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### South China under the Later Han Dynasty

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*Introductory summary:*

At the end of the second century AD, all southern China was formally under the authority of the imperial government of Han. The territory was divided into three provinces, with a substructure of commanderies and counties. One function of the present chapter is to present a geography of the southern provinces, with indication of local topography, communications routes and the products of the region.

For the future, however, the most important development of the Han period was the number of Chinese subjects who migrated into the lands of the south, and established themselves within those territories. As they did so, they placed increasing pressure on the non-Chinese people who had formerly inhabited the region, and brought almost endemic disturbance to the region. The physical occupation of the ground, moreover, was accompanied by a cultural aggression, generally supported by official patronage, which integrated the territory still more firmly into the Chinese cultural sphere.

The pioneer immigrants, however, had not normally come to the south in order to expand the political and administrative control of the central imperial government based in the north; on the contrary, they were often seeking to escape it, and the unit upon which they based their fortunes was the family, the extended clan, or a local

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system of mutual defence. By the end of the second century AD, as the authority of the central government was weakened through political conflict and turmoil in the north, the new settlers in the south held no particular sense of allegiance to the unified empire.

Moreover, whereas in earlier times the territory of the south had been easily and naturally kept under the control of whichever power could dominate the north, the increase in population south of the Yangzi now meant there was the possibility of establishing a separate state, Chinese by culture and tradition, but politically independent from the lands of the Yellow River. Upon this demographic foundation the generals of the south would build their fortunes.

### *Han and the south:*

Chinese civilisation, which first developed in the region of the Yellow River, spread by cultural influence, by colonisation and by conquest to the valley of the Yangzi River and beyond. The expansion was gradual, and the movement was influenced and controlled by climate and by topography, but the essential fact was that the territory and the people could accept the Chinese style of cultivation, so the southern part of the subcontinent was steadily integrated with the cultural world of China.

A central belt of mountains, spur of the great Kunlun massif, runs east from the high ground of Tibet to form the Qin Ling range and the Daba Shan between present-day Sichuan and Shenxi, and the Tongbai and Dabie hills of eastern Hubei. This long divide separates the watersheds of the Yangzi and Yellow Rivers, and divides China into two major geographical regions. The northern climate is influenced by the cold dry air of the Mongolian deserts, but the southern region obtains many of its natural characteristics from the tropical maritime air of the southern and eastern seas. In the north, great deposits of wind-borne and water-borne loess have smoothed the contours of the hills and created the vast expanse of the North China plain; in the south, the Yangzi and its tributaries, while swollen and liable to flood at the times of the mid-year monsoon,

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flow for the most part through narrow valleys among steep and rocky hills.

For the purposes of man, the loess soils of the north offered easy tilling of dry crops such as millet and, later, wheat, while dykes, dams, canals and other earthworks were developed to irrigate the dry land of the Wei River and the west, to provide for transport and, most importantly, to control the flow of the Yellow River and bring great areas of fertile land, formerly liable to flood, under cultivation. Chinese civilisation was thus founded upon settled agriculture maintained by water control, and it is natural and appropriate that a leading role in legend was given to the Great Yu, master of the floods.

In south China, in the Yangzi basin and beyond, the techniques of water control were less critical to development, but they could be applied with great advantage. Water was brought to fill rice paddy-fields on the narrow river plains and in terraces built up the slopes, while flooded lands and marshes by the rivers and lakes were drained and reclaimed. So the Chinese pattern of agriculture and irrigation, first established in the open country of the north, was extended through the lands of the south, even though the chief crop farmed was different and the purposes of water control had largely changed.

In Chapter 129 of his *Shi ji* "Records of the Historian," compiled at the beginning of the first century BC, Sima Qian summarised the difference between north and south:<sup>1</sup>

... in the territories of Chu and Yue, land was broad and the population sparse. For their food they had rice, and for their soup they had fish. Some of them tilled with fire and weeded with water, and the fruit and shellfish were sufficient without need to purchase them in markets. The land is by nature abundant with things to eat, and there is no danger of famine or death. For this reason, even those who are weak or ill can manage to survive, there is no occasion to store up goods, and many of the people remain poor.

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<sup>1</sup> SJ 129, 3270; Swann, *Food and Money*, 447-448.

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Thus, south of the Yangzi and the Huai, there are no people cold or hungry, but there are also no families with as much as a thousand catties of gold.

North of the Yi and the Si, [on the other hand,]<sup>2</sup> the conditions are suitable for the five grains,<sup>3</sup> for the mulberry and the hemp, and for the six kinds of domestic animals.<sup>4</sup> The territory, [however,] is not large, the people are numerous, and they often suffer from flood or from drought. [So] they are interested in hoarding things and storing them.

The latter part of this passage is of less immediate interest to us, though one may observe that across all north China, with its high ratio of people to land, there was an intensity and variety of economic effort, with manufactures and trade, which is clearly compared with the easier life of the south, where even the poor and the handicapped could manage to survive.

In the description of agricultural techniques in the south, "tilling the land with fire" has often been interpreted as reference to slash-and-burn agriculture, but it seems more likely to have described the burning of grass or stubble on established fields during fallow. And "weeding with water" surely refers to the flooding of a paddy-field before the sown rice has sprouted, in order to kill unwanted plants. On this basis, though Sima Qian may have felt some disapproval for the unorthodox techniques of the south, we may reasonably understand that there was an effective and sophisticated tradition of rice cultivation, including transplanting,

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<sup>2</sup> The Yi and Si rivers were northern tributaries of the Huai; Sima Qian has thus defined the frontier between north and south on a line east-west from present-day northern Jiangsu, close to the "old course" (pre-1852) of the Yellow River.

<sup>3</sup> There is disagreement among classical texts as to the enumeration of the five grains. One list contained common millet, spiked millet, beans, wheat and rice; in another version, possibly older, hemp was included in place of rice, which had gained chief importance as the Chinese moved towards the south. See Hsu, *Han Agriculture*, 81 ff and Needham and Bray, *Science and Civilisation VI:2*, 432. In the present text, however, since hemp is mentioned immediately afterwards, it appears that rice must have been amongst the five.

<sup>4</sup>The six kinds of domestic animals are traditionally defined as the horse, the ox, sheep, pigs, dogs and chickens.

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already established in the south by Han times.<sup>5</sup> It was upon this agricultural development that the immigrants and colonists of Han China were able to expand their influence over their non-Chinese neighbours.

Sima Qian also gave more detailed descriptions of the various territories of the empire, but we shall consider those, and the parallel passages from *Han shu*, compiled at the end of the first century BC,<sup>6</sup> in separate sections below. We have, unfortunately, no such regional descriptions of the empire in the time of Later Han,<sup>7</sup> and incidental remarks and discussions in the texts, presented as part of court debate, were often distorted either by the influence of classical tradition or by the requirements of political argument. I have noted elsewhere how the region of Liang province in the northwest, devastated by insurrection and reduced to weakness and poverty in the second century AD, was still being described at that time in the splendid terms of the *Yu gong* chapter, "The Tribute of Yu," from the Confucian classic *Shu jing*.<sup>8</sup> The situation had changed over

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<sup>5</sup>See, for example, Needham and Bray, *Science and Civilisation* VI:2, 591; Hsu, *Han Agriculture*, 120, and 301-302, and *Cambridge Han*, 568-574 Nishijima, "Economic and Social History of Former Han"]. There is reference to the transplanting of rice in the *Simin yueling* "Ordinances of the Months for the Four Peoples," of the second century author Cui Shi: 5.5; Hsu, *Han Agriculture*, 222, referred to by Needham and Bray, *Science and Civilisation* VI:2, 594.

<sup>6</sup>Regional descriptions of the empire are given by *SJ* 129, 3260-70; Swann, *Food and Money*, 437-448, and by *HS* 28B, 1641-70, the Treatise of Geography. *HS* 28B, 1640, explains that this text was prepared in the latter part of the first century BC by the celebrated scholar Liu Xiang, supplemented by a discussion from his contemporary, Zhu Gan, on the customs of the people as influenced by geography. Ban Gu later incorporated this material into his *Han shu*.

<sup>7</sup>The Treatise of Administrative Geography of Sima Biao, preserved in *HHS* 109/19-113/23, consists largely of a list of provinces, commanderies and kingdoms, with their subordinate county units, but without any general description.

The local government of Later Han was arranged in a hierarchy of provinces, commanderies or kingdoms, and counties. These units will be referred to frequently in the following pages of regional description. See also the section "The enforcement of authority" below, and Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 90-104.

<sup>8</sup>See de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 116, translating a portion of the memorial presented in 129 by the official Yu Xu, urging the resettlement of Liang province after the ruinous Qiang rebellion of 107-118: *HHS* 87/77, 2893.

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time, but official scholarship was reluctant to recognise the fact. Considering south China at this period, it is again disconcerting to observe how echoes from *Shi ji*, almost clichés, may be found again in the parallel passages of *Han shu*.<sup>9</sup>

For although the earlier descriptions are valuable, there is no question that the position of south China, and its relationship to the heart-lands of the empire, was changing very considerably during the course of the four centuries of Former and Later Han. The most striking evidence for this may be seen in comparison of the census figures from the Treatise of Geography of *Han shu*, dated to 2 AD, and those preserved in the Treatise of Administrative Geography of *Hou Han shu*, originally part of the *Xu Han shu* of Sima Biao, which reflects the situation about 140 AD. The figures have been discussed and analysed by the modern scholars Lao Gan and Bielenstein, and the general tenor of their information is clear: the registered population of the lands from the Huai River and the Yangzi basin southwards increased markedly in the first century and a half AD. Not only were there more Han Chinese in that area, but they were recorded in many areas which had not formerly been settled by the people of the empire, and they represented a far greater proportion of the whole population of the empire.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Compare, for example, the manner in which *HS* 28B, 1665-70, deals with the lands of the south in similar terms *SJ* 129, 3270, translated above. In particular, *HS* 28B, 1666, describes the region of "Chu," with broad lands and sparse population, in close parallel to the text of *SJ* 129. The territory of "Chu" defined by *HS* 28B, however, relates essentially to present-day Hubei and Hunan provinces; the region described by *SJ* 129 was far greater, comprising all of China south of the Yangzi and the Huai.

<sup>10</sup> On questions of population in China in the first centuries AD, I use the figures given in the geographical treatises of *HS* 28A-B and *HHS* 109/19-113/23, as cited above, and I accept the amendments which Bielenstein has provided in his article on "The Census of China." Both treatises list the administrative units of the empire, the one for 2 AD and the other for the period about 140 AD, and figures are given for the population of each of the commanderies and kingdoms in terms of households and individuals. It seems clear that the figures in the two Han treatises are census lists, though some of the data given for later dynasties in other histories are concerned rather with taxation figures than with full lists of population.

Though the figures are impressively detailed, they cannot be considered totally correct: not even a modern census can claim complete reliability. There seems no

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Bielenstein has argued that the increase of population in the south, matched by a decline in number of registered households and individuals in the north, and particularly in the northwest, may be accounted for chiefly by migration of Han Chinese within the empire. There is no doubt this was an important factor: the troubles on the northern and north-western frontier of the empire drove many settlers away, while the open spaces described by Sima Qian were an opportunity and an invitation to the refugees. On the other hand, a certain number of the former Chinese subjects in the north disappeared from government registers as the authority of Han declined in that region, while conversely in the south many native people were brought under the control of Han through the establishment of new units of administration, an official process which was itself inspired by increasing numbers of the recognised Chinese settlers; and, at a still more personal and basic level, there was certainly some intermarriage between the local people and the immigrants.

The effects of this increased Chinese migration and control varied from one region of the south to another. The main stream of colonisation tended directly toward the south, with settlements spreading along the middle Yangzi basin and the valley of the Xiang past Changsha, and then across the Nan Ling divide. Further to the east, the lower Yangzi and the delta and lake region south to Hangzhou Bay had long been a part of the Chinese political and cultural ambit, but the hill and mountain country north of present-day Fujian presented difficulties, and there was less pressure of settlement in that region. Overall, naturally enough, it was the river valleys and stretches of level ground which gave favourable conditions for Chinese colonisation, but the intermediate ranges of hills, where the slopes are too steep for farming, gave opportunity for the non-Chinese native people, and some Chinese refugees, to evade and resist the influence of Chinese culture and the

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question, however, that the gathering of information and its presentation was consistent between the two dynasties, that the figures are sufficiently comparable to be analysed in relation to one another, and that the gross demographic changes which they show may be taken as evidence of an historical reality.

On the decline of population in the northern regions of the empire under Later Han, see also de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 145 and 244.

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attentions of the imperial government. Formal Chinese control thus followed the rivers towards the south, and those people who would not accept that development were driven into the hills.

The region of Jiao province, however, across the Nan Ling divide and extending westwards along the rivers and coastal region from Panyu, present-day Guangzhou, is a special case. Distant from the imperial capital, it was always a more marginal territory; and the expansion of Chinese control was largely a matter of conquest and administration, encouraged by an interest in trade; one does not find the same pattern of migrant colonisation which was transforming the region of the Yangzi. We shall discuss the far southern territory in more detail below.

Not surprisingly, the Chinese invasion south of the Yangzi was sometimes resisted, and the history of Later Han is punctuated by records of warfare against "rebel barbarians." Such a description, of course, is presented from the perspective of the Chinese court, and there is little question that the so-called insurrections in fact represented the exasperated response of native people who saw their way of life, their homes and their families disrupted and destroyed by alien immigrants. From that point of view, though rebellion is generally regarded as a sign of weakness and disruption in the imperial power, many of the campaigns against rebels in south China may better be represented as the expression of a dynamic expansion.<sup>11</sup>

In some areas the resistance was comparatively successful. The non-Chinese people of Wuling commandery, and notably those about the region known as Wuqi, "Five Gorges," on the upper reaches of the Yuan River by the present-day Hunan-Guizhou border, brought catastrophic defeat to a large locally-recruited Chinese army in 48 AD, and the tribesmen were defeated only after a full campaign by the great general Ma Yuan.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, there

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<sup>11</sup> Bielenstein, *RHD* III, presents maps showing areas of disturbance during the time of Later Han, though he interprets them rather as indications of weakness than, as I argue, possible signs of energy and expansion.

<sup>12</sup> On the barbarians of Wuling during Later Han, see *HHS* 86/76, 2831-34, and for an analysis of the rebels and the campaigns against them, see Bielenstein, *RHD* III, 67-73. Ma Yuan died in the course of this campaign but Bielenstein

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were continuing disturbances in and about Wuling commandery throughout the period of Later Han, with a major outbreak in the early 160s, and the Wuqi barbarians remained a factor to be reckoned with in the struggles of the Three Kingdoms period.

Further south, in the valley of the Xiang, the most notable period of rebellion, very likely inspired by the process of Chinese settlement and colonisation, is recorded from 157, when there was a rising in the northern part of Changsha. Within a few years, there were disturbances throughout the hill country about the Xiang River basin, and the troubles extended across the Nan Ling to the south. The major group of "rebels," a mixed force of Chinese and barbarians, was defeated in 164, and by the following year the territory was largely pacified.<sup>13</sup> The potential for disorder, however, remained, and over twenty years later the founder of the house of Wu was able to gain his first great success in dealing with insurrection in that same region.<sup>14</sup>

At the administrative level, however, there was an acclaimed tradition of Confucian education. In the early years of Later Han, Xi Guang the Grand Administrator of Jiaozhi, Ren Yan the Grand Administrator of Jiuzhen, Wei Sa and Ci Chong, who succeeded one another as Grand Administrators of Guiyang, and Zong [or Song] Jun in Wuling and Jiujiang, all attempted to teach the people Chinese customs and techniques, notably those dealing with marriage, costume, agriculture, silk-farming and schools.<sup>15</sup>

These dedicated rulers, classified by Chinese historians as "benevolent," were not following any declared official policy, and they were surely far outnumbered by less energetic colleagues, but

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observes that the success of Chinese arms had already been arranged under his leadership.

<sup>13</sup> *HHS* 86/76, 2833-34, and *HHS* 8, 303-313.

<sup>14</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>15</sup> On Xi Guang and Ren Yan, see *HHS* 76/66, 2460-62, the biography of Ren Yan in the Chapter on the Benevolent Officials, *HHS* 86/76, 2836, and also the memorial of 213 presented to Sun Quan by Xie Zong, preserved in *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1251-53 at 1253.

On Wei Sa and Ci Chong, see *HHS* 76/66, 2458-60, the biography of Wei Sa in the Chapter on the Benevolent Officials, and on Zong Jun, see his biography in *HHS* 41/31, 1411-14 at 1412. The personal name of Wei Sa may also be sounded Li; the surname Zong also appears as Song, but Zong is more probably correct.

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their work demonstrates that the expansion of Chinese culture to the south was more than a physical movement of people and a transfer of technology. *Han shu* records that the people of the Yangzi region believed in mediums and spirits, that they followed "wrongful customs and evil ceremonies,"<sup>16</sup> and the celebrated administrators of south China were regularly concerned with matters of schooling, parental guidance and mourning rites, and also with direct attack upon local cults.

Zong Jun, for example, when he was Chief of Zhenyang in Wuling commandery during the reign of Emperor Guangwu, found that the people there believed in shamans and spirits; he set up schools for them and prohibited their evil sacrifices. Then Song Jun became Grand Administrator of Jiujiang commandery, north of the present-day Poyang Lake, where there was a set of shamans who organised the worship of two local mountains, compelling youths and maidens to become bridegrooms and brides of the mountains and refusing them for human marriage. Song Jun eliminated this custom. A hundred years later, when Luan Ba was Grand Administrator in Guiyang during the time of Emperor Shun, he was known for teaching the people the proper ceremonies of marriage and mourning and for setting up schools. He later became Grand Administrator of Yuzhang commandery, in present-day Jiangxi about the Poyang Lake, and there he put an end to the activities of another considerable local cult which worshipped the spirits of mountains and rivers.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> The phrase *yin si* is discussed by Loewe, *Ideas of Life and Death*, 109:

The precise significance of this expression may not be known for this period (c. 30 BC). It generally implies practices of an impure or lewd nature, or religious abuses such as sacrifices to deities which were not acceptable. For later periods the term may imply sexual practices, but there is no direct evidence to prove that these were involved in shamanistic exercises of the Han period.

<sup>17</sup> See the biography of Luan Ba in *HHS* 57/47, 1841-42. Luan Ba was a curious man with an interesting career. According to his biography, he came from Wei commandery, was an expert on Taoism, and used his powers to control the gods of Yuzhang and destroy their cult. Earlier, he had been a eunuch in the imperial harem, but it is said that he left that office because his virility returned. He was put to death about 170 for his opposition to the eunuch dominance of the court of Emperor Ling.

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There were, of course, local cults in every region of China, but the records of archaeology and religious texts confirm the indications of the histories that the culture of the region of the Yangzi placed strong emphasis upon the concept of the *wu* shaman, with concern for the spirits of the dead and the spirits of nature.<sup>18</sup> The great anthology *Chu ci* "Songs of the South" contains examples of both these patterns of belief: the poems *Zhao hun* "Summons of the Soul" and *Da zhao* "Great Summons," both appear as invocations to persuade the soul of the recently departed to turn back from the dangers and uncertainties of the journey into the unknown worlds of death, and to return to the certainties and pleasures of earthly life.<sup>19</sup> And in the same collection, dating also most probably from the third century BC, the *Jiu ke* "Nine Songs" have generally been interpreted as reflecting the spiritual and in many respects sexual union of the shaman with a deity such as the spirit of the Xiang River or the spirit of the East.<sup>20</sup>

Though the term *wu* may be found as the description of presumably shamanistic practices in other parts of the empire, and in a strong tradition in central Asia and the far northeast, there seems no question that the beliefs and customs of the Yangzi valley owed a great deal to the tradition of the pre-Han state and civilisation of Chu, and that religious strain continued into the Han period.<sup>21</sup> There is

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In the commentary to Luan Ba's biography, however, extracts from the *Shenxian zhuan* by Ge Hong of the fourth century suggest that he came not from Wei commandery but from Shu, in the west, and a number of anecdotes enlarge upon his magical achievements. His record as a temporary eunuch, as a Taoist adept, and as a local administrator who founded (presumably Confucian) schools, is somewhat confusing, and it seems that Luan Ba, whatever his origins and reality, served as a focus for a number of popular stories.

<sup>18</sup> On the cult of *wu* "shamanism," see Loewe, *Ideas of Life and Death*, 104-108, and also his discussion of "The Case of Witchcraft in 92 BC," in *Crisis and Conflict*, at 81-90. On the *yin si* "evil ceremonies," see note 16 above, citing Loewe, *Ideas of Life and Death*, 109.

<sup>19</sup> See the translations by Hawkes, *Songs of the South*, 101-114.

<sup>20</sup> See the translations by Hawkes, *Songs of the South*, 35-44, particularly poems (c) *Xiang jun* "The Princess of the Hsiang," (d) *Xiang furen* "The Lady of the Hsiang" and (g) *Dong jun* "The Lord of the East."

<sup>21</sup> For discussion on the early culture of the middle Yangzi and the state of Chu, see Chang, *Archeology of Ancient China*, 400-408, Blakeley, "Recent

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good archaeological evidence, such as in the Mawangdui excavations, for the influence of such beliefs into the highest levels of Han Chinese society, and in such forms it was both tolerated and accepted. Among the common people, however, a general acceptance of such religion implied also an acceptance of its practitioners as leaders of society - and this, of course, presented an indigenous challenge to the sacred authority of the empire.

Eastwards, by the mouth of the Yangzi, there was an added interest in divination and other forms of magic with a particular local tradition of foretelling the future by interpreting the wind.<sup>22</sup> More actively, the *yuewu* or *yuefang* "Magic of Yue" was particularly concerned with the art of putting spells upon people, animals, plants and things, either to prevent them from moving or to bring them to life. Among the biographies of the Chapter on the Diviners and Magicians in *Hou Han shu*, we are told of Xu Deng and Zhao Bing, both men from the south of Hangzhou Bay. In a test of their powers, Xu Deng stopped a river from flowing, and Zhao Bing made a dead tree send forth shoots.<sup>23</sup> And in the time of Sun Quan, at the beginning of the third century, the savant Wu Fan of Kuaiji was celebrated and respected for his ability to tell the future by calculation of the calendar and by divination of the wind.<sup>24</sup>

Across the Yangzi to the north, in the region of the Huai and notably in Langye commandery on the coast south of the Shandong peninsula, there was a strong tradition of supernatural arts and remarkable powers. The celebrated physician Hua Tuo came from Pei, in the southern part of the north China plain, and the earliest account of the *Taiping jing* "Classic of Great Peace" ascribes its origins to the Taoist teacher Gan Ji of Langye, who later travelled

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Developments in Chu Studies," and the important compilation of Cook and Major, *Defining Chu*.

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Ngo, *Divination, magie et politique*, 94-95, rendering the biography of Li Nan from *HHS* 82A/72A, 2716-17; 87-92, rendering the biography of Xie Yiwu from *HHS* 82A/72A, 2713-15; and 186-190, describing the technique of this divination.

<sup>23</sup> *HHS* 82B/72B, 2741-42; Ngo, *Divination, magie et politique*, 127-128, and DeWoskin, *Doctors, Diviners and Magicians*, 76-77. On the experience of the Wu general He Qi with this form of magic, see note 63 to Chapter 5.

<sup>24</sup> The biography of Wu Fan is in *SGZ* 63/Wu 18, 1421-23.

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south to the region of the lower Yangzi and met his death at the hands of the jealous warlord Sun Ce.<sup>25</sup>

Unfortunately, however, though there are accounts of a few of these men in *Hou Han shu*, and there are later works describing the achievements of Taoist adepts, the information is often vague, or highly eccentric and anecdotal. In particular, official Chinese historians were concerned chiefly with the relationship of these men to the organised government of the state, whether a diviner is giving advice to the emperor or to one of his ministers, or a man of magic seeks to establish himself in rivalry to the imperial power. Too often, these latter are described simply by the general expression *yao* "unorthodox and heretic, wicked and evil:" so that the phrase *yao ze* "heretic rebels" might be applied to a rising of religious rebels in any part of the empire. While the term *wu* generally appears to have some specific connotation of shamanistic beliefs and practices, the terms *yao* and *yin* are best understood as an all-purpose descriptions of supernatural practices which were alien to official Confucianism. The Confucianists were not necessarily interested in the details of these heterodox beliefs, and the fact that Chinese texts describe a sect or custom as *yao* or *yin* does not, of itself, tell us anything about the content of the belief system or the conduct of its followers: all we know is that the Han authorities disapproved of them.<sup>26</sup>

Throughout the centuries of Han, therefore, the lands of the Yangzi remained in many respects alien to the people of the north. In a classical model of colonial expansion, the native people of the region were oppressed both by the bureaucratic weight of the government of Han, with an apparatus of local administration backed by the ultimate force of the imperial armies, and also by the

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<sup>25</sup> On Hua Tuo, see *HHS* 82B/72B, 2736-40; Ngo, *Divination, magie et politique*, 118-126, and DeWoskin, *Doctors, Diviners and Magicians*, 140-153. On Gan Ji [also known, probably mistakenly, as Yu Ji] and the *Taiping jing* see, for example, *HHS* 30B/20B, 1080 and 1084; de Crespigny, *Portents of Protest*, 31-32 and 90-94, and see Chapter 3. For an early modern discussion of the popular Taoist tradition in this region, see the article by Chen Yinke [1934].

<sup>26</sup> To use a modern comparison, a Han Confucianist would have used the term *yao* to describe all sects of Islam, Judaism and Christianity, and their rituals would have been similarly dismissed as *yin si*. They themselves might be concerned with the differences between them, but they were beneath the notice of an orthodox scholar.

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superficially peaceful occupation by individual settlers from the north. Either they were compelled to accept a horde of new neighbours in their existing lands, or they were simply driven away into the less easily cultivated country of the hills and forests. In the losing battle against this invasion, the native people sometimes resorted to force of arms, but they also sought to retain a measure of independence through the maintenance of their original culture. The process of "Confucianisation" was in many respects a struggle to confirm the physical conquest of the region by Han through the suppression and elimination of the traditional culture of the south.<sup>27</sup>

From this point of view, the work of the administrators who encouraged settled agriculture and established schools was a program for government control. And the reforms of marriage and the ceremonies of mourning were direct challenges to the authority of the old religion. Whether they knew it or not, and regardless whether their motives were truly humanitarian or just a reflection of Sino-centric arrogance, when Zong Jun and Luan Ba put an end to the mystical marriages of youths and maidens with the spirits of the mountains, they attacked and destroyed the very basis of local belief.

There is an occasional record of local resistance in these terms. In the time of Emperor Guangwu the Grand Administrator of Kuaiji, Diwu Lun, was faced with a local custom of sacrificing plough-oxen. The local *wu* leaders had told the people that if they failed to kill their oxen, they themselves would bellow like cattle and then die, and the fear of these consequences had made it impossible for the regular officials to prevent the custom from spreading. But the ox-pulled plough is at the core of the Chinese system of settled agriculture, and Diwu Lun took prompt, firm and effective steps to destroy the cult and restore good order.<sup>28</sup>

More generally, however, resistance was either clandestine, maintained beyond the borders of effective imperial control, or expressed by physical rebellion. For the second century AD we are told that in 132, during the reign of Emperor Shun, the heretic rebel

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<sup>27</sup> For a traditional view of "The Confucianization of South China," see the article of that title by Miyakawa.

<sup>28</sup> See the biography of Diwu Lun in *HHS* 41/31, 1395-1402 at 1397.

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Zhang He ravaged half the counties in Yang province, and although that disturbance was put down there was another *yao ze*, Xu Chang, active in Kuaiji during the early years of the reign of Emperor Ling.<sup>29</sup> These disturbances were important enough to be recorded in the imperial annals, but there is every reason to believe that the pattern of pressure from colonisation was countered at a local level by small-scale protest, described in reports and commentary as heresy and rebellion: *cet animal est très méchant ...*

The final victory of the Han Chinese was determined by their weight of numbers, those population figures detailed by the censuses of Former and Later Han. In 2 AD there had been less than four million Chinese citizens living in the lower and middle Yangzi basin and the south, while the population of the whole empire was over fifty-seven million. In the 140s there were almost seven and a half million people in the south, from a population overall of forty-eight million. In less than a hundred and fifty years, this region of south China had almost doubled its registered population: and the bulk of that addition came from immigration, with the development of new land under improved techniques of farming brought from the north.

The same calculation, however, while it demonstrates the expanding authority of Han in the south, shows also the growing importance of that region to the empire as a whole. In the time of Former Han, the south of the Yangzi accounted for about seven percent of the people in the empire. By the latter half of the second century AD, south China represented almost fifteen percent of the whole population. Though still a small proportion, this number of people might represent the critical mass which would permit men from the south to establish an independent state.

That experiment, however, lay in the future, and there were other factors, notably those of geography and politics, logistics and leadership, which had still to be called into play. For the time being we should consider the nature of the provinces of south China established under the continuing dynasty of Later Han.

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<sup>29</sup> On Zhang He, see *HHS* 6, 260. On Xu Chang, see *HHS* 8, 334-36 and Chapter 2.

## CHAPTER ONE

### *Jing province and the middle Yangzi:*

Under the imperial administration of Later Han, the province or circuit of Jingzhou extended from Nanyang commandery in the north, with its capital at Wan, now Nanyang in Henan, southwards through present-day Hubei and Hunan. It thus encompassed the lower valley of the Han River, the marshes and lakes of the middle Yangzi, and the whole basin of the tributary Xiang River as far as the Nan Ling divide. On the west, the territory was bounded by the Gorge Mountains, running from the Wu Shan southwards to the Wuling Shan and the Xuefeng Shan on the present-day border between Hunan and Guizhou. On the east, Jing province was separated from Yang province by the Dabie Shan north of the Yangzi, and by the high ridges of the Mufu Shan and the Wugong Shan which lie along the provincial borders of present-day Hunan and Jiangxi.

The commandery of Nanyang, in the north of the province, was in some respects an anomaly. It occupied the basin of the Bai and Tang Rivers, which drain southwards to the Han, but the territory was much more closely associated with the region of Luoyang, the imperial capital, north across the hills of the Xiong'er Shan. In particular, Nanyang was the home country of that branch of the imperial Liu clan which had risen in rebellion against Wang Mang and re-established the Han dynasty under the eventual leadership of Liu Xiu, Emperor Guangwu of Later Han. The ancestral tombs of the family from the time of Former Han were still maintained there, and in descriptions of that time the city of Wan was coupled with Luoyang for elegance, bustle and prosperity.<sup>30</sup>

Apart from its imperial connections, Wan owed a great deal of its importance to its position as a centre for trade. Northwest the road by the Wu pass along the Dan River led through the mountains into present-day southern Shenxi and the city of Chang'an, the Land

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<sup>30</sup> On Wan city, see *HHSJJ* 112/22, 12b, and *Nandu fu* "Southern Capital Rhapsody" by Zhang Heng of the second century AD, translated by Knechtges, *Wen xuan* I, 311-336; also *Nineteen Old Poems*, No.3, translated by Diény, *Dix-neuf poèmes anciens*, 13.

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Within the Passes and the capital district of Qin and Former Han. Westwards there was communication up the Han River to Hanzhong commandery and Yi province in present-day northern Sichuan. South was the lower Han River and the products of the middle Yangzi basin, and eastwards the line of the Ru and the Ying and other rivers tributary to the Huai gave access toward the lower Yangzi.<sup>31</sup> Since Former Han, Wan city had been noted for its energetic mixture of people and for their interest in business and trade, and Wang Mang had recognised its importance as one of the five great provincial market centres.<sup>32</sup>

In his geographical survey based upon the second century BC, in chapter 129 of *Shi ji*, Sima Qian described the region of "Western Chu" as extending from the upper valley of the Huai across the north of the Dabie Shan and then curving south to the Yangzi. By doing so he recognised a southern hinterland for the trade which led through Wan city, and he saw some unity east and west across the region of the upper Huai and the lower Han. *Han shu* 28B, in the parallel text compiled a hundred years later, identified the "Territory of Chu" with all the commanderies of Jing province in the middle Yangzi, together with Hanzhong to the west and Runan to the east, but not including Nanyang, which was discussed with Yingchuan as a part of the "Territory of Han."<sup>33</sup> The divisions and analysis of *Han shu* are based to a considerable degree upon classical history and on contemporary theories of sociology and astrology, but one may observe echoes of the development of a southern axis from Nanyang into Jing province during the period of Former Han, while the northern region, about present-day southern Henan, had good access east and west as well as a dominance of the south.

Besides its position as a centre of communications, Wan city in Nanyang had also been the site of an imperial Office for Iron during Former Han.<sup>34</sup> Under Later Han, these offices were not maintained

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<sup>31</sup> Swann, *Food and Money*, 446, translating *SC* 129, 3269; also *HS* 28B, 1654.

<sup>32</sup> Swann, *Food and Money*, 336, translating *HS* 24B, 1180.

<sup>33</sup> Swann, *Food and Money*, 446, translating *SC* 129, 3269, also *HS* 28B, 1654.

<sup>34</sup> *HS* 28B, 1665-66; *cf.* *HS* 28B, 1654.

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and supervised so strictly by the central government, but the work continued and there is archaeological evidence of the impressive scale of the industry.<sup>35</sup>

The population of Nanyang commandery according to the Former Han census of 2 AD had been just under two million people. A hundred and fifty years later, at the time of the Later Han census, the figure was a little less than two and a half million, in a slightly enlarged territory. In a region so far north, and close to the centre of the empire, this increase can hardly be regarded as colonisation and new settlement: some of the gain may be the result of natural increase in a prosperous region, and the remainder is surely a secondary effect of the shift of the capital to Luoyang, encouraging migration from all parts of the empire towards the new centre of power.<sup>36</sup> Together with the capital commandery of Henan, Nanyang and its eastern neighbours Yingchuan and Runan in Yu province were among the most populous of the empire.

Immediately south of Nanyang lay Jiangxia and Nan commanderies.<sup>37</sup> Jiangxia controlled the lower loop of the Han River and the marsh-land about its junction with the Yangzi at present-day Wuhan, and the capital of the commandery under Later Han was at Xiling, now Xinzhou, northeast of the modern

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<sup>35</sup> See, for example, Wang, *Han Civilization*, 126, describing the excavations of a Han dynasty iron foundry at Nanyang, reported in *KGXB* 48 (1978). The foundry, situated within the walls of the ancient city of Wan, was operative from the middle of Former Han into the Later Han period, and was probably one of several under the administration of the local office for iron. It had sixteen furnaces for casting and forging iron and steel, using ingots brought from outside or recycling old items. From the evidence of clay moulds, the products included farming implements from spades and pick-axes to axes and ploughs, axle-pins and bearings for carriages, and tripods, pots and basins.

<sup>36</sup> According to the census of Later Han, the population of Nanyang commandery was 528,551 households with 2,439,619 individuals, the population of Yingchuan was 263,440 households and 1,436,513 individuals, and that of Runan was 404,448 households and 2,100,788 individuals. The population of Henan was 208,486 households and 1,010,827 individuals. See the *Treatise of Administrative Geography*, at *HHS* 112/22, 3476; 110/20, 3421 and 34324; and 109/19, 3389.

<sup>37</sup> On Jiangxia and Nan commanderies, see the *Treatise of Administrative Geography*, *HHS* 112/22, 3482 and 3479; *cf.* the *Treatise of Geography*, *HS* 28A, 1567-68 and 1566.

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metropolis. This lower reach of the Han was also known as the Xia River, and the commandery evidently took its name from a combination of the name Xia with that of Jiang, the Yangzi. There was an identifiable settlement, Xiakou, at the mouth of the Han River,<sup>38</sup> and the main stream of the Yangzi gave good access to the territories in the east, so Jiangxia was an area of some potential importance. The commandery was, however, separated from the immediate north by the Dabie mountains, and the region as a whole was one of marsh-land and seasonal flooding. In the second century AD Jiangxia had a population of 265,464 individuals; this was a substantial increase, 21 per cent, above the 219,218 recorded at the end of Former Han, but it is small compared to the territories further south.

Nan commandery, west of Jiangxia, extended from the twin cities of Xiangyang and Fan on the Han River south of Wan, now the combined city of Xiangfan, to the ancient metropolis of Jiangling, capital of the commandery, on the Yangzi by present-day Shashe. Much of the formal territory of Nan commandery was covered by the mountain country to the west, and the Jing Shan extended an area of higher ground towards the line of the Han River, but there is open land along the river, and the modern railway curves across that plain. The Ju and Zhang rivers, flowing south from the Jing Shan, join the Yangzi close to Jiangling and provided a route by water some distance towards the north near the intermediate city of Danyang. The Han River, on the other hand, curving eastwards towards its junction with the Yangzi, was of lesser value as a communications route between the north and the south, but it is likely that considerable small-scale traffic took place through waterways in the marsh country between the two rivers.

According to tradition, the capital Ying of the ancient state of Chu during the seventh and sixth centuries BC was on the Yangzi in the region of Jiangling, but it now appears more probable that the original Ying was in fact north of the Han.<sup>39</sup> Certainly later, and

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<sup>38</sup> The Han River at this time was also known as the Mian, so the name of the junction with the Yangzi is sometimes given as Miankou.

<sup>39</sup> At the beginning of the Zhou dynasty, the capital of Chu was at Danyang (*SC* 40, 1691-92; Chavannes, *MH* IV 340). There is, however, disagreement among modern scholars about the site of this early city. One theory, now generally

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until the early third century, the capital of Chu, still known as Ying, was in the vicinity of Yicheng in Hubei.<sup>40</sup> The debate on these early sites nonetheless reflects the later division of Nan commandery under Han between two regions, that on the north about Xiangyang on the Han, and that in the south by Jiangling on the Yangzi, with open territory for communication by land and water between them; while the eastern part of the commandery, in that marsh region which lay between the Han and the Yangzi, and which tended to isolate Jiangxia, contained the wilderness of Yunmeng, celebrated as the hunting park of the rulers of Chu, and glorified in the splendid rhapsody "Sir Fantasy" by Sima Xiangru:

... broad plains and wide lowlands,  
Rising and falling in gentle slopes,  
Secluded hollows and rolling leas,  
Hemmed in by the great Yangzi  
And bounded by Shaman's Mountain ...  
... bubbling springs and clear pools  
Spread their restless waters,  
Lotus and water chestnut blooming on their borders,  
Huge rocks and white sand hidden in their depths.....  
... dense forests and giant trees -  
Medlar, cedar and camphor,  
Cinnamon, prickly ash and anise tree.....  
Mandarins and citrons, breathing forth their fragrance.<sup>41</sup>

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rejected, placed it in the region of present-day Anhui province, near Danyang commandery of Han; the present debate is between the advocates of the Yangzi region, close to the putative site of the first Ying, and those who would locate both early capitals further north on the Han River near present-day Xiangfan in Henan, close to the second site of Ying or Yanying (*qqv.* below). Weight of opinion currently supports the northern theory: Blakeley, "Geography," 10-13.

<sup>40</sup> *SC* 40, 1695; Chavannes, *MH* IV 345 and 337 note 1, and *SC* 40, 1716; Chavannes, *MH* IV, 378. This second capital was sometimes defined more precisely as Yanying.

The capital of Chu was shifted again in 278 and 241, first to the region of Huaiyang in present-day Henan (*SJ* 40, 1735; Chavannes, *MH* IV, 414), and then to Shouxian in present-day Anhui, which new capital was again given the name of Ying (*SJ* 40, 1736; Chavannes, *MH* IV, 416). For the history of all these moves, see Chavannes, *MH* IV, 337-338 note 1.

<sup>41</sup> *SJ* 117, 3004; Watson, *Chinese Rhyme-Prose*, 32, slightly adapted.

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West of Jiangling, up the stream of the Yangzi and through the great gorges, lay the route to Yi province in present-day Sichuan. So far as one can tell, the river provided the one practicable route through the mountains at that time, for there were no county settlements within reach of one another in that region except for the stations on the Yangzi. For major movement, whether peaceful trade or the manoeuvres of armies, the only effective resource was the Yangzi: the back-breaking labour of hauling junks upstream by men in trackers' galleries carved from the cliff face, and the swift but dangerous descent with the force of the river through the snags and whirlpools.<sup>42</sup>

The other major communication route through Jiangling led south across the Yangzi. In the time of the First Emperor of Qin, an imperial highway had been constructed from the imperial capital at Xianyang, through the Wu Pass to Wan city in Nanyang, and then across the Han River at Xiangyang to reach Jiangling on the Yangzi. From Jiangling it continued south through Changsha and up the Xiang River.

In his reconstruction of that route, Needham has shown the road passing to the east of the present Dongting Lake. It is, however, more probable that the highway crossed the Yangzi in the near vicinity of Jiangling and led through the commandery of Wuling. The eastern route would have involved a traverse of the Yunmeng marsh-land, and the main expanse of the Dongting Lake at that time was concentrated further to the east, so the western route was more practicable than it appears at the present day.<sup>43</sup>

Wuling commandery, moreover, though not particularly large nor populous in the time of Later Han, was the headquarters of the Inspector of Jing province, and this implies a significant position on the line of communications between north and south. As we have observed, the non-Chinese people of the hill country to the west

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<sup>42</sup> On traditional methods of tracking through the Gorges of the Yangzi, and the sometimes hair-raising descent, see, for example, Worcester, *Junks and Sampans*, 51-56, and Needham, *Science and Civilisation IV:3*, 662-664.

<sup>43</sup> Needham, *Science and Civilisation IV:3*, 8, 16 and Figure 711. Tom [1967], 206 and Map facing 212, however, shows the route going south from Jiangling, through the area of Wuling, to cross the Zi River at Yiyang, by the present-day city of the same name. This seems most likely.

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were active and effective even until the end of Later Han. Wuling commandery may have gained in administrative importance from this, but the territory suffered also from the potential disruption. Though the commandery formally controlled a great swathe of territory from the Dongting Lake southwest up the valleys of the Li and Yuan rivers, which at that time appear to have flowed into the lake near its junction with the Yangzi, the chief area of settlement was most probably in the narrow thoroughfare across the lower reaches of those rivers by Linyuan, the capital of the commandery, near present-day Changde, and Hanshou, the headquarters of the inspector, which lay a small distance to the east.<sup>44</sup>

In population, Wuling was the smallest commandery of Jing province, but it had shown considerable increase during Later Han. In 2 AD, Wuling had 185,758 individuals, but by the middle of the second century that figure had increased more than a third, to 250,913, and that after losing one of its former thirteen counties to Nan commandery in the north. By contrast, Nan commandery had remained relatively static in population: from 718,540 individuals in the census of 2 AD to 747,604 in the 140s; a small gain which may well be accounted for by the transfer from Wuling of the border county Henshan, south of the Yangzi.<sup>45</sup>

These records of increase on the middle Yangzi, however, pale into insignificance compared with the development which had taken place in the three southern commanderies along the Xiang River and its tributaries.<sup>46</sup>

Changsha commandery held a dominant strategic position in the valley of the Xiang upstream from the Dongting Lake and the junction with the Yangzi. The territory is described by *Shi ji* as a centre for the production of lead and tin, though Sima Qian notes

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<sup>44</sup> *HHS* 112/22, 3484. *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1096 and 1097 PC note 2 quoting *Wu lu*, describe how Sun Jian passed that way on his march north from Changsha in 189, and killed the Inspector Wang Rui. See also Chapter 2.

<sup>45</sup> On Wuling and Nan commanderies, see the Treatise of Administrative Geography, *HHS* 112/22, 3484 and 3479-80; *cf.* the Treatise of Geography, *HS* 28A, 1568-69 and 1594-95.

<sup>46</sup> On Changsha, Lingling and Guiyang, see the Treatise of Administrative Geography, *HHS* 112/22, 3485, 3482-83 and 3483-84; *cf.* the Treatise of Geography, *HS* 28B, 1639, *HS* 28A, 1594 and 1595-96.

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that the quantities produced at that time were not sufficient to justify their cost.<sup>47</sup> The archaeological evidence from pre-Han times, however, demonstrates that Changsha was an important centre of the culture of Chu, and the records of such discoveries as the Mawangdui tombs just outside the present-day city of Changsha, which was at that time known as Linxiang and was the capital of the commandery, confirm the importance and wealth of the region in early Han.<sup>48</sup> Faced with such finds of treasure, a modern scholar is hard put to reconcile the evidence of archaeology with the dismissive comments in *Shi ji* and *Han shu*, that "there is no occasion to store up goods, and many of the people remain poor."

During the second century BC this region had been at the southern frontier of the empire, facing the independent state of Nan-Yue across the Nan Ling divide. Nan-Yue was conquered by Emperor Wu, and trade with the south was always prosperous, but the population of the region at the end of Former Han was not particularly large: some quarter of a million individuals in Changsha, a hundred and fifty thousand in Guiyang to the immediate south, and rather less in Lingling commandery to the southwest. By the middle of the second century AD, the registered population of Guiyang, which occupied the hill country of the Lei River, tributary to the Xiang, and the upper reaches of the Bei Jiang/North River on the other side of the Nan Ling watershed, had more than doubled, and was now over half a million. Changsha, however, and Lingling now registered each more than a million inhabitants, an increase of four and a half times for Changsha as compared with the population recorded for Former Han, and an increase of more than seven times for the region of Lingling. These numbers far outweighed those of the commanderies on the middle Yangzi, and they raised Changsha and Lingling to rank among the important territories of the empire.

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<sup>47</sup> *SJ* 129, 3268; Swann, *Food and Money*, 445. There is no record of such production in the geographical treatises of *HS* and *HHS*.

<sup>48</sup> See, for example, Wang, *Han Civilization*, 81 and 128, on lacquer and iron work of the Warring States period found at Changsha; 81-83 and 103 and 105, on lacquer and gilded bronze of the Han period; and 52 and 207 on the food and the grave goods found at Mawangdui, together with Figures 274-278, 285-291 and others.

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This notable development reflects the importance of the imperial communications routes and the prosperity brought by trade with the southern coast. Under the empire of Qin, the highway which came south to Changsha had continued up the valley of the Xiang along the present-day railway line southeast into Lingling. Just south of the county of Lingling, by the present town of Xing'an in Guangxi, the First Emperor had a canal cut across the watershed to link the Xiang River with the head-waters of the Li. This remarkable feat of engineering, the Ling Qu "Magic Trench," initially constructed to aid the movement of the First Emperor's armies in their conquest of the far south, was maintained throughout the Han dynasty. It has been restored on occasion over the last two thousand years, and it is still used for traffic between north and south.<sup>49</sup>

So the main line of communications in the southern part of Jing province followed the course of the Xiang River and the highway established by Qin. The Han, however, supplemented this central axis by additional made roads. One route led through Guiyang on a more direct line to the south, and contributed to the development of that commandery, though there was no canal to aid the transport of goods, and the longer route by the Ling Qu canal was thus more effective. During Later Han, primarily for the purposes of administrative organisation and control, roads were built into and through the mountain country between the rivers, so that Lingling was connected in the north with the upper reaches of the Yuan River in western Wuling, and southeast with Guiyang commandery. The Guiyang roads, in particular, were constructed in the time of Emperor Guangwu by the Grand Administrator Wei Sa specifically to assert the authority of the imperial government, to ensure the collection of taxes, and to bring the people under the full control and guidance of Han.<sup>50</sup>

That same energetic administrator, whom we have already noted for his activities in the Confucianisation of the south, was also concerned to develop the prosperity of his territory, and he

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<sup>49</sup> For a discussion of the working of the canal, see Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 299-305.

<sup>50</sup> *Cambridge Han*, 614 [Ebrey, "Economic and Social History of Later Han"], citing *HHS* 76/66, 2459.

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re-established the iron works at Leiyang county, which had been the site of an Office for Iron during Former Han but had later fallen into decay.<sup>51</sup> The new foundry was a local initiative, but it was the only source of iron recorded in that region by the census survey of the second century AD. It certainly supplied the requirements of Changsha and Lingling, and very likely also those of the far south.

By the end of Later Han, therefore, these three commanderies in the south of Jing province had been greatly developed in Chinese terms. The immigration and colonisation brought frequent local disturbances, culminating in the 160s and the 180s with major rebellions of the native people, joined by renegade Chinese who sought to resist the force of government. Dealing with these troubles required the co-operation of governments in all three commanderies, and the river communication routes, despite rivalry from newly constructed local roads, also tended to encourage the administrative unity of the region. Surrounded by hills on three sides, and with its comparatively limited access to the north across the Yangzi, Changsha, Lingling and Guiyang now represented not merely a line of communication to the south but an identifiable region of economic and political importance.

### *Jiao province and the far south coast:*

The lands beyond the Nan Ling divide were originally brought under Chinese control by the First Emperor of Qin. In a series of campaigns between 220 and final victory in 214, the armies of Qin conquered and annexed territories covering the greater part of present-day Guangdong, Guangxi and northern Vietnam, and there was at least a brief occupation of part of Fujian.<sup>52</sup> With the fall of

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<sup>51</sup> *HHS* 76/66, 2459, and *HHS* 112/22, 3483. During Former Han there had been an Office for Metal under the commandery administration of Guiyang: *HS* 28A, 1594.

<sup>52</sup> *Huainan zi* 18, 15a-b, describes these campaigns in some detail, and there are modern discussions and translations by Aurousseau, "La première conquête" and, more briefly, by Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 17-19. Five armies were sent out, of which four traversed the Nan Ling south from present-day Hunan, while the fifth, assembled in present-day Jiangxi in the Poyang region, moved eastwards

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Qin a few years later, however, Zhao Tuo, who had been named as successor to the Commandant of Nanhai under the empire, took advantage of the disturbed conditions to the north to seize and block the passes through the Nan Ling, and he established his own regime. This kingdom of Nan-Yue continued under Zhao Tuo and his successors for almost a hundred years until it was conquered by the armies of Emperor Wu in 111.<sup>53</sup>

Two maps found in Tomb Number Three at Mawangdui record the civil and military dispositions on the frontier of Former Han against Nan-Yue in the early years of the second century, and they present magnificent examples of the early Chinese competence in cartography.<sup>54</sup> For the most part, however, the frontier was not a disturbed one, and the government of Nan-Yue, under a royal house of Chinese origin, and owing much of its support to the immigrant Chinese population, had rather confirmed the incorporation of this territory into the Chinese cultural ambit.

In his description of the far south, which he looked upon formally as part of the territory of Southern Chu, Sima Qian observed that the people were for the most part non-Chinese Yue, a term which appears generally used for the peoples of the southern and south-eastern seaboard. Panyu, the capital of Nanhai commandery situated in the vicinity of present-day Guangzhou, was recognised as a major centre, and Sima Qian refers specifically to the trade in pearls, rhinoceros horn, tortoise shell, fruits and textiles. A hundred years later, the *Han shu* description of the "Territory of Yue" added

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across the Wuyi Shan divide to the Fuchun River, and then followed the coast south along the whole of present-day Fujian province to enter the Guangdong region from an easterly direction by the Jieyang pass near Shantou. As a result of this march, which may have been accompanied and assisted by a naval force, the Qin government established Minzhong commandery with its capital at present-day Fuzhou on the Min River: *SJ* 114, 2979, and *HS* 95, 3859; and also below.

<sup>53</sup> On the history of the state of Nan-Yue founded by Zhao Tuo, see *SJ* 113, 2967-78, and *HS* 95, 3847-59, Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 23-27, and *Cambridge Han*, 451-453 [Yü, "Han Foreign Relations"]. The discovery of a collection of tombs of middle-ranking and minor officials of Nan-Yue is reported in *KGXB* 40 (1974), and that of a royal tomb in *Kaogu* 1984.3.

<sup>54</sup> These maps are discussed in de Crespigny, "Maps from Mawangdui."

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references to ivory, silver and copper.<sup>55</sup> Archaeological excavations in the district have confirmed the descriptions of Panyu as a great centre of trade and the manufacture of fine lacquer ware,<sup>56</sup> and have also revealed that there was an important ship-building industry, capable of producing vessels which could undertake the coastal trade and the sea routes to the south.<sup>57</sup>

During Later Han, there was major development of Chinese authority and settlement in the whole region of Jiao province.<sup>58</sup> In

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<sup>55</sup> *SJ* 119, 3268; Swann, *Food and Money*, 446, and *HS* 28B, 1670. Commentary note 1 to the latter text quotes Wei Zhao of third century Wu (on whom see also Chapter 9), who identifies the general term *guo* "fruit" as referring specifically to longan and lychees.

Wei Zhao further explains the expression *bu* "cloth" as referring specifically to that which was made from *ge*, the dolichos or kudzu vine, a leguminous climbing plant, still valued in China for the fine fibres of its stem (*Pueraria thunbergiana* Benth.:Needham and Bray, *Science and Civilisation* VI:2, 536, and Bretschneider, *Botanicum Sinicum* II, 390). Yan Shigu, however, takes the term as a general reference to fine textiles in various weaves and colours. (At this time the Chinese possessed hemp and ramie but not cotton; their other cloths were silk, wool and sometimes felt, all of animal origin: Needham and Bray, *Science and Civilisation* VI:2, 532-537.)

<sup>56</sup> For example, Wang, *Han Civilization*, 84-85.

<sup>57</sup> See note 64 below.

<sup>58</sup> There is some uncertainty about the title and administrative status of the region controlled by the Inspector in the far south during Han. In the listing of the commanderies in the Treatise of Geography, *HS* 28B, 1628-30, the territories are described as being under Jiao province (*Jiaozhou*), and the summary statement in the Treatise of Administrative Geography, *HHS* 113/23, 3533, also refers to the region as Jiao province.

However, there are several references to inspectors of Jiaozhi in texts dealing with Later Han, and *JS* 15, 464-65, supported by *Song shu* 38, 1204, states clearly that the territory was indeed under an Inspector of Jiaozhi until 203, when it was changed to become a province under a Governor: on this matter, see also at note 120 below and Chapter 5 at note 94.

In his commentary to *HHSJJ* 113B/23B, 30b, Wang Xianqian observes that *HHS* always refers to the whole region as Jiaozhi, up until the change at the end of the dynasty, and that Sima Biao's statement is probably an anachronism. This indeed seems likely, and we may accept that the region, under an inspector, was called Jiaozhi for almost all of Later Han.

This means, of course, that there was a province-level territory in the far south called Jiaozhi which was supervised by an Inspector, and among its subordinate commandery units there was also a region called Jiaozhi, headed by a Grand

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the eastern part of the territory, Nanhai commandery extended up the North River to the border with Guiyang commandery in Jing province, and up the system of the Dong Jiang/East River and along the coast as far as present-day Shantou. Cangwu, with its capital by present-day Wuzhou, controlled the lower reaches of the present-day Xi Jiang/West River, known at that time as the Yu River, and notably its northern tributary the Gui River, then known as the Li, which joined the Ling Qu canal. In 2 AD, the population of Nanhai commandery had been just under one hundred thousand, and in the next hundred and fifty years it multiplied two and a half times to a quarter of a million. In the same period in Cangwu the rise was even more impressive, from just under a hundred and fifty thousand individuals to over four hundred and fifty thousand, almost half a million and an increase of twice the earlier figure.<sup>59</sup>

Upstream of Cangwu, Yulin commandery controlled the main stream of the West River and its tributary the Liu.<sup>60</sup> The capital of the commandery was at the river junction by present-day Guiping in Guangxi. Under Former Han, the population of the commandery had been some seventy thousand, only half that of Cangwu, but we do not have figures from the census of Later Han. The main stream of colonisation may have passed this territory by, though it is possible the region benefited from highway and water

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Administrator. While the nomenclature is a little confusing, it is not unique: Yi province (*Yizhou*) in the west and southwest of the empire also contained a commandery unit called *Yizhou*: see, for example, the *Treatise of Administrative Geography*, *HHS* 113/23, 3512 and 3516. In most circumstances, either the context of the passage, or a specific reference to the Inspector or the Grand Administrator, will determine which level and region of government is being discussed. (One may observe also that there was a period during Former Han and the beginning of Later Han that the name of *Shuofang* was given both to a commandery and also to a short-lived provincial administration in the far north of the empire: see, for example, *HS* 28A 1543 and *HHS* 1B, 58.)

For the sake of clarity, and because indeed most of the events in the far south which concerned the state of Wu took place after the rearrangement of 203, I regularly refer to this territory by the anachronistic form of Jiao province.

<sup>59</sup> On Nanhai and Cangwu commanderies, see the *Treatise of Administrative Geography*, *HHS* 113/23, 3530-31; *cf.* the *Treatise of Geography*, *HS* 28B, 1628 and 1629.

<sup>60</sup> On Yulin commandery, see the *Treatise of Administrative Geography*, *HHS* 113/23, 3531; *cf.* the *Treatise of Geography*, *HS* 28B, 1628.

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communication along the upper reaches of the West River from Cangwu and then across the divide to the commandery of Jiaozhi in the Red River basin about Hanoi in present-day Vietnam.

Needham and other scholars have observed that the internal transport system of Han allowed goods to be moved by water more than two thousand kilometres, from the West River at Nanhai or Yulin in the far south, up the Gui/Li River and across the Ling Qu canal to the head-waters of the Xiang, then down past Changsha and the Dongting Lake to join the Yangzi. From there ships and barges could go north up the Han River to Xiangyang and Wan, with a short overland connection to Luoyang, or could travel downstream along the Yangzi and connect with the river and canal system about the Huai in the south of the North China plain. Paralleled and supplemented by the imperial highways and other roads, this was a remarkable system of communication; more extensive and flexible than the Egyptian Nile, and better controlled than the Roman lake of the Mediterranean.<sup>61</sup>

While this inland route was of great use to the government and immensely valuable to travellers and merchants, there was a natural, though sometimes dangerous, alternative: the sea-borne trade along the coast from the Red River delta to the Bay of Canton, the Hangzhou Bay, the mouth of the Yangzi and beyond. As Wang Gungwu has observed, "this trade was so much a part of the Chinese economy that there was rarely any need to refer to it,"<sup>62</sup> but references to naval activity indicate considerable maritime competence. There were operations along the coast of present-day Fujian under during the third and second centuries BC, and the final victory of Han over Nan-Yue in 111 was gained by a fleet collected at Panyu which pursued its enemies to the Gulf of Tongking. Likewise, at the end of Later Han, Sun Ce mounted an expedition by sea from Hangzhou Bay to the mouth of the Min River in 196, and Lü Dai attacked the Shi family in Jiaozhi by both land and sea in 226. Such enterprises required great numbers of ships and seamen, and they provide good evidence, albeit indirect, for the existence of an

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<sup>61</sup> Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 306, and *Cambridge Han*, 65 [Bodde, "The State and Empire of Ch'in"].

<sup>62</sup> Wang, "Nan-hai Trade," 29-30.

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active merchant marine which could be commandeered in time of need.<sup>63</sup> The remains of ancient shipyards at Guangzhou, old Panyu, demonstrate the capacity of vessels constructed there in the time of Nan-Yue,<sup>64</sup> and though conquest by Han reduced official interest in this field, there were numbers of local traders, Chinese and more often Yue people, who maintained the enterprise.

The shoreline between present-day Guangzhou and Hanoi, generally under the authority of Hepu commandery,<sup>65</sup> had an erratic history under Han. There was incentive for expansion, for shipping naturally passed through the Hainan strait, and Xuwen county, at the tip of the Leizhou peninsula, was a useful transit port.<sup>66</sup> Still more important to the government, the pearl fisheries of this southern coast, and Hainan in particular, were the source for the majority of fine pearls from the South China Sea. The coast between the Leizhou peninsula and the Bay of Canton, however, is separated from the West River by hills and mountains, and the narrow, humid, unhealthy hinterland along the coast discouraged Chinese settlement. In 2 AD the population of Hepu was recorded as just under 80,000, and it had increased very little, to some 86,000, by the Later Han count.

Hepu county, capital of the commandery, which lay west of the Leizhou peninsula facing the Gulf of Tongking, had land access north across the low and narrow watershed to the West River in Yulin. During Former Han, Hepu was the base for long-distance sea traffic, for we are told that officials of the emperor's private apartments were sent on missions as far as India to exchange the

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<sup>63</sup> *SJ* 114, 2980; *HS* 95, 3860, and *SJ* 114, 2982; *HS* 95, 3861, also *SJ* 113, 2976; *HS* 95, 3858. On Sun Ce see Chapter 2 and on Lü Dai see Chapter 7.

<sup>64</sup> On the shipyards of the Qin and early Han period excavated at present-day Guangzhou, and on the nature of ships at that time see the articles by scholars of Guangzhou City and of Shanghai Communications University in *Wenwu* 1977.4, and also Wang, *Han Civilization*, 122. The building platforms at the yards are estimated to have been suitable for the construction of vessels of sixty metric tonnes, thirty metres long and eight metres wide.

<sup>65</sup> On Hepu commandery, see the Treatise of Administrative Geography, *HHS* 113/23, 3531; *cf.* the Treatise of Geography, *HS* 28B, 1630.

<sup>66</sup> On Xuwen county in Han, see the article by scholars of the Guangdong Provincial Museum in *Kaogu* 1977.4.

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gold and silks of China for precious stones, curios and trinkets, while the pearls they brought back were as large as two inches diameter, far more valuable than those collected locally.<sup>67</sup> The goods were assessed and traded in the market at Hepu, and then joined the local production of pearls for portage to the West River and then followed the rivers and canals to the north. Under both Former and Later Han, the supply of pearls for the imperial court was a chief concern of the local administrators, and officials and private traders acquired great fortunes from the trade.<sup>68</sup>

During the 170s and 180s AD, the government of Emperor Ling of Later Han sought for a time, by the establishment of Gaoliang commandery, to bring the isolated territory east of the Leizhou peninsula under more effective control. The development, however, was short-lived, and the new unit disappeared a few years later.<sup>69</sup>

There were also several attempts to establish imperial presence on Hainan island. At the end of the second century BC, immediately after the conquest of the kingdom of Nan-Yue, Emperor Wu sent troops and colonists, and two commanderies were proclaimed, named Dan'er and Zhuyai. Dan'er "Drooping Ears" probably referred to the adornments of the natives, but Zhuyai "Shore of Pearls" gives the real reason for the enterprise: the trade in pearls was of value and interest to the court, but there was still more to be said for direct access to the centre of production.

*Han shu* describes the people of Hainan as living a simple life, with some hunting, but with a basic peasant economy. Because officials sent from central China abused and provoked the natives, however, there were frequent rebellions, and during the following

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<sup>67</sup> *HS* 28B, 1671.

<sup>68</sup> Yü, *Trade and Expansion*, 178.

<sup>69</sup> The Wuhu people were brought under the control of the imperial government in 170, and their territory was made into a new commandery: according to *JS* 15, 464, the name of the commandery was Gaoxing, but it was evidently later changed to Gaoliang. In 178, however, these people rebelled, and the trouble spread throughout the region. In 181 the newly appointed Inspector of Jiaozhi, Zhu Jun, succeeded in quelling the disorders (*HHS* 86/76, 2839, *HHS* 71/61, 2308-09, and *HHS* 8, 345), but the commandery of Gaoxing/Gaoliang is not mentioned again in the texts of this period, and it is probable that the establishment was abandoned.

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reigns the imperial positions were gradually withdrawn. Dan'er was abolished in 82 BC, and in 46 BC Zhuyai commandery was also ended.<sup>70</sup> At the beginning of Later Han a county named Zhuyai was re-established, probably on the northern shore of Hainan island, and Emperor Ming is said to have received tribute from the Dan'er barbarians.<sup>71</sup> There was, however, no serious attempt to restore Chinese authority until the time of the Three Kingdoms and the empire of Wu.<sup>72</sup>

These failures of colonisation and control reflect the distances involved and the difficulties of the country. To this day, Hainan and the adjacent coastline are known for endemic tropical diseases, notably malaria, and the effects were equally feared in earlier times. During the Tang period, the Gate of Ghosts, a narrow gap between crags on the West River, still embellished by a stele ascribed to the great general Ma Yuan of Later Han, was viewed as the entrance to a land of strange and deadly air, and a popular saying claimed that for every ten men who went out only nine would return.<sup>73</sup> Under Han, the same conditions applied, and Hepu was used as a place of banishment for criminals and their associates.

The coastal region of present-day Vietnam had been formally under Chinese administration since the conquests of Qin at the end of the third century, and Former Han benefited from the expansion and consolidation in that region which had been achieved by Zhao Tuo and his state of Nan-Yue.<sup>74</sup> The major administrative units were the commanderies of Jiaozhi, on the Red River delta, with its

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<sup>70</sup> *HS* 28B, 1670, describes the island of Hainan and the two commanderies of Dan'er and Zhuyai. On their establishment, see also *SJ* 113, 2977, and *HS* 95, 3859; on their abandonment, see *HS* 7, 223; Dubs, *HFHD* II, 160 (Dan'er), and *HS* 9, 283; Dubs, *HFHD* II, 310 (Zhuyai), and *HS* 64B, 2830-35, also *HHS* 86/76, 2835-36. See also Schafer, *Shore of Pearls*, 8-14, Wang, "Nan-hai Trade," 21, Yü, *Trade and Expansion*, 192, and *Cambridge Han*, 453 [Yü, "Han Foreign Relations"].

<sup>71</sup> *HHS* 2, 121, and on Zhuyai county of Later Han see *HHSJJ* 113B/23B, 27a-b.

<sup>72</sup> *i.e.* in 242: *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1145; Wang, "Nan-hai Trade," 33.

<sup>73</sup> Schafer, *Vermilion Bird*, 31.

<sup>74</sup> *SJ* 113, 2969, and *HS* 95, 3848, record Zhao Tuo's conquest of the western kingdom of Oule [Au Lac], in the region of the Red River delta; Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 23-27; Schafer, *Vermilion Bird*, 15.

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capital at Longbian by present-day Hanoi, Jiuzhen, with its capital at Xupu, near Thanh Hoa in northern Vietnam, and Rinan, which was based upon Xiquan, near present-day Quang Tri.<sup>75</sup>

At the beginning of Later Han imperial authority was confirmed by the campaigns of Ma Yuan against the rebellion led by the Zheng (or Trung) sisters in the region of the Red River between 40 and 43 AD.<sup>76</sup> The heroic sisters are still remembered in Vietnam as symbols of national independence and resistance, but Ma Yuan, General Who Calms the Waves, who enforced Chinese culture at the point of the sword and melted the sacred bronze drums of the Yue chieftains in order to cast a triumphal horse for presentation at Luoyang, was celebrated centuries later as a god and a hero.<sup>77</sup>

To the west of Chinese territory, the backbone country was inhabited by mountain people, probably the ancestors of the present-day Moi tribes and perhaps related to the more advanced and powerful Cham and Khmer to the south.<sup>78</sup> They appear to have been rather a source of exploitation than of concern to the Chinese administrators and the people of the delta and coastal plain, and the chief threat to Han control came from the settled inhabitants of the regions which they sought to occupy.

For a hundred years after Ma Yuan put down the rebellion of the Trung sisters, imperial authority remained largely intact, despite endemic small-scale rebellion which was blamed most commonly

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<sup>75</sup> Holmgren, *Colonisation*, 23-52, presents a detailed reconstruction of the river systems in the delta and the sites of the counties in Vietnam during the Han period.

<sup>76</sup> *HHS* 86/76, 2836-37, and *HHS* 24/14, 838-39; Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 37-41, Holmgren, *Colonisation*, 11-16, and Schafer, *Vermilion Bird*, 81.

<sup>77</sup> On the Trung sisters in later centuries, see Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 334-339 Appendix K. On the later fame of Ma Yuan, see, for example, Schafer, *Vermilion Bird*, 97-99, and on local traditions of his putative quasi-magical works, Stein, "Lin-yi," 147-202.

*HHS* 24/14, 840, tells us that Ma Yuan was a connoisseur of fine horses. After his destruction of the rebellion in the south, he took the captured drums, symbols of alien religion and power, and melted them down in order to produce a bronze statue of the ideal horse. He presented it to the Emperor at Luoyang, and it was set up by the Hall of All-Embracing Virtue in the Southern Palace: Bielenstein, *Lo-yang*, 25-26.

<sup>78</sup> Schafer, *Vermilion Bird*, 16-17.

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on the corruption and greed of the alien governors from the north. In 136, however, there was a great uprising, chiefly by the Cham people from the south, which overwhelmed the greater part of Rinan commandery and made heavy inroads into Jiuzhen. Moreover, when troops were raised in Jiaozhi to oppose the rebels, these men in turn broke out in mutiny, and the whole imperial position in the region was threatened.

Discussions at court recognised that resources in the south were inadequate to deal with the problem in military terms. There was a suggestion that an army should be raised in Jing province, but this scheme was wisely rejected. On the one hand the tropical conditions, heat and disease, would exact an enormous toll in non-combat casualties, and it was doubtful if an army from the north could be effectively deployed. It was known, moreover, that there was discontent in the south of Jing province, so the disruption of such a major conscription might well bring another mutiny and even more serious trouble closer to home. The rebellion in the south was demonstrating the limits of imperial power, and the senior official Li Gu argued that the best solution was to attempt to settle the affair by administration, diplomacy and disruption of the enemy through intrigue: an old and well-tried recipe for dealing with barbarians on the frontiers.<sup>79</sup>

The program was successful, at least insofar as it brought an end to active warfare, and Han control was formally restored. There were, however, continued disturbances in the region of Vietnam during 144, 157 and 160, and troubles with the mountain people of the north, in present-day Guangxi and Guizhou.<sup>80</sup> At the extremity of the empire, Rinan commandery below the 16th parallel appears to have been lost, and the non-Chinese kingdom of Linyi was established in the region of Hue, extending south beyond

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<sup>79</sup> HHS 6, 266-68, HHS 86/76, 2837-39; Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 61-62, and 341-342, where his Appendix L translates the memorial of Li Gu. See also *Cambridge Han*, 310-311 [Loewe, "The Conduct of Government"], and 454-455 [Yü, "Han Foreign Relations"], also Wang, "Nan-hai Trade," 26.

<sup>80</sup> Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 63-67.

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present-day Da Nang.<sup>81</sup> Further around the coast, on the Mekong delta, the kingdom of Funan, which traded regularly with Han, and which was developing political authority along the eastern coast of the Malay peninsula and a dominance of the regional trade, was powerful enough and sufficiently distant to avoid any military confrontation.<sup>82</sup>

We do not, unfortunately, have any census figures for the population of Jiaozhi commandery under the Later Han dynasty, but in 2 AD there were almost three quarters of a million people registered, more than in all the rest of the province put together, and it seems certain that the number of inhabitants must have reached above a million during the second century AD. Jiuzhen commandery increased by about a quarter, from 166,013 to 209,894, and we are told that Rinan gained more than 40 per cent, from just under 70,000 to just over 100,000: it seems likely, however, that this last figure reflects the situation at the time of greatest prosperity, before the rebellion and partial withdrawal of the late 130s.<sup>83</sup>

Jiaozhi commandery, however, was the territory of greatest importance in this region of present-day Vietnam. Though the delta of the Red River did not extend so far into the Gulf of Tongking as it does at the present day, the area was broad and fertile, and provided a prosperous hinterland for trade and influence by land and sea. There were communications by land: northeast across the modern

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<sup>81</sup> There is a description and history of Linyi in *Liang shu* 54, 784-87. For modern discussion, see Stein, "Lin-yi," particularly at 130-147, and also Kuwada [1941].

The commentary of Liu Zhao to the Treatise of Administrative Geography, *HHS* 113/23, 3533 note 2, observes that the kingdom of Linyi in the fifth century occupied the territory of Xianglin county in Rinan under Later Han. Stein argues, surely correctly, that the new state represented a formation of the local people who had long inhabited the region formally regarded by the Chinese as being within the territory of the empire: they were not "beyond the frontiers" but local groups which gained their independence at this time.

<sup>82</sup> On Funan, see *Liang shu* 54, 787, Pelliot, "Fou-nan," and for a discussion using modern scholarship on Southeast Asia, Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development*, 38 and 48-68.

<sup>83</sup> On Jiaozhi, Jiuzhen and Rinan commanderies, see the Treatise of Administrative Geography, *HHS* 113/23, 3531-33; *cf.* the Treatise of Geography, *HS* 28B, 1629 and 1630.

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frontier into the upper reaches of the West River; and northwest into Yi province, where present-day Kunming in Yunnan was administered by Yizhou commandery, and where Later Han claimed suzerainty over the Ailao people and the new commandery of Yongchang about the Dali Lake. Longbian, moreover, was the major trading port for the South China Sea, with contact east along the coast to Nanhai, and south to the peninsulas and islands of southeast Asia and the straits which led to the Indian Ocean.<sup>84</sup>

The earliest description of the sea trade, preserved in the Treatise of Geography of *Han shu*, emphasises the importance of Hepu commandery, and sailing distances were apparently counted from that territory.<sup>85</sup> By the first centuries AD, however, the natural advantages of Longbian, with its fertile and open ground for settlement, and its access to a network of transport routes, had given it pride of place: the descriptions of the city under the rule of Shi Xie at the end of Han, and the records of Jiaozhi's population and prosperity, indicate a dominant position as market and entrepot for goods brought by land and sea, with a flourishing trade, along the coast of China and beyond to the lands of southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean.

The foreign trade was essentially seasonal, based upon the alternation of the monsoon, with ships sailing south during winter, across the end of the calendar year, and north in the summer. In theory, it would have been possible for vessels to leave the coast by Cape Varella and sail due north towards Hainan or even more easterly to landfall by the Bay of Canton. In practice, however, apart from the normal difficulties of navigation away from land, the reefs and shoals of the Paracels and other petty islands made the risk too great, and the regular line of voyages followed the curve of the coast to call first at Longbian.

There is no evidence of direct official involvement in this overseas enterprise during Later Han, and the bulk of the trade was probably carried in non-Chinese Yue ships or in those of foreigners

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<sup>84</sup> Yü, *Trade and Expansion*, 177-178; also Chapter 5. Longbian is generally equated with the city known in the West as Cattigara.

<sup>85</sup> *HS* 28B, 1671, discussed by Wang, "Nan-hai Trade," 17-23. For another study of the sea-borne foreign trade of Han, see the article by Han Zhenhua [1957].

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from the south and east. In the time of Emperor Huan, however, there was a series of officially recognised visits from the distant lands of the west, arriving by sea from the south of Rinan. Groups from India were received at the court in 159 and in 161, and an "embassy" from Daqin, the empire of Rome, arrived in 166. It is very possible these were no more than groups of private merchants seeking favourable terms for trade, while the court accepted the imposture for the sake of its own prestige. Irrespective, however, of the true status of the travellers, they did come from very distant lands, and the record of their visits shows the range and extent of Han China's communication with the world beyond the southern seas.<sup>86</sup>

### *Yang province and the lower Yangzi:*

During the Han period there was minimal attempt at government interference with the trade and the people of the coastline of present-day Fujian. An outpost of the empire was maintained by the counties of Dongye and Houguan, at the mouth of the Min River by present-day Fuzhou, which probably served both as a communications point and as a place for gathering toll on the local

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<sup>86</sup> The "embassies" from India (*Tianzhu*) are cited in *HHS* 7, 306 and 309, and *HHS* 88/78, 2922. That from Daqin is cited in *HHS* 7, 318, *HHS* 88/78, 2920, and *HHJ* 15, 7a-b. In 159 Emperor Huan overthrew the government of the General-in-Chief Liang Ji in a coup assisted by the palace eunuchs, and took power for himself; in 166 his government was under criticism and pressure from scholars and officials who objected to his policies and to the eunuchs' influence at court: see, for example, de Crespigny, *Huan and Ling* I, 11-14 and 69-85. The arrival of embassies bearing tribute from distant regions was a useful source of propaganda for the regime.

The texts on Daqin have been discussed in a multitude of secondary works in Western languages, of which I mention here only Hirth, *China and the Roman Orient*, 47, 82, 94-95 and 173; Pelliot, "Deux itinéraires," 132-133; Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, 281; Shiratori, "Geography of the Western Region," 145; Needham, *Science and Civilisation* I, 197-198, and III, 174-175, Wang, "Nan-hai Trade," 28, and Raschke, "New Studies in Roman Commerce with the East," 853-855. See also Lu Bi, *SGZJJ* 30, 62b, citing Ding Qian. I have been fortunate to be able to consult Dr Donald Leslie and Dr K.H.J. Gardiner, whose work on the Roman Empire in Chinese sources is in preparation.

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and passing commerce.<sup>87</sup> Something was known of Taiwan, then called simply Yizhou "Barbarian Island," but there was no official interest in the place. Further north, from the time of Emperor Shun the county of Yongning occupied the mouth of the Ou River by present-day Wenzhou in southern Zhejiang. None of the coastal settlements, however, appear to have exercised more than nominal control over their hinterland, and there was no drive to do so. The greater part of the mountain country of south-eastern China, including all of Fujian and great areas of eastern Guangdong, south-eastern Jiangxi and southern Zhejiang, lay beyond the frontiers of the empire and even beyond the interests of Chinese colonists.

There is, however, good archaeological evidence to demonstrate a long relationship between central China and the lower Yangzi, and during the time of the Zhou dynasty, a kingdom of Yue, with at least a sinicised ruling class, had developed in the region of Hangzhou Bay. At the beginning of the fifth century BC, Yue defeated the rival state of Wu whose base territory was in the region of the Tai Lake and whose capital was at the city of Wu, presently Suzhou, and Yue continued as an enemy of the great state of Chu until its final defeat in 334 BC.<sup>88</sup> When Chu was in turn conquered by Qin in 223, the former territory of Yue was made into the commandery of Kuaiji, with its capital at Wu. Immediately afterwards, moreover, an army of Qin moved eastwards from Jiangxi, across the dividing range of

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<sup>87</sup> On the county of Dongye, and its neighbouring county of Houguan, see Bielenstein, "The Chinese Colonisation of Fukien," 121-122. The reference to the two places in *HHS* 112/22, 3488, is seriously corrupt, and must be elucidated by means of the commentary in *HHSJJ* 112/22, 47a-b.

The name of the county of Houguan, which was also known as Dong houguan, was evidently derived from its original function as a military colony: the term *houguan* may be rendered as "the office of a captain," or "company," and it appears as the name or part of the name of a number of county units along the northern frontiers of the Han empire (de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 457-458 note 38, and Loewe, *RHA* I, 76 and 96). The prefix *dong* "Eastern" served to distinguish it from the various other places of that or similar names in the north and northwest of the empire.

<sup>88</sup> On the history of Yue and Wu, see *SJ* 41; Chavannes, *MH* IV, 418-448, and *SJ* 31; Chavannes, *MH* IV, 1-33. On the history of the state of Chu, see *SJ* 40; Chavannes, *MH* IV, 337-417.

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the Wuyi Shan, and then followed the coast southwards to the region of present-day Guangdong.<sup>89</sup> On that route, the expedition passed by and conquered two small states of the Yue people in the neighbourhood of present-day Wenzhou and Fuzhou, and the commandery of Minzhong was proclaimed to control the region of Fuzhou.

With the fall of Qin, these territories regained their independence, and two states re-emerged: Min-Yue by Fuzhou and Dong-Ou by Wenzhou; and both rulers were recognised by Han with the title of king.<sup>90</sup> About 138, however, we are told that Min-Yue invaded Dong-Ou and besieged the capital. Dong-Ou asked for help from Han, and then requested that "the state should be transferred" to China Proper. The people were accordingly brought north to the region of Donghai between the Yangzi and the Huai, and the land was left vacant for occupation by Min-Yue.

Another generation later, following the conquest of Nan-Yue by Emperor Wu of Former Han, Min-Yue, now also known as Dong-Yue, shared its fate. A combined force of armies from Yuzhang and ships from Hangzhou Bay destroyed the state, and again the people were shifted north to the Huai and the Yangzi.

One can hardly believe that the entire population of Fujian and southern Zhejiang was thus forcibly removed. Almost certainly, those involved were the royal and noble families of the two states. Their departure removed the cultural and political leadership of the native people, and the county settlements maintained thereafter by the Han empire were sufficient to prevent any future development of renewed political independence. For the next three hundred years no Chinese armies operated along the rivers of Fujian and east of the Wuyi Shan, and there was no cause for them to do so. The people lived in small scattered communities among the mountains, they were in no position to cause trouble, and they were of no interest to the imperial government. It was, indeed, not until the time of Emperor Shun of Later Han, in 138, that the former territory of Dong-Ou by present-day Wenzhou was raised from the status of a

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<sup>89</sup> See note 52 above.

<sup>90</sup> On the history of these two states, see *SJ* 114, and *HS* 95, 3859-63.

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subordinate military district to become the separate county of Yongning.<sup>91</sup>

Further to the north, the area about Hangzhou Bay was reasonably settled, with several counties along the southern shore, and extensions of colonisation in the valleys of the major rivers to the south, notably the Puyang and the Zhe, which flow into the Qiantang estuary by present-day Hangzhou. From the region south of the bay, north to the mouth of the Yangzi, the Han commandery of Kuaiji also controlled the region of the Tai Lake and the low-lying, often marshy, but fertile land about it. The population of the commandery in 2 AD was just over one million.<sup>92</sup>

At this time, the coast-line at the mouth of the Yangzi was by no means so far advanced as it is now. The site of the present-day metropolis of Shanghai was still in the shallows of the sea, Chongming Island, which now guards the mouth of the estuary, did not exist, and the turn of the coast to the north appears to have been close to present-day Rugao in Jiangsu. The Yangzi, moreover, had determined its course only within the previous few hundred years, for there is evidence that at least two other major streams, the so-called Middle and Southern Jiang, had flowed through the region of the Tai Lake during the first millennium BC, before the main stream of the river was finally concentrated into the more northerly course of the last two thousand years.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> *HHS* 112/22, 3488, the Treatise of Administrative Geography. On the Han county settlements by the mouth of the Min River, see also Bielenstein, "Colonisation of Fukien," 101-103.

<sup>92</sup> On Kuaiji and Wu commanderies, see the Treatise of Administrative Geography, *HHS* 113/23, 3488-91; *cf.* the Treatise of Geography *HS* 28A, 1590-92.

<sup>93</sup> For references to the Northern Jiang, now the main course of the Yangzi, to the Middle Jiang and to the Southern Jiang, and also to a Branch Stream, see the Treatise of Geography, *HS* 28A, 1590-91 *sub* Piling, 1592 *sub* Wuhu, 1590 *sub* Wu, and 1592 *sub* Shicheng. See also the discussion in *HSBZ* 28A (3), 11a, 20a, 10a and 19a.

For reconstructions of the courses of these streams, see Yang Shoujing, *Lidai yudi yange xianyao tu (Qian Han)*, 47a-48b, and Worcester, *Junks and Sampans*, 5. It appears likely that by the end of Han the Southern Jiang and the Branch Stream had ceased to flow, and it is questionable whether the Middle Jiang was

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In this region, the *Shi ji* of Sima Qian, referring to the region of Eastern Chu, and the discussion on the "Territory of Wu," in the Treatise of Geography in *Han shu*, both describe the region of the "Three Jiang and the Five Lakes" as low-lying and damp, so that many men died young. It was, however, naturally prosperous, with profit from the production of sea salt and from copper in the Zhang Hills to the west, while the city of Wu was one of the great cities of the empire.<sup>94</sup>

West of Wu commandery, on the southern bank of the Yangzi, lay Danyang commandery, with its capital at Wanling, at the place of the same name in present-day Anhui.<sup>95</sup> In this region, the Yangzi flows northeast past present-day Wuhu, the limit of tidal waters, and the greater part of Danyang commandery was spread between the line of the river and the high ground now known as the Huang Shan to the southeast with a couple of isolated counties beyond.

Under Qin and early Han, Danyang had been known as Zhang, so the Zhang Hills referred to in the *Han shu* text cited above may be identified as this territory.<sup>96</sup> Under the Former Han dynasty, Danyang is recorded as the site of an Office for Copper, evidently based on the local production, and some mirrors of the time of Wang Mang have the proud inscription that they are made of Danyang copper. This region of the southeast, moreover, was noted for the quality of its mirrors and for a distinctive style of design, developed in the second century of Later Han, which showed gods and goddesses and spiritual animals, or human figures with horses and carriages. The pattern spread over the rest of China, and Kuaiji was noted as a centre of production.<sup>97</sup>

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more than a relic by the end of Later Han. See also *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* II, 24-25 and 51-52.

On the general outline of the coast in this region of Hangzhou Bay, the Yangzi estuary and the seashore north to Shandong, I accept the delineation of *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* II, 24-25, 51-52, and III, 27-28.

<sup>94</sup> *SJ* 129, 3167; Swann, *Food and Money*, 444-445, also *HS* 28B, 1666-68.

<sup>95</sup> On Danyang commandery, see the Treatise of Administrative Geography, *HHS* 112/22, 3486; *cf.* the Treatise of Geography, *HS* 28A, 1592.

<sup>96</sup> The name of the commandery was changed in 109 BC (*HS* 28A, 1592).

<sup>97</sup> Wang, *Han Civilization*, 105.

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In general terms, some of the pottery of the lands south of the Yangzi is distinctive to that region, notably a so-called "hard pottery," made from dense clay which required firing at a higher temperature than the more common grey pottery. Specifically in Kuaiji, moreover, there has appeared the earliest evidence for the development of celadon glaze. Previously, the vessels excavated from tombs in the area of Nanjing and Wuhan during the 1950s, and dated to the years of the kingdom and empire of Wu in the third century, were regarded as the first examples of that work. More recently, however, works of the late second century have been discovered in the region of Shaoxing, south of Hangzhou Bay: the design of the kilns lends itself to the development of comparatively high temperatures with good circulation of air, and among the potsherds there are some of green-glazed stoneware, the standard celadon.<sup>98</sup>

During the reign of Emperor Shun of Later Han the commandery of Kuaiji was divided, and the city of Wu became the capital of a more restricted unit between the mouth of the Yangzi and Hangzhou Bay, with extension up the Zhe River to the southwest and the minor county of Fuchun. The southern part of the former commandery, which retained the name Kuaiji, had its capital at Shanyin near present-day Shaoxing, on the southern shore of the bay.

The census records of Later Han, at the end of the reign of Emperor Shun, show the population of Wu commandery just over 700,000 and that of truncated Kuaiji as just under half a million, a combined total of 1,181,978, and an increase of some fourteen per cent from the count in 2 AD. One has the impression of natural increase rather than substantial migration, and indeed the number of counties in the region was reduced. In particular, the city of Qiantang, by present-day Hangzhou, which had been the headquarters of a county administration under Former Han, lost that status at some time during Later Han. Qiantang was evidently

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<sup>98</sup> Wang, *Han Civilization*, 143 and 145, citing the following articles: on the celadon of the tombs of third century Wu, see Wuhan City Cultural Relics Commission [1955], Ni Zhenkui and others [1955], and Nanjing Museum, *Selected Cultural Relics unearthed in Jiangsu Province*, figures 127 and 128. On the excavations of kilns in the neighbourhood of Shaoxing and the evidence for the development of celadon, see Ye Hongming and others [1978].

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restored to its former position by the end of the dynasty, and the settlement, on the strategic site which later became the capital of Southern Song and was praised by Marco Polo as the greatest city in the world, certainly retained its local importance, but such a reduction in status can hardly be regarded as a mark of interest or concern on the part of the imperial government.

In similar fashion, though the population of Danyang went up by more than fifty per cent between the censuses of Former and Later Han, from 405,171 individuals in 2 AD to 630,545 in the 140s, the formal area of the commandery did not increase, and the number of counties was reduced by one.

Across the Yangzi from the northern corner of Danyang and the neighbouring region of Wu commandery, Guangling commandery in Xu province occupied the northern shore of the broad Yangzi estuary as it was formed at that time. The capital of Guangling was at the county of that name, by present-day Yangzhou in Jiangsu, and it appears that there was canal construction and waterways leading northwards towards the Huai, roughly on the line of the present Grand Canal but meandering to the east through the Sheyang marsh.<sup>99</sup>

The estuary, however, was not so sheltered as it is now, and the centre of the empire lay not in the north but well to the northwest. The transport link into Guangling, therefore, was primarily a local one, and the main line of communication between the southeast and central China went by crossing-places of the Yangzi further upstream and southwest of present-day Nanjing. At the same time, however, the hills and marsh-land south of Dantu, Qu'a and Piling, in Wu commandery opposite Guangling, allowed only a comparatively narrow strip of open ground along the southern shore of the estuary, and these counties held an important position for both river- and land-borne communications towards the centre of Wu commandery and the further region of Kuaiji.

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<sup>99</sup> Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 271-272, and see *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* II, 45.

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Upstream and southwest of Danyang, occupying the greater part of present-day Jiangxi province, was Yuzhang commandery.<sup>100</sup> Sima Qian, describing the commandery under the region of Southern Chu, referred to its local production of gold but observed that, like the tin of Changsha, the cost of extraction was more than the market value. Sima Qian's comments were followed by *Han shu* in its section on the Territory of Wu, and this region, like that to the northeast, shared the description that "the land south of the Yangzi is low-lying and damp, and many men die young."<sup>101</sup>

During the Han period, the area of the present-day Poyang Lake was indeed for the most part marsh-land, watered by the rivers of all present-day Jiangxi, but notably by the Gan River from the south and west. These streams mingled in the marsh-lands of Poyang, but where they joined the Yangzi there was a great lake and marsh, Pengli, extending both north and south of the main stream. There were Chinese settlements all about the lake and the marsh-lands, and counties had been established to the south, in the upper valleys of the tributary rivers.<sup>102</sup>

In Yuzhang, the development of colonisation was remarkable. In 2 AD there were eighteen counties and a population of 351,965 individuals. By the middle of the second century, the census of Later Han listed twenty-one counties, but a population of 1,668,941 individuals, an increase of almost five-fold. Yuzhang had thus an increase in the numbers of Chinese citizens comparable to that of Changsha and inferior only to that of Lingling, and it was the largest and most populous commandery south of the Yangzi.

This great advance of colonisation also increased the importance of the lake and river system of Yuzhang as a communications route towards the far south. In the west, the county of Yichun in Yuzhang was only a short distance across the mountains from Changsha commandery in Jing province and the north-south traffic along the

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<sup>100</sup> On Yuzhang commandery, see the Treatise of Administrative Geography, *HHS* 112/22, 3491; *cf.* the Treatise of Geography, *HS* 28A, 1593.

<sup>101</sup> *SJ* 129, 3268; Swann, *Food and Money*, 445, also *HS* 28B, 1668.

On the gold resources of Poyang county of Yuzhang in Former Han, see *HS* 28A, 1593.

<sup>102</sup> For a reconstruction of drainage patterns in this region, see *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* II, 24-25 and 51-52.

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Xiang River,<sup>103</sup> but the most important development was further south along the main stream of the Gan River. By that route, a traveller from the region of the Huai and the lower Yangzi could enter Yuzhang by the junction at the Pengli Lake and then travel up the Gan River, past the capital of the commandery at Nanchang near the present-day city of that name, to the region of Gan county in the far southwest. From there a road was maintained across the mountains to Qujiang in Guiyang commandery of Jing province, which lay on the upper course of the North River, and this gave access downstream to Nanhai commandery and Panyu its capital.

During the Tang dynasty, in the year 809, the scholar and official Li Ao followed just this route on his way to take up an appointment. He journeyed southeast from Luoyang across the Huai to the Yangzi, then south to Hangzhou and the Zhe River and over a mountain pass to Hongzhou on the Gan River south of the Poyang Lake. He arrived there on 12 June, and crossed the Great Yu mountain pass at the head of the Gan River exactly one month later, on 12 July. By 17 July he and his family were at Qujiang, and a little over a week later, on 25 July, they came to Guangzhou.<sup>104</sup>

During Han, the route up the Zhe River would have been neither practicable nor desirable, and access to Yuzhang commandery was effectively limited to the water and narrow land paths through the lake and marsh-land by the Yangzi. The old road of Han across the Great Yu pass had been bypassed for an easier way at the beginning of Tang, but the official Zhang Jiuling, supervisor of that later work, left verses describing the abandoned road the east of the pass:

Forbidding in the extreme, a hardship for men.  
An unswerving course: you clambered aloft  
On the outskirts of several miles of heavy forest,  
With flying bridges, clinging to the brink  
Halfway up a thousand fathoms of layered cliffs.....<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Sun Jian, Grand Administrator of Changsha, based on the Xiang River, was thus able to send assistance to the county administration of Yichun when it was under siege by rebels about 189: Chapter 2.

<sup>104</sup> The route of Li Ao is described, with a timetable taken from his diary, by Schafer, *Vermilion Bird*, 22-24.

<sup>105</sup> The verses are translated by Schafer, *Vermilion Bird*, 22.

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So the route was not inviting, with echoes of the trestle ways and galleries by which the Chinese in the northwest of the empire had developed the Bao-Ye and other routes across the Qin Ling between the valleys of the Wei and Han rivers.<sup>106</sup> It cannot have been easy for major transport, nor for the movement of an army; but it was convenient for traders with light and valuable goods, such as pearls and other exotica from the south, and it confirmed the authority of government in the region, with at least the potential for military operations.

Immediately north of the Yangzi, in the two remaining commanderies of Yang province, Lujiang and Jiujiang, the symptoms of Yuzhang's success in colonisation and development may be seen and explained. Under Former Han, the territory of those two commanderies had been divided into three, Lujiang, Jiujiang and the kingdom of Liu'an in the north of present-day Anhui. The total number of counties was thirty-two and the combined population was 1.4 million. Under Later Han, Lujiang and Jiujiang had absorbed the territory of Liu'an, the number of counties was reduced to twenty-eight, but the population of the area had fallen to 857,109, a loss of more than half a million.<sup>107</sup>

Similar dramatic decline can be observed across the whole region of the Huai valley and north of the Yangzi. In Runan, just north of Lujiang, the registered population had fallen from two and a half to just over two million; in the neighbouring territory of Pei, formerly more than two million, the loss was almost half; and in Xu province, which occupied the coastline from the Shandong peninsula south to the Yangzi estuary, the population had been reduced by 40%, from some 4.8 million to 2.8 million, while the number of counties had fallen by half, from over 130 in the Former Han list to 62 under Later Han.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> On the trestle gallery engineering of Han roads, see Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 20-24.

<sup>107</sup> Compare *HS* 28A, 1569, 1568 and 28B, 1638-39, with *HHS* 112/22, 3485-86 and 3487; also *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* II, 24 and 51.

<sup>108</sup> On Runan and Pei, see the Treatise of Administrative Geography, *HHS* 110/20, 3424 and 3427, also the Treatise of Geography, *HS* 28A, 1561-62 and 1572.

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Bielenstein, in his discussion of the causes for the fall of Wang Mang, explains this catastrophic drop in the registered population to the breaking of the banks of the Yellow River and consequent flooding across this southern part of the North China plain.<sup>109</sup> The demographic evidence for his argument is impressive. It appears that the flood, which extended across this region for much of the first part of the first century AD, and was only brought under control in the time of Emperor Ming of Later Han, drove the people to take refuge north, west and south. In the short term, banditry and rebellion were brought about by the disruption and despair of homeless refugees moving into the heart-land of the empire, but in the longer term the errant waters also drove men and their families south across the Yangzi, notably to Yuzhang and to Danyang, but also no doubt to the new lands of Jing province a little upstream.

Lujiang commandery, immediately north of Yuzhang, with its capital at Shu, near present-day Lujiang in Anhui, lay close against the ranges of the Dabie Shan, and occupied the eastern end of the low watershed, the Huaiyang Shan, which divides the Yangzi from the Huai.<sup>110</sup> It thus provided the most direct route by land from north to south on this side of the divide, and its position on the intermediate stretch of the Yangzi gave it considerable strategic importance. Under Former Han, Lujiang commandery was the site of an imperial Office for Towered Warships, probably a naval training depot, and surely a naval dockyard for construction and maintenance. Ships from that base could operate not only on the lower Yangzi, but also upstream into the neighbouring territory of Jiangxia, probably with a patrol area as far as the mouth of the Han.

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The figure for the population of Pei, then a kingdom, at the time of the Later Han count, is given as 200,495 households and only 251,393 individuals; in Former Han it had been 409,079 households and 2,030,480 individuals. The number of individuals recorded for Later Han is impossibly small, not only in terms of the alleged decrease from Former Han, but also in relation to the number of households. Bielenstein, "Census," 159 has suggested that the figure for individuals for Later Han should read 1,251,393; he is very probably correct.

<sup>109</sup> Bielenstein, "Census," 140, and *RHD* I, 146-151.

<sup>110</sup> On Lujiang commandery, see the *Treatise of Administrative Geography*, *HHS* 112/22, 3487; *cf.* the *Treatise of Geography*, *HS* 28A, 1568.

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And it is very possible that this arrangement continued for much of Later Han.<sup>111</sup>

Jiujiang, with its capital at Yinling, near Fengyang in Anhui, was on the further end of the Huaiyang Shan, which thereafter disappears into open country of lakes, marshes and flood-lands to the east.<sup>112</sup> On the borders of Lujiang and Jiujiang were large lakes, the Chao near present-day Hefei, and the Shaobei further north, just south of the Huai. *Shi ji* and *Han shu* both remark that this region was on a useful transport route between the Huai and the Yangzi, and that Hefei was an important metropolis and market. *Han shu* refers also to the city of Shouchun, in the north of Jiujiang by the Huai River near the Shaobei lake, as sharing in the trade route and the prosperity of Hefei.<sup>113</sup> Hefei was an important junction for two alternative routes. West of the Chao Lake, a line of communication ran due south along the line of the modern railway past Shu city in Lujiang to the area of Huan city close to the Yangzi by present-day Anqing, with access upstream south and west towards Yuzhang and the middle Yangzi beyond. The other route lay almost due east, passing north of the Chao Lake, and reached the Yangzi on its north-flowing reach between present-day Wuhu and Nanjing. There were crossing places and river ports at Liyang county on the Yangzi and in Fuling county nearby to the north, and goods and people could then move either by land into Danyang or downstream towards the mouth of the estuary. In that sense, despite the need for

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<sup>111</sup> The Office for Towered Warships is described as a shipyard by *Cambridge Han*, 582 [Nishijima, "Economic and Social History of Former Han"], and it may indeed be true that ships were built there.

However, one of the training possibilities for conscripts of the Former Han empire was as a sailor or marine in a Towered Warship (*louchuan*): see, for example, Yen Keng-wang [1961] I, 204, and de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 48. It appears probable that the full establishment at Lujiang was a base which acted as the headquarters of naval activities on the Yangzi, as a supply and construction point, and served also as a training establishment for conscripts. The regular system of conscription used by Former Han was largely abandoned by Later Han (see below), but the function of the headquarters and the dockyard may well have been maintained, and there was presumably training for volunteers.

<sup>112</sup> On Jiujiang commandery, see the Treatise of Administrative Geography, *HHS* 112/22, 3485-86; cf. the Treatise of Geography, *HS* 28A, 1568.

<sup>113</sup> *SJ* 129, 3268; Swann, *Food and Money*, 445, also *HS* 28B, 1668.

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occasional portage, Hefei was the major communications link between central China and the lands of the southeast and south, and despite the general loss of population, the cities of this region appear to have maintained their prosperity through Later Han.<sup>114</sup>

We have already observed the depopulation of Xu province, which extended along the coastline from the mouth of the Yangzi across the lower Huai and north to Shandong. In Later Han, that region appears to have been comparatively unimportant to the imperial government. Langye commandery, however, just south of the Shandong peninsula, was noted as a centre of popular religion, with charismatic teachers and frequent rebellion or other disturbance. There was certainly some trade in ideas up and down the coast, and the celebrated Gan Ji, whom we have mentioned before and whom we shall consider again, was involved with the doctrines of the *Taiping jing* "Classic of Great Peace" which influenced north China, and he also taught in the territories of Kuaiji, Wu and Danyang.<sup>115</sup>

More importantly, however, immediately north of Jiujiang and Lujiang, Yu province was one of the chief regions of the empire, and both Pei and Runan were still large and important. From Hefei and Shouchun there was excellent communication to the north, for the tributaries of the Huai river flow generally southeast and give good access upstream towards the Yellow River and Luoyang.

In the time of Han, moreover, the natural river system was enhanced by the great system known as the Hong Gou, often rendered as the "Wild Goose" but better understood as the "Vast" or "Grand Canal." As far as it can be reconstructed for Han times, the Hong Gou comprised two different sets of works, both focussed upon the city of Rongyang by the Yellow River north of present-day Zhengzhou, where a great imperial granary held supplies for transit upstream to Luoyang. From Rongyang, one canal, the Langtang Qu, curved south to link the upper reaches of several rivers tributary to the Huai, improving their capacity for transport, and joining them to the Yellow River. A second canal, still longer, led eastwards from one natural waterway to the next as far as the city of Xiapi in Xu

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<sup>114</sup> On the road routes of this region, see Tom [1967], map facing 212.

<sup>115</sup> See above and Chapter 3.

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province, where it joined the Si River which flowed south into the Huai. This waterway, named Ban or Bian, and described variously by the texts as a river or a canal, was later developed into the Bian Canal of Sui and Tang, the essential part of the original Grand Canal.<sup>116</sup> In Han times it was a conduit for the great overflow of the Yellow River in the time of Wang Mang, and these waterways were the scene of important flood control works during Later Han, designed to prevent a repetition of that disaster.<sup>117</sup>

From the imperial capital and the region of the Yellow River, therefore, there was good communication by waterways southeast towards the Huai. About the lower reaches of the Huai in Xu province, there was the possibility of continuous water transport from Xiapi down the Si River and then south through the rivers, canals and lakes of Guangling to the Yangzi. More directly, however, communications could follow rivers such as the Ru and the Ying to the Huai near Shouchun and then south past Hefei and the lakes, by occasional portage to the Yangzi. From there, as we have seen, there were water and land routes to the furthest south, an impressive system for government and mercantile transport. On this basis, however, in more troubled times at the end of Later Han, the cities of Jiujiang and Lujiang became of major strategic importance in frontier war between north and south, and their prosperity was overshadowed by uncertainty and devastation.

### *The enforcement of authority:*

In the sections above, we have considered the dynamics of colonisation and demography, the migration of the Han people to the south, and also the routes by which traders and officials and armies could travel. It must be emphasised, however, that Chinese civilisation was based upon peasant agriculture, and though people might move into the south, they sought a place for cultivation and settlement at the end of their journey.

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<sup>116</sup> Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 270.

<sup>117</sup> *HHS* 2, 116, and 76/66, 2464-65; Bielenstein, *RHD* I, 147-150.

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For the most part, agriculture in the south was based upon rice grown in paddy fields, stretched along the river valleys or extended a short way up the slopes by terracing. Local enterprise, sometimes assisted or encouraged by government, saw the construction of small-scale dams, irrigation canals and other works for the maintenance of the crop within its sunken fields, and the yearly round of sowing, transplanting, weeding and harvest, just as among the millet and wheat-fields of the north, represented the basic occupation of the people and the regular limit of their individual horizons. The traders and officials, the generals and the soldiers, were small in number and almost superficial in their importance compared to the unending concerns of farming, food and clothing.

The Later Han administration of South China echoed this priority of settlement. The administrative units changed little during two centuries, and there were few new centres of local government. Though the commandery of Yuzhang, for example, multiplied its population almost five times, the number of counties in the region increased by only three, from eighteen to twenty-one. In central and eastern China, the government of Later Han had abolished many of the counties established in the former dynasty,<sup>118</sup> and even in the expanding south counties were set up rather to supervise newly settled regions than to initiate colonisation or intensify local control. Despite changes brought by migration, the southern frontiers were not regarded with concern by the central government, and policy was conservative rather than expansionist.

Throughout the region there was an administrative hierarchy like that in the settled central territories of the empire.<sup>119</sup> The largest units, provinces, were each headed by an Inspector, whose rank was expressed in terms of his formal salary of Six Hundred *shi* of grain. The provinces were divided into commanderies, each ruled by a Grand Administrator, and kingdoms, each governed by a Chancellor.

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<sup>118</sup> On this economy move by Emperor Guangwu, and the counties abolished at the beginning of Later Han, see Bielenstein, *RHD* I, 141-145 and map 19.

<sup>119</sup> In the discussion which follows, I rely largely upon Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, based upon the Introduction to the Table of Officials, Excellencies and Ministers of *HS* 19A, on the Treatise of Officials of *HHS* 114/24-118/28, and on other early texts, and on Yen Keng-wang [1961], which also pays particular attention to items of anecdotal evidence and the records of stele.

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In practice, a kingdom was distinguished only by the fact that a member of the imperial Liu family had been granted nominal enfeoffment over a commandery-level territory, and that the title of the senior officials varied from those of the commandery; like Grand Administrators, Chancellors were appointed by the court and were responsible to the central government.

Commanderies and kingdoms, in turn, were divided into counties; some counties gave their titles to Marquises of the empire, and were then headed also by Chancellors, while regular counties, depending upon population, were administered by Prefects, for counties of more than ten thousand households, or by Chiefs, for those of lesser size. The formal rank and salary of prefects, chiefs and the chancellors of marquises ranged from Six Hundred to Three Hundred *shi*, while the salaries of grand administrators and chancellors of kingdoms were Two Thousand *shi*, close to the status of a minister at the imperial capital.

The contrast between the rank and salary of an inspector, at Six Hundred *shi*, and that of a grand administrator or chancellor, at Two Thousand *shi*, was deliberate. An inspector was given authority over a wide region, but in normal circumstances he did not have executive powers. Local government was under the control of the commandery or kingdom, and the inspector had the right only to report wrongdoing so that higher authority in the central government could investigate the situation and apply the appropriate punishment. In a single exception, because of the distance from the capital, the Inspector of the province of Jiaozhi was given the Staff of Authority, with special powers permitting him to take action without the requirement that he should first report to the throne.<sup>120</sup>

At the very end of Later Han, in the last years of the reign of Emperor Ling, there was a change made to allow the appointment of Governors to various provinces, men of ministerial rank, who could exercise direct control over the commanderies within their territory. The experiment had also been tried, briefly, at the end of Former

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<sup>120</sup> On Jiaozhi province see note 57 above, On the Staff of Authority and the special powers of the Inspector, see *HS* 28A, 1543, commentary note 1 quoting the scholar and statesman Hu Guang (91-172 AD), and commentary to the Treatise of Officials, *HHS* 114/28, 3618, quoting *Dongguan Hanji* [cited as *Dongguan shu*].

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Han, but although the direct line of command made for increased effectiveness in local government, it had the considerable danger of permitting provincial authorities to obtain sufficient power as might make them independent of the throne.<sup>121</sup> In the civil war at the end of Later Han, indeed, position as governor of a province gave an essential base for political and military power, while the contradictions of the former inspectorate system were shown, by contrast, to have served the interests of a centralising government very well.

Despite the difference in rank, however, and the formal limitations of power upon the inspector, the provincial headquarters was at least of comparable importance to the commanderies and kingdoms, if only through the ability of the Inspector's staff to interfere, and the capacity to take a broader view of the affairs of the region as a whole. By the later years of the dynasty, even before the appointment of the first governors in 188, the effective influence of the two offices was very similar. In the biography of Taishi Ci, later a lieutenant of Sun Ce, there is an amusing anecdote which tells how, as a junior officer of Donghai commandery, he tricked his opposite number in the service of the Inspector of Xu province, and so arranged that the commandery's argument in a particular dispute should be heard first and favourably by the central authority. Specifically, we are told that "at this time the commandery had a disagreement with the provincial office, but no judgement had yet been given on the matter, and the side which first obtained a hearing [at the capital] was sure to come out best."<sup>122</sup>

In time of military emergency, however, the situation became quite different. It was a basic rule of Han that local officials could not take military action outside the borders of their territory; thus county officials could deal with banditry or trouble with the natives only within their counties, and the grand administrator of a commandery could undertake action only within that territory. If, however, a rebellion or other disturbance became so widespread as to involve more than one commandery unit, then the inspector of the

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<sup>121</sup> *HHS* 8, 357, and *HHS* 75/65, 2431, and *SGZ* 31/Shu 1, 865; also de Crespigny, "Inspection and Surveillance," 59-60, 62-63 and 67.

<sup>122</sup> *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1186-87.

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province was empowered to take command and to co-ordinate the raising of troops and their use in action. In these special circumstances, an inspector had formal right to give direct orders to a grand administrator.

The source and the quality of local troops was a matter of some concern. Under Former Han, there had been a regular system of conscription whereby men were called up about the age of eighteen, received basic training, served for a time on guard duties at one place or another in the empire, and might be required to spend time on full frontier service, or pay for a substitute. After these first years of training and experience, able-bodied men remained available for local or more distant service as part of a militia.

Later Han, however, appears to have largely abandoned this system. There was certainly still conscription, but for the citizens of the inner commanderies and kingdoms of the empire the military training was only rudimentary, and the conscripts were used only for the most basic guard duties. Large-scale military operations were carried out by professional soldiers drawn from garrisons on the frontier or from the professional Northern Army stationed at the capital, aided by non-Chinese auxiliaries, and also by the citizen militia which was maintained in the frontier regions.<sup>123</sup>

The difference was reflected in the title of the senior military assistant to the head of a commandery. Under Former Han, each commandery had one or more chief commandants, with the equivalent position in a kingdom being held by a Palace Commandant: where there was more than one chief commandant, each officer was set in charge of a Division, designated by direction, as north, south, east, west or central. For Later Han, however, we are told that the position of Chief Commandant was retained only for the frontier commanderies and other territories of particular military concern and responsibility.<sup>124</sup> It seems most probable that those

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<sup>123</sup> I have discussed this question in de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 48-50, where I follow the argument of He Changqun [1962]; *cf.*, however, Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 114. More recently, Lewis, "Han Abolition," has developed the subject further.

<sup>124</sup> See *HHS* 118/28, 3621, Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 96, and Yen Keng-wang [1961] I, 153 and a table of appointments at 167-171.

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commanderies which had a chief commandant also maintained a regular and properly trained militia, but that within the empire, where there was no immediate need for skilled soldiers, security was left to a small local guard under the commandery or county administration, supplemented on occasion by largely untrained citizen levies. From the point of view of the imperial government, the main danger in the inner regions of the empire was local banditry, and if the local people were untrained, so too would be the bandits. Moreover, in the days of Former Han and of Wang Mang there had been some fear of insurrection or mutiny by malcontents at the time of the autumn reviews: better, perhaps, a blunted weapon than one which could be too easily turned against the ruler.

Unlike the frontier regions to the west and north, there were no substantial garrisons maintained in the far south, and most disturbances were handled by troops recruited locally. Nevertheless, as settled Chinese territory lay close by that of the non-Chinese people in the hills, it was very likely necessary to employ commandery chief commandants. We have evidence that such officers were appointed in Jiaozhi and Jiuzhen commanderies in the far south, and the special circumstances of Jiao province may have required all the commanderies of that region to maintain chief commandants, with the accompanying apparatus of regular conscription and training.<sup>125</sup>

Further north, we have records of chief commandants for the eastern and the western divisions of Kuaiji, and it seems likely that

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On the northern and western frontiers of the empire there were also established Dependent States ( *shu guo*), controlling territory largely inhabited by non-Chinese peoples, and these were under the administration of chief commandants: de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 2-3. This system, however, was not used in the southern provinces of the empire.

As examples of the temporary appointment of chief commandants in regions within the empire affected by rebellion or banditry, we may note the arrangements made for Langye commandery between 155 and 165 and for Taishan commandery between 155 and 162 (*HHS* 7, 301, 311 and 314), and also for Jiujiang commandery in 145 (*HHS* 38/28, 1275).

<sup>125</sup> *e.g.* *HHS* 7, 302, and *HHS* 44/34, 1504, cited by Yen Keng-wang [1961] I, 162. The first item refers to a chief commandant taking action against specific disturbance; but the second is merely a passing reference, not associated with any particular incident or campaign.

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the system was regularly maintained in that frontier region.<sup>126</sup> Elsewhere, however, there is simply no evidence for such establishments, though it could be argued that any of the commanderies south of the Yangzi, either in Jing province or in Yang province, faced unassimilated non-Chinese peoples on their borders. The consistent absence of any reference to chief commandants in this region, however, compels one to assume that such appointments were not made, and that for the most part the relations there between Chinese and barbarians were matters of no great military concern to the government. There was substantial local recruitment to deal with the insurrections of the second century, as in southern Jing province during the 160s and in Kuaiji in the 170s, but this was evidently an *ad hoc* arrangement, and the early record of the commandery troops dealing with the insurrection in Jing province does not give the impression that they were a well-trained force. By the end of the dynasty, however, the sheer number of rebellions and the need for soldiers to deal with them meant that considerable numbers of the civilian male population were experienced in the use of arms.

Finally, moreover, we must observe one further development in the growing times of trouble. Whether sponsored by the government or not, and increasingly in times and places where the government failed to provide a proper sense of security, groups of people, Chinese or non-Chinese, were banding together for mutual protection. The natural unit was the family or clan, but the more powerful of these tended to attract weaker groups or individuals by commendation, and local leaders thus gathered clients, retainers and dependents who enhanced their prosperity and power.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Yen Keng-wang [1961] I, 162.

<sup>127</sup> Already in the 170s and 180s military officials of Han found it useful to supplement imperial troops with their personal retainers. Zhu Jun, for example, collected his own men in Kuaiji before he went to deal with a rebellion in Jiao province about 180: *HHS* 71/61, 2308. Later, of course, leaders of every level relied on personal followers as a nucleus for their armies.

On this whole development, see *Cambridge Han*, 622-631 [Ebrey, "Economic and Social History of Later Han"], the discussion by Tang Changru [1955], 3-29, and by He Changqun [1956B], debating Tang's analysis. At 629 Ebrey cites specifically the groups about the Poyang region who were involved with Sun Ce,

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Such a development under Later Han may be observed even in the affairs of peace, for in a subsistence economy the great landed families could bind their tenants to their interests by rent and usury, they could hire retainers, and they could afford the luxury of education, the route to office in government. Members of the most powerful families could expect to be recommended for the imperial service by the officials in charge of their commandery or province, while those with less influence might take service among the more junior, locally-recruited police and clerical offices of the county or commandery and seek for notice and recognition there. In turn, tenure of these positions, at whatever level, gave an opportunity to influence local government in the interests of the clan, for any magistrate would be anxious to obtain the help of those who held local power, and would be careful in his dealings with men whose relatives might at some time hold jurisdiction over his own native place and people. This linkage between local gentry and imperial officials was a constant concern of the central government, it was one of the chief problems which the inspectors of provinces were appointed to control, it was one of the major factors which limited the powers and capacities of the imperial government of Later Han, and it had much to do with its ultimately fatal weakness.

Naturally enough, the greatest and most powerful families were to be found in the region of the capital and in the prosperous territories of the North China plain, where great clans had developed economic and social dominance through their extensive manorial properties, with speculation in grain, specialism in cash crops such as indigo, and experiments with new crops and techniques of farming and labour. The situation on the open frontier of the south, where rice cultivation was often developed upon newly-claimed or colonised land, limited the opportunities for gentry authority, and distance from the capital restricted their opportunities for influence in the central government. We are nonetheless told that members of the Xu family of Yangxian in Wu commandery had been recommended for office since the earliest years of Later Han, and Xu Yu became Grand Commandant, most senior position in the

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but one may observe similar local and clan groups among the people of Wu and Kuaiji, who also sought to oppose the power of the young warlord: see Chapter 3.

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bureaucracy, in 181, while the Zhou family of Shu county in Lujiang supplied many imperial officials, including two Grand Commandants.<sup>128</sup> In more limited terms, the Lu family of Wu county in Wu commandery had been local leaders for generations and produced several officials;<sup>129</sup> and the Gao and Yan clans of Wu commandery, the Jiao and the He of Kuaiji, held substantial influence at county or even commandery level.<sup>130</sup>

During the latter part of the second century, however, as disturbance continued and the force of government appeared increasingly uncertain, people became even more concerned to gather together for protection and support. Throughout the empire there were leaders, large or small, who held private authority, not necessarily reinforced by official commission, and whose forces, first gathered for mutual defence, could be deployed for more ambitious action.<sup>131</sup> From that point of view, as central government collapsed after the death of Emperor Ling in 189, the empire was already prepared for civil war.

In one important respect, however, the conflict that came at the end of Later Han differed from that which had developed two hundred years earlier after the destruction of Wang Mang. When Liu Xiu, founding Emperor Guangwu of Later Han, had made himself master of north China, he had to deal with only one major rival, Gongsun Shu, in the west. China south of the Yangzi had produced

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<sup>128</sup> *HHS* 76/66, 2471-72; and *HHS* 8, 345 and *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1259.

<sup>129</sup> *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1343 and PC note 1 quoting *Lushi shi song*, a clan record of the Lu family, and see also Chapter 8.

<sup>130</sup> On the Gao family, see *HHS* 37/27, 1250 commentary note 1 quoting the *Hou Han shu* of Xie Cheng. On the Yan, notably White Tiger Yan the opponent of Sun Ce, see Chapter 3 and *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1310. On the Jiao, who acted as patrons of Bu Zhi, future Chancellor of Wu, see *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1236. On the He, see *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 13, and Chapter 3.

<sup>131</sup> Already, by the middle of the second century, Cui Shi's *Simin yueling*, "Ordinances of the Months for the Four Peoples," suggests that the third month is the time to prepare security measures against thieves who may appear during the shortages of food and the famines of spring (3.6; Hsu, *Han Agriculture*, 220), and in the ninth month the family should put its weapons into repair and practice military skills, so as to be ready for the attacks of bandits driven by the misery of the coming winter (9.1; Hsu, *Han Agriculture*, 225). See also He Changqun [1956A], 60-61.

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no major political or military grouping, and the whole territory fell naturally into the hands of the victor in the north.

By the end of Later Han, however, the process of colonisation and settlement through the lands south of the Yangzi had brought a new pattern to the empire. During these two centuries, the weakness of imperial power along the northern borders with the steppe, and the static oppression of great landed families in central China, had encouraged more enterprising subjects of the empire to seek their fortunes in the south. Sometimes aided by the force of government, but more often seeking to escape such interference, such new settlers brought new energies and new techniques of settled agriculture against the open frontier of the south. In a quiet aggression that would continue for two thousand years, the pressure of this colonisation usurped the land and displaced the native peoples. For the future of China, this active development confirmed the dominance of Han Chinese and their culture on the land-mass of east Asia. In more immediate terms, however, by the end of the second century AD, the growing prosperity and population of the south had created a new balance of power. Where the lands beyond the Yangzi had formerly been subordinated to the political and economic dominance of the north, there was now a possibility that the people of the south, while still bound to the heart-land through language and culture, could break from the unified empire and establish political independence in their own interest.