
The ‘*Vimalakīrti Sutra Scroll Painting*’

An Annotated Translation of Part of the 119 CE 《维摩诘经》画卷

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2023

The Yúnnán Papers

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1 Introduction

The ‘*Vimalakīrti Sutra Scroll Painting*’ 《维摩诘经》画卷⁽¹⁾ is a Buddhist devotional painting given by the prime minister of the Dàlǐ kingdom 大理国 to a Sòng envoy as a gift in 1119 CE. It is a very rare, well-preserved Buddhist scroll made in Yúnnán during the Sòng dynasty.⁽²⁾

The work is painted in gold and silver on purple-dyed silk with an illuminated frontispiece, similar to a wallpainting at Dūnhuáng 敦煌;⁽³⁾ a part of the *Vimalakīrti Sutra* 《维摩诘经》; a colophon written by the Dàlǐ prime minister Gāo Tàimíng 高泰明 expressing his best wishes for the departing envoy; followed by an exact date and the name of the supervising abbot, allowing a clear attribution and dating.

The scroll was in China at least until the beginning of the 20th century;⁽⁴⁾ in 1947 it was purchased from a private collector for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, USA, where it remains.⁽⁵⁾ Otherwise, its history is unknown.

1.1 Historical Background

The work was given as a parting gift to a Sòng ambassador upon leaving the Dàlǐ kingdom. His mission took place during the reign of Sòng emperor Huīzōng 宋徽宗, who ruled 1100–1125, when contacts between the two powers resumed after a long hiatus.⁽⁶⁾

The ‘*Sòng History*’ 《宋史》 recorded that, in 1115 CE, the Dàlǐ kingdom had requested permission for a tribute mission. That mission arrived in the Chinese capital two years later, in 1117. In return, the then ruler of the Dàlǐ kingdom Duàn Héyù 段和誉, who ruled 1108–1147, was given a number of prestigious, if nominal, titles in return:⁽⁷⁾

政和五年，广州观察使黄璘奏，南诏大理国慕义怀徕，愿为臣妾，欲听其

In the 5th year of Zhèng Hé, the investigating commissioner of Guǎngzhōu Huáng Lín reported, that the Nánzhào Dàlǐ kingdom

r1: In the 5th year of Zhèng Hé] 1115.

⁽¹⁾ The work does not have title, 《维摩诘经》画卷 is the title given to it in Zhāng Zēngqí 张增祺 (2010), p. 365.

⁽²⁾ Another, according to eyewitnesses, comparable work, a copy of the Diamond Sutra 《金刚般若波罗密经》, was discovered during restoration work at the Qiānxún pagoda 千寻塔: but after being exposed to sunlight it faded quickly. This sacred work was mentioned in Qiū Xuānchōng 邱宣充 (1988) (contained in Yáng Shìyù 杨世钰 and Zhào Yīnsōng 赵寅松 (2009), vol. 5, p. 2539), and Matsumoto (1991), p. 83, but it seems that not a single images of the work exists. Lutz saw the scroll in 1987 and noted that it was difficult to discern even the composition of the frontispiece (Lutz (1991b), pp. 92–93).

⁽³⁾ The Dūnhuáng 敦煌 painting, which itself was based on a work by the famous painter Gù Kǎizhī 顾恺之 (Bunker (1968)), is reproduced in Fong (1992), p. 331. The execution of the work, in gold on dyed paper bears similarity to fragments of the Parinirvāṇa Sūtra discovered at Dūnhuáng 敦煌 (held at the British Library Or.8210/S.5720A), see Agnew, Reed and Ball (2016), pp. 230–231.

⁽⁴⁾ The scholar and private collector Luō Zhènyù 罗振玉 saw and described it, see Zhāng Zēngqí 张增祺 (2010), p. 365.

⁽⁵⁾ The work is available online at <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/39958>.

⁽⁶⁾ In 965 CE Sòng emperor Tàizǔ 宋太祖 had declared the Dàdù river 大渡河 the southern border of his empire, see Yang (2004), pp. 89–93. This event is also narrated, in romanticized form, in the 《南诏野史》, however for the year 967 CE. The resumption of contacts did not last, as the ‘*Sòng History*’ 《宋史》 records the next contacts with Dàlǐ only for the year 1033, followed by another long interruption.

⁽⁷⁾ In the 488th *juàn* of the 《宋史》, the text is included in Fāng Guóyú 方国瑜 (1998), vol. 1, p. 478.



Illustration 1:
Illuminated Frontispiece of the 《维摩诘经》

入贡。

宋史⁵ 七年二月，至京师，贡马三百八十四及麝香、牛黄、细毡、碧玕山诸物。

制以其王段和誉为金紫光禄大夫、检校司空、云南节度使、上柱国、大理国王。
宋史¹⁰

admired righteousness and cherished consolation, desired to become a vassal, wishing to be allowed to make a tribute mission. [...] In the 2nd month of the 7th year [of Zhèng hé], [the tribute mission] reached the capital, bringing three hundred and eighty-four horses, musk, bezoar, fine felts, *bigānshān* and other goods.

It was arranged to appoint king Duàn Héyù as lord of the golden seal and purple ribbon, acting minister of works, military commissioner of Yúnnán, supreme pillar of the state, and king of the Dàlǐ kingdom.

A Sòng envoy then likely travelled to Dàlǐ to convey the appointment letters and on his departure received the 《维摩诘经》画卷 as a parting gift. However, this mission is not recorded in Chinese documents; from the scroll only the envoy's family name is known.⁽⁸⁾

However, it is interesting to note that the author of the colophon, the above-mentioned Gāo Tàimíng, was a member of the Gāo clan 高氏, an influential multi-generational sponsor of Buddhist in the Dàlǐ kingdom that vied with Dàlǐ's ruling Duàn clan 段氏 for power, some even claiming that the real power continued to rest with the Gāo clan after the interregnum of Gāo Shēngtài 高升泰 in 1094–1095 CE.⁽⁹⁾

r3: admired righteousness and cherished consolation] i.e. implying the Dàlǐ kingdom had absorbed Chinese cultural values and wished to be governed by the Chinese emperor.

r5: In the 2nd month of the 7th year [of Zhèng hé]] 1117.

r6: the capital] that would have been Biànjīng 汴京.

r7: bezoar] ox gallstones, *calculus bovis*, a precious Chinese medicine.

r7: *bigānshān*] unclear item, appears to be a precious stone, Bielenstein (2005), p. 269 simply translates the term as 'gems'.

⁽⁸⁾ see page 11.

⁽⁹⁾ For the history of the Gāo clan 高氏 see Wèi Yùfán 魏玉凡 and Niè Géming 聂葛明 (2015) and the related dissertation by Wèi Yùfán 魏玉凡 (2016).

Megan Bryson notes about the relationship of between the two families:

Most surviving sources for Dali-kingdom Buddhism come from the court, but the court included more than just the Duan rulers. While it is clear that the Duan family sponsored multiple Buddhist projects, the Gao family did as well. Among the handful of extant inscriptions from the Dali kingdom, most concern members of the Gao clan and their Buddhist devotion. [...] It is only with Gao Shengtai's son Gao Taiming 泰明 (d.u.) that we find an example of Gao Buddhist activity, in this case sponsoring a manuscript of the Vimalakīrti Sūtra in gold ink on indigo silk as a gift for a Song envoy in 1118. Over the twelfth century Gao Taiming's descendants continued to serve as high officials who suppressed rebellions and sponsored Buddhist structures. [...] [The] Gao family was involved in a variety of Buddhist projects that touched on Chan, the Vimalakīrti Sūtra, a dhāraṇī pillar with esoteric imagery, and the building of temples tied to both esoteric and Chan monks. (Bryson (2022), pp. 96–98)

Gāo Tàimíng, or one of his descendants, is also mentioned on a bronze plate from either 1116 or 1141 CE that served as a cover piece for a scripture stashed away in the Qiānxún pagoda 千寻塔.⁽¹⁰⁾ The inscription notes that the duke of Píngguó 平国公, a title held conferred Gāo Tàimíng by the Sòng,⁽¹¹⁾ sponsored the restoration of Buddhist treasures.⁽¹²⁾

1.2 The Vimalakīrti Sūtra

The Vimalakīrti Sūtra 《维摩诘经》 narrates a famous, but likely fictional, theological debate between the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (in Chinese: Wénshū 文殊) and the erudite layperson Vimalakīrti (in Chinese: Wéimójié 维摩诘).

In topics the sutra ranges from 'the nature of Vimalakīrti's ailment and the power of the Buddha to the transcendental nature of the Buddha's physical being' and it discusses the 'Buddhist doctrine of nonduality, the complementarity and mutual identification of reality and nonreality'.⁽¹³⁾

Fong (1992) notes,

the Vimalakīrti Sūtra found special favor with the Chinese, at it deals with such topics as being and nonbeing, appearance and reality, and the meaninglessness of such distinctions.⁽¹⁴⁾

The selection of the 《维摩诘经》画卷 as a diplomatic gift shows that the Vimalakīrti Sūtra had become a popular Buddhist scripture during the Dàlǐ kingdom. This is also illustrated by the inclusion of the debate in a scene of the 1173 CE 'Long Roll of Buddhist Images' 《梵像卷》, see illustration 2.⁽¹⁵⁾

⁽¹⁰⁾ the central of the Three Pagodas 三塔 at the important Chóngshèng temple 崇圣寺.

⁽¹¹⁾ according to the 'Unofficial History of Nánzhào' 《南诏野史》, see page 11.

⁽¹²⁾ The find is described in Qiū Xuānchōng 邱宣充 (1981), where also the text on the plate is given. It is only partly readable and uses a number of variant characters 别字, making it difficult to reproduce. This is the approximate text: 时辛酉岁平国公平示省事甫再修元重行信拓招校语治亲手作组成都典校金师彦贲李珠睬智门拈子女其李胜隆新建铁柱四林治口殊佑盖三取足坚固口口人世永人可代流名贤妇保十春茶盛孝男当君宠臣敬者口口. For further research: Qiū Xuānchōng 邱宣充 (1981), pp. 254–255 (also in Yáng Shìyù 杨世钰 and Zhào Yīnsōng 赵寅松 (2009), vol. 5, pp. 2504–2505), Lutz (1991a), p. 140, Lutz (1991b), p. 68.

⁽¹³⁾ All quotes from Fong (1992), p. 330. This introduction is also based on Thurman (1976) and Watson (1997).

⁽¹⁴⁾ Fong (1992), p. 330.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Images 59 to 61 in Chapin and Soper (1971) and Lǐ Línàn 李霖灿 (1982).

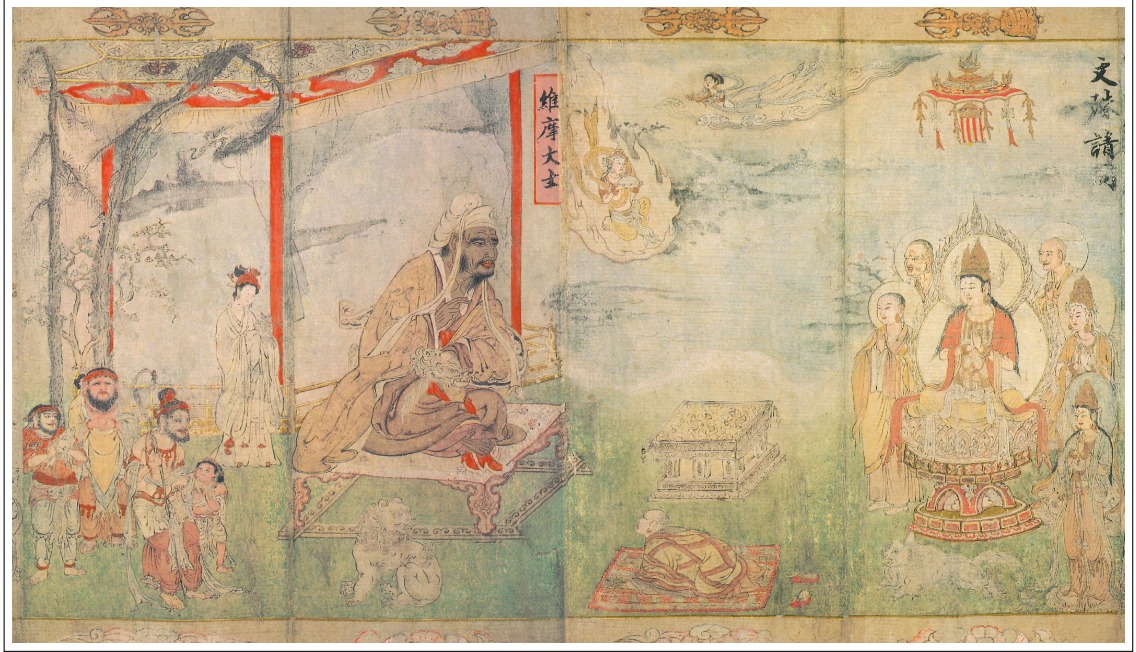


Illustration 2:
The Vimalakīrti Debate in the 1173 CE 《梵像卷》
Composite image from images in Lǐ Línchǎn 李霖灿 (1982).

The text, thought to date back to the 1st century BCE, was translated from Sanskrit⁽¹⁶⁾ into Chinese a number of times, first in 406 CE. This first translation is known as the Kumārajīva (in Chinese: Jiūmóluōshén 鸠摩罗什) version.⁽¹⁷⁾

The text of the ‘Vimalakīrti Sutra Scroll Painting’ 《维摩诘经》画卷 discussed here is an excerpt from this Kumārajīva version.⁽¹⁸⁾ At its beginning it describes Vimalakīrti 维摩诘 (translation by Burton Watson):

深达实相，善说法要，辩才无滞，智慧无碍；一切菩萨法式悉知，诸佛秘藏无不得入；降伏众魔，游戏神通；其慧方便，皆已得度。👁

He is profoundly enlightened in the true nature of reality and skilled at preaching the essentials of the Law. His eloquence never falters, his wisdom is free of impediments. He understands all the rules of bodhisattva conduct, and nothing in the secret storehouse of the Buddhas is beyond his grasp. He has overcome the host of devils and disports himself with transcendental powers. In wisdom and

[4: 👁] Text in traditional characters from the Metropolitan Museum of Art website at <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/39958>.

⁽¹⁶⁾ The original Sanskrit text was long thought to be lost, but in 1999 Takahashi found a complete copy at the Potala Palace in Lhasa. The Sanskrit text is published in Takahashi (2006).

⁽¹⁷⁾ For background on Kumārajīva, see Yü (2020), pp. 21–23.

⁽¹⁸⁾ So the Vimalakīrti Sutra 《维摩诘经》 is one of the many Buddhist text that had entered the Dàlǐ region from Táng and Sòng territory, see Bryson (2016), p. 72.

expedient means he has mastered all there is to know. (Translation by Watson (1997), p. 64.)

2 About this Translation

The Vimalakīrti Sutra 《维摩诘经》 scroll was first described in Lǐ Líncàn 李霖灿 (1967)⁽¹⁹⁾ and later in Fong (1992). It is briefly discussed in Zhāng Zēngqí 张增祺 (2010), pp. 364–365.

The website of the Metropolitan Museum of Art⁽²⁰⁾ provides a high-quality photographic reproduction, a brief introduction, the entire text and a translation of the colophon by Shi-yee Liu. The images included here are sourced from that website.⁽²¹⁾

3 Annotated Translation

3.1 Frontispiece 卷头插画

The frontispiece contains a short title on the left hand side, see illustration 1.

南无维摩诘会

Homage to the Vimalakīrti Assembly

Then follow part V to IX of the 《维摩诘经》, which are not translated here. Watson (1997) has a full translation.

3.2 Colophon 题署

At the end of the scroll is a colophon giving its context and allowing its precise dating, see the left part of illustration 3.

大理国相国公高泰明 致心为

大宋国奉使钟□□造此维摩经壹部赞
祝将

The prime minister of the Dàlǐ kingdom, the honourable Gāo Tàimíng, sincerely made this section of the Vimalakīrti Sutra for the envoy of the Great Sòng, Zhōng, wishing him, as he is about to com-

[1: 南无] The website of the Metropolitan Museum of Art has this as *kāiyuán* 开元 (<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/39958>), which makes no sense, *nāmó* 南无 is a very common Buddhist salutation. Zhāng Zēngqí 张增祺 (2010), p. 364 transcribes it correctly.

[2: 大理国相国公高泰明] Note that 国, and not 國, is used in 大理国, but 國 is used in 宋國. For an explanation of the significance see page 11.

[3: □□] On the scroll, see illustration 3, is a blank space for two (or three?, Lǐ Líncàn 李霖灿 (1967), p. 3 places three □ in his transcription, see below page 11.) characters, surrounded by perfectly legible characters, as if the missing characters had never been written or later deliberately rubbed out.

r1: Homage] *nāmó* 南无 is a loanword from Sanskrit नमस्, its meaning is a humble salutation.

⁽¹⁹⁾ That booklet contains a Chinese part and an ‘English summary’, which is actually a self-contained work, here cited as Li Lin-Ts’an (1967).

⁽²⁰⁾ <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/39958>.

⁽²¹⁾ They are clearly marked as being in the public domain.

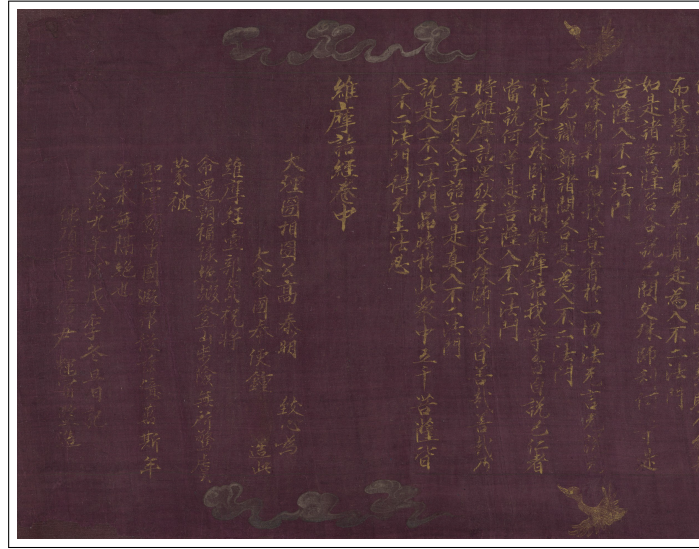


Illustration 3:
Colophon of the 《维摩诘经》

维摩诘 5 命还朝福祿绝巖登山步險无所惊虞
蒙被
圣泽愿中国遐邦从兹亿万斯年
而永无隔绝也
维摩诘 10 文治九年戊戌季冬旦日记
佛顶寺主僧尹辉富监造

plete his mission and return to court, good fortune and long life, no worries nor fears when climbing mountains and passing dangers. With gratitude for the emperor's favours, wishing that China and this distant vassal from now for a myriad of years never sever relations. Recorded on the 1st day of the last month of winter in the 9th year of Wénzhì, wùxū. Made under supervision of the abbot of Fódǐng temple, Yǐn Huífù.

For comparison, the translations by Li Lin-Ts'an and Shi-yee Liu:

Li Lin-Ts'an

The Prime Minister of the Ta-li Kingdom, Kao T'ai-ming, for the Ambassadors of the Great Sung dynasty, Chung (Chen, Huang Chien?) prepared this section of the Vimalakirti Sutra, and hopes that they will be successful in carrying out their mission and will return in safety to their Court, that they will receive blessings and emoluments, and will be free from fear and danger in crossing the mountains and taking so long a journey. May they receive the divine favor to the end that China and the distant Kingdom (Ta-li) henceforth for a thou-

Shi-yee Liu

The Prime Minister of the Dali Kingdom, Gao Taiming, had this Vimalakirti Sutra scroll produced with deep sincerity for Ambassador Zhong of the Great Song dynasty, wishing him, upon his return to court as ordered, the best of fortune and career success and no accident or worry along his perilous journey through the mountains. Gratefully under her divine grace, we hope the distant Chinese state will never be disconnected from us in the

r8: for a myriad of years] The Chinese expression literally means one hundred million ten thousand years.
r10-11: 1st day of the last month of winter in the 9th year of Wénzhì, wùxū] 13th January 1119.

sand myriad years may never break off relations.
Record in Wu-hsu year which in the 9th year of the Wen-shih reign, the last month of Winter, the first day. Yin Yün-fu, abbot of the Fu-ting monastery, encharged with this matter.
(Li Lin-Ts'an (1967), p. 65)

coming myriads of years.
Recorded in the ninth year of the Wenzhi reign era, the first day of the last winter month of the wuxu year.
Produced under the supervision of Yin Huifu, Abbot of the Foding Si Monastery.
(<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/39958>.)

Li Lin-Ts'an points out that 大理囯 was written with the character *guó* 囯 introduced by Wǔ Zétiān 武则天 in 695 CE,⁽²²⁾ but when referring to China the standard form *guó* 國 was used. He explained:

A new Chinese character '囯' (Kingdom), invented by the T'ang dynasty empress Wu Tse-t'ien 武则天 (684–705 A.D.), had been borrowed by the Ta-li people at an early time. By the date of our document, it had come to be used only in a special sense to designate the Ta-li Kingdom; and the normal character '國' (Kingdom), was employed for designating China. From this distinction, we can draw an inference about the mentality of the Ta-li people; for the character '囯' involves an expansive and very proud meaning – representing, as it does, government of the 'eight directions'. (Li Lin-Ts'an (1967), p. 66, note: 囯 is composed of 八 ('eight') over 方 ('direction') inside □.)

The use of the character 囯 remained quite common during the Nánzhào and the Dàlǐ kingdom period, even after this form had fallen out of use in China proper.⁽²³⁾ This was also noted in the Sòng dynasty geographical record *Língwài Dàidá* 《岭外代答》.

Li Lin-Ts'an (1967), p. 66 further points out that the name of the Chinese envoy, of which only his family name Zhōng 钟 is present, is followed three empty spaces, which could have been two names mentioned in the *'Unofficial History of Nánzhào'* 《南诏野史》: Zhōng Zhèn 钟震 and Huáng Jiàn 黄渐:

政和六年遣儒官钟震黄渐赍敕褒高泰明相国忠贞封平国公。👁

In the 6th year of Zhèng Hé, the Chinese officials Zhōng Zhèn and Huáng Jiàn were sent out carrying an edict praising prime minister Gāo Tàimíng as loyal and steadfast and granted him the title duke of Píngguó.

However, judging from the two columns immediately left and right, I think there is only space for two characters. In a note to the, longer, Chinese version of his discussion, Lǐ Líncàn 李霖灿 notes that someone called Zhōu Wàn 周万 on personal inspection had also noted that there was only space for two characters, so either the names in the *'Unofficial History of Nánzhào'* 《南诏野史》 are incorrectly separated, misrecorded or, perhaps most likely, there was only one character, followed by a space, like this: 钟震□.⁽²⁴⁾

[2: 👁] Source text: <https://ctext.org/library.pl?if=en&file=165446&page=91>

r1: In the 6th year of Zhèng Hé] 1116.

r2: Zhōng Zhèn and Huáng Jiàn] In the text is of course no punctuation, but 钟 and 黄 are both family names, suggesting that these were two officials.

⁽²²⁾ Shi Ānchāng 施安昌 (1983).

⁽²³⁾ Zhāng Nán 张楠 (1992).

⁽²⁴⁾ Lǐ Líncàn 李霖灿 (1967), 6, note 1.

4 Glossary

- bìgānshān** 碧玕山: *bìgānshān*, unclear item, appears to be a precious stone, Bielenstein (2005), p. 269 simply translates the term as ‘gems’ – see page 6, 12
- Biànjīng** 汴京: Sòng dynasty capital – see page 6
- Chángjiāng** 长江: Yangzi, major Chinese river – see page 12
- Chéngdū** 成都: capital of Shǔ 蜀, during the Táng dynasty center of administration for Jiànnán 剑南 –
- Chóngshèng Sì** 崇圣寺: Chóngshèng temple, main temple north of Dàlǐ 大理, in front of it are the Three Pagodas 三塔 – see page 7, 12
- Dàdù Hé** 大渡河: Dàdù river, tributary to the Mínjiāng 岷江 in south-west of 成都, during the Sòng dynasty it formed the border to the tribal regions of the south-west. – see page 5, 12
- Dàlǐ** 大理: – see pages 5, 6, 8
- Dàlǐ Guó** 大理国: Dàlǐ kingdom, successor state to Nánzhào, ruled by the Duàn 段 clan, 937–1253 – see pages 5–7, 9, 11, 12
- Dàlǐguówáng** 大理国王: king of the Dàlǐ kingdom, official title given to the ruler of the Dàlǐ kingdom – see page 6, 12
- Duàn Héyù** 段和誉: Dàlǐ kingdom ruler, 1108–1147 – see page 5, 6
- Duàn Shì** 段氏: Duàn clan, ruling clan of Dàlǐ Guó – see page 6, 12
- Duàn Zhèngyán** 段正严: Dàlǐ kingdom ruler, ruled 1108–1147, also known as Duàn Héyù 段和誉 – see page see 段和誉
- Dūnhuáng** 敦煌: one of the most important sites of early Buddhism – see page 5
- 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 12
- Fànxiàng Juàn** 《梵像卷》: ‘Long Roll of Buddhist Images’, a long scroll of Buddhist images painted between 1173 and 1176, see Chapin and Soper (1971) – see page 7, 12
- Fóding Sì** 佛顶寺: Fódǐng temple, temple mentioned on the 《维摩诘经》 – see page 10, 12
- Gāo Shēngtài** 高升泰: short-term ruler of Dàlǐ 大理, 1094–1096 – see page 6
- Gāo Shì** 高氏: Gāo clan, name of powerful clan in Yúnnán – see page 6, 12
- Gāo Tàimíng** 高泰明: Dàlǐguó 大理国 prime minister – see pages 5–7, 9, 11
- Gōng** 公: duke, ‘(1) Duke, from high antiquity the highest title of nobility after wang, normally reserved for members of the ruling family; ... Commonly prefixed with territorial names, ... (2) The Honorable or His Honor, polite term of indirect address applied to someone considered deserving of respect’, see Hucker (1985), 3388 – see page 9, 12
- Gù Kǎizhī** 顾恺之: important painter, 344–406 – see page 5
- Guāncháshǐ** 观察使: investigating commissioner, hucker 792 – see page 5, 12
- Guǎngzhōu** 广州: south-eastern region of China – see page 5
- Huáng Jiàn** 黄渐: Táng dynasty official – see page 11

- Huáng Lín** 黄璘: Sòng dynasty official – see page 5
- Jiǎnxiào Sīkōng** 检校司空: acting minister of works, hucker 804 – see page 6, 13
- Jiédù Shǐ** 节度使: military commissioner, ‘a military title of great historical importance’ ‘during much of the late T’ang period they were virtually autonomous regional governors’, see Hucker (1985), 777 – see page 6, 13
- Jīngāng Bānrùo Bānlūo Mìjīng** 《金刚般若波罗密经》: Diamond Sutra, – see page 5, 13
- Jīnzǐ Guānglù Dàfū** 金紫光禄大夫: lord of the golden seal and purple ribbon, ‘lord of the golden seal and purple ribbon’, see Hucker (1985), 1158 – see page 6, 13
- Jiūmóluōshén** 鸠摩罗什: Kumārajīva, Buddhist monk and important translator of scriptures into Chinese, including the 《维摩诘经》, 344–413 – see page 8, 13
- Língwài Dàidá** 《岭外代答》: ‘*Língwài Dàidá*’, Sòng dynasty geographical work, written by Zhōu Qùfēi 周去非 in 1178 – see page 11, 13
- Luō Zhènyù** 罗振玉: scholar and private collector, see <https://zh.wikipedia.org/zh-hans/罗振玉> – see page 5, 13
- Mínjiāng** 岷江: Mìn river, most important tributary to the Chángjiāng 长江, west of 成都 – see page 13
- Míng Cháo** 明朝: Míng dynasty, Chinese dynasty, 1368–1644 – see page 13
- nāmó** 南无: Homage, a loanword from Sanskrit नमस्, its meaning is a humble salutation – see page 9, 13
- Nánzhào** 南诏: southern zhào, regional power with its center on Ěrhǎi during the 8th and 9th centuries – see pages 5, 11, 13
- Nánzhào Yěshǐ** 《南诏野史》: ‘*Unofficial History of Nánzhào*’, import Míng Cháo 明朝 dynasty recreation of the history of Nánzhào – see pages 5, 7, 11, 13
- Niúhuáng** 牛黄: bezoar, ox gallstones, *calculus bovis*, a precious Chinese medicine – see page 6, 13
- Píngguó Gōng** 平国公: duke of *Píngguó*, title mentioned in the 《南诏野史》 – see page 11, 13
- Píngguó Gōng** 平国公: duke of *Píngguó*, title conferred to Gāo Tàimíng 高泰明 in Dàlǐ kingdom writing variant – see page 7, 13, see 平国公
- Qiānxún Tǎ** 千寻塔: Qiānxún pagoda, the central of the three pagodas in Dàlǐ 大理 – see pages 5, 7, 13
- Sāntǎ** 三塔: Three Pagodas, temple complex north of Dàlǐ 大理 called Chóngshèng Sì 崇圣寺 – see page 7, 13, see 崇圣寺
- Shàngzhùguó** 上柱国: supreme pillar of the state, title given to rulers of Nánzhào and Dàlǐ kingdom (in 1117), see Hucker (1985), 4990 – see page 6, 13
- Sòng Cháo** 宋朝: Sòng dynasty, Chinese dynasty, 960–1279 – see pages 5, 8, 9, 11, 13
- Sòng** 宋: Sòng, Chinese dynasty – see pages 5–7, 13
- Sòng Huīzōng** 宋徽宗: Sòng emperor Huīzōng, Sòng emperor, 1100–1125 – see page 5, 13
- Sòng Shǐ** 《宋史》: ‘*Sòng History*’, Yuán Cháo 元朝 history of the Sòng dynasty – see page 5, 13

- Sòng Tàizǔ** 宋太祖: Sòng emperor Tàizǔ, Second Sòng emperor, ruled 976–997 – see page 5, 14
- Táng Cháo** 唐朝: Táng dynasty, Chinese dynasty, 618–907 – see page 8, 14
- 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 6, 14
- Wéimójié** 维摩诘: Vimalakīrti, legendary erudite Buddhist layperson, engaged in a theological debate with Wénshū 文殊 narrated in the 《维摩诘经》 – see pages 7–9, 14, see 维摩诘经 & 文殊
- Wéimójié Jīng** 《维摩诘经》: Vimalakīrti Sutra, a scroll from the Dàlǐ Guó period, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, USA – see pages 5, 7–9, 14
- Wéimójié Jīng Huàjuàn** 《维摩诘经》画卷: ‘Vimalakīrti Sutra Scroll Painting’, scroll painting from the Dàlǐ kingdom period of the 《维摩诘经》 – see pages 5–8, 14
- Wénshū** 文殊: Mañjuśrī, oldest and most significant bodhisattva, representing wisdom – see page 7, 14
- Wénzhì** 文治: reign period of the 16th king of Dàlǐ kingdom, Duàn Zhèngyán 段正严 – see page 10, see 段正严
- Wǔ Zétiān** 武则天: de-facto ruler of China from 665–705 – see page 11
- Xiāngguó** 相国: prime minister, title mentioned on the 《维摩诘经》 – see pages 5, 9, 11, 14
- Yīn Huīfù** 尹辉富: abbot of Fódǐng temple, mentioned on the 《维摩诘经》 – see page 10, see 佛顶寺
- Yuán Cháo** 元朝: Yuán dynasty, Chinese dynasty, 1279–1368 – see page 14
- Yúnnán** 云南: at the time of the Táng dynasty the name for the geographic region south of its Jiannan district – see page 5, 6
- zhào** 诏: zhào, term for a local ruler or his realm – see page 14
- Zhèng hé** 政和: reign period of Sòng Huīzōng 宋徽宗, 1111–1118 – see pages 5, 6, 11
- Zhōng** 钟: Sòng 宋 envoy, mentioned on the 《维摩诘经》 – see page 9, 11
- Zhōng Zhèn** 钟震: Táng dynasty official – see page 11
- Zhōu Qùfēi** 周去非: author of the Língwài Dàidá 岭外代答 –
- Zhōu Wàn** 周万: name mentioned in Lǐ Líncàn 李霖灿 (1967), no further information given – see page 11

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