
Yúnnán in the ‘*Records of the Historian*’

A New Annotated Translation of Selected Parts of the 《史记》

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The Yúnnán Papers

This text is part of a series of translations of historical Chinese texts concerning Yúnnán.

This series does not aim to present any new research but to allow an English-speaking audience to better understand Yúnnán’s history and culture through original texts. The texts are heavily annotated, giving geographical, historical and cultural background information and references to contemporary academic discussions.

The texts in this series are currently in draft and undergoing revision. Those translations that have reached a certain state of maturity can be found on my website at

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1 Introduction

The written history of south-west China begins with Sīmǎ Qiān 司马迁: his monumental ‘*Records of the Historian*’ 《史记》 set the model for all later Chinese history writing.

As the 《史记》 predates Nánzhào 南诏, the polity that rose in the 7th to dominate Yúnnán through the 8th and 9th centuries, by several centuries, it obviously cannot tell us anything about Nánzhào itself. But Sīmǎ Qiān’s accounts established indelible reference points that later Chinese historians would inevitably invoke when writing about the region. While the real historic connection between the period of the Hàn dynasty and Nánzhào is entirely speculative, the 《史记》 influenced how Chinese officials and historians perceived the region and how they wrote about it centuries later. Many of the ‘tropes and motifs’⁽¹⁾ of later writing can be traced back to this work and I believe many passages in later works can be understood better if the origin of their frequent allusions is made explicit.

The authoritative collection of historic material regarding Yúnnán 云南, the multi-volume 《云南史料丛刊》, published under the nominal editorial leadership of the eminent local historian Fāng Guóyú 方国瑜, duely opens with a selection of sections from the 《史记》, mainly the 116th *juàn* titled ‘*Records of the Western and Southern Yi*’ 《西南夷列传》 which focusses on the early history of Chinese interaction with its south-west, a region inhabited by groups of non-Chinese people referred to as *Yi* 夷 or *Mányí* 蛮夷.

While the historic truthfulness of the accounts has long been debated and, even if true, long gaps in the record⁽²⁾ and unclear geographical references pose problems, there is plenty in the archeological record that shows an early and important impact of Chinese culture on eastern Yúnnán.⁽³⁾

2 About this Translation

Considering the importance 《史记》 for the study of Chinese history few translations have been published. Watson’s ‘highly dependable and readable’⁽⁴⁾ 1961 translation of the 《史记》 remained for many decades not only the reference translation, but the *only* one. Only in 2016 another complete translation of the 116th *juàn* was published as part of Nienhauser (2006).⁽⁵⁾

I am not qualified to provide a better translation and, if both translations were not still under copyright, it would have been appropriate to simply include one here for reference. Their styles are very different. To give a passage from the 112th *juàn* titled 《平津侯主父列传》, concerning a road being built into the area of the western and southern *Yi* 西南夷, as an example:

Watson (1961), p. 188:

At this time the Han government was busy building a road out of China to the lands of the southwestern barbarians and setting up new provinces in the region, undertakings which were causing great hard-

Nienhauser (2010), p. 365:

At this time the road to the Southwestern Yi 夷 was being built and a commandery was established. The people of Pa 巴 and Shu 蜀 were suffering because of this. By edict [the Emperor] sent [Kung-sun] Hung to

⁽¹⁾ Nienhauser (2016), p. 79.

⁽²⁾ For a chronological arrangement of the early records, see Sun and Xiong (1983) and Qiang (2008).

⁽³⁾ see Allard (2015).

⁽⁴⁾ Ho (1963).

⁽⁵⁾ Translations of selected parts can be found in many works, such as Sun and Xiong (1983), Qiang (2008).

ship to the people of Ba and Shu Provinces in the west. The emperor ordered Gongsun Hong to go on a mission to the area to observe what progress had been made. When he returned and made his report, he strongly criticized the project, insisting that there was no benefit to be gained from establishing communication with the southwestern barbarians. The emperor, however, paid no attention to his views.

inspect them. When he returned and memorialized on the matter he denounced in strong terms the fact that [the territory] of the Southwestern Yi was useless. The sovereign did not listen to him.

While the judgement which translation is 'better' is highly subjective, I think it is fair to note that the translation in Nienhauser (2010), p. 365 is much closer to the original text. In my own translation I have also tried to stay as close to the text as possible.

Countless versions of the 《史记》 exist, the source text for my translation has been taken from the collaborative CText Project at <https://ctext.org/shiji>.

For the passages of the 《史记》 that were also included in Fāng Guóyú 方国瑜 (1998a) I have taken the annotations provided there into account. Fāng Guóyú 方国瑜 (1980) presents an analysis of place names.

3 Annotated Translation

第一百一十二卷 **Biographies of the Marquis of Píngjīn and Zhǔfù** 《平津侯主父列传》

This following excerpt from the biography of Gōngsūn Hóng 公孙弘 is not included in the 《云南史料丛刊》, but as it mentions the road to the western and southern Yí 西南夷, that will be mentioned again below, it makes sense to include it here.⁽⁶⁾

是时通西南夷道，置郡，巴蜀民苦之，诏使弘视之。还奏事，盛毁西南夷无所用，上不听。

At the time, a road to the western and southern Yí was built and a prefecture established. The people of Bā and Shǔ suffered because of it. An edict was issued to send Hóng to inspect it. He returned and wrote a memorial about this matter, vigorously disparaging the [lands of the] western and southern Yí as useless. The emperor did not listen.

第一百一十六卷 **Records of the Western and Southern Yí** 《西南夷列传》

The following is the most important source of information about the indigenous people of the southwest. For a historical introduction, see Herman (2009).

西南夷君长以什数，夜郎最大；其西靡莫之属以什数，滇最大；自滇以北

The western and southern Yí have dozens of leaders, Yèláng is the greatest. West of them dozens belong to the Mímò, Diān is the

⁽⁶⁾ This is the passage used for comparisons above. In addition to Watson (1961), p. 188 and Nienhauser (2010), p. 365 it is also translated in Sun and Xiong (1983), p. 245.

<p>君长以什数，邛都最大：此皆魑结，耕田，有邑聚。</p>	<p>greatest. North of Diān are dozens of leaders, Qióng Dū is the greatest. They all wear their hair in bun, plough fields and have vil-</p>	<p>史记 10</p>
<p>其外西自同师以东，北至牂榆，名为嵩、昆明，皆编发，随畜迁徙，毋常处，毋君长，地方可数千里。</p>	<p>Further from them to the west, east of Tóngshī north until Yèyú, they are called Xī and Kūnmíng. They all braid their hair, follow their livestock moving around, do not have permanent settlements, have no leaders, their lands extend perhaps several thousand <i>lǐ</i> in one</p>	<p>史记 15</p>
<p>自冉以东北，君长以什数，徙、笮都最大；自笮以东北，君长以什数，冉、靡最大。</p>	<p>North-east of the Rǎn are dozens of leaders, Xī and Zuó are the greatest. North-east of Zuó are dozens of leaders, Rǎn and Máng are the greatest.</p>	<p>史记 20</p>
<p>其俗或土箸，或移徙，在蜀之西。</p>	<p>Their custom is that some are settled and others move about, west of Shǔ.</p>	<p>史记 25</p>
<p>自冉靡以东北，君长以什数，白马最大，皆氏类也。</p>	<p>North-east of the Rǎn and are dozens of leaders, Báimǎ the greatest, they are all of the Dǐ kind.</p>	<p>史记 25</p>
<p>此皆巴蜀西南外蛮夷也。</p>	<p>These are all the <i>Mányí</i> in the outer areas west and south of Bā and Shǔ.</p>	<p>史记 25</p>

Then follows an important section on the Chǔ 楚 general Zhuāng Qiāo 庄蹻 who led an expedition into the region and, as he could not return, turned ‘native’ and became king of Diān 滇王. Almost as in passing, the text mentions the five-foot road 五尺道, a military road stretching into Yúnnán.⁽⁷⁾

<p>始楚威王时，使将军庄蹻将兵循江上，略巴、黔中以西。</p>	<p>In the beginning, at the times of king Wēi of Chǔ, general Zhuāng Qiāo was dispatched to lead an army following the river upstream to invade Bā, [Shǔ,] Qiánzhōng, and further west.</p>	<p>史记 30</p>
<p>庄蹻者，故楚庄王苗裔也。蹻至滇池，地方三百里，旁平地，肥饶数千里，以兵威定属楚。</p>	<p>Zhuāng Qiāo was a descendant of the former king Zhuāng of Chǔ. Qiāo reached Lake Dian, three hundred <i>lǐ</i> in one direction, next to flat lands, fertile for several thousand <i>lǐ</i>, he used his military might to pacify and bring it under the rule of Chǔ.</p>	<p>史记 35</p>
<p>欲归报，会秦击夺楚巴、黔中郡，道塞不通，因还，以其众王滇，变服，从其俗，以长之。</p>	<p>He intended to return and report, then Qín attacked Chǔ's prefectures of Bā and Qiánzhōng, the road was blocked and impassable, so he turned back and used his men to become king of Diān, changed his dress, followed their customs and served as their leader.</p>	<p>史记 35</p>
<p>秦时常頡略通五尺道，诸此国颇置吏</p>	<p>At the time of the Qín Cháng È planned and constructed the five-</p>	<p>史记 35</p>

[27: 巴] some editions add 蜀 here, it is printed in small type in Fāng Guóyú 方国瑜 (1998a), but without an explanation given for this.

r9: Qióng Dū] dū 都 seems to signify the main settlement or city, see Nienhauser (2016), p. 66.

r20: Their custom is that some are settled and others move about] Watson (1961), p. 253 translated this as some being settled, some moving about. I interpret it as a description of seasonal transhumance, similar to what Fürer-Haimendorf (1975) described as a life form in Nepal.

r28: [Shǔ,] the character 蜀 is not in all editions.

r37: planned] Watson (1974) translates it as ‘invaded the region’, this translation follows Needham (1971), p. 15.]

(7) For technical background of road construction during this time, see Needham (1971), pp. 15–16.

焉。 十馀岁，秦灭。 史记 40 及汉兴，皆弃此国而开蜀故徼。	foot road, all their states were inclined to establish officials. Some ten years later, the Qín came to an end. Then the Hàn prospered, it abandoned all these states and opened the old Shǔ border posts.
巴蜀民或窃出商贾，取其笮马、犍僮、髦牛，以此巴蜀殷富。	The people of Bā and Shǔ furtively went out for trade, obtained horses from Zuó, child-servants from Bó, yaks, making Bā and Shǔ prosperous.

Then events east of Yúnnán are reported.

史记 45 建元六年，大行王恢击东越，东越杀王郢以报。 恢因兵威使番阳令唐蒙风指晓南越。	In the 6th year of Jiànyuán , the senior messenger Wáng Huī attacked the eastern Yuè, the eastern Yuè killed Wáng Yǐng in revenge. Huī used his military might to send out the administrator of Póyáng Táng Méng with the intention to enlighten the southern Yuè.
史记 50 南越食蒙蜀枸酱，蒙问所从来，曰“道西北牂柯，牂柯江广数里，出番禺城下”。	The southern Yuè gave Méng betel juice from Shǔ to eat, Méng inquired where it came from, it was said: ‘A road north-west to Zāngkē, the Zāngkē river is several <i>lǐ</i> wide, flowing out to the walled town of Pānyú.’
蒙归至长安，问蜀贾人，贾人曰：独蜀出枸酱，多持窃出市夜郎。	After Méng had returned to Cháng’ān, he asked traders from Shǔ, the traders said: Only from Shǔ comes betel juice, they often secretly bring it to market in Yèláng.
夜郎者，临牂柯江，江广百馀步，足以行船。 南越以财物役属夜郎，西至同师，然亦不能臣使也。	With regards to Yèláng, it is near the Zāngkē river, the river is more than one hundred paces wide, sufficient for boat travel. The southern Yuè used money and goods to subdue Yèláng, west to Tóngshī, however they could not govern it.
史记 60 蒙乃上书说上曰：“南越王黄屋左纛，地东西万余里，名为外臣，实一州主也。 今以长沙、豫章往，水道多绝，难行。	Méng then sent a letter to the court, saying: the king of southern Yuè has a yellow canope with tassels on the left, his territory from east to west measures over ten thousand <i>lǐ</i> . Sending [soldiers] towards Chángshā and Yùzhāng, the river road is often blocked, it is difficult to go.
史记 65 窃闻夜郎所有精兵，可得十馀万，浮船牂柯江，出其不意，此制越一奇也。	I have secretly heard Yèláng has excellent soldiers, it is possible to obtain one hundred thousand men, floating boats on the Zāngkē river river to take them by surprise, that way to control Yuè is an excellent plan.
史记 70 诚以汉之强，巴蜀之饶，通夜郎道，为置吏，易甚。 上许之。	Indeed, using the strength of the Hàn, and the riches of Bā and Shǔ to connect a road to Yèláng to govern them, that is easy. The emperor approved.

[47: 番禺] Fāng Guóyú 方国瑜 (1998b), vol. 1, p. 7 notes that this is written as Póyáng in other texts.

r38: were inclined to establish officials.]

r45: In the 6th year of Jiànyuán] 135 BCE.

r46: in revenge] unclear – see Nienhauser (2016), p. 70 for a very different translation.

r47: Póyáng] another writing for Póyáng 番禺.

<p>乃拜蒙为郎中将军，将千人，食重万余人，从巴蜀笮关入，遂见夜郎侯多同。</p>	<p>He then appointed Méng as commandant, commanding thousand men and over ten thousand men to carry provisions, and entered from the narrow passes of Bā and Shǔ, progressing to see the marquis of Yèláng Duō Tóng.</p>	<p>史记 75</p>
<p>蒙厚赐，喻以威德，约为置吏，使其子为令。 夜郎旁小邑皆贪汉缯帛，以为汉道险，终不能有也，乃且听蒙约。</p>	<p>Méng gave ample gifts, explaining the power and the virtue and agreed to establish officials, with the envoy's son as administrator. The small places next to Yèláng were all eager for silk from the Hàn, but thought the road to the Hàn was dangerous and in the end had not obtained it, so they listened to Méng's pact.</p>	<p>史记 80</p>
<p>还报，乃以为犍为郡。</p>	<p>He returned to report and then Jiānwèi was established as prefecture.</p>	
<p>发巴蜀卒治道，自犍道指牂柯江。</p>	<p>Soldiers were dispatched from Bā and Shǔ to establish the road, from the Bó road reaching the Zāngkē river.</p>	
<p>蜀人司马相如亦言西夷邛、笮可置郡。</p>	<p>Sīmǎ Xiāngrú, a man from Shǔ, added it was possible to establish prefectures in the western Yí's Qióng and Zuó.</p>	<p>史记 85</p>
<p>使相如以郎中将军往喻，皆如南夷，为置一都尉，十馀县，属蜀。</p>	<p>The envoy Xiāngrú as was appointed commandant to go and instruct them, like the southern Yí, to establish one regional commander, more than ten counties, subordinate to Shǔ.</p>	
<p>当是时，巴蜀四郡通西南夷道，戍转相饷。</p>	<p>At that time, the four prefectures of Bā and Shǔ were connected by road to the western and southern Yí, and took turns to provide themselves across the borders.</p>	<p>史记 90</p>
<p>数岁，道不通，士罢饿离湿，死者甚众；西南夷又数反，发兵兴击，耗费无功。</p>	<p>After many years, the road was blocked. The soldiers were exhausted, many died of hunger or damp. The western and southern Yí rebelled many times, forces were sent to fight them at great expense without success.</p>	<p>史记 95</p>
<p>上患之，使公孙弘往视问焉。还对，言其不便。</p>	<p>The emperor worried about this, and sent out Gōngsūn Hóng to investigate. When he returned, he said that it was not easy.</p>	
<p>及弘为御史大夫，是时方筑朔方以据河逐胡，弘因数言西南夷害，可且罢，专力事匈奴。</p>	<p>Gōngsūn Hóng was appointed censor-in-chief, at the time he was fortifying Shuòfāng to occupy the Hé and expel the Hú, Hóng mentioned many times because of the dangers of the western and southern Yí, it was acceptable to abandon it and to turn the forces to the affairs with the Xiōngnú.</p>	<p>史记 100</p>
<p>上罢西夷，独置南夷夜郎两县一都尉，稍令犍为自葆就。</p>	<p>The emperor abandoned the western Yí, and only established the two counties of Nán Yí and Yèláng with one regional commander, somewhat ordering that Jiānwèi fend for itself.</p>	<p>史记 105</p>

[72: 郎中将军] There is some debate as to whether this should be commandant 中郎将, see Nienhauser (2016), p. 71.

r72: commandant] I have chosen 中郎将 as the probably correct title for translation, but there is no way of knowing.

r90: At that time] This event here is not dated. It is mentioned earlier, but the dates given might not be accurate, see Nienhauser (2010), p. 367.

r91-92: and took turns to provide themselves across the borders] Alternate translations possible, see Nienhauser (2016), pp. 72-73.

r106: somewhat ordering that Jiānwèi fend for itself] See Nienhauser (2016), p. 73.

The following passage provides ‘us with invaluable as well as rather obscure information on the South-west Silk Road’.⁽⁸⁾

史记 110	及元狩元年，博望侯张骞使大夏来，言居大夏时见蜀布、邛竹杖，使问所从来，曰“从东南身毒国，可数千里，得蜀贾人市”。	In the 1st year of Yuánshòu, the marquis of Bówàng Zhāng Qiān returned from his mission to Bactria and said when he resided in Bactria he saw cloth from Shǔ and bamboo canes from Qióng, he inquired where they came from and it was said from the south-eastern state of Shēndú, perhaps several thousand 里, obtained at a market of traders from Shǔ.
史记 115	或闻邛西可二千里有身毒国。骞因盛言大夏在汉西南，慕中国，患匈奴隔其道，诚通蜀，身毒国道便近，有利无害。	He also heard that two thousand 里 west of Qióng was the state of Shēndú. Qiān extolled that Bactria was south-west of the Hàn, admired China and suffered that the Xiōngnú had blocked their road, so indeed opening a road from Shǔ to the state of Shēndú was easy and short, had benefits and no harm.
史记 120	于是天子乃令王然于、柏始昌、吕越人等，使闲出西夷西，指求身毒国。	So the emperor then ordered Wáng Rányú, Bǎi Shǐchāng, Lǚ Yuè and others, to go furtively west of the western Yí in search for the state of Shēndú.
史记 125	至滇，滇王尝羌乃留，为求道西十馀岁，皆闭昆明，莫能通身毒国。	When they reached Diān, the king of Diān Chángqiāng detained them, as they were in search for a western road with more than ten groups. A few years [passed], all had been blocked by the Kūnmíng, they could not reach state of Shēndú.

The following passage about the ignorance of the local rulers regarding the Chinese empire is so famous that a phrase as become a fixed expression for arrogance: 夜郎自大.

史记 130	滇王与汉使者言曰：“汉孰与我大？”及夜郎侯亦然。以道不通故，各自以为一州主，不知汉广大。使者还，因盛言滇大国，足事亲附。天子注意焉。	The king of Diān and the Hàn envoy talked and said: Who is greater - the Hàn or I? The marquis of Yèláng also asked this. As there was no road to connect them, each considered himself master of the state, not knowing about the great extent of the Hàn. The envoy returned and extolled the great state of Diān, sufficient to be closely attached. The emperor took note of it.
史记 135	及至南越反，上使驰义侯因犍为发南	When the southern Yuè rebelled, the emperor sent the marquis of

r107: In the 1st year of Yuánshòu] 122 BCE.

r120: furtively] 闲?

⁽⁸⁾ Yang (2004), p. 29. He also includes a translation with rather a lot of poetic license of this passage, but he points out that 身毒 should be pronounced ‘Yandu’ as a phonetic translation of Indus or Hindus. Schuessler (2006), p. 457 gives ‘sin’ as a phonetic writing of 身 as pronounced during the later Hàn dynasty period, while Nienhauser (2016), p. 74 transliterates it as ‘Chüan-tu’.

<p>夷兵。 且兰君恐远行，旁国虏其老弱，乃与其众反，杀使者及犍为太守。</p>	<p>Chíyì to make Jiānwèi to send soldiers against the southern Yí. The ruler of Jūlán was afraid to march far away, as the neighbouring country would take the old and weak captive, so he rebelled with his people and killed the envoy and the grand protector of Jiānwèi.</p>	
<p>汉乃发巴蜀罪人尝击南越者八校尉击破之。 会越已破，汉八校尉不下，即引兵还，行诛头兰。</p>	<p>The Hàn then sent criminals from Bā and Shǔ to attack southern Yuè and eight officers to attack and destroy it. When the southern Yuè were already defeated, the eight Hàn officers were not stood down, the soldiers returned, marching to punish Tóulán.</p>	<p>史记 140</p>
<p>头兰，常隔滇道者也。已平头兰，遂平南夷为牂柯郡。 夜郎侯始倚南越，南越已灭，会还诛反者，夜郎遂入朝，上以为夜郎王。</p>	<p>Tóulán had often blocked the road to Diān. When Tóulán was pacified, then the southern Yí were pacified as Zāngkē prefecture. The marquis of Yèláng in the beginning had sided with the southern Yuè, but with the southern Yuè already eliminated, he returned to punish the rebels, Yèláng then sent tributes. The emperor appointed him as king of Yèláng.</p>	<p>史记 145</p>
<p>南越破后，及汉诛且兰、邛君，并杀笮侯，毋駝皆振恐，请臣置吏。</p>	<p>After the southern Yuè were defeated, the Hàn executed the rulers of Jūlán and Qióng and killed the marquis of Zuó, the Rǎn and Máng were all shaking with fear and petitioned to become vassals and officials be established.</p>	<p>史记 150</p>
<p>乃以邛都为越嶲郡，笮都为沈犁郡，毋駝为汶山郡，广汉西白马为武都郡。</p>	<p>Then Qióng Dū was made Yuèxī prefecture, Zuódū was made Shěnlí prefecture, Rǎnmáng was made Wènshān prefecture, Báimǎ west of Guǎnghàn was made Wǔdū prefecture.</p>	<p>史记 155</p>

The story of the Seal of the King of Diān 滇滇王之印 is one of the famous passages of the 《史记》 that found a direct corroboration in the archeological record as the seal was discovered in a tomb on the eastern shore of Lake Dian 滇池.

<p>上使王然于以越破及诛南夷兵威风喻滇王入朝。</p>	<p>The emperor sent Wáng Rányú who used the defeat of the southern Yuè and the military elimination of southern Yí to make the king of Diān come to court.</p>	<p>史记 160</p>
<p>滇王者，其众数万人，其旁东北有劳寢、靡莫，皆同姓相扶，未肯听。</p>	<p>The king of Diān had many tens of thousands of men, and adjacent to the north-east were the Láoqìn and the Mímò, all of the same name assisting each other, so he was unwilling to listen.</p>	
<p>劳寢、靡莫数侵犯使者吏卒。 元封二年，天子发巴蜀兵击灭劳寢、靡莫，以兵临滇。</p>	<p>The Láoqìn and the Mímò assaulted the envoy's forces many times. In the 2nd year of Yuánfēng, the emperor sent soldiers from Bā and Shǔ to attack and eliminate the Láoqìn and Mímò, the soldiers getting close to Diān.</p>	<p>史记 165</p>
<p>滇王始首善，以故弗诛。</p>	<p>The king of Diān was then the first to submit and so was not executed.</p>	
<p>滇王离难西南夷，举国降，请置吏入朝。</p>	<p>The king of Diān abandoned the western and southern Yí, the entire state surrendered, petitioned to establish officials and made a</p>	<p>史记 170</p>

r165: In the 2nd year of Yuánfēng] 109 BCE.

r170: abandoned] Watson (1961), p. 258 points out that the text here appears corrupt, he translates 离难 as the name of the king. Nienhauser (2016), p. 76 documents more discussion about this passage and notes that it is problematic.

		tribute mission.
	于是以为益州郡，赐滇王王印，复长其民。	Afterwards [the region] became Yìzhōu prefecture, the king of Diān was conferred a seal as king, and restored as leader of his people.
史记 175	西南夷君长以百数，独夜郎、滇受王印。	The rulers of western and southern Yí were hundreds, only Yèláng and Diān were given seals as kings.
	滇小邑，最宠焉。	Diān is a small region, but most favoured.
	太史公曰：楚之先岂有天禄哉？	Grand Historian remarks: The ancestors of Chǔ – don't they have the blessings of heaven?
史记 180	在周为文王师，封楚。	During the Zhōu they served as teachers for king Wén and were granted Chǔ.
	及周之衰，地称五千里。	Even during the Zhōu's decline, its territory was five thousand lǐ.
	秦灭诸侯，唯楚苗裔尚有滇王。	The Qín eliminated all the leaders, only the descendants of Chǔ still were king of Diān.
史记 185	汉诛西南夷，国多灭矣，唯滇复为宠王。	The Hàn punished the western and southern Yí and many states were destroyed, only Diān was restored as an esteemed king.
	然南夷之端，见枸酱番禺，大夏杖、邛竹。	The starting point with the southern Yí was that someone saw betel juice from Pānyú and in Bactria canes from bamboo of Qióng.
	西夷后揃，剽分二方，卒为七郡。	After the western Yí were wiped out, they were divided into two regions, finally seven prefectures.

第一百一十七卷 Biography of Simǎ Xiāngrú 《司马相如列传》

Simǎ Xiāngrú 司马相如, *179–†117, from Chéngdū 成都, was a poet and politician during the Western Hàn 西汉 period. His lengthy biography takes up the 117th *juàn* of the 《史记》, which also includes some of his works, including his masterpiece, the 'Ode to the Imperial Park' 《上林赋》, which contains a brief mention of a music troupe from Diān 滇.

Simǎ Xiāngrú is considered a master of *fù* 赋, a term lacking a counterpart in Western literature, sometimes translated as 'rhapsody'.⁽⁹⁾ Wilt Idema and Lloyd Haft introduce this form of poetry like this:

The *fu* is a type of poem in which an object, action, or feeling is described in exhaustive detail. The author not only tries to deal with all aspects of his subject matter, he also tries to exhaust all relevant resources of the language. [...] The *fu* was intended to be read aloud, not sung; in this respect it differs from all other genres of traditional Chinese poetry, as these all originated in song. Accordingly, a fixed line-length was less essential in *fu* than in other poetic forms. The lines in the *fu* may vary with each couplet, lines of four or six syllables being the most frequent. The even lines rhyme, and a change of subject often goes together with a change of rhyme. (Idema and Haft (1997), pp. 97–98)

r183: the leaders] of the other groups mentioned above.

⁽⁹⁾ Knechtges (2008), p. 59.

A work written for Hàn emperor Wǔ 汉武帝, called ‘*Ode to the Imperial Park*’ 《上林賦》, is considered his greatest work.

[...] Sima Xiangru wrote for Emperor Wu his greatest work, an expansion of the ‘Zixu fu’ called the ‘Shanglin fu’ (The Imperial Park). It describes in superlatives the Imperial hunting preserve. ‘Zixu fu’ and ‘Shanglin fu’ are often classed together as a single work under the title ‘Shanglin fu.’ The ‘Shanglin fu’ is noted not only for its length but also for the richness of its vocabulary. (Idema and Haft (1997), p. 98)

The sinologist and acclaimed translator of Chinese poetry, Arthur Waley considered the 《上林賦》 as too difficult to translate:

I do not think that anyone who has read Hsiang-ju’s poems will blame me for not attempting to translate them. Such a glittering torrent of words has never since poured from the pen of any writer in the world. Beside him Euphues seems timid and Apuleius cold. He sports with language as a dolphin sports with the sea. Such eloquence cannot be described, much less translated (Waley (1923), pp. 43–44)

‘In spite of this warning,’⁽¹⁰⁾ Burton Watson undertook ‘the task of translation’ as part of his work on the ‘*Records of the Historian*’ 《史记》, where the text had survived as part of Sīmǎ Xiāngrú’s biography in the 117th *juàn*. His translation for the part selected here can be found on Watson (1961), p. 280.

A comprehensively researched translation into French is Hervouet (1972), see illustration 1. Two further translations can be found in Knechtges (2008), pp. 59–83 and in Ess (2016), pp. 115–116.

The four translations for this passage are juxtaposed in table 1.

于是乎	And then	
游戏懈怠	he takes a rest from game and play	
置酒乎颢天之台	Sets up wine on a platform under the sky	
张乐乎轡輶之宇	Performs music in an imperial hall	
撞千石之钟	Strikes a one thousand <i>dàn</i> bell,	史记 195
立万石之虞	Erects a ten thousand <i>dàn</i> bell frame,	
建翠华之旗	Raises the halcyon banner	
树灵鼉之鼓	Installs an alligator skin drum.	
奏陶唐氏之舞	Performing the dances of the Táotáng clan,	
听葛天氏之歌	Listening to the songs of the Gétian clan	史记 200
千人唱万人和	One thousand singing, ten thousand joining in,	
山陵为之震动	Shaking the mountains,	
川谷为之荡波	Swinging the valleys,	
巴渝宋蔡	From Bāyú, Sòng and Cài,	
淮南干遮	Gānzhē from Huáinán.	史记 205
文成颠歌	The songs of Wénchéng and Diān,	

[206: 颢] variant writing of Diān 滇.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Watson (1961), p. 262

族居递奏
金鼓迭起
铿枪闐鞀
史记 210 洞心骇耳

performed by groups in turn.
Gongs and drums sounding in turns
kēng qiāng tāng jiǎ!
Penetrating the heart and pleasing the ears.

Table with 2 columns: Chinese characters and their phonetic/semantic annotations. Includes characters like 巴, 俞, 宋, 蔡, 淮, 南, 子, 進, etc.

史記會注考證卷一百一十七

802 TRANSCRIPTION
"Les airs de Ts'ing du Song et du Ts'ai (1)..."

Variations: Page 52. Ligne 1. Le Wen shan (Li) = 山, des notes anciennes de Che Ki ont pour 山... Ligne 2. Le Wen shan (Li) = 山, des notes anciennes de Che Ki ont pour 山...

128 LE CHAPITRE LIT DU CHE-KI
La musique du King, du Wen, du Tchong, du Wei (1)...

802 TRANSCRIPTION
les musiciens et les danseurs (1)1, les chanteuses des danses du Ts'i (1)12, c'est tout cela qui divertit les oreilles...

Illustration 1: Translation of the 《上林賦》 by Yves Hervouet Source: Hervouet (1972).

司马相如	Burton Watson	David R. Knechtges	Hans Van Ess	Ives Hervouet
于是乎	Then ,	And then	And then,	Or donc,
游戏懈怠	waried of the chase,	Tired of excursion and sport	relaxes and takes rest, And then, He joyfully plays, relaxes and takes rest,	lassé des plaisirs de la promenade, pour l'empereur lassé des plaisirs de la promenade, on dispose du vin sur
置酒乎颢天之台	He orders wine brought forth on the Terrace of Azure Heaven	He holds a feast at a terrace high as vast heaven,	Sets out drinks at the Terrace of Vast Heaven,	une terrasse haute comme le ciel L'orchestre est installé dans une immense salle
张乐乎鞀鞀之宇	And music for the still and spacious halls	Holds a musical performance in a capacious hall.	Suspends music in his broad realm,	pour frapper la cloche, lourde de trente tonnes
撞千石之钟	His courtiers, sounding the massive bells	They beat thousand-catty bells,	Beats a bell of thousand piculs,	on dresse des montants de bois de trois cents tonnes
立万石之虞	That swing from the giant bell rack	Erect ten-thousand-catty bell-racks,	Erects bell racks of ten thousand piculs,	décoré d'un bouquet
建翠华之旗	Raising the pennants of kingfisher feathers	Raise banners adorned with kingfisher tufts,	Establishes a flag with turquoise flowers,	de plumes de martin-pêcheur
树灵鼉之鼓	And setting up the drum of sacred lizard skin,	Set in place drums of magic alligator hide.	Plants a drum with a divine alligator.	on érige le tambour en peau d'alligator magique
奏陶唐氏之舞	Present of his pleasure the dances of Yao	They perform dances of Taotang,	He performs the music to the dance of Sir T'ao-t'ang,	pour présenter à l'Empereur les danses de Yin-kang che
听葛天氏之歌	And the songs of the ancient Emperor Ge;	Listen to songs of Getian.	Listens to the songs of Sir Ko-t'ien,	pour qu'il puisse écouter les chants de Ko-t'ien che
千人唱	A thousand voices intone,	A thousand voices sing the lead	A thousand people sing,	Mille hommes chantent
万人和	Ten thousand join in harmony,	Ten thousand sing the harmony.	ten thousand people join in,	et dix mille leur répondent à l'unisson
山陵为之震动	As the mountains and hills rock with echoes	Mountains and hills from this quake and rock;	Mountains and slopes quake because they are moved by this,	Les montagnes sursautent à ce bruit,
川谷为之荡波	And the valley waters quiver to the sound.	Streams and valleys from this churn and billow.	Streams and valleys billow, shaken by it.	à ce bruit les fleuves gonflent leurs aux
巴渝宋蔡	The dances of Bayu, of Song and Cai,	The music of Ba-Yu, Song and Cai,	[Musicians] from Pa, Yü, Sung and Ts'ai,	Les airs de Pa-yu, du Song et du Ts'ai
淮南干遮	The Yuzhe song of Huainan,	The 'Ganzhe' of Huainan,	Kan-che from Huai-nan,	le Kan-tchö du Sud de la Houai
文成颠歌	The airs of Dian and Wencheng,	Songs of Wencheng and Dian,	Songs from Wen-ch'eng and from Tien,	les chants de Wen-tch'eng et de Tien
族居递奏	One after another in groups they perform,	Are presented in masse, performed en suite.	Are presented in groups, performed in alternation,	s'élèvent nombreux, alternant leurs mélodies
金鼓迭起	Sounding in succession the gongs and drums	Bells and drums alternately sound,	Bells and drums come forth here and then,	sur la cloche et le tambour tour à tour surgissent
铿枪闐鞀	Whose shrill clash and dull booming	Their cling-clang and rat-a-tat-tat	Cling-clang, tang-ta,	et ding et dong, rapataplan
洞心骇耳	Pierce the heart and startle the ear.	Pierce the heart and startle the ears.	Piercing the heart, they startle the ears.	ils pénètrent jusqu'au coeur, jettent l'effroi dans les oreilles.

Table 1:
Four Translations of the 'Ode to the Imperial Park' 《上林赋》 in Comparison

第一百二十三卷 *Records of Dàyuān* 《大宛列传》

The section on Dàyuān 大宛, a Central Asian region far to the west of the Western Hàn 西汉 empire, contains Zhāng Qiān 张骞's observations on China's trade with the western regions, indicating a trade route from India to China passing through Yúnnán.

骞曰：“臣在大夏时，见邛竹杖、蜀布。问曰：‘安得此？’

大夏国人曰：‘吾贾人往市之身毒。身毒在大夏东南可数千里。其俗土著，大与大夏同，而卑湿暑热云。其人民乘象以战。其国临大水焉。’

以骞度之，大夏去汉万二千里，居汉西南。

今身毒国又居大夏东南数千里，有蜀物，此其去蜀不远矣。

今使大夏，从羌中，险，羌人恶之；少北，则为匈奴所得；从蜀宜径，又无寇。

天子既闻大宛及大夏、安息之属皆大国，多奇物，土著，颇与中国同业，而兵弱，贵汉财物；其北有大月氏、康居之属，兵强，可以赂遗设利朝也。

且诚得而以义属之，则广地万里，重九译，致殊俗，威德遍于四海。

天子欣然，以骞言为然，乃令骞因蜀犍为发闲使，四道并出：出陇，出冉，出徙，出邛、夔，皆各行一二千里。其北方闭氏、笮，南方闭嵩、昆明。

昆明之属无君长，善寇盗，辄杀略汉使，终莫得通。

然闻其西可千馀里有乘象国，名曰滇越，而蜀贾奸出物者或至焉，于是汉以求大夏道始通滇国。

初，汉欲通西南夷，费多，道不通，

Qiān said: ‘When I was in Dàxià, I saw bamboo staffs from Qióng and cloth from Shǔ.’ He asked: ‘Where do they come from?’

The people of Dàxià said: ‘Our merchangs go to Shēndú to trade. Shēndú is several thousand *lǐ* south-east of Dàxià. Their customs and people are largely similar to Dàxià, but their lands are low, wet and hot in summer’ and so on. Their people ride elephants in war and their lands are close to the sea.

As Qiān had measured it, Dàxià was twelve thousand *lǐ* from the Hàn, living to the south-west of the Hàn.

The state of Shēndú is several thousand *lǐ* south-east from Dàxià, they have goods from Shǔ and it is not far to Shǔ.

When it comes to sending envoys to Dàxià, passing through the Qiāng regions is dangerous, as the Qiāng people hate them; the north belongs to the Xiōngnú; passing through Shǔ is easy as there are no bandits.

When the emperor had heard Dàyuān, Dàxià, and Ānxī were such important states, with many wonderous good, and their inhabitants inclined to trade with China, but their armies weak and in need of the riches of the Hàn, and that in their north were the Dàyuèzhī, subordinate to the Kāngjū with a strong army, he considered it was possible to use bribes for the benefit of the empire.

If they were subordinated to the empire, it would expand the realm by tens of thousands of *lǐ*, in faraway lands of strange customs power and virtue would stretch to the four seas.

The emperor was overjoyed and accepted the words of Qiān, so he appointed Qiān as secret envoy to Shǔ and Jiānwèi. They set out on four routes at the same time: from Máng, from Rǎn, from Xǐ and from Qióng and Bó, each journey one or two thousand *lǐ*. In the north they were blocked by the Dǐ and Zuó, in the south by the Xī and Kūnmíng.

The Kūnmíng had no rulers, they were good at robbery and frequently killed the envoys of the Hàn, so it was not possible to establish a road.

However, when he heard that more than a thousand *lǐ* to the west was a state where they ride elephants called Diānyuè, that Shǔ merchants and smugglers reached, the Hàn desired to open a road to Dàxià beginning by penetrating kingdom of Diān.

Initially, the Hàn attempted to establish contacts with the western

史记 215

史记 220

史记 225

史记 230

史记 235

史记 240

史记 245

罢之。

and southern *Yi*, but the costs were high and the roads were impassable, so it was abandoned.

及张騫言可以通大夏，乃复事西南夷。

But as Zhāng Qiān said that it was possible to establish a road to Dàxià, the efforts with the western and southern *Yi* were renewed.

第一百二十九卷 **Biographies of Merchants** 《货殖列传》

The section on *huòzhí* 货殖, i.e. men who enriched themselves, begins with details of geography and mentions the regions of Diān 滇, i.e. Yúnnán, and Bó 犍, a region thought to be around north-eastern Yúnnán and Yībīn 宜宾 in Sìchuān. The latter had a reputation for juvenile boy servants called *Bó tóng* 犍僮.

史记 255 南则巴蜀。巴蜀亦沃野，地饶卮、姜、丹沙、石、铜、铁、竹、木之器。南御滇犍，犍僮。

In the south [of the Chinese heartland] are Bā and Shǔ. Bā and Shǔ have fertile lands, their lands abundant in red dye, ginger, cinnabar, stone, copper, iron, bamboo and wooden implements. In the south are the Diān and Bó, with boy servants from Bó.

西近邛笮，笮马、旄牛。

In the west it borders Qióng and Zuó with horses from Zuó and yaks.

r254: red dye] Zhī 卮 is a plant product for making red dye, used for make-up. Watson (1961), p. 441 translates it as 'gardenias for making dye', Nienhauser (2006), vol. 11, p. 277 follows this.

r255: stone] Watson (1961), p. 441 skips this character, Nienhauser (2006), vol. 11, p. 277 translates it as 'precious stones', which I think is unlikely. As the segmentation with 丶 is of course not present in the ancient text it could also mean implements made from stone, copper etc.

4 Glossary

- Ānhuī** 安徽: since 1661 a province of China –
- Ānxī** 安息: ancient state – see page 17
- Bā** 巴: name of a state during the Warring States period, later used to refer to the eastern part of present-day Sichuan – see pages 6–9, 11, 18
- Bāyú** 巴渝: – see page 13
- Báimǎ** 白马: state mentioned in the 《史记》 – see page 7, 11
- Bǎi Shǐchāng** 柏始昌: general during the Hàn dynasty – see page 10
- Bó** 夔: ancient tribal group – see pages 8, 9, 17, 18
- Bó tóng** 夔僮: boy servants from Bó, young slaves from Bó – see page 18, 19
- Bówàng Hóu** 博望侯: marquis of Bówàng, – see page 10, 19
- Cháng’ān** 长安: historic city, present-day Xiān – see page 8
- Cháng È** 常頰: official during the Qín dynasty – see page 7
- Chángqiāng** 尝羌: name of the king of Diān 滇 – see page 10
- Chángshā** 长沙: historic state, in present-day Húnán – see page 8
- Chéngdū** 成都: capital of Shǔ 蜀, during the Táng dynasty center of administration for Jiànnán 剑南 – see page 12
- Chíyì Hóu** 驰义侯: marquis of Chíyì, general of Nányuè 南越, later named marquis of Chíyì by the Hàn, honorific for Hé Yí 何遗 – see page see 何遗
- Chǔ** 楚: – see page 12
- Chǔ Guó** 楚国: kingdom of Chǔ, ancient Chinese state before the Qin dynasty, 704–223BCE – see page 7, 19
- Chǔ Wēi Wáng** 楚威王: king Wēi of Chǔ, king of Chǔ – see page 7, 19
- Dàxià** 大夏: Bactria, – see pages 10, 12, 17–19
- Dàxíng** 大行: senior messenger, ‘members of the Ministry of Justice (ch’iu-kuan) who made arrangements for the visits and receptions of Feudal Lords (chu-hou) at the royal court’, see Hucker (1985), 5957 – see page 8, 19
- Dàyuān** 大宛: ancient region to the west of China – see page 17
- Dàyuèzhī** 大月氏: ancient group – see page 17
- Dǐ** 氏: – see page 7, 17
- Diān** 滇: one of the earliest polities known to China in present-day Yúnnán, later also a geographical term for the region – see pages 12, 13, 18, see 滇国
- Diān Wáng Zhī Yìn** 《滇王之印》: Seal of the King of Diān 滇, important relic from the kingdom of Diān, mentioned in the 《史记》 – see page 11, 19
- Diānchí** 滇池: Lake Dian, large lake in the center of Yúnnán, south of present-day Kūnmíng 昆明 – see pages 7, 11, 19
- Diān Guó** 滇国: kingdom of Diān, historic polity in Yunnan, centered around Diānchí, flourishing at the time of the Hàn dynasty – see pages 6, 7, 10–12, 17, 19
- Diān Wáng** 滇王: king of Diān, – see page 7, 19
- Diānyuè** 滇越: region in western Yúnnán, first mentioned in the 《史记》 – see page 17

- Dōng Yuè** 东越: eastern Yuè, non-Chinese group in southern China – see page 8, 20
- Duō Tóng** 多同: – see page 9
- Ērhǎi** 洱海: lake Ērhǎi, highland lake in western Yúnnán with the center of Nánzhào on its western side. It was also called Xīěr 西洱, Xīěrhé 西洱河 – see page 20
- fù** 赋: Ode, ancient poetry form – see page 12, 20
- Gétiānshì** 葛天氏: Gétiān clan, tribal group mentioned in the 《史记》 – see page 13, 20
- Gōngsūn Hóng** 公孙弘: – see page 6, 9
- Gǒujiàng** 枸酱: betel juice, – see pages 8, 12, 20
- Guǎnghàn** 广汉: – see page 11
- Guǎngzhōu** 广州: south-eastern region of China –
- Hàn Cháo** 汉朝: Hàn dynasty, Chinese dynasty, 202 BCE–220 – see page 5, 20
- Hàn** 汉: Hàn, main ethnic group of China – see pages 8–12, 17, 20
- Hàn Wǔdì** 汉武帝: Hàn emperor Wǔ, Hàn dynasty emperor Wǔ, 140–87 BCE – see page 13, 20
- Hé** 河: – see page 9
- Hé Yí** 何遗: – see page 10, 19
- Hóu** 侯: marquis, ‘Marquis, a title of nobility, usually next in prestige only after Prince (wang) and Duke (kung), sometimes hereditary, sometimes conferred for special merit; usually prefixed with a geographic name designating the noble’s real or hypothetical fief,’ see Hucker (1985), 2205 – see pages 9–11, 20
- Hòu Hàn** 后汉: later Hàn dynasty, second period of the Hàn dynasty – see page 10, 20
- Hú** 胡: – see page 9
- Huáinán** 淮南: region in present-day Ānhuī 安徽, literally meaning ‘south of the Huái [river]’ – see page 13
- Jiānwèi** 犍为: – see pages 9, 11, 17
- Jiànnán** 剑南: Táng dynasty commandery in present-day Sichuān –
- Jiànyuán** 建元: reign period of Hàn Wǔdì 汉武帝, 140–135 – see page 8
- Jiāngjūn** 将军: general, ‘throughout history the most common term for the commander of a substantial body of troops, whether a regular officer of the standing army or the ad hoc commander of a special force organized for a campaign; occurs with many kinds of prefixes,’ see Hucker (1985), 694 – see page 7, 20
- Jūlán** 且兰: – see page 11
- Jùn** 郡: prefecture, historic administrative area, term in use before the Táng – see pages 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 20
- Kāngjū** 康居: ancient group – see page 17
- Kūnmíng** 昆明: Salt producing area of present-day 盐源 – see pages 7, 10, 17
- Láojiàn** 劳寢: – see page 11
- Lìng** 令: administrator, check with hucker – see page 8, 20
- Lǚ Jiā** 吕嘉: –
- Lǚ Yuè** 吕越: Lǚ Jiā from Nányuè, – see page 10, 20
- Mán** 蛮: historically a generic term for non-Chinese people in the southwest –
- Mányí** 蛮夷: Mányí, collective term for non-Chinese groups in south-west China – see pages 5, 7, 20

- Máng 駘**: – see pages 7, 11, 17
- Mímò 靡莫**: non-Chinese group in southern China – see page 6, 11
- Nán Yí 南夷**: southern Yí, general term for non-Chinese people south of China – see pages 9, 11, 12, 21
- Nányuè 南越**: southern Yuè, non-Chinese people in southern China – see pages 8, 10, 11, 21
- Nánzhào 南诏**: southern *zhào*, regional power with its center on Ērhǎi during the 8th and 9th centuries – see page 5, 21
- Pānyú 番禺**: capital of ??, in the region of present-day Guǎngzhōu 广州 – see page 8, 12
- Píngjīn Hóu 平津侯**: marquis of Píngjīn, official mentioned in the 《史记》 – see page 6, 21
- Póyáng 番禺**: – see page 8, *see* 番禺
- Póyáng 番禺**: – see page 8
- Qiánzhōng 黔中**: ancient Chinese district, in present-day eastern Guìzhōu and western Húnán – see page 7
- Qiāng 羌**: ethnic group in western Sichuan – see page 17
- Qín 秦**: – see page 8, 12
- Qín Cháo 秦朝**: Qín dynasty, – see page 21
- Qín Guó 秦国**: state of Qín, early Chinese kingdom, united China for the first time as the Qín Cháo 秦朝 – see page 7, 21
- Qióng 邛**: – see pages 10–12, 17, 18
- Qióng Dū 邛都**: Qióng district, tribal region in present-day southern Sìchuān – see pages 7, 9, 11, 21
- Rǎn 冉**: – see page 7, 11
- Rǎn 冉**: – see page 17
- Rǎnmáng 冉駘**: – see page 11
- Shànglín Fù 《上林賦》**: ‘*Ode to the Imperial Park*’, poem by Sīmǎ Xiāngrú 司马相如 – see pages 12, 13, 21
- Shēndú 身毒**: ancient reference to India – see page 17
- Shēndú Guó 身毒国**: state of Shēndú, an ancient reference to India – see page 10, 21
- Shěnlí 沈犁**: – see page 11
- Shǐjì 《史记》**: ‘*Records of the Historian*’, – see pages 5, 6, 11–13, 21
- Shǔ 蜀**: name of a state during the Warring States period, later used to refer to the western part of present-day Sìchuān – see pages 6–11, 17, 18
- Shǔjùn 蜀郡**: Shǔ prefecture, historical administrative unit in present-day Sìchuān, its name multiple times changing to Yìzhōu – see page 21
- Shuòfāng 朔方**: – see page 9
- Sīmǎ Qiān 司马迁**: Hàn dynasty historian, author of the 《史记》 – see page 5
- Sīmǎ Xiāngrú 司马相如**: Xihàn 西汉 poet and politician, his biography and some of his works are included in the 《史记》 – see pages 9, 12, 13
- Sìchuān 四川**: Chinese province – see page 18
- Sòng 宋**: Sòng, Chinese dynasty – see page 13, 21
- Tàishǐ Gōng 太史公**: Grand Historian, Sīmǎqiān 司马迁’s self-appellation in the 《史记》 – see page 12, 21

- Tàishǒu** 太守: grand protector, ‘a title commonly awarded chieftains of southern and southwestern aboriginal tribes’. Herman (2009) translates it as ‘governor’, noting that it was a title given to members of the indigenous local elite, see Hucker (1985), 1985 – see page 11, 22
- Táng Cháo** 唐朝: Táng dynasty, Chinese dynasty, 618–907 – see page 22
- Táng** 唐: Táng, Chinese dynasty contemporary with Nánzhào, 618–907 – see page 22
- Táng Méng** 唐蒙: – see page 8, 9
- Táotáng Shì** 陶唐氏: Táotáng clan, tribal group mentioned in the 《史记》 – see page 13, 22
- Tóngshī** 同师: – see page 7, 8
- Tóulán** 头兰: – see page 11
- Tǔbō** 吐蕃: Tibetan empire –
- wáng** 王: king, ‘King, title commonly used in reference to rulers of foreign states and alien peoples’. It is important to note that this does not have the meaning of a ruler equal to the Chinese emperor, it is a designation of a ruler below him, when used in titles conferred by China, the ruler of a vassal state, see Hucker (1985), 7634 – see page 22
- Wáng Huī** 王恢: Xihàn 西汉 official – see page 8
- Wáng Rányú** 王然于: – see page 10, 11
- Wáng Yǐng** 王郢: – see page 8
- Wénchéng** 文成: state north-east of China, Hervouet (1972), p. 52 – see page 13
- Wénwáng** 文王: king Wén, – see page 12, 22
- Wènshān** 汶山: mount Wèn, – see page 11, 22
- Wǔchǐdào** 五尺道: five-foot road, – see page 7, 22
- Wǔdū** 武都: region in present-day Gānsù 甘肃 – see page 11
- Xī** 崑: – see page 7, 17
- Xīhàn** 西汉: Western Hàn, dynastic period, 202BCE–8CE – see pages 12, 17, 21, 22
- Xīnán Yí** 西南夷: western and southern Yí, a term first appearing in the 《史记》 denoting non-Chinese people in present-day Sìchuān, Guìzhōu and Yúnnán. It is often translated as ‘southwestern barbarians’, but it seems to be a short form referring to both 西夷 and 南夷, see Yang (2004), pp. 5–6 – see pages 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 17, 18, 22
- Xīnányílièchuán** 《西南夷列传》: Records of the Western and Southern Yí, – see page 5, 22
- Xī Yí** 西夷: western Yí, – see pages 9, 10, 12, 22
- Xǐ** 徙: – see page 7, 17
- Xiōngnú** 匈奴: Xiōngnú, tribal group in north China – see pages 9, 10, 17, 22
- Yèláng** 夜郎: ancient powerful political entity in the region of present-day Guìzhōu – see pages 6, 8–12
- Yèyú** 牂榆: – see page 7
- Yí** 夷: one of the collective terms for non-Chinese people in the south-west – see page 5, see 蛮
- Yībīn** 宜宾: city in southern Sìchuān – see page 18
- Yìzhōu** 益州: Yìzhōu, one of thirteen administrative regions created by Hàn Wǔdì 汉武帝 in 106BCE, covering the region of present-day Sìchuān with its center at 成

- 都. In 742 it became Shǔjùn 蜀郡, but the name remained in use to refer to 成都 – see page 12, 22
- Yùshǐ Dàfū** 御史大夫: censor-in-chief, ‘head of the Censorate (yü-shih t’ai) and one of the most eminent officials of the central government, in administrative charge of Censors (yü-shih) of many sorts who maintained disciplinary surveillance over the officialdom, freely impeaching any official for public or private misconduct’, see Hucker (1985), 8181 – see page 9, 23
- Yùzhāng** 豫章: – see page 8
- Yuánfēng** 元封: reign period of Hàn Wǔdì 汉武帝, 110–104BC – see page 11
- Yuánshòu** 元狩: reign period of Hàn Wǔdì 汉武帝, 122–117 – see page 10
- Yuèxī** 越巂: Prefecture belonging to Jiànnán. Called Xīzhōu 618-742 then Yuèxī 742-756, in 757 invaded and captured by Nánzhào 吐蕃, later reestablished as 越巂 789-865 – see page 11
- Yúnnán** 云南: at the time of the Táng dynasty the name for the geographic region south of its Jiannan district – see pages 5, 7, 8, 17–19
- Zānggē** 牂牁: the region of present-day Guìzhōu – see page 8, 11
- Zāngkē river** 牂柯江: Zāngkē river, – see pages 8, 9, 23
- Zhànguó** 战国: Warring States, Warring States period, the time before the Qin dynasty, 475-221 BCE – see page 23
- Zhāng Qiān** 张骞: – see pages 10, 17, 18
- zhào** 诏: *zhào*, term for a local ruler or his realm – see page 23
- Zhōnglángjiāng** 中郎将: commandant, earlier: ‘leader of court gentlemen’, during the Táng dynasty: commandant, see Hucker (1985), 1581 – see page 9, 23
- Zhōu** 周: Zhōu, 1022–256 BCE, early Chinese dynasty – see page 12, 23
- Zhǔfù** 主父: – see page 6
- Zhuāng Qiāo** 庄蹻: Chǔ 楚 general who became king of Diān[napi] during the Warring States period – see page 7
- Zhuāng Wáng** 庄王: king Zhuāng, – see page 7, 23
- Zuó** 笮: ancient region in present-day Sìchuān – see page 18
- Zuó** 笮: non-Chinese group, thought to have lived in present-day southern Sìchuān, see Fāng Guóyú 方国瑜 (1987), pp. 13–14 – see pages 7–9, 11, 17

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