times.<sup>59</sup> These were some of the peoples who were encountered by Chu-ko Liang in his great campaign into Yunnan in the third century, and their rulers were subsequently included in Chu-ko's successful policy of indirect control. They were granted surnames, given rich gifts, and confirmed in their authority to govern their native region, which remained nominally under Chinese control.<sup>60</sup> Post-Sung sources often

refer to these peoples collectively as the Pai-tzu kingdom. These later sources also report that the ruling family of these peoples had been granted the surname Chang by Chu-ko Liang, after which time the kingdom was also known as Chien-ning.<sup>61</sup> After the fourth century, this region figures much less prominently in Chinese sources, so information about the development of these peoples is quite limited. However, it seems likely that the names of these three kingdoms (K'un-ming, Pai-tzu, and Chien-ning), along with that of the Ai-lao, all refer to essentially the same evolving local culture centered on the plains of western Yunnan, whose rulers and principal occupants were the ancestors of the Pai Man peoples of T'ang times.<sup>62</sup> Thus, there was considerable cultural continuity at a rather high level in this region during the post-Han period, when China took a much less active role in the southwest. Like their Ts'u'an counterparts in eastern Yunnan, the rulers of this kingdom based on the Pai Man apparently grew gradually stronger and more independent from the Chinese dynasties to the north during this era. But with the resurgence of Chinese efforts in Yunnan by the Sui and early T'ang courts, these peoples were again directly and adversely affected.<sup>63</sup>

By the middle of the seventh century, as we have seen, the T'ang had succeeded temporarily in subjugating the peoples of this area. Especially after the far-reaching expeditions of Liang Chien-fang and Chao Hsiao-tsu (in 648 and 652) against the Sung-wai, Pai-shui, Po-nung, Erh-ho Man, and others (all of whom can probably be linked with the Pai Man), whatever power and political unity was left to the Pai Man in this region apparently collapsed.<sup>64</sup> Thereafter, the Pai Man elite (the Yang, Li, Chao, Tung, and other clans) fragmented. 'Each occupied a single region. The greatest of them had six hundred families, while the smallest had two or three hundred. There was no overall leader, nor was there any shared unity.'<sup>65</sup> It was this politically disorganized situation, which had resulted from T'ang expeditions against the Pai Man, that provided the opportunity for the rise of the Wu Man peoples and the creation of the Six Chao.

Although it was only at this juncture, beginning in the middle of the seventh century, that the Six Chao were formed, it has been argued that the Wu Man peoples too had long been in this region and that some of them must have participated in the various Pai Man kingdoms. They are thus seen as the inheritors of Pai Man political and cultural traditions going all the way back to the K'un-ming kingdom.<sup>66</sup> Although these conclusions seem somewhat speculative, it is safe to say that there were Wu Man chiefs among the local elite encountered by T'ang forces in the middle of the seventh century. One of them at least, Meng Yü, who may have been related to the Meng clan of Nan-chao, was appointed as a T'ang representative in this region.<sup>67</sup> What is certain is that the rise of these Wu Man ruled kingdoms, the Six Chao,

coincided with the decline of Pai Man power and cohesion, which had been brought about partially at least by T'ang attacks.

Nan-chao legends concerning the foundation of the political power of the Meng family in Yunnan, of which there are many fascinating versions, support this observation. These legends appear mostly in post-Sung sources, but they may have been current as early as the ninth century, for some of them occur in the accompanying text of the remarkable painting known as the 'Nan-chao t'u-chuan,' which dates originally from the 890's.<sup>68</sup> These legends often have a strong overlay of Buddhist influence, replete with miraculous portents, indicative of the religious transformation of the Nan-chao kingdom that took place during the ninth century.<sup>69</sup> (See chapters 5 and 6.) Some of them even attempt to trace the lineage of the Nan-chao kings back to Asoka, the great third-century B.C. Indian king and propagator of Buddhism.<sup>70</sup>

One key feature that appears in most of these legendary accounts is the story of the abdication of power from the Pai Man ruler Chang-lo-chin-ch'iu to Hsi-nu-lo, first ruler of the Meng-she Chao. Although different dates are given for this event, most commonly 629 and 653, most scholars prefer the latter date.<sup>71</sup> It is not likely that any such formal abdication ever took place, but these legends may well reflect the transfer of power in this region during the middle of the seventh century from the Pai Man, whose political base had been broken up by repeated Chinese campaigns against them, to the Wu Man.<sup>72</sup>

It is wrong, however, to think that the Nan-chao kingdom suddenly sprang up full-blown in the middle of the seventh century. Rather, the unification of the Six Chao and the consolidation of control over all of the territory surrounding the Ta-li plain, the Nan-chao heartland, would take much longer to accomplish. In that process, moreover, Chinese and Tibetan rivalry for control of this region would play a major role.

It should be recalled that by the 670's the T'ang court was well aware of extensive Tibetan encroachment along the Szechwan border and into the northern part of this region. It was also increasingly concerned about the apparent establishment of a network of contacts between the Tibetans and the peoples of this area. Thus one of the primary objectives of the T'ang in the southwest from the latter half of the seventh century on was to block the spread of that influence.<sup>73</sup> To assist in the attainment of that objective, the T'ang court seems to have searched for a reliable ally in the southwest, to stabilize the region and make it less open to Tibetan advancement.<sup>74</sup>

Although, as has been shown, none of the early rulers of pre-unified Nan-chao was immune from contacts and perhaps even collusion with Tibet, it appears that the T'ang court either was not aware of those contacts or else still regarded these Wu Man leaders, especially the rulers of the Meng-she Chao, as their best hope for securing stability and a measure of control over this region.

The earliest formal contacts between the Nan-chao leaders and the T'ang court came during the reign of Emperor Kao-tsung, while Hsi-nu-lo was the Nan-chao ruler. (See the table of Nan-chao kings on p. 58.) Post-Sung sources indicate that Hsi-nu-lo sent his son Lo-sheng (sometimes mistakenly written Lo-sheng-yen)<sup>75</sup> on a mission to the T'ang capital in 653.<sup>76</sup> As usual, the T'ang court responded with gifts and official titles.<sup>77</sup> Many people have used this date, which is also the most likely year for the reputed abdication of power from Chang to Meng, as the beginning of Nan-chao history.<sup>78</sup> Contemporary T'ang sources, however, are not so explicit, indicating only that both Hsi-nu-lo and Lo-sheng sent missions to the T'ang court during the reigns of Emperor Kao-tsung (650–684) and Empress Wu (684–705).<sup>79</sup>

It was during the period when Lo-sheng was ruler of Nan-chao, down to 712, that the T'ang began to experience major setbacks in the Yunnan region. As recounted in chapter 2, virtually all of the peoples of the southwest, both Pai Man and Wu Man, including apparently the leaders of the Lang-ch'ung and Teng-t'an Chao, offered continual resistance to Chinese control during these years. They tended to ally with the Tibetans and to rely on Tibetan support against Chinese attempts to subdue them, as evidenced in the disastrous Li Chih-ku affair of 712. Yet Lo-sheng and his successor Sheng-lo-p'i (reigned 712–728) kept sending missions to the T'ang court, maintaining at least the semblance of cooperation with T'ang interests in the southwest. Evidently, in this period, they were the only leaders in this region to do so.<sup>80</sup> Perhaps their location south of Erh-hai Lake brought them into the least conflict with Chinese ambitions to control the area. It is also true that their favored location may have allowed them to withstand Tibetan domination better than groups located further north.<sup>81</sup>

It is nevertheless clear that even the Nan-chao leaders maintained their own contacts with the Tibetan court and were regarded as subjects by the Tibetans, at least from the beginning of the eighth century. However, at least the Nan-chao leaders were not overtly hostile to the T'ang. If the T'ang court was to find an ally in the southwest, the Nan-chao rulers may have seemed to be the most likely candidates. All of these factors seem to have combined to win Nan-chao a favored place in the eyes of the Chinese.<sup>82</sup> This helps to explain why the T'ang court seems to have approved the expansion of Nan-chao power and why they actively supported Nan-chao attempts to unify the entire Erh-hai Lake region under their rule.

Although the sources tell us very little about the reign of the Nan-chao ruler Sheng-lo-p'i (712–728), it seems that he too sent a mission to the T'ang court, probably in 722; for this, he was awarded an official title.<sup>83</sup> However, the process of Nan-chao unification did not really begin until the reign of his successor, P'i-lo-ko (728–748). That process has been described and analyzed

*Rulers of the Nan-chao kingdom*

Name (variants)	Relation to predecessor	Reign dates	T'ang (and Tibetan) titles	Native titles
She-lung (Meng-chia tu)		?		<i>Meng-she chao</i>
Hsi-nu-lo (Lung-tu-lo)	son	653–674		<i>Kao-tsu; Ch'i-chia wang</i>
Lo-sheng (Lo-sheng-yen)	son	674–712		<i>Shih-tsung; Hsing-tsung wang</i>
Yen-ko*				
Sheng-lo-p'i	son	712–728	<i>T'ai-teng chün wang</i>	<i>T'ai-tsung; Wei-ch'eng wang</i>
P'i-lo-ko	son	728–748	<i>Yun-nan wang; Kuei-i</i>	
Ko-lo-feng	son	748–779	<i>Yun-nan wang (Tsan-p'u chung; Tung-ti)</i>	<i>Shen-wu wang</i>
Feng-ch'ieh-i†				
I-mou-hsün	grandson	779–808	<i>Nan-chao wang (Jih-tung wang)</i>	<i>Hsiao-huan wang</i>
Hsün-ko-ch'üan	son	808–809	<i>Nan-chao wang</i>	<i>Hsiao-hui wang; P'iao-hsin</i>
Ch'üan-lung-sheng	son	809–816	<i>Nan-chao wang</i>	<i>Yu wang</i>
Ch'üan-li-sheng	younger brother	816–823	<i>Nan-chao wang</i>	<i>Ching wang</i>
(Ch'üan-) Feng-yu	younger brother	823–859	<i>Nan-chao wang</i>	<i>Chao-ch'eng wang</i>
Shih-lung (Ch'iu-lung)	son	859–877		<i>Ching-chuang huang-ti</i>
Lung-shun (Fa)	son	877–897		<i>Hsuan-wu-ti; Mo-ho-lo-ts'o; T'u-lun wang</i>
Shun-hua-chen	son	897–902		<i>Hsiao-ai ti</i>

\*Probably never existed. See chapter 3, n. 75. †Died before father and did not reign.

Sources: MSCC, 3, 68–74; HTS, 222a, 6270–93; CTS, 197, 5280–4; THY, 99, 1763–6; TFYK, *Wai-ch'en pu (ch'üan 956–1000), passim*; Hu NCYS, 24–67; Juan NCYS, 535–49; Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 197 and 566; Li Chia-jui, 'Yung wen-wu pu-cheng Nan-chao chi Ta-li kuo ti chi-nien.'



very fully by Ma, Fujisawa, and Wang; and in English most of the details have been faithfully related by Blackmore.<sup>84</sup> But it is still necessary here to give a general account of that process and especially to assess the extent of Chinese and Tibetan involvement in it.

We must first deal with the legend of the Sung-ming Tower, which has been current in Yunnan at least since Ming times, according to which Nan-chao unification was greatly facilitated by P'i-lo-ko's use of a clever, deadly stratagem. Essentially, this popular story tells how P'i-lo-ko summoned the leaders of the other five *chao* to a council in his capital. There, under the pretext of a banquet, he trapped them all inside the Sung-ming Tower, specially built of highly flammable materials for this purpose, then burned it to the ground, killing them all. Thereafter he was able to take over their territories without much difficulty.<sup>85</sup> The story of 'this ruthless act of treachery' is accepted and recounted in detail, totally without qualification, in some modern works.<sup>86</sup> However, it should not be too surprising that the tale is purely anecdotal. In reality, the conquest of the other five *chao* and the consolidation of Nan-chao control over the entire region was a long and complicated process, which was achieved step by step.

In general, P'i-lo-ko seems to have accomplished the goal of unification partially by exploiting internal tensions within the other five *chao* and partially through superior military strength.<sup>87</sup> But at crucial points in the process, he does seem to have received active Chinese support.

Not unnaturally, the first of the rival *chao* to be conquered by P'i-lo-ko was the nearest. Meng-sui was located at Yang-kua-chou, near modern Mi-tu, only a few miles to the north of the Nan-chao capital, which was situated near modern Wei-shan.<sup>88</sup> According to Ma Ch'ang-shou, Meng-sui was probably founded in the 650's, soon after Nan-chao itself, and the two probably had much in common.<sup>89</sup> Meng-sui was the largest of the Six Chao.<sup>90</sup> By the 720's, however, it may already have been subordinate to Nan-chao, for the son of its ruler was said then to have been a hostage at the Nan-chao capital. In quite a ruthless fashion, P'i-lo-ko brought on first the downfall and then the death of the Meng-sui ruler, who was reportedly blind, and arranged for this son to succeed him. Within a few months, however, P'i-lo-ko took over direct control there himself, probably around the year 730.<sup>91</sup>

It was around this time, soon after P'i-lo-ko's accession, that a concerted attempt seems to have been made to cultivate Chinese sanction and support for Nan-chao's unification of the peoples of this region. Visits to the T'ang court continued on a regular basis, in 732 and 734; records of the 734 mission specify two local products presented in tribute to the T'ang: musk aromatic (*she-hsiang*) and ox bezoar (*niu-huang*).<sup>92</sup> In addition, we are told that P'i-lo-ko sought to insure a favorable reception for his expansionist plans by bribing

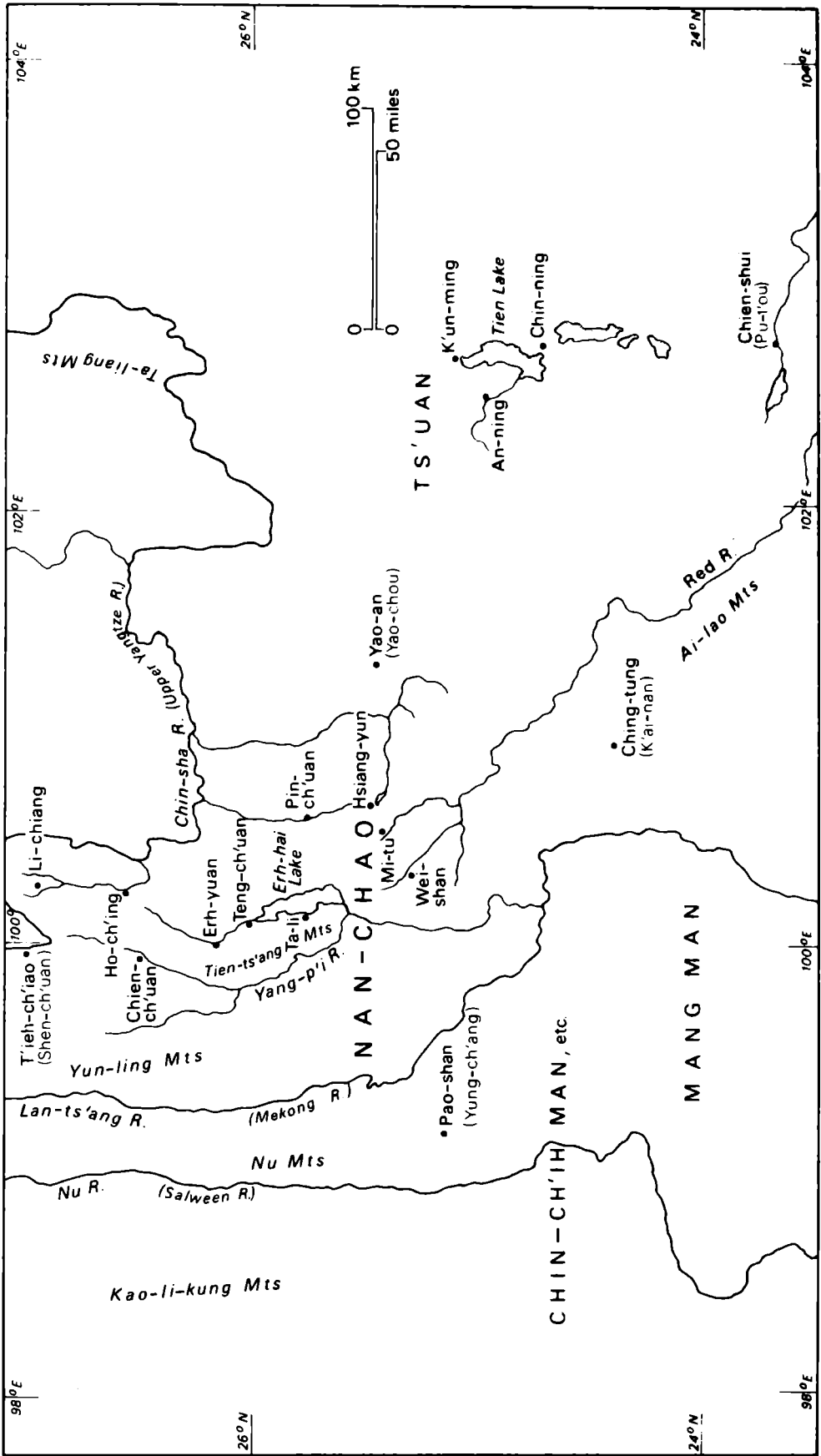
the T'ang regional commander in Szechwan, Wang Yü.<sup>93</sup> Thereafter, there is indirect evidence that Wang Yü did send reports to the T'ang court, assuring the emperor of P'i-lo-ko's loyal intentions, and that this may have helped to win at least tacit approval of Nan-chao ambitions.<sup>94</sup>

Next of the Six Chao to fall to those ambitions was Yueh-hsi, located east of the Erh-hai Lake, near modern Pin-ch'uan. The conquest of Yueh-hsi was greatly facilitated by a serious rift between its ruler P'o-ch'ung and a member of the local Pai Man elite named Chang Hsün-ch'iu. (Many have noted the curious resemblance between the names of the historical Chang Hsün-ch'iu and the legendary Pai Man king who abdicated power to the Meng clan, Chang-lo-chin-ch'iu.<sup>95</sup>) We are told that the quarrel concerned Chang's illicit relations with P'o-ch'ung's wife and that it resulted in the murder of the Yueh-hsi ruler by Chang. It was at this point that P'i-lo-ko's cultivation of Wang Yü paid off. Wang reportedly summoned Chang Hsün-ch'iu and had him executed. Then on the pretext that Yueh-hsi at that point had no ruler, Wang transferred control over it to P'i-lo-ko. (Although parts of this account have a suspicious ring, we have little choice but to accept it, for it is repeated in several reliable sources.) Subsequently, Yueh-hsi forces under P'o-ch'ung's nephew Yü-tseng put up stubborn and effective resistance to Nan-chao's annexation of their territory. Finally, however, they were overcome by Nan-chao armies led personally by P'i-lo-ko's son Ko-lo-feng.<sup>96</sup>

P'i-lo-ko's conquest of the remaining three *chao*, all of which were located to the north of the Erh-hai Lake, was to be more problematic and, for the time being, less completely successful, largely because of Tibetan intervention. Efforts against them actually began in 737 with Nan-chao's conquest of the Ta-li plain. Although from the middle of the seventh century the Wu Man leaders of the Six Chao seem to have controlled virtually all of the territory surrounding the Erh-hai Lake (see the map on p. 61), the narrow Ta-li plain itself remained in the possession of the Ho Man (or Hsi-erh Ho Man), whose surnames and cultural traits identify them as Pai Man peoples.<sup>97</sup>

In preparation for the conquest of this area, P'i-lo-ko first allied with the Teng-t'an Chao, the capital of which was one of the sites recently excavated by archaeologists in Yunnan. Situated on the side of a mountain near modern Teng-ch'uan, this small fortress (approximately three thousand square meters) with strong, tamped-earth walls, a deep moat, and an excellent system of water supply, was probably designed mainly for defensive purposes and could not have held a very large population. It may have been typical of cities in the area up to that time.<sup>98</sup>

The reader should recall that it was the Teng-t'an Chao's previous ruler, Feng-mieh (or P'ang-ming), who had earlier been involved in the Li Chih-ku affair of 712. His son Mieh-lo-p'i, the current ruler, was reportedly related to



Map 4 The Yunnan region during the Nan-chao period. Names in capitals represent ethnic groups.

P'i-lo-ko by marriage.<sup>99</sup> It was thus perhaps natural that he should have been included in the campaign against the Ho Man. The combined forces of Meng-she and Teng-t'an seem to have had little trouble in capturing the Ta-li plain and driving out the Ho Man, probably in 737. Their success may have been made easier by active Chinese assistance in this campaign. According to the Te-hua inscription, a T'ang official named Yen Cheng-hui<sup>100</sup> both participated in the planning of the campaign and joined forces with Ko-lo-feng in one wing of the attack.<sup>101</sup>

Once the Ta-li plain had been captured, however, P'i-lo-ko turned against his Teng-t'an allies, preventing them from establishing themselves there and forcing them back to their original base.<sup>102</sup> This was an extremely important development, for thereby Nan-chao secured for itself undisputed control over the Ta-li plain. P'i-lo-ko's achievements earned him additional recognition at the T'ang court, including the granting of the honorific name Kuei-i, a not uncommon sobriquet for trusted foreign leaders, which might be translated 'surrendered to loyalty.'<sup>103</sup>

At this point an alliance was formed by the rulers of Teng-t'an, Lang-ch'iung, and Shih-lang, in an attempt to prevent Nan-chao's continued expansion at their expense. In a showdown battle, however, that alliance suffered a great defeat. Thus P'i-lo-ko was able to capture control over these three localities as well.<sup>104</sup> The Teng-t'an ruler fled north to a place called Yeh-kung-ch'uan, probably located near modern Ho-ch'ing. The Lang-ch'iung leader too was expelled from his territory, centered on modern Erh-yuan, and fled north with his remaining forces. They settled at Chien-ch'uan and thereafter became known as the Chien-lang Chao.<sup>105</sup>

Unlike the Teng-t'an and Lang-ch'iung rulers, the ruler of Shih-lang was not able to escape and re-establish his power elsewhere. Rather, his population surrendered to P'i-lo-ko, and he was forced to flee with about half of his family to Yung-ch'ang (modern Pao-shan). He seems to have known that he would inevitably be captured by Nan-chao forces, so he sought peace with P'i-lo-ko, offering him his daughter, reportedly a famous beauty. P'i-lo-ko accepted, and the erstwhile Shih-lang ruler was brought to the Nan-chao capital, where he seems to have been allowed to live out his years.<sup>106</sup>

His younger brother, however, did manage to escape and subsequently fled to Tibet. The Tibetan court gave him their patronage and sent him back to Chien-ch'uan. There, with Tibetan support, he carried on as the ruler of the Shih-lang Chao.<sup>107</sup> Altogether, it is reported, the remnant forces of Teng-t'an, Lang-ch'iung, and Shih-lang numbered in the tens of thousands. Situated in close proximity to each other, they were known henceforth as the San-lang ('the three lang'), or simply as the Lang-jen, *i.e.*, the Lang peoples.<sup>108</sup> With

continued Tibetan support, their successors were to control this area of north-western Yunnan for the next several decades.

Similar Tibetan support may have been given to the remnants of the Ho Man who had been expelled from the Ta-li plain by Nan-chao and who now attached themselves to the San-lang at Chien-ch'uan.<sup>109</sup> The Tibetans were also involved with two other abortive Wu Man regimes. As mentioned above, Shih-p'ang, a relative of the Nan-chao rulers, and I-lo-shih, about whom we know very little, attempted to establish independent kingdoms of their own, apparently in 737 or 738. Their negotiations for Tibetan support, however, became known, and Nan-chao quickly took action against them. Again the Chinese seem to have provided military assistance, under the command of the eunuch general Wang Ch'eng-hsün, in the campaign against I-lo-shih.<sup>110</sup> Shih-p'ang was killed, but I-lo-shih fled to Tibet and apparently lived the rest of his life in Lhasa.<sup>111</sup>

Nonetheless, despite the continued existence in the northwest of vestiges of the original Six Chao, who with persistent Tibetan support would prevent full consolidation of Nan-chao power in that region until the 790's, much had been accomplished. All potential rivals had either been conquered or expelled from the Erh-hai Lake region, and the entire Ta-li plain now came under Nan-chao control. Although Nan-chao's accomplishment had been assisted both by active T'ang support and by internal disputes within some of the other five *chao*, most of the credit for this impressive achievement should still be assigned personally to P'i-lo-ko, who is rightly regarded as the great unifier of Nan-chao history.

In 739, P'i-lo-ko took the decisive step of moving his capital from Meng-she to the Ta-li plain, to a site called T'ai-ho-ch'eng (south of modern Ta-li).<sup>112</sup> Strategic sites were fortified, especially the northern and southern ends of the plain, called Lung-t'ou, 'Dragon-head,' and Lung-wei, 'Dragon-tail' (modern Shang-kuan and Hsia-kuan respectively).<sup>113</sup> Thereafter this fertile and easily defended plain, with the precipitous Tien-ts'ang mountains to the west and the broad Erh-hai Lake to the east, would serve as the heartland of the Nan-chao kingdom, and of its successor states down to the middle of the thirteenth century. This may be regarded as the final, symbolic step in the creation of the Nan-chao kingdom. There was thus ample justification for the new title granted by the T'ang court to P'i-lo-ko in 738 in recognition of his achievements: *Yun-nan wang*, 'King of Yunnan,' *i.e.*, the western portion of modern Yunnan province.<sup>114</sup>

### Conquest of the Ts'uan

Having achieved the unification of the Six Chao and the annexation of the entire Ta-li plain region, the Nan-chao rulers were quickly presented with

an opportunity to extend their control over the eastern portion of what is now Yunnan province, the ancient homeland of the Ts'uan peoples, as well. Again the opportunity was catalyzed by Chinese attempts to expand their own administrative authority over this region, and again the Nan-chao rulers accomplished their goal by performing the role of cooperative ally of the T'ang:

It should be recalled from chapter 1 that the Ts'uan had become virtually independent rulers of this area in the period between Han and Sui. During the Sui and early T'ang periods, however, a series of campaigns against them had again forced their submission. Thereafter, relations between them and the T'ang seem to have been consistently cooperative and peaceful. According to some scholars, this relationship may have been carefully cultivated by the Ts'uan, for though they remained nominally subordinate to the T'ang they in fact retained a semi-independent status in their region. Chinese administrative encroachment and interference appears to have been minimal.<sup>115</sup>

In the 740's, however, the Chinese suddenly began to take a more active interest in this area. As in the middle of the seventh century, the main focus of that interest was again the construction of a road through eastern Yunnan. The beginning stages of this road, from Szechwan down into Ts'uan territory near Chin-ning, probably were the same that had been in use for a very long time.<sup>116</sup> From Chin-ning, however, the route passed through and beyond Ts'uan territory, down to a place called Pu-t'ou (probably modern Chien-shui, Pelliot's Lin-an). From there the route followed the valley of the Red River, for the most part probably by boat, down to Annam and the lively commercial center of Chiao-chou (modern Hanoi).<sup>117</sup>

In addition to the construction of the 'Pu-t'ou road,' the Chinese suddenly took over control of the rich salt wells near An-ning, which long had been relied upon by the Ts'uan.<sup>118</sup> The Chinese regional commander in Szechwan, Chang-ch'ou Chien-ch'iung, sent an official named Chu Ling-ch'ien to build a fortress at An-ning and to establish a stronger Chinese administrative presence in this area. What seemed to the Ts'uan like harsh taxes and labor services were suddenly imposed.<sup>119</sup>

It has been suggested that this sudden activism in T'ang policy towards the southwest, which would continue through the 740's and into the 750's, with disastrous results, may have been inspired by local interests in Szechwan.<sup>120</sup> The exploitation of Yunnan's mineral wealth and especially the opening of a new route connecting Szechwan more effectively with the riches of the Nan-hai trade are hypothetically linked to the likely mercantile connections of Szechwanese officials with whom the new policies are closely associated. In particular, Chang-ch'ou Chien-ch'iung's protégé and eventual successor as governor of Szechwan, Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung, was a native of Szechwan, as

was the increasingly powerful patron of them both at the T'ang court, Yang Kuo-chung. All three were from prominent though not especially distinguished local families. There are very explicit indications that these three relied on each other for political support and that the wealth of Szechwan was used liberally in the form of bribes to strengthen the positions of all three at court.<sup>121</sup> Thus it is possible that local motives, more than national interests, were involved in this aggressive change of policy towards the Ts'uan.<sup>122</sup> There is not much substantial evidence to prove or disprove this hypothesis. However, in conjunction with what we have seen to be similar activities and proposals emanating from Szechwan in the middle of the seventh century,<sup>123</sup> the circumstances of these new developments give the idea a degree of plausibility.

Whatever the origins of these policies, they quickly provoked resistance from the previously cooperative Ts'uan peoples. Chinese exploitation of their resources and demands for their labor appear to have been more than they were willing to bear. Moreover, the construction of the Pu-t'ou road and the creation of a fortified administrative outpost by the Chinese at An-ning were unmistakable threats to their continued autonomy.<sup>124</sup> Severe disturbances resulted, during which the Ts'uan attacked and destroyed the fortress at An-ning, killing Chu Ling-ch'ien.<sup>125</sup>

It was at this point that Nan-chao was given its opportunity. Since the conquest of his rivals in western Yunnan, P'i-lo-ko had maintained close contact with the T'ang court, which reportedly treated him with ever greater ceremony and honors.<sup>126</sup> In 745, his grandson Feng-ch'ieh-i was sent to the T'ang capital, where gifts and favors were lavished upon him.<sup>127</sup> It was probably in 746 that the Ts'uan disturbances began.<sup>128</sup> At that time, it was perhaps natural that the T'ang court asked P'i-lo-ko to intervene on their behalf. This he did, forcing a number of the Ts'uan leaders to perform acts of obeisance. Having done this service as the marshall of the Chinese, P'i-lo-ko then petitioned the T'ang court in behalf of the Ts'uan, perhaps cultivating the role of *their* protector. Subsequently they were pardoned.<sup>129</sup> The T'ang outpost at An-ning was then rebuilt.<sup>130</sup>

There followed a complex skein of intrigue and incitement used against the Ts'uan both by the Chinese and by the Nan-chao court. The Ts'uan had for centuries been split into eastern and western halves, though by T'ang times that division does not seem to have been a particularly hostile one. Still, there is some indication of dissension among the Ts'uan during the first half of the eighth century, for Ts'uan Kuei-wang, whom the Chinese seem to have regarded as the chief Ts'uan leader, is said to have attacked and killed two other Ts'uan chieftains and to have taken over their territory.<sup>131</sup> Wang Chi-lin sees this as evidence of pre-existing tensions among the Ts'uan, which now the new Chinese official at An-ning, Li Mi, sought to exploit.<sup>132</sup> Li Mi

reportedly incited Ts'uan Kuei-wang's nephew Ch'ung-tao to kill first his uncle and later his own brother. Again P'i-lo-ko played a leading role in restoring order, but this internal violence seems to have caused great alarm and unrest among the Ts'uan.<sup>133</sup> It was at this point that some of their leaders themselves asked directly for Nan-chao's intercession.

It so happened that the wife of the murdered leader Ts'uan Kuei-wang was originally from some unspecified Wu Man tribe and was thus ethnically related to the Nan-chao rulers. After her husband's death, she fled back to her home and sent a message to P'i-lo-ko, asking for his help.<sup>134</sup> P'i-lo-ko then used his influence at the T'ang court to have Ts'uan Kuei-wang's son Shou-ou named as the successor to his father's titles.<sup>135</sup> However, P'i-lo-ko also supported the other side in this dispute, for when he gave a wife to Shou-ou he also sent one to Fu-ch'ao, son of the regicide, Ch'ung-tao.<sup>136</sup> Was this simply the act of an impartial peacemaker? It seems more likely that P'i-lo-ko was in fact shrewdly promoting Ts'uan dissension, as had the Chinese, playing one side off against another. In any case, harmony among the Ts'uan was not restored for long. When hostilities against Ts'uan Kuei-wang's wife persisted, she again requested P'i-lo-ko's assistance. This time decisive action was taken. P'i-lo-ko sent an army which captured Ch'ung-tao, his family, and his followers; and both Ch'ung-tao and his son were subsequently killed. The outcome of all this was that by 747 Ts'uan power and unity had been significantly weakened.<sup>137</sup>

The Nan-chao leaders took full advantage of this situation. After P'i-lo-ko's death in 748, his son Ko-lo-feng carried out an extensive program of resettlement of a large part of the Ts'uan population. Ts'uan Kuei-wang's wife assumed leadership of her own Wu Man tribe and was well received when she personally led a mission to the T'ang court in Ch'ang-an.<sup>138</sup> Her son Shou-ou, however, was prevented from assuming leadership of the Ts'uan. He and his Nan-chao wife were summoned by the Nan-chao king to take up residence at a place called Ho-t'an, which seems to have been located somewhere on the Ta-li plain.<sup>139</sup> From this location, Shou-ou not only was cut off from the Ts'uan populace but also no longer had direct contact with T'ang officials. The majority of the Ts'uan population, on the other hand, was rounded up by Nan-chao forces and forcibly resettled in large numbers (reportedly more than 200,000 families) far off to the southwest, near Yung-ch'ang (modern Pao-shan).<sup>140</sup> The remainder of the Ts'uan peoples escaped this relocation and eventually reasserted themselves as the major population of this region of northeastern Yunnan.<sup>141</sup> For the time being, however, this eastern realm seems to have been depopulated and in great disorder. Thus, after hostilities erupted between Nan-chao and the T'ang in the early 750's, the Nan-chao



leaders were in a commanding position to incorporate this entire eastern region into their kingdom, as will be shown in the following chapter.

Inevitably, one must question the wisdom of T'ang policy toward the southwest during these years. Early Chinese support for Nan-chao unification may have helped to counter the growth of Tibetan influence in this area. Yet it should be remembered that Nan-chao evidently did maintain contacts with Tibet throughout these years, whatever the Chinese may have believed; in 733 and 742 at least, the Tibetan annals record missions from the Nan-chao king P'i-lo-ko at the Tibetan court.<sup>142</sup> It is also likely that even without T'ang support the strength of Nan-chao forces alone would have prevailed over the other five *chao* and the Ho Man natives of the Ta-li plain, especially when combined with the Nan-chao leaders' astute display of diplomatic skills and pragmatic manipulation of their rivals' weaknesses. Nevertheless, the T'ang court had at least established close and cordial relations with the rising Nan-chao kingdom, and backing the winner in the far southwest could not be judged an unwise policy.

Chinese actions against the previously pliant Ts'uan peoples, on the other hand, seem to have been hastily conceived and lacking in foresight. There appears to have been insufficient awareness of the dangers of provoking the Ts'uan and promoting their decline, too little realization that their fall was more likely to benefit Nan-chao than it was to profit Chinese interests.

As for the Nan-chao leaders themselves, one has to admire the skill and the efficiency with which they accomplished the formation of their kingdom and the extension of their control over the richest and most strategically valuable areas of modern Yunnan province. In 728, when P'i-lo-ko became ruler, Nan-chao had been perhaps the strongest of a number of small principalities in western Yunnan. By 750, barely two decades later, it was unquestionably the largest and strongest force in that entire region, heir to a productive economy and a sophisticated cultural tradition. Yet the Nan-chao leaders accomplished all this without unduly offending or alarming either the Tibetans or the Chinese. Instead, they somehow seem to have convinced both great powers that they were a cooperative ally. Indeed, as we have seen, they attained many of their goals of unification and territorial consolidation by taking advantage of that role.

By the late 740's, T'ang officials in the southwest may have begun to realize that the Nan-chao kingdom had itself become a potent rival to Chinese interests in this region. According to the Te-hua inscription, sometime during these years the T'ang general Li Mi sent a memorial to the court in which he complained that Nan-chao had overstepped its authority in interceding in the

Ts'uan troubles, and that this was indicative of rebellious intentions.<sup>143</sup>

Reportedly, however, the Nan-chao king was cleared of these charges at the time by Kuo Hsü-chi, who was then serving as regional commander of Szechwan.<sup>144</sup>

There was still no reason to expect any serious disruption of friendly relations between China and the Nan-chao kingdom. Nevertheless, the seeds of rivalry and mistrust in the southwest may already have been sown.

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## NAN-CHAO'S ALLIANCE WITH TIBET

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In 748, P'i-lo-ko, under whose reign the unification of the Nan-chao kingdom had been accomplished, died. That year the T'ang court dispatched a eunuch envoy to confirm the succession of his son, Ko-lo-feng, as 'King of Yunnan.' Ko-lo-feng's own son, Feng-ch'ieh-i, in turn inherited his father's previous titles.<sup>1</sup>

As described in chapter 3, even before his accession Ko-lo-feng had taken an active part in the process of Nan-chao unification and consolidation. As king, he was to be confronted with still greater challenges, vitally important to the future of the Nan-chao kingdom. Our sources, which are uniformly laudatory, make it seem that hard choices were forced upon him and that his responses were admirably pragmatic and decisive. He is probably the most heroic figure in Nan-chao history.<sup>2</sup>

### **The outbreak of hostilities**

It should be recalled that Chinese attempts in the 740's to open up the Pu-t'ou road through eastern Yunnan and to capture control of the salt resources at An-ning had provoked resistance from the Ts'uan. The Chinese had then called upon Nan-chao for support. Ultimately, this struggle had resulted in the Nan-chao takeover of the region, greatly expanding Nan-chao population and territorial control. Superficially at least, Nan-chao and China remained on friendly terms. However, this route was still very important to the T'ang court, and perhaps even more important to local interests in Szechwan, since it provided them more direct access to the Chinese protectorate in Annam and its rich commercial entrepot of Chiao-chou (modern Hanoi). After Nan-chao had subjugated the Ts'uan and, in effect, had annexed their territory, control of this route may well have then become a source of contention between Nan-chao and Chinese interests.<sup>3</sup> It is reported that in 749 a T'ang general named Ho Lü-kuang, a native of the Kwangsi region, led a force from Annam via the Pu-t'ou road on a campaign against An-ning.<sup>4</sup> And a little earlier there had been a quarrel between the previous Nan-chao ruler P'i-lo-ko and a T'ang envoy at the Nan-chao court.<sup>5</sup> The

sources are not explicit, but this seems to be part of a background of growing dissension between Nan-chao and the T'ang, which was to break out into open hostilities in the early 750's.

According to the Chinese sources, the flare-up of hostilities can be traced to the immoral and exploitative behavior of a certain Chang Ch'ien-t'o, a T'ang official in Yao-chou, or 'Yun-nan,' as it was called during the T'ien-pao era (742 to 756).<sup>6</sup> Although very little information concerning Chang has survived, it has been suggested that he may have been a native chieftain appointed to this official post, rather than a Chinese official sent by the T'ang court.<sup>7</sup> This conjecture is consistent with the apparent loss of direct control over Yao-chou by the T'ang after the second decade of the eighth century, as recounted in chapter 2. In any case, Chang Ch'ien-t'o is said to have made numerous excessive demands on Ko-lo-feng. Moreover, it is reported that he had sexual relations with the Nan-chao ruler's wife (or wives), who customarily accompanied him on his trips into Szechwan to see the T'ang governor-general.<sup>8</sup>

It is noteworthy that our most important surviving Nan-chao source, the Te-hua inscription erected by Ko-lo-feng in 766, says nothing of any such sexual outrage. It does, however, catalog a whole list of grievances against Chang. In general, it claims that Chang was doing everything he could to weaken the Nan-chao kingdom and that he had tried to incite the Tibetans, the Ts'uan, and others to attack Nan-chao.<sup>9</sup> Ko-lo-feng sent petitions to the T'ang court, complaining about such treatment; but the eunuch commissioner who was sent by the Chinese court to investigate the matter was bribed by Chang Ch'ien-t'o, and Ko-lo-feng continued to receive insulting and unjust treatment. Thus, when all peaceful recourses had failed, Ko-lo-feng attacked Yao-chou, capturing it and taking control of the peoples in the surrounding territory. Ko-lo-feng thereby got his vengeance, for in the attack on Yao-chou, Chang Ch'ien-t'o either was killed or, according to another source, poisoned himself.<sup>10</sup>

It seems that hostilities might have ended there. However, from this relatively minor incident, Chinese officials in Szechwan foolishly escalated the confrontation with Nan-chao into a series of major campaigns, each of them more disastrous than the last. According to the Te-hua inscription, Ko-lo-feng himself would rather have considered the matter closed, for his quarrel was with Chang Ch'ien-t'o, whose provocations could not have been ignored, and not with the T'ang as a whole. However, his explanations and professions of loyalty were rejected.<sup>11</sup>

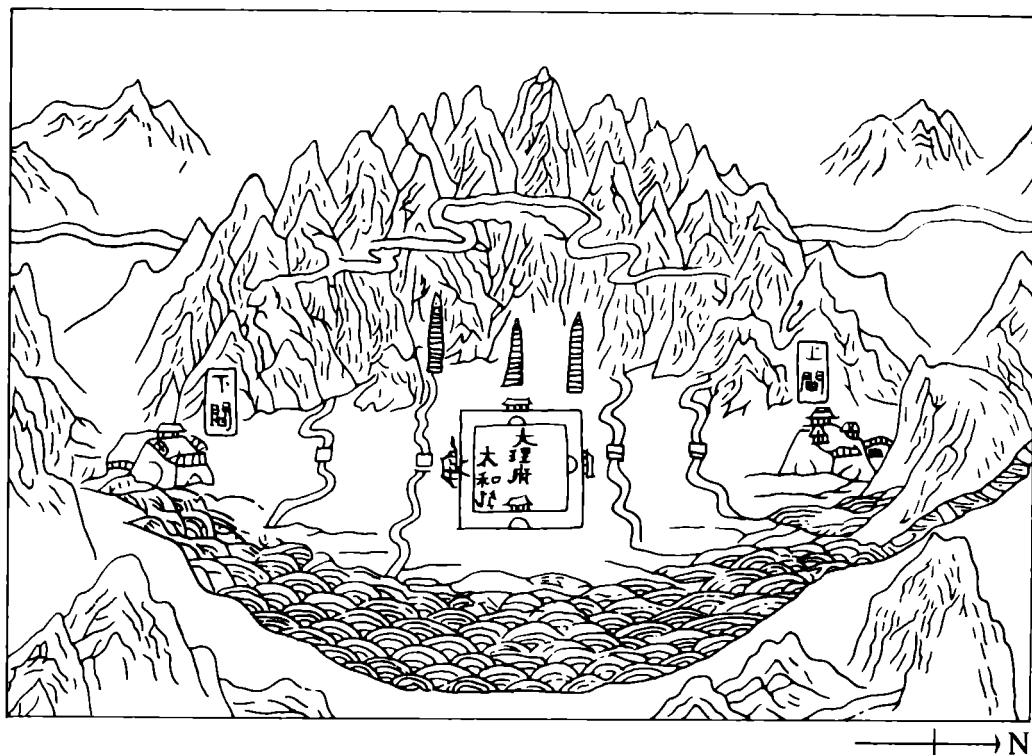
It is true of course that the Te-hua inscription was written specifically as an *apologia* for Nan-chao's actions during these years. We should thus regard its righteous claims of innocence and good intentions with some skepticism.

However, Chinese sources too indicate that it was T'ang officials in Szechwan, not the Nan-chao leaders, who subsequently precipitated full-scale war.<sup>12</sup>

In the summer of 751, the regional commander of Chien-nan, Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung, initiated a punitive campaign against Nan-chao. As an augury of what was to come, that expedition began with a heavy defeat for the Chinese forces at Lu-nan, the point where their route crossed the Upper Yangtze.<sup>13</sup> Yet even then, Ko-lo-feng was still willing to extend his apologies for the Chang Ch'ien-t'o affair. Moreover, he offered to return those Chinese who had been taken captive and even to repair the damage that had been done to Yao-chou. More importantly, however, he also issued the following warning: 'At present, large Tibetan armies are pressing on the frontier. If you do not accept our proposal, then we will turn our allegiance to Tibet, and Yun-nan will no longer belong to the T'ang.'<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately for China, Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung was incensed rather than persuaded by this candid threat. He imprisoned the Nan-chao envoys and pressed on with the campaign.<sup>15</sup>

One very interesting feature of this campaign is the surprise flanking attack on the Ta-li plain, ordered by Hsien-yü, that reportedly crossed the formidable Tien-ts'ang mountain range from the west.<sup>16</sup> The sheer topographical difficulties of such a maneuver make it seem almost impossible. (See the accompanying sketch map, traced from a sixteenth-century gazetteer of Yunnan, on p. 72.) Yet it must be remembered that, only a few years before, a large Chinese force under Kao Hsien-chih had crossed the equally formidable Pamirs in a campaign against the Tibetans.<sup>17</sup> It seems that the Ta-li plain was not so completely invulnerable to attack from the west as has been claimed.<sup>18</sup>

Although Ko-lo-feng still professed his loyalty, Nan-chao could no longer afford to be without an ally. Thus, true to his warning, the Nan-chao king did not hesitate to turn to Tibet. It should be remembered that the Tibetan chronicles provide strong evidence that Nan-chao had been in direct contact with Tibet throughout the first half of the eighth century. There was therefore precedent for the high-level mission that was sent to the Tibetan capital with articles of tribute in 751.<sup>19</sup> The Tibetan court responded with lavish gifts and agreed to regard Nan-chao as a 'fraternal state' (*hsiung-ti chih kuo*). That this relationship was one of elder to younger brother, however, is reflected in a title that the Tibetans bestowed on Ko-lo-feng: 'Tsan-p'u chung,' i.e., 'younger brother' (*chung*) of the *Tsan-p'u*, or Tibetan king.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, Ko-lo-feng was given the title of 'eastern emperor' (*tung-ti*), and a gold seal and badges (*kao-shen*) acknowledging his authority were presented to him and his ministers. The mountains and rivers were invoked in an oath of fidelity, and Nan-chao adopted a new, Tibetan-centered era name, beginning with the first day of the lunar year, 752.<sup>21</sup>



Map 5 A sixteenth-century view of the Ta-li plain

In the meantime, there was an attempt at the T'ang court to cover up the disastrous results of Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung's campaign. In fact, we are told that Hsien-yü's patron at court, Yang Kuo-chung, actually claimed that the expedition into Yunnan had been a success.<sup>22</sup> Like Hsien-yü, Yang was himself a native of Szechwan, from a mid-level aristocratic family with links to the Sui ruling house. Through his close family relationship to Emperor Hsüan-tsung's favorite courtesan and principal consort, Yang Kuei-fei, Yang Kuo-chung had achieved an extraordinary rise to high position at the T'ang court. In Ch'ang-an, Yang had managed to gain control over T'ang finances while jockeying for position in the struggle to succeed the 'virtual dictator' of the court during the 740's, Li Lin-fu, who by this time was old and ailing.<sup>23</sup> One way that Yang sought to assure his position at court was through his personal control over the armies of Szechwan, the only major region whose troops remained under the control of Chinese commanders instead of foreign generals in T'ang employ.<sup>24</sup> Accordingly, Yang arranged for his protégé, Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung, to be appointed to the post of regional commander of the province.<sup>25</sup>

In the coming showdown with the military might of the regional commander of Ho-peï, the infamous An Lu-shan, and his allied forces, it was essential for Yang both to maintain absolute control over the troops of Szechwan and to demonstrate their effectiveness. Thus Hsien-yü Chung-

t'ung's zealous pursuit of the campaign against Nan-chao may have been designed to enlarge the power base in Szechwan as well as to increase the prestige of the Szechwanese army.<sup>26</sup> In any event, it is clear why Yang Kuo-chung would have wanted to cover up the ensuing disaster. However, it is hard to see how such a major setback could be covered up for long, even from the uninterested gaze of a well sheltered emperor.

Soon thereafter, Yang Kuo-chung had himself appointed regional commander of Szechwan. When Li Lin-fu actually ordered him to return to Szechwan to take up his post, however, Yang relied on the Lady Yang's intercession, and on his own tears before the emperor, to have the order rescinded. Soon the ailing Li Lin-fu died, and Yang Kuo-chung was himself entrusted with governing the T'ang empire.<sup>27</sup>

Yang, however, was not done with his intentions to chastise Nan-chao. Another large-scale campaign was being readied. To supplement the regular T'ang forces in Szechwan and to replace the large number of soldiers who had been lost in the previous expedition, reinforcements (evidently including a contingent of captured warriors from the distant northeastern frontier state of Hsi) were sent in to guard the Nan-chao frontiers.<sup>28</sup> More importantly, Yang Kuo-chung resorted to a very extensive program of conscription.<sup>29</sup>

By mid-century, the state of the T'ang military, especially those forces not controlled by non-Chinese frontier generals, had declined markedly.<sup>30</sup> The old *fu-ping* military system, designed to defend the frontiers by calling up units of peasant-soldiers in rotation, was totally moribund. The dead and deserters were not replaced, and horses, weapons, and supplies were virtually depleted. Yet whenever possible, these dead and deserted souls were retained on the rolls so that corrupt military officials could personally enrich themselves with whatever supplies they could falsely requisition for them. From 743 on, we are told, conscription procedures were utterly undermined and the whole system was rife with corruption. Those who were taken into the ranks were usually vagrants with no military experience.<sup>31</sup>

By this time, the prestige of the regular T'ang armies had ebbed away. Armies controlled directly by the T'ang court were virtually powerless. The only effective troops were those concentrated in the northern frontier regions under foreign generals.<sup>32</sup> It is, in fact, quite possible that Nan-chao's decision to challenge the T'ang, cautious though it was, was based on an accurate assessment of the decline of T'ang military effectiveness.

The program of conscription ordered by Yang Kuo-chung in the early 750's was carried out with great severity and consequently resulted in much social disruption. It is reported that even those who were entitled to permanent exemption because of their families' previous military services were intentionally drafted. Quotas still could not be met, so trickery had to be

used. Indigents were enticed to banquets where they were suddenly seized, shackled, provided with coarse clothing, and sent off to the frontier. If any were lost along the way, the wardens who accompanied them would be put in their place.<sup>33</sup>

Half a century later, the great T'ang poet and statesman Po Chü-i wrote a poem to denounce the folly of these campaigns into Yunnan and the harsh program of conscription enacted by Yang at this time. In Arthur Waley's translation (here quoted with a number of my own revisions), the poem has a very modern ring.

*The Old Man with the Broken Arm*  
(An Admonition against Militarism)

In Hsin-feng an old man, four score and eight,  
The hair at his temples, his beard and eyebrows, all white as snow,  
Leaning on the shoulders of his great-great-grandson, walks in front  
of the inn.  
With his left arm he leans on his great-great-grandson's shoulders; his  
right arm is broken  
I asked the old man how many years had passed since he broke his arm  
And also asked the cause of the injury, how and why it had happened.  
The old man replied: 'My native place is Hsin-feng District.  
I was born in a wise reign, without campaigns or battles.'<sup>34</sup>  
I was accustomed to hearing, from the Pear Garden, the sounds of flute  
and song.<sup>35</sup>  
Naught I knew of banner and lance, nothing of arrow or bow.  
But ere long, in the era of T'ien-pao,<sup>36</sup> came the great levy of troops.  
In every house with three grown men, one was taken.  
And those to whom the lot fell, where were they taken to?  
Five months' journey, ten thousand *li*, away to Yun-nan.<sup>37</sup>  
We heard it said that in Yun-nan there flows the Lu River;<sup>38</sup>  
As the flowers fall from the pepper-trees, poisonous vapors rise.  
Whenever a great army wades across, the water seems to boil;  
When barely ten have gotten past, two or three have died.  
To the north of my village, to the south of my village, the sound of  
weeping and wailing;  
Children parting from fathers and mothers, husbands parting from  
wives.  
Everyone says that whenever expeditions are sent against the Man  
Of tens of thousands sent out, not a single man returns.  
At that time, I (now an old man) was only twenty-four,  
And my name appeared in the report to the Board of War.  
In the depth of night, hardly daring to let anyone know,  
I secretly took a large stone and dashed it against my arm.  
For drawing the bow and waving the banner now wholly unfit,  
Henceforth I could avoid the expeditions into Yun-nan.  
Broken bones and injured tendons could not fail to hurt;  
Yet the plan allowed me to choose to return, to go back to native soil.



Sixty years ago this arm of mine was broken;  
But though I sacrificed a limb, I preserved my life.  
Even now on cold and cloudy nights, when the wind and the rain blow,  
Straight through till the morning's dawn I cannot sleep for pain.  
    I cannot sleep for pain;  
    Yet I can never regret it,  
Delighting in the old age that I alone have attained.  
For otherwise, long ago, at the ford of the Lu River,  
My body slain, my soul deserted, my bones ungathered,  
I would have become a ghost in Yun-nan, always looking for home,  
Over the burial mound of the ten thousand, mournfully weeping.'  
    So the old man spoke.  
    I bid you listen and heed.  
    Have you not heard  
That the chief minister of the K'ai-yuan era, Chancellor Sung Ching,  
Did not reward frontier exploits, lest a spirit of aggression prevail?<sup>39</sup>  
    And have you not heard  
That the chief minister of the T'ien-pao period, Yang Kuo-chung,  
Desiring to win imperial favor, started a frontier war?  
Frontier merit was not achieved, but the people's anger was aroused.  
Just ask the old man from Hsin-feng with the broken arm.<sup>40</sup>

Could this poem really have been based on a chance encounter with the old man from Hsin-feng, a district near the capital of Ch'ang-an? Or is this a purely imagined political satire, of the kind for which Po Chü-i is justly famous? For our purposes, it hardly matters, for there is ample additional evidence to confirm the unpopularity of these campaigns and the great disruption which they caused. It is certain that wherever conscription for the Yunnan expedition was carried out, it provoked fear, bitterness, and popular resistance.<sup>41</sup>

Nevertheless, Yang Kuo-chung and the generals under his command pressed on with their plans. In the summer of 752, Yang reported that T'ang troops in Szechwan had scored a great victory over some 600,000 (!) Tibetan soldiers who had been sent to aid Nan-chao and that they had recovered much of the territory that previously had been lost.<sup>42</sup> Even aside from the impossibly high figure, however, one tends to be suspicious of this claim. Some modern scholars have argued compellingly that this report, like earlier ones presented at court by Yang, was a complete fabrication.<sup>43</sup>

In the summer of 753, according to the Te-hua inscription, the Chinese attempted to re-establish control over Yao-chou. However, Nan-chao cut off the Chinese supply route and surrounded the fort. Within two days, Yao-chou again fell easily, 'like pulling up a rotten stump.'<sup>44</sup>

The most concerted Chinese effort against Nan-chao, however, was not to come until the following year, in the summer of 754. At that time, a general in Yang Kuo-chung's employ in Szechwan named Li Mi led a force of seventy

thousand soldiers into Yunnan. Simultaneously, Ho Lü-kuang (sometimes mistakenly written Ho Fu-kuang) led another large contingent of Chinese soldiers in a coordinated attack on Nan-chao from the south.<sup>45</sup> Some sources indicate that Ho had also invaded Nan-chao from the south in the previous summer.<sup>46</sup> Chinese accounts of this campaign say that Ko-lo-feng cleverly ordered his forces to fall back, drawing Li Mi's army deeply into Nan-chao territory. When they reached the Nan-chao capital (still at T'ai-ho-ch'eng), Ko-lo-feng's forces simply encamped within its walls, relying on its defenses (which must have been effective to have resisted so large a Chinese army) rather than giving battle. This stratagem worked well, for soon T'ang supplies ran low. 'Seven or eight out of ten' of the Chinese soldiers began dying from starvation and virulent disease. When they tried to retreat, Nan-chao forces rushed out to attack them. Li Mi himself was captured and his army was virtually wiped out.<sup>47</sup>

The Nan-chao account of this campaign is slightly different. According to the Te-hua inscription, the combined T'ang armies were cornered at Teng-ch'uan both by Nan-chao and by Tibetan forces. The Chinese were sorely beset: 'They had no time to draw their bows. They could not wield their swords fast enough. Though it was daylight, shadows were obscured; red dust dimmed the sky. Blood flowed, forming rivers; corpses piled up, blocking the streams.'<sup>48</sup> The entire T'ang army was annihilated, and its generals were drowned.<sup>49</sup>

Whichever of the accounts is the more accurate, it is clear that the T'ang forces suffered tremendous losses and a great defeat. Again, we are told, Yang Kuo-chung attempted to hide the severity of this defeat from the T'ang court; and obsessively, he sent out even more troops against Nan-chao. Altogether, it is reported, nearly 200,000 Chinese were killed in the various campaigns in Yunnan.<sup>50</sup>

These figures are probably exaggerated, but the significance of this series of defeats in the southwest was unmistakably profound. The soldiers lost in these campaigns were some of the best that the T'ang court had left at its disposal. Yet because of the difficulties of topography and climate, the dangers of malarial infection, and the inadequacies of supplies, the majority of them did not return.<sup>51</sup> Although many people throughout China were grieved and incensed at the wasteful folly of these campaigns, no one dared to challenge Yang Kuo-chung at court, especially after he assumed the dominant position upon the death of Li Lin-fu in 753. When even the powerful eunuch Kao Li-shih warned Emperor Hsüan-tsung that the repeated loss of T'ang armies in Yunnan had left the court completely defenseless against dangerous frontier generals, he was told to mind his own business.<sup>52</sup>

All of this could only have had a baneful effect on the T'ang, just when it

was about to face its greatest challenge, as Kao Li-shih (and no doubt many others) had foreseen. It seems certain that the calamitous An Lu-shan rebellion, which began in 755, would have occurred regardless of the outcome of the campaigns against Nan-chao. Yet the loss of precious troops and the demoralization and popular unrest caused by these campaigns surely did not help the dynasty to cope with An Lu-shan's challenge.<sup>53</sup>

On the other hand, it was quite natural that Nan-chao would take advantage of the tremendous difficulties that the T'ang experienced because of the An Lu-shan rebellion. Forced by the rebellion to call in all of the frontier armies that remained loyal, the T'ang court quickly lost control over many outlying regions, some as far away as the modern Soviet republics in Central Asia. Thus, in the southwest, the Chinese could hardly afford to expend much additional effort. Fortunately, the T'ang court was able to rely on the Tsang-ko leader Chao Kuo-chen in Ch'ien-chung (a region which included modern southeastern Szechwan, southwestern Hupei, western Hunan, and northern Kweichow) to maintain stability and loyalty to the dynasty in that region at least, throughout this difficult period.<sup>54</sup> This was important, for conditions in neighboring Szechwan over the next three decades would not be so favorable.

In 756, Nan-chao captured Sui-chou and Hui-t'ung and occupied territory as far north as the Ch'ing-ch'i pass, just south of the Ta-tu River.<sup>55</sup> According to the Te-hua inscription, the Nan-chao attack against this area was at the behest of its sovereign ally Tibet. Sui-chou resisted, and its defenders consequently were destroyed. Hui-t'ung, on the other hand, capitulated, and its occupants were not harmed. In 757, the Chinese tried to re-establish control over Sui-chou and refortified T'ai-teng, to the north of it. Again it was at Tibet's suggestion, we are told, that Nan-chao joined in a coordinated attack on Sui-chou, which was again captured. In addition, T'ai-teng was razed, and many Chinese were taken captive.<sup>56</sup>

Having accomplished so much against the T'ang, Ko-lo-feng next turned his kingdom's attention to its southern borders. He personally led campaigns against peoples called the Hsün-ch'uan, the Luo-hsing, and the Ch'i-hsiang, all of whom were located probably in what is now the southwestern part of Yunnan province.<sup>57</sup> According to the Te-hua inscription, these peoples occupied rich territories, but they were barely civilized. Thus, in 762, Ko-lo-feng decided to conquer and, indeed, to civilize them. Again, those who submitted were treated well, while those who resisted were suppressed.<sup>58</sup> This also seems to have been the period during which Nan-chao first established its domination over the Pyu kingdom of upper Burma.<sup>59</sup>

In addition, Ko-lo-feng consolidated Nan-chao control in the east. An administrative post was established in An-ning, both to supervise salt pro-

duction there and to oversee the territory formerly controlled by the Ts'uan. In the winter of 763, this area was surveyed and a site around modern Kunming was selected, both for its strategic location and for its ability to support a large population. In 765, Ko-lo-feng's son Feng-ch'ieh-i was sent there to establish a new fortress, which was named Che-tung. Feng-ch'ieh-i remained at Che-tung and apparently was given authority over the eastern part of the kingdom, the area taken over from the fractious and demoralized Ts'uan.<sup>60</sup>

Any further consolidation of control in Yunnan, however, was blocked by Nan-chao's own ally Tibet. It is difficult to know how far direct Tibetan authority extended into Yunnan at this time. Probably the furthest Tibetan outpost was at Shen-ch'uan, located immediately north of the famous iron-chain suspension bridge across the Upper Yangtze at T'ieh-ch'iao. However, indirect Tibetan control must have extended much further, for throughout the eighth century Tibet dominated and supported the peoples of this north-western corner of Yunnan. Moreover, Tibet offered sponsorship and protection to the remnants of the ruling families of those original Six Chao who had fled north to avoid total conquest and unification by P'i-lo-ko and Ko-lo-feng.<sup>61</sup> There is no indication that Nan-chao ever discussed the disposition of these peoples and this territory with their Tibetan allies. What is certain is that throughout the period of the alliance with Tibet, Nan-chao took no aggressive actions against any of the peoples in this area.

### **The achievements of Ko-lo-feng's reign**

Nevertheless, many lasting accomplishments had been achieved by Ko-lo-feng. Not only had he extended the limits of Nan-chao territorial control to the northeast and to the south and consolidated Nan-chao administrative authority in the east, he also had strengthened Nan-chao's internal organization, establishing the basic pattern of Nan-chao government, a subject to which we must now turn briefly.

To some extent, Nan-chao political institutions probably drew upon local patterns of organization which had been developed by the peoples of Yunnan over many centuries. It is likely that this local political organization was already much influenced by Chinese institutions. However, during Ko-lo-feng's reign, Nan-chao government was evidently greatly elaborated on the basis of the administrative model of T'ang China, which seems to have been borrowed with varying degrees of adaptation by almost all of the sedentary societies with whom the T'ang had close and extended relations. It was under Ko-lo-feng that the elaboration of this governmental pattern is first clearly evident.

Unfortunately, our sources tell us little about how Nan-chao government actually worked, how policies were formulated and enacted. However, the

basic outline of Nan-chao's bureaucratic organization is relatively clear. The Nan-chao king seems to have been a true autocrat, probably with fewer restrictions on his absolute power than the Chinese emperor. However, there was a council of chief ministers (*ch'ing-p'ing kuan*) who acted under him as a deliberative and advisory body. Each of the *ch'ing-p'ing kuan* held concurrent rank as general (*chün-chiang*) in the military organization.<sup>62</sup> In fact, it seems that virtually all civil offices were awarded on the basis of demonstrated military merit. In theory there were six *ch'ing-p'ing kuan*; however, this number seems to have fluctuated a great deal, and more often there were seven or eight.<sup>63</sup> The council itself had a variety of functional offices, which saw to the transmission of documents and the implementation of policy.

In its earliest elaborated form, in the middle of the eighth century, the Nan-chao bureaucracy had under the council of *ch'ing-p'ing kuan* a group of functionally distinct ministries called the six *ts'ao*. These seem to have corresponded to the six ministries or boards (*liu-pu*) responsible for the routine administration of government in the T'ang system. They may reflect even more closely the six functional divisions of provincial government under the early T'ang, which also were termed *ts'ao*.<sup>64</sup> In the Nan-chao system, the six *ts'ao* seem to have been responsible for the administration of the military (*ping-ts'ao*), taxation (*hu-ts'ao*), foreign relations (*k'o-ts'ao*), punishments (*hsing-ts'ao* or *fa-ts'ao*), personnel (*shih-ts'ao*, sometimes mistakenly written *kung-ts'ao*), and public welfare (*ts'ang-ts'ao*, also sometimes written *hui-ts'ao*).<sup>65</sup> Nan-chao military organization was also highly bureaucratic. At the top, there were twelve generals in theory, though again the numbers seem to have varied. Six of them were assigned to the Nan-chao court, while the remaining six were sent out to serve concurrently as heads of the basic units of local government. At first there were six regional administrative organizations called *chien*. Their number grew significantly with time, however, and later they came to be called *chieh-tu shih*, perhaps in imitation of the evolving T'ang system of regional governmental control.<sup>66</sup>

In addition to these obvious T'ang models, however, some Tibetan influence can also be seen in Nan-chao administrative practices, especially its detailed sumptuary laws concerning the wearing of tiger skins by different classes of officials and its intricate system of badges (*kao-shen*) which had been presented to the Nan-chao court by the Tibetan king in the 750's.<sup>67</sup> However, there seems to have been no direct Tibetan influence on Nan-chao political organization or terminology, though there may well have been some similarities, since Tibet too had borrowed from Chinese institutions.

The Nan-chao armies included both infantry and cavalry, in addition to elite guard units. Evidently, advancement in Nan-chao society was tied closely to military achievement; bravery was rewarded, while the slightest sign of

cowardice was dealt with harshly. In general, troops were expected to provide their own weapons and mounts. Provisions were assigned sparingly to encourage the soldiers to accomplish their task quickly. Tight discipline was maintained over the army; however, once they had passed into enemy territory, soldiers were freely allowed to pillage and provide for themselves.<sup>68</sup>

Perhaps also reflecting T'ang practices, there was an elaborate system of examinations for both Nan-chao soldiers and civil officials. Soldiers were required to demonstrate both skill and endurance in tests of archery, jousting, climbing, jumping, swimming, fencing, and the like. There were set periods for military maneuvers and yearly inspections of troops and their weapons.<sup>69</sup> In addition, all officers, both military and civil, were required to show mathematical skills and a basic degree of literacy. The fact that written instructions were sent down to the village level whenever mobilization was necessary shows that literacy was perhaps not uncommon within the Nan-chao kingdom.<sup>70</sup> And later, some of the Nan-chao elite were to demonstrate a high degree of literary accomplishment.<sup>71</sup>

In assessing Ko-lo-feng's reign, one must conclude that his greatest achievement was simply to have maintained Nan-chao's political and economic independence in the face of these large-scale and vindictive Chinese invasions. Although to do so required an alliance with and some degree of subordination to Tibet, nonetheless Nan-chao's autonomy within its own territory, exclusive of the northwestern corner, was retained. It is natural that Ko-lo-feng would have sought the support of an alliance with Tibet when confronted with the prospect of full-scale war with China, especially given the long-standing pattern of contacts between Nan-chao and Tibet. However, considering the decline of T'ang military effectiveness and Yunnan's problematic terrain and climate, it is not impossible that Nan-chao alone could have repulsed the T'ang expeditions against them. Nor is it clear that Tibetan military assistance to the Nan-chao cause in these years was so great anyway.

Still, it was essential to cultivate Tibetan support, if for no other reason than that Nan-chao could scarcely risk any possibility of Tibetan attack at the same time that it was at war with China. Eventually, Tibetan demands on its ally would become onerous, and Ko-lo-feng's successor would have to find a way to break away from this unequal alliance. However, subordination to Tibet and the tribute and duties that it entailed may have seemed a small price to pay at the time.

Thus it is not surprising that the Te-hua inscription erected near the Nan-chao capital of T'ai-ho-ch'eng in 766 should praise Ko-lo-feng warmly.<sup>72</sup> The main purpose of this inscription, however, was to disclaim responsibility for the break with the T'ang and to emphasize that hostilities were forced upon Nan-chao. Perhaps the Nan-chao leaders did truly regret the break with China;

certainly the inscription indicates a realization that the break was not likely to be permanent. Ko-lo-feng himself is said to have remarked that, 'my predecessors have for generations served China and have repeatedly received appointments and rewards. Later heirs may well re-establish that relationship. If an emissary of the T'ang should arrive, they can point to this inscription to cleanse away any charges against me.'<sup>73</sup> In this light, Nan-chao's alliance with Tibet appears to have been purely an expedience, to be dropped when circumstances no longer favored it.

### **T'ang efforts to deal with the alliance**

The alliance between Nan-chao and Tibet, however, gave T'ang China considerable cause for alarm. For the preceding two decades the southwestern frontier had been relatively untroubled. Even the Tibetans, who were preoccupied by their own internal problems and confronted by Arab expansion and consolidation in the west, had not been much of a threat.<sup>74</sup> Now, suddenly, not only had Nan-chao been provoked into becoming a formidable enemy rather than a fairly cooperative ally but also, and far worse, they had been driven into the Tibetan camp. The whole length of T'ang China's western frontier abruptly was occupied by a dangerous alliance of truly potent enemies. Moreover, China had suffered great losses in the Yunnan campaigns. And with the outbreak of the An Lu-shan rebellion, all available men were needed to fight for the dynasty's survival. Thus in the classic pattern of the interaction between 'external disaster' and 'internal disorder,' T'ang China was hamstrung by rebellion just when she needed a strong military presence on the frontiers; and a relatively stable frontier situation was turned into one fraught with danger, just when the dynasty could least afford it.

It was natural that both Nan-chao and Tibet should take advantage of this situation. Nan-chao, at Tibetan behest, had attacked and captured the Sui-chou region in 756–757, as we have seen. Thereafter, however, there is little indication of any Nan-chao aggression in the Szechwan area, despite the disorder caused by a series of minor rebellions in that province in the late 750's and 760's.<sup>75</sup>

Yet if Nan-chao refrained from fully exploiting T'ang weakness and disorder, the same thing can hardly be said for Tibet. The severity and the audacity of Tibetan attacks on T'ang territory increased throughout the 750's, culminating in their takeover of most T'ang possessions in Central Asia, their capture of the vitally important horse-breeding provinces of Ho-hsi and Lung-yu in the northwest, and their brief seizure in 763 of the T'ang capital itself. It is interesting to speculate whether Nan-chao troops may have been employed in the Tibetan conquests in the northwest and perhaps even in the capture of Ch'ang-an. Although there is no decisive evidence about this

one way or the other, it is true that the Tibetans customarily used the troops both of its allies and of its subjugated peoples in the forefront of their campaigns.<sup>76</sup> And there is firm indication that they did later seek Nan-chao troops for campaigns against the Uighurs in the northwest.<sup>77</sup> More than this cannot be said with certainty.

In fact, records concerning the Nan-chao kingdom in the Chinese sources for the period from 756 to 779 are very sparse. And the major supplementary document for this period, the Te-hua inscription, only covers the years up to 766. There is thus a significant gap in our knowledge of the Nan-chao kingdom during these years, with regard both to its relations with China and Tibet and to its internal development and consolidation.

There are therefore few sources that we can consult to clear up one puzzling bit of information concerning the year 776. In that year, certain Chinese sources mention that Nan-chao joined with *T'ang* forces to repulse Tibetan attacks on Szechwan.<sup>78</sup> Another reliable source specifically identifies Ko-lo-feng as the leader of Nan-chao forces in support of the *T'ang* at the time of this Tibetan attack.<sup>79</sup> This is very difficult to reconcile with the overall pattern of relations among these three powers during the latter half of the eighth century, for the bulk of the evidence indicates that Nan-chao was firmly, if not whole-heartedly, in the Tibetan camp down to the 790's. Wang Chung, who has copiously annotated the sections on Tibet and Nan-chao in the *New Tang History (Hsin T'ang-shu)*, therefore concludes that these sources must be wrong concerning this reported aberration in the three-way relationship.<sup>80</sup>

Satō Hisashi, however, offers a more compelling explanation. Supplementing the Chinese sources with the Tibetan annals for this period, he notes that during the reign of Trhisong Detsen (754–797) the 'Myava Blanc' reportedly revolted and were subsequently quelled, reverting to their earlier submissive allegiance.<sup>81</sup> It is unfortunate that the annals do not specify the exact year in which this occurred.<sup>82</sup> However, as substantiated in chapter 2, it is certain that the 'Myava Blanc' is a reference to Nan-chao, or at least to some of the peoples within that kingdom. Satō thinks that the events reported in the Chinese sources and in the Tibetan annals are probably linked and that they indicate a temporary break between one segment of the Nan-chao population and their Tibetan overlords in the mid-770's.<sup>83</sup> If that is so, it is still certain from the Tibetan annals and from subsequent well documented events that the rupture between Nan-chao and Tibet could not have lasted long.

Throughout the 770's, *T'ang* forces in Szechwan seem to have been consistently successful in repelling periodic Tibetan attacks.<sup>84</sup> The principal figure associated with these successes was an official named Ts'ui Ning (originally called Ts'ui Kan). Although Ts'ui was said to have been from a



scholarly family, he was more inclined to the military arts. As a youth, he went to Szechwan, where he enrolled as a foot soldier in the service of Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung. Ts'ui participated in the ill-fated Li Mi campaign into Yunnan but managed to survive that debacle and to return to Ch'eng-tu.<sup>85</sup> (This is an indication that there were probably more Chinese survivors of the T'ang expeditions into Yunnan in the 750's than our romanticized sources state.<sup>86</sup>) In Szechwan, Ts'ui gradually rose to higher office and established a reputation for himself. Eventually, he was appointed to lead a campaign against the Tibetans and their Ch'iang allies in the Hsi-shan region, northwest of Ch'eng-tu. In that campaign, Ts'ui's exploits became legendary and are reported subsequently to have greatly intimidated the enemy. Equally important, Ts'ui had gained the loyal support of the provincial military forces.

This was in great contrast to the new regional commander of the region, Kuo Ying-i. A dispute soon arose between Kuo and Ts'ui (Kuo is said to have taken Ts'ui's family hostage and to have violated his women), and soon Ts'ui found a pretext for mutiny. In the struggle that followed, Ts'ui enjoyed the support of almost all of the region's troops, and soon Kuo was killed. The new court-appointed regional commander, Tu Hung-chien, was apparently wary of suffering Kuo's fate. Upon his arrival in Ch'eng-tu, he therefore petitioned that the court transfer his command to Ts'ui.<sup>87</sup> The court was concerned about the continuing Tibetan threat to the Szechwan frontier and preoccupied by its own troubles. It therefore decided to secure Ts'ui's support by giving him the post of regional commander in 767.<sup>88</sup>

Thereafter, Ts'ui seems to have used his successes against the Tibetans as the lever for maintaining his own power in Szechwan. As long as the Tibetan threat against Szechwan seemed severe and as long as Ts'ui was successful in controlling it, the T'ang court was reluctant to replace him. It is reported that Ts'ui also maintained the court's favor by sending his brother to Ch'ang-an to cultivate the support of high officials, especially the chief minister Yuan Tsai and his sons, with liberal bribes. Ts'ui thereby enjoyed the security of his position in Szechwan for more than ten years. Although Ts'ui's administration reportedly grew increasingly extravagant and his life-style increasingly debauched, the court could do nothing.<sup>89</sup> Some modern scholars have concluded that Ts'ui in fact probably exaggerated in his reports both the extent of the Tibetan threat to Szechwan and the consistency of his victories over them.<sup>90</sup>

However, the T'ang court had not completely forgotten that Ts'ui Ning had in effect usurped his position in Szechwan. Finally, in 779, Ts'ui was persuaded to return to the T'ang capital briefly on some unspecified pretext.<sup>91</sup> It was clear that Ts'ui, once at court, was meant to be kept from returning to Ch'eng-tu.

**The invasion of 779**

It was at this point that the Tibetans, in conjunction with their Nan-chao allies, chose to mount a massive invasion into Szechwan. A reported total of 100,000 enemy soldiers were sent in a three-pronged attack toward Ch'eng-tu, the Nan-chao forces invading from the southwest, from their captured base in Sui-chou. Some of the sources which describe the invasion are ambiguous about whether it was Tibet or Nan-chao that initiated this large-scale attack.<sup>92</sup> However, in what is probably the fullest and most explicit account, in Ts'ui Ning's biography in the *Old T'ang History (Chiu T'ang-shu)*, the following manifesto is clearly attributed to the Tibetan king: 'I want to make Szechwan our eastern prefecture. Skilled craftsmen will all be sent to Lhasa, where they will uniformly be levied merely one piece of fine silk a year.'<sup>93</sup>

The progress of the invaders was apparently swift. They overran much territory, and the populace of Szechwan is reported to have fled in panic to the hills. However effective the troops of Szechwan had been against Tibetan attacks under Ts'ui Ning's command, the generals who led them in Ts'ui's absence proved to be totally unable to mount an effective resistance.<sup>94</sup> Perhaps the fact that Tibet and Nan-chao chose the occasion of Ts'ui's absence to invade in force was the strongest argument for his crucial role in Szechwan.

Alarmed, the T'ang court was about to return Ts'ui to Ch'eng-tu to deal with this critical situation. However, Ts'ui's main antagonist at court, the chief minister Yang Yen, strenuously objected. He argued that Ts'ui's usurpation in Szechwan had deprived the dynasty of full control over this rich territory. He denigrated Ts'ui's abilities and pointed out that it was only by the circumstance of rebellion that he had risen to power there; if the court were to return him now it would not be likely that Ts'ui would be successful against the invaders. And even if he were to be successful, the T'ang court would still not be in direct control there. 'Thus the riches of Szechwan by defeat would surely be lost and by victory also would not be regained.'<sup>95</sup> The emperor was thus persuaded to reconsider and to retain Ts'ui in a sinecure at court.

In his place, the famous T'ang general Li Sheng was ordered to lead an army of around nine thousand court and provincial troops from the north to rescue Szechwan. Few details are provided, but we know that the results of this campaign were entirely in the T'ang favor. The combined forces of Tibet and Nan-chao were routed and chased from the province with great losses.<sup>96</sup>

This proved to be a significant victory for the T'ang. Of immediate importance, it prevented any further loss of territory and stabilized the Szechwan frontier for several years to come. It seems also to have weakened Tibetan ability to take aggressive actions against China's borders. For this and perhaps

other reasons, the period after 779 thus saw an improvement in Sino-Tibetan relations. Border skirmishes diminished in intensity and frequency; prisoner exchanges were arranged. Serious negotiations got under way and culminated in 783 in the signing of the Ch'ing-shui treaty of border demarcation.<sup>97</sup> Along the Szechwan frontier, the Hsi-shan mountains and the Ta-tu River were chosen as the natural frontiers. East of these, it was agreed, was T'ang territory; to the west and southwest, specifically including the territory of the Moso and other local peoples, all belonged to Tibet.<sup>98</sup> Relations had so improved that Tibet even agreed to help the T'ang royal house put down the acutely serious Chu Tz'u rebellion, which had once again brought political chaos to China.<sup>99</sup> The Tibetans, however, demanded a price for their support: the cession of additional territory in the northwest. When after the Chu Tz'u rebellion had been quashed the T'ang court did not honor what the Tibetans regarded as their side of the bargain, relations were impaired even further and the newly concluded treaty became a dead letter.<sup>100</sup>

More significantly for our story, however, the T'ang victory in 779 had a lasting effect also on the course of Nan-chao's relations with Tibet. The Tibetan court is reported to have reacted to this defeat with stern anger, executing the leaders of the unsuccessful campaign. Presumably, Nan-chao generals were included in this punishment. In any event, the failure of the invasion attempt together with Tibet's harsh measures alarmed the new Nan-chao king, Ko-lo-feng's grandson, I-mou-hsün.<sup>101</sup> It was at this time that he moved the Nan-chao capital to the newly built fortress city of Yang-hsieh-mieh, modern Ta-li.<sup>102</sup> His alarm soon turned to resentment, for Tibet began to make ever more onerous demands on its ally. Heavy levies and yearly quotas of soldiers were required; strategic Nan-chao territory was taken over by Tibetan garrisons.<sup>103</sup>

It was also at this time that the Tibetans are said to have granted a new title to the Nan-chao king: *jih-tung wang*, or 'king of the region east of the sun.'<sup>104</sup> Wang Chung regards this as a clear diminution of the status of the Nan-chao kingdom in its relationship to the Tibetan court. Before, the Nan-chao king had been addressed as the 'eastern emperor' (*tung-ti*) and regarded as a younger brother. Now his grandson was to be treated as a simple vassal.<sup>105</sup> On the basis of the existing evidence, Wang's interpretation seems a little forced. However, it is certain that from this point on the relationship between Nan-chao and Tibet was increasingly characterized by resentment and mutual distrust.

A major factor in this trend seems to have been the character and background of the new Nan-chao ruler, I-mou-hsün. And, apparently, a critically important factor in the life of I-mou-hsün was the relationship between him and his tutor and advisor, the captured Chinese official Cheng Hui.

### Cheng Hui and I-mou-hsün

Cheng Hui, a native of Hsiang-chou, in modern Honan, was serving as magistrate of Hsi-lu, a district attached to Sui-chou, when that region was overrun by Nan-chao in 756–757. Cheng himself was taken captive at that time. He, however, proved himself well able to adapt to his new circumstances. We are told that his Nan-chao captors realized that he was no common soldier and valued him highly for his learning and his governmental expertise. Indicative of that esteem, he was given a new name by Ko-lo-feng: Man-li, *i.e.*, 'of benefit to the Man.'<sup>106</sup> He was soon appointed tutor to the royal princes, including I-mou-hsün, through which position he gained the intimate respect and favor of a succession of Nan-chao rulers. Thus, it is likely that he personally had much to do with the process by which the Nan-chao kingdom took on an increasingly Chinese flavor, even as it continued to ally with Tibet against the T'ang.<sup>107</sup>

For these reasons, by 779 we can assume that I-mou-hsün was already well disposed towards Chinese culture, even aside from his resentment of excessive Tibetan exactions. As ruler, I-mou-hsün is said to have despised his kingdom's low level of culture and morality and to have regretted that Nan-chao was cut off from direct contact with China.<sup>108</sup> This sounds suspiciously like later Chinese historiographical rationalization, but it is made more plausible by the fact of I-mou-hsün's extended period of tutelage under Cheng Hui. It is reported that Cheng was a stern and demanding teacher who on occasion would not hesitate to whip his princely charges and that I-mou-hsün actually stood in dread of him.<sup>109</sup>

Cheng's role as imperial tutor began soon after his capture in 756, but there is no indication that he took any active role in Nan-chao politics during Ko-lo-feng's reign. With I-mou-hsün's accession in 779, however, Cheng rose to become a dominant figure in the Nan-chao government.

When I-mou-hsün became king, he appointed Cheng Hui to the post of *ch'ing-p'ing kuan*. The *ch'ing-p'ing kuan* were the Nan-chao chief ministers. There were in all six of them, but national affairs were decided exclusively by Cheng Hui. The other five ministers treated Cheng with great deference, for whenever they erred Cheng would flog them.<sup>110</sup>

It is not clear what these Chinese accounts of Cheng's role in the Nan-chao kingdom are based upon, so they should perhaps not be taken at face value. Nevertheless, it is evident that Cheng did occupy a position of power in the decision-making process of the Nan-chao state and that he did exert a strong influence over its ruler. Cheng Hui was undoubtedly a key figure both in the continuing development of political institutions patterned on the T'ang

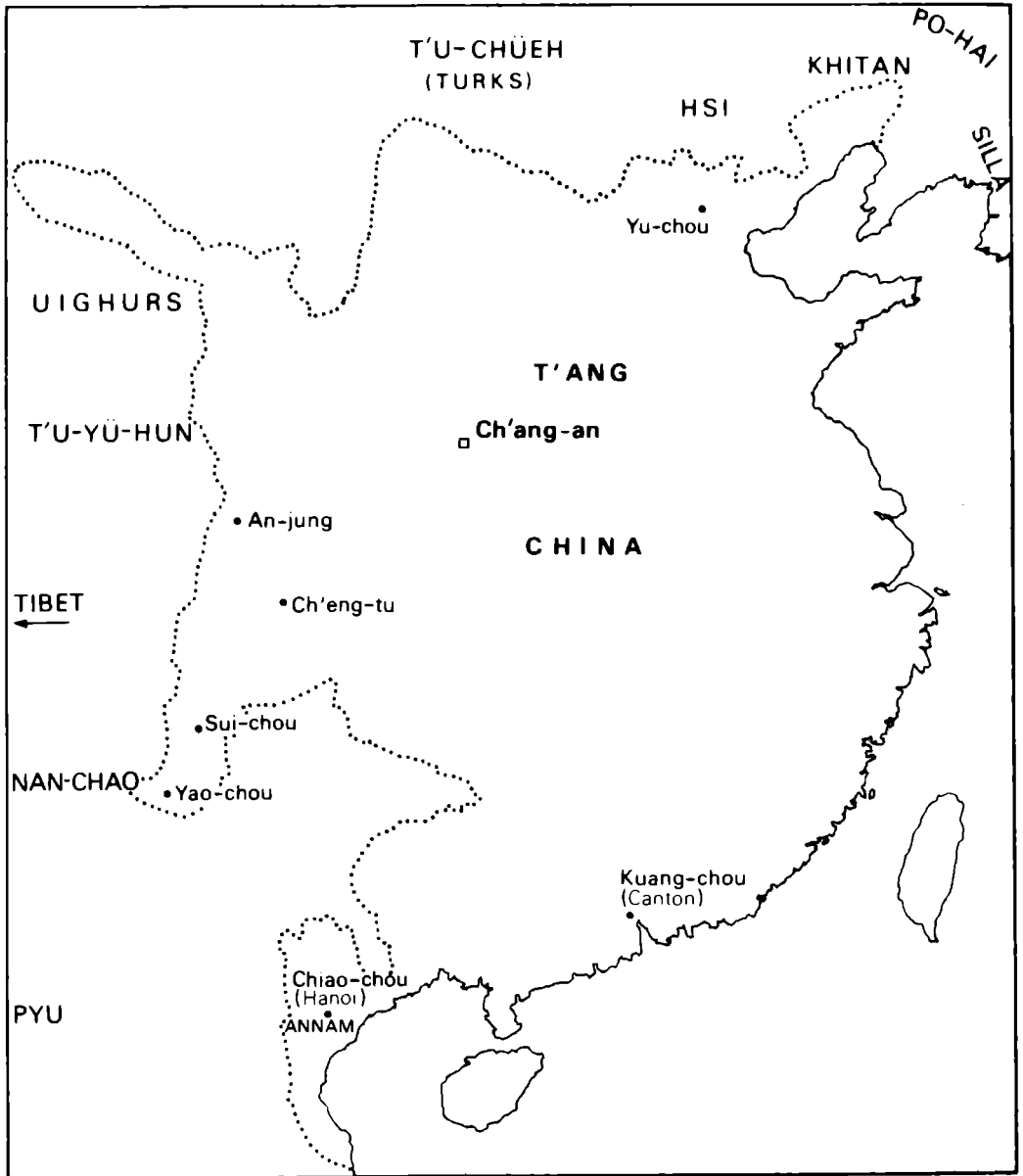
model and in the increasing adoption of Chinese literary and cultural forms within the Nan-chao kingdom. He was the author of the important Te-hua inscription of 766,<sup>111</sup> and he no doubt served as the chief drafter and interpreter of correspondence to and from China. Although he supported rapprochement with the T'ang, Cheng seems in fact to have worked primarily for Nan-chao interests. In any case, there is no indication that he ever sought to return to China.<sup>112</sup>

The sources give no information concerning the role that Cheng Hui's immediate descendants may have played in Nan-chao government, though we do know that it was his fifth-generation grandson, Cheng Mai-ssu, who would later end the Nan-chao dynasty and found the first of the Nan-chao successor kingdoms early in the tenth century.<sup>113</sup> Of more immediate importance, however, Cheng Hui was to serve as the primary force within the Nan-chao kingdom arguing for a sundering of relations with Tibet and realignment with T'ang China.

### **Li Pi and the grand stratagem**

As we have seen, the situation confronting China on her southwestern frontier during the last quarter of the eighth century was a critical one. Decades of border warfare, though inconclusive, had been severely debilitating and at times had verged on disaster. Certainly the alliance between Tibet and Nan-chao, fitful though it may have been, was potentially an explosive one and a source of grave concern to the T'ang. This was especially so in light of China's recurrent instability, which again manifested itself dramatically in the rebellions of the early 780's.<sup>114</sup> Thus, the most pressing frontier worry which China faced during this period was the joint Tibetan–Nan-chao threat in the southwest. Reducing the severity of that threat had become the prime concern of T'ang foreign policy.

A rather grand alliance was proposed for this purpose by Li Pi, a chief minister at the T'ang court from 787 until his death in 789, who advocated what was essentially a policy of 'using foreigners to control foreigners.' He proposed that the T'ang should cultivate friendly relations with the Uighurs, a Turkish confederation that dominated much of Mongolia from the middle of the eighth to the middle of the ninth centuries, inducing them to put additional pressure on the Tibetans from the north. He moreover emphasized the importance of re-establishing friendly relations with Nan-chao, thereby diminishing Tibetan power and ultimately creating an additional source of harassment for the Tibetans to cope with on their southern borders. He even proposed to encircle Tibet entirely by persuading both the Indian kingdoms, known to the Chinese collectively as T'ien-chu, and the Arab empire to join in this grand alliance against Tibet. In repeated and insistent dialogues with



Map 6 A composite view of the frontiers of T'ang China. Names in capitals represent nations or major ethnic groups.

the Emperor Te-tsung, Li Pi asserted that he could bring Tibet to grief without ever using T'ang armies. Li Pi's justifications for this policy were simply stated:

Once amiable relations have been established with the Uighurs, then the Tibetans already would no longer dare to attack our borders at will. If next we were to win over Yunnan [*i.e.*, Nan-chao], then this would cut off Tibet's right arm.<sup>115</sup>

Li then presented his assessment of the Nan-chao disposition towards China:

Yunnan [Nan-chao] has been subordinate to China since Han times. Yang Kuo-chung needlessly agitated them, causing them to rebel against us and ally with Tibet. But they have suffered bitterly from heavy Tibetan impositions, and there has never been a single day when they did not think of again becoming a T'ang vassal.

As for India and the Arabs,

The Arabs are the strongest force in the western regions; from the Ts'ung-ling mountain range all the way to the Western ocean, their territory covers nearly half the world. They and India both feel admiration for China, and both have for generations regarded Tibet as their enemies. Thus I know that they can be won over.<sup>116</sup>

Although little ever came of this part of Li Pi's proposal, the hope to include the Arabs and the Indian kingdoms in this alliance against Tibet was not so far-fetched as it may seem. The Indians had for some time been in touch diplomatically with the T'ang; and in 720 they had offered their war elephants and cavalry to the Chinese court to be used in a joint campaign against both the Tibetans and the Arabs. These diplomatic contacts continued at least through the 750's.<sup>117</sup> There also had been frequent diplomatic contacts between China and the Arabs during the first half of the eighth century, continuing down through the 760's and 770's; and Arab troops had been among those used by the T'ang court to recover both Ch'ang-an and Lo-yang from the rebel forces of An Lu-shan.<sup>118</sup> During the 780's, the Arabs were probably the strongest enemy of Tibet. The Chinese were well aware that the greater part of the Tibetan forces was preoccupied in defending against the Arabs to the west, thereby reducing the frequency of Tibetan attacks against T'ang borders.<sup>119</sup>

The mainstays of Li Pi's proposed alliance, however, were the Uighurs and Nan-chao. But Li Pi's suggestion to establish an alliance with the Uighurs immediately met with strong personal opposition from Emperor Te-tsung himself. A quarter of a century before, the future emperor had been involved in a dreadfully humiliating incident when he was sent to represent the dynasty at the Uighur court. A dispute arose when the Uighurs haughtily demanded that the T'ang heir-apparent should make some outward sign of respect to the Uighur khagan, a compelling indication of the hard times on which the T'ang dynasty had fallen. Refusal resulted in terrific beatings for the heir-apparent's top ministers, from which two of them died. The future emperor himself suffered no physical harm, but this humiliation permanently embittered him towards the Uighurs.<sup>120</sup>

Thus Li Pi's strategy for dealing with the Tibetan problem was in great

jeopardy from the very start. Te-tsung was willing to consider all other aspects of Li Pi's plan; but concerning the Uighurs he was adamant. It took skillful arguments, a keen sense of psychology, and numerous discussions with the emperor for Li to convince him to negotiate with the Uighurs.<sup>121</sup> Finally, Te-tsung reluctantly agreed for the sake of the country to put aside his personal grudge.

To the emperor's surprise and delight, the Uighurs, who at this period were very much interested in gaining a T'ang princess for their ruler, proved to be quite eager to come to terms with the Chinese, no longer insisting on diplomatic treatment as an equal. As a result, an alliance was arranged, and the Hsien-an Princess (one of only three true imperial daughters given in marriage to foreign kings during the entire T'ang period) was sent to the Uighur kingdom.<sup>122</sup> The cornerstone of Li Pi's strategy against the Tibetans was thus achieved.

### **Wei Kao and the southwestern frontier**

However, the other major part of Li Pi's plan, securing Nan-chao co-operation against Tibet, would take much longer to accomplish. Li Pi himself died long before this part of his proposal came to fruition. The primary figure in the realization of this policy was instead the long-term regional commander on the Szechwan frontier, Wei Kao. From around 785 when he was appointed to his post in Ch'eng-tu as a reward for his services against the rebels Chu Tz'u and Chu T'ao,<sup>123</sup> until his death in 805, Wei deftly coordinated a series of effective military campaigns against the Tibetans, while he also skillfully exploited existing tensions between Tibet and its ally, the Nan-chao kingdom. Although he seems to have followed the overall frontier strategies then in favor at the T'ang court, much credit still must go to Wei Kao personally, for it was he who realistically implemented frontier policy and adroitly manipulated the growing rift between Nan-chao and Tibet.<sup>124</sup>

In the years since 778, not much had happened to change existing relations between China and Nan-chao in a formal sense. However, the great failure of the joint invasion of Szechwan by Nan-chao and Tibetan forces in 779 and, subsequently, Tibet's punitive actions and harsh demands on its ally had planted seeds of mistrust and resentment. It was at this point that I-mou-hsün's chief minister Cheng Hui is reported to have begun urging that Nan-chao break off its alliance with Tibet and realign itself with T'ang China. He argued that in previous relations with the Chinese Nan-chao had been treated beneficently and that Chinese demands on Nan-chao had always been minimal in comparison with the burdens now demanded by Tibet.<sup>125</sup> I-mou-hsün readily agreed, but he was understandably fearful of Tibetan reprisal and hesitant to give his ally cause for suspicion. In fact, I-mou-hsün's reluctance



to offend Tibet colored the remainder of the period until 794. I-mou-hsün was nevertheless eager to explore covertly the possibilities for renewed relations with China. Indirect and more or less surreptitious contacts between Nan-chao and the T'ang thus became the general rule. In this process, smaller intermediate tribal groups of this region, especially the Wu-teng, Feng-se, and Liang-lin, known collectively as the Tung Man, played a key role.<sup>126</sup>

When the new T'ang regional commander Wei Kao arrived in Szechwan, his first discernible step in dealing with that region's frontier problems was to attempt to establish contact with Nan-chao. For that purpose, he sought especially to secure the cooperation of the local peoples who formed something of a buffer between Nan-chao and the territory under his command. It is interesting to note how closely his memorial of the spring of 787 analyzing the Tibetan problem is mirrored in Li Pi's proposal made later in that year.

At present the Tibetans have cast aside friendly relations and have ravaged Yen-chou and Hsia-chou [in the northwest]. We ought to take advantage of the sentiment for realignment with China held by Nan-chao and the eight kingdoms of unsubmissive Ch'iang to entice and receive them, thus breaking them away from the Tibetan band and dividing Tibetan strength.<sup>127</sup>

Within the year, Wei Kao's efforts were rewarded by the appearance in Ch'eng-tu, the provincial administrative seat, of the Tung Man chieftains P'iao-p'ang, Chü-meng-ch'ung, and Chü-wu-hsing.<sup>128</sup> Apparently seeing an opportunity in this new situation, the Nan-chao king I-mou-hsün reportedly sent a messenger in the company of this Tung Man delegation to inquire about the possibility of renewing friendly relations with China.<sup>129</sup> Wei Kao quickly realized the implications of the inquiry and sent a report to the T'ang court. He was instructed to send a message to the Nan-chao ruler and to assess his intentions.<sup>130</sup> First, Wei sent a letter to another of the Tung Man chieftains, Chü-na-shih, and instructed him to send spies into Yunnan to observe and report on political conditions there.<sup>131</sup> Then later in that year, taking advantage we are told of the high degree of literacy in Chinese among the Nan-chao elite, Wei sent a personal letter to the Nan-chao court, urging them to dispatch an emissary to China.<sup>132</sup>

According to the sources, I-mou-hsün did not yet dare make so direct and open a move as to appoint an official Nan-chao envoy to China. Instead, in 788 he again relied on the same Tung Man leaders to represent him secretly at the T'ang court in Ch'ang-an. There they were received lavishly with banquets and gifts; each of them was given a princely title and a seal of office.<sup>133</sup>

From his Tung Man informants, Wei Kao learned that Nan-chao was indeed inclined towards realignment with China but was still hesitant to make

that move.<sup>134</sup> Knowing that this was so, Wei indulged in some diplomatic chicanery to precipitate the breach between Nan-chao and Tibet. At that time, it is reported, Tibet was planning another attack on Szechwan and had called upon its ally for supporting troops. Nan-chao felt forced to respond and sent out a large army. Meanwhile, Wei Kao had composed a letter to the Nan-chao king in which he acknowledged I-mou-hsün's 'sincere desire to abandon Tibet and realign with China.' He then had one of the Tung Man chiefs deliver the letter not to Nan-chao but to the Tibetans.<sup>135</sup> This ploy worked splendidly. Tibet began to have serious doubts about its Nan-chao ally; subsequently, the Tibetan court reportedly dispatched a twenty thousand man force to garrison the border and thus block the Nan-chao court from direct access into Szechwan. This move angered Nan-chao, which promptly called back the forces that had been sent in support of the Tibetan attack on Szechwan. Strong mutual antagonisms were thus engendered between Nan-chao and Tibet, and it is said that Nan-chao's resolve to return to alliance with the T'ang became even firmer.<sup>136</sup> From this period on, Nan-chao military support for Tibetan attacks on the T'ang frontier grew progressively weaker, confirming Wei Kao in his policy.

In addition to these diplomatic inroads, Wei was also scoring repeated military victories during this period. His first major triumph over Tibetan forces came in a 789 battle at T'ai-teng, just north of Sui-chou. For the Tibetans, this defeat was made the more serious by the loss of an important general named Ch'i-ts'ang-che-che, who was said to be the son of the Tibetan chief minister Shang-chieh-tsan.<sup>137</sup> This signalled the beginning of what was to become more than a decade of consistent military success by Wei's forces over the Tibetan armies.<sup>138</sup> It is important to note that these triumphs were partially determined by the effective military support that Wei received from his newly cultivated Tung Man allies.<sup>139</sup> Thus Wei was always quick to defend them from the threat of Tibetan punitive attack.<sup>140</sup>

On the other hand, these intermediary peoples were of such vital importance to his overall frontier goals that Wei could ill afford to let any of them slip back into the Tibetan camp. Therefore, he sought both to insulate them from the pressures of Tibetan attack and to block any renewed contact between them and Tibet. When the Wu-teng chieftain Chü-meng-ch'ung suddenly re-established relations with Tibet in 791, Wei Kao was quick to punish him lest this precedent go unchecked and serve to incite other local leaders to follow his example. A punitive expedition was sent to execute Chü-meng-ch'ung, and a more reliable tribal leader was appointed in his place.<sup>141</sup> Wei's firm policy must have discouraged any other tribal chiefs from entertaining similar notions.

This incident serves to underscore a larger general characteristic of Wei

Kao's frontier policy. Diplomatic initiatives based upon an understanding of the frontier peoples and their interests were consistently successful only when balanced by a firm and effective display of Chinese military might. Ultimately, Tibetan attacks could only be blocked militarily. Equally important, the conversion of the southwestern frontier peoples, including Nan-chao, to a position of support for China could only be maintained so long as T'ang armies proved themselves victorious in battle against Tibet, the cultural attraction of Chinese civilization notwithstanding. It was essential for Wei Kao to demonstrate that Chinese forces could and would defend themselves, and their frontier allies, from Tibetan attack. In this regard, his accomplishments were consistent and convincing.

Yet diplomatically too, Wei Kao showed himself to be quite resourceful. In the spring of 789, for instance, he sent a letter to I-mou-hsün in which he warned the Nan-chao ruler that he should act quickly to avoid losing this chance to come to favorable terms with the T'ang and also gain revenge against Tibet. Wei argued as follows:

The Uighurs have repeatedly offered to aid the Emperor by joining forces to exterminate Tibet. If you do not quickly reach a plan of action, you may one day suddenly find that the Uighurs have won out over you. Thus you would vainly throw away the chance for fame and glory that could last for generations. Moreover, Nan-chao has long suffered humiliation from Tibet. If you do not take advantage of the current situation to lean upon China's strength, thus requiting the grudge and erasing the disgrace, then later on it will be too late for regret.<sup>142</sup>

This clever appeal may have struck a responsive chord, but in 789 I-mou-hsün was still unwilling to risk an open break with Tibet.

In 791 another incident occurred which further deteriorated relations between Nan-chao and Tibet. By this time Wei Kao was regularly sending letters to I-mou-hsün, though he never received a direct response.<sup>143</sup> But convinced by Nan-chao's decreasing support for Tibetan incursions that I-mou-hsün was inclined to re-ally with China, Wei Kao in that year sent a former Nan-chao minister named Tuan Chung-i (who perhaps had been captured in battle by the Chinese) back to the Nan-chao capital with a letter again urging Nan-chao's realignment. *En route*, however, Tuan passed through territory controlled by the Moso peoples. The leader of the Moso, who were closer ethnically and culturally to the Tibetans than any of the other peoples of this region,<sup>144</sup> secretly reported the news of Tuan's mission to the Tibetan court.<sup>145</sup> By the time that Tuan Chung-i had arrived, Tibetan representatives at the Nan-chao capital knew of his mission and demanded an explanation

from I-mou-hsün. Thoroughly intimidated, I-mou-hsün tried to mollify the Tibetans by saying that Tuan was only a former Nan-chao official who had received Wei Kao's permission to return to his homeland. Unconvinced, the Tibetans arrested Tuan and sent him off to their territory. Further, they took hostages from among the sons of high ranking Nan-chao ministers. All of this naturally embittered relations still more.<sup>146</sup>

In fact, by 792 relations had so deteriorated that both Nan-chao and Tibet are reported to have mobilized their forces and to have made armed preparations against one another.<sup>147</sup> In that year, Wei Kao sent another message to I-mou-hsün in which he proposed a joint attack against Tibet in order to expel them from the Yunnan plateau. Thereafter, he suggested, the frontier could be fortified against the Tibetans and jointly garrisoned by T'ang and Nan-chao forces.<sup>148</sup> Wei also directed a campaign against Tibetan positions in the Hsi-shan region northwest of Ch'eng-tu.<sup>149</sup> Wei Kao's successes there in this and the following year seem to have been a factor in the subsequent submission of the so-called 'eight kingdoms of Hsi-shan,' the same group of 'unsubmissive Ch'iang' peoples mentioned in Wei's memorial of 787. Wei carried out a resettlement of these peoples, providing them with draft animals and supplies, in areas along the Szechwan frontier that were somewhat more firmly under T'ang control.<sup>150</sup> Throughout these years, with each new success Wei Kao's titles and honors were increased by the T'ang court.<sup>151</sup>

### **The new alignment in the southwest**

Perhaps influenced by all of these developments, I-mou-hsün finally committed himself to an open break with Tibet and formal realignment with China. Early in the summer of 793, he sent three sets of envoys to the T'ang court. Each took a different route, presumably to insure that at least one of them would get through to the T'ang court without being blocked by Tibetan forces on the frontier. Although some sources make it seem that all three first called on Wei Kao in Ch'eng-tu, it is clear from other sources that this was not the case. Rather, one group went via Szechwan (following an eastern route through Jung-chou rather than the more direct route, which the Tibetans may have blocked), one via the T'ang province of Ch'ien-chou (parts of modern Kweichow and Hunan), and one via the T'ang protectorate in Annam, from where they were eventually sent on to Ch'ang-an.<sup>152</sup> Each envoy carried offerings symbolic of the sincerity of the Nan-chao request: gold to symbolize firm resolve, cinnabar to symbolize red-hearted sincerity. Each apparently was instructed to reiterate the causes of the unfortunate break with the T'ang in the 750's and to ask for pardon. They formally renounced Tibet and asked that their country be allowed to re-establish close relations with the T'ang.<sup>153</sup> The Nan-chao envoys were sent on to the T'ang court. Wei

Kao sent in his own memorial of congratulations, no doubt to remind the court of his own important role in this major diplomatic coup.<sup>154</sup>

When news of their arrival reached the T'ang court, Emperor Te-tsung was delighted. He sent out a delegation to welcome them and gave their group, headed by I-mou-hsün's son and heir Hsün-ko-ch'üan, a personal audience, breaking protocol by having him approach the imperial throne.

He draws him near the jade throne, close to the Heavenly visage;  
He foregoes wearing the pendants on His crown, personally coaxing him  
on;  
He grants him robes and gives him food, in an audience lasting for  
hours.<sup>155</sup>

Hsün-ko-ch'üan and the other Nan-chao envoys again expressed their kingdom's desire to re-establish friendly relations with China and pledged to remain forever a bulwark of defense for the T'ang in the southwest. The emperor responded with gifts and gave the envoys a letter for I-mou-hsün. He then instructed Wei Kao to dispatch a mission to the Nan-chao court.<sup>156</sup>

Wei entrusted this mission to an official in his administration named Ts'ui Tso-shih.<sup>157</sup> Arriving in the Nan-chao capital early in 794, Ts'ui found that despite the recent Nan-chao embassy to China I-mou-hsün was still fearful of provoking his erstwhile Tibetan ally, several hundred of whose representatives remained in the Nan-chao capital. I-mou-hsün was thus afraid to deal openly with the T'ang envoy. This situation produced an extraordinary and rather amusing session of frontier diplomacy. I-mou-hsün reportedly asked Ts'ui, who we learn from an unrelated source was an enormous, corpulent man,<sup>158</sup> to keep his mission secret by entering the Nan-chao capital disguised in the costume of the neighboring Tsang-ko peoples. Indignantly, Ts'ui refused: 'I am the emissary of the Great T'ang. How could I possibly dress in the costume of some insignificant little foreign tribe?'<sup>159</sup> Having little alternative, I-mou-hsün gave Ts'ui a formal reception, but arranged to do so at night. We are told that when Ts'ui loudly declaimed the contents of the imperial letter, I-mou-hsün grew fearful and turned pale, glancing nervously to left and right. Reportedly with a great deal of sniveling, I-mou-hsün bowed and accepted the edict.<sup>160</sup>

Meanwhile Cheng Hui had met secretly with Ts'ui Tso-shih and had counseled him on the particulars of the current situation within the Nan-chao kingdom. Armed with this information, Ts'ui strongly urged I-mou-hsün to formalize the break with Tibet by executing all of the Tibetan representatives at the Nan-chao capital. He moreover insisted that Nan-chao should give up the Tibetan seal and reign title and revert to the T'ang era name. I-mou-hsün agreed to all of this.<sup>161</sup> Soon thereafter he sent another son, Hsün-meng-ts'ou, and several high officials to swear a solemn oath with the T'ang emissary at a

temple in the Tien-ts'ang mountains overlooking the Nan-chao capital. There they invoked the natural forces of sky, earth, and water along with the various spirits of the Five Sacred Peaks and Four Sacred Streams (earlier proclaimed by I-mou-hsün, again probably in imitation of the Chinese system) to draw near and give permanent witness.<sup>162</sup> Four copies were made of the oath. One was retained in an archive at the Nan-chao capital and one was submitted to the T'ang court. Of the other two, one was left at the mountain temple and the other was deposited in the Erh-hai Lake.<sup>163</sup>

To head off Tibetan reprisals that were almost certain to come, I-mou-hsün now took decisive action against his former ally. As described above, Li Pi's proposal to cultivate Uighur support against the Tibetans had been accomplished by the late 780's, and it soon began to have just the effect that Li Pi had hoped for. In recent years Tibet had been hard pressed from the north by the Uighurs, and Tibetan casualties had been high.<sup>164</sup> To make up for these losses, the Tibetans had demanded ten thousand replacement soldiers from Nan-chao. I-mou-hsün objected, claiming that Nan-chao was too small a country to spare so many troops. After some quibbling, a figure of five thousand was agreed to and these soldiers set out towards Tibet, ostensibly as reinforcements. Actually, these troops were sent as the advance guard of a deadly ruse. Behind them followed a large Nan-chao army. The Tibetans came under surprise attack from both directions and were routed by the Nan-chao forces. Nan-chao took several important localities, including the fortress of T'ieh-ch'iao on the Upper Yangtze. They moreover destroyed the famous iron-chain suspension bridge that had been the principal route of Tibetan penetration into this region.<sup>165</sup>

After this stunning victory, I-mou-hsün sent his brother Ts'ou-lo-tung, along with a group of high officials, to the T'ang court. There they presented a map of their country, in addition to objects of local tribute. They also surrendered the gold seal and badges that Nan-chao had received from Tibet in 751 and requested restoration of the titles first granted to P'i-lo-ko, I-mou-hsün's great-grandfather, almost fifty years before.<sup>166</sup> Wei Kao, who had reason to be well satisfied with the outcome of his patient efforts, sent in two memorials confirming the Nan-chao triumphs over the Tibetans and supporting their request.<sup>167</sup>

The T'ang court seems to have been eager to grant the Nan-chao request and to send an official, high-level mission of investiture into Yunnan. (It should be remembered that Ts'ui Tso-shih technically had been a representative not of the T'ang court but only of Wei Kao's provincial administration.<sup>168</sup>) However, the court evidently had difficulty in finding a suitable official who was willing to lead a mission into the forbidding outbacks of the far southwest. Only Yuan Tzu, a middle-ranking official at court, did not

excuse himself from the responsibility when it was offered him, thereby earning the emperor's favor.<sup>169</sup> The Yuan mission set out in the autumn of 794, following a route that had been opened up especially for them by a force sent out by Wei Kao.<sup>170</sup>

Rather detailed accounts have survived concerning the Yuan mission to the Nan-chao kingdom. These probably all derive from Yuan's own description of his experiences in Yunnan, entitled *Yun-nan chi*, in five *chüan*, which unfortunately has not survived.<sup>171</sup> Nan-chao reportedly gave the Yuan mission an elaborate and enthusiastic welcome. At each stop along the way, an honor guard lined the road and the populace bowed and paid their respects. When they drew near the Nan-chao capital, all of the top Nan-chao officials, led by I-mou-hsün himself, went out to greet them. The Chinese were welcomed with great pomp by musicians, cavalry, elephants, and soldiers, all in full regalia. The ceremony of investiture was itself impressive, with banners and pennants all set out. The Nan-chao king and his high officials, with great decorum it is said, stood in rank facing north. The subordinate members of the T'ang mission stood facing east, while the investing official, Yuan Tzu, as the imperial representative stood facing south. Yuan Tzu read aloud the imperial proclamation, and I-mou-hsün was summoned to receive official confirmation from the T'ang court of his title of 'king of Nan-chao.'<sup>172</sup> A special gold seal, intended (at Wei Kao's insistence) to be at least as impressive as the one that the Tibetans had given, was presented to I-mou-hsün.<sup>173</sup> Finally, I-mou-hsün was given the T'ang calendar for the tenth year of the *chen-yuan* era, 794, which he and his officials received with humble prostrations.<sup>174</sup>

There was a great feast of celebration that day, during which I-mou-hsün displayed precious relics from the 740's, gifts to previous Nan-chao kings which had been respectfully stored after the break in relations. Among the Nan-chao court musicians were an old man who played the flute (*ti*) and a female singer, both of them around seventy years old. These were the only survivors of two troupes of musicians from Central Asia who had been presented to the Nan-chao court by the Chinese Emperor Hsüan-tsung a half-century before.<sup>175</sup> Thus there is evidence for the penetration of Central Asian musical forms into the region of southwest China in the eighth century, a striking indication of the cosmopolitan nature of Asian interstate relations during the T'ang period. Finally, there was a round of toasts, after which Yuan Tzu delivered a stern lecture to I-mou-hsün on his country's obligation to remain loyal to the T'ang, which it is said I-mou-hsün acknowledged humbly, with a great sigh.<sup>176</sup>

After the ceremonies were over, I-mou-hsün sent a group of officials to accompany the members of the Yuan mission back to the T'ang court. There they expressed gratitude for imperial favor and offered an impressive array of

products in tribute: excellent swords, horses, gold and jewels, ivory, and textiles.<sup>177</sup>

This then was the culmination of the long process by which the alliance between Nan-chao and Tibet was broken up and relatively cordial relations were again established between China and the Nan-chao kingdom. This marked the real turning point in T'ang attempts to resolve the Tibetan threat. Renewed Nan-chao support proved to be at least as important as the securing of Uighur cooperation against Tibet. From this point on, China consistently held the advantage; with Nan-chao help, the next ten years were filled with a succession of military triumphs over the Tibetans.<sup>178</sup> And when the Tibetans, increasingly preoccupied with their own internal problems, began to request peace negotiations in 797, the T'ang court could afford to refuse, waiting for the time when they could arrange a peace precisely on their own terms.<sup>179</sup>

In 800 further military victories over Tibet were made more important by the surrender of another outstanding Tibetan general, Ma-ting-te. His defection was a severe blow to the morale of the remaining Tibetan commanders.<sup>180</sup> In the following year, many of the Moso peoples also submitted to Wei Kao.<sup>181</sup> In fact, there seems to have been a snowballing pattern of submission to China by a number of the peoples of the southwestern frontier during this period, some of whom had never before had relations with China. The Pyu kingdom for instance, which by now seems to have been firmly under Nan-chao domination, appeared at the T'ang court for the first time in 802, in the train of the Nan-chao mission of that year.<sup>182</sup> Both the Nan-chao and the Pyu missions caused great excitement in the T'ang capital with their exotic troupes of musicians, who specialized in intricate dances and songs with Buddhist lyrics.<sup>183</sup>

Perhaps the most decisive battle of this period of Sino-Tibetan confrontation occurred in the years 801–802. Tibet was again harassing the T'ang frontier in the northwest, capturing additional territory in the region around Lin-chou. To take pressure off this quadrant, the T'ang court ordered Wei Kao to counter-attack in the southwest. What followed was a very well coordinated campaign against the Tibetans involving many thousands of soldiers, including the forces of all of China's new allies in the southwest, especially Nan-chao, the Tung Man, and even the Moso. The strength of this attack forced the Tibetans to draw back their invading forces from the northwest. Yet when a very large Tibetan army led by the high-ranking general Lun-mang-je arrived to relieve the situation in the south, it was drawn into an ambush and took a disastrous beating. Lun-mang-je was himself captured and sent on to Ch'ang-an, where he was pardoned and retained as a hostage, apparently in rather grand style.<sup>184</sup>

This was to be the last major battle of the period in the southwest. It was



in many ways the end of an era. The first decade of the ninth century was characterized by a general cessation of hostilities between Tibet and China and by increased attempts at negotiation. For Tibet the decades of debilitating fighting had been compounded by the loss of support from Nan-chao and other southwestern peoples as well as by increased pressure from the Uighurs in the north. The death of the Tibetan king Trhisong Detsen in 797 had coincided with the deaths of key ministers. The next few years were ones of some internal instability for the Tibetan kingdom, another factor which sapped their power.<sup>185</sup> Poor harvests, famine, and disease are also reported.<sup>186</sup> Moreover, serious religious antagonism, which eventually would lead to the collapse of the kingdom, had already begun to manifest itself.<sup>187</sup> The Tibetans were no longer in a commanding position but were forced to seek compromise with the Chinese. Prisoners were again exchanged, and there was a gradual lessening of the previously bitter hostilities.<sup>188</sup> Tibet was no longer to be quite such a major problem for either T'ang China or the Nan-chao kingdom.

Thus, by the time of Wei Kao's death in 805, the southwestern frontier was again relatively stable. Partially this was due to fortuitous factors over which the T'ang had no control. Yet in large part it derived from a combination of astute diplomacy and military triumph (in Chinese, *en-wei ping-yung*), and for this Wei Kao personally deserves much of the credit. His successes along the southwestern frontier were of vital importance to the T'ang. Even more than in the case of Ts'ui Ning, this helps to explain the extraordinary length of Wei Kao's tenure in Szechwan (twenty-one years) and the semi-autonomous nature of his administration there.<sup>189</sup>

Nan-chao too had profited from its assertion of independence from Tibet and from the decline in Tibetan strength. From 794 on, I-mou-hsün's forces were able to consolidate Nan-chao control over those portions of northwestern Yunnan that had been dominated up to that time by Tibet. After trouncing the Tibetans at T'ieh-ch'iao, Nan-chao armies captured K'un-ming (modern Yen-yuan) and temporarily took control over the salt deposits there.<sup>190</sup> They conquered many of the local peoples who inhabited this region: the Shih Man, the Shun Man, the Mang Man, and the Moso, to name the most prominent.<sup>191</sup> In a manner quite similar to the resettlement policy employed by Ko-lo-feng (see chapter 3), I-mou-hsün captured their leaders and removed them from this region, transferring them to areas in the south around Mengshe, where they could be watched over and kept separate from the peoples whom they had previously led.<sup>192</sup> The bulk of these peoples, on the other hand, were resettled in the northeast, near modern Chao-t'ung, and in the region around Che-tung, modern Kunming. There they seem to have been employed in developing the economic resources of these areas; and later they

would be used to augment the ranks of the Nan-chao army.<sup>193</sup> The Nan-chao technique of resettlement thus proved to be a very effective method of maintaining political cohesion and control over an ethnically diverse population.<sup>194</sup>

The elimination of Tibetan power in this area also gave the Nan-chao court the opportunity to deal once and for all with the remnant groups of the original Six Chao who had fled north to avoid total conquest and absorption by the Nan-chao unifiers – namely, the Lang-ch'iuung, Teng-t'an, and Shih-lang peoples, known collectively as the San-lang. In 794, Nan-chao forces conquered Chien-ch'uan, their base in the northwest, and captured all of the San-lang leaders. Subsequently, these leaders were forcibly removed to the Yung-ch'ang area, thus guarding against any further collusion between them and Tibet.<sup>195</sup>

Thus it was only under I-mou-hsün, in the last decade of the eighth century, that complete unification of the peoples and territory of the Nan-chao kingdom was finally achieved. For Nan-chao, the realignment with China had been an even greater accomplishment than it was for the T'ang. The re-establishment of a formal alliance with the T'ang court required some symbolic acts of subservience, but it in no way diminished Nan-chao's political and cultural autonomy. And never again would the Nan-chao kingdom be obliged to honor excessive demands from Tibet or any other state.

It can be seen that Nan-chao always, not unexpectedly, looked to its own interests in determining alliances, that its leaders consistently sided with what they judiciously considered to be the strongest power in their region. They then pragmatically relied on the support of that alliance to expand their own territorial control, at the expense of the Tibetans in the 790's as at the expense of the Chinese in the 750's. Always, Nan-chao's intelligence concerning internal conditions in T'ang China and at the Tibetan court, as well as its knowledge of the broader context of Asian interstate relations, seems to have been excellent. Basing its decisions cautiously on this information, the Nan-chao court chose to alter its foreign policy alignment only when it was clearly safe and in its best interests to do so.<sup>196</sup>

In this manner, the Nan-chao kingdom seems to have manipulated its relationships with the Tibetan kingdom and T'ang China, always managing to maintain its basic independence from both.<sup>197</sup> This was no mean achievement, considering that China and Tibet, the two strongest powers in East Asia, both had tenacious ambitions for the subjugation of this region. Moreover, in the process, Nan-chao had become a sophisticated and powerful state in its own right. Thereafter, the renewal of friendly relations with the Chinese would permit a half-century or more of stable peace (with one startling exception) and the opportunity for further economic and cultural growth.

## TRIBUTE AND PLUNDER

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For years they had submitted tribute to the imperial court;  
suddenly one day they sacked Ch'eng-tu.<sup>1</sup>

The first half of the ninth century was probably the most stable and the least troubled period in the history of the intercourse between the Nan-chao kingdom and T'ang China. Only one dramatic incident was to mar the general peace and cooperation that existed between the two states through these decades. This era of good relations was important for both countries. For China, the period offered a welcome respite from the critical border strife that had plagued the southwestern frontier for the preceding half-century; coinciding with an era of comparative tranquillity on all of China's frontiers, it helped to make possible the T'ang court's own program of internal reconstruction, especially during the reign of Emperor Hsien-tsung (805–820). For Nan-chao, the stable and amicable relationship with China was certainly conducive to the institutional and cultural development which occurred during these years, even in the midst of some internal political strife.

During the productive reign of I-mou-hsün, the Nan-chao kingdom not only had asserted independence from its Tibetan overlords but also had become a fully autonomous and powerful state. During these years, additional Chinese cultural patterns and technical skills had been adopted. Soon after the realignment with T'ang China in the 790's, for instance, I-mou-hsün informed Wei Kao that Nan-chao armies did not have adequate armor or crossbows to use in the fight against Tibet. Wei responded by sending Chinese artisans to Nan-chao to instruct local craftsmen in arms manufacture; thereafter the quality of Nan-chao weapons was reportedly much improved.<sup>2</sup>

In 799, a more important and longer-lasting channel of cultural dissemination was created when I-mou-hsün requested that Nan-chao youths be allowed to live as 'hostages' in Ch'eng-tu. It is interesting and indicative of the direct nature of the contacts between them that I-mou-hsün's request was addressed to Wei Kao, rather than to the T'ang court. Subsequently, Wei established facilities for the Nan-chao youths in Ch'eng-tu. There they went to reside and to study, instead of going to Ch'ang-an to be enrolled as special

students at the National University, as was customary for foreign students allowed into T'ang China.<sup>3</sup> Although this case of foreigners going to study at a regional frontier city rather than at the capital is not unique in Chinese history, it probably reflects both the especially close nature of the relationship between Nan-chao and the T'ang governors in Szechwan and the semi-independent status of Wei Kao's regime.<sup>4</sup> Thereafter, for more than fifty uninterrupted years, young men from the Nan-chao kingdom learned Chinese literary and mathematical skills in Ch'eng-tu.<sup>5</sup> There can be no doubt that this had a significant impact on the governing style and the general level of cultural sophistication of the Nan-chao elite.<sup>6</sup>

I-mou-hsün's death in 808, however, initiated a fifteen-year period of internal political instability. In 808, I-mou-hsün's son Hsün-ko-ch'üan came to the throne for a reign that was brief but which nevertheless did produce some politically important developments. The eastern portion of modern Yunnan, though not the original focus of Nan-chao development, had long been a major center of civilization in this area. Its increasing importance within the Nan-chao kingdom by this time is apparent in Hsün-ko-ch'üan's establishment, perhaps in imitation of the T'ang practice, of two official capitals. An 'Eastern Capital' was proclaimed in the area of modern K'un-ming, at the site of the fortress called Che-tung which had been built by Ko-lo-feng's son Feng-ch'ieh-i in 764.<sup>7</sup> During Hsün-ko-ch'üan's reign or shortly thereafter, its name was changed to Shan-ch'an.<sup>8</sup> However, the true center of the kingdom remained at the 'Western Capital,' in the Ta-li region.<sup>9</sup>

This period also saw the adoption of a new and significant title by the Nan-chao court. Although he retained his inherited title, 'king of Nan-chao,'<sup>10</sup> Hsün-ko-ch'üan also styled himself '*P'iao-hsin*,' a Burmese term which has been translated by G.E. Harvey as 'Lord of the Pyu.'<sup>11</sup> The use of this term is significant, for it is an indication of Nan-chao's increasing dominance over upper Burma, where the Pyu kingdom (Chinese *P'iao-kuo*) had ruled since the late seventh century.<sup>12</sup> The Pyu people seem to have come under Nan-chao hegemony as early as the time of Ko-lo-feng, in the middle of the eighth century.<sup>13</sup> During I-mou-hsün's reign, Nan-chao influence over the Pyu kingdom must have grown, for in 802 the Pyu kingdom sent a tribute mission to Ch'ang-an in the train of the Nan-chao embassy. As we have seen, both Nan-chao and the Pyu kingdom presented troupes of musicians and dancers that caused great excitement in the T'ang capital.<sup>14</sup> According to the Chinese, 'through its military strength and territorial proximity Nan-chao has always held the Pyu kingdom in control.'<sup>15</sup> Hsün-ko-ch'üan's adoption of the title *P'iao-hsin* seems both to reflect and to glorify that fact. This began a period of expansion which was to take Nan-chao power far beyond the borders of modern Yunnan.

In 809, Hsün-ko-ch'üan died and was succeeded by his son Ch'üan-lung-sheng. The new ruler's reign lasted until 816, at which time he was murdered by an important regional official named Wang Ts'o-tien.<sup>16</sup> It is claimed that Ch'üan-lung-sheng had been wanton and immoral in his rule and that everyone in the kingdom bore him ill will.<sup>17</sup> However, in view of Wang Ts'o-tien's subsequent career (to be discussed in detail below), it is possible that he had fabricated these charges as a pretext to kill the young and inexperienced Ch'üan-lung-sheng. According to later sources, Ch'üan-lung-sheng came to the throne at the age of twelve and was only nineteen at the time of his death.<sup>18</sup> Wang Chi-lin has suggested that as Ch'üan-lung-sheng matured he may have clashed with those who had grabbed power in the Nan-chao government during his youth, thereby provoking his own demise.<sup>19</sup> In any case, Wang Ts'o-tien installed the dead ruler's brother, Ch'üan-li-sheng, as his successor.

Again, according to later sources, Ch'üan-li-sheng was himself only fifteen years old when he became king in 816.<sup>20</sup> Apparently, he at first fell easily under the domination of his 'patron,' Wang Ts'o-tien. Wang Ts'o-tien was made a chief minister (*ch'ing-p'ing kuan*), the royal surname of Meng was conferred upon him, and he was even addressed by the new ruler as *ta-jung*, a term meaning 'elder brother,' according to contemporary Chinese sources.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, Wang Ts'o-tien's role as virtual regent came to an end in 819 when Ch'üan-li-sheng successfully asserted his own powers and dismissed him. Wang Ts'o-tien was not punished for his murder of Ch'üan-lung-sheng, and he remained a prominent and powerful figure in Nan-chao political and military history for many years to come.<sup>22</sup>

In 823 (some sources say 824), Ch'üan-li-sheng died and was succeeded by another brother, Ch'üan-feng-yu. This new king, reportedly out of admiration for Chinese ways, did not want to follow the local custom of patronymic linkage and therefore dropped the first syllable of his name. Thus, he is usually known simply as Feng-yu. He is characterized in T'ang sources as a strong and effective ruler, appreciative of Chinese civilization and skilled in using his subordinates.<sup>23</sup> With his accession and until his death in 859, the political instability of preceding years apparently came to an end.

Throughout this period, up to the late 820's, there is little convincing evidence of any military confrontation between the Nan-chao kingdom and T'ang China. There was sporadic fighting in the southwest during these years, but it was evidently limited to uprisings of minor frontier peoples in the regions of modern Kweichow and Kwangsi who, according to the sources, were resentful of various demands made of them by local Chinese officials.<sup>24</sup> Some Ming and Ch'ing period sources give more or less anecdotal accounts of Nan-chao forays into Szechwan and Annam in 814 and 816.<sup>25</sup> But these alleged attacks are not corroborated in any of the standard sources for the

T'ang and should thus be discounted, since there are many other instances where these later sources can be shown to be unreliable and misleading.

Part of the confusion arises from the fact that Nan-chao was sometimes referred to in various Chinese sources of the T'ang period by the general term 'Southern Man' or 'Yun-nan Man,' appellations used for all the border peoples of the south or of the southwest respectively. In most instances, it is clear what is meant, but one must resist the temptation to read Nan-chao into every such occurrence. Ming and Ch'ing period scholars were sometimes not so critical. In other cases, T'ang sources themselves seem contradictory and misleading. For example, the distinguished court official Tuan Wen-ch'ang, who was considered something of a frontier expert, is said by one source to have been sent to the Kweichow region in 822 to help repulse an invasion of the 'Yun-nan Man,' while another source says that it was actually a rebellion of local peoples in Kweichow that he had been sent to quell.<sup>26</sup> It is doubtful that there was any real attack on the Kweichow area, the T'ang province of Ch'ien-chung, by Nan-chao at this time.

Rather, from the turn of the ninth century until the late 820's smooth and uninterrupted relations were predominant. Nan-chao even offered to help the T'ang repulse some of the minor Tibetan assaults on Szechwan that preceded the negotiation of the Sino-Tibetan treaty of 821.<sup>27</sup> Wang Chi-lin thinks that Nan-chao's succession of youthful rulers and general political instability argued against any aggressive actions against China's frontiers during the first quarter of the ninth century.<sup>28</sup> In any case, it is evident that throughout this period the Nan-chao kingdom maintained a consistently circumspect and generally submissive relationship with T'ang China. The T'ang court responded with an appropriate display of diplomatic ritual, honors, and material rewards, characteristic of the Chinese system of interstate relations.

Official diplomatic contacts between Nan-chao and China during the period from 805 to 850 are summarized in the Appendix on pp. 195-9. In general, there seems to have been nothing extraordinary about these contacts. Each country kept the other informed about the deaths of rulers so that proper ritual condolences could be made. In the case of the death of a Nan-chao king, the Chinese always appointed an embassy soon thereafter to confirm the succession of the new Nan-chao ruler. In 809, the Chinese also presented a new seal symbolizing Chinese authority and the reaffirmation of friendly relations between the two countries. Nan-chao embassies to China offered tribute of local products (often livestock) and precious objects such as gold and jewels. In 800 and again in 802, the Nan-chao embassy also presented troupes of musicians and dancers, who were enthusiastically received. They, along with entertainers from the Pyu kingdom, were thereafter enrolled among the fourteen official foreign music troupes at the T'ang

court and seem to have performed there regularly.<sup>29</sup> Nan-chao embassies also took part in various Chinese rituals, such as sacrificing at the imperial tombs and offering New Year's congratulations to the emperor. In return, the Nan-chao envoys were well rewarded. In addition to prestigious official titles, they were frequently honored with imperial audiences and banquets. Personal gifts from the emperor included rich brocades and other clothing, silver utensils, and gold and silver belts.<sup>30</sup>

There is, however, nothing very unusual in any of this. In fact, there is little reason to believe that Nan-chao occupied any especially distinguished position in T'ang China's diplomatic hierarchy. The Japanese monk Ennin does report in his diary that Nan-chao was ranked first of the five foreign embassies received in imperial audience on one occasion in 839, ahead of Japan and the others, but that is not particularly surprising.<sup>31</sup> Even the suspension of court in observance of the Nan-chao ruler's death in 808 and again in 816, while meant to be a great honor, was a common practice of the T'ang court during this period.<sup>32</sup> One can assume that there was a great deal of private, unofficial trade between the two countries, yet *official* trade between Nan-chao and T'ang China apparently was insignificant. Certainly it was not a strategic concern for Chinese officials and historians (who devoted considerable attention to the strategically crucial and carefully regulated horse trade with the Uighurs, for instance), and therefore it does not warrant mention in any of the standard sources.<sup>33</sup> Nor did the issue of a marriage alliance arise in this period of relations between China and Nan-chao, as it did with both the Uighurs and the Tibetans.<sup>34</sup>

Instead, the most interesting feature of the relationship is simply the regularity of this diplomatic and cultural intercourse. In almost every year between 805 and 829 Nan-chao sent at least one embassy to the T'ang capital. Frequent contacts continued in the 830's and, to a lesser extent, in the 840's. Moreover, the special educational program established in Ch'eng-tu remained in effect throughout these years: 'When one group's instruction was completed, they would leave to be replaced by other youths. It went on like this for fifty years, so that all together Nan-chao youths who had studied in Ch'eng-tu could virtually be counted in the thousands.'<sup>35</sup>

What makes the persistence of these very proper and evidently friendly relations especially noteworthy is the curious fact that in the winter of 829, coinciding precisely with the dispatch of yet another embassy to Ch'ang-an, Nan-chao mounted a devastating invasion into Szechwan.

### **The Nan-chao invasion and plunder of Szechwan, 829–830**

Responsibility for disastrous frontier incursions in Chinese history was usually assigned by court officials and later historians alike not just to the

incompetence but also to the cupidity or moral ineptitude of the chief Chinese official assigned to that frontier. The invasion and devastation of Szechwan by Nan-chao forces in the winter of 829–830 is no exception. Tu Yuan-ying, governor of that region when the invasion occurred and a very prominent T'ang official, suffered demotion and exile to remote and unpleasant posts in Ling-nan, as well as considerable historiographical opprobrium, because of this calamity. Inevitably, our opinion of Tu is colored by this traditional historiographical viewpoint. Yet in this particular case, the weight of the evidence suggests that Tu Yuan-ying was not merely a scapegoat, but that he indeed must share much of the responsibility for the conditions in Szechwan that precipitated the Nan-chao invasion.

Tu Yuan-ying's career had flourished under the T'ang emperors of the 820's, Mu-tsung (reigned 820–824), Ching-tsung (reigned 824–827), and Wen-tsung (reigned 827–840), all of whom, in varying degrees, seem to deserve their reputations as immature, sometimes foolish, and dissolute rulers who gave more concern to personal pleasures than to governmental affairs.<sup>36</sup> At Mu-tsung's court, Tu had taken advantage of imperial favor to rise with astonishing quickness to the rank of a chief minister.<sup>37</sup> When, in 823, he fell from power and was sent out to become governor of Hsi-ch'uan, the western half of the T'ang province of Chien-nan (modern Szechwan), he apparently devoted himself to maintaining that favor.

Tu Yuan-ying always sought to fulfill the emperor's desires and thereby strengthen his own favored position. Thus [as governor of Hsi-ch'uan] he cleverly obtained valuable and unusual products of that region and submitted them one after the other in an endless stream to the court. There was no limit to his demands for all kinds of manufactured goods; his requisitions were oppressively heavy. He even misappropriated military provisions in order to promote his accumulation of valuable goods. Nor did he issue supplies to his troops according to their seasonal needs. The frontier soldiers suffered from cold and hunger.<sup>38</sup>

While serving at court in 821, Tu had been criticized for his military incompetence and shortsightedness.<sup>39</sup> In Szechwan, he displayed both of these qualities in abundance. Intent upon his own ends, perhaps lulled by the untroubled post-treaty frontier with Tibet and the extended period of submissive and cooperative relations with Nan-chao, Tu neglected frontier preparations and apparently remained oblivious or indifferent to the growing restiveness of the exploited population of Szechwan, civilians and soldiers alike.<sup>40</sup>

However, the precarious and unstable conditions in Szechwan did not go unnoticed by Nan-chao, which, through its close and amicable relationship



with China, had acquired extensive knowledge of local conditions in this region. Nan-chao emissaries had frequent opportunities to observe the province on their way to and from Ch'ang-an. Moreover, the permanent Nan-chao student establishment in Ch'eng-tu provided an excellent base for ongoing intelligence gathering.<sup>41</sup> There is little direct evidence concerning unofficial contacts between Chinese and Nan-chao citizens and adherents on the border itself, but it seems safe to assume that such contacts were commonplace by this time. It is easily understandable how any instance of widespread unrest in Szechwan would be readily observed by Nan-chao.

In 829, the unstable conditions in Szechwan must indeed have been obvious to Nan-chao leaders, for by that time dissatisfied and embittered garrison soldiers who may have been cheated of their supplies by Tu Yuan-ying's regime had begun making raids on the Nan-chao frontier in order to sustain themselves.<sup>42</sup> Instead of forcibly resisting these raids, however, Nan-chao is said to have freely provided the disgruntled soldiers with supplies. It is difficult to judge how calculated a move this was, but it is clear that Nan-chao thereby earned the gratitude of these Chinese garrison soldiers, and also increased its intelligence concerning local unrest in Szechwan. Meanwhile, Tu Yuan-ying took no precautions, despite warnings of impending trouble from Nan-chao by some of his own officials on the frontier.<sup>43</sup>

Militarily, Szechwan was by itself unprepared to repulse any concerted Nan-chao invasion attempt. While no firm estimate can be made for the total number of soldiers in Szechwan at precisely this time, perhaps the figure of 50,000 given a couple of decades later by the mid ninth-century provincial official Lu Ch'iu is a fair approximation.<sup>44</sup> This figure also squares well with the numbers given for total garrison strength in Szechwan several decades earlier, in 742: 30,900 soldiers, plus some 14,000 militia (*t'uan-chieh ying*) in the administrative seat at Ch'eng-tu.<sup>45</sup> It should be pointed out though that these numbers may have been supplemented by additional soldiers personally recruited and financed by the provincial governor, a common practice during this period.<sup>46</sup>

Yet whatever their number, the quality of the military forces in Szechwan in 829 was not good. It seems that the people of Szechwan had never been highly regarded as soldiers. In 688, Ch'en Tzu-ang had characterized them as weak and unskilled in the martial arts; should one invader attack, even a hundred of them would not dare to offer defense. He also pointed out how isolated they were from T'ang relief forces.<sup>47</sup> This situation may have improved under Wei Kao, during the long period of warfare with Tibet. But since the suppression of the revolt by the would-be provincial governor Liu P'i in 806,<sup>48</sup> Szechwan had experienced some twenty years of peace, with no major internal disturbances and only relatively minor and isolated border

attacks from Tibet. The sources report that during these years provincial military training and defensive preparedness had not been emphasized and that the armies of Szechwan had declined in effectiveness.<sup>49</sup>

Later, in the 880's, Sun Ch'iao, a civil official stationed at Sui-chou, recorded a discussion he had had with a frontier general named T'ien Tsai-pin concerning the military situation in Szechwan. His colorful characterization of Szechwan military forces can perhaps be taken as an apt description for most of the ninth century.

All the soldiers who are sent here each year to guard the southern frontier are Ch'eng-tu rabble, well-stuffed with pork and grain so that ninety percent of them look like pumpkins. They may know the military signals for advance and retreat, but they are not familiar with the strategic lay of the land. I once observed them coming. With the north wind stiff at their backs, they proceeded slowly on the level road, each day advancing only one station. Even so, how they sweated and creaked along! How could they be expected to pass through difficult terrain on a strict schedule, to bind on their armor and hasten to the fight, to grasp their lances and give battle?<sup>50</sup>

Further complicating the matter was the fact that these soldiers, in the 880's as well as in the 820's, were frequently ill-paid and cheated even of the supplies which were due them. Sun's description continues:

What's more, their generals are oppressive and self-seeking; and the quartermasters allow their clerks to engage in petty thievery. They take the good quality silk that the government is supposed to give to the soldiers and exchange it for coarse quality silk; they add sand to the grain that is the soldier's due [pilfering the difference for themselves]. In these circumstances, the frontier troops are totally preoccupied by ill will against their superiors. So how can they be expected to fight aggressively to the death? This is why the security of Hsi-ch'uan has become a serious concern.<sup>51</sup>

As noted above, Tu Yuan-ying himself had 'misappropriated military provisions in order to promote his accumulation of valuable goods. Nor did he issue supplies to his troops according to their seasonal needs.' In such circumstances, it is not surprising that some of these troops would abandon allegiance to Tu Yuan-ying and his provincial administration. When Nan-chao provided them with supplies that they were unable to obtain from their own superiors, these soldiers evidently added freely to the Nan-chao store of information regarding conditions in Szechwan.<sup>52</sup>

There is, moreover, strong evidence that some of the Szechwan populace

may actually have conspired with Nan-chao. When the Nan-chao army invaded in 829, a number of provincial garrison soldiers served as their guides.<sup>53</sup> Again according to Sun Ch'iao, Nan-chao always sought to take advantage of any opportunity of divided loyalties by spying out grudges between commanders and looking for dissatisfaction among the T'ang forces in Szechwan. Nor was collaboration necessarily limited to discontented soldiers. In the late 830's, for instance, a resident of Szechwan named Li Ch'üan 'sent his son with a letter informing Nan-chao that Hsi-ch'üan was unprepared and ripe for the taking. This son was apprehended at one of the border towns. An investigation was made to determine the facts; subsequently they [father and son] were publicly executed. Yet even now there may be others who would follow in their steps.'<sup>54</sup>

Thus, Szechwan's first line of defense, its own military force, was weak and unreliable. Nor was there much popular support for the provincial administration. Indeed, there seems to be ample evidence to confirm the existence of some 'marginal' peoples (Owen Lattimore's term)<sup>55</sup> among the Szechwan frontier populace who, under stress, might shift their allegiances away from the T'ang. Ultimately, Szechwan's fate in any large-scale attack would depend upon T'ang relief forces.

The 829 Nan-chao invasion of Szechwan, though short-lived, had important and long-lasting effects. The general picture which emerges from the sources is of a quick strike into the province in December 829, a brief occupation of key localities including the suburbs of Ch'eng-tu itself, and the plunder and widespread devastation of these areas before the Nan-chao forces pulled back in late January 830. The invasion was over within six or seven weeks, even before Chinese relief forces could arrive in strength.

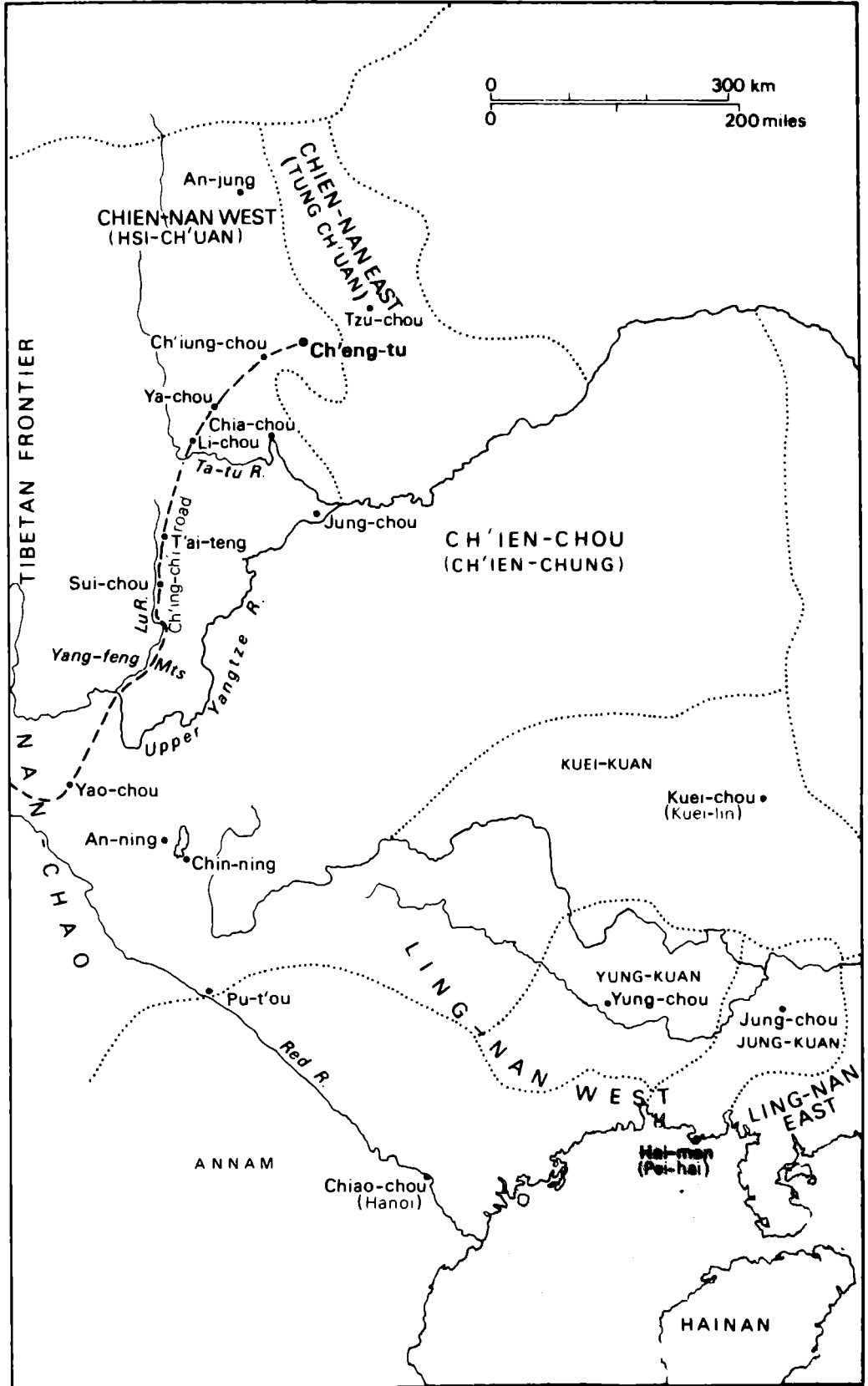
There is not enough detailed and consistent information in the sources to permit any very thorough reconstruction of the progress of the Nan-chao invasion. Nevertheless, some significant points can be raised. The Nan-chao attack was led by Wang Ts'o-tien, the same general who, in 816, had engineered the coup against Ch'üan-lung-sheng and the installation of his young brother, Ch'üan-li-sheng, whose reign Wang Ts'o-tien seems to have dominated completely until 819. Thereafter, his exact role at the Nan-chao court is not clear. Feng-yu, who ruled from 823, is always described as a strong king, but post-Sung sources report that he was only seven at the time of his accession.<sup>56</sup> During his infancy, Wang Ts'o-tien may once again have assumed the role of regent. In any event, Wang Ts'o-tien's command of this major invasion makes it clear that he was the pre-eminent Nan-chao military figure during this period. As we shall see, he was also the principal figure involved in the exchange of diplomatic letters between Nan-chao and China at this time.

The Nan-chao attack naturally fell first on Sui-chou, which from the early part of the eighth century on was the furthest and most important T'ang outpost in the southwest.<sup>57</sup> The invasion probably began sometime during the first ten days of December 829.<sup>58</sup> Thereafter the progress of the Nan-chao forces was swift. By mid-December the Nan-chao army had struck at the Ch'ing-ch'i pass, which controlled access to Ch'eng-tu from the south. (See the map on p. 111.) By the end of December the invaders had pushed further north, routing a provincial force sent by Tu Yuan-ying to stop their advance and capturing Ch'iung-chou, the last important prefecture on the road to Ch'eng-tu, barely fifty miles away.<sup>59</sup>

During this period Nan-chao forces had split up, for about the time that Ch'iung-chou fell, the invaders also captured Jung-chou, located approximately one hundred miles to the southeast of Ch'eng-tu.<sup>60</sup> The eventual objective of this eastward foray was Tzu-chou, administrative capital of Tung-ch'uan, the other half of the old T'ang province of Chien-nan. By late December 829, Nan-chao had thus made very serious inroads into all of Szechwan and had threatened its two most important cities. The situation was critical, since none of the prefectural garrisons attacked by Nan-chao was able, or willing, to offer much resistance. Rather, 'when each of the garrisons heard that Nan-chao forces had reached them, the soldiers all fled.'<sup>61</sup>

By this time the T'ang court had begun to take steps to rescue Szechwan. A eunuch envoy was sent to present an imperial decree to the Nan-chao court, though it seems unlikely that he ever got there.<sup>62</sup> Under normal circumstances, news from Szechwan probably took well over a week to reach Ch'ang-an. The difficulties of this journey and the time required to get a response from the T'ang court meant that effective frontier administration in the southwest, especially in a crisis, demanded the presence of an effective regional commander in Ch'eng-tu. On 30 December, the court appointed Kuo Chao, who was then serving as governor of Tung-ch'uan, to take over as interim governor of Hsi-ch'uan as well, replacing Tu Yuan-ying.<sup>63</sup> Within the next few weeks, Tu Yuan-ying was demoted into exile, ultimately to a very remote post in the dreaded backwaters of Ling-nan, where he died early in 833. Three of his subordinates were also stripped of rank and banished to separate posts.<sup>64</sup>

Kuo Chao was a descendant of the famous eighth-century general Kuo Tzu-i, a brother of Empress-dowager Kuo (and thus Emperor Wen-tsung's great-uncle), and a competent military official in his own right. He was chosen for this important task, however, partly just for expediency's sake, as the court realized that there was not sufficient time to send out another official from Ch'ang-an.<sup>65</sup> With troops from Tung-ch'uan still under his command, Kuo was ordered to proceed to Hsi-ch'uan's rescue.



Map 7 The southwestern frontier of T'ang China

The T'ang court also called up troops and supplies from at least six provinces and sent Tung Chung-chih, the famous rebel cavalry commander from Huai-hsi, now in the court's employ, to head an expeditionary force of the imperial Shen-ts'e army in relief of Szechwan.<sup>66</sup> However, by the time that these assorted troops had arrived in Ch'eng-tu in mid-January, the Nan-chao invaders had already retreated across the frontier. Although some of these Chinese troops remained on temporary assignment to garrison Ch'eng-tu, Tung Chung-chih and most of the relief forces were ordered to pull back on 19 January 830.<sup>67</sup> T'ang relief armies had not arrived in time to do Szechwan much good. For the most part, provincial officials were forced to cope with this formidable problem on their own.

Primary responsibility fell to Kuo Chao. Yet before he could even depart for Ch'eng-tu (and well before T'ang relief forces had arrived), Kuo found that the Tung-ch'uan provincial capital of Tzu-chou, for which he was still responsible, was itself in imminent danger.<sup>68</sup> Knowing that his own provincial forces were not strong enough to offer effective resistance, Kuo resorted to diplomatic maneuvering. He sent a letter to the commander of the Nan-chao forces, Wang Ts'o-tien, condemning the Nan-chao invasion and demanding to know the reason for it.<sup>69</sup> Wang Ts'o-tien responded with what was to become the standard Nan-chao justification for the incursion. He claimed that soldiers under Tu Yuan-ying had invaded Nan-chao lands several times and that the Nan-chao attack was simply an attempt to put things right. There was an element of truth to this, but there was no reason to think that Tu himself had in any way sanctioned those raids, which were in fact evidently a desperate response to Tu's own malfeasance. Given the friendly relations that Nan-chao had cultivated with those very soldiers, Wang Ts'o-tien must surely have known that. In any event, Kuo Chao was able to negotiate a settlement with him. No details are given concerning the settlement, except that after it was concluded the Nan-chao army lifted the siege of Tzu-chou and pulled back.<sup>70</sup>

Meanwhile, however, Nan-chao armies had placed the Hsi-ch'uan administrative seat of Ch'eng-tu itself under siege. On 2 January 830, they breached Ch'eng-tu's western wall and occupied the western suburbs of the city.<sup>71</sup> Tu Yuan-ying, who had not yet been notified of his demotion, found himself in an impossible situation. It cannot be true that Tu became aware of the invasion only after Nan-chao soldiers had reached the outer walls of Ch'eng-tu itself, as some sources contemptuously claim,<sup>72</sup> but it is true that Tu's general mismanagement of this region, his neglect of frontier defenses, and especially his alienation of border garrisons, had made Szechwan an easy target for invasion. By this time, Tu's only recourse was to take refuge in the inner administrative enclosure (*ya-ch'eng*) of Ch'eng-tu. Although the T'ang court did receive a report that Ch'eng-tu had fallen, Nan-chao forces were apparently

unable to capture the inner precincts of the city and may only have occupied two of its metropolitan districts.<sup>73</sup> This point will be discussed more fully below. Yet whether or not the heart of the city held out against the invaders, it is clear that much of Ch'eng-tu suffered directly from their attack.

The Nan-chao army occupied the western suburbs of Ch'eng-tu for ten days in early January 830. At first, the sources state, they reassured the population of Ch'eng-tu. There was no plunder or disruption of the city. Almost certainly, however, the invaders never intended to conquer or occupy Ch'eng-tu permanently, and they must have realized that they were in danger of being trapped deep within Chinese territory by T'ang relief armies.<sup>74</sup> Thus when Kuo Chao arrived at Ch'eng-tu to negotiate further with the Nan-chao leaders, they quickly reached an agreement with him. Each side promised to refrain from encroaching upon the other's territory.<sup>75</sup>

Before leaving, however, Nan-chao forces did not miss this opportunity to loot the rich and culturally sophisticated city of Ch'eng-tu, plundering as much as they could of its precious goods.<sup>76</sup> Much of what they did not take was apparently destroyed. We know, for instance, that they reduced Ch'eng-tu's Yü-ch'en Palace to rubble,<sup>77</sup> that they razed at least parts of Ch'eng-tu's outer wall,<sup>78</sup> and that they set fire to portions of the city.<sup>79</sup> Finally and most infamously, before they left the invaders rounded up many thousands of Ch'eng-tu's skilled craftsmen, along with many of its young people, and forcibly carried these captives back to their homeland with them. By 19 January, the Nan-chao forces had gone.<sup>80</sup>

In the midst of all this, sometime during the twelfth lunar month of 829 (30 December 829 to 27 January 830), Nan-chao's customary tribute mission arrived in Ch'ang-an.<sup>81</sup>

The suffering and the devastation caused by the Nan-chao invasion of Szechwan are attested in several accounts, some of them composed by people very close to the event. It is interesting to note that the citizens of Ch'eng-tu may have thought that they noticed during the year 829 several portents of the impending disaster, for we are told that several strange and unnatural occurrences took place in Ch'eng-tu at that time: plum trees bore quince;<sup>82</sup> a cat and a rat were seen suckling together;<sup>83</sup> a dragon and an ox fought outside the city gates.<sup>84</sup> These omens are not specifically linked with the Nan-chao attack in the sources, but one cannot help thinking that later they may have been connected with that catastrophe in the popular mind.

Probably the most poignant accounts of the invasion itself were those written by the poet Yung T'ao. Yung was a native of Ch'eng-tu who received a *chin-shih* degree in 834 and later rose to prominence as a scholar at the T'ang court. Aside from this, very little is known of Yung's life. A rather

modest corpus of poems is extant,<sup>85</sup> but the only real biographical material which has survived is the sketch in the Yuan period collection of the lives of prominent T'ang literary figures, *T'ang ts'ai-tzu chuan*. This short account, though not explicit, makes it seem that Yung himself was either taken captive to Yunnan or at least forced to flee from Ch'eng-tu by the Nan-chao invasion.<sup>86</sup> Whether or not he himself had been so personally involved in the invasion, it is clear that he knew many people who had endured this misfortune.<sup>87</sup> As he remarks in a poem addressed to his friend Ma Ai,

In this region which has suffered attack,  
Whose family has not experienced the crises of life and death?<sup>88</sup>

To commemorate their sufferings, Yung T'ao wrote a series of five poems entitled *Lamenting the Nan-chao Capture of the People of Szechwan*. These poems are part of a genre of Chinese poetry, very popular in T'ang times, which describes the rigors, the loneliness, and the barbarity of areas beyond China's borders. Most such frontier poems (*pien-sai shih*) deal with the arid vastness of the northern and northwestern frontier regions.<sup>89</sup> Yung's poems, on the other hand, are interesting representatives of another category of *pien-sai shih*, focusing their imagery on the lush but pestilential southern frontier.

Though not brilliant, Yung's poems deserve better than the prosaic translations offered here. However, their historical and especially their psychological significance demands that they be presented in some translated form. In writing these poems, Yung T'ao gave particular emphasis to the bitter lot of those Chinese who had been captured and enslaved by the Nan-chao invaders.

Look now as the Chinese commander returns to the city's walls.  
Who would have known our handsome beauties would become subject  
to the Man troops?  
From south of the Embroidered River,<sup>90</sup> hear the distant cries:  
All the sounds of parting country, of being torn from home.

On the banks of the Ta-tu River, even the Man are saddened.  
About to cross over, the Chinese all turn their heads homeward.  
Here they must leave the rest of their homesick tears;  
Once south, no streams will flow back northward.

Going out from the gates of home, their steps slacken.  
In this life there will be no chance to go back again.  
A thousand grievances, ten thousand hates – who will perceive them?  
Beasts and birds of the desolate mountains alone will know.

South of the fort at Yueh-sui,<sup>91</sup> there are no Chinese lands.  
It wounds the heart from now on to become barbarians.



A mournful wind arises with the bewailing of their grievances;  
Clouds darken clear skies, the sun sets below the mountains.

The dew of Yun-nan emerges from the quicksands of the West.<sup>92</sup>  
Poisonous grasses are ever green, miasmatic shades hang low.  
Gradually nearing the city of the Man, who would dare to weep?  
For the moment, they can but collect their tears and envy the gibbon's  
sad cry.<sup>93</sup>

Although these laments obviously employ a great deal of poetic exaggeration, there is certainly a strong tradition, evident in all of the standard historical sources, to substantiate Yung's depiction of the plight of the captured Chinese. In these accounts, we are informed of the general panic which ensued in Ch'eng-tu when the Nan-chao invaders began rounding up their captives. Reportedly, countless people killed themselves, presumably out of fear of the barbarous life they thought might await them.<sup>94</sup> As the Nan-chao army fled south with their captives, Wang Ts'o-tien himself took command of the rear guard. According to these accounts, when they reached the Ta-tu River, Wang Ts'o-tien condescendingly, or sadistically perhaps, advised the Chinese that, 'south of this point is my [Nan-chao] territory; we will allow you to weep at leaving your homeland.'<sup>95</sup> Thereupon, the Chinese were overcome with grief; many of them, we are told, threw themselves into the river and drowned.<sup>96</sup>

The poignancy of this particular account is, unfortunately, diminished with the realization that this is actually a stock incident in Chinese historiography. This suspicion is confirmed by an almost identical description, using very similar language, of the fate of more than ten thousand Chinese from the area northwest of Ch'ang-an who had been captured by the Tibetans in 787. After they had been driven out of China and were about to be parceled out as slaves to various subordinate tribes, they were told that 'we will allow you to face eastward [toward China] and weep at leaving your homeland.' The denouement is also the same, with only a change in the topographical features. Several hundred are said to have died of grief, and more than a thousand reportedly committed suicide by throwing themselves off the cliffs in that area.<sup>97</sup>

These, obviously, are examples of another of the *topoi* of Chinese frontier historiography. As such, they should be taken for their symbolic rather than for their literal value. In the case of the January 830 incident at the Ta-tu River, this anecdote clearly expresses what must have been the feelings of many who had personally experienced the invasion and represents the sentiments of many others who were outraged by this violation of Chinese ethnic identity.

Strong memories of this invasion apparently continued for some time. Writing a generation later in 855, Lu Ch'iu described the massive destruction that the 829 invasion had caused, so great that succeeding provincial administrations had up to that time still not been able to restore the area completely. Lu claims that half of the region's artisans had been lost and that half of its population had been wiped out.<sup>98</sup> Nor were craftsmen and hardy youths the only ones taken captive. In the early 840's, the T'ang court received a petition from the son of a former Sui-chou official who complained that his father and brother, along with twenty-seven others, were among those captured in the 829 invasion. A draft of an imperial letter addressed to the chief ministers of Nan-chao, demanding the return of these captives, has survived; but there seems to be no other record of their fate.<sup>99</sup>

However, a quite similar event that occurred in the early part of the eighth century and by chance was recorded in the Sung period collection of informal writings known as the *T'ai-ping kuang-chi* can give us some indication of what may have happened to some of these captives. Around the year 710, shortly after the Li Chih-ku debacle at Yao-chou (see chapter 2), Kuo Chung-hsiang, a nephew of the T'ang chief minister Kuo Yuan-chen, was sent to serve in the administration of the new Yao-chou governor-general Li Meng. Subsequently, Kuo recommended a former neighbor named Wu Pao-an for a clerical job in Yao-chou. What followed is an almost incredible story of friendship and obligation, of suffering and cruelty. Although only the salient details will be summarized here, the story is important, for it can tell us a great deal about one aspect of relations between the Chinese and the peoples of the southwest.

By the time that Wu Pao-an arrived in Yao-chou, the peoples of that region had again rebelled against the Chinese presence there, attacking the T'ang outpost at Yao-chou and killing Li Meng. In that attack, hapless Kuo Chung-hsiang was taken captive.<sup>100</sup> When Chinese were captured by these southwestern peoples, we are told, they were usually held for ransom. At this period, there was evidently a standard rate of thirty bolts of cloth demanded from their families for each person's return.<sup>101</sup> When his captors learned that Kuo was related to such a high court official as Kuo Yuan-chen, however, they raised their price to a thousand pieces of fine silk. But by this time Kuo Chung-hsiang's uncle had died, and there was apparently no way of raising so large a ransom. As a result, Kuo languished in captivity.<sup>102</sup>

At this point, Kuo's neighbor and protégé Wu Pao-an took it as his personal duty somehow to raise the funds. He remained on the frontier at Sui-chou, cutting himself off from wife and family, and by scrimping for ten years managed to acquire seven hundred of the necessary one thousand pieces of silk. Finally, in the mid-720's, the new governor-general of this region heard of Kuo's plight, and of Wu's devotion, and provided the additional

funds for the ransom. The ransom was sent, and two hundred days later Kuo was returned, 'emaciated and haggard in appearance, [looking] virtually inhuman.'<sup>103</sup>

Kuo had a harrowing tale to relate upon his return. When he was first captured he was given as a slave to one of the local chiefs, who liked him and gave him very favored treatment. However, as the years passed and Kuo despaired of ever returning to China, he found an opportunity to escape, only to be recaptured and sold off to another chief further south. This new master was much more severe; bitter work and cruel beatings became Kuo's daily lot. Again Kuo fled, and again he was captured and sold, this time to a master even further south. After another few years of suffering, Kuo escaped once more, but had no better luck as a fugitive. Once again he was recaptured and sold off. This final master, we are told, decided to take no chances with such a recalcitrant slave. Not only did he lock Kuo up in an underground cage at night, he also hobbled him by having a wooden plank several feet long nailed to each of Kuo's feet.<sup>104</sup>

Kuo's thirteen-year ordeal must have been a special case, and perhaps we should not believe all of the sensational aspects of this account. Yet there is here valuable evidence of an established practice among the peoples who made up the Nan-chao kingdom of exploiting, marketing, and ransoming Chinese slaves. Many of the Chinese captured in the 829 invasion may well have received similar treatment.

Even in the 880's, the scars of the 829 invasion were apparently still evident, for Sun Ch'iao, writing at that time, observed that 'to this day the sixteen prefectures of Hsi-ch'uan still show signs of damage.'<sup>105</sup> Sun's account of the aftermath of the invasion is especially interesting as it adds to our knowledge of the invasion's chaotic effects.

The Nan-chao plunder of Hsi-ch'uan was so complete that in the region south of Ch'eng-tu and north of Sui-chou, several hundred miles in extent, scarcely a living thing survived. On top of this, Chinese soldiers routed by the Nan-chao army and the people made homeless by them now took up arms and formed themselves into gangs, robbing and killing. Officials were unable to restrain them.<sup>106</sup>

Matsui Shūichi is no doubt right in seeing this not only as evidence of the sufferings caused the people of Szechwan by the Nan-chao invasion but also as a manifestation of popular dissatisfaction with their provincial government.<sup>107</sup> It was probably these restive conditions that prompted an imperial decree of 9 June 830, ordering the reduction of tax obligations in Hsi-ch'uan.<sup>108</sup> It is clear, at any rate, that the people of Szechwan had suffered greatly. In another of his poems, Yung T'ao described how

After the battles were done, people grieved over their injuries.  
After the fires had died, they looked with remorse on the ashes.<sup>109</sup>

What were the motives for this Nan-chao invasion? In 829, it seems that Nan-chao could not realistically have hoped to conquer and occupy Szechwan permanently, especially not the well-developed region around Ch'eng-tu. Although conditions within the province had made it an easy target for a quick incursion, there is no reason to believe that Nan-chao forces could have withstood a concerted T'ang effort at recovery. Nor could anyone have doubted that the T'ang would fight hard to retain such a vitally important area. Retreat from Ch'eng-tu after such a brief occupation and before T'ang relief forces could arrive in strength indicated that Nan-chao was well aware of these facts.

Yet perhaps it would be going too far to say that Nan-chao held no territorial ambitions for Szechwan at all. Ever since 750 Nan-chao had periodically chipped away at the Szechwan frontier. At the time of the 829 invasion, the furthest secure T'ang frontier outpost was Sui-chou.<sup>110</sup> Yet in 829 and following years Sui-chou itself was threatened. It is possible that Nan-chao did seek to annex the Sui-chou region in these years, since in 831 Nan-chao forces again attacked this prefecture, overrunning three of its districts and forcing the governor of Hsi-ch'uan to move the prefectural seat to a less exposed area further north.<sup>111</sup>

It is also possible to see territorial designs in Wang Ts'o-tien's reported pronouncement to his Chinese captives that all of the region south of the Ta-tu River was Nan-chao territory. Even if this story is not purely apocryphal, however, we should not put much stock in this claim. While there was never a static and clearly demarked border line between Nan-chao and T'ang China, the subsequent frontier seems to have fallen well south of the Ta-tu, at least as far as the outpost known as T'ai-teng.<sup>112</sup> Yet the attacks of 829 and 831 probably did extend the Nan-chao marches somewhat to the north, and this may indeed have been one of the goals of the invasion.

We can of course discount one stated motive for the Nan-chao invasion, Wang Ts'o-tien's claim merely to have been repaying Tu Yuan-ying's administration in kind for Chinese raids on its own territory. According to this self-serving explanation, the primary goal of the attack on Hsi-ch'uan was a compassionate attempt to rid the province of this corrupt official. In fact, shortly after the Nan-chao retreat from Ch'eng-tu, Wang Ts'o-tien submitted a memorial to the T'ang court in which he asked for pardon and attempted to rationalize the attack on Szechwan. Carefully noting the regularity of Nan-chao tribute missions to the T'ang court, he asserted that Nan-chao dared to violate the border only because Tu Yuan-ying had incurred the resentment of

his own soldiers, who had subsequently volunteered to act as guides for Nan-chao forces, entreating them to enter Szechwan and execute their cruel and uncompassionate governor.<sup>113</sup> There may have been a kernel of truth to this claim, as we have seen, but it is obvious from subsequent Nan-chao actions that this was not the real reason for the incursion, convenient justification though it may have been. Wang Ts'o-tien claimed regret that he had been unable to carry out the Szechwanese soldiers' wishes and strongly urged the T'ang emperor to execute Tu as a means of atonement to the people of Hsi-ch'uan. The court, however, did not give him that satisfaction.<sup>114</sup>

Rather than any of this, the real stimulus for the attack seems to have been simply Nan-chao's awareness that Szechwan was ripe for the plucking. The riches of this province, and especially of its capital, were famous throughout T'ang China and must have been the envy of many frontier peoples as well.<sup>115</sup> Simple plunder was thus a key attraction for the Nan-chao invaders, with Ch'eng-tu's large output of fine textiles, famous at least from Han times, as one of the major material prizes.<sup>116</sup>

Perhaps even more important than material riches, however, was the acquisition of skilled manpower and technological expertise. Ma Ch'ang-shou, for one, has argued that ultimately one of the most important of the Nan-chao objectives was the capture of Chinese people, for he believes that slavery was a fundamental element of the Nan-chao economy.<sup>117</sup>

Our sources give a relatively good economic overview of the Nan-chao kingdom. We know that Nan-chao had a mixed economy, in which there was a strong pastoral element, especially in the western and northwestern parts of the kingdom, where excellent horses were produced.<sup>118</sup> In addition, there was a well-developed mining industry, which seems to have extracted considerable amounts of salt, gold, silver, tin, and other precious metals, as well as high quality amber (*hu-p'ò*), a huge chunk of which was submitted to an amazed T'ang court in 794.<sup>119</sup> Sericulture also existed, though the leaves of the *che* tree, rather than the mulberry, were used to feed the silkworms.<sup>120</sup>

Nan-chao also had an important crafts industry. The variety and the color of its textiles seem to have been stimulated by elaborate sumptuary laws of dress.<sup>121</sup> The production of weapons, some of them tipped or veneered with poison, and of armor made from rhinoceros or elephant hide was also especially important. In particular, this area was famous for its highly refined swords, which seem to have been a major item of trade with the Chinese and the other peoples of the southwest all the way through the Sung period.<sup>122</sup>

Nevertheless, agriculture was clearly the mainstay of the economy. Favorable natural conditions, including an excellent climate and rich soil, had encouraged the development of agriculture in the plains regions of Yunnan at least from the Han period.<sup>123</sup> Nan-chao inherited this agricultural base and

developed it even further. There was a great diversity of crops – cereals, fruits, and vegetables. Wet-field rice production was probably the staple, but the Chinese were especially impressed with Nan-chao's excellent techniques of cultivating hillside fields.<sup>124</sup> Their system of irrigation, which tapped perpetual mountain springs, is also highly praised.<sup>125</sup>

Ma Ch'ang-shou's contention that Nan-chao based its economy on a system of slave labor is derived from Chinese descriptions of the regulations that controlled land allotment and the Nan-chao labor force. According to these sources, a graded system of land allotment was in force, whereby the highest officials were given forty *shuang* (around two hundred Chinese *mou*, or roughly thirty-three acres) of land, upper-class families thirty *shuang*, and middle- and lower-class families correspondingly less.<sup>126</sup> Fujisawa Yoshimi regards this as a copy of the Chinese *chün-t'ien* system.<sup>127</sup> Ma Ch'ang-shou sees it both as an indication of the rigid class distinction within the Nan-chao kingdom and as evidence of the exploitation of laborers by the land-holding classes. He dismisses as false and absurd the notion found in the *New T'ang History* (*Hsin T'ang-shu*) that the entire society engaged personally in tilling the soil and that no labor services were demanded.<sup>128</sup> Here, Ma's argument seems well founded. We know that agricultural laborers (*tien-jen*) were watched over and urged on by low-level officials acting as overseers. Although regulations against graft were strictly enforced, the tillers themselves had no control over the disposition of their crops. Rather, the officials would calculate a subsistence allowance for each agricultural family based on its size; all of the rest of the harvest was appropriated by the officials.<sup>129</sup> Similarly harsh regulations existed for miners, for seventy to eighty per cent of their yield was claimed by the officials who oversaw them. Moreover, it is clear that many Nan-chao captives were enslaved and put to work in state run gold and salt mines.<sup>130</sup>

On this basis, Ma argues that one major goal of the invasion of 829, and indeed of all Nan-chao forays across its own borders, was the replenishment of its supply of slaves.<sup>131</sup> Certainly, slavery was fairly common in south and southwest China throughout this entire period, as noted in chapter 1. However, Nan-chao's raid on Ch'eng-tu had netted them more than simply an additional supply of manpower; for among their captives, it is clear, were thousands of skilled craftsmen. It is likely that the majority of these artisans were textile workers, but all manner of crafts, skills, and professions were probably represented. Nevertheless, both the number and the identity of these captives are far from clear.

Surprisingly, one detailed enumeration of those taken captive in the Nan-chao invasion has survived. However, this report, which was written by Li Te-yü, probably the most important chief minister of the entire ninth century,

must be used with caution. Li Te-yü played a leading role in the factional politics that dominated the T'ang court during the first half of the ninth century.<sup>132</sup> In 830, Li was temporarily out of favor at court and was assigned to manage the difficult situation in the southwest. This he was to do very well, as will be described below. In his initial report concerning the Nan-chao captives, however, Li's apparent motive was to downplay the severity of the invasion, thus lessening the culpability of the chief official in Ch'eng-tu, Tu Yuan-ying — who was both Li's personal friend and a member of Li's faction at court.<sup>133</sup>

Before Tu's death, Li sought to lessen the punishment which Tu had received for the disastrous results of his inept administration. Later, as the dominant chief minister at Emperor Wu-tsung's court, Li successfully had some of Tu's titles and perquisites posthumously restored.<sup>134</sup> As Hsiang Ta has cogently demonstrated, the two long petitions that Li wrote in support of these aims give an impression of the severity of the invasion that is not entirely reliable. In fact, Li's assessment may have been intentionally distorted so as to make the invasion appear less catastrophic.<sup>135</sup> Thus, rather than clarifying this issue, Li's account has further shrouded it with controversy. According to Li,

After Nan-chao's forces withdrew, reports circulated in Ch'ang-an that they had captured more than fifty thousand people and that none of the musicians and craftsmen of Ch'eng-tu were left. These reports derive from [the interim governor] Kuo Chao's administrative incompetence in not having investigated any of the facts. When I arrived at my post in Hsi-ch'uan, I dispatched officials to make an inspection of each and every prefecture and district that Nan-chao forces had passed through and to put all of their findings into an official report. In all, Nan-chao had captured nine thousand people. From the Ch'eng-tu metropolitan districts of Ch'eng-tu [*i.e.*, Ch'eng-tu *hsien*] and Hua-yang they got only eighty people. Of these, one was a young girl named Chin-chin [*tzu-nü Chin-chin* (?)], and there were two *tsa-chü* actors and an eye doctor, who was a [Nestorian] priest from Persia [*Ta-ch'in seng*]. All the rest were ordinary people and certainly not craftsmen. The remaining 8,900 captives were all folks from Li-chou and Ya-chou, and half of them were Ko-lao aborigines.<sup>136</sup>

There is some fascinating and useful information provided here. Cultural historians, for instance, should take note of this very early use of the term *tsa-chü*, which we usually associate with later developments in the Chinese dramatic genre. It is also interesting to consider the possibility that the Nestorian form of Christianity, which we know was already well established

in Ch'ang-an and in Ch'eng-tu, may have been introduced into Yunnan in T'ang times.<sup>137</sup>

More to the point of this analysis, however, is the difficulty of reconciling Li's figures with all of the other standard accounts. These sources give figures of from four thousand to several myriads of Chinese captives taken in the 829 Nan-chao invasion. More importantly, they all agree that many of the captives were artisans.<sup>138</sup> Given Li Te-yü's apparent ulterior motives, it would seem best to reject his figures.<sup>139</sup> The best conclusion is that at least several thousand Chinese were captured by Nan-chao forces in the 829 invasion and that many of them were skilled craftsmen from the suburbs of Ch'eng-tu.

Nan-chao made efficient use of this valuable catch. The sophistication of the Nan-chao textile industry and the quality of its output improved quite noticeably. 'Since 829 when Nan-chao invaded Hsi-ch'uan and took prisoner quite a few male and female craftsmen, nowadays Nan-chao knows all about how to weave silk cloth.'<sup>140</sup> 'From this point on,' the sources state, 'Nan-chao produced patterned textiles that were equal to those of China.'<sup>141</sup> With this invasion, Nan-chao acquired the skills to achieve a sudden and significant advancement of its economy and culture, rapidly accelerating the trend of Nan-chao's adoption of Chinese technology. Hence, this invasion, brief as it was, assumed great importance in the cultural history of southwest China.

For Szechwan, however, the invasion had been an outright catastrophe. Conditions in that province in 830 were acute. The recently disgraced provincial governor had exploited the resources of the province for his own purposes, incurring the ill will of its people and soldiers in the process. Under his administration, frontier defenses and the military readiness of the province had deteriorated through neglect. Moreover, the province had just experienced a destructive invasion which had left it in a state of exhaustion and desolation. Its economy had been dealt a crippling blow, not only by the destruction itself but also by the loss of thousands of skilled workers. Some of its people, exhausted and embittered by years of exploitation and ravaged by the Nan-chao invasion, had themselves become roving bandits. The soldiers of the province, ill-trained and ill-supplied, were divided in their loyalties and doubtless demoralized by their ineffective performance against the Nan-chao army. Kuo Chao, the new provincial governor, was old and in poor health. Incapable of resolving the myriad problems with which he was confronted, he soon asked to be relieved of his duties and, in fact, died on his way back to Ch'ang-an.<sup>142</sup>

The situation was critical. It demanded the services of a skilled and forceful administrator to restore the stability, the security, and the vitality of the province.



### **Li Te-yü and the restabilization of Szechwan**

In late October 830, Li Te-yü was appointed to fill the post of Hsi-ch'uan *chieh-tu shih*, which Kuo Chao had recently resigned.<sup>143</sup> Although Li is best known for his role as a top court official, it should be remembered that he, like most high officials of his time, spent a large part of his career serving in provincial posts. This was neither the first nor the last time that Li was appointed to a provincial governorship.<sup>144</sup> As subsequent events were to show, the T'ang court could hardly have selected a more effective administrator for this important frontier province.

When he arrived in Szechwan, Li Te-yü found that the province was still in an unsettled condition. None of the sources mention pacification of the riots which according to less official historical jottings followed the Nan-chao invasion,<sup>145</sup> so restoring civil order to the province was probably a relatively easy matter, which may have been settled during Kuo Chao's few months in office. Yet Kuo's illness and lack of administrative ability had prevented him from doing much to revive provincial fortunes.<sup>146</sup> It was Li's firm hand and clear-sighted policies that restabilized the region and reassured the people of Szechwan.

Li's first step was to acquaint himself thoroughly with the peculiarities of the region to which he had been assigned. Upon arriving in Szechwan, he systematically familiarized himself with all aspects of local geography and specific conditions. In so doing, Li was perhaps taking a lesson from his father, Li Chi-fu (the most powerful chief minister at Emperor Hsien-tsung's court), whose own recognition of the necessity for a thorough knowledge of the country's geography is best evidenced by his compilation of the famous *Treatise on the Administrative Geography of the Yuan-ho Period* (*Yuan-ho chün-hsien t'u-chih*).<sup>147</sup> Li Te-yü took great pains to increase his own stock of intelligence through personal interviews with anyone who possessed strategic information concerning the region and its frontiers. We are told that Li

daily summoned those who had long experience in frontier garrisons and were familiar with border affairs, regardless of whether they were common soldiers or border peoples, and inquired about the disposition of mountains and streams, fortifications and towns, the strategic features of roads, their widths and distances. Within a month, he knew as much about these things as if he himself had passed through them.<sup>148</sup>

Li kept careful records of all this information. For this purpose and perhaps as a reassuring symbol of his steps to secure the borders, he ordered the construction in Ch'eng-tu of a building known as the Tower of Frontier Preparedness (*Ch'ou-pien lou*). Maps were sketched on this tower, depicting the

frontier geography of the region. On the left side, all of the Nan-chao routes of attack into Szechwan were delineated; on the right, the border with Tibet was demarcated in detail.<sup>149</sup> During this period Li also compiled a book in thirteen *chüan* (including maps), which he called *Notes on Southwestern Border Defense (Hsi-nan pei-pien lu)*. Sadly, only a prefatory memorial and a handful of scattered quotations survive. However, this work probably served as the primary source for the detailed description of the southwestern border in Li's biography in the *New T'ang History (Hsin T'ang-shu)*.<sup>150</sup> We may also surmise that this work, along with similar non-extant pieces by Wei Kao and the T'ang envoys Yuan Tzu and Wei Ch'i-hsiu, served subsequently as a handbook for both court and provincial officials who had to respond to the exigencies of the southwestern frontier.<sup>151</sup> It is thus clear that Li Te-yü made efficient use of the local intelligence that he had painstakingly acquired.

Defense construction was perhaps the one area in which Li's knowledge of local conditions was utilized most effectively. During Li's brief tenure in Szechwan, several forts were constructed, each of them designed to reinforce a spot which Li had determined to be vulnerable or of special strategic value. Li also reinforced important passes and transferred the prefectural seat of Sui-chou northward to the less exposed region around T'ai-teng, probably in response to the Nan-chao attack on Sui-chou of November 831, in which two or three districts were captured from the Chinese.<sup>152</sup> Thus Li was quick to engage in defense construction where he thought it strategically necessary. Yet he also realized that such defense works, unless strongly garrisoned, had only limited value – and that in some areas they were impractical in the first place. When in 830 he received an imperial directive to refortify the Ch'ing-ch'i pass in order to block the Nan-chao route of invasion, Li objected that any such attempt would be futile, since there were too many back roads leading through the area and it would be impossible to block them all. Rather, he argued insistently, only by garrisoning this region in sufficient strength could it be defended effectively. If there were enough troops in the area, well supplied and well trained, Nan-chao would not dare attack. Li's informed opinion convinced the T'ang court.<sup>153</sup> Chang-i Fort, built in this vicinity and heavily garrisoned in this period, was probably a product of Li's proposal.<sup>154</sup>

Concurrently, Li was engaged in a thorough reform of the military forces of Szechwan. Li first petitioned that some of the soldiers which had been sent to the rescue of Szechwan be allowed to remain and garrison the province on a more permanent basis. By the time of Li's arrival in Ch'eng-tu, most of these relief forces had long since returned to their home areas. Only a small contingent of three thousand troops remained, and even those soldiers were scheduled to return in the third lunar month of the following year.<sup>155</sup>

Because of this, the people of Szechwan were understandably apprehensive that they should again be vulnerable to attack.

In petitioning that at least fifteen hundred troops be allowed to remain for the defense of Szechwan, Li offered the following critique of the state of the military there in 830:

The troops of Hsi-ch'uan are fragile and weak, and moreover, have recently been besieged by the Nan-chao invaders. Their confidence has been shattered, and they are incapable of giving battle or of offering defense. If the relief forces were all to return [to their home provinces], then the situation would be no different from that which existed under Tu Yuan-ying, and Hsi-ch'uan could not defend itself.<sup>156</sup>

Li further pointed out that local troops drafted by Tu were virtually useless and that subsequent call-ups by Kuo and by Li himself had yielded but a few hundred men. Li capped his argument by reporting the ominous news that Nan-chao had sent two thousand of the Chinese captured in the invasion, along with a gift of cash, to the Tibetans. If both countries should learn of Szechwan's continued military weakness and were to join forces for an invasion, Li warned, it could truly be cause for deep concern. Persuaded by these alarming (and perhaps exaggerated) arguments, the court approved Li's request and left some of these relief forces on duty in Szechwan.<sup>157</sup>

Li then devoted himself to eliminating deadwood from the provincial troops. Complaining that the sick and the infirm, the old and the weak among the soldiers of Szechwan were never weeded out, Li established new standards of fitness for soldiers under his command, thereby getting rid of more than 4,400 useless personnel. On the other hand, Li recruited an additional thousand sturdy youths into the ranks. He intermixed these recruits, along with the fifteen hundred relief troops that he had been granted, into the regular provincial army and had them train together and learn from one another.<sup>158</sup> He also established a new militia in Szechwan, called the 'Border Braves' (*hsiung-pien tzu-ti*), with one man selected for service from among every two hundred households. In theory self-supporting, since in normal times they would farm and otherwise provide for themselves (though they would remain ready to fight when emergencies arose), the 'Border Braves' were divided into eleven units, including crossbowmen and cavalry.<sup>159</sup>

Li Te-yü also sought to improve the quality of arms manufacture in Szechwan, claiming that weapons produced by local artisans were overly ornamental and not of much use. He therefore recruited weapons-makers from other regions (armorers from An-ting, bow-makers from Ho-chung, crossbow craftsmen from Che-hsi) to help upgrade these crafts in Ch'eng-tu. Li integrated them with the local artisans and oversaw their production.

From this time on, we are told, the arms of Szechwan were sharp-edged and keen-pointed.<sup>160</sup>

As governor of Hsi-ch'uan, Li also showed concern for the problems of supply for frontier garrisons. Formerly, the province's frontier garrisons had received provisions which were transported all the way from the Chia-chou and Mei-shan areas in the eastern part of the province. Moreover, supply trains left late in the year and, because of the difficulty of travel in this area, often did not arrive at their frontier destinations until mid-summer. By that time the heat and miasma of the frontier took a heavy toll on what must have been a considerable number of laborers drafted for the transport of these provisions.<sup>161</sup> Li's reform of this system shortened the supply route and began the transport in the tenth lunar month, allowing plenty of time to arrive on the frontier before the onset of summer and thus avoiding the hottest months.<sup>162</sup>

Li Te-yü's incisive and comprehensive policies in Szechwan are impressive, as indeed are the results of those policies, especially the military reforms.<sup>163</sup> Li had strengthened Szechwan's defensive capabilities, providing the province with more, better trained, better armed, and better supplied soldiers, as well as a newly buttressed perimeter of fortifications. All of this may have instilled a renewed *esprit de corps* in the province's soldiers and must have given comfort to the people of Szechwan, who were apprehensive over the possibility of further invasion. The upgrading of the provincial army and the creation of a new local militia force may, moreover, have rekindled local pride and confidence.<sup>164</sup> Although the province had not recovered fully under Li Te-yü, his policies did result in a marked improvement over the situation as it had existed under Tu Yuan-ying, however much Li may have wanted to downplay Tu's negligence. The populace of Szechwan, we are told, responded with a sense of relief.<sup>165</sup>

Despite the brevity of his tenure in Hsi-ch'uan, less than two years, Li had enacted the most successful and constructive programs of any governor there since Wei Kao. Partly because of his achievements in restoring this important area, Li Te-yü was recalled to the capital in late 832 and rose for the first time to the rank of chief minister.<sup>166</sup>

### **Normalization of relations between Nan-chao and China, 830 to mid-century**

Given the Nan-chao leaders' excellent intelligence concerning Szechwan, it is not likely that they would have failed to notice any of these developments, for Li Te-yü had rectified most of the weaknesses that had made Szechwan such an inviting target for invasion under Tu Yuan-ying. When Li sent an envoy in early July 831, to demand the return of Chinese prisoners

captured in the 829 invasion, Nan-chao responded by repatriating some four thousand of them.<sup>167</sup> Clearly, as in the case of the Sui-chou official mentioned above, not all the Chinese taken captive were returned to their homeland. According to Li himself, two thousand of them had been sent to Tibet. It is possible that some sort of a ransom was paid for those who were repatriated, but no details concerning the circumstances of their return are given. On the other hand, as Wang Chi-lin has observed, it is also possible that Nan-chao's willingness to return these prisoners indicates that they had been impressed by Li's restabilization of the region and were intimidated by his reorganization and strengthening of its military potential.<sup>168</sup> Perhaps to avoid a fight over the issue of these captives, Nan-chao at least partially acquiesced.

In any case, the repatriation of these prisoners is consistent with Nan-chao's continuation of regular diplomatic relations with the T'ang court. The table in the Appendix reveals that again in 830, in 831, and in ensuing years, Nan-chao dispatched its normal missions to Ch'ang-an with great consistency. Contacts with Ch'eng-tu must have been even more frequent. Only in the 840's did the frequency of these missions begin to decline. Yet note again that, curiously contradicting this consistently correct diplomatic relationship with China and occurring almost simultaneously with their mission of 831, Nan-chao in mid-November of that year once more attacked Sui-chou and overran parts of that prefecture.<sup>169</sup>

Clearly, border attacks and even serious invasions were not necessarily incompatible with continued diplomatic relations under the traditional Chinese system. 'Acts of war' did not necessarily lead to a 'break in diplomatic relations,' as the modern Western system of interstate relations might lead one to expect.<sup>170</sup>

Aside from this 831 incident, however, the frontier between Nan-chao and the T'ang province of Hsi-ch'uan was quiet for the remainder of the period under consideration in this chapter. Perhaps one reason for this was the continuing emphasis given to the military preparedness of the region. As governor of Hsi-ch'uan in the late 830's, the T'ang official Li Ku-yen (who was not related to Li Te-yü) established a new cavalry unit and recruited three thousand more soldiers into the provincial army.<sup>171</sup> The eastern part of the province was also strengthened militarily during these years by its governor, Feng Su.<sup>172</sup> And Pai Min-chung further improved military preparedness in the region as governor of Hsi-ch'uan in the 850's.<sup>173</sup>

Meanwhile, during the reign of the Nan-chao king Feng-yu (823-859), important internal developments may have been taking place in the Nan-chao kingdom. Unfortunately, virtually all we know about such developments is derived from post-Sung Chinese sources, which, it must be reiterated, are not fully reliable for the Nan-chao period. Some cautious use, however, can be

made of them. They indicate, for instance, that this was a great era of architectural construction within the Nan-chao kingdom. Great secular buildings, especially the outstanding Tower of Five Glories (*Wu-hua lou*), new fortress towns, and public works projects such as granaries and irrigation waterways, were completed during these years.<sup>174</sup> Many of the most impressive buildings, however, seem to have been religiously inspired. In fact, the entire ninth century was a great era for the building of Buddhist temples all over Yunnan.<sup>175</sup> Of these, the most famous is the Ch'ung-sheng Temple, located near modern Ta-li, whose three magnificent pagodas have survived into the twentieth century.<sup>176</sup>

This period of temple construction seems to reflect the religious transformation that occurred in the Nan-chao kingdom during the ninth century. Prior to that time, the peoples of Yunnan held to their own local religious orientation, apparently shamanistic in practice and organization, centered on belief in the forces of nature and in the need to propitiate the spirits of departed ancestors.<sup>177</sup> Extensive contacts with other societies, especially China and Tibet, must have exposed the Nan-chao peoples to Buddhist influence throughout the seventh and eighth centuries; on the other hand, of course, it is quite possible that these peoples had long been aware of Buddhism through more or less direct contacts with India.<sup>178</sup> At any rate, it is certain that they had ample opportunity to observe Buddhism as it was practised at the T'ang court when they began sending missions to China in the latter half of the seventh century.<sup>179</sup>

Yet down to the end of the eighth century there is little reliable evidence that Buddhism had begun to supplant the earlier religious practices. It is true that post-Sung sources tell of a Nan-chao minister named Chang Chien-ch'eng who studied Buddhism while on a mission to China in the late 720's.<sup>180</sup> And there is also a legend concerning a brother of Ko-lo-feng, who was reputedly a Buddhist priest with magic powers that were employed with great effectiveness against the T'ang armies in the wars of the 750's.<sup>181</sup> But these sources are especially suspect in the realm of religion, where they all exhibit a very prominent and often anachronistic overlay of Buddhist legend. (In these sources, for example, the genealogy of the Nan-chao kings is spuriously traced to Asoka, the great Indian emperor and patron of Buddhism of the third century B.C., as has already been noted.) More trustworthy sources give no indication of any Buddhist influence within the Nan-chao kingdom through the end of the reign of I-mou-hsün. Certainly, the ritual associated with the Nan-chao acceptance of the treaty with China in 794 was dominated by pre-Buddhist religious impulses, requiring the sanction of the three forces of earth, water, and mountain/sky.<sup>182</sup>

It was only during the first half of the ninth century that the first indi-

cations appeared that Buddhism was displacing the earlier native religious orientation. As the century progressed, the building of Buddhist temples and the casting of Buddhist statues seem to have become prolific, under the patronage of the Nan-chao court.<sup>183</sup> Indeed, later Nan-chao kings, as we will see in the following chapter, became fervent followers of this religion. By the latter half of the ninth century, Buddhism was quite clearly the state religion of the Nan-chao kingdom.<sup>184</sup> This development was to have lasting importance, for all of Nan-chao's successor kingdoms in Yunnan down to the Mongol conquest in the middle of the thirteenth century remained devoted patrons of Buddhism.

Externally too, significant developments occurred during the period of Feng-yu's reign. In particular, during the 830's Nan-chao seems to have refocused its attention southward, exercising its considerable military power in raids across much of mainland Southeast Asia. In 832, for instance, Nan-chao forces invaded and sacked the capital of the Pyu kingdom of upper Burma, which Nan-chao had long dominated, and abruptly ended its political existence.<sup>185</sup> 'In 832, Nan-chao forces invaded and plundered the Pyu kingdom. They captured more than three thousand of its people and transported them into servitude at Che-tung, requiring them to be self-sufficient. Nowadays [*ca.* 866] their descendants are still there, subsisting on such things as fish and insects. Such has been the end of that people.'<sup>186</sup>

In 835, Nan-chao also attacked and destroyed the kingdom of Mi-ch'en of lower Burma, over which the Pyu kingdom had claimed some form of suzerainty.<sup>187</sup> Again, Nan-chao took a great deal of booty and many captives, whom they carried off to northwest Yunnan where they were forced to pan for gold.<sup>188</sup> There are additional records of Nan-chao attacks during this period on the Mon peoples of the K'un-lun kingdom and on another kingdom known to the Chinese as Nü-wang. Both of these attacks, however, were repulsed, reportedly with very heavy losses for the Nan-chao army.<sup>189</sup> Nan-chao is also reported to have attacked the Khmer peoples of Chen-la, in a foray which took their cavalry all the way to the sea.<sup>190</sup> Obviously, by mid-century Nan-chao had asserted itself as a major power in mainland Southeast Asia as well as along the southwest China frontier.

Several post-Sung sources also include a rather involved account of a Nan-chao expedition into Burma in the 850's, reportedly at the request of the Burmese king, to drive off a force of invaders from Sri Lanka (Shih-tzu kuo).<sup>191</sup> This account, however, must be discounted, partially on the basis of internal inaccuracies.<sup>192</sup> Moreover, there is apparently no record of any such Sinhalese invasion into Southeast Asia in the ninth century, either in Burmese or in Sinhalese chronicles. We do know, however, that there was a massive raid on Burma in 1164 or 1165 by forces under the great Sinhalese king

Parakramabahu I, an incursion that was provoked by a dispute over trading rights.<sup>193</sup> It is possible that post-Sung Chinese sources picked up local historical tradition that somehow had misplaced this event and had woven it into the context of Nan-chao history. It seems unlikely in any case that any such event actually occurred in the middle of the ninth century.

The only other incident that has possible significance in the history of relations between Nan-chao and China in the first half of the ninth century is likewise rather questionable. Many late sources report that in 846 Nan-chao forces attacked the T'ang protectorate in Annam, capturing it and killing the Chinese official in command, P'ei Yuan-yü.<sup>194</sup> That there was some sort of disturbance in Annam in that year is confirmed by the far more reliable source, *Tzu-chih t'ung-chien*. However, that source says only that there was an attack on Annam by the Man, or 'southern peoples,' and that P'ei Yuan-yü led a force of soldiers from neighboring regions against them.<sup>195</sup> P'ei could hardly have been killed at this time, in any case, since he is known to have served in this post until 848.<sup>196</sup> Of course, 'Man' could here mean Nan-chao; but, as we have seen, that is not necessarily so. The Annam region had had its share of troubles with local tribes throughout the eighth and ninth centuries.<sup>197</sup> It is possible, even likely, that the 846 attack was also local in nature. In any event, it is certain that Nan-chao did not capture Annam in 846.

Yet the possibility that Nan-chao did at least stage a raid on Annam at that time has to be taken seriously, especially in light of Nan-chao forays all over mainland Southeast Asia in the preceding decade. Soon, moreover, there were to be truly massive invasions into Annam by Nan-chao forces, attacks which would succeed in the temporary capture of Hanoi and which would threaten the T'ang empire with the permanent loss of this commercially vital region. These are developments that will be analyzed more fully in chapter 6.

Yet the fact remains that from 831 to the middle of the century, the frontier between T'ang China and the Nan-chao kingdom was stable and comparatively quiet. These favorable conditions can be attributed partly to the legacy of Li Te-yü's reforms in Szechwan. The ordinary pattern of frequent diplomatic contacts and generally friendly relations between the two countries remained as yet unbroken, despite the devastation of 829.



## BELLIGERENCE AND DECLINE

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For nearly three decades after Nan-chao's 829 invasion of Szechwan, no serious problems arose to mar relations between the Nan-chao kingdom and China. During this period, as we have seen, close diplomatic contacts were maintained. The Nan-chao kingdom continued to advance culturally and technologically, stimulated in part by its increasingly wholehearted adoption of Buddhism. It was after the 829 invasion, however, that Nan-chao also began to extend its influence and to expand its territorial control to the south. Its campaigns deep into mainland Southeast Asia, though not always successful, were in some cases catastrophic to the peoples and states of that region.

Given this new orientation toward its southern borders, it was perhaps natural that Nan-chao would eventually turn its ambitions toward the region of modern Kwangsi and ultimately toward the T'ang protectorate in Annam (northern Vietnam) as well. As we have seen, it is possible that as early as 846 a brief clash occurred in that region between Nan-chao and T'ang forces.<sup>1</sup> Even if we assume that this attack was associated with Nan-chao forces, however, it could have been little more than a tentative and inconsequential raid.

Nonetheless, there definitely was recurring instability in this corner of the T'ang empire. For one thing, this was an area of quite confusing ethnic diversity, never truly under direct T'ang administrative rule.<sup>2</sup> At best, the territory corresponding to modern Kwangsi and northern Vietnam was loosely administered by the Chinese through a series of largely autonomous *chi-mi* protectorates.<sup>3</sup> Chinese population in this area was never large, down even to fairly recent times. This presented a far more unsettled situation than even frontier regions of Szechwan, in which the Chinese presence, though sometimes problematic, was long-standing and relatively secure. Throughout the T'ang period, and particularly in the ninth century, there was a virtually unending series of insurrections against Chinese control by one or another of these aboriginal groups in the hinterlands of Kwangsi and Annam.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, the exotic natural resources of this area and the international trade which flourished in Canton and Hanoi made it worth the trouble and the risk to try to maintain security and control in this area.<sup>5</sup>

According to our sources, these unsettled conditions were often brought on by the incompetence or the severity of T'ang administrators in the far south, whose actions provoked the local peoples to acts of resistance. Such conditions eventually provided the Nan-chao kingdom with a real opportunity to expand in this direction.

Previously, periodic troubles in this region had been of a purely local nature, and the instigators were usually put down or accommodated by T'ang forces without too much difficulty.<sup>6</sup> In 854, however, tensions were greatly intensified, evidently as a direct result of the exploitative policies of the new T'ang official in Annam, Li Cho. We are told that Li had obtained his post in Annam by bribing the son of the powerful chief minister Ling-hu T'ao.<sup>7</sup> In describing his actions in Annam, these sources make it clear that Li intended to make that bribe pay off. Thus, Li's administration of Annam was said to have been especially harsh and acquisitive, even for a region whose incumbents regularly amassed enormous fortunes. In particular, he is charged with alienating one group of local peoples, known as the Ch'ung-mo Man, by forcing them to sell livestock to the Chinese at greatly deflated prices: one *tou* of salt for one horse or cow.<sup>8</sup>

In that same year, Li Cho also decided on his own authority to quit sending a contingent of six thousand Chinese soldiers each winter to defend the border northwest of Annam, presumably from the possibility of Nan-chao attack. In this region, winter was a particularly vulnerable season for an invasion, since then the threat of infectious disease, which itself was evidently an effective defense against invading armies during most of the year, was not so great.<sup>9</sup> Li's decision may have reduced defense expenditures for the region. However, this unilateral action was resented by the chief of the Ch'i-kuan-tung Man (also called the T'ao-hua peoples), Li Yu-tu. He and his tribe reportedly had given long-standing support to T'ang administrators in Annam, both in the form of taxes and by providing permanent border garrisons in this northwestern section. The sudden elimination of the Chinese winter garrison had left Li Yu-tu feeling exposed and isolated.<sup>10</sup>

Li Yu-tu's sense of alienation from the T'ang was reportedly encouraged by the Nan-chao commander in Che-tung. It should be remembered that after the conquest of the Ts'uan and the annexation of this area of eastern Yunnan (near modern Kunming) in the middle of the eighth century, the Nan-chao court had established Che-tung to consolidate its control in the east. Later it was renamed Shan-ch'an and elevated to the position of Nan-chao's 'Eastern Capital.' Now Shan-ch'an, still referred to as Che-tung in some sources, was being used as a forward staging area for Nan-chao's aggressive policies against the Kwangsi and Annam regions.<sup>11</sup> The Nan-chao commander there established communications with Li Yu-tu and gave a wife to his son to seal an

alliance with him. This, the historians ominously report, was the beginning of the Nan-chao calamity in Annam.<sup>12</sup>

Several other instances of needlessly severe treatment of the local peoples by Li Cho are grimly recounted in the sources.<sup>13</sup> Although Li left his post in Annam in 855, his policies there had provoked widespread alienation of the local frontier peoples who were critical to the security of his northern border. This set the stage for more serious troubles beginning in 857 and 858.

By the summer of 857, frontier disturbances in this region were getting out of hand. The Ch'i-tung Man, whose leader earlier had been killed by Li Cho, were attacking T'ang administrative posts with regularity, and the Chinese troops in Jung-chou were themselves out of control.<sup>14</sup> It was to deal with these troubles that the T'ang court appointed Wang Shih to the post of Annam protector-general at the beginning of the following year.<sup>15</sup>

Wang Shih is well known as the most effective Chinese military commander of the 850's and 860's.<sup>16</sup> His stint in the far south gave him a good opportunity to demonstrate that effectiveness. After his arrival in Hanoi, Wang took steps to improve the region's defenses. An impenetrable palisade of reeds was planted around Hanoi, surrounded by a deep moat and then another thicket of sharpened bamboo. The quality of government troops in this region was also significantly improved. Thus, when a large force of 'southern Man' troops, in this case identified fairly clearly as being from Nan-chao, approached the area, they were intimidated. Wang was able to convince them that they had nothing to gain from attacking, and the Nan-chao army quickly pulled back. Its commander reportedly sent someone to explain that they were simply trying to restore order among the local peoples and had no intention of invading Chinese territory.<sup>17</sup>

This claim is reminiscent of Nan-chao attempts to justify the 829 invasion of Szechwan; and similar rationalizations would often be relied upon in future attacks against Annam and Szechwan as well. This may be taken as a further indication of Nan-chao's excellent intelligence concerning conditions in surrounding areas and of the quickness with which they took advantage of all such opportunities. On the other hand, it is also an indication of the great caution which they employed on most such occasions. When they encountered effective resistance, they usually opted for a timely retreat. This is a theme that often recurs in Chinese accounts of the difficulties of the following two decades.

In the meantime, Wang Shih also showed steady leadership in quelling an insurrection of local vagrants.<sup>18</sup> He moreover succeeded in restoring the finances of this region. Troops who had not been properly paid for years were again well provided for; and for the first time in several years Annam sent in its quota of tax contributions to the T'ang court.<sup>19</sup> Fortuitously, it would

seem, the peoples of Champa (Chan-ch'eng) and Cambodia (Chen-la) again established contact with China, through his administration in Hanoi.<sup>20</sup> Wang's successes in stabilizing Annam, however, were to be short-lived. His effectiveness in Annam was recognized by the T'ang court, and thus, in the spring of 860, he was called back to the north to command the campaign against the very serious rebellion led by Ch'iu Fu that was then raging in the T'ang province of Che-tung, on the eastern coast of China, north of Fukien.<sup>21</sup>

Meanwhile, several things had happened to disrupt normal diplomatic relations between Nan-chao and T'ang China. Despite the fact that their incursions into Kwangsi and Annam had grown more serious and more overt, Nan-chao missions to the T'ang court still kept appearing on a regular basis. In addition to the cultural and diplomatic advantages of these missions, Nan-chao probably benefitted from them economically as well, though there is no firm evidence either to support or to dispute this conjecture. Be that as it may, the size of the retinue of these missions was very large and getting larger. The T'ang court seems to have felt this to be an increasing burden. Moreover, the long-standing educational program for Nan-chao youths in Ch'eng-tu was still flourishing. Reportedly, stipends and related expenses for these students, who over the years could 'virtually be numbered in the thousands,' were a great drain on the budget of the regional commander there.<sup>22</sup>

In 859, Tu Ts'ung, then just beginning a second term as regional commander of Szechwan, petitioned to restrict the number of persons allowed to come in the Nan-chao missions, as well as the number of students accommodated in Ch'eng-tu. The court approved.<sup>23</sup> But these restrictions angered the Nan-chao ruler Feng-yu. In response, he recalled all Nan-chao students then in China; and that year's mission to China simply delivered a memorial to the frontier official at Sui-chou rather than journeying to the T'ang court itself. Communication between the two countries became strained.<sup>24</sup>

That, however, was only the beginning of diplomatic difficulties. A Chinese envoy was sent to the Nan-chao kingdom in 859 to inform the Nan-chao court of the death of Emperor Hsüan-tsung. But by the time that the T'ang mission arrived, the Nan-chao king Feng-yu too had died. This coincidence caused a serious diplomatic crisis. Feng-yu had been succeeded by his son Shih-lung. (According to custom, one would expect Feng-yu's son's name to begin with the syllable 'yu.' This apparent break in the pattern of patronymic linkage has never, to my knowledge, been adequately explained.) Shih-lung was peeved that the T'ang court should expect Nan-chao to send its condolences when the Chinese themselves had not yet sent a mission, as was customary, to express sympathy for his father's death and to recognize his own succession. He therefore treated the Chinese envoy shabbily.<sup>25</sup>

Later, when the T'ang court learned what had happened, yet another

thorny problem arose. The Chinese were unwilling to grant investiture to the new Nan-chao ruler since the first syllable of his name was written with a character tabooed because of its association with the personal name of Emperor T'ai-tung, Li Shih-min. (Consequently, all T'ang and Sung period sources refer to Shih-lung as 'Ch'iu-lung.'<sup>26</sup>) It is perhaps revealing to note that these punctilious controversies over form and ritual apparently led to a complete break in diplomatic relations between the two countries, whereas border conflict and even ruinous invasions had not.

For his part, the Nan-chao king began calling himself 'emperor' (*huang-ti*) and adopted his own era name rather than following the era name in effect in T'ang China, as had all prior Nan-chao kings since I-mou-hsün.<sup>27</sup> It is also reported that he changed the name of his country, calling it the Ta-li kingdom.<sup>28</sup> (That name, however, seems to have been used only temporarily. It should not be confused with the name of the later Ta-li kingdom, founded in 937, which is written with a different character. This is, nonetheless, an interesting precedent for that name.)

Unfortunately, this diplomatic breakdown had occurred just as Nan-chao was becoming increasingly involved in T'ang troubles in the frontier regions of Annam and Kwangsi. These events set the stage for two decades of full-scale border war beginning in 861, during which Annam would twice fall to Nan-chao forces and Szechwan would again be severely threatened as well.

### **The struggle for Annam**

In 859, immediately after the rupture of diplomatic relations between Nan-chao and China, the Nan-chao king Shih-lung sent an army in an attack on Po-chou (modern Tsun-i, in Kweichow), which was apparently captured with little difficulty.<sup>29</sup> However, neither then nor at any other time did the Nan-chao kingdom control regions this far east into Kweichow for long. In the following year, the new T'ang governor in Annam, Li Hu, took it upon himself to recapture Po-chou, though it lay far outside of his jurisdiction. His bold counter-attack was successful and the Nan-chao army was repulsed, but the maneuver left Li's own command in Annam vulnerable.<sup>30</sup>

This was especially dangerous at a time when Chinese officials there had still not resolved the sources of hostility which had come to plague relations between them and some of the local peoples. It appears that Nan-chao was well aware of this enmity and characteristically encouraged it. The upshot of all this was that, during the winter of 860–861, one group of these peoples (whose former leader Li Hu himself had executed) called in Nan-chao troops. With their collaboration, Nan-chao was able to take advantage of the absence of Li's army to overrun Annam and even to capture Hanoi itself.<sup>31</sup>

This initial Nan-chao capture of Hanoi, however, seems to have been

wholly fortuitous, without any long-range plans for conquest. Thus, when Li Hu's forces hastily returned to Annam, they had little trouble driving the Nan-chao invaders out.<sup>32</sup> Yet these events must have made any ambitions that the Nan-chao court entertained toward this area and the fabulously rich trade which came through it seem more realistically attainable. The T'ang court, in the meantime, had taken a harsh view of what they regarded as Li Hu's dereliction of his responsibility in Annam. Despite his effective recovery of Po-chou and the victories that he had won, he was demoted and exiled to Hainan.<sup>33</sup>

In the fall of 861, after having pulled back from Annam, the Nan-chao army struck at Yung-chou, in modern Kwangsi. T'ang forces there were inadequate to defend the region. A recent plan to economize by replacing Yung-chou's complement of garrison soldiers, which previously had come from adjoining areas, with local recruits had not worked effectively. Reportedly, Yung-chou's troop strength had as a result been diminished by seventy or eighty per cent of what it had been before. Once again, Nan-chao seems to have taken full advantage of this opportunity, driving out the remaining T'ang forces, and capturing the area.<sup>34</sup>

Again, Nan-chao's occupation of Yung-chou was quite brief, only around twenty days. However, in that period the Nan-chao army managed to plunder the region thoroughly. After they had left and T'ang forces returned to Yung-chou, they found the region to have been desolated, with only a small fraction of its former inhabitants still there.<sup>35</sup>

By this time Tu Ts'ung, whose petition to restrict the size of Nan-chao missions and the number of their students in China had been one cause of the deterioration of relations between the two countries, had returned to the T'ang capital and had been named one of the court's four chief ministers. Realizing belatedly the extent of the Nan-chao threat in the south, the danger of renewed attack in Szechwan, and thus the desirability of keeping Nan-chao in a friendly alliance, Tu proposed that the court take steps to heal the breach. Tu urged that the court should first send a representative to commiserate over Feng-yu's death. This minister would also be instructed to explain to the present Nan-chao king and his officials the reason for the court's displeasure concerning the ruler's name. If only Shih-lung would alter his name slightly to avoid conflict with dynastic sensitivities, the T'ang court would forthwith send a mission of investiture and treat the new king with full honors. Again, it is extremely interesting to note that the Chinese were willing to overlook several very serious Nan-chao attacks in the south, including the capture and plunder of key areas, in order to seek conciliation – but that they could not ignore this breach of form. In any case, the matter was settled before the mission to Nan-chao could set out. News arrived that Nan-chao had again

struck into Szechwan, attacking Sui-chou and reaching as far north as the Ch'iung-lai pass. Consequently, Tu's proposal of appeasement was shelved.<sup>36</sup>

Li Hu's demotion and exile had coincided with Wang K'uan's appointment as the T'ang governor for Annam. Wang, however, was ineffectual against continuing Nan-chao attacks during his brief administration there. His repeated requests for aid convinced the T'ang court to replace him with Ts'ai Hsi, formerly the civil governor of Hunan, who was then apparently serving as a subordinate official in Annam.<sup>37</sup> In addition, some thirty thousand troops from provincial armies in the north were reportedly put at Ts'ai's disposal. As in Szechwan three decades earlier, the arrival of so many Chinese soldiers seems to have had an immediate stabilizing effect. For the time being, Nan-chao forces no longer advanced.<sup>38</sup>

About this time, however, personal jealousy and spite among some of the T'ang officials in the south began to affect the course of Chinese efforts against Nan-chao. A low-level court official named Ts'ai Ching, described in the sources as cruel and cunning, had been sent to Ling-nan in the spring of 862 on a mission for the court. After his return, Ts'ai Ching proposed a major reform in the administrative organization of Ling-nan, a region which included most of modern Kwangtung and Kwangsi and had jurisdiction over Annam as well. Up to that time, Ling-nan had been subdivided into five administrative units: Kuang-chou, the most important, to the east; Kuei-chou (not to be confused with modern Kweichow province), to the north and west; Yung-chou, to the west; Jung-chou, in the center; and Annam to the south and west.<sup>39</sup> (See the map on p. 111.) Now Ts'ai convinced the court to divide the province into eastern and western halves. Kuang-chou remained the seat of administration for Ling-nan East, while Yung-chou was upgraded to the status of an independent regional commandery (*chieh-tu shih*), now to be called Ling-nan West, with much territory attached to it from Kuei-chou and Jung-chou.<sup>40</sup> It is not surprising that Ts'ai Ching was able to get himself appointed to govern Ling-nan West. From his administrative base in Yung-chou, he was to have authority over Annam as well.<sup>41</sup>

Apparently one of Ts'ai Ching's first acts as regional commander was to petition that the northern troops which had been placed under Ts'ai Hsi's command for the defense of Annam be recalled. We are told that Ts'ai Ching's motives were purely spiteful, for he was jealous of Ts'ai Hsi, whose continued success against Nan-chao forces in Annam might outshine any of his own achievements. Ts'ai Ching claimed that Nan-chao forces had moved far out of the area and that these troops were therefore unnecessary and a wasteful expense. He argued cleverly that frontier commanders would naturally claim that extra soldiers were needed so that they could strengthen their own armies and add to the amount of requisitioned supplies that would

come through their hands. His arguments convinced the T'ang court, who ordered the relief forces to return to their home provinces, despite strenuous objections from Ts'ai Hsi in Annam.<sup>42</sup>

Ts'ai Hsi sent in numerous memorials in which he pointed out that Nan-chao and its allies had a well-organized system of intelligence and that they were just waiting for an easy opportunity to attack. Thus, Annam could hardly afford not to be prepared. Yet the court would not even grant that five thousand of the northern troops be left behind. Further desperate pleas from Ts'ai Hsi went unanswered.<sup>43</sup>

What satisfaction Ts'ai Ching got out of this, however, was short-lived. His own administration in Yung-chou was reportedly extremely rapacious and his system of justice unspeakably cruel.<sup>44</sup> His own troops finally could take it no longer and drove him from Yung-chou. He fled north to Kuei-chou, but could find no support there either. Finally, he was demoted to a post in Hainan. When he refused to go there, he received an order from the court to kill himself.<sup>45</sup>

Thus the situation in Annam had again been made favorable for a Nan-chao attack, which was not long in coming. During the winter of 862–863, a Nan-chao army of fifty thousand invaded.<sup>46</sup> Much of what we know about this invasion, and indeed about this whole era of relations between Nan-chao and China, comes to us from an official named Fan Ch'o, who served Ts'ai Hsi as a trusted lieutenant. Even before Ts'ai had been promoted to the top position in Annam, he had employed Fan in reconnaissance missions into the Nan-chao camp.<sup>47</sup> Fan's task seems to have been both to gather information and to attempt negotiations with the Nan-chao leaders. In 861, he did manage to lead a small patrol into the Nan-chao camp and to see several of the Nan-chao generals, along with their collaborator, a local chieftain named Chu Tao-ku. Although nothing was accomplished by his attempts to negotiate, Fan did bring back much information concerning the makeup of the Nan-chao forces and the extent of their support from local peoples.<sup>48</sup>

As we have seen, the Nan-chao army was actually a confederation of forces. In addition to the military core described in chapter 4, numerous neighboring peoples who were allied with or had been subjugated by Nan-chao added significantly to its fighting strength. Fan Ch'o specifically mentions seeing the following peoples in the ranks of Nan-chao's invading forces: the Ho Man, P'u-tzu Man, Hsün-ch'uan Man, Lo-hsing Man, Wang-chü-tzu Man, Mang Man, Chin-ch'ih Man, the Pyu, and others.<sup>49</sup> According to Fan's reports, they were all fierce and unrelenting fighters. And of course, in this invasion of Annam, they were joined by those local peoples of that area who had been disaffected from T'ang control.<sup>50</sup>

Late in 862, Ts'ai Hsi sent urgent messages to Ch'ang-an warning of Nan-



chao's impending attack. In response, the T'ang court finally sent several thousand relief troops from the Hunan region. It was decided, however, that these forces should remain at Yung-chou, since Chinese officials feared that a Nan-chao attack there could cut off vital communication and supply lines. Ts'ai Hsi again requested additional support, but by the time that a thousand more soldiers had reached the area, Hanoi was already under siege and the T'ang troops were unable to break through.<sup>51</sup>

During the time that Hanoi was under siege, Ts'ai Hsi had a copy of I-mou-hsün's 794 oath of fidelity to the T'ang tied to an arrow and shot into the Nan-chao camp. This desperate act of indignation, however, went unanswered.<sup>52</sup> Finally, early in the spring of 863, after bitter fighting, Hanoi again fell to Nan-chao. Ts'ai Hsi himself was killed, along with most of his family and retainers. His subordinate Fan Ch'o, though himself wounded, managed to escape, loyally carrying Ts'ai's seal of office.<sup>53</sup>

These experiences naturally (and fortunately for us) made a strong impression on Fan Ch'o. He resolved to compile a book detailing all he had come to know about Nan-chao, both for the benefit of the Chinese court and to aid frontier officials who would have to deal further with them.<sup>54</sup> This, of course, is the invaluable work known to us as the *Man-shu*, which provides the fullest surviving description of the Nan-chao kingdom as well as a detailed, and at times understandably acrimonious, account of the events leading to the fall of Annam in 863.<sup>55</sup>

According to Fan, as the city fell, furious hand-to-hand fighting took place. In spite of heroic efforts by some of the T'ang forces defending Hanoi, the defenders were virtually wiped out. Later, Nan-chao went on to take other key points in Annam, during which naval battles reportedly also took place.<sup>56</sup> In all, it is said that in the two conquests of Annam, Nan-chao forces killed or captured more than 150,000 T'ang subjects.<sup>57</sup>

Unlike the first conquest, which was more in the nature of a timely raid, the 863 capture of Annam seems to have been a well-organized campaign with the goal of permanent occupation of this region. Surely one of the major Nan-chao objectives must have been to tap the riches of the Nan-hai trade, for which Hanoi was a major port.<sup>58</sup> However, the sources say nothing about either the exploitation or the disruption of this trade by Nan-chao forces while they were in control there, so one is left only to speculation. It is certain, however, that this time the Nan-chao army did not follow the pattern of first plundering the city and then quickly pulling back. Rather, they left some twenty thousand troops behind to defend and administer the region, under the commanders Yang Ssu-chin and Tuan Ch'iu-ch'ien. It is reported that all of the local peoples in the surrounding area quickly submitted to their authority.<sup>59</sup>

Meanwhile, all of the T'ang troops in this area had been ordered to pull back to defend other parts of Ling-nan from the threat of further conquest. Nan-chao continued its assault with an attack on Yung-chou. The Yung-chou commander, Cheng Yü, who had replaced Ts'ai Ching, was not up to this challenge and requested that an experienced general be sent down to take command. The T'ang court called upon K'ang Ch'eng-hsüh, who previously had been successful in campaigns against the troublesome T'ang-hsiang peoples in the northwest.<sup>60</sup> K'ang was given around ten thousand additional troops with which to resist Nan-chao.<sup>61</sup>

In the summer of 863, the T'ang court made further administrative changes in the Ling-nan region. The most important of these was to abolish the Annam protectorate (*tu-hu fu*), thereby acknowledging the loss of Hanoi, at least temporarily. A provisional administration for Annam was set up at the Hai-men commandery (near modern Pei-hai, in Kwangsi), under an official named Sung Jung. K'ang Ch'eng-hsün remained commander-in-chief of the expeditionary forces against Nan-chao.<sup>62</sup>

In addition, problems of supply for T'ang forces in Ling-nan were discussed at court and various attempts were made to resolve them. The normal route of supply followed the valley of the Hsiang River from Hunan, which was said to have been an arduous journey, full of obstructions. The most interesting of the attempted solutions was a proposal made by a native of Min-chou (in modern Fukien, on the southeast coast), who was probably a merchant, to supply Ling-nan by a sea route.<sup>63</sup> Special transport ships were constructed, each with a capacity of a thousand measures (*hu*) of grain, which could reach Kuang-chou in less than a month. His proposal was adopted and at first seems to have worked well. However, merchants and sailors soon began to experience arbitrary exploitation from the officials in charge; they suffered greatly from being held strictly accountable for any losses *en route*. Thus, as many problems were created by this scheme as were resolved.<sup>64</sup>

However, an additional series of relief measures was enacted in order to reduce the strain on the people of Ling-nan, who had been hit hard by the Nan-chao incursions. Tax exemptions were declared for two years; and even restrictions on the gathering of pearls were relaxed.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, liberal treatment was prescribed for all of the soldiers and local peoples who had fled north to Hai-men and Yung-chou after the Nan-chao attack. Evidently, this move was calculated to prevent these people from being pushed into the Nan-chao camp.<sup>66</sup>

In the spring of 864, Nan-chao attacks in the Yung-chou region became even more serious. They were met by the large contingent of relief forces from eight northern provinces that had been placed under K'ang Ch'eng-

hsün's command. Even with what should have been an effective force, however, we are told that K'ang botched things badly. Insufficient precautions were taken against Nan-chao; as a result, large numbers of K'ang's troops were killed in initial battles with them. K'ang and the remainder of his soldiers were surrounded at Yung-chou. The outlook was hopelessly bleak, yet K'ang was afraid to approve a subordinate's proposal to stage a surprise night attack against the Nan-chao forces. Realizing that otherwise all was lost, this assistant commander went ahead with the attack anyway. Nan-chao troops were caught off guard and suffered heavy losses; the next day they lifted the siege and left.<sup>67</sup> Subsequently, K'ang embittered his officers and troops by himself taking credit for this timely victory over Nan-chao, while his subordinates received neither rewards nor recognition. Eventually, however, K'ang's ineffectiveness was brought to light, and he was forced to resign.<sup>68</sup>

It was at this point that T'ang fortunes in the south took a favorable turn, with the appointment of Kao P'ien to command Chinese efforts to recover Annam and to expel Nan-chao from the Ling-nan region altogether. Kao was the grandson of Kao Ch'ung-wen, a well-known general who had seen service against the rebellious official Liu P'i in Szechwan early in the ninth century.<sup>69</sup> Kao's family, who originally came from the non-Chinese state of Po-hai, north of Korea, had long been associated with the T'ang palace armies.<sup>70</sup> But though Kao grew up in martial surroundings, he seems to have had a precocious bent for literature and scholarly pursuits as well. Later, Kao was to be well known as a poet.<sup>71</sup> In fact, he was one of the most remarkable figures of his time. His flamboyant style and preoccupation with Taoist ritual make him an especially fascinating subject for study.<sup>72</sup> Undeniably, he was an extremely charismatic and effective, though unorthodox, military leader. His triumphant services against the T'ang-hsiang, whose recalcitrant attacks in the northwest were again causing the Chinese grief, had already demonstrated that.<sup>73</sup>

In the fall of 864, Kao P'ien was entrusted with the command of expeditionary forces in the south, with overall authority for the campaign to recover Annam.<sup>74</sup> Once again, however, dislike and jealousy among T'ang officials in the south were to hamper Chinese efforts against Nan-chao. The sources report that the eunuch military supervisor (*chien-chün*) at Hai-men, Li Wei-chou, bore a strong personal dislike for Kao and constantly urged him to push forward with the campaign against Nan-chao. Eventually, Kao set out with an advance force, on the understanding that Li would send additional troops behind. However, after Kao and his force had gone, Li remained holed up in Hai-men, without sending a single soldier to Kao's support.<sup>75</sup>

Nevertheless, Kao pressed onward with the expedition. In the fall of 865, he captured Feng-chou, smashing the resistance of the local peoples who lived

there and confiscating their harvest. Thus his troops were well supplied for the continuing campaign.<sup>76</sup> An advance camp of Nan-chao soldiers simply burned their own supplies and fled when Kao's forces approached. Yet, these were merely preliminary skirmishes. As Kao's army drew nearer to Hanoi, the occupying forces of Nan-chao organized for resistance. Nevertheless, Kao continued to win victory after victory.<sup>77</sup>

Kao's reports to the T'ang court of this triumphal advance, however, were consistently blocked at Hai-men by his nemesis, Li Wei-chou.<sup>78</sup> The court thus had no idea of what was happening in the south. When they commanded a full report, Li Wei-chou falsely accused Kao P'ien of timidly dawdling at Feng-chou and not advancing against the enemy. This accusation led to the appointment of Wang Yen-ch'üan to replace Kao, who was summarily recalled to court for a full investigation.<sup>79</sup>

In the meantime, Kao's campaign had made continuous progress. By the summer of 866, he had met and defeated Nan-chao forces outside Hanoi. Nan-chao casualties were reportedly very high. Kao then put Hanoi itself under tight siege.<sup>80</sup>

Kao sent additional messengers to report this latest victory. Their route took them by boat from Hanoi to Hai-men. *En route*, we are told, they spied a convoy approaching, with banners and pennants flying. Inquiring of a passing ship, they learned that it was Li Wei-chou and the new commander of the southern expedition coming to take charge. Kao's messengers figured that if they were spotted they would be detained and their report would not get through to Ch'ang-an. Accordingly, they hid among some small islands, and proceeded only after the other ships had passed. When they finally arrived in Ch'ang-an and handed in their report, the court was surprised and delighted. Immediately, a general pardon was ordered in celebration. Kao P'ien was promoted in rank and reinstated as commander in Annam.<sup>81</sup>

During this period, Li Wei-chou and Wang Yen-ch'üan had arrived at Kao's camp outside of Hanoi. Reportedly, Hanoi had been under siege for more than ten days and was about ready to fall.<sup>82</sup> When Wang Yen-ch'üan presented the court's decree to him, Kao had little choice but to transfer command to Wang and head back north. By the time he had reached Hai-men, however, the new order from the court reinstating him had arrived. Thereupon, Kao P'ien quickly returned to Annam and resumed command of the campaign.<sup>83</sup>

Unfortunately, during his brief absence, Wang and Li had managed to disaffect the soldiers under their command and had allowed the siege of Hanoi to be relaxed. Thus, in this interim, half of the Nan-chao forces had been able to escape.<sup>84</sup> After Kao P'ien had returned to the scene, the assault on Hanoi was effectively renewed, and the city soon fell. It is reported that more than

thirty thousand of its Nan-chao defenders were killed, including the Nan-chao commander Tuan Ch'iu-ch'ien. Chu Tao-ku and other leaders of those local peoples who had collaborated with or submitted to Nan-chao were executed. Thereafter, all of the local peoples of Annam and the Kwangsi region again surrendered to the T'ang. And thus, by the autumn of 866, Hanoi was once again under Chinese administration. Soon thereafter, Nan-chao forces were expelled from all of Annam.<sup>85</sup>

This was a major achievement, symbolized by the establishment late in 866 of the Ching-hai commandery in Annam, with Kao P'ien named as regional commander.<sup>86</sup> While he remained there, Kao P'ien worked hard to strengthen Annam's defenses. Although Hanoi had had a city wall at least from the time of Chang Po-i's tenure as governor there in the middle of the eighth century, Kao P'ien now greatly enlarged and strengthened it.<sup>87</sup> He also helped to insure the smooth transport of supplies into Hanoi by dredging canals and removing large boulders which had made navigation in the initial stages of the water route to Canton hazardous.<sup>88</sup>

Kao P'ien's convincing defeat of Nan-chao forces in Annam and, subsequently, his significant improvement of Hanoi's defenses had a lasting effect. Although already Nan-chao had again begun to threaten the security of Szechwan, T'ang control over Annam was never again challenged. Little wonder that Kao P'ien, when he was called back to the T'ang court, was able more or less to dictate the appointment of his grand-nephew (*tsung-sun*) Kao Hsün, who reportedly had been his most effective field lieutenant, to replace him as commander in Annam.<sup>89</sup>

There had been much jubilation at the T'ang court when news first arrived that Hanoi had been regained and that Nan-chao forces had been driven out of the Annam region. Again a general pardon was proclaimed and congratulatory memorials poured into court.<sup>90</sup> Significantly, however, the T'ang court was careful not to encourage any further hostility with Nan-chao. Rather, the Chinese commanders in Annam, Yung-chou, and Szechwan were ordered merely to strengthen and maintain their positions; they were given explicit instructions not to take the offensive against Nan-chao. In addition, an official named Liu T'ung was assigned to attempt renewed negotiations with the Nan-chao kingdom. As far as the T'ang court was concerned, if friendly relations could be re-established, all previous offenses would be forgotten.<sup>91</sup>

It is quite obvious why the T'ang court should be willing to be so magnanimous. The decade of warfare with Nan-chao in the south had taken a heavy toll. As we have seen, Chinese casualties in Annam and the Kwangsi region had been very high. More importantly, the threat to Annam and in fact to all of Ling-nan had forced the T'ang court repeatedly to send large numbers of troops from most of the provincial armies in the north that the central

government could still count upon. This caused great economic and social disruption at a time when the dynasty could least afford it.

Terrific economic pressures and popular unrest had been building in many of the interior provinces of T'ang China for some time. Governmental mismanagement of essential services, official corruption, famine, flooding, plagues – these stresses had led to increasing banditry and ultimately to mass rebellions, such as the one led by Ch'iu Fu in Che-tung in 859.<sup>92</sup> Yet during the 860's, the necessity for heavy impositions on these already distressed areas for funds and supplies to sustain the continual and intense frontier fighting in the south greatly exacerbated those conditions. There was great concern at the T'ang court over these spiraling developments, as reflected in Emperor I-tsung's pronouncement of 864, lamenting Nan-chao recalcitrance and the great havoc that they had wrought and announcing special emergency relief measures for those areas that had come under Nan-chao attack.<sup>93</sup>

A new stage of social protest was reached when popular distress and disaffection found expression in the P'ang Hsün rebellion, which raged for two years throughout a wide area of the interior of China, especially in the Lower Yangtze valley.<sup>94</sup> Significantly, this rebellion began as an insurrection of a contingent of garrison soldiers who had been sent on frontier duty in the far south. Among the relief forces dispatched to aid against the Nan-chao invaders in 862 was a group of soldiers from Hsü-chou, in Wu-ning province, located on the Grand Canal southeast of modern Kaifeng. Throughout the first half of the ninth century, the Wu-ning region had been a serious concern for the T'ang court. This area was highly militarized, and its commanders had made themselves semi-independent from central government control. Robert Somers has shown that increasingly serious acts of insurrection in 849, 859, and especially in 862 had led the T'ang court to attempt to demilitarize the area completely. As part of this solution, one contingent of the Wu-ning army had been sent south for a three-year tour of duty defending the frontier.<sup>95</sup>

Further harsh measures against the remaining soldiers of this area, however, only succeeded in turning them into bandits. Finally, the government offered an amnesty to those former soldiers who would agree to enroll for a tour of duty in the border areas of Ling-nan. Thus, in 864, an additional three thousand Wu-ning soldiers were sent to the south, where they were assigned to garrison Kuei-chou (modern Kweilin, in Kwangsi).<sup>96</sup>

Originally, it had been promised that the Wu-ning soldiers would be replaced and allowed to return home after a three-year tour of duty. In 868, however, after that agreement had been extended by government fiat for the second time, these soldiers mutinied. (It should be noted that this was more than two years after the end of hostilities with Nan-chao in the Ling-nan

region.) Led by an officer among their ranks named P'ang Hsün, they started on their journey back north.<sup>97</sup> The T'ang court at first took a lenient attitude toward these rebellious soldiers; the soldiers themselves, however, remained suspicious of the government, and things soon got out of hand. When P'ang Hsün and his band returned to Wu-ning, their home province, a confrontation developed. Soon large numbers of distressed peasants joined the revolt and the uprising quickly spread over a broad area. It took almost a full year for government forces to end the rebellion and, significantly, the court had to rely on foreign military support from a number of Turkish tribes (especially the Sha-t'o) to do it.<sup>98</sup>

Thus, indirectly, Nan-chao attacks in the south had helped to provide the context for the beginnings of the P'ang Hsün revolt, regarded as the real precursor of the soon-to-come Huang Ch'ao rebellion, which would disrupt the fabric of Chinese society and cripple the dynasty irretrievably.<sup>99</sup> Indeed, traditional historiographical opinion has always blamed Nan-chao for these developments. At the end of their remarks on the Nan-chao kingdom, the compilers of the *New T'ang History (Hsin T'ang-shu)* emphatically conclude that 'the T'ang was destroyed by Huang Ch'ao, but the foundations of the calamity were laid at Kweilin,' *i.e.*, in the garrison revolt led by P'ang Hsün, which originated in Kweilin, and (by implication) in the Nan-chao invasions which had preceded the P'ang Hsün rebellion.<sup>100</sup>

Such a conclusion, however, is both an exaggeration and a distortion. It is true that the Nan-chao invasion of the south greatly exacerbated T'ang troubles. But to think that the rebellions which destroyed the dynasty truly originated in the south ignores both the growing economic and social distress in the country as a whole and the particular pattern of military revolt which was long-standing among the soldiers of Wu-ning.<sup>101</sup> The Nan-chao kingdom did contribute a great deal to the dynasty's decline, as the subsequent narrative will re-emphasize. Yet it is important to realize that, even indirectly, Nan-chao did not cause the fall of the T'ang.<sup>102</sup>

### **The renewed threat against Szechwan**

Fortunately for the T'ang, the P'ang Hsün rebellion occurred during a period of relative tranquillity and stability at the frontiers, a lull during which there were no major external challenges to Chinese security. In particular, in the southwest the Nan-chao kingdom, after being defeated and driven from the Annam region in 866, caused no further major problems for China, down to 869. Nan-chao itself seems to have been strained by the Annam campaigns and perhaps needed this time to recover. In any case, this interval allowed the T'ang court to concentrate most of its resources on the suppression of the P'ang Hsün rebellion. Beginning in 869, however, and for the next several

years, Nan-chao again proved itself to be China's chief foreign threat by mounting a series of full-scale invasions into Szechwan.

In the early 860's, there had been occasional Nan-chao forays against Szechwan. But these all had been limited to attacks on the area around Sui-chou, on the frontier itself. One such attack, as we have seen, put an end to consideration of a proposed T'ang mission of appeasement, which had been suggested by Tu Ts'ung in 861.<sup>103</sup> Later, around the beginning of 864, Nan-chao again attacked the Sui-chou region.<sup>104</sup> This attack was repulsed by the T'ang official in charge there, Yü Shih-chen, who captured more than a thousand of the invaders. This was a comparatively minor affair, but Yü Shih-chen's name should be remembered. Soon he would play an entirely different role in the Nan-chao incursions.

After the 864 attack on Sui-chou, the T'ang court took precautions to strengthen the entire area by assigning additional garrison soldiers and by constructing two new forts near Sui-chou.<sup>105</sup> Then in the fall of that year, the chief of the Liang-lin tribe (part of the so-called Tung Man peoples, who had been effective allies of the T'ang since the time of Wei Kao) defeated an attacking Nan-chao army. Nan-chao casualties were high, including many captives and quite a few defectors.<sup>106</sup>

In the summer of the following year, however, things took a bad turn. Sui-chou was lost, largely through the collaboration with Nan-chao of the very people who had turned back the invaders in the preceding year: both Yü Shih-chen and the Liang-lin tribe. According to the sources, Yü had systematically kidnapped many members of the Liang-lin and had ransomed or sold them as slaves. Thus, when Nan-chao again attacked, the Liang-lin peoples in revenge opened the gates of Sui-chou to them, allowing them to capture the fortress and to kill all of its defenders. As for Yü Shih-chen, he himself reportedly defected at that time to the Nan-chao forces.<sup>107</sup>

This is where matters stood in 866, while Kao P'ien's campaign for the recovery of Annam was going on. Yet even before the recapture of Hanoi, Nan-chao itself began to show renewed interest in negotiations with the T'ang court. Late in the spring of 866, Nan-chao sent the *ch'ing-p'ing kuan* official Tung Ch'eng to Ch'eng-tu, where he was received with great ceremony by the new Chinese regional commander Li Fu.<sup>108</sup> Nan-chao, however, was not willing to resume the ritual and terminology of the past, symbolic of vassal-like subordination to the T'ang court. Tung Ch'eng thus insisted on diplomatic treatment as an equal. Li Fu indignantly refused and a long, heated argument developed. Finally, and quite undiplomatically, Li Fu had Tung Ch'eng seized and beaten, and then threw him in jail.<sup>109</sup>

Later in that year, when Liu T'ung, who had been assigned the task of renewing negotiations with the Nan-chao kingdom, took over as regional com-



mander in Szechwan, he immediately released Tung Ch'eng. The T'ang court summoned Tung to Ch'ang-an and there treated him with great honors. This visit seems to have resolved nothing, however; Tung was soon sent back to Nan-chao. (Later that year, Li Fu was demoted for his hot-headed actions against the Nan-chao envoy.)<sup>110</sup>

In the summer of 868, further administrative changes were ordered for Szechwan, changes that were in many ways reminiscent of the reorganization of Ling-nan, which had been brought about by Ts'ai Ching's proposal of 861. A junior official from Feng-hsiang named Li Shih-wang submitted a memorial to the court in which he argued that Sui-chou was the key point in the T'ang system of defense to ward off Nan-chao incursions into Szechwan. He argued that Ch'eng-tu, the seat of the present regional administration, was far removed from Sui-chou and that it was thus difficult to coordinate an effective defense of the frontier under the existing system. He thus proposed the creation of a new, independent command area, to be known as the Ting-pien Army, and an increase in the size of the garrison force at Sui-chou; he further suggested that this new regional unit should be administered from Ch'iung-chou, to the southwest of Ch'eng-tu. The court agreed to all of this. Li Shih-wang himself was appointed to be the new Ting-pien regional commander (*chieh-tu shih*). His jurisdiction included not only Sui-chou but also all of the other important localities southwest of Ch'eng-tu, including Mei-chou, Shu-chou, Ya-chou, Chia-chou, and Li-chou. (See the map on p. 111.) Li Shih-wang was thus given overall responsibility for the defense of the main routes of Nan-chao attack into Szechwan.<sup>111</sup>

Li's motives for this proposal seem to have been entirely self-aggrandizing. In reality, Ch'iung-chou was located fairly close to Ch'eng-tu, while Sui-chou was still several hundred miles away. In short, this administrative change did nothing to help with coordination of the defense against Nan-chao in the far southwest.<sup>112</sup>

The sources have further unflattering things to report about Li Shih-wang. The Nan-chao court had sent an official named Yang Ch'iu-ch'ing to seek the release of Tung Ch'eng, who as we have seen had been imprisoned by Li Fu and subsequently had been sent on to Ch'ang-an. According to the sources, Li Shih-wang wanted to provoke Nan-chao into an attack so that he could have a chance to demonstrate his merit against them. For this reason, he had Yang Ch'iu-ch'ing killed.<sup>113</sup> However, all of the military officials of Szechwan bore a grudge against Li for having disrupted the previous military organization of the province. Thus, it is said, they now sent secret messages to the Nan-chao court, reporting this incident and encouraging them to attack.<sup>114</sup>

Li Shih-wang had accumulated such a vast fortune in his short time in the area, we are told, that he was very much hated by all of his troops, who

'wanted to eat him alive.'<sup>115</sup> Realizing his danger, Li managed to get the T'ang court to recall him. He was then replaced by an official named Tou P'ang; but Tou unfortunately proved to be even more rapacious and cruel than Li Shih-wang. Thus, 'even before the Nan-chao invaders had arrived, the Ting-pien region had already become greatly distressed.'<sup>116</sup> Nan-chao's effective system of intelligence could not have failed to notice all this.<sup>117</sup>

Thus the winter of 869 saw a renewal of large-scale Nan-chao aggression against China's southwestern frontier, ending the lull in hostilities that had lasted since 866. Now the Nan-chao army and allied forces, led personally by the Nan-chao king Shih-lung, again staged a major invasion of Szechwan, which was to be just as serious a threat to the security of that region as had been the invasion of 829–830. The progress of this incursion, however, was not quite as quick as the one before. Chinese defenses were able to hold up the Nan-chao advance at strategic points: first at the Ch'ing-ch'i pass, then at the Ta-tu River.

The battle at the Ta-tu River was especially critical. It lasted for eight or nine days without the Nan-chao forces being able to get across. Finally, Nan-chao soldiers and engineers succeeded in cutting a route across the high Taliang mountains, striking out to the east against Chia-chou (modern Lo-shan). Several victories along the way, including one which was achieved by dressing in clothes captured from defeated Chinese soldiers, brought them to Chia-chou. Its garrison was routed and its commander was killed.<sup>118</sup>

Meanwhile, however, the main force of the Nan-chao invaders had still not managed to cross the Ta-tu River. The commander of the Ting-pien army, Tou P'ang, arrived to coordinate the defense of that strategic natural barrier. Under the pretext of negotiations, however, some of the Nan-chao soldiers were able to get across the river on rafts and attacked Tou's headquarters. At this point, the sources report that Tou P'ang was terrified and was barely prevented from hanging himself in his tent. While his army, under his subordinates Miao Ch'üan-hsü and An Tsai-jung, were engaged in a desperate struggle with the Nan-chao forces, Tou fled alone on horseback.<sup>119</sup>

Though caught in a tight bind, the T'ang soldiers managed to fight bravely and effectively, and most of them finally were able to escape. However, this failure to check the Nan-chao advance exposed the territory further north to their attack. Soon they overran both Li-chou and Ya-chou. Perhaps remembering the experience of 829–830, all of the populace of this region fled to the hills to escape capture. The defeated Chinese soldiers, on the other hand, roamed about pillaging the area.<sup>120</sup>

The fall of Li-chou and Ya-chou had further alarmed the Ting-pien commander Tou P'ang. He now abandoned Ch'iung-chou, his administrative seat. Ch'iung-chou too was subsequently ravaged by the disordered T'ang soldiers,

who then continued their retreat northward. Thus Nan-chao was able to pass through Ch'iung-chou totally unopposed. Early in 870, the Nan-chao contingent which had captured Chia-chou moved further to the north and east, taking Mei-chou. Thus all of the area assigned to the Ting-pien command had now fallen to the invaders.<sup>121</sup> By this time the T'ang court had responded to news of this serious incursion by sending a large contingent of relief forces under Yen Ch'ing-fu to block it.<sup>122</sup>

According to our sources, during this period Ch'eng-tu had only an inner wall (*tzu-ch'eng*).<sup>123</sup> (Apparently, this was one long-lasting effect of the destructive 829 invasion.) The population of the city, now swollen by refugees from areas further south, was thus crowded into an extremely restricted area, with insufficient water and highly unsanitary conditions, awaiting the Nan-chao attack.<sup>124</sup>

Moreover, the general quality of the troops defending Ch'eng-tu continued to be quite bad. However, at this time a new program of recruitment and training of a local militia force was begun under the direction of Yen Ch'ing-fu and Lu Tan. Weapons, armor, and fortifications were all upgraded; a spirit of local pride and competition were encouraged. The result was an elite force of three thousand soldiers, known as the *T'u-chiang*, or 'shock troops.'<sup>125</sup>

In the meantime, the speed of the Nan-chao advance had perhaps been slowed by their force's preoccupation with plunder, which seems to have been the primary motive for this incursion as for the 829 invasion.<sup>126</sup> Apparently, this caused them to linger for a while at each captured city, a pattern which may ultimately have weakened them. On the other hand, the delay gave T'ang forces in Ch'eng-tu precious time to prepare and to strengthen themselves.<sup>127</sup>

Still, a Nan-chao attack on Ch'eng-tu was certain to come. After they had advanced to Shuang-liu, the district nearest to Ch'eng-tu itself, the regional commander Lu Tan sent an assistant once more to attempt to negotiate with the Nan-chao leaders. However, Nan-chao refused to deal with the Chinese except on a basis of diplomatic equality. They moreover made numerous demands for special treatment, including for instance a covered carriage for the Nan-chao king's entry into Ch'eng-tu and permission to lodge in the famous halls built nearly three centuries before for Prince Hsiu of the Sui. All of this the Chinese resolutely refused to grant.<sup>128</sup>

It was at this point that the siege of Ch'eng-tu began in earnest. More relief forces were sent to Szechwan, but these unfortunately did Ch'eng-tu little good. Instead, ironically, they were mostly pre-empted by Tou P'ang, who after being driven from his Ting-pien command had fled to Han-chou, located just north of Ch'eng-tu, on the main route to the T'ang capital. It is said that Tou, who was humiliated at having lost all of the territory under his command,

actually hoped that Ch'eng-tu would fall to Nan-chao forces, thus making his own failures seem less serious. Thus, whenever additional troops arrived in Szechwan, Tou always told them that the Nan-chao army outnumbered government troops by ten to one, thereby convincing them that it would be prudent to hold back and gather their strength before advancing against them.<sup>129</sup>

The situation in Ch'eng-tu itself was made more dangerous, as in the case of the 829 invasion, by the presence of potential collaborators. Sources report, for instance, the case of a certain Li Tzu-hsiao, who was a friend of Yü Shih-chen, the Sui-chou official who had defected to the Nan-chao ranks several years before. In Ch'eng-tu, Li Tzu-hsiao planned a series of signals to direct the Nan-chao attack; he himself would set fire to the city's eastern storehouse. His plot was discovered, however, and he of course was executed. When Nan-chao forces did appear a few days later to carry out the attack, nothing happened from within the city, and so they pulled back.<sup>130</sup>

Not long thereafter, however, the Nan-chao army returned to attack in force. Herbert Franke has shown that usually in attacks on fortified cities in medieval China the advantage lay very much with the defenders.<sup>131</sup> So it would seem to have been in this case as well, despite the fact that Nan-chao forces employed rather sophisticated siege equipment in the assault, including so-called 'cloud bridges' (*yün liang*) and 'goose-carriages' (*o-ch'e*), devices used for scaling walls.<sup>132</sup> In addition, they constructed awnings which they hoped would allow them to draw close enough to the Ch'eng-tu inner wall to tunnel under it. In every case, however, the besieged Chinese rained arrows, fire, molten iron, and various other vile substances down on the attackers, destroying their equipment and killing many of their number.<sup>133</sup>

Subsequently, a brief attempt at negotiation was totally unsuccessful, for the Nan-chao leaders still insisted on what the Chinese regarded as presumptuously grandiose treatment. Finally, Shih-lung himself led a last furious assault. Again they were defeated. Suddenly, the next morning, those within Ch'eng-tu were very much relieved to learn that the Nan-chao forces had given up the siege and retreated.<sup>134</sup>

The Nan-chao retreat was orderly and unpanicked. Nonetheless, there does seem to have been a chance of catching them and of destroying their army before they had a chance to escape back across the frontier. This chance was lost, however, again largely because of personal jealousy and animosity among the Chinese commanders.<sup>135</sup> The fact that the Nan-chao attackers were allowed to escape seems to have provoked much popular displeasure in Szechwan, whose citizenry had been aroused to great hatred and resentment of the invaders. If we can believe the sources, the Nan-chao army treated those Chinese whom they captured very cruelly. Reportedly, they always cut

off their ears and noses before letting them go. (Thereafter, the sources assert, some eighty per cent of the inhabitants of this region were forced to wear artificial ears and noses made from wood.<sup>136</sup>) Such acts, even if isolated, could only have heightened popular resistance to the Nan-chao invaders.<sup>137</sup>

Nan-chao had not been successful in capturing Ch'eng-tu, and the strengthening of this region in response to their invasion may have been the major reason that they did not attack again for some time. However, we can safely assume that they did get a great deal of booty from their campaign into Szechwan, which must always have seemed to them the most attractive and convenient target for attack. Thus it is not surprising that they would again eventually return.<sup>138</sup>

In the winter of 874, an unidentified Nan-chao commander led another invasion into Szechwan. One of the most interesting features of this particular attack was Nan-chao's use of 'floating bridges' (*fu-liang*) to facilitate their crossing of major strategic rivers.<sup>139</sup> Nonetheless, fighting was heavy and T'ang forces at first effectively slowed Nan-chao progress. Once again, however, the Nan-chao leaders feigned negotiations, claiming that they merely wanted to express their grievances, accumulated over the past several years, in person to the T'ang court. Momentarily, T'ang forces relaxed, and the Nan-chao army was able to take advantage of that opportunity to break through.<sup>140</sup> Thereafter, they quickly advanced as far as Ya-chou and Ch'iung-chou. And once again, all of the Chinese population in their path fled north to the relative safety of Ch'eng-tu.<sup>141</sup>

The Nan-chao commander then sent a set of envoys to Ch'eng-tu. There they once again assumed the pose that they were not really invading Szechwan but were just passing through that region on their way to deliver their grievances to the T'ang court. The new regional commander in Ch'eng-tu, Niu Ts'ung (son of the famous chief minister and factional leader of the 820's and 830's, Niu Seng-ju), who is described in the sources as timid and indecisive, is said to have been duped by this Nan-chao claim. He was about to accede to the Nan-chao demand to enter Ch'eng-tu and to let their leaders stay in the old Sui royal mansion, but he was prevented from making this blunder by his subordinate Yang Ch'ing-fu. At Yang's suggestion, Niu had all of the Nan-chao envoys killed except for two who were allowed to return Niu's message to the Nan-chao camp.<sup>142</sup> In his letter (which may actually have been drafted by Yang), Niu severely rebuked the Nan-chao leaders for their treachery and ingratitude to the T'ang, which had done so much to help their ancestors.<sup>143</sup>

By this time the T'ang court had decided to take further steps to deal with the Nan-chao invasion. Still more relief forces were sent to Szechwan, and named to command them was the illustrious Kao P'ien.<sup>144</sup> Since his smashing victory over Nan-chao forces in Annam in 866, Kao had served the central

government as well in other regional posts. He had come to be trusted by the court and was famous throughout China as the most effective and reliable T'ang military commander.<sup>145</sup> It was hoped that in this case too Kao would prove effective in ending the Nan-chao threat to Szechwan once and for all.

Kao P'ien was sent out to Szechwan early in 875. At that time, although Ch'eng-tu itself was not under siege, conditions within that city were extremely trying. Countless people had fled into Ch'eng-tu, fearful of the approaching Nan-chao armies. The city was cramped and filthy. Supplies, we are told, were already beginning to run out, especially fresh drinking water. Many people were already dead from disease and hardship, and their corpses were simply piled in the streets.<sup>146</sup> Kao P'ien knew about these desperate conditions, but he was also supremely confident that the very news of his approach would panic the Nan-chao forces and cause them to retreat. Thus, even before his arrival in Ch'eng-tu, Kao sent someone ahead to order that the gates of the festering city be opened and that the transient populace be returned to the countryside.<sup>147</sup> A subordinate pointed out the imminent danger of Nan-chao attack, but Kao showed no concern. With great disdain, he characterized the Nan-chao forces as 'petty rogues, easily stood up to.'<sup>148</sup> Moreover, he claimed that there was little need for so many government troops in the area, who were a wasteful expense and a burden on the countryside. Kao therefore petitioned that most of the T'ang relief forces be called back.<sup>149</sup>

When Kao P'ien finally did arrive in Ch'eng-tu, he found as he had expected that Nan-chao forces had retreated and sent out an army which caught up with them at the Ta-tu River. There, a great many Nan-chao soldiers were killed or captured. Nan-chao leaders and local collaborators were brought back to Ch'eng-tu, where they were executed.<sup>150</sup> Subsequently, however, when Kao proposed a massive expedition across the frontier into Nan-chao territory itself, the T'ang court refused permission. By this time banditry and intense social dislocation were widespread within China. Thus, the T'ang could hardly sustain a campaign outside of its own borders.<sup>151</sup>

Thus the remainder of Kao P'ien's stay in Szechwan was preoccupied with internal matters. In particular, Kao P'ien, like Li Te-yü before him, concentrated on improving the defenses of the region. The Ch'iung-lai pass and the stockades defending the Ta-tu River were rebuilt, and new fortresses were constructed in strategic points along the line of Nan-chao attack. When properly garrisoned, these defenses were an effective deterrent, which may be one of the reasons why Nan-chao never again invaded Szechwan during the T'ang period.<sup>152</sup> In addition, Kao P'ien, an indefatigable builder of walls, oversaw the construction of a great outer wall (*lo-ch'eng*) for Ch'eng-tu, under the supervision of a monk-engineer named Ching-hsien.<sup>153</sup> Kao's measures in

building this wall were extremely equitable. Great care was taken not to disturb agricultural lands, and corvée demands were light and fairly distributed. Kao's efficient measures were popular, and the wall was completed in only three months.<sup>154</sup>

However, one aspect of Kao's tenure in Szechwan was not so just. He treated the recently formed local militia, the *T'u-chiang*, whom he may have regarded as potentially rebellious, with utter disdain and seems almost systematically to have provoked them into a mutiny. After barely escaping with his life, Kao carried out a ruthless campaign of extermination against them, which extended to their entire families – mothers, babies, and pregnant women included. Thousands were wiped out; their bodies were reportedly loaded onto carts at night and dumped into the river.<sup>155</sup>

Nevertheless, Kao P'ien's achievements against Nan-chao and in the restoration of the defenses of both Annam and Szechwan were impressive. His accomplishments must be regarded as one of the major reasons for Nan-chao's subsequent willingness to adopt a more humble attitude and to negotiate on terms more acceptable to the T'ang court. For the remaining years of the dynasty, the Nan-chao kingdom was never again an active threat to China's security.

### **Rapprochement and decline**

During the period that Ch'eng-tu's wall was being constructed, there was some concern that Nan-chao might again attack. Kao P'ien was confident that his forces could repulse any such reoccurrence, but he feared that further disruption of the area might provoke serious disturbances among the populace. Thus, to insure that Nan-chao would not take advantage of unsettled conditions during this critical period, Kao found it expedient to send Ching-hsien as an envoy to negotiate with the Nan-chao court.<sup>156</sup>

Ching-hsien was the Buddhist monk who had reportedly been actively engaged in the design and engineering of the Ch'eng-tu wall. That he was now chosen by Kao for the important responsibility of re-establishing an acceptable relationship with the Nan-chao leaders is entirely consistent with what we know of Kao's character and temperament. Kao P'ien seems to have been a very religious man, or at least a very superstitious one. Throughout his checkered career, he freely used both Buddhist and Taoist priests as advisors and lieutenants.<sup>157</sup>

Yet in the case of the 876 mission to the Nan-chao court, there was an additional good reason why the Buddhist priest Ching-hsien was chosen. In recent years the Nan-chao court had never treated envoys from China with proper respect and deference. Rather than himself giving any sign of obeisance, the Nan-chao ruler would always remain seated to accept the bows

of the Chinese. Kao P'ien knew, however, that by this time the Nan-chao court was devoutly Buddhist, and he figured that the monk--envoy Ching-hsien would receive more favorable treatment. This estimation proved to be correct. The Nan-chao king reportedly ordered his high officials to welcome Ching-hsien with respectful bows, while he himself listened attentively to what Ching-hsien had to say.<sup>158</sup>

Ching-hsien's mission to Nan-chao apparently was effective in persuading Shih-lung to submit again to T'ang diplomatic forms. An agreement was reached which included a promise of a T'ang princess for the Nan-chao king, an offer which evidently had not been authorized by the T'ang court.<sup>159</sup> On the other hand, even before Ching-hsien's mission the Nan-chao court had shown an eagerness to restore peaceful relations. Soon after being driven out of Szechwan by Kao P'ien, Shih-lung had two or three times sent emissaries to Kao, asking for a truce. One of these emissaries returned the wife of a Chinese official, reportedly a member of the T'ang royal family, who had been captured in Annam. However, Kao P'ien had responded haughtily to these overtures, executing some of the emissaries and threatening others with a massive Chinese expedition against the Nan-chao capital.<sup>160</sup> Thus, the success of Ching-hsien's mission to Nan-chao may have derived more from its symbolic indication that the Chinese were now willing to negotiate. Indeed, though Shih-lung soon sent high officials along with some thirty hostages to the T'ang court to request a new treaty of friendship, he still insisted on elder brother/younger brother or at least uncle/nephew terminology for the relationship, rather than that of lord and vassal.<sup>161</sup>

In 877, Shih-lung died; his demise was hastened, we are told, by the rage he felt at having been thwarted at every turn by Kao P'ien's effective leadership.<sup>162</sup> He was succeeded by his son, Lung-shun, still quite a young man, who is sometimes called by his Buddhist name, Fa.<sup>163</sup> As in the case of previous rulers, Lung-shun seems to have given new names to his country, calling it both Ho-t'o and the Ta-feng-min kingdom. (For clarity's sake, it seems best to follow the practice of the standard Chinese sources and refer to the kingdom consistently as Nan-chao.<sup>164</sup>)

Lung-shun's accession marked the beginning of a new and final era of relations between T'ang China and the Nan-chao kingdom. As we have seen, the long series of military campaigns carried out during Shih-lung's reign had seriously weakened T'ang China, but they seem to have exhausted Nan-chao as well. This probably was the real reason for Nan-chao's increased willingness to restore peaceful and even submissive relations with the T'ang court, even though they maintained their insistence on altered terminology.

In 877, Lung-shun sent a new set of envoys to China. Significantly, however, this new mission went first not to Szechwan, where the redoubtable Kao



P'ien was still in command, but to Yung-chou in modern Kwangsi. The regional commander there, Hsin Tang, urged the T'ang court to seek rapprochement with the Nan-chao kingdom and not to lose this opportunity to reduce defense requirements in the south, which over the years had cost China dearly. The T'ang court agreed, and Hsin sent a general named Tu Hung with gifts and letters to escort the Nan-chao envoy back to the Nan-chao capital. Subsequently, we are told, garrison forces in the Yung-chou region were reduced by as much as seventy per cent.<sup>165</sup>

In the following year, the T'ang court seems to have been caught by surprise when a Nan-chao envoy came with a request for a marriage alliance (*ho-ch'in*), which he said had been promised them by Kao P'ien's envoy Ching-hsien.<sup>166</sup> Again, however, the Nan-chao mission did not fulfill all of the ritual obligations expected of subject peoples in the idealized Chinese scheme of foreign relations. In particular, the Nan-chao envoy insisted on being addressed as the representative of a younger-brother country (*ti*) and not as a vassal (*ch'en*).<sup>167</sup> Emperor Hsi-tsung submitted this problem to a full-scale court debate. The court seems to have been deeply divided over this issue. One group of high-ranking ministers, led by Ts'ui T'an, Cheng T'ien, and others, argued that so long as Nan-chao arrogantly refused to submit to the proper etiquette of relations with the Chinese, the T'ang could not grant their request without the risk of becoming the laughing-stock of future generations.<sup>168</sup>

Other ministers at court, however, disagreed with this assessment and urged that for the sake of a stable frontier the Nan-chao request should be granted without too much quibbling over diplomatic niceties. Chief of those holding this view was the chief minister Lu Hsi, who we know was a close associate and political ally of Kao P'ien.<sup>169</sup> So great was the controversy over this issue that, after a particularly unseemly argument between Lu Hsi and Cheng T'ien, both chief ministers were demoted.<sup>170</sup>

In the meantime, the regional commander of Yung-chou, Hsin Tang, had sent another mission to Nan-chao. Thus a pattern was emerging whereby the Kwangsi region became the principal route of diplomatic contact between the Nan-chao kingdom and China, replacing Szechwan in that role. This pattern was to continue after both the Nan-chao and T'ang dynasties had fallen. Eventually it was to be practically the only route of contact between the courts of both Northern and Southern Sung China and the Ta-li kingdom, Nan-chao's successor.<sup>171</sup> This 878 mission, however, was ill-fated; most of its members died from disease on the way, and it was finally abandoned.<sup>172</sup>

Then in the following year, Hsin Tang entrusted another of his officers, Hsü Yün-ch'ien, with what he regarded as an extremely important mission to Nan-chao. Hsü's mission was not destined to accomplish much in substance,

but Hsü's account of his journey to the Nan-chao kingdom, the *Nan-chao lu*, in three *chüan*, was extremely important historiographically. Although it has long been lost, it seems to be quoted extensively in *Tzu-chih t'ung-chien* and *Hsin T'ang-shu* and is thus ultimately the most important source for this latest period of Nan-chao history.<sup>173</sup>

Hsü Yün-ch'ien found the Nan-chao ruler Lung-shun and his court in Shan-ch'an, which is what Che-tung was called in this period.<sup>174</sup> Although it is not clear whether the Nan-chao court had actually been moved there, this is another indication of the importance of the eastern portion of the Nan-chao kingdom in the latter half of the ninth century.<sup>175</sup> Hsü has left us a picture of a youthful ruler, fond of hunting and drinking. While Hsü was in Lung-shun's presence, the Nan-chao ruler personally directed a martial arts contest in which Lung-shun himself took part. Afterwards, he entertained Hsü with wine and song and called upon Hsü, in the midst of the celebration, to explicate the text of the *Ch'un-ch'iu*, the famous *Spring and Autumn Annals*.<sup>176</sup> Again, however, the issue of diplomatic terminology came up, for the Nan-chao ruler was still unwilling to have himself regarded as a mere T'ang vassal. When Lung-shun insisted on this point, Hsü admonished him, reminding him that his ancestors had been able to unify the kingdom in the first place only with T'ang patronage. Lung-shun, we are told, treated Hsü very well during his seventeen-day stay in his country. Yet Hsü left without getting the Nan-chao king to revert to acceptable tributary terminology.<sup>177</sup>

Thus, neither the question of diplomatic terminology nor Nan-chao's request for peace and for a T'ang princess had been resolved. The matter dragged on until 880. By that time, the gigantic rebellion in China led by Huang Ch'ao and Wang Hsien-chih had grown intense and widespread. Moreover, the situation in Annam had again become critical when T'ang troops there staged yet another revolt, forcing the regional commander to flee.<sup>178</sup> The T'ang court simply could not risk any further trouble from Nan-chao, and therefore the issue of granting *ho-ch'in* to the Nan-chao court remained a lively subject of debate.

It was at this point that the chief minister Lu Hsi offered the most telling analysis of the situation then facing the T'ang court, as well as the best description of the extent of disruption and exhaustion which the Nan-chao attacks against Chinese borders had caused.

Late in the Ta-chung period [847–859] the imperial treasury was full. But from the Hsien-t'ung period on [860–873], Nan-chao has twice captured Annam and Yung-chou, has once invaded Ch'ien-chung, and four times has attacked Szechwan. The entire empire is exhausted from the levies of troops and the transport of supplies. For more than fifteen

years, the greater part of tax revenues has not reached the capital, and because of this the three ministries and the imperial treasury are depleted. Our warriors have died from endemic disease, and the people have been so hard-pressed they have become bandits, thus bringing China to the point of anarchy. Nan-chao is responsible for all of this . . . If Nan-chao were to unloose an invasion or attack, how could we deal with it? It would be better instead to dispatch an official emissary to respond to them. Even if we cannot yet get them to call themselves vassals and to submit tribute, still as long as we do not cause the grievances which they bear to grow even deeper and do not strengthen their resolve to attack our frontiers, then it will do.<sup>179</sup>

Emperor Hsi-tsung's response was to send someone to inform the Nan-chao leaders that they would be granted a marriage alliance and would no longer be addressed as vassals. In addition, gifts of gold and silk were presented to them. An imperial prince named Li Kuei-nien (the Prince of Ts'ao) was sent, along with Hsü Yün-ch'ien as his assistant, on a state visit to Nan-chao.<sup>180</sup>

While it is true that Nan-chao too had been exhausted by the many years of border warfare with China and thus was no longer a serious threat, it is still important to remember that during these years the T'ang was in truly desperate straits and could not afford any chance of trouble in the southwest. Thus in 881, when Li Kuei-nien's mission to Nan-chao returned with a memorial of submission from the Nan-chao king, Hsi-tsung was willing to promise his own sister (Emperor I-tsung's second daughter), the An-hua Princess, in marriage to the Nan-chao king.<sup>181</sup>

However, it is very possible that the Chinese never intended to carry out this marriage alliance. In fact, when Lung-shun sent three of his chief ministers, Chao Lung-mei, Yang Ch'i-hun, and Tuan I-tsung, to Ch'eng-tu (the temporary capital of the T'ang court after it had fled Huang Ch'ao's armies) to receive the T'ang princess, the Chinese indulged in an act of treachery. Ironically, it was Kao P'ien, whose own envoy had first promised a Chinese princess to the Nan-chao ruler, who now sent in a memorial from his new post in Yang-chou, pointing out that these three officials were the most important and trusted in the Nan-chao kingdom and proposing that they be poisoned. The emperor and his court seem to have had no qualms about following this suggestion. All of the Nan-chao envoys were killed. From this time on, we are told, 'there were no more talented officials' in the Nan-chao kingdom. Misleading as this may be, the Nan-chao kingdom was already weakened by its years of war with China and thereafter continued to decline.<sup>182</sup> The Nan-chao court, militarily exhausted and increasingly preoccupied with its own significant internal changes, apparently did not even venture to take advantage

of the T'ang dynasty's terribly vulnerable position while in exile in Ch'eng-tu in the 880's.

Subsequently, there were at least two more missions from the Nan-chao kingdom that pressed for the fulfillment of the promise of a Chinese princess, but they were put off with various excuses: in 882, that the court was still trying to determine the proper protocol;<sup>183</sup> in 883, that the marriage should wait until Hsi-tsung's court in exile could return to Ch'ang-an.<sup>184</sup> Finally, the T'ang court did appoint several officials to lead a mission which would carry the An-hua Princess to the Nan-chao kingdom. However, with the quelling of the Huang Ch'ao rebellion and the return of the T'ang court to Ch'ang-an, there was no longer any compelling reason to grant the marriage alliance to Nan-chao, and thus it never took place.<sup>185</sup>

This was practically the last official contact between the Nan-chao kingdom and T'ang China. After Lung-shun's death and the accession of his son Shun-hua (or Shun-hua-chen) in 897, a Nan-chao envoy appeared at Li-chou in Szechwan, reportedly with a request to restore friendly intercourse. However, Wang Chien, then the regional commander in Szechwan, counseled the court not to demean itself by replying to Nan-chao and guaranteed that as long as he was in control in the southwest, Nan-chao would not dare to attack.<sup>186</sup>

It is interesting to note here that some of the local peoples in the Li-chou region were said to have been in Chinese employ as spies against Nan-chao. It is reported, however, that they also accepted payment from Nan-chao and in fact actually acted as counter-spies against the Chinese. Whenever there was dissension within Szechwan, their leaders would advise Nan-chao to attack.<sup>187</sup> As we have seen, there is strong evidence that this sort of collusion was a long-standing practice and that it had more than once contributed to the effectiveness of Nan-chao incursions into this region. Previous Chinese commanders, it is said, did not want to risk further disturbances by punishing these collaborators. Wang Chien, however, resolved to end this situation and therefore executed several of them. This, it was claimed, discouraged Nan-chao from ever again attacking the Szechwan frontier.<sup>188</sup>

By 897, T'ang China had been fatally weakened by rebellion and regionalism, and diplomatic relations with the T'ang court could have meant little anyway. There was no further communication between the two countries before the final collapse of the T'ang dynasty in 907.<sup>189</sup>

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## EPILOGUE

### THE FALL OF THE NAN-CHAO DYNASTY AND ITS SUCCESSOR KINGDOMS IN YUNNAN

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This book was conceived as a study in Chinese frontier history, specifically the southwestern frontier during the T'ang dynasty. After the early 880's, no very significant contacts took place between T'ang China and the Nan-chao kingdom; nor did any of the Chinese states that held power during the Five Dynasties period (907–960) have much interest in or contacts with the far southwest. In fact, that area was not a major concern of the Chinese again until the thirteenth century, when Mongol armies invaded the region as part of their plans for the conquest of all Asia. That clearly is another story.

This study, therefore, might well end here – except that the reader, having gotten this far, will probably be interested in the denouement of the Nan-chao kingdom and an outline of how its successors fared through the centuries until its territory was finally brought under effective Chinese administrative control. This brief epilogue is meant solely to provide such a concluding account, without much analysis or detail.

Unfortunately, the lack of official contact between Nan-chao and China after the early 880's meant that almost no information was recorded in surviving Chinese sources concerning developments in Yunnan during the last two decades of the ninth century. Our knowledge of this final period of the history of the Nan-chao dynasty thus rests heavily on data that can be gleaned from the few surviving art works of late Nan-chao and Ta-li times, works which have already been studied thoroughly by Li Lin-ts'an, Chapin, Soper, and others.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the paucity of information, however, what emerges from these sources is an interesting picture of cultural change and internal political struggle which, after the premature death of the Nan-chao king Shun-hua in 902, culminated in the deposition of his infant heir and the subsequent destruction of the entire Nan-chao ruling family. The most obvious of those cultural developments was the accelerated religious transformation of the Nan-chao kingdom during the reign of Lung-shun (877–897). Indeed, Lung-shun must be regarded as the key figure in the formal adoption of Buddhism as the state-supported religion of the Nan-chao kingdom and all of its suc-

cessor states in Yunnan.<sup>2</sup> Lung-shun's pious devotion to Buddhism is reflected in his adoption of the titles of 'Maharaja' (*mo-ho-lo-ts'o*) and 'Earth-Wheel King' (*t'u-lun wang*), as evidenced in the famous scroll in the Taipei Palace Museum, the *Fan-hsiang chüan*.<sup>3</sup> As Soper has observed, these titles can be taken as indications of Lung-shun's striving for the Buddhist Cakravartin ideal of 'Universal Monarch.'<sup>4</sup>

The reign of Lung-shun may also have witnessed an increased influx of cultural influences from Southeast Asia. Lung-shun's quest for a marriage alliance with the T'ang had ultimately failed; but according to some post-Sung sources, he found solace in a princess whom he obtained from the Southeast Asian kingdom known to the Chinese as K'un-lun.<sup>5</sup> This evidence has been used to support the theory of prominent Southeast Asian influences on Nan-chao and Ta-li art styles, especially as represented by bronze statues of Avalokitesvara (Kuan-yin), of which several outstanding examples survive.<sup>6</sup>

Perhaps these religious and cultural developments also had some effect on the Nan-chao kingdom's internal politics during that period. In particular, one might see in Lung-shun's apparent devotion to Buddhism a tendency to withdraw from active control of the Nan-chao government, with the Nan-chao chief ministers (called *t'an-ch'o* or *pu-hsieh* after the middle of the ninth century)<sup>7</sup> gradually assuming preponderant power. In fact, it seems that by the time of Lung-shun's reign the dominance of the Meng family was being supplanted by that of the numerous Pai Man clans who had long served in most official Nan-chao posts.<sup>8</sup> This was part of the gradual process whereby the Wu Man rulers of the Nan-chao kingdom were replaced in name as well as in fact by the Pai Man elite of Yunnan, who as we have seen had for centuries occupied a pre-eminent role in the rather highly developed civilization of that region. Indeed, one modern Yunnanese scholar believes that by the time of Lung-shun the Meng dynasty rulers were already actually controlled by their own chief ministers.<sup>9</sup>

Ironically, however, the actual deposition of the Meng rulers of Nan-chao was accomplished by a descendant of Cheng Hui, the Chinese captive who had played such a prominent role within the Nan-chao kingdom during the last decades of the eighth century. There is no mention of Cheng Hui's immediate survivors in any of our sources, but it seems likely that he or they intermarried with the Nan-chao elite and thereby maintained an active role at the Nan-chao court.<sup>10</sup> In any case, by the end of the ninth century one of Cheng Hui's descendants, a man named Cheng Mai-ssu, was serving in high office under the Nan-chao king, Lung-shun.<sup>11</sup>

According to some sources, Cheng Mai-ssu was often left in charge of the state when Lung-shun was away from the capital.<sup>12</sup> Cheng himself thus gradually took over as virtual ruler. This situation only became more pro-

nounced under Lung-shun's successor, Shun-hua. And when Shun-hua died in 902, leaving an infant son as heir, Cheng Mai-ssu gained custody of the baby and cruelly killed him. He then staged a coup and wiped out the entire Meng clan.<sup>13</sup> In that same year, Cheng set up his own dynasty in Yunnan, changing the name of the country to the Ta-ch'ang-ho kingdom.<sup>14</sup>

This act of usurpation formally ended the rule of the Nan-chao kingdom, though its name was still often used by the Chinese to refer to the states which succeeded it in Yunnan. The Ta-ch'ang-ho dynasty founded by Cheng Mai-ssu, however, did not last for long. In 928, Cheng Mai-ssu's grandson was overthrown; over the next decade, the short-lived Ta-t'ien-hsing kingdom, founded in 928 by Chao Shan-cheng, and the Ta-i-ning kingdom, founded in 929 by Yang Kan-chen, held sway in Yunnan.<sup>15</sup> Finally, in 937, another Pai Man official named Tuan Ssu-p'ing usurped the throne and founded his own dynasty, which he called the Ta-li kingdom. In contrast to its immediate predecessors, the Ta-li kingdom's rule in Yunnan was to last for more than three centuries.<sup>16</sup> All of these successor states governed the same basic population as had the Nan-chao kingdom. Their institutions, economy, and culture also seem to have remained basically the same, so far as we can tell from the rather limited sources for this period of Yunnanese history.

As for the continuing relationship between these states and the Chinese, we know really very little. There are indications of both bellicose forays and peaceful overtures between the Ta-ch'ang-ho kingdom and China during the first decades of the tenth century. During the winter of 914, forces from the Ta-ch'ang-ho kingdom invaded Szechwan but were driven off, reportedly with heavy casualties, by the local strongman Wang Chien.<sup>17</sup> Chinese troops set out across the Ta-tu River in pursuit of the fleeing invaders, but they were quickly called back by Wang Chien, who decided it would not be prudent to risk being drawn into their territory. Subsequently, Wang had a number of collaborators executed; after this, we are told, forces from that region no longer dared to attack Szechwan.<sup>18</sup>

Some years later, in 925, Cheng Mai-ssu's son and successor, Cheng Min (sometimes called Cheng Jen-min), sought a marriage alliance with the court of the Later Han dynasty, then in power in south China. The Chinese seem to have been impressed with the cultural attainments of Cheng Min's envoys, who submitted examples of their poetry in Chinese, written in a proper, vigorous style on heavy, parchment-like paper.<sup>19</sup> Despite the fact that the Chinese still found their attitude to be 'disrespectful,' their mission was successful and a Chinese princess was sent to Cheng Min by the Later Han ruler.<sup>20</sup> After that, however, there was very little recorded contact between the two peoples for well over a century.

Relations between the Ta-li kingdom and China after its reunification

*Successor dynasties to Nan-chao in Yunnan*


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<i>Ta-ch'ang-ho kingdom</i>	902-928
Cheng Mai-ssu	902-909
Cheng Min (Cheng Jen-min)	910-926
Cheng Lung-tan	927-928
<i>Ta-t'ien-hsing kingdom</i>	928-929
Chao Shan-cheng	928-929
<i>Ta-i-ning kingdom</i>	929-937
Yang Kan-chen	929-937
<i>Ta-li kingdom</i>	937-1253
Tuan Ssu-p'ing	937-944
Tuan Ssu-ying	945
Tuan Ssu-liang	946-951
Tuan Ssu-ts'ung	952-968
Tuan Su-shun	969-985
Tuan Su-ying	986-1009
Tuan Su-lien	1010-1022
Tuan Su-lung	1023-1026
Tuan Su-chen	1027-1041
Tuan Su-hsing	1042-1044
Tuan Ssu-lien	1045-1074
Tuan Lien-i	1075-1080
Tuan Shou-huei	1081
Tuan Cheng-ming	1082-1094
<i>Ta-chung kuo (Interregnum)</i>	1094-1095
Kao Sheng-t'ai	1094-1095
<i>Hou-li kuo (Later Ta-li kingdom)</i>	1096-1253
Tuan Cheng-ch'un	1096-1108
Tuan Cheng-yen	1109-1147
Tuan Cheng-hsing	1148-1171
Tuan Chih-hsing	1172-1200
Tuan Chih-lien	1201-1204
Tuan Chih-hsiang	1205-1238
Tuan Hsiang-hsing	1239-1251
Tuan Hsing-chih	1252-1253

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Sources: Hu NCYS, 67-99; Juan NCYS, 549-561; *Yun-nan t'ung-chih*, 16, 13a-17b; Li Chia-jui, 'Yung wen-wu pu-cheng Nan-chao chi Ta-li kuo ti chi nien.'

under the Sung dynasty (960-1279) were also quite restricted and not nearly as interesting as the Nan-chao kingdom's interaction with T'ang China. It is said that the founder of the Sung dynasty, when presented (like Sui and T'ang emperors before him) with a proposal to conquer the peoples of Yunnan, reviewed the difficult history of relations between T'ang China and the Nan-



chao kingdom and decided that the area simply was not worth the trouble and the risk. Using a ceremonial axe, he sketched a line representing the Ta-tu River and ordered that all territory beyond that strategic natural boundary should not be the concern of the dynasty he had founded.<sup>21</sup> Although it is likely that this account is anecdotal, the story does effectively represent the very conservative nature of Sung policy toward the southwestern frontier.

However, a period did ensue when the Sung court was forced to turn its attention toward the far southwest – not to defend that frontier but rather simply to obtain as many horses as could be gotten in trade from Yunnan. China's dire need for those horses, of course, had resulted from its troubles elsewhere. It is well known that the first half of the twelfth century was a very difficult time for Sung China. In particular, the struggle with the Jurchen peoples, who had established their own Chin dynasty on the northern frontier and who clearly had ambitions for the conquest of China, did not go well. Indeed, in 1127 the Sung court was forced to abandon its original capital at Kaifeng and subsequently to retreat south of the Huai River. Yet strategically, one of the most important setbacks the Chinese had suffered was the loss of their pasturelands and horse-breeding grounds in the north and northwest. Since heavy fighting continued, even after China concluded a peace with the Jurchen in 1142, the military need for horses remained a critical issue.

The interesting point for us is that the Sung court did find an alternative and less vulnerable source of horses in the southwest. The Chinese had known of a fine breed of horses from Yunnan at least as early as the ninth century, horses that were prized especially for their endurance.<sup>22</sup> Probably the Chinese had traded for these horses for some time, but that trading arrangement was formalized and greatly expanded during the early decades of the twelfth century. This trade was probably most important during the decade of the 1130's, when a succession of horse caravans from the southwest traveled overland to join Sung armies in the north.<sup>23</sup> Court debates in 1133 and 1136 concluded that it was best to suffer the opening of formal relations with the Ta-li kingdom, if need be, for the sake of those horses.<sup>24</sup> It is interesting, however, that the trading arrangement itself seems to have been kept indirect and restricted to the Kwangsi border region around Yung-chou. Local peoples in that area acted as middlemen, procuring horses from Ta-li and exchanging them in regulated markets for Chinese salt, silk, and silver.<sup>25</sup> At its height, something like fifteen hundred Ta-li horses were delivered to the Southern Sung capital each year.<sup>26</sup> That trade seems also to have spurred frontier trade in other items from the Ta-li kingdom: notably musk, medicinal items, felts, and Yunnanese swords, which were evidently renowned throughout the region.<sup>27</sup>

Although this indirect trading arrangement seems to have continued for

some time, significant direct contacts between Sung China and the Ta-li kingdom were still relatively few.<sup>28</sup> Clearly, the Sung court was usually far too preoccupied with serious border troubles elsewhere to consider aggressive intervention in the southwest, and there was relatively little need to defend that frontier. Although militarily respected and even feared by the Chinese, the Ta-li kingdom can hardly be characterized as an aggressive power. By Sung times, the Ta-li kingdom probably controlled considerably less territory than had Nan-chao during its most expansive decades in the middle of the ninth century. It was predominantly centered on the area around the Ta-li plain, and its hegemony probably never went beyond the boundaries of modern Yunnan. Ta-li could not have been considered a real territorial threat to any of Sung China's southern provinces, either in Szechwan, in Kweichow, or in Kwangsi.

As for Annam, the fall of the T'ang marked the end of extended Chinese domination in that region; the Chinese protectorate there was overthrown, and an independent Vietnamese kingdom was established in 939.<sup>29</sup> In Burma too, a new independent kingdom was founded, probably not long after the Nan-chao destruction of the ancient Pyu kingdom in the 830's.<sup>30</sup> There does not seem to be any record, however, of significant military or diplomatic activity between the Ta-li kingdom and either this Burmese kingdom of Pagan, or the new Vietnamese state, or any other Southeast Asian country throughout this subsequent period. Nor did any other strong, expansionist power arise again in Tibet or in other areas of southwestern China to threaten the security of Yunnan during the post Nan-chao era. Thus, though limited in size and might, the Ta-li kingdom seems to have remained unmolested and independent down to the middle of the thirteenth century.

It was then that Mongol armies conquered Yunnan in a carefully executed campaign that was part of a grand strategy for the conquest of Sung China.<sup>31</sup> Ironically, it was the Mongol Yuan dynasty that first effectively ruled Yunnan as a directly administered province of China. Although the Mongol overlords partially restored the authority of the Tuan clan, who were given a special, hereditary role in the administration of their ancient homeland,<sup>32</sup> from 1253 on Yunnan's independence was finally ended.

The process thus began by which this area and its peoples, for so long a source of attraction and of trouble for the Chinese, were made an integral part of China.



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## NOTES

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### Abbreviations

CTS:	<i>Chiu T'ang-shu</i>
CTSh:	<i>Ch'üan T'ang-shih</i>
CTW:	<i>Ch'üan T'ang-wen</i>
HTS:	<i>Hsin T'ang-shu</i>
MSCC:	<i>Man-shu chiao-chu</i>
Hu NCYS:	<i>Nan-chao yeh-shih</i> , Hu Wei edition
Juan NCYS:	<i>Nan-chao yeh-shih</i> , Juan Yuan-sheng edition
TCTC:	<i>Tzu-chih t'ung-chien</i>
TFYK:	<i>Ts'e-fu yuan-kuei</i>
THY:	<i>T'ang hui-yao</i>

Full citations and specific references to editions will be found in the Bibliography.

## Notes to prologue

- 1 'The Southerners' seems to be the closest, non-pejorative English approximation of *Man-tzu*, the Chinese generic term for the foreign ethnic groups living all along the southern frontier regions. Although the term is used here in a fairly general sense, reference to the Nan-chao kingdom is clear from the following context.
- 2 Modern Hsi-ch'ang, in Szechwan province. In T'ang times, Sui-chou was usually the furthest secure Chinese outpost in the far southwest.
- 3 Wei Kao, who served as military governor or regional commander of Hsi-ch'uan, roughly the western half of modern Szechwan province, from 785 to 805.
- 4 The component kingdoms from which the Nan-chao kingdom was formed. See chapter 3.
- 5 The Tsang-ko were a relatively peaceful ethnic group occupying parts of modern Kweichow province during T'ang times. See chapter 1.
- 6 Emperor Hsüan-tsung, who is lauded for the glorious period of his reign known as the K'ai-yuan era (713–741).
- 7 Regional Commander of Hsi-ch'uan from 749 to 751.
- 8 Po Chü-i's poetical account does not quite square with the historical details of this disastrous campaign, which will be recounted in chapter 4.
- 9 The Erh-hai Lake, located near Ta-li in western Yunnan province.
- 10 The mid-790's, the height of the reign of Emperor Te-tsung (reigned 779–805).
- 11 Po Chü-i clearly implies the Emperor's derision at Wei Kao's self-inflating memorial.
- 12 The Moso can be equated with the modern Na-hsi peoples of northwestern Yunnan, bordering on Tibet. See chapter 2.
- 13 *Su-yü* is apparently the Chinese transliteration of a Nan-chao official title; however, it and *wei-ch'ieh* are terms for which even the erudite modern scholar Ch'en Yin-k'o could not determine precise meanings. See Ch'en Yin-k'o, *Yuan-Po shih chien-cheng kao*, 203–7.
- 14 The *ch'ing-p'ing kuan* were the Nan-chao chief ministers. See chapter 4.
- 15 Throughout T'ang and into Sung times, the Nan-chao kingdom was evidently famous for these red cane staffs and golden leather belts. The terms are explicated by Ch'en Yin-k'o, using a variety of T'ang historical and literary sources, in *Yuan-Po shih chien-cheng kao*, 203–7. A strong visual impression of Nan-chao dress, weapons, and accoutrements, both civil and military, can be gotten from the detailed depiction of a procession of Nan-chao nobles found in the extraordinary scroll known as the *Fan-hsiang chüan*, a section of which is reproduced on the bookjacket. See chapter 3.
- 16 I-mou-hsün was one of the great Nan-chao kings, who ruled during the eventful period from 779 to 808. His son Hsün-ko-ch'üan succeeded him and ruled briefly from 808 to 809. It was Hsün-ko-ch'üan who led the Nan-chao mission to the T'ang capital in 793, symbolizing the momentous realliance between China and the Nan-chao kingdom. See chapter 4.
- 17 Apparently, to have an unobstructed view of this strategically important visitor, about whose country Emperor Te-tsung must have been curious for some time. According to Chinese court ritual, of course, all of these imperial liberties were highly improper.
- 18 The author of this poem, Po Chü-i, was one of several T'ang poets who played an active and important role in the dynasty's bureaucratic life. Po is famous for this sort of political satire, especially in the genre known as *Hsin yueh-fu*, of which this and the poem translated in chapter 4 are good examples. See CTSh, 426, 4689–99. (Po's compatriot Yuan Chen also wrote a poem on this identical theme. See CTSh, 419, 4619.)

## Notes to chapter 1

- 1 K.C. Chang summarizes the most important archaeological reports from this area, especially Wu Chin-ting *et al.*, *Yun-nan Ts'ang Erh ching k'ao-ku pao-kao*, and *Yun-nan Chin-ning Shih-chai-shan ku-mu ch'ün fa-chüeh pao-kao*. See K.C. Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China*, 454–67.
- 2 Chang also notes the existence of a distinct cultural group in northwestern Szechwan, in a rugged peripheral area now inhabited by Ch'iang peoples, whose similarities with steppe cultures further north may also have been transmitted into Yunnan. See K.C. Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China*, 453–70.
- 3 K.C. Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China*, 454.
- 4 K.C. Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China*, 454–67.
- 5 See K.C. Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China*, 457.
- 6 See C.P. Fitzgerald, *The Southern Expansion of the Chinese People*, 43–4. Wada Sei contends that this account must be apocryphal on both chronological and geographical grounds. See his 'Tenō Sō Kyaku koji,' 995–1003. Hervouet, however, is not fully convinced by his arguments. See Yves Hervouet, *Un poète de cour sous les Han: Sseu-ma Siang-jou*, 76–7.
- 7 See Edward H. Schafer, *The Vermilion Bird, T'ang Images of the South*, 15. The Ch'in also conquered the area of modern Kweichow and created a province there called Ch'ien-chung.
- 8 See Yü Ying-shih, *Trade and Expansion in Han China*, 186, and Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China*, 460.
- 9 Yü, *Trade and Expansion in Han China*, 111–15.
- 10 See Herold J. Wiens, *Han Chinese Expansion in South China*, 147–9.
- 11 *Hua-yang kuo-chih*, 4, 47–55.
- 12 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao yü Li T'ang kuan-hsi chih yen-chiu*, 50.
- 13 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 73–4. On the Hou Ching rebellion, see Wang Chung-lo, *Wei-Chin Nan-pei-ch'ao Sui ch'u-T'ang shih*, I, 312–18.
- 14 *Hua-yang kuo-chih*, 4, 50. Cf. Miyakawa Hisayuki, 'The Confucianization of South China,' 36.
- 15 This and other pertinent Chinese characters can be found in the Glossary, beginning on p. 200.
- 16 Feng Han-yi and J.K. Shryock, 'The Historical Origins of the Lolo,' 117–18.
- 17 HTS, 222c, 6315.
- 18 *Yuan-ho hsing-tsuán*, 9, 10b.
- 19 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 70.
- 20 Édouard Chavannes, 'Quatre inscriptions du Yun-nan,' 5–44.
- 21 *Tien-nan ku chin-shih lu*, 1a.
- 22 Wada Sei has argued that the often cited legend concerning General Chuang Ch'iao and his takeover of Tien territory after the Ch'in conquest of his native state of Ch'u is inaccurate and contradictory in many respects. See Wada Sei, 'Tenō Sō Kyaku koji,' 995–1003. On the Tuan claim to Chinese affiliation, see especially Hsiang Ta, '“Man-shu chiao-chu tu-hou” shih yü,' 6, 129–30.
- 23 See Howard J. Wechsler, *Mirror to the Son of Heaven: Wei Cheng at the Court of T'ang T'ai-tsung*, 34.
- 24 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 61–74. See also Feng and Shryock, 'Origins of the Lolo,' 103–27.
- 25 HTS, 222c, 6315; THY, 98, 1750.
- 26 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 72.
- 27 TCTC, 174, 5429–30.
- 28 *Sui-shu*, 37, 1126.
- 29 *Sui-shu*, 37, 1126–7.

- 30 *Sui-shu*, 37, 1126.  
 31 *Sui-shu*, 37, 1126. I have found no corroboration of this assertion in any other source.  
 32 *Sui-shu*, 37, 1126–7.  
 33 *Sui-shu*, 37, 1127.  
 34 *Sui-shu*, 37, 1127.  
 35 *Sui-shu*, 37, 1127.  
 36 *Sui-shu*, 47, 1270.  
 37 *Sui-shu*, 54, 1361–2.  
 38 *Sui-shu*, 47, 1270.  
 39 *Sui-shu*, 47, 1270.  
 40 *Sui-shu*, 53, 1354.  
 41 See *Sui-shu*, 53, 1354.  
 42 *Sui-shu*, 53, 1353–4.  
 43 *Sui-shu*, 53, 1354.  
 44 See Fujisawa Yoshimi, 'Tōdai nyūUnro no shiteki kōsatsu,' 16–30.  
 45 TCTC, 178, 5551–2.  
 46 *Sui-shu*, 53, 1355.  
 47 TCTC, 178, 5552.  
 48 *Sui-shu*, 45, 1241–2.  
 49 *Sui-shu*, 53, 1355.  
 50 *Sui-shu*, 45, 1241.  
 51 *Sui-shu*, 53, 1355.  
 52 *Sui-shu*, 53, 1355.  
 53 TCTC, 179, 5571.  
 54 Arthur F. Wright, 'The Sui Dynasty,' 69.  
 55 *Sui-shu*, 53, 1356–7.  
 56 TCTC, 179, 5591.  
 57 *Sui-shu*, 53, 1358.  
 58 *Sui-shu*, 45, 1242.  
 59 TCTC, 179, 5591; *Sui-shu*, 53, 1359.  
 60 HTS, 222c, 6315.  
 61 Georges Coedès, *The Indianized States of South-East Asia*, 70–2.  
 62 HTS, 222c, 6315.  
 63 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 94.  
 64 TCTC, 188, 5887.  
 65 HTS, 222c, 6315.  
 66 TCTC, 188, 5887.  
 67 HTS, 222c, 6318–19.  
 68 THY, 98, 1750; TCTC, 189, 5941.  
 69 HTS, 42, 1086.  
 70 TCTC, 191, 5990.  
 71 TCTC, 191, 5991.  
 72 CTS, 185a, 4782.  
 73 TCTC, 191, 5991.  
 74 CTS, 185a, 4783.  
 75 CTS, 185a, 4782–3.  
 76 CTS, 185a, 4783.  
 77 HTS, 222c, 6316.  
 78 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 99–100.  
 79 TCTC, 192, 6026.  
 80 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 100.  
 81 TFYK, 970, 11396.

- 82 HTS, 222c, 6319.
- 83 THY, 99, 1761–2; TFYK, 970, 11397.
- 84 TCTC, 193, 6067–8.
- 85 HTS, 222c, 6321; TCTC, 198, 6250.
- 86 TCTC, 195, 6148.
- 87 TCTC, 199, 6255.
- 88 *Shih-chi*, 116, 96.
- 89 *Shih-chi*, 116, 97.
- 90 See Yü, *Trade and Expansion in Han China*, 175.
- 91 *Hou Han-shu*, 86, 550.
- 92 Wang Gungwu, 'The Nanhai Trade: A Study of the Early History of Chinese Trade in the South China Sea,' 46–7.
- 93 *Shih-chi*, 116, 98. See also Yu Chung, 'Han-Chin shih-ch'i ti "Hsi-nan I",' 22 and 26–8.
- 94 Schuyler Cammann, 'Archaeological Evidence for Chinese Contacts with India during the Han Dynasty,' 1–19.
- 95 Compare Yü Ying-shih's analysis in Yü, *Trade and Expansion in Han China*, 111–15.
- 96 TCTC, 199, 6255 and 6276.
- 97 See p. 17.
- 98 TCTC, 195, 6148.
- 99 See chapter 4.
- 100 TCTC, 199, 6255–6.
- 101 HTS, 222c, 6321–2.
- 102 HTS, 222c, 6322.
- 103 See Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 104–5.
- 104 TCTC, 199, 6255.
- 105 TCTC, 199, 6256.
- 106 HTS, 222c, 6322.
- 107 TCTC, 199, 6256.
- 108 TFYK, 970, 11401.
- 109 TCTC, 199, 6265.
- 110 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 103.
- 111 TCTC, 199, 6275.
- 112 HTS, 222c, 6315. See also Inez de Beauclair, 'Cultural Traits of Non-Chinese Tribes in Kweichow Province, Southwest China,' 20–35, and Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism, Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, 441–3.
- 113 TCTC, 199, 6276.
- 114 See Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 108–9.
- 115 HTS, 222c, 6315–16.
- 116 TCTC, 199, 6278.
- 117 TCTC, 200, 6297.
- 118 TCTC, 202, 6368.
- 119 HTS, 222c, 6318. The sources are not explicit, but it seems likely that these two events were not directly related.
- 120 THY, 73, 1330; TCTC, 201, 6340.
- 121 See Fujisawa Yoshimi, 'Tōchō Unnan keiei no naiyō to mokuteki,' 45–9.
- 122 See Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 110–25.
- 123 Fujisawa Yoshimi, 'Tōchō Unnan keiei shi no kenkyū,' 33. Also see Fujisawa, 'Tōdai nyūUnro no shiteki kōsatsu,' 16–30.
- 124 TCTC, 199, 6287.



## Notes to chapter 2

- 1 See R.A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, especially chapters 2 and 3.
- 2 CTS, 196a, 5236–7; TCTC, 223, 7146–7.
- 3 TCTC, 223, 7151–3; HTS, 216a, 6087–8. See also Hou Lin-po's summary of T'ang foreign relations, *T'ang-tai I-Ti pien-huan shih-lueh*.
- 4 See K'uang P'ing-chang, 'T'ang-tai kung-chu ho-ch'in k'ao,' 30–9, and H.E. Richardson, *Tibet and Its History*, 58. Also compare TCTC, 195, 6153 and 196, 6164.
- 5 Richardson, *Tibet and Its History*, 30.
- 6 HTS, 216a, 6071; CTS, 196a, 5219. See also Yü, *Trade and Expansion in Han China*, 51–3.
- 7 Richardson, *Tibet and Its History*, 28.
- 8 See J. Bacot, F.W. Thomas, and Ch. Toussaint, *Documents de Touen-houang relatifs à l'histoire du Tibet*. See also Chang K'un, 'The Tun-huang Tibetan Annals.'
- 9 Satō Hisashi, *Kodai Chibetto shi kenkyū*, 9.
- 10 See HTS, 221a, 6224–7.
- 11 TCTC, 195, 6139–40 and 6157.
- 12 K'uang, 'T'ang-tai kung-chu,' 30–3.
- 13 TCTC, 196, 6164–5.
- 14 K'uang, 'T'ang-tai kung-chu,' 30–3. See also R.A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, 58.
- 15 TCTC, 201, 6351; HTS, 216a, 6074–6. The Tibetan conquest of the T'u-yü-hun was one of the most significant events in early T'ang foreign relations, signalling to the Chinese that there was a formidable new threat on their western frontier. See Gabriella Molè, *The T'u-yü-hun from the Northern Wei to the Time of the Five Dynasties*.
- 16 CTS, 196a, 5224; HTS, 216a, 6077–8.
- 17 Also known in recent times as the Mao-min Ch'iang People's Autonomous District.
- 18 Yen Keng-wang, 'T'ang-tai Mao-chou hsi-t'ung T'u-fan liang-tao k'ao,' 1–23.
- 19 *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao*, 67, 2902–3.
- 20 CTS, 196a, 5235.
- 21 CTS, 196a, 5224; HTS, 216a, 6077.
- 22 TCTC, 202, 6396.
- 23 Yen, 'Mao-chou,' 12–23. See also Jao Tsung-i, 'Wei-chou tsai T'ang-tai Fan-Han chiao-she shih-shang chih ti-wei.'
- 24 HTS, 222c, 6323–4.
- 25 See Fujisawa Yoshimi, *Seinan Chūgoku minzoku shi no kenkyū – Nanshō koku no shi teki kenkyū*, 256.
- 26 MSCC, 2, 43.
- 27 TCTC, 214, 6835.
- 28 TCTC, 202, 6396; HTS, 222c, 6322.
- 29 Wang Chung, 'T'ang-tai Han-Tsang liang-tsu jen-min ti ching-chi wen-hua chiao-liu,' 53–60.
- 30 Satō, *Kodai Chibetto*, 33 and 811–12.
- 31 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 124.
- 32 Bacot *et al.*, *Documents*, 149–50.
- 33 See R.A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, 63–5, and Chang K'un, 'The Tun-huang Tibetan Annals.'
- 34 R.A. Stein, 'Récentes études tibétaines,' 82.
- 35 This correlation will be more fully substantiated on pp. 44–5.
- 36 See chapter 3.
- 37 Bacot *et al.*, *Documents*, 150.

- 38 CTS, 196a, 5226.
- 39 Maejima Shinji, 'Unnan no eisei to seinan i.'
- 40 MSCC, 7, 189. See Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 206.
- 41 MSCC, 7, 201 and 171–4.
- 42 MSCC, 7, 204–6.
- 43 See Satō, *Kodai Chibetto*, 760, and F.W. Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents Concerning Chinese Turkestan*, II, 415–31.
- 44 CTS, 91, 2940–1.
- 45 CTS, 91, 2941.
- 46 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 127–8.
- 47 CTS, 91, 2941.
- 48 MSCC, appendix 2, 315–19.
- 49 See chapter 1.
- 50 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 201–4.
- 51 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 133.
- 52 TCTC, 204, 6457.
- 53 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 133–4.
- 54 TCTC, 205, 6494.
- 55 CTS, 185b, 4807.
- 56 CTS, 185b, 4808.
- 57 TCTC, 205, 6487.
- 58 HTS, 216a, 6078.
- 59 Wang Chung, *Hsin T'ang-shu T'u-fan chuan chien-cheng*, 51–2.
- 60 CTS, 91, 2936–42.
- 61 See C.P. Fitzgerald, *The Empress Wu*, 157.
- 62 CTS, 91, 2939.
- 63 TCTC, 206, 6537.
- 64 CTS, 91, 2939.
- 65 CTS, 91, 2940.
- 66 CTS, 91, 2940.
- 67 CTS, 2941. On the term *fan-kuo* and other elements of the idealized Chinese conception of interstate relations, see John K. Fairbank, 'A Preliminary Framework,' in *The Chinese World Order*, especially 9–10.
- 68 CTS, 41, 1697.
- 69 Yen Keng-wang, 'T'ang-tai Ch'eng-tu Ch'ing-ch'i Nan-chao tao i-ch'eng k'ao,' 350–7.
- 70 One should recall Po Chü-i's poem, 'Man-tzu ch'ao,' translated in the Prologue:  
 Floating on leather boats, yes, crossing rope bridges,  
 They come via Sui-chou, over remote roads and paths.  
 See CTSh, 426, 4697. Such means of conveyance have persisted in this area into modern times. See Joseph Rock's tome, *The Ancient Na-khi Kingdom of Southwest China*, which is richly illustrated with excellent photographs.
- 71 CTS, 91, 2940–1.
- 72 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 136–7.
- 73 *Yun-nan t'ung-chih* (1576 edition), 16, 15a. See the Epilogue.
- 74 Fitzgerald, *Empress Wu*, 189–93.
- 75 See K'uang, 'T'ang-tai kung-chu,' 66.
- 76 HTS, 4, 109–10.
- 77 TCTC, 208, 6610.
- 78 *Ta-T'ang hsin-yü*, 11, 167 (cited in Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 160).
- 79 In his survey of the history of Chinese bridge construction, Joseph Needham has observed that 'the eastern part of the Tibetan massif must surely be the focus of origin of Old World suspension bridges.' (Joseph Needham *et al.*, *Science and*

*Civilisation in China*, IV, pt 3, 185.) Because of the extraordinary topographical features of this entire region, 'the suspension bridge was almost a condition *sine qua non* for intercourse in historical times between the people of China and those of Tibet . . .' (Needham *et al.*, *Science*, 189.) According to Needham, the use of wrought-iron chains, 'the decisive step in the perfecting of suspension bridges,' seems to have been developed first in southwest China, no later than the end of the sixth century and possibly, though more debatably, as early as the first century. The earlier date is that attributed to the Lan-chin bridge near Chin-tung; the later one, for a bridge reportedly built by Shih Wan-sui and an engineer named Su Jung during the expedition of 598, as discussed in chapter 1. These bridges required not only a high degree of skill in civil engineering but also 'an advanced metallurgy of iron.' In fact, iron is prevalent all over the Yunnan border region; in subsequent times, it was to be used frequently in impressive construction projects by the native peoples of this area. (*Yun-nan t'ung-ch'ih*, 10, 16; *T'ien lüeh*, 8, 11a.) In this regard, it is pertinent to note that the commemorative pillar that T'ang Chiu-cheng commissioned Lü Ch'iu-chün (who must have been the same Ch'eng-tu native mentioned above in reference to the Wang Jen-ch'iu inscription) to erect near the Erh-hai Lake (surely not the Tien Lake, as our source mistakenly has it) was also cast of iron. (*Ta-T'ang hsin-yü*, 11, 167.)

Although he is not entirely consistent in his conclusions concerning the origins of such bridges in the southwest, Needham seems to regard them as having been made possible through a process of technological diffusion from China, for 'it seems most reasonable to suppose that the making of iron-chain suspension bridges radiated from the regions of most advanced iron technology.' (Needham, *Science*, 198.) This point is well taken. Yet it is noteworthy that this relatively early and credible Chinese source, not utilized by Needham, attributes the construction of these bridges over the Yang and P'i Rivers (just northwest of the Erh-hai Lake) specifically, and solely, to the Tibetans. (*Ta-t'ang hsin-yü*, 11, 167.) At the very least, this indicates that by the beginning of the eighth century the Tibetans, whether by capture of Chinese artisans, cultural borrowing, or whatever means, already had the technological capability for building such remarkable structures, more than a millennium ahead of anything comparable in the West.

- 80 See the two letters written in the emperor's name by Chang Chiu-ling, quoted in MSCC, appendix 2, 289–90 and 291–2.
- 81 TCTC, 210, 6661.
- 82 HTS, 199, 5662–3.
- 83 CTS, 190b, 5021–4. Compare HTS, 143, 4680.
- 84 See chapter 1, p. 16.
- 85 CTS, 196a, 5228.
- 86 TCTC, 210, 6661.
- 87 MSCC, 3, 62.
- 88 MSCC, 3, 61.
- 89 See p. 32.
- 90 TCTC, 204, 6457.
- 91 Bernhard Karlgren, *Analytic Dictionary of Chinese and Sino-Japanese*, 214 and 45.
- 92 Ma Ch'ang-shou, *Nan-chao kuo-nei ti pu-tsu tsu-ch'eng ho nu-li chih-tu*, 53–5. Ma does not prove this point entirely to my satisfaction, but I certainly do not have the linguistic competence to clarify this particular issue any further.
- 93 MSCC, 3, 60–5.
- 94 HTS, 222b, 6294; MSCC, 3, 62.
- 95 TCTC, 210, 6661; CTS, 196a, 5228.
- 96 Karlgren, *Analytic Dictionary*, 199. I am grateful to T'ang Hai't'ao of Princeton

University for his confirmation of the approximate accuracy of these reconstructed sounds.

- 97 Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 54–5.  
 98 Lo Ch'ang-p'ei, 'The Genealogical Patronymic Linkage System of the Tibeto-Burman Speaking Tribes,' 349–63.  
 99 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 162.  
 100 HTS, 191, 5509; HTS, 5, 122.  
 101 HTS, 5, 124; TCTC, 211, 6712.  
 102 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 281.  
 103 TFYK, 986, 11585; TCTC, 213, 6783.  
 104 Fujisawa Yoshimi, 'Tōdai Unnan shijō no ensei ni tsuite,' 205–6. See also letters written in the 730's from the T'ang court to officials in Szechwan warning of impending Tibetan attempts to recover the K'un-ming salt-producing region, quoted in MSCC, appendix 2, 288–93.  
 105 TCTC, 214, 6835; 6840; 6842.  
 106 *Tien k'ao*, 1, 18b; *Tien-yün li-nien chuan*, 4, 15a.  
 107 *Tien k'ao*, 1, 17b.  
 108 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 212–13.  
 109 TCTC, 214, 6836.  
 110 Hu NCYS, 1, 10b; *Yun-nan t'ung-chih*, 1, 11b.  
 111 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 208–10, 227–9; Fujisawa, Tōchō Unnan keiei shi no kenkyū, pt 2, 31; Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 150, 158, 162–3. See also Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 65–8.  
 112 See Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 187–8 and 209.  
 113 TFYK, 964, 11346.  
 114 *T'ang ch'eng-hsiang Ch'ü-chiang Chang hsien-sheng wen-chi*, 12, 124–5 (quoted in MSCC, appendix 2, 293).  
 115 Bacot *et al.*, *Documents*, 149–50.  
 116 Rock, *Ancient Na-khi*, 192.  
 117 Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts*, III, 45.  
 118 Satō, *Kodai Chibetto*, 399–401 and 603.  
 119 Karlgren, *Analytic Dictionary*, 190.  
 120 Bacot *et al.*, *Documents*, 49.  
 121 HTS, 216a, 6085.  
 122 Karlgren, *Analytic Dictionary*, 184 and 142.  
 123 Bacot *et al.*, *Documents*, 51.  
 124 Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts*, II, 107.  
 125 Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts*, III, 43. Along with the Tibetans, the Chinese, and the Hjan, the fourth of these 'great states' was the Drug, or Dru-gu, whose identification presents its own special problems. Thomas believes that the term may have had more geographical than ethnic significance, referring to any of the peoples who occupied the area around Turfan and Shan-shan, territory once controlled by the T'u-yü-hun, which from the middle of the eighth century was to become part of the Uighur empire. See Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts*, II, 267–87.  
 126 Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts*, II, 107. See also R.A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, 63–4.

### Notes to chapter 3

- 1 See, for example, the confusing collection of essays in *Yun-nan Pai-tsu ti ch'i-yuan ho hsing-ch'eng lun-wen chi*.
- 2 What evidence there is is summarized in Li Chia-jui, ed., *Ta-li Pai-tsu tzu-chih-chou li-shih wen-wu tiao-ch'a tzu-liao*.

- 3 Terrien de Lacouperie, *The Cradle of the Shan Race* (1885).
- 4 Le Marquis d'Hervey de Saint-Denys, *Ethnographie des peuples étrangers à la Chine* (1876); Émile Rocher, 'Histoire des princes du Yunnan' (1899); E.H. Parker, 'The Early Laos and China' (1891); H.R. Davies, *Yün-nan, The Link between India and the Yangtze* (1909).
- 5 Michael Blackmore, 'The Ethnological Problems Connected with Nanchao,' 60; Hsü Yun-ts'iao, 'Was Nan-chao a Thai Kingdom?', 14.
- 6 F.W. Mote, 'Problems of Thai Prehistory,' 102–3.
- 7 Coedès, *Indianized States*, 194–8.
- 8 The phrase appears in W.A.R. Wood, *A History of Siam*, 35.
- 9 Paul Pelliot, 'Deux itinéraires de Chine en Inde à la fin du VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle,' 154.
- 10 Wood, *History of Siam*, 36–7.
- 11 Wood, *History of Siam*, 32.
- 12 See, for example, Chiang Ying-liang, 'Nan-chao pu-shih T'ai-tsu chien-li ti kuo-chia,' 71–3 and Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 9–14.
- 13 Mote, 'Problems,' 100–8.
- 14 See, for example, Ch'en Pi-sheng, *Tien-pien san-i*, published in 1941; by 1956, however, the same author had repudiated this interpretation in an article called 'Shih-lun Pai-tsu yuan-ch'u yü Nan-chao.'
- 15 See, for example, Lea Williams, *Southeast Asia: A History* (1976), 14–16; Erwin O. Reischauer and J.K. Fairbank, *East Asia: The Great Tradition* (1960), 177 and 190; and *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th edn (1978), VII, 178; XVI, 718; XIX, 1113.
- 16 Fitzgerald, *Southern Expansion*, 51–62 (published 1972).
- 17 For example, Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*; Fujisawa, *Seinan*; Blackmore, 'Ethnological Problems'; Mote, 'Problems.'
- 18 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 10.
- 19 Hsiang Ta, 'Nan-chao shih lüeh-lun,' 177.
- 20 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 6–10; Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 18–21; Hu Hou-süan and Yang Hsiang-kuei, 'P'i-p'an Hsiang Ta ti fan Ma-k'o-ssu chu-i ti li-shih kuan-tien,' 18–20.
- 21 Ling Ch'un-sheng, 'T'ang-tai Yun-nan ti Wu-man yü Pai-man k'ao,' 64–6, 75–6; Hsü, 'Was Nanchao a Thai Kingdom?', 17–18; Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 69–75.
- 22 MSCC, 4, 82.
- 23 HTS, 222c, 6317; MSCC, 8, 216–17; Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 99–103.
- 24 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 175.
- 25 HTS, 222a, 6267.
- 26 MSCC, 3, 55–81.
- 27 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 386–8.
- 28 See chapter 1 and MSCC, 6, 129–30. Also note Fujisawa's extremely thorough analysis of the make-up of the Nan-chao bureaucracy in *Seinan*, 327–88.
- 29 HTS, 222a, 6272; 222c, 6317.
- 30 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 388.
- 31 See, for example, F.W. Mote, 'Symposium on the Pre-history of the Thai People,' 4; Liu Yao-han, 'Nan-chao t'ung-chih-che Meng-shih chia-tsu shu-yü I-tsu hsin-cheng,' 31–51; Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*; Blackmore, 'Ethnological Problems,' 67–8.
- 32 See C.P. Fitzgerald, *The Tower of Five Glories, A Study of the Min Chia of Tali, Yunnan*.
- 33 Feng and Shryock, 'Origins of the Lolo,' 103–27.
- 34 See William J. Gedney, review of J. Marvin Brown, *From Ancient Thai to Modern Dialects*, 112.
- 35 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 2–6.

- 36 Wen Yu, 'Ai-lao yü Nan-chao,' 24–6; Ch'en Ching-ho, 'Airō I Kyūryū densetsu no tantō,' 1–2.
- 37 TCTC, 214, 6836; CTS, 197, 5280.
- 38 See Ruey Yihfu (Jui I-fu), 'Nan-chao shih,' 359–61; Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 14–15; Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 173.
- 39 Mote, 'Problems,' 102–4; Hiram Woodward, 'Who Are the Ancestors of the Thai?', 88–91.
- 40 Hu NCYS, 94–8.
- 41 Hsia Kuang-nan, *Yuan-tai Yun-nan shih ti ts'ung-k'ao*, 125.
- 42 Lo, 'Patronymic Linkage System,' 349–63; Ling Ch'un-sheng, 'Tung-nan Ya ti fu-tzu lien-ming chih,' 117–220.
- 43 The system seems to apply to daughters as well, according to Ling, 'T'ang-tai Wu-man yü Pai-man,' 184.
- 44 Liu, 'Nan-chao t'ung-chih-che,' 31–45.
- 45 See Ch'en Pi-sheng, 'Shih-lun Pai-tsu,' 142; Chiang, 'Nan-chao pu-shih T'ai-tsu,' 76–7; Blackmore, 'Ethnological Problems,' 66.
- 46 See Li Lin-ts'an, *Nan-chao Ta-li kuo hsin tzu-liao ti tsung-ho yen-chiu*, 51–3, 72–3; Blackmore, 'Ethnological Problems,' 66–8.
- 47 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 4.
- 48 HTS, 222a, 6276. See also G.H. Luce, 'The Early *Syām* in Burma's History,' 123–50, and the detailed ethnographical map in Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 104.
- 49 MSCC, 4, 103–5.
- 50 MSCC, 4, 99–105.
- 51 Mote, 'Problems,' 104–7.
- 52 *Yuan-shih*, 61, 725 and 736. See also Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 99–103.
- 53 See especially Hsiang, 'Nan-chao shih lüeh-lun,' 156–71.
- 54 Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 18–21; Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 6–10; Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 110–20.
- 55 HTS, 222a, 6267.
- 56 Compare the sources listed at the bottom of the table on p. 54.
- 57 HTS, 222b, 6293; MSCC, 3, 55–7.
- 58 Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 65; Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 146–7.
- 59 *Hou Han-shu*, 87, 541. See also Hervouet, *Un poète de cour*, 103–18.
- 60 *Hua-yang kuo-chih*, 4, 50–4.
- 61 Hu NCYS, 21–2; *Yun-nan t'ung-chih*, 16, 9a–9b.
- 62 Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 25–41; Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 1–44; Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 25–50.
- 63 See chapter 1.
- 64 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 154.
- 65 TCTC, 199, 6256.
- 66 Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 25–41; Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 183–7, 197–200.
- 67 HTS, 222c, 6322; Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 104–6; Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 38.
- 68 Li Lin-ts'an, *Nan-chao tzu-liao*, 40–51.
- 69 Compare Li Lin-ts'an, 'Nan-chao ti Lung-shun huang-ti yü "Mo-ho-lo-ts'o" ming-hao k'ao,' 149–68.
- 70 *Pai-kuo yin-yu*, 1a–2a; *Chi ku-Tien shuo*, 353–4; Hu NCYS, 21–2. Note that many of these legends are discussed and translated by Soper in Helen B. Chapin and Alexander C. Soper, *A Long Roll of Buddhist Images*, 10–41.
- 71 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 150–4; Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 50.
- 72 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 186–7; compare Hsiang's interesting interpretation in 'Nan-chao shih lüeh-lun,' 184–7.
- 73 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 159.

- 74 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 229; Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 164 and 184.
- 75 In order to accommodate this spurious additional syllable 'yen' within the rules of the patronymic linkage system, some sources go so far as to create an additional Nan-chao ruler, called 'Yen-ko,' whose name is in turn linked to that of the great mid eighth-century ruler Ko-lo-feng. See Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 192–4, and MSCC, 3, 68–70.
- 76 MSCC, 3, 68–70; Hu NCYS, 26.
- 77 Hu NCYS, 26.
- 78 Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 50.
- 79 CTS, 197, 5280; HTS, 222a, 6270; MSCC, 3, 68–70.
- 80 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 163.
- 81 Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 66.
- 82 See Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 229.
- 83 TFYK, 974, 11448; HTS, 222a, 6270.
- 84 See Michael Blackmore, 'The Rise of Nan-chao in Yunnan,' 47–61.
- 85 Hu NCYS, 29–31; *Tien k'ao*, 792–3.
- 86 See, most notably, Fitzgerald, *Southern Expansion*, 53–4, from which the phrase is quoted.
- 87 TCTC, 214, 6836; CTS, 197, 5280.
- 88 MSCC, 3, 67.
- 89 Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 56–7.
- 90 HTS, 222b, 6293.
- 91 HTS, 222b, 6293.
- 92 TFYK, 975, 11454 and 11455.
- 93 TCTC, 214, 6836.
- 94 HTS, 222a, 6270; Blackmore, 'Rise of Nan-chao,' 55.
- 95 See, for example, Hsiang, 'Nan-chao shih lüeh-lun,' 185.
- 96 MSCC, 3, 57–60; HTS, 222b, 6293–4; *Te-hua pei*, 320.
- 97 HTS, 222c, 6322; MSCC, 5, 122; Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 224–5.
- 98 See Yang Yü-ts'ai, 'Nan-chao Ta-li kuo li-shih i-chih chi she-hui ching-chi tiao-ch'a chi-yao,' 22–58. Also see *Hsin Chung-kuo ti k'ao-ku shou-huo*, 103–4.
- 99 MSCC, 3, 64.
- 100 See HTS, 145, 4727.
- 101 *Te-hua pei*, 319.
- 102 HTS, 222b, 6294.
- 103 HTS, 222a, 6270; MSCC, 3, 62–4.
- 104 MSCC, 3, 64.
- 105 MSCC, 3, 60–5. Additional detail is provided in Blackmore, 'Rise of Nan-chao,' 52–7. Admittedly, this account is rather cryptic, but then so are the sources on which it is based.
- 106 MSCC, 3, 65–6.
- 107 MSCC, 3, 66.
- 108 HTS, 222b, 6294–5.
- 109 MSCC, 4, 92.
- 110 *Te-hua pei*, 319–20.
- 111 MSCC, 3, 55–7; HTS, 222b, 6293.
- 112 MSCC, 5, 114–16.
- 113 MSCC, 5, 117–18.
- 114 TCTC, 214, 6836; CTS, 197, 5280.
- 115 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 187.
- 116 HTS, 43b, 1152. See also Chü Ch'ing-yuan, *T'ang-tai chih chiao-t'ung*, 65–9.
- 117 MSCC, 6, 145–9; Pelliot, 'Deux itinéraires,' 136–9.
- 118 MSCC, 7, 187.

- 119 *Te-hua pei*, 320. See also Fujisawa, 'Tōdai Unnan ensei,' 200–5.  
 120 See Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 257–8.  
 121 HTS, 206, 5846; Edwin G. Pulleyblank, *The Background of the Rebellion of An Lu-shan*, 93.  
 122 Fujisawa, 'Tōchō Unnan keiei no naiyō to mokuteki,' 70–1.  
 123 See chapter 1, pp. 17–20. Compare Yü, *Trade and Expansion in Han China*, 92ff.  
 124 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 188.  
 125 HTS, 222c, 6316; *Te-hua pei*, 320.  
 126 THY, 99, 1763.  
 127 CTS, 197, 5280.  
 128 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 189.  
 129 MSCC, 4, 83. A condescending letter of pardon, drafted by Chang Chiu-ling and sent by the T'ang court to the Ts'uan leaders at this time, has survived and is quoted in MSCC, appendix 2, 294.  
 130 *Te-hua pei*, 320.  
 131 MSCC, 4, 83. On the earlier history of the Ts'uan, see Ling, 'T'ang-tai Yun-nan ti Wu-man yü Pai-man,' 59–60.  
 132 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 191–3.  
 133 *Te-hua pei*, 320–1.  
 134 HTS, 222c, 6316.  
 135 MSCC, 4, 83–5.  
 136 HTS, 222c, 6316.  
 137 MSCC, 4, 85.  
 138 HTS, 222c, 6316.  
 139 Liu Yao-han, 'Man-shu "Ho-t'an" hsiao-k'ao,' 22.  
 140 HTS, 222c, 6316.  
 141 MSCC, 4, 86.  
 142 See chapter 2, p. 44.  
 143 *Te-hua pei*, 321.  
 144 *Te-hua pei*, 321; Wang Shou-nan, *T'ang-tai fan-chen yü chung-yang kuan-hsi chih yen-chiu*, 785.

#### Notes to chapter 4

- 1 *Te-hua pei*, 320.  
 2 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 272.  
 3 See Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 202.  
 4 MSCC, 7, 184–5; HTS, 5, 147.  
 5 CTS, 197, 5280.  
 6 *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao*, 116, 4668.  
 7 Fujisawa, 'Tōchō Unnan keiei shi no kenkyū,' pt 3, 29.  
 8 TCTC, 216, 6901–2.  
 9 *Te-hua pei*, 320–1.  
 10 See both CTS, 197, 5280–1 and *Te-hua pei*, 320–1.  
 11 *Te-hua pei*, 322.  
 12 See, for example, CTS, 197, 5281 and HTS, 222a, 6271.  
 13 TCTC, 216, 6906.  
 14 TCTC, 216, 6907. Here it seems more likely that 'Yun-nan' refers to the region as a whole, rather than specifically to Yao-chou.  
 15 TCTC, 216, 6907; CTS, 197, 5281.  
 16 *Te-hua pei*, 322.  
 17 See Aurel Stein, 'A Chinese Expedition across the Pamirs and Hindukush, A.D. 747.'



- 18 See, for example, C.P. Fitzgerald, 'The Tali Region of Western Yunnan,' 50–60, and Blackmore, 'Rise of Nan-chao,' 58.
- 19 HTS, 222a, 6271; *Te-hua pei*, 322–3.
- 20 TCTC, 216, 6907; HTS, 222a, 6271.
- 21 *Te-hua pei*, 323. This mission to the Tibetan court, headed by the Nan-chao minister Tuan Chung-kuo, is also described and glorified in the Tibetan annals (where Tuan Chung-kuo is called Dvan Cun-kog). See Bacot *et al.*, *Documents*, 150–2.
- 22 TCTC, 216, 6907.
- 23 See Pulleyblank, *Rebellion of An Lu-shan*, 24–40 and 82–104.
- 24 In the past, frontier generals had used their exploits as a means to rise to appointment as chief ministers. Thus the practice arose of using foreign generals, who were virtually disqualified from high court office because they were largely illiterate and without family connections at the capital, in these frontier commands. See TCTC, 216, 7889.
- 25 TCTC, 216, 6901; CTS, 106, 3243.
- 26 See Pulleyblank, *Rebellion of An Lu-shan*, 99.
- 27 HTS, 206, 5848; TCTC, 216, 6913–14.
- 28 On the captured soldiers from the state of Hsi, see HTS, 219, 6175.
- 29 HTS, 206, 5850.
- 30 See Pulleyblank, *Rebellion of An Lu-shan*, 61–75.
- 31 TCTC, 216, 6895.
- 32 TCTC, 216, 6894–5.
- 33 HTS, 206, 5850.
- 34 The 'wise reign' referred to is the K'ai-yuan era (713–741), the beginning, productive period of Emperor Hsüan-tsung's reign.
- 35 The Pear Garden (*Li-yuan*) was the name given to the musical academy established by Emperor Hsüan-tsung, who took a very strong personal interest in it. See HTS, 22, 476.
- 36 In pointed contrast to the earlier K'ai-yuan era, the latter period of Hsüan-tsung's reign, known as T'ien-pao (742–756), is almost always characterized as extravagant and misguided.
- 37 A *li* is usually equated with a distance of roughly one-third mile; here, of course, 'ten thousand *li*' means simply a very great distance. 'Yun-nan' here probably refers either to Yao-chou or to Sui-chou and the alien territory beyond it.
- 38 The Lu River is a branch of the Upper Yangtze. See Yen Keng-wang's useful article on the historical geography of this region, 'Ch'eng-tu Nan-chao tao.'
- 39 Again note the contrast that the poet makes between the wise and cautious K'ai-yuan era and the follies associated with the T'ien-pao period.
- 40 Po Chü-i, 'Hsin-feng che-pi weng,' CTSh, 426, 4693–4. Compare Arthur Waley's original translation in *One Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems*, 109–11.
- 41 TCTC, 216, 6907. See also similar but not as memorable poems by Liu Wan, quoted in *Tien lüeh*, 8, 17a–17b, and by Li Po, CTSh, 171, 1765.
- 42 TCTC, 216, 6912–13.
- 43 See Wang Chung, *T'u-fan chien-cheng*, 82–3, and Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 206.
- 44 *Te-hua pei*, 323.
- 45 *Te-hua pei*, 323.
- 46 See TCTC, 216, 6918.
- 47 CTS, 9, 228; TCTC, 216, 6927.
- 48 *Te-hua pei*, 323.
- 49 *Te-hua pei*, 323.
- 50 HTS, 206, 5850; TCTC, 216, 6927.

- 51 CTS, 106, 3243.  
 52 HTS, 206, 5860.  
 53 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 210–11.  
 54 HTS, 222c, 6319. See also Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 229.  
 55 TCTC, 218, 7000. See Yen, 'Ch'eng-tu Nan-chao tao,' 351–2.  
 56 *Te-hua pei*, 324.  
 57 MSCC, 4, 97–100; HTS, 222a, 6271. See also Ch'en Ju-hsing, 'Fan Ch'o *Man-shu* tui Mien-tien shih chih kung-hsien,' 23.  
 58 *Te-hua pei*, 324.  
 59 TCTC, 218, 7000. See chapter 5.  
 60 *Te-hua pei*, 324.  
 61 MSCC, 3, 66.  
 62 MSCC, 9, 221; HTS, 222a, 6268.  
 63 See Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 399–402.  
 64 See Robert des Rotours, 'Les grands fonctionnaires des provinces en Chine sous la dynastie des T'ang,' 239.  
 65 MSCC, 9, 223–4; *Te-hua pei*, 327–9.  
 66 MSCC, 5, 114–25; HTS, 222a, 6267–8. A very full and lucid analysis of all aspects of Nan-chao bureaucratic organization can be found in Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 389–436 and 493–508.  
 67 See Hsiang, 'Nan-chao shih lüeh-lun,' 179. The wearing of tiger skins, as well as many other aspects of Nan-chao dress and weapons is strikingly depicted in the two major surviving examples of Nan-chao art: the *Long Roll of Buddhist Images* in the Palace Museum in Taipei; and the *Nan-chao t'u-chuan* in the Fujii Yürinkan in Kyoto. See Chapin and Soper, *A Long Roll of Buddhist Images*, and Li Lin-ts'an, *Nan-chao*.  
 68 MSCC, 9, 226.  
 69 HTS, 222a, 6268. See also Wilfrid Stott, 'The Expansion of the Nan-chao Kingdom,' 215–19.  
 70 HTS, 222a, 6268; MSCC, 9, 226.  
 71 See poems in Chinese collected in *Chien-ch'ieh lu*, 6, 86. See also Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 546–7.  
 72 See Édouard Chavannes, 'Une inscription du royaume de Nan-tchao,' 435–40.  
 73 HTS, 222a, 6271.  
 74 R.A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, 64.  
 75 See Matsui Shūichi, 'Tōdai zenhanki no Shisen,' 21–5.  
 76 Satō, *Kodai Chibetto*, 760.  
 77 TCTC, 234, 7552. See p. 96.  
 78 HTS, 216b, 6092.  
 79 TFYK, 973, 11435.  
 80 Wang Chung, *T'u-fan chien-cheng*, 95–6.  
 81 Satō, *Kodai Chibetto*, 602.  
 82 Bacot *et al.*, *Documents*, 154–5.  
 83 Satō, *Kodai Chibetto*, 601–4.  
 84 TCTC, 225, 7229, 7237, 7243.  
 85 CTS, 117, 3397.  
 86 Compare Hsiang Ta's analysis in MSCC, 7, 185–6.  
 87 CTS, 108, 3283–4.  
 88 CTS, 117, 3399–400.  
 89 HTS, 144, 4705–6.  
 90 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 250.  
 91 HTS, 144, 4706; TCTC, 226, 7270.  
 92 TCTC, 226, 7270; HTS, 222a, 6272; CTS, 196b, 5245.

- 93 CTS, 117, 3400–1.
- 94 TCTC, 226, 7270.
- 95 TCTC, 226, 7270. See also CTS, 117, 3401.
- 96 TCTC, 226, 7271.
- 97 See Joseph Kolmas, 'Four Letters of Po Chü-i to the Tibetan Authorities,' 383–5.
- 98 CTS, 196b, 5247.
- 99 See Denis Twitchett, 'Lu Chih (754–805): Imperial Adviser and Court Official,' 93–102.
- 100 Apparently the Chinese also felt that the Tibetans had not lived up to the terms of the agreement. See CTS, 196b, 5246–9.
- 101 TCTC, 226, 7271. Ko-lo-feng's son, Feng-ch'ieh-i, had already died. See HTS, 222a, 6271.
- 102 I follow Hu San-hsing's annotations for the pronunciation of these characters. See TCTC, 234, 7552. Compare MSCC, 1, 1. See also Stott, 'Expansion of the Nan-chao Kingdom,' 196.
- 103 HTS, 222a, 6272.
- 104 TCTC, 226, 7272.
- 105 Wang Chung, *T'u-fan chien-cheng*, 97.
- 106 CTS, 197, 5281.
- 107 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 542.
- 108 MSCC, 3, 74.
- 109 CTS, 197, 5281.
- 110 TCTC, 232, 7480.
- 111 Chavannes, 'Une inscription,' 390.
- 112 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 271.
- 113 See Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 344–5 and 542–3.
- 114 Twitchett, 'Lu Chih,' 91–3.
- 115 TCTC, 232, 7495.
- 116 TCTC, 233, 7505.
- 117 CTS, 198, 5308 and 5309.
- 118 CTS, 198, 5316.
- 119 THY, 100, 1790; CTS, 129, 3602; CTS, 198, 5316–17.
- 120 See Colin Mackerras, *The Uighur Empire According to the T'ang Dynastic Histories*, 24.
- 121 See TCTC, 233, 7501–4.
- 122 TCTC, 233, 7501–5. See also K'uang P'ing-chang, 'T'ang-tai kung-chu,' 52–3.
- 123 CTS, 140, 3821–2.
- 124 CTS, 140, 3821–6; HTS, 158, 4933–8.
- 125 CTS, 197, 5281.
- 126 See HTS, 222c, 6317, and TCTC, 232, 7485.
- 127 The 'eight kingdoms of unsubmissive Ch'iang' (*pa-kuo sheng-Ch'iang*), sometimes referred to as the 'eight kingdoms of Hsi-shan' (*Hsi-shan pa-kuo*), are identified as the Pai-kou, the Ko-lin, the Pu-tsu, the Nan-shui, the Jo-shui, the Hsi-tung, the Ch'ing-yuan, and the To-pa. See TCTC, 232, 7480; compare HTS, 158, 4935, and CTS, 140, 3823. These Ch'iang tribes seem to have occupied the region north of Sui-chou along Szechwan's western periphery, an area sometimes called Hsi-shan.
- 128 CTS, 140, 3823. Compare HTS, 158, 4934.
- 129 TCTC, 232, 7480.
- 130 TCTC, 232, 7480.
- 131 TCTC, 232, 7485.
- 132 TCTC, 232, 7489.
- 133 TCTC, 233, 7513.
- 134 HTS, 222a, 6272.

- 135 TCTC, 233, 7515–16.  
 136 TCTC, 233, 7516.  
 137 CTS, 140, 3823; TFYK, 987, 11589.  
 138 TFYK, 987, 11588–90.  
 139 HTS, 158, 4934.  
 140 TCTC, 233, 7516.  
 141 MSCC, 1, 35; MSCC, 4, 106–7; TCTC, 233, 7525; 234, 7526.  
 142 TCTC, 233, 7517.  
 143 TCTC, 233, 7520; 7524.  
 144 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 313.  
 145 CTS, 197, 5282.  
 146 TCTC, 233, 7524–5.  
 147 TCTC, 234, 7537.  
 148 TCTC, 234, 7537.  
 149 TCTC, 234, 7534.  
 150 TCTC, 234, 7547–8.  
 151 CTS, 140, 3823.  
 152 TCTC, 234, 7547; MSCC, 3, 76; 10, 266.  
 153 CTS, 197, 5282; TCTC, 234, 7547.  
 154 Recall the line from Po Chü-i's poem, translated in the Prologue: 'The Szechwan commander garners merit, quickly sending in a congratulatory report.' See CTSh, 426, 4697, and TCTC, 234, 7547.  
 155 Po Chü-i, 'Man-tzu ch'ao,' CTSh, 426, 4697. See the Prologue.  
 156 TCTC, 234, 7547.  
 157 TCTC, 234, 7549.  
 158 See *T'ang kuo-shih pu*, 2, 38.  
 159 TCTC, 234, 7552.  
 160 CTS, 197, 5282.  
 161 TCTC, 234, 7552.  
 162 MSCC, 10, 261–5. The Five Sacred Peaks were Mt Wu-meng in the east, Mt Meng-lo in the south, Mt Kao-li-kung in the west, Mt Yü-lung in the north, and Mt Tients'ang in the center. The Four Sacred Streams were the Mekong (Lan-ts'ang chiang), the Yangtze (Chin-sha chiang), the Yang-p'i (Hei-hui chiang), and the Salween (Nu chiang). See Hsiang Ta's analysis in MSCC, 2, 39–41.  
 163 CTW, 999, 13081–2; TCTC, 234, 7552.  
 164 See CTS, 196b, 5257; TCTC, 233, 7520–1; and TCTC, 234, 7552–3.  
 165 HTS, 222a, 6274; TCTC, 234, 7552–3.  
 166 TCTC, 235, 7561.  
 167 THY, 99, 1764; *T'ang-wen shih-i*, 24, 9a. On the return journey, Ts'ou-lo-tung died, and the T'ang court subsequently granted him posthumous honors. See CTS, 197, 5283.  
 168 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 292.  
 169 CTS, 185b, 4830–1; HTS, 151, 4824.  
 170 Yuan Tzu left us a stone marker commemorating the construction of this route. See MSCC, appendix 2, 330. Also see Huang Chung-ch'in, 'T'ang chen-yuan shih-nien ts'e-feng Nan-chao k'ai-lu k'an-shih,' 11–14.  
 171 HTS, 58, 1508. See Hsiang Ta, 'T'ang-tai chi-tsai Nan-chao chu-shu k'ao-lüeh,' 140–3.  
 172 HTS, 222a, 6274.  
 173 See Wei Kao's memorial 'Ch'ing tz'u Nan-chao chin-yin tsou' in *T'ang-wen shih-i*, 24, 9.  
 174 MSCC, 10, 251–2.  
 175 TCTC, 235, 7561.

- 176 MSCC, 10, 249–52; TCTC, 235, 7561.  
 177 TFYK, 972, 11416–17; MSCC, 10, 252.  
 178 HTS, 222a, 6277.  
 179 CTS, 196b, 5258; TCTC, 235, 7576.  
 180 HTS, 216b, 6099; TCTC, 235, 7593.  
 181 CTS, 196b, 5260.  
 182 THY, 100, 1794.  
 183 HTS, 222c, 6306–14. See also Po Chü-i's poem, 'P'iao-kuo yueh,' in CTSh, 426, 4698. Extensive translations of some of this material are found in an article by Denis Twitchett and A.C. Christie, entitled 'A Medieval Burmese Orchestra,' 176–95.  
 184 TCTC, 236, 7599; CTS, 140, 3824.  
 185 See Satō, *Kodai Chibetto*, 667.  
 186 HTS, 222c, 6278–9.  
 187 See R.A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, 67–8.  
 188 CTS, 196b, 5261.  
 189 TCTC, 236, 7620; HTS, 158, 4936–7.  
 190 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 312 and 322–3; also see Fujisawa, *Tōdai Unnan ensei*, 206.  
 191 TCTC, 235, 7570; HTS, 222a, 6275–6.  
 192 MSCC, 4, 92–6.  
 193 See Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 316–19 and 453–67.  
 194 See Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 317–18.  
 195 MSCC, 3, 61–6.  
 196 See Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 284–5.  
 197 See Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 232.

### Notes to chapter 5

- 1 Yung T'ao, 'Ta Shu-chung ching Man hou yu-jen Ma Ai chien-chi,' CTSh, 518, 5917 (quoted in MSCC, appendix 2, 312).
- 2 TCTC, 252, 8156.
- 3 HTS, 222a, 6276; CTS, 196a, 5222.
- 4 Note that during the T'ang period the Khitan and the Hsi also seem to have dealt more or less indirectly with Ch'ang-an through the regional commander at Yu-chou (modern Peking). Very large tribute missions from these northeastern frontier peoples normally stopped at Yu-chou, from where only a few representatives were sent on to the capital. See HTS, 219, 6172. (I am grateful to Denis Twitchett for pointing out this roughly similar case.) However, there seems to have been no parallel schooling system set up for the Khitan and the Hsi in Yu-chou. The only other such educational program established for nearby peoples in a frontier province of which I am aware was that set up for the regular embassies from Liu-ch'iu (the Ryukyu Islands) by the Ch'ing governors in Foochow during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. (In each embassy, however, four of the Liu-ch'iu students were also sent on to study at the Imperial Academy in Peking.) See Ch'en Ta-tuan, 'Investiture of Liu-ch'iu Kings in the Ch'ing Period,' 159–60.
- 5 TCTC, 249, 8078.
- 6 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 543.
- 7 MSCC, 6, 135–6.
- 8 HTS, 222a, 6267; *Chi ku-Tien shuo*, 365.
- 9 See Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 488–91.
- 10 THY, 99, 1765.

- 11 HTS, 222b, 6281. See G.E. Harvey, *History of Burma*, 15.
- 12 See G.H. Luce, 'The Ancient Pyu,' 239–53, and T'ao Yun-k'uei, 'Shih-i shih-chi ch'ien chih Mien-tien yü P'iao-kuo k'ao,' 35–47.
- 13 MSCC, 10, 233.
- 14 See Twitchett and Christie, 'Burmese Orchestra,' 176–95.
- 15 HTS, 222c, 6308.
- 16 HTS, 222b, 6281.
- 17 TCTC, 239, 7721.
- 18 See Hu NCYS, 47–8.
- 19 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 324.
- 20 See Juan NCYS, 541.
- 21 HTS, 222b, 6281.
- 22 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 325.
- 23 HTS, 222b, 6281; TCTC, 243, 7827.
- 24 See, for example, TCTC, 238, 7686, and 241, 7774; TFYK, 995, 11687–8, and 994, 11669; CTS, 131, 3641.
- 25 Hu NCYS, 47–8; *Tien lüeh*, 7, 12a.
- 26 CTS, 167, 4368–9. Compare HTS, 89, 3763–4.
- 27 See THY, 99, 1765; TCTC, 241, 7772–4, 7779, and 7784–6.
- 28 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 325.
- 29 HTS, 22, 479–80.
- 30 TFYK, 976, 11463–7.
- 31 See Edwin O. Reischauer (translator), *Ennin's Diary*, 90.
- 32 See TFYK, 976, *passim*.
- 33 For example, see TFYK, 999, 11725–8.
- 34 See TFYK, *chüan* 978 and 979. See also K'uang P'ing-chang, 'T'ang-tai kung-chu,' 23–68.
- 35 TCTC, 249, 8078.
- 36 See Michael Dalby, 'Court Politics in Late T'ang Times,' in *The Cambridge History of China*, III, 561–681.
- 37 HTS, 96, 3862.
- 38 HTS, 96, 3862.
- 39 CTS, 16, 490.
- 40 See Matsui Shūichi, 'Tōdai kōhanki no Shisen,' 55–7.
- 41 HTS, 215a, 6027.
- 42 TCTC, 244, 7867.
- 43 THY, 99, 1765.
- 44 See Lu Ch'iu, 'Ch'eng-tu chi-hsü,' in CTW, 744, 14.
- 45 TCTC, 215, 6850. Matsui Shūichi thinks that the number of militia should be included within the figure for garrison soldiers. See his 'Tōdai zenhanki no Shisen,' 289–90.
- 46 See Charles A. Peterson, 'Corruption Unmasked: Yüan Chen's Investigations in Szechwan,' 48.
- 47 CTS, 190b, 5023.
- 48 See HTS, 158, 4938. This short-lived revolt is recounted in Peterson, 'Corruption Unmasked,' 41–3.
- 49 See *Pei-meng suo-yen*, 5, 41.
- 50 *Sun K'o-chih wen-chi*, 1, 9a.
- 51 *Sun K'o-chih wen-chi*, 1, 9a–9b.
- 52 TCTC, 244, 7867.
- 53 HTS, 96, 3862.
- 54 *Sun K'o-chih wen-chi*, 1, 9a.
- 55 See Owen Lattimore's classic study, *Inner Asian Frontiers of China*, *passim*.

- 56 See Hu NCYS, 50.
- 57 Yen, 'Ch'eng-tu Nan-chao tao,' 323–66.
- 58 CTS, 17a, 533.
- 59 *Ch'iu-yang tsa-ts'u*, 8, 3b–4a; TCTC, 244, 7867.
- 60 CTS, 17a, 533.
- 61 HTS, 96, 3862.
- 62 CTS, 17a, 533.
- 63 TCTC, 244, 7867; CTS, 17a, 533.
- 64 HTS, 96, 3862–3.
- 65 CTS, 120, 3471–2.
- 66 CTS, 17a, 533. The six specified localities from which relief forces were sent to Szechwan were Tung-ch'uan, Hsing-yuan, Ching-nan, O-yueh, Hsiang-teng, and Ch'en-hsü. See TCTC, 244, 7867–8.
- 67 This frustrating expedition, incidentally, provoked a mutiny among the troops called up from Hsing-yuan. Chief of its casualties was the noted T'ang official Li Chiang, then serving as governor of the western portion of Shan-nan province, who was killed, along with his family and retainers. See TCTC, 244, 7869, and CTS, 164, 4291.
- 68 HTS, 137, 4612.
- 69 TCTC, 244, 7868.
- 70 CTS, 120, 3472; TCTC, 244, 7868.
- 71 HTS, 222b, 7282.
- 72 HTS, 96, 3862; TCTC, 244, 7868; MSCC, 7, 178–81.
- 73 CTS, 17a, 533.
- 74 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 328.
- 75 CTS, 120, 3472.
- 76 TCTC, 244, 7868.
- 77 HTS, 35, 914.
- 78 *Pei-meng suo-yen*, 5, 41–2.
- 79 See Liu Yü-hsi, 'Ch'eng-tu-fu hsin-hsiu Fu-ch'eng-ssu chi,' in *Liu Meng-te wen-chi*, 30, 10b–11b (quoted in Liu Ming-shu, 'Nan-chao lai-hsi yü Ch'eng-tu Ta-ch'in Ching-chiao chih ts'ui-ts'an,' 33).
- 80 TCTC, 244, 7868.
- 81 TFK, 972, 11418.
- 82 HTS, 34, 875.
- 83 HTS, 34, 883.
- 84 HTS, 36, 952.
- 85 See CTSh, *chüan* 518, and *T'ang-shih chi-shih*, *chüan* 56.
- 86 *T'ang ts'ai-tzu chuan*, 7, 385–8.
- 87 See MSCC, 7, 177–8.
- 88 Yung T'ao, 'Ta Shu-chung ching Man hou yu-jen Ma Ai chien-chi' (quoted in MSCC, appendix 2, 312).
- 89 See Ronald Miao, 'T'ang Frontier Poetry, An Exercise in Archetypal Criticism,' 114–40.
- 90 The Min River, which flows near Ch'eng-tu.
- 91 Yueh-sui is another name for Sui-chou.
- 92 'Dew' (*lu*) is written 'road' (*lu*) in most editions, but 'dew' seems to fit better with the imagery of this poem. The phrase '*hsien-ho hsi*' seems to be an allusion to the quicksands of the Western regions. See the Sung scholar Ch'eng Ta-ch'ang's *Yen-fan lu*, quoted in *Chung-wen ta tz'u-tien*, 15495.
- 93 MSCC, appendix 2, 311.
- 94 HTS, 222b, 6282.
- 95 TCTC, 244, 7868.

- 96 HTS, 222b, 6282.  
 97 TCTC, 233, 7501; CTS, 196b, 5255.  
 98 Lu Ch'iu, 'Ch'eng-tu chi-hsü,' in CTW, 744, 14.  
 99 See Feng Ao, 'Yü Nan-chao ch'ing-p'ing kuan shu,' in *Wen-yuan ying-hua*, 470, 12–13 (quoted in MSCC, appendix 2, 312).  
 100 HTS, 191, 5509.  
 101 *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi*, 166, 1216.  
 102 *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi*, 166, 1216.  
 103 *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi*, 166, 1216.  
 104 *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi*, 166, 1216 (quoted in Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 122–3).  
 105 *Sun K'o-chih wen-chi*, 1, 9a.  
 106 *Sun K'o-chih wen-chi*, 1, 9a.  
 107 Matsui, 'Tōdai kōhanki no Shisen,' 56–9.  
 108 TFYK, 484, 5790; CTS, 17b, 537.  
 109 Yung T'ao, 'Shu-chung chan-hou kan-shih,' CTSh, 518, 5917.  
 110 See Yen, 'Ch'eng-tu Nan-chao tao,' 340–50.  
 111 TCTC, 244, 7879.  
 112 See Yen, 'Ch'eng-tu Nan-chao tao,' 348–50.  
 113 CTS, 197, 5284; TCTC, 244, 7868.  
 114 TCTC, 244, 7868.  
 115 See Lu Ch'iu, 'Ch'eng-tu chi-hsü,' in CTW, 744, 13.  
 116 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 544; Chü Ch'ing-yuan, 'T'ang-Sung shih-tai Ssu-ch'uan ti ts'an-shih,' 28–34; Yen Keng-wang, 'T'ang-tai fang-chih kung-yeh chih ti-li fen-pu,' 645–56.  
 117 Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 104–32.  
 118 MSCC, 7, 200–2.  
 119 MSCC, 7, 184–90 and 199–200. See also Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 521–4, and compare Yü, *Trade and Expansion in Han China*, 116–17, on earlier evidence of the importation of amber from the southwest into China.  
 120 MSCC, 7, 173–4.  
 121 HTS, 222a, 6269.  
 122 See *Ling-wai tai-ta*, 6, 58–61.  
 123 See *Hou Han-shu*, 544, 549 and 553; also *Hua-yang kuo-chih*, 4, 47–64. See also Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 511–17.  
 124 MSCC, 7, 171–3.  
 125 MSCC, 7, 173.  
 126 HTS, 222a, 6268.  
 127 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 517.  
 128 HTS, 222a, 6270.  
 129 MSCC, 7, 173.  
 130 MSCC, 7, 199.  
 131 Ma, *Nan-chao chih-tu*, 126–31.  
 132 See Dalby, 'Court Politics,' 639–54.  
 133 HTS, 96, 3862–3.  
 134 HTS, 96, 3862–3.  
 135 MSCC, 7, 178–83.  
 136 *Li Wei-kung Hui-ch'ang i-p'in chi*, 12, 94–5.  
 137 MSCC, 7, 178–83. See also Liu Ming-shu, 'Nan-chao lai-hsi,' 29–34.  
 138 See HTS, 222b, 6282; CTS, 163, 4264; TCTC, 244, 7868.  
 139 As does Ssu-ma Kuang in TCTC, 244, 7877, *K'ao-i*, and Hsiang Ta in MSCC, 7, 179–80.  
 140 MSCC, 7, 174.  
 141 HTS, 222b, 6282; TCTC, 244, 7868.



- 142 CTS, 120, 3472.
- 143 CTS, 174, 4518.
- 144 See Li Yueh-ju, 'Li Wei-kung,' 7–21. Also see T'ang Ch'eng-yeh's study, *Li Te-yü yen-chiu*.
- 145 See p. 117.
- 146 TCTC, 244, 7872.
- 147 See Édouard Chavannes, 'Les deux plus anciens spécimens de la cartographie chinoise,' 245.
- 148 TCTC, 244, 7872.
- 149 HTS, 180, 5331.
- 150 See Hsiang, 'T'ang-tai chi-tsai Nan-chao,' 149. The prefatory memorial is located in *Li Wei-kung Hui-ch'ang i-p'in chi*, 17, 153.
- 151 HTS, 58, 1508; 59, 1551. See Hsiang, 'T'ang-tai chi-tsai Nan-chao,' 140–8.
- 152 HTS, 180, 5332.
- 153 See *Li-tai ming-ch'en tsou-i*, 321, 22a–22b.
- 154 HTS, 180, 5332.
- 155 Probably this was done to avoid the expense of prolonged subsidies from the central government for these troops, who under normal conditions back in their home areas were supported solely from provincial funds. See TCTC, 228, 7346, and Charles A. Peterson, 'Regional Defense against the Central Power: The Huai-hsi Campaign, 815–817,' 138.
- 156 TCTC, 244, 7372–3.
- 157 TCTC, 244, 7873.
- 158 HTS, 180, 5331–2; TCTC, 244, 7872–3.
- 159 HTS, 180, 5332.
- 160 CTS, 174, 4519; HTS, 180, 5332.
- 161 See Matsui, 'Tōdai zenhanki no Shisen,' 15.
- 162 HTS, 180, 5332.
- 163 Li Te-yü also tried to reform certain local customs in Szechwan and enacted some measures aimed against wealthy Buddhist manors, perhaps a presage of his subsequent role in the general measures taken against Buddhist monastic wealth and influence in the 840's. See Li's biography in *chüan* 180 of the *New T'ang History (Hsin T'ang-shu)*.
- 164 Matsui, 'Tōdai kōhanki no Shisen,' 61.
- 165 CTS, 174, 4519.
- 166 CTS, 174, 4519 and 4523–5. Li Te-yü's promotion to chief minister status was partially influenced by his role in a complicated factional struggle concerning the surrender of the strategic Tibetan-controlled fortress of Wei-chou, northwest of Ch'eng-tu, and the defection of its Tibetan commander, Hsi-ta-mou, in 831. This very interesting incident is not really relevant to the topic here under consideration, but I do plan a separate and detailed monograph on it.
- 167 Here again differing figures are given. Li Te-yü writes at one point that 3,300 captives were returned, but elsewhere he says 5,364. See Hsiang Ta's discussion in MSCC, 7, 179–80. Ssu-ma Kuang's judgment (based on the *shih-lu*) that around four thousand were repatriated is probably the most reliable. See TCTC, 244, 7877, *k'ao-i*.
- 168 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 332–3.
- 169 CTS, 17b, 543. See also T'ang, *Li Te-yü yen-chiu*, 367–8. It is possible, of course, that this isolated attack of 831 was carried out by Nan-chao commanders on the frontier, acting independently.
- 170 In another celebrated case, the Oirat Mongols sent several trade and tribute missions which were duly received at the Ming court in Peking after the T'u-mu incident of 1449, even while the Mongols still held captive the Cheng-t'ung

- emperor himself. See Henry Serruys, 'Mongol Tribute Missions of the Ming Period,' 3.
- 171 HTS, 182, 5358.
- 172 HTS, 177, 5278.
- 173 HTS, 119, 4306.
- 174 See Juan NCYS, 544–5, and *Chi ku-Tien shuo*, 366.
- 175 See *Yun-nan t'ung-chih*, 12, 6a–7b, and 13, 4a–4b.
- 176 See Walter Liebenthal, 'Sanskrit Inscriptions from Yunnan,' 6–10.
- 177 See Hsü Chia-jui's description of Nan-chao religion in his two articles 'Nan-chao ch'u-ch'i tsung-chiao k'ao' and 'Nan-chao hou-ch'i tsung-chiao k'ao.'
- 178 See Yuan Chia-ku, 'Tien-nan shih-chiao lun,' 23a–25b. Also remember that the Nan-chao and Pyu musical troupes sent to the T'ang court in 802 were said to have performed songs with Buddhist lyrics. See HTS, 222c, 6306–14.
- 179 Hsü Chia-jui, *Ta-li ku-tai wen-hua shih*, 348.
- 180 See *Chi ku-Tien shuo*, 362, and *Yun-nan chih-lüeh*, 388.
- 181 See Hu NCYS, 35, and *Tien shih chi*, 1, 10a.
- 182 See Hsiang, 'Nan-chao shih lüeh-lun,' 171–2.
- 183 See Li Lin-ts'an, *Nan-chao tzu-liao*; Helen B. Chapin, 'Yunnanese Images of Avalokitesvara;' M.T. de Mallmann, 'Notes sur les bronzes de Yunnan représentant Avalokitesvara;' and Chapin and Soper, *A Long Roll of Buddhist Images*.
- 184 See Fujisawa Yoshimi, 'Nanshō koku no Bukkyo ni tsuite,' 131–54.
- 185 See G.H. Luce and Pe Maung Tin, 'Burma down to the Fall of Pagan,' 272.
- 186 MSCC, 10, 238. We should note in passing that one of the pre-eminent historians of Burma, Gordon Luce, regards this final stage in the conquest and destruction of the Pyu by Nan-chao as being extremely important to the subsequent formation of the earliest Burmese kingdom, that of Pagan, founded in the middle of the ninth century. (See the Foreword to G.H. Luce, *Old Burma – Early Pagan*.) Luce notes that 'proto-Burmans' (a term that he applies to the Mang, Wang-chü, and P'u peoples) were present in this era as subordinate tribes under Nan-chao control in the southwestern corner of Yunnan. He thinks that their chance came in 832, when the Pyu were destroyed and a vacuum was created in the plains of Burma. 'This . . . was the supreme moment in the history of the Burmans, when they descended *en masse* upon the plains of Kyaukse.' (See G.H. Luce, 'Old Kyaukse and the Coming of the Burmans,' 76–80.) However, it should be pointed out that, if it was these peoples who shortly thereafter founded Pagan, it is nonetheless certain that through the middle decades of the ninth century at least a portion of them remained subordinate to Nan-chao, for we know that some of their notoriously fierce soldiers participated in the coming Nan-chao campaigns against Annam in the 850's. See MSCC, 4, 101–3.
- 187 HTS, 222c, 6307. Mi-ch'en, however, had sent an independent mission to the T'ang court in 805.
- 188 MSCC, 10, 231–2.
- 189 See Kachorn Sukhabanij, 'Two Thai MSS on the K'unlun Kingdom,' 72–3, and Luce, 'The Early *Syām* in Burma's History,' 142–5.
- 190 MSCC, 10, 245.
- 191 See, for example, Hu NCYS, 54–8.
- 192 Noted in *Tien k'ao*, 805.
- 193 See H.C. Ray, ed., *History of Ceylon*, 473–5.
- 194 Hu NCYS, 53; *Tien lüeh*, 7, 13a.
- 195 TCTC, 248, 8026. See also HTS, 8, 246.
- 196 See Wang Shou-nan, *T'ang-tai fan-chen*, 923.
- 197 HTS, 222c, 6329–31. See also Henri Maspero, 'Le protectorat général d'Annam sous les T'ang,' 539–84.

## Notes to chapter 6

- 1 TCTC, 248, 8026; HTS, 8, 246.
- 2 The best descriptions of some of the peoples of this peripheral area in T'ang times can be found in MSCC, 4, 107–13, and HTS, 222c, 6325–33. For an account of these peoples in Sung times, see *Ling-wai tai-ta*, 1, 12–13; 2, 15–20; and 3, 29–37. See also Schafer, *The Vermilion Bird*, 48–61.
- 3 These are described in the geographical treatise sections of CTS, 41, 1725–56, and HTS, 43b, 1144–55.
- 4 Some of these insurrections are conveniently chronicled by Schafer in *The Vermilion Bird*, 61–9.
- 5 See Wang Gungwu, 'The Nanhai Trade,' 71–89, and Schafer, *The Vermilion Bird*, 28–31 and 76–8.
- 6 See, for example, HTS, 170, 5175; CTS, 131, 3641; TCTC, 241, 7787; 243, 7827; and 243, 7859.
- 7 TCTC, 249, 8071, *k'ao-i*. See also Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 336–7.
- 8 MSCC, 4, 107.
- 9 TCTC, 249, 8070.
- 10 TCTC, 249, 8070.
- 11 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 336.
- 12 MSCC, 4, 108.
- 13 See, for example, TCTC, 250, 8094–5, *k'ao-i*.
- 14 TCTC, 249, 8063.
- 15 TCTC, 249, 8066.
- 16 See Robert M. Somers, 'The End of the T'ang,' in *The Cambridge History of China*, III, 690–1.
- 17 HTS, 167, 5120.
- 18 TCTC, 249, 8072.
- 19 TCTC, 249, 8072.
- 20 TCTC, 249, 8072.
- 21 TCTC, 250, 8081. See Somers, 'The End of the T'ang,' 688–92.
- 22 TCTC, 249, 8078.
- 23 HTS, 222b, 6282.
- 24 TCTC, 249, 8078.
- 25 TCTC, 249, 8078.
- 26 See HTS, 222b, 6282, for example.
- 27 TCTC, 249, 8078.
- 28 HTS, 222b, 6282.
- 29 HTS, 222b, 6282.
- 30 TCTC, 250, 8091–2.
- 31 TCTC, 250, 8092 and 8094–5.
- 32 TCTC, 250, 8094.
- 33 TCTC, 250, 8094. See Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 341.
- 34 TCTC, 250, 8095.
- 35 TCTC, 250, 8095. Here, the abbreviated account in HTS, 222b, 6282 seems misleading.
- 36 TCTC, 250, 8095.
- 37 TCTC, 250, 8096; MSCC, 4, 87.
- 38 HTS, 222b, 6283.
- 39 TCTC, 250, 8098.
- 40 CTS, 19a, 652.
- 41 See *T'ang ta chao-ling chi*, 99, 501.
- 42 HTS, 222b, 6283.

- 43 MSCC, 4, 87–8.
- 44 TCTC, 250, 8100.
- 45 TCTC, 250, 8101.
- 46 HTS, 222b, 6283.
- 47 MSCC, 4, 87.
- 48 MSCC, 4, 87–8.
- 49 See MSCC, 4, 92–108, and 10, 238.
- 50 See Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 344.
- 51 HTS, 222b, 6283; TCTC, 250, 8101.
- 52 MSCC, 3, 81.
- 53 HTS, 222b, 6283.
- 54 See Hsiang, 'T'ang-tai chi-tsai Nan-chao,' 150–4.
- 55 MSCC, 'Preface,' 1–15.
- 56 MSCC, 10, 248.
- 57 TCTC, 250, 8102–3.
- 58 See Wang Gungwu, *The Nan-hai Trade*, 83–4.
- 59 TCTC, 250, 8103.
- 60 HTS, 148, 4773–4.
- 61 TCTC, 250, 8104.
- 62 TCTC, 250, 8104–5.
- 63 CTS, 19a, 652.
- 64 TCTC, 250, 8105–6.
- 65 HTS, 9, 258; CTS, 19a, 654; *T'ang ta chao-ling chi*, 107, 557.
- 66 HTS, 222b, 6284. See also Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 346.
- 67 HTS, 148, 4774.
- 68 TCTC, 250, 8108–9.
- 69 See Charles A. Peterson, 'The Restoration Completed: Emperor Hsien-tsung and the Provinces,' 157–60.
- 70 HTS, 170, 5161; 224b, 6391.
- 71 See Schafer, *The Vermilion Bird*, 105 and 241.
- 72 See Miyakawa Hisayuki, 'Legate Kao P'ien and a Taoist Magician Lü Yung-chih in the Time of Huang Ch'ao's Rebellion,' 75–9.
- 73 See CTS, 182, 4703.
- 74 TCTC, 250, 8110.
- 75 TCTC, 250, 8112.
- 76 TCTC, 250, 8112.
- 77 TCTC, 250, 8112–15.
- 78 HTS, 224b, 6392.
- 79 TCTC, 250, 8115.
- 80 TCTC, 250, 8115–16.
- 81 HTS, 224b, 6392.
- 82 This seems like far too short a time for Kao's messengers to have reached Ch'ang-an from Annam or even from the coast of Kwangsi, but the sources are explicit. In general, remarkably fast passages of envoys, reports, and commands to and from the T'ang court are characteristic of the accounts of this campaign.
- 83 TCTC, 250, 8116.
- 84 TCTC, 250, 8116.
- 85 TCTC, 250, 8116.
- 86 TCTC, 250, 8117.
- 87 See *Ch'in-ting Yüeh-shih t'ung-chien kang-mu*, 5, 396–8. A detailed description of Kao's wall, including precise dimensions, is given in *Yüeh-shih lüeh*, 1, 13–14.
- 88 HTS, 224b, 6392; TCTC, 250, 8118.
- 89 HTS, 224b, 6392; TCTC, 251, 8121.

- 90 CTS, 19a, 656.
- 91 TCTC, 250, 8116.
- 92 See Somers, 'The End of the T'ang,' 684–92.
- 93 See CTS, 19a, 656. Also see Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 348.
- 94 See Robert des Rotours, 'La révolte de P'ang Hsün,' 229–40.
- 95 See Somers, 'The End of the T'ang,' 695–700.
- 96 TCTC, 250, 8109.
- 97 TCTC, 251, 8120–1.
- 98 TCTC, 251, 8131.
- 99 See Somers, 'The End of the T'ang,' 700.
- 100 HTS, 222b, 6295.
- 101 Somers, 'The End of the T'ang,' 696–7.
- 102 Compare Ch'en Yin-k'o's conclusions in 'T'ang-tai cheng-chih shih shu-lun kao,' 209.
- 103 TCTC, 250, 8095.
- 104 TCTC, 250, 8107.
- 105 TCTC, 250, 8108.
- 106 TCTC, 250, 8109.
- 107 TCTC, 250, 8111.
- 108 TCTC, 250, 8113–14.
- 109 HTS, 222b, 6284–5.
- 110 TCTC, 250, 8114.
- 111 TCTC, 251, 8120.
- 112 Moreover, Li Shih-wang evidently proved himself to be extremely acquisitive in his new post and very susceptible to bribes. Most importantly, the new regional commander in Ch'eng-tu, Lu Tan, had now been stripped of the authority and the power to control frontier defense in the southwest. See HTS, 222b, 6285; TCTC, 251, 8121–2; and Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 356.
- 113 HTS, 222b, 6284.
- 114 TCTC, 251, 8150.
- 115 TCTC, 251, 8150.
- 116 TCTC, 251, 8150. See also HTS, 222b, 6285.
- 117 See Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 356–7.
- 118 TCTC, 251, 8151.
- 119 HTS, 222b, 6285.
- 120 TCTC, 251, 8152.
- 121 See Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 358–9.
- 122 TCTC, 251, 8152.
- 123 See TCTC, 252, 8153.
- 124 HTS, 222b, 6286.
- 125 TCTC, 252, 8153–4. Miyakawa calls them the 'Charging Warriors.' See Miyakawa, 'Legate Kao P'ien,' 79.
- 126 See Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 359–60.
- 127 HTS, 222b, 6286.
- 128 TCTC, 252, 8155; HTS, 222b, 6286.
- 129 TCTC, 252, 8155.
- 130 HTS, 222b, 6287.
- 131 See Herbert Franke, 'Siege and Defense of Towns in Medieval China,' 151–2.
- 132 HTS, 222b, 6287.
- 133 TCTC, 252, 8155.
- 134 See Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 362.
- 135 TCTC, 252, 8157.
- 136 HTS, 222b, 6288.

- 137 See Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 363.
- 138 Wang Chi-lin, *T'ang-tai Nan-chao*, 364.
- 139 TCTC, 252, 8171–2.
- 140 HTS, 222b, 6289.
- 141 TCTC, 252, 8172.
- 142 TCTC, 252, 8172–3.
- 143 See CTW, 827, 10981–2.
- 144 HTS, 224b, 6392.
- 145 See Somers, 'The End of the T'ang,' 742.
- 146 TCTC, 252, 8175.
- 147 HTS, 224b, 6392.
- 148 The translation is Schafer's, from *The Vermilion Bird*, 58.
- 149 TCTC, 252, 8175.
- 150 HTS, 222b, 6290; TCTC, 252, 8176.
- 151 TCTC, 252, 8176–7.
- 152 TCTC, 252, 8176.
- 153 HTS, 224b, 6393–4; TCTC, 252, 8185.
- 154 The soil of this area was not conducive for the construction of tamped-earth walls, so bricks were used instead. See TCTC, 252, 8185.
- 155 TCTC, 252, 8177–80. See also Miyakawa, 'Legate Kao P'ien,' 79. On the very interesting phenomenon of the development of powerful local militia forces in Szechwan and elsewhere in late T'ang times, see Somers, 'The End of the T'ang,' 748–54.
- 156 TCTC, 252, 8185–6.
- 157 Later, Kao P'ien's relationship with the Taoist priest Lü Yung-chih was to become notorious. See Miyakawa, 'Legate,' 83–96.
- 158 TCTC, 252, 8185–6.
- 159 TCTC, 252, 8185.
- 160 HTS, 222b, 6290.
- 161 HTS, 222b, 6290.
- 162 HTS, 222b, 6290.
- 163 TCTC, 253, 8190.
- 164 HTS, 222b, 6290–1.
- 165 TCTC, 253, 8190.
- 166 TCTC, 253, 8204.
- 167 TCTC, 253, 8204.
- 168 HTS, 222b, 6291; TCTC, 253, 8204.
- 169 CTS, 178, 4638; TCTC, 253, 8226.
- 170 Note, however, that this was only one in a series of vitriolic arguments between the two. The Nan-chao controversy was not necessarily the most important reason for their dismissals. See Kuwabara Jitsuzō, *T'ang-Sung Mao-i kang yen-chiu*, 57–8.
- 171 See the Epilogue.
- 172 TCTC, 253, 8206 and 8211.
- 173 See Hsiang, 'T'ang-tai chi-tsai Nan-chao,' 149–50.
- 174 HTS, 222b, 6291.
- 175 See *Chi ku-Tien shuo*, 368.
- 176 HTS, 222b, 6291.
- 177 TCTC, 253, 8211–12.
- 178 TCTC, 253, 8224.
- 179 TCTC, 253, 8227–8.
- 180 TCTC, 253, 8228.
- 181 HTS, 83, 3674.

- 182 HTS, 222b, 6292–3.  
 183 TCTC, 255, 8273.  
 184 TCTC, 255, 8297.  
 185 HTS, 222b, 6293. According to TCTC, 255, 8300, the marriage did actually take place, but this is flatly contradicted elsewhere and must be regarded as a mistake. See K'uang, 'T'ang-tai kung-chu,' 62–4.  
 186 TCTC, 261, 8511–12.  
 187 TCTC, 261, 8512.  
 188 *Hsin Wu-tai shih*, 63a, 790; TCTC, 261, 8512.  
 189 HTS, 222b, 6293.

### Notes to Epilogue

- 1 In addition to all of the articles by Li Lin-ts'an, Chapin, and Chapin and Soper that are listed in the Bibliography, see de Mallmann, 'Notes sur les bronzes de Yunnan,' Liebenthal, 'Sanskrit Inscriptions from Yunnan,' and numerous articles in Li Chia-jui, ed., *Ta-li Pai-tsu tzu-chih chou li-shih wen-wu tiao-ch'a tzu-liao*.
- 2 Li Lin-ts'an, 'Nan-chao ti Lung-shun huang-ti,' 158.
- 3 See Li Lin-ts'an, *Nan-chao tzu-liao*, 30–40, 47–51, and 54.
- 4 Chapin and Soper, *A Long Roll of Buddhist Images*, 32.
- 5 See, for example, Hu NCYS, 1, 65. On the difficult issue of identifying and locating the 'K'un-lun kingdom,' see Hsiang Ta in MSCC, 10, 238–40, and Coedès, *Indianized States*, 9 and 91.
- 6 Chapin, 'Yunnanese Images of Avalokitesvara,' 131–86. See also de Mallmann, 'Notes sur les bronzes de Yunnan,' 567–601.
- 7 See Fujisawa's analysis of Nan-chao official titles in his major study *Seinan Chūgoku minzoku shi no kenkyū*, 392–410.
- 8 Fujisawa, *Seinan*, 327–88 and 428–34.
- 9 See Chou Yung-hsien, 'Feng-i hsien Pei-t'ang-t'ien Nan-chao Ta-li kuo i-lai ku-pen ching-chüan cheng-li chi,' 11.
- 10 *Yun-nan t'ung-chih*, 16, 14a.
- 11 Hu NCYS, 1, 67.
- 12 See, for example, Hu NCYS, 1, 67–8.
- 13 Juan NCYS, 549.
- 14 *Tien tsai-chi*, 465–6.
- 15 *Yun-nan t'ung-chih*, 16, 14a–14b.
- 16 Hu NCYS, 1, 72–6. There was, however, a brief interregnum around 1095 during which Kao Sheng-t'ai, a high official at the Ta-li court, proclaimed his own state of Ta-chung kuo. Soon after his death, his son abdicated titular authority back to the Tuan, whose subsequent rule in Yunnan is sometimes referred to as the Hou-li dynasty, *i.e.*, the Later [Ta-]li dynasty. Nonetheless, it is apparent from the sources that the Yunnanese court was still dominated by the Kao clan, which maintained hereditary chief minister status throughout the remainder of the Ta-li period. See Hu NCYS, 1, 72–99, which contains probably the fullest outline of Ta-li history.
- 17 TCTC, 269, 8785–6.
- 18 *Wu-tai shih-chi*, 63a, 1061.
- 19 TCTC, 274, 8950.
- 20 TCTC, 274, 8950. Compare *Wu-tai hui-yao*, 30, 12b–13b.
- 21 *Yun-nan t'ung-chih*, 16, 15a; Hu NCYS, 1, 78.
- 22 See MSCC, 7, 200–2. Compare *Ling-wai tai-ta*, 9, 99.
- 23 *Ling-wai tai-ta*, 5, 51–3.
- 24 *Sung-shih*, 488, 5835–6; *Sung hui-yao*, 1353, 59b–60a.

- 25 *Ling-wai tai-ta*, 5, 52–3.
- 26 *Ling-wai tai-ta*, 5, 52.
- 27 *Ling-wai tai-ta*, 5, 54; 6, 58–9. Compare MSCC, 7, 203–6.
- 28 A brief summary of the history of the Ta-li kingdom and its relationship with Sung China can be found in Ruey, 'Nan-chao shih,' 372–4.
- 29 Later Chinese attempts to control northern Vietnam, in the early fifteenth century and in the 1780's, were comparatively brief and highly problematic. See Fitzgerald, *Southern Expansion*, 19–38.
- 30 See Luce, 'Old Kyaukse,' 76–81.
- 31 See Fitzgerald, *Southern Expansion*, 64–6.
- 32 See Hsia, *Yuan-tai Yun-nan*, 125–30.



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## APPENDIX

### T'ANG-NAN-CHAO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

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- 618-620 Ts'uan Hung-ta reinstated by T'ang court as local ruler in Yunnan; T'ang mission sent to Ts'uan territory, resulting in Ts'uan capitulation and tribute missions to China
- 621 Chi Hung-wei led T'ang expedition to K'un-ming peoples, who submitted and sent tribute; Yao-chou established as seat of T'ang control in far southwest
- ca. 624 T'ang abandoned direct control by naming Ts'uan Kuei-wang governor-general of Nan-ning, succeeding Wei Jen-shou
- 648 T'ang expedition led by Liang Chien-fang against Sung-wai Man resulted in their capitulation and tribute
- 649 T'u-mo-chih Man and Chien-wang Man submitted to T'ang
- 651-652 Chao Hsiao-tsu expedition forced submission of Pai-shui Man and Po-nung peoples
- 653? Meng-she Chao ruler Hsi-nu-lo sent mission to T'ang court headed by son Lo-sheng; T'ang court responded with gifts and titles; other tribute missions reportedly sent during following decades by Hsi-nu-lo and Lo-sheng
- 656 Hsi-erh Ho Man sent tribute mission to China
- 664 Yao-chou raised in status to a governor-generalship (*tu-tu fu*)
- 672 K'un-ming peoples submitted to T'ang; their chiefs were given Chinese titles and authority
- 680 Tibet captured T'ang outpost of An-jung; Hsi-erh Ho Man and others submitted to Tibet; Yao-chou abandoned by T'ang
- 688 Ts'uan Ch'ien-fu and Wang Shan-pao requested re-establishment of Chinese power at Yao-chou
- 689 Lang-ch'iung peoples submitted to T'ang; later, Yung-ch'ang peoples also submitted
- 703 Tibet subjugated the Pai Man and Wu Man peoples of Yunnan
- 722 Nan-chao ruler Sheng-lo-p'i sent mission to China; T'ang court responded with gifts and official titles
- 732 Nan-chao tribute mission to T'ang court
- 733 Nan-chao king P'i-lo-ko sent tribute mission to Tibet
- 734 P'i-lo-ko sent mission to T'ang court and submitted tribute
- 738 T'ang court granted title 'King of Yunnan' to P'i-lo-ko
- early T'ang initiatives against the Ts'uan; construction of Pu-t'ou road  
740's through Yunnan

- 745 Nan-chao mission to T'ang court headed by Feng-ch'ieh-i; T'ang responded with gifts and honors
- 746 T'ang asked Nan-chao to intervene in troubles with the Ts'uan  
late Quarrel reported between P'i-lo-ko and T'ang envoy at Nan-chao  
740's court
- 748 T'ang envoy sent to confirm succession of Ko-lo-feng as 'King of Yunnan'
- 750 T'ang frontier official alienated Ko-lo-feng; Nan-chao attacked Yao-chou
- 751 T'ang regional commander Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung refused Nan-chao apology; T'ang punitive expedition met heavy defeat
- 751-752 Nan-chao allied with Tibet, receiving gifts and titles from Tibetan court
- 752-754 Series of disastrous defeats for T'ang armies in Yunnan
- 779 Chinese repulsion of combined Tibetan/Nan-chao invasion of Szechwan led to deterioration of relations between Nan-chao and Tibet
- 787 Proposal by chief minister Li Pi to woo Nan-chao back into alliance with China in order to 'cut off Tibet's right arm'
- late Captured Chinese advisor at Nan-chao court Cheng Hui urged re-  
780's alignment with T'ang
- 787 Chinese regional commander Wei Kao proposed cultivation of Nan-chao through intermediary frontier peoples
- 788 Nan-chao messenger sent to Wei Kao through Tung Man intermediaries
- 789 Wei Kao sowed dissension between Tibet and Nan-chao, in addition to successive military triumphs over Tibet
- 791 Growing distrust between Tibet and Nan-chao and continued surreptitious contacts between Wei Kao and Nan-chao court
- 792 Wei Kao sent Nan-chao king I-mou-hsün a proposal for a joint attack on Tibet
- 793 I-mou-hsün sent envoys to T'ang court, renouncing Tibet and realigning with China; T'ang ruler responded with extraordinary honors
- 794 Wei Kao sent envoy Ts'ui Tso-shih to Nan-chao court to convey imperial message; Nan-chao formally broke with Tibet and swore treaty oath with China
- 794 After victorious surprise attack on Tibet, Nan-chao sent another tribute mission to China
- 794 Chinese minister Yuan Tzu headed investiture mission to Nan-chao court; impressive ceremony and celebration
- 795 Nan-chao sent return mission to T'ang court with tribute
- 799 Wei Kao established school for Nan-chao youth in Ch'eng-tu
- 802 Nan-chao tribute mission to Ch'ang-an accompanied by envoys from its vassal state of Pyu; both submitted exotic music troupes
- 805 Nan-chao mission offered sacrifices at deceased Emperor Tetsung's tomb
- 806 Nan-chao tribute missions

- 807 Nan-chao tribute missions; Nan-chao envoy granted an official title by T'ang court
- 808 T'ang court suspended for three days to commemorate Nan-chao ruler I-mou-hsün's death; Chinese appointed envoy to offer condolences and confirm Nan-chao successor
- 809 T'ang court dismissed the first envoy and appointed another; a new seal was cut and presented to Nan-chao
- 809 Nan-chao envoys granted an imperial audience and gifts; later, Nan-chao sent another tribute mission
- 810 Nan-chao tribute mission
- 812 Nan-chao envoys honored at imperial banquet and granted official titles; another Nan-chao tribute mission arrived later that year
- 814 Nan-chao envoys honored with imperial banquet and gifts
- 815 Nan-chao envoys honored with imperial banquet; later that year another Nan-chao tribute mission arrived
- 816 Nan-chao envoys granted official titles, imperial gifts, and credentials (*kuo-hsin*)
- 816 T'ang court suspended for three days to commemorate Ch'üan-lung-sheng's death; Chinese appointed envoy to offer condolences and confirm Nan-chao successor
- 816 T'ang envoy sent to Nan-chao with news of T'ang empress's death; later that year, another Nan-chao tribute mission arrived
- 817 Nan-chao tribute mission
- 818 Nan-chao tribute mission; Nan-chao offer to help T'ang armies against Tibet was not accepted
- 819 Nan-chao tribute mission; envoys given imperial gifts
- 820 Nan-chao tribute mission; envoys given imperial gifts
- 821 Nan-chao offer to help turn back Tibetan assaults on Szechwan; Nan-chao envoys honored at imperial banquet
- 823 Nan-chao tribute mission; T'ang court appointed envoy to offer condolences and confirm Nan-chao successor; Nan-chao sent embassy to give thanks
- 826 Nan-chao tribute mission
- 827 Nan-chao tribute mission
- 828 Nan-chao envoys honored with imperial banquet; later another tribute mission
- 829 Nan-chao tribute mission arrived in midst of Nan-chao invasion and plunder of Szechwan
- 830 Nan-chao tribute mission
- 831 Nan-chao tribute mission
- 832 Nan-chao envoys honored with imperial banquet
- 833 Nan-chao envoys honored with imperial banquet and gifts
- 834 Nan-chao tribute mission; envoys given imperial gifts
- 836 Nan-chao tribute mission
- 837 Nan-chao envoys offered New Year's congratulations; envoys honored with imperial banquet; later that year, another Nan-chao tribute mission
- 838 Nan-chao envoys given imperial gifts

- 839 Nan-chao tribute mission; envoys given imperial audience, official titles and gifts
- 840 Nan-chao tribute mission; envoys given imperial audience
- 842 Nan-chao tribute mission; envoys given imperial audience
- 846 Nan-chao tribute mission received imperial audience, banquet, and gifts
- 859 T'ang regional commander Tu Ts'ung petitioned to restrict size of Nan-chao tribute mission and number of students in Ch'eng-tu; Nan-chao king Feng-yu recalled all students, and communications became strained
- 859 T'ang envoy sent to inform Nan-chao court of Chinese emperor's death; new Nan-chao ruler Shih-lung peeved that China had not sent mission with condolences over his own father's recent death; Chinese envoy was treated badly
- 859 Dispute arose over similarity between name of new Nan-chao ruler and tabooed name of previous T'ang emperor; Nan-chao king began to call himself 'emperor'
- 859 Nan-chao attacks on Chinese territory began, culminating later in the capture of the T'ang protectorate of Annam
- 866 After recapturing Hanoi, Chinese attempted to renew peaceful relations with Nan-chao; both sides exhausted by frontier fighting
- 866 Nan-chao sent official envoy to Ch'eng-tu; unwilling to resume vassal status, he was beaten and jailed; later released and sent to T'ang capital, he was treated with honors, but nothing was resolved
- 869 Nan-chao attacks on Szechwan renewed by Shih-lung; Shih-lung demanded extraordinary honors and treatment as a diplomatic equal
- 874 Another large-scale invasion of Szechwan; Chinese ultimately refused to negotiate with Nan-chao envoys
- 876 New Szechwan regional commander Kao P'ien sent Buddhist monk Ching-hsien as envoy to Nan-chao court, where he was treated respectfully; Ching-hsien persuaded Shih-lung to submit to T'ang diplomatic terms; Nan-chao ruler was promised a T'ang princess; later Nan-chao sent envoys to Szechwan but still refused to acknowledge vassal status
- 877 New Nan-chao ruler Lung-shun sent envoys to T'ang court through Kwangsi; Chinese sent gifts back to Nan-chao court
- 878 Nan-chao envoy arrived at T'ang capital with request to carry out the promised marriage alliance, but still refused subordinate status; this led to a bitter debate at the T'ang court
- 879 Kwangsi regional commander sent mission to Nan-chao court, led by Hsü Yün-ch'ien; he was treated well in a personal audience with Lung-shun, but the Nan-chao ruler still refused Chinese tributary terminology
- 880 Chinese court debate on granting princess to Nan-chao continued; Li Kuei-nien mission sent to Nan-chao
- 881 Li mission returned with Nan-chao promise of submission; T'ang court agreed to grant Nan-chao an imperial princess; Nan-chao

- envoys sent to receive princess were treacherously killed by the Chinese, and the marriage alliance was never fulfilled
- 882 Nan-chao mission which arrived to press for promised princess was unsuccessful
- 883 Another unsuccessful Nan-chao mission to demand Chinese princess
- 897 New Nan-chao ruler Shun-hua sent envoy to request restoration of friendly relations with China; at urging of Szechwan regional commander Wang Chien, this request was ignored by the T'ang court

*Sources:* TFYK, *chüan* 963-5, 968-72, and 974-6; THY, *chüan* 99; CTS, *chüan* 1-20 and 197; HTS, *chüan* 222a and 222b; Bacot *et al.*, *Documents*. Compare Hsiang Ta's table of historical events in MSCC, 339-91.

## A SELECT GLOSSARY OF CHINESE CHARACTERS

- Ai-lao 哀牢  
 An-jung 安戎  
 Annam 安南  
 An-ning 安寧  
 Chang Ch'ien 張鸞  
 Chang Chien-chih 張柬之  
 Chang Ch'ien-t'ò 張虔陀  
 Chang-ch'ou Chien-ch'iuung 章仇兼瓊  
 Chang Hsün-ch'iu 張尋求  
 Chang-lo-chin-ch'iu 張樂進求  
 Chang-lo-p'i 張羅皮  
 Chang Shen-su (Chang Shou-su)  
     張審素 (張守素)  
 chao 詔  
 Chao (Western Chao) 西趙  
 Chao Shan-cheng 趙善政  
 che 柘  
 Che-tung 柘東  
 Chen-la 真臘  
 Ch'en Tzu-ang 陳子昂  
 Cheng Hui (Man-li) 鄭回 (蠻利)  
 Cheng Mai-ssu 鄭買嗣  
 Cheng Min (Cheng Jen-min) 鄭旻  
     (鄭仁旻)  
 Cheng T'ien 鄭旼  
 chi-mi 羈縻  
 Ch'iang 羌  
 Chiao-chou 交州  
 chien 賧  
 Ch'ien-chou 黔州  
 Ch'ien-chung 黔中  
 Chien-lang Chao 劍浪詔  
 Chien-nan 劍南  
 Chien-ning kuo 建寧國  
 Chin-ch'ih Man 金齒蠻  
 Ch'ing-ch'i 清溪  
 Ching-hai 靜海  
 Ching-hsien 景仙  
 ch'ing-p'ing kuan 清平官  
 Ch'iuung-chou 邛州  
 Ch'ou-pien lou 籌邊樓  
 Chu-ko Liang 諸葛亮  
 Chü-meng-ch'ung 苴夢衝  
 Chü-na-shih 苴那時  
 Chu Tao-ku 朱道古  
 Chü-wu-hsing 苴烏星  
 Ch'üan-li-sheng 勸利晟  
 Ch'üan-lung-sheng 勸龍晟  
 Chuang Ch'iao 莊躑  
 Ch'ung-mo Man 崇魔蠻  
 Ch'ung-tao 崇道  
 en-wei ping-yung 恩威並用  
 Erh-hai 洱海  
 Fan Ch'o 樊綽  
*Fan-hsiang chüan* 梵像卷  
 fan-kuo 蕃國  
 Feng-ch'ieh-i 鳳伽異  
 Feng-mieh 豐咩  
 Feng-se 豐毳  
 Feng-shih 豐時  
 Feng-yu (Chüan-feng-yu) 豐祐  
     (勸豐祐)  
 Fu-ch'ao 輔朝  
 fu-liang 浮梁  
 Hai-men 海門  
 ho-ch'in 和親  
 Ho Lü-kuang (Ho Fu-kuang) 何履  
     光 (何復光)

- Ho-t'an 河賧  
 Ho-t'o 鶴拓  
 Hou Hung-jen 侯弘仁  
 Hou-li kuo 後理國  
 Hsi-ch'uan 西川  
 Hsi-erh Ho Man 西洱河蠻  
 Hsi-nan pei-pien lu 西南備邊錄  
 Hsi-nu-lo 細奴羅  
 Hsi-shan pa-kuo 西山八國  
 Hsi-ta-mou 悉州謀  
 Hsieh (Eastern Hsieh/Southern Hsieh)  
     東謝/南謝  
 Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung 鮮于仲通  
 Hsin Tang 辛譙  
 Hsiu-mien Man 繡面蠻  
 hsiung-pien tzu-ti 雄邊子弟  
 hsiung-ti chih kuo 兄弟之國  
 Hsü Chien 徐堅  
 Hsü Yün-ch'ien 徐雲虔  
 Hsün-ch'uan Man 尋傳蠻  
 Hsün-ko-ch'uan 尋閣勸  
 Hsün-meng-ts'ou 尋夢湊  
 hu-p'o 琥珀  
 i-I chih-I 以夷制夷  
 I-lo-shih (I-ch'uan-lo-shih) 矣羅識  
     (矣川羅識)  
 I-mou-hsün 異牟尋  
 jih-tung wang 日東王  
 Jung-chou 容州  
 K'ang Ch'eng-hsün 康承訓  
 Kao P'ien 高駢  
 kao-shen 告身  
 Kao Sheng-t'ai 高昇泰  
 Ko-lao 葛獠  
 Ko-lo-feng 閣羅鳳  
 Kuei-chou 桂州  
 kuei-chu 鬼主  
 Kuei-i 歸義  
 K'un-lun 崑崙  
 K'un-ming kuo 昆明國  
 Kuo Chao 郭釗  
 Kuo Chung-hsiang 郭仲翔  
 Lang-ch'iuang Chao 浪穹詔  
 Lang-ch'iuang-chou Man 浪穹州蠻  
 Lao 獠  
 Li Chih-ku 李知古  
 Li Cho 李涿(琢)  
 Li Fu 李福  
 Li Kuei-nien (Ts'ao wang) 李龜年  
     (曹王)  
 Li Mi 李必  
 Li Pi 李泌  
 Li Sheng 李晟  
 Li Shih-wang 李師望  
 Li Te-yü 李德裕  
 Li Yu-tu 李由獨  
 Liang Chien-fang 梁建方  
 Liang Jui 梁濟  
 Liang-lin 兩林  
 Ling-nan 嶺南  
 Liu P'i 劉關  
 Liu Po-ying 劉伯英  
 Liu T'ung 劉潼  
 lo-ch'eng 羅城  
 Lo-hsing Man 裸形蠻  
 Lo-sheng (Lo-sheng-yen) 羅盛(羅盛  
     炎)  
 Lolo 羅羅  
 Lü Ch'iu-chün 閩丘均  
 Lu Hsi 盧攜  
 Lu-nan 瀘南  
 Lu Tan 盧耽  
 Lung-shun (Fa) 隆舜(法)  
 Man (Man-tzu) 蠻子  
 Man-shu 蠻書  
 Mang Man 茫蠻  
 Mao-chou 茂州  
 Meng 蒙  
 Meng-she Chao 蒙舍詔  
 Meng-sui Chao 蒙叺詔  
 Meng Yü 蒙羽  
 Mi-ch'en 彌臣  
 Mieh-lo-p'i 咩羅皮  
 Minchia 民家  
 Mo-ho-lo-ts'o 摩訶羅嗟  
 Moso 磨些  
 Nan-chao 南詔  
 Nan-chao t'u-chuan 南詔圖傳  
 Nan-chung 南中  
 Nan-ning 南寧  
 niu-huang 牛黃  
 Niu Ts'ung 牛叢

- Nü-wang 女王  
 o-ch'e 鷓車  
 Pa-kuo sheng-Ch'iang 八國生羌  
 Pai Man 白蠻  
 Pai-shui Man 白水蠻  
 Pai-tsu 白族  
 Pai-tzu kuo 白子國  
 P'ang Hsün 龐助  
 P'ang-ming 傍名  
 P'ang-shih-hsi 傍時昔  
 P'ei Huai-ku 裴懷古  
 P'ei Yuan-yü 裴元裕  
 P'i-lo-ko 皮羅閣  
 P'iao-hsin 驃信  
 P'iao-p'ang 驃傍  
 pien-sai shih 邊塞詩  
 P'o-ch'ung 波衝  
 Po-nung 勃弄  
 pu-hsieh 布燹  
 Pu-t'ou 步頭  
 P'u-tzu Man 撲子蠻  
 Pyu (P'iao) 驃  
 San-lang (Lang-jen) 三浪 (浪人)  
 Shan-ch'an 善闡  
 she-hsiang 麝香  
 She-lung 舍龍  
 Sheng-lo-p'i 盛羅皮  
 Shih-lang Chao 施浪詔  
 Shih-lung (Ch'iu-lung) 世隆 (酋龍)  
 Shih Man 施蠻  
 Shih-p'ang 時傍  
 Shih-tzu kuo 獅子國  
 Shih Wan-sui 史萬歲  
 shuang 爽  
 Shun-hua (Shun-hua-chen) 舜化  
 (舜化貞)  
 Shun Man 順蠻  
 su-yü 俗羽  
 Sui-chou 嵩州  
 Sung-wai Man 松外蠻  
 Ta-ch'ang-ho kuo 大長和國  
 Ta-ch'in seng 大秦僧  
 Ta-chung kuo 大中國  
 Ta-feng-min 大封民  
 Ta-i-ning kuo 大義寧國  
 ta-jung 大容  
 Ta-li (859-877) 大禮  
 Ta-li kuo (937-1253) 大理國  
 Ta-t'ien-hsing kuo 大天興國  
 Ta-tu 大渡  
 T'ai-ho 太和  
 T'ai-teng 臺登  
 t'an-ch'o 坦綽  
 T'ang Chiu-cheng 唐九徵  
 T'ang Meng 唐蒙  
 T'ao-hua jen 桃花人  
 Teng-t'an Chao 遼談詔  
 Ti 氐  
 T'ieh-ch'iao 鐵橋  
 Tien 滇  
 T'ien-chu 天竺  
 tien-jen 仨人  
 Tien-ts'ang 點蒼  
 Ting-pien 定邊  
 Tou P'ang 竇滂  
 tsa-chü 雜劇  
 Ts'ai Ching 蔡京  
 Ts'ai Hsi 蔡襲  
 Tsan-p'u chung 贊普鐘  
 Tsang-ko 牂牁  
 ts'ao 曹  
 Ts'ou-lo-tung 湊羅棟  
 Ts'uan 夔  
 Ts'uan Chen 夔震  
 Ts'uan Ch'ien-fu 夔乾福  
 Ts'uan Hung-ta 夔弘達  
 Ts'uan Kuei-wang 夔歸王  
 Ts'uan Wan 夔斲  
 Ts'ui Ning (Ts'ui Kan) 崔寧 (崔旰)  
 Ts'ui Tso-shih 崔佐時  
 t'u-chiang 突將  
 t'u-lun wang 土輪王  
 T'u-mo-chih Man 徒莫祗蠻  
 Tu Ts'ung 杜棕  
 T'u-yü-hun 吐谷渾  
 Tu Yuan-ying 杜元穎  
 Tuan Ch'iu-ch'ien 段會選  
 Tuan Chung-i 段忠義  
 Tuan Lun 段綸  
 Tuan Ssu-p'ing 段思平  
 Tuan Wen-ch'ang 段文昌  
 Tung Ch'eng 董成



- Tung Chung-chih 董重質  
 Tung Man 東蠻  
 tung-ti 東帝  
 tzu-ch'eng 子城  
 Tzu-chou 梓州  
 tzu-nü chin-chin 子女錦錦  
 tzu-yun (or tzu-yen) 白云 (自言)  
 Wang Chien 王建  
 Wang-chü-tzu Man 望苴子蠻  
 Wang Jen-ch'iu 王仁求  
 Wang Shan-pao 王善寶  
 Wang Shih 王式  
 Wang Ts'o-tien 王嵯巖  
 Wang Yen-ch'üan 王晏權  
 Wang Yü 王昱  
 Wei Ch'i-hsiu 韋齊休  
 wei-ch'ieh 隈伽  
 Wei-chou 維州  
 Wei Jen-shou 韋仁壽  
 Wei Kao 韋皋  
 Wei-shan 巍山  
 Wu-hua lou 五華樓  
 Wu Man 烏蠻  
 Wu Pao-an 吳保安  
 Wu-teng 勿鄧  
 ya-ch'eng 牙城  
 Yang Ch'ing-fu 楊慶復  
 Yang Ch'iu-ch'ing 楊酋慶  
 Yang-hsieh-mieh 楊苴岬  
 Yang Kan-chen 楊干貞  
 Yang Kuo-chung 楊國忠  
 Yang-p'i 漾泐  
 Yang Ssu-chin 楊思緒  
 Yao-chou 姚州  
 Yeh-lang 夜郎  
 Yen Ch'ing-fu 顏慶復  
 Yen-ko 炎閣  
 Yi 彝  
 Yü Shih-chen 喻士珍  
 yuan-chiao chin-kung 遠交近攻  
 Yuan Tzu 袁滋  
 Yueh-hsi Chao 越析詔  
 yun-liang 雲梁  
 Yunnan 雲南  
 Yun-nan chi 雲南記  
 Yung-ch'ang 永昌  
 Yung-chou 邕州  
 Yung T'ao 雍陶

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