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## The Great Kingdom of Eternal Peace: Buddhist Kingship in Tenth-Century Dali

### ABSTRACT:

Tenth-century China's political instability extended beyond Tang territorial boundaries to reach the Dali region of what is now Yunnan province. In Dali, the void left by the fallen Nanzhao kingdom (649–903) was filled by a series of short-lived regimes, the longest of which was Da Changhe guo (903–927), or “The Great Kingdom of Eternal Peace.” Though studies of the “Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms” omit Changhe, its rulers' diplomatic strategies, and particularly their representations of Buddhist kingship, aligned with the strategies of contemporaneous regimes. Like their counterparts to the east, Changhe rulers depicted themselves as heirs of the Tang emperors as well as the Buddhist monarchs Liang Wudi and Aśoka. This article uses understudied materials, including a 908 subcommentary to the *Scripture for Humane Kings* (*Renwang jing*) only found in Dali, to argue that Changhe belongs in discussions of religion and politics in tenth-century China, and tenth-century East Asia.

### KEYWORDS:

*Dali, Yunnan, Changhe kingdom, Scripture for Humane Kings, Buddhism, Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms, tenth century*

### INTRODUCTION

Studies of tenth-century East Asia have long recognized the limitations of Ouyang Xiu's 歐陽修 (1007–1072) “Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms” model, which took the Song dynastic viewpoint. However, scholarship on this time period continues to apply its focus on the regional politics that was of interest to the Song court and its officials.<sup>1</sup> This has had the effect of erasing the short-lived regimes in modern-day Yunnan from the period's overall religious, cultural, and political

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<sup>1</sup> When scholars turn their attention to so-called border regions, they tend to focus on the north and northwest. Franke and Twitchett briefly address the regimes centered in Yunnan, particularly the Nanzhao kingdom, but their volume on “Alien Regimes and Border States, 907–1368,” does not include any chapters on the south or southwest; Herbert Franke and

history. After the Nanzhao 南詔 kingdom fell in 903, the Changhe 長和 (903–927), Tianxing 天興 (927–928), and Yining 義寧 (928–937) kingdoms ruled the region until in 937 Duan Siping founded the Dali 大理 kingdom, which would last until the Mongol conquest of 1253. Song emperors, beginning with Taizu, adopted a policy of disengagement with Dali to avoid the kind of conflict with Nanzhao that had weakened an already faltering Tang dynasty. The Song court even expressed reluctance for Dali to pay tribute missions on the grounds that Dali could become a nuisance.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the perception of the Dali region as non-Chinese or non-Han has led to its elision from studies of tenth-century China. Yet during the tenth century, Changhe entered into diplomatic and military relationships with the Shu, Southern Han, and Later Tang kingdoms, and Changhe rulers invoked Buddhism in presenting themselves as successors to Tang and Nanzhao authority.

This article examines the image of Buddhist kingship that was current in the Changhe kingdom by using the only source that can be dated to this period, Xuanjian's 玄鑿 *Huguo sinan chao* 護國司南抄 (*Compass for Protecting the State Subcommentary*; for convenience, often referred to in the following as “Subcommentary”) of 908, which survives as a highly abridged 1052 manuscript.<sup>3</sup> This subcommentary is directly based on two Tang works: Bukong's 不空 (Amoghavajra; 705–774) version of *Renwang huguo boreboluomiduo jing* 仁王護國般若波羅蜜多經 (*Prajñāpāramitā Scripture for Humane Kings to Protect Their States*; hereafter, *Scripture for Humane Kings*) and the commentary on it by Bukong's disciple Liangbi 良贄 (717–777). The *Subcommentary* shows that the Changhe court used Tang sources on Buddhist kingship, so that the resulting image drew specifically on Tang models. In doing so, the work belonged to a body

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Denis Twitchett, “Introduction,” in Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett, eds., *The Cambridge History of China: Volume 6, Alien Regimes and Border States, 907–1368* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1994), pp. 3–4. Similarly, the geographical range and temporal span of the essays in Carmen Meinert, ed., *Transfer of Buddhism Across Central Asian Networks (7th to 13th Centuries)* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), extend beyond the boundaries of 10th-c. China, but, as the title indicates, they do not address the south. Certain studies of the 10th-c. southeast challenge Ouyang Xiu's model, such as Benjamin Brose's *Patrons and Patriarchs: Regional Rulers and Chan Monks during the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms* (Honolulu: U. Hawaii P., 2015), and Hugh Clark's many studies of Fujian that cover this time period, but these do not extend as far as Yunnan.

<sup>2</sup> Toghto 脫脫 et al., *Songshi* 宋史 (Taipei: Dingwen shuju, 1980) 353, p. 11149; Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (1223–1296), *Yu hai* 玉海 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1983) 153, p. 44b.

<sup>3</sup> This manuscript was found in 1956 in a cache of over 3,000 fascicles in the Fazang si 法藏寺, the family temple of the Dong 董 clan, who served as “national preceptors” under the Dali kingdom. Fazang si is located to the southeast of the Dali prefectural seat. It was abridged from five fascicles to one; I discuss this process, below.

of textual and visual productions based on the *Scripture for Humane Kings* that extended throughout the Sinitic Buddhist world, including Heian, Koryō, Liao, and, later, Xi Xia. Rulers throughout East Asia sought to wield the power promised to devout Buddhist monarchs in the text of the *Scripture for Humane Kings*, and monastics invoked the scripture in their championing of Buddhism. On one level, the *Subcommentary* participates in Buddhist political strategies that go beyond tenth-century China. However, I argue that its the strategy of legitimation also fit into the religious and political milieu of tenth-century China more generally. This topic has been approached by other scholars, namely, Franciscus Verellen in his studies of Daoism in Shu, Ben Brose in his study of Chan Buddhism in the southeastern polities of Wuyue, Min, and the Southern Tang, and Makita Tairyō's 牧田諦亮 work on the Buddhist reforms in the Later Zhou dynasty.<sup>4</sup> Changhe deserves to be part of these conversations about tenth-century China, as Naomi Standen has argued for the Liao dynasty (907–1125) in the north.<sup>5</sup>

The main challenge faced by including Changhe in such conversations is the lack of surviving sources from the period. A handful of records from the tenth and eleventh centuries discuss relations between Changhe and other polities, particularly the regimes in Shu (modern-day Sichuan), but there are no detailed, lengthy accounts of Changhe history. This dearth has led some scholars to rely on much-later histories of Dali, such as the Ming-era *Nanzhao yeshi* 南詔野史 (*Unofficial History of Nanzhao*). While the tales of Changhe in these later texts might be more exciting than what one finds in earlier materials, such as the founder's slaughter of the whole Nanzhao ruling clan, Hou Chong's 侯冲 work has shown that the *Nanzhao yeshi*'s new narratives should be treated as products of the late-imperial period rather than the tenth century itself.<sup>6</sup>

Other sources from tenth-century Dali, as well as materials from the Nanzhao and Dali kingdoms, help us to locate the *Subcommentary* and Changhe kingdom each in its broader historical context. Though

<sup>4</sup> See Franciscus Verellen, "Shu as a Hallowed Land: Du Guangting's *Record of Marvels*," *CEA* 10 (1998), pp. 213–54; Brose, *Patrons and Patriarchs*; Makita Tairyō, *Godai shūkyōshi kenkyū* 五代宗教史研究 (Kyoto: Heirakuji shoten, 1971).

<sup>5</sup> Naomi Standen, *Unbounded Loyalty: Frontier Crossing in Liao China* (Honolulu: U. Hawaii P., 2007), pp. 7–8.

<sup>6</sup> Hou Chong, *Baizu xinshi: Bai gu tong ji yanjiu* 白族心史, 白古通記研究 (Kunming: Yunnan minzu chubanshe, 2002). For later accounts of Dachanghe, see Ni Lu 倪輅 (Ming), *Nanzhao yeshi* 南詔野史, in Fang Guoyu 方國瑜, ed., *Yunnan shiliao congkan* 雲南史料叢刊 (Kunming: Yunnan daxue chubanshe, 1998–2001; hereafter, *YNSLCK*) 4, pp. 782–83; Feng Su 馮甦 (1628–1692), *Dian kao* 滇考, in *YNSLCK* 11, pp. 26–27; Yang Shen 楊慎 (1488–1559), *Dian zaiji* 滇載記, in *YNSLCK* 4, pp. 759–60.

the work is Changhe's only surviving cultural product, its Buddhist focus shows a continuity with the 899 *Nanzhao tuzhuan* 南詔圖傳 (*Illustrated History of Nanzhao*), which through images and text recounts the introduction of Buddhism to the region: first it uses paintings to give a visual narrative, then it repeats the narrative in Sinitic script. Buddhist materials from the Dali kingdom, including two manuscripts of the *Scripture for Humane Kings* with Liangbi's commentary and the manuscript of the *Subcommentary* itself, demonstrate how later rulers drew inspiration from this Changhe-period subcommentary. Just as scholars of the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms have considered how the regimes constituted breaks or continuities with the Tang and Song dynasties, examining the *Subcommentary* in its tenth-century context will reveal how Changhe court Buddhism related to the Buddhism of the Nanzhao and Dali courts.

To understand the *Subcommentary* requires first an understanding of the background of Buddhism in the preceding Nanzhao kingdom, whose rulers followed Tang political structures and embraced Buddhist teachings by the mid-ninth century. Nanzhao statecraft, including the state-protection offered by Buddhism, carried into the subsequent Changhe regime, whose leaders attempted to follow Nanzhao precedent in alternately raiding and seeking marriage alliances from its powerful neighbors. The work's composition during the early Changhe fitted these strategies of legitimation. It shows us that the Changhe court, like its counterparts in what had been Tang territory, drew on Tang models for political and religious authority. The *Scripture for Humane Kings*, which combined Buddhist and Confucian concepts, offered one such model, and the *Subcommentary* reveals the extent to which the Changhe court joined in the chorus of tenth-century voices claiming to have inherited the Tang dynastic mandate.

#### THE NANZHAO BACKGROUND

Both the *Subcommentary* and surviving records about Changhe's relations with neighboring polities suggest that the Changhe court followed the political strategies and Buddhist ideology of their Nanzhao predecessors. The Nanzhao kingdom was governed by the Meng 蒙 clan, and began as one of six regimes (called "zhao 詔") controlling the greater Dali region in the seventh and eighth centuries. Though Tang texts describe the Nanzhao population as consisting of White Man (*baiman* 白蠻) and Black Man (*wuman* 烏蠻), the absence of terms of ethnic self-representation in Nanzhao writings leads me to be suspi-

cious about those Tang descriptions.<sup>7</sup> Unlike the Dali kingdom, which had relatively few interactions with the Song state, Nanzhao had sustained diplomatic and military relations with the Tang court and its representatives. The eighth century saw a series of alliances between the two regimes. In the 730s, Tang helped Nanzhao conquer its rivals in the Dali Plain in exchange for Nanzhao's support against a growing Tibetan threat. However, in 752 Nanzhao formally switched its allegiance to Tibet out of resentment for being mistreated at the hands of Tang officials. Nanzhao took advantage of the An Lushan Rebellion to raid Yuesui 越巂 commandery in 756, when they captured the Xilu district magistrate Zheng Hui 鄭回, who became the Nanzhao imperial tutor and eventually prime minister (*qingpingguan* 清平官).<sup>8</sup> Then, in 794, Nanzhao again allied with Tang as a result of Tibet's having imposed heavy corvée labor requirements and taxes.

During the ninth century Nanzhao became increasingly independent, while both Tibet and the Tang government weakened; they ultimately challenged Tang authority militarily and diplomatically. In 829–830 Nanzhao carried out a raid on Chengdu during which they collected captives, including artisans, and precious goods.<sup>9</sup> During this general period of time, young men from Nanzhao were already being sent to Chengdu for their education, and this practice was not dampened because of the raid.<sup>10</sup> In the second half of the century Nanzhao tried to seize Annam (a part of modern-day Vietnam) from Tang control and continued its intermittent attacks on Shu. Much of this happened during the rule of the Nanzhao leader Shilong 世隆 (r. 860–877), who declared himself emperor and tried to negotiate a marriage alliance and the status of “younger brother” with the Tang.<sup>11</sup> Shilong also refused to bow to Tang envoys, which hindered a diplomatic resolution

<sup>7</sup> It is possible to discuss the Nanzhao court's politico-religious self-representation, as separate from their ethnic self-representation. See Megan Bryson, *Goddess on the Frontier: Religion, Ethnicity, and Gender in Southwest China* (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford U.P., 2016), p. 35.

<sup>8</sup> Liu Xu 劉詢 (887–946), *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975) 197, p. 5281. Most scholars of Nanzhao history follow the *Man shu* in identifying Zheng Hui, aka Zheng Manli 蠻利, as the author of the 766 *Dehua bei* (Stele of Transformation through Virtue), but Sun Taichu 孫太初 has raised serious doubts about this identification. See Fan Chuo 樊綽 (8th c.), *Man shu* 蠻書 (as *Yunnan zhi* 雲南志) in *YNSLCK* 2, p. 47; Sun Taichu 孫太初, *Yunnan gudai shike congkao* 雲南古代石刻叢考 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1983), pp. 58–59.

<sup>9</sup> Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086), *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 (SKQS edn.; hereafter, *ZZTJ*) 244, pp. 6b–8a; Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072) and Song Qi 宋祁 (Song), *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (Taibei: Dingwen shuju, 1981; hereafter, *XTS*) 222B, p. 6282; Liu, *Jiu Tang shu* 197, p. 5284.

<sup>10</sup> *ZZTJ* 249, p. 40b.

<sup>11</sup> *XTS* 222B, p. 6290; *ZZTJ* 253, p. 17a. Both characters in Shilong's name violated Tang taboos, so Tang sources refer to him as Qulong 酋龍.

to their military conflicts, until the Tang general and military governor Gao Pian 高駢 (d. 887), knowing that it was Shilong's "custom to revere the buddhadharma, sent the Buddhist monk Jingxian to act as an envoy."<sup>12</sup>

Shilong's devotion reflects the bigger picture that emerges from the second half of the ninth century, namely one in which Nanzhao rulers and high officials increasingly embraced Buddhism. An 850 inscription from the Jianchuan area northwest of the Dali Plain records the dedication of Maitreya and Amitābha statues; and the Buddhist temple Chongsheng si 崇聖寺 along with its central pagoda Qianxun ta 千尋塔 were probably built (based on Tang models) in the Nanzhao capital during the ninth-century.<sup>13</sup> The late Nanzhao interest in Buddhism is most apparent in *Nanzhao tuzhuan*. According to its text, Nanzhao officials commissioned the work in response to the last Nanzhao ruler Shunhuazhen's 舜化貞 (r. 897–902) questions about how Buddhism entered Nanzhao. It depicts the bodhisattva Acuoye Guanyin 阿嵯耶觀音 (Ajaya Avalokiteśvara, or Invincible Avalokiteśvara) as taking the form of a foreign monk (*fanseng* 梵僧) in order to bring Buddhism to the people of Yunnan, which included the conferral of a Buddhist mandate upon the founders of the Nanzhao kingdom. The visual narrative, at the ending, shows the penultimate Nanzhao ruler Longshun 隆舜 (r. 878–897) and his officials worshipping a golden statue of the bodhisattva's true form.<sup>14</sup>

As with all other texts from Nanzhao, *Nanzhao tuzhuan* is written in Sinitic script. However, while the 766 "Dehua bei" 德化碑 ("Stele of Virtuous Transformation") depicted Nanzhao as a loyal Confucian vassal state of the Tang empire, *Nanzhao tuzhuan* presents the Nanzhao ruler as a Buddhist emperor whose authority comes from the "Western Regions" (*xiyu* 西域) rather than the Central Plain.<sup>15</sup> The text makes a point of refuting the rumor that the Tang monk-pilgrim Xuanzang was the one who introduced Buddhism to the area, though it does concede

<sup>12</sup> *XTS* 222B, p. 6290.

<sup>13</sup> Hou Chong 侯冲, *Yunnan yu Ba Shu Fojiao yanjiu lungao* 雲南與巴蜀佛教研究論稿 (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 2006), p. 126; Zhang Banglong *zaoxiang ji* 張傍龍造像記, in Yang Shiyu 楊世鈺 and Zhang Shufang 張樹芳, eds., *Dali congshu: jinshi pian* 大理叢書: 金石篇 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1993) 10, pp. 5–6; Li Gong 李公, *Nanzhao shigao* 南詔史稿 (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2006), p. 153.

<sup>14</sup> *Nanzhao tuzhuan* 南詔圖傳, in Li Lin-ts'an 李霖燦, *Nanzhao Dali guo xin ziliao de zonghe yanjiu* 南詔大理國新資料的綜合研究 (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan minzuxue yanjiusuo, 1982; hereafter, *Nanzhao*), pp. 136–37.

<sup>15</sup> The different narratives of kingship in *Dehua bei* and *Nanzhao* are discussed in Megan Bryson, "Tsenpo Chung, Yunnan wang, Mahārāja: Royal Titles in Narratives of Nanzhao Kingship between Tibet and Tang China," *CEA* 24 (2015), pp. 59–76.

that Buddhism “arrived from Hu 胡 and Fan 梵, and came from Fan 蕃 and Han 漢” to reach Nanzhao.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the final pictorial scene of Longshun’s worshipping Acuoye Guanyin’s true form emphasizes the emperor’s non-Chinese appearance and titles. A cartouche identifies him as “Mahārāja, Earth Wheel King, *danbi qianjian*, Who Invites The Four Directions to Become One Family, the Piaoxin Meng Longhao.”<sup>17</sup> Mahārāja and “Earth Wheel King” refer to Buddhist rulers, while Piaoxin means “Lord of Pyu” and reflects Nanzhao’s conquest of the Pyu kingdom.<sup>18</sup> While the idea of unifying those within the four directions (or four seas) appears frequently in classical Chinese texts, it is noteworthy that none of the titles the Tang court bestowed on Nanzhao rulers, such as prince of Yunnan (Yunnan wang 雲南王), appear here. Longshun’s appearance, as well as that of Acuoye Guanyin himself, is similarly non-Chinese: the emperor wears only a *dhoti*, earrings, and a hairpin as he stands barefoot making the prayer *mudrā* before the golden statue. Behind him stand two youths holding vases in their left hands and whisks in their right.

This scene not only presents Longshun as a Buddhist ruler in a non-Chinese mold, it also presents him as a Buddhist ruler on the verge of receiving the *abhiṣeka*, or consecration (Ch. *guanding* 灌頂) rite. In esoteric or tantric Buddhism, *abhiṣeka* was the rite by which practitioners identified with awakened or powerful beings, such as the bodhisattva Guanyin. It called for being sprinkled with water, which the vases suggest visually and the text of *Nanzhao tuzhuan* makes explicit by stating that Longshun was “sprinkled from the basin” in 897.<sup>19</sup> The text also credits Acuoye Guanyin with “opening the marvellous gate of the esoteric [teachings] and extinguishing the hardships of calamity,” which further supports the text’s connection to esoteric Buddhism. The imperial context of the work’s *abhiṣeka* ceremony is no coincidence, as the ritual often followed a metaphor of a royal coronation that homolo-

<sup>16</sup> *Nanzhao*, p. 147.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137. In Sinitic script the titles read: *Moheluocuo tulunwang danbi qianjian sifang qing wei yijia piaoxin Meng Longhao* 摩訶羅嵯土輪王擔卑謙賤四方請爲一家驃信蒙隆昊. Leonard van der Kuijp has suggested that *danbi qianjian* might transliterate the Tibetan *Bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan*, a Buddhist term meaning “victory banner of the teachings,” but this remains tentative. Personal communication, August 2014.

<sup>18</sup> Mahārāja by itself means “great king” and has no particular Buddhist connotations, but the term entered East Asia with Buddhism, and so became associated with Buddhist rulership. The term “Earth Wheel King” alludes to the figure of the *cakravartin* or “wheel-turning king” (*zhuanlun wang* 轉輪王), but the standard typology for *cakravartins* includes gold, silver, bronze, and iron, not earth.

<sup>19</sup> *Nanzhao*, p. 146.

<sup>20</sup> Ronald M. Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement* (New York: Columbia U.P., 2002), p. 123.

gized rulers and buddhas.<sup>20</sup> The Indian monk Bukong, whose version of the *Scripture for Humane Kings* served as the basis for the *Subcommentary*, performed *abhiseka* rites for the Tang emperors Xuanzong 玄宗, Suzong 肅宗, and Daizong 代宗, and promoted an image of the emperor as a *cakravartin*, or Buddhist monarch.<sup>21</sup> This indicates a strong thread of continuity between Tang conceptions of Buddhist rulership, late Nanzhao conceptions of Buddhist kingship, and the vision of Buddhist kingship that emerges from the early Changhe *Subcommentary*.

#### FOLLOWING NANZHAO:

#### BUDDHISM AND POLITICS IN THE CHANGHE KINGDOM

The fall of Nanzhao is poorly documented in tenth- and eleventh-century sources, which merely report that what used to be Nanzhao became Changhe. The Yuan-dynasty *Yunnan zhilue* 雲南志略 (*Concise Gazetteer of Yunnan*) explains that the last Nanzhao emperor, Shunhua-zhen, was deposed by his grand councillor (*buxie* 布燮) Zheng Maisi 鄭買嗣 (r. 903–910), whom the text identifies as a descendant of the Tang official Zheng Hui.<sup>22</sup> Zheng Maisi reportedly changed his name to Zheng Chang 昶 and established a reign era that he named Anguo 安國.<sup>23</sup> The *Subcommentary* is the only work from Zheng Maisi's court that survives. However, his son Zheng Renmin 仁旻 (r. 910–927) seems to have actively followed Nanzhao's precedents in foreign relations.

Zheng Renmin looked to Nanzhao for precedents in mounting attacks on Shu and for negotiating marriage alliances with neighboring polities. In 914 Changhe attacked the Former Shu in Lizhou, but the Shu ruler Wang Jian quickly responded by sending three of his adopted sons to crush the invasion. According to the 1084 *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑, Changhe suffered massive losses when the bridge collapsed as they were fleeing across the Dadu River. In the following year Shu executed three tribal leaders who had been leaking Shu military plans to Changhe, after which Changhe “did not dare cross the border again.”<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Charles D. Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom: The Scripture for Humane Kings in the Creation of Chinese Buddhism* (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State U.P., 1998), pp. 141–45.

<sup>22</sup> *Buxie* is one of the official titles used by Nanzhao that Changhe and Dali continued to use. *Xin Tang shu* explains that it, along with the titles *jiuzan* 久贊 and *tanchuo* 坦綽, were different kinds of *qingpingguan*, which corresponded to the Tang role of *zaixiang* 宰相; *XTS* 222A, p. 6268.

<sup>23</sup> Li Jing 李京 (Yuan), *Yunnan zhilue* 雲南志略, in *YNSLCK* 3, p. 126.

<sup>24</sup> *ZZTJ* 269, pp. 7b–8b, which refers to Changhe as Nanzhao.

Following these military failures, Zheng Renmin looked to diplomatic channels for relations with the Former Shu. He sent his *buxie* Duan Yizong 段義宗 as an envoy to Shu sometime during the Shu's Qiande era (919–924).<sup>25</sup> However, Duan Yizong, like the Nanzhao ruler Shilong, had no intention of bowing to the Shu ruler, so he shaved his head and became a monk known as “Śramaṇa of the Silver Almsbowl, Recipient of the Purple Robe at Chongsheng [Temple], Left Guard of the Great Changhe Kingdom.”<sup>26</sup> This strategy failed to impress the Shu ministers, who told the Shu ruler that even monks had to bow at court. Duan Yizong then lost control and tried to defend himself on the spot with three poems on Buddhist themes that “quickly followed like a stream.”<sup>27</sup> With this tactic the Changhe court might have been trying to invert the situation in which Shilong bowed to the Tang monk Jingxian, but again miscalculated their position vis-à-vis the political power in Shu.

It is possible that the purpose of Duan Yizong's visit to Former Shu was to propose a marriage alliance between the two kingdoms, because Zheng Renmin subsequently sought such ties with the Southern Han and Later Tang courts. In 925, “Zheng [Ren]min, the Piao Xin of Changhe, sent his *buxie* Zheng Zhaochun to seek a wife from the Han kingdom, and the Han ruler gave his daughter, the Zengcheng Princess, as a wife.”<sup>28</sup> Perhaps this arrangement succeeded because the Liu rul-

<sup>25</sup> There is some confusion about Duan Yizong's visit to Shu. The late-10th-c. *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記 (*Extensive Records Assembled in the Taiping Era*) claims that Duan Yizong represented Nanzhao in seeking a marriage alliance with Tang in the 880s, but that he and the other Nanzhao envoys were killed after Xizong was able to move back to Chang'an. However, the mid-10th-c. *Jianjie lu* 鑑誠錄 (*Record of Warnings*), describes Duan Yizong's visit to Shu as a representative of Changhe in the Qiande era. Based on the earlier date of the *Jianjie lu* and the fact that it was written by the Shu native He Guangyuan 何光遠 (fl. 938–960), I follow its account. See Li Fang 李昉 (925–996), *Taiping guangji* (SKQS edn.) 190, pp. 4b–5a; He Guangyuan 何光遠, *Jianjie lu* 鑑誠錄 (SKQS edn.) 6, pp. 8a–9b; Glen Dudbridge, *A Portrait of Five Dynasties China: From the Memoirs of Wang Renyu (880–956)* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 2013), p. 126.

<sup>26</sup> I tentatively read *zuowei* 左衛 for *youjie* 尤街 here. Zanning 贊寧 (919–1002), *Da Song seng shilue* 大宋僧史略 (T 54, no. 2126), p. 249A25–26, states, “During the false Shu, the kingdom of Yunnan sent the Inner Offering Monk, Abbot of Chongsheng si, Recipient of the Purple Robe and Silver Bowl, to act as a diplomatic envoy.” See Hou Chong, “Dali guo xiejing *Huguo sinan chao* jiqi xueshu jiazhi” 大理國寫經“護國司南抄”及其學術價值, *Yunnan shehui kexue* 雲南社會科學 4 (1999), p. 104.

<sup>27</sup> He, *Jianjie lu* 6, pp. 8b–9b. The first poem is “Peonies at Daci Temple,” which I translate as follows: “Floating petals differ from common flowers / They are stimulated by the dharma-protecting merit of eminent monks. At night numerous stamens extend under the abbot's moon / By morning the rare fragrance dissipates with the wind from the lecturer's seat. One seeks truth and finds it within, as the mind's source is tranquil. / One perceives form without greed, as the visual field is empty. How wonderful that this perfume can be given as an offering. / Heaven's teachings grow within Śākyamuni's gates.”

<sup>28</sup> *ZZTJ* 174, p. 9b.

ers of the Southern Han were described as *Man* people in Song-dynasty records, as was the population of Dali.<sup>29</sup> The attempt to establish another marriage alliance in 927 with the Later Tang was less successful. After the Later Tang defeated Former Shu, they returned to Changhe thousands of *Man* captives taken by Wang Yan. To express his gratitude, the Changhe ruler sent fifteen baskets of gifts, a scroll of poems, and a letter. One of the poems seemed to seek an affinal relationship with Later Tang and was deemed impertinent, so the Later Tang kept only the letter and refused the other items.<sup>30</sup> Needless to say, the marriage never happened.

These sources about the Changhe kingdom are limited, but they show the high degree of continuity with Nanzhao's political strategies and structures. Changhe rulers followed Nanzhao precedent in attacking Shu and seeking marriage alliances with neighboring regimes. They also retained the distinctive titles Nanzhao had used, suggesting that their government was organized in the same way. Duan Yizong's monastic title in particular highlights continuities between Nanzhao Buddhism and Changhe Buddhism, as we see even more in the *Subcommentary*.

#### POINTING SOUTH:

#### CHANGHE KINGSHIP IN THE *SUBCOMMENTARY*

The *Subcommentary*, as a product of the Changhe court, constitutes another way in which the Zheng rulers sought to establish their ruling authority. Given that it was written before Zheng Renmin's military and diplomatic efforts with both Shu and the Southern Han, it offers a glimpse of how Zheng Maisi mobilized Buddhist kingship at a time of great possibility. By the early-tenth century, the Tang dynasty survived in name only, and regional regimes were still taking shape. Just as rulers of these other polities invoked Buddhism and Daoism in competing with rival states, so too did the rulers of the Changhe kingdom. The *Subcommentary* shows how monks at the imperial monastery Chongsheng si drew from a wide variety of Chinese sources to compose a text that would explain Liangbi's commentary on the *Scripture for Humane Kings*,

<sup>29</sup> Hugh R. Clark, "The Southern Kingdoms between the T'ang and the Sung, 907-979," in Denis Twitchett and Paul Jakov Smith, eds., *The Cambridge History of China: Volume 5, Book 1, The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907-1279* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2009), p. 153. Of course, if the Zheng rulers of Changhe were in fact descendants of Zheng Hui, they may not have been considered *Man*, but sources from the tenth and eleventh centuries still use *Man* in describing the people of Changhe.

<sup>30</sup> Wang Qinruo 王欽若 et al., *Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜 (SKQS edn.) 980, pp. 29b-30a; Wang Pu 王溥 (922-982), *Wudai huiyao* 五代會要 (SKQS edn.) 30, pp. 13b-15b.

a scripture that promised in the last phrase of its title to help kings protect their countries.

*State-Protection Buddhism in the Tang Dynasty: Bukong's Scripture and Liangbi's Commentary*

Bukong's version of the *Scripture for Humane Kings* was popular with the Tang court in the eighth century, but the scripture already had a long history. Its earlier version (T. no. 245) was probably written in fifth-century north China. Sixth-century Buddhist sources classify the text as "suspect," but the 597 *Lidai sanbao ji* claims that it was translated by the prolific monks Dharmarakṣa, Kumārajīva, and Paramārtha.<sup>31</sup> Even before this attribution, the *Scripture* had found favor with the rulers of the Chen dynasty (557–589), who invited Tiantai Zhiyi 天台智顛 (538–597) to lecture on it.<sup>32</sup> Tang Taizong 太宗 (r. 626–649) also embraced the *Scripture*, and in 630 ordered monks in Chang'an to recite it once a month.<sup>33</sup> Most commentaries on it follow this earlier version and come from a Tiantai perspective, with its emphasis on the Three Truths.<sup>34</sup>

As Charles Orzech has shown, the *Scripture for Humane Kings* appealed to rulers in China by combining Buddhist and Chinese concepts, such as the Buddhist *ren* 忍 (forbearance) and the Chinese *ren* 仁 (humaneness). In fact, when the Tang court ordered Bukong to "retranslate" the scripture, one of his projects was to remove obvious references to Chinese concepts that might have revealed the text's indigenous provenance.<sup>35</sup> Bukong also brought the text more in line with its Perfection of Wisdom (Prajñāpāramitā) genre and the system of esoteric Buddhism in which he was trained, for example by reducing the Three Truths to two and replacing the five bodhisattvas with five "brilliant kings" (Skt. *vidyārājas*, Ch. *mingwang* 明王), and he removed arguments against religious involvement in statecraft.<sup>36</sup> However, the *Scripture for Humane*

<sup>31</sup> Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, p. 75; Fei Changfang 費長房, *Lidai sanbao ji* 歷代三寶記 (T 49, no. 2034), pp. 62C18, 64C14–15, 78A23, 79A9–10, 99A2, 99A14–16.

<sup>32</sup> Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, p. 76; Zhipan 志磐, *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (T 49, no. 2035), p. 182C5–6.

<sup>33</sup> Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, p. 77; *Fozu tongji*, p. 363B28–29.

<sup>34</sup> The Three Truths refer to emptiness, provisional existence, and the mean that encompasses both. See the following commentaries in the Taishō canon: *Renwang bore jing shu* 仁王般若經疏 (T 33, no. 1707), by Jizang 吉藏 (549–623); the early-Tang *Renwang huguo bore jing shu* 仁王護國般若經疏 (T 33, no. 1705); *Renwang jing shu* 仁王經疏 (T 33, no. 1708), by Wōng-ch'ük 圓測 (fl. 640–60); and *Foshuo renwang huguo bore boluomi jing shu* 佛說仁王護國般若波羅蜜經疏 (T 33, no. 1706), by Shanyue 善月 (1150–1241). Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, pp. 127, 326.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 99–100, 163.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 165–66.

*Kings's* distinctive message remained its identification of rulers with bodhisattvas and its promise that upholding the scripture would help rulers protect their countries.<sup>37</sup>

The identification of rulers with enlightened beings also underpins the esoteric *abhiṣeka* ceremony that Bukong performed for Tang emperors, and which appears in the *Nanzhao tuzhuan's* images and text. Moreover, Liangbi's commentary was written for Bukong's version of the *Scripture for Humane Kings* (rather than the earlier version). Liangbi had assisted Bukong in reworking the *Scripture for Humane Kings*, so he was highly familiar with the scripture and Bukong's esoteric teachings. Like other educated monks, he was also familiar with Confucian and Daoist teachings as well as Buddhism, which is apparent in the texts he cites in the commentary as well as in his other work.<sup>38</sup> The *Subcommentary's* choice of Liangbi's commentary on Bukong's version of the *Scripture for Humane Kings* fits in well with the visual and textual representations of esoteric Buddhist kingship in the *Nanzhao tuzhuan*; and the *Subcommentary's* use of Chinese classical texts (along with Buddhist sources) matches Liangbi's own commentarial approach.

### *Xuanjian's Compass*

In the preface of the *Subcommentary* the author identifies himself and explains why, where, and when he wrote the text. The opening colophon proclaims, "Compiled by the Śramaṇa Xuanjian, Recipient of the Purple Robe, Master of Exegesis, Abbot of Chongsheng si, and Monk of Inner Offerings."<sup>39</sup> Already this recalls the monastic title that Duan Yizong adopted later in the Changhe kingdom with its references to receiving the purple robe and to Chongsheng si. As Hou Chong points out, the titles "Recipient of the Purple Robe" (*cizi* 賜紫) and "Monk of Inner Offerings" (*nei gongfeng seng* 內供奉僧) originated at the Tang court, which shows the extent to which Changhe followed Tang models.<sup>40</sup> Xuanjian's religious name, literally "profound mirror,"

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>38</sup> Yamaguchi Shikyō 山口史恭, "Ryōhi no shōgai oyobi Fukū sanzō to no kankei ni tsuite" 良賁の生涯及び不空三蔵との関係について, *Chizan gakuho* 智山学報 53 (2004), pp. 394, 397.

<sup>39</sup> "*Neigongfeng seng, Chongsheng si zhu, yixue jiaozhu, cizi shamen Xuanjian ji* 內供奉僧崇聖寺主義學教主賜紫沙門玄鑒集"; see Xuanjian 玄鑒, *Huguo sinan chao* 護國司南抄, in Yang Shiyu 楊世鈺, Zhao Yinsong 趙寅松, and Guo Huiqing 郭惠青, eds., *Dali congshu: dazangjing pian* 大理叢書, 大藏經篇 (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2008; hereafter cited as *Huguo*) 1, p. 3. "Monk of Inner Offerings" refers to a monk who performed rituals at court in the inner ritual area (*nei daochang* 內道場). I mainly follow the manuscript reproductions of *Huguo* in vol. 1 of *Dali congshu: dazangjing pian*, but I also consult Hou Chong's transcription of the text in vol. 7 of *idem*, transcriber and ed., *Huguo sinan chao* 護國司南抄, in Fang Guangchang 方廣錫, ed., *Zangwai fojiao wenxian* 藏外佛教文獻 (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 2000).

<sup>40</sup> Hou, "Dali guo xiejing," pp. 104-5.

meaning in effect “superior understanding,” has roots in classical Chinese texts such as *Huainanzi*, but also appears at the end of Liangbi’s commentary.<sup>41</sup> This, along with his title “Master of Exegesis” (*yixue jiaozhu* 義學教主), suggests that the elite monks of Nanzhao and Dali, like their Tang counterparts, were educated in classical Chinese writings as well as Buddhist texts.<sup>42</sup>

After Xuanjian identifies himself, he goes on to write,  
 The precious sūtra of *prajñā* justly upholds [the task of] protecting the state. Humane kings follow and obey it; disciples of the Way protect and uphold it. Thereby the light of the Three Jewels can shine and the mist of the seven hardships can disperse. The achievements of the commentator and Tripiṭaka Master [Liangbi] are praised far and wide; his learning penetrates the past and present. The translation of this scripture is adorned with literary embellishments, and all praise the clarity of meaning in this commentary. The writing is economical and simple, its reasoning profound, clear, and intelligent: it reaches the crest of the peak and extends to the dragon’s chin in the ocean. As for [Liangbi’s] commentary on the scripture, the style is expansive and encompasses many ideas: he evaluates the different schools of preaching and scholarship, putting an end to debates once and for all. Now, having repeatedly examined [his commentary], I record this [subcommentary]. When I finished writing it out by hand, it was compiled into five fascicles. To prevent confusing my subcommentary with his commentary and losing direction, I have given it the title *Compass for Protecting the State Subcommentary*. In addition, I have appended the single-fascicle *Record of Variations* to the end of the fifth fascicle. I have only gathered scriptures and treatises [to write this subcommentary]; I am not expressing my own personal inclinations. If there is anything that I forgot to inspect, it is no one’s fault but mine. Recorded in the sixth year of the holy reign of Anguo (that is, 908), the *jiayin* 甲寅 year (of the sexagenary cycle), last month of summer.<sup>43</sup>

The only hint that this subcommentary comes from the Changhe kingdom rather than one of the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms (or

<sup>41</sup> *Huainanzi* 淮南子, in *Zhongguo zixue mingzhu jicheng* 中國子學名著集成 (Taipei: Zhongguo zixue mingzhu jicheng bianyin jijinhui, 1977), vol. 85, p. 718; Liangbi 良贇 (717–777), *Renwang huguo bore boluomiduo jing shu* 仁王護國般若波羅蜜多經疏 (T 33, no. 1709; hereafter, Liangbi), p. 523B3.

<sup>42</sup> Below, I discuss the meaning of *yixue*, translated here as “exegesis.”

<sup>43</sup> *Huguo*, pp. 3–4.

Tang) is its reference to Zheng Maisi's Anguo reign era. The date has generated debate because, by the generally accepted chronology of the Nanzhao and Changhe kingdoms, the sixth year of Anguo was not a *jiayin* 甲寅 year, but a *wuchen* 戊辰 year. Considering that the closest *jiayin* years were 894 and 954, it seems unlikely that this part of the date is correct.<sup>44</sup> Hou Chong follows Li Jiarui in reading *jiayin* as a copying error that resulted from the fact that the extant manuscript of the *Subcommentary* was copied over a century after Xuanjian's original text.<sup>45</sup> This seems more likely, though given the uncertainty surrounding dates in the Dali region, it is also possible that the sixth year of Anguo refers to the *jiazi* 甲子 year 904 or the *bingyin* 丙寅 year 906.

Xuanjian starts his preface by stating the *Scripture for Humane Kings's* central message, which is state protection, a notion that he implicitly "protects and upholds" by the act of composing the subcommentary. He then devotes considerably more space to lauding Liangbi's commentary. The greater emphasis on the commentary over the scripture is reflected in the body of the *Subcommentary* as well, which glosses passages from the commentary, but not the scripture (though sometimes the two overlap, and sometimes Xuanjian quotes the scripture in explaining the commentary). Xuanjian explains that he has given his subcommentary a distinct title to avoid confusion, and the *Subcommentary* later, in fact, reveals the source: it is Liangbi's commentary, which advises, "Do not embrace selecting or rejecting, but desire a compass (*zhinan* 指南)." Xuanjian explicates this as follows:

If you select emptiness and reject existence, you will necessarily follow one extreme and not accord with the Middle Path. If a person on a chariot always points south, they will stick to that side... Using the compass chariot to lead the Son of Heaven east, west, south, or north, the person on the chariot will always point south. Once you know where south is, you automatically know the other three directions.<sup>46</sup>

The subcommentary is thus the compass that guides readers through Liangbi's commentary.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Zhou Yongxian did think that *jiayin* was the correct year, and dated *Huguo* to 894; Zhou Yongxian 周泳先, "Fengyi xian Beitangtian Nanzhao Dali guo yilai guben jinguan zhengli ji" 鳳儀北湯天南詔大理國以來古本經卷整理記, in Li Jiarui 李家瑞, Zhou Yongxian, Yang Yucai 楊毓才, and Li Yifu 李一夫, eds., *Dali Baizu Zizhizhou lishi wenwu diaocha ziliao* 大理白族自治州歷史文物調查資料 (Kunming: Yunnan renmin chubanshe, 1958).

<sup>45</sup> Hou, "Dali guo xiejing," p. 105.

<sup>46</sup> *Huguo*, p. 45.

<sup>47</sup> Joseph Needham explains that the compass chariot differed from the magnetic compass: the former had a pointer that was fixed in a given direction, regardless of how the vehi-

As the preface states, the original *Subcommentary* encompassed five fascicles, which makes sense for a subcommentary on a three-fascicle commentary (which was itself based on a two-fascicle scripture). However, in its extant manuscript form the *Subcommentary* has been abridged to a single fascicle, as described in the closing colophon: “Commentary written in one fascicle, reverentially offered to seven generations of the deceased by the Buddha’s disciple, the *bhikṣu* Shi Daochang 釋道常, in year eight of the Bao’an 保安 reign (1052).”<sup>48</sup> From the contents of the extant manuscript, which cover Liangbi’s commentary from beginning to end, we know that Shi Daochang abridged the entire five-fascicle original rather than only copying one fascicle. Shi Daochang abridged the text unevenly, so that the vast majority of the subcommentary manuscript covers only the first fascicle of Liangbi’s three-fascicle commentary. Xuanjian’s version of the text must have been far more detailed and addressed much more of Liangbi’s commentary than what survives. Still, the extant manuscript offers a glimpse of how an early-tenth-century monk at the Changhe court drew from a wide array of sources.

*From Aśoka to Tang Daizong: Statecraft in the Subcommentary*

The *Subcommentary* follows the text of Liangbi’s commentary, and as such lacks an independent structure (a fact that is exacerbated by the abridgement). Its genre, namely that of *yixue*, also means that the contents will vary from basic definitions of seemingly common characters, to stories about early Buddhist figures, to explanations of subtle doctrinal points. Though I follow Erik Zürcher in translating *yixue* as “exegesis,” Hou Chong points out that the term encompasses a wide range of scholarly work that includes exegesis, but also phonology,

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cle moved; See Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1971) 4, p. 229.

<sup>48</sup> *Huguo*, p. 83. The Bao’an reign era occurred during the rule of the Dali emperor Duan Silian 段思廉 (r. 1045–1075). The *Huguo* manuscript is a scroll of mulberry paper 30.9 cm tall and approximately 1.1 meters long. Each line has eighteen to twenty-one characters, with the headings from the commentary written in *xingshu* 行書 script and the content of the subcommentary written in *caoshu* 草書 script. Headings and other punctuation are marked by red circles or dots; see *Huguo*, p. 2. As Hou Chong has shown, *Huguo* survives in three sections: the first and third are stored in the Library of the Yunnan Province Social Science Research Institute (Yunnan sheng shehui kexue yuan tushuguan 雲南省社會科學院圖書館) and the second section is stored in the Yunnan Province Library (Yunnan sheng tushuguan 雲南省圖書館); Hou, “Dali guo xiejing,” pp. 103–4. I have not seen the original *Huguo* manuscript, and have worked from the manuscript reproductions (scans, not photographs) in the first volume of Yang et al., *Dali congshu: dazangjing pian*, and the edited version that Hou Chong prepared for Fang, *Zangwai Fojiao wenxian*. The former reproduces the manuscript’s red punctuation, which is not always the case for manuscript reproductions in this set.

doctrinal studies, philosophy, and preaching.<sup>49</sup> As with other commentaries and subcommentaries in the Chinese scholarly tradition, Xuanjian's exegesis draws from a wide range of texts. These texts give a good indication of what the Changhe court (and presumably, the late Nanzhao court) had available, and provide information about sources that have not survived. For example, the *Subcommentary* cites the later-reconstructed Sui-dynasty *Qieyun* 切韻 (*Cut Rhymes*) in explaining the character *zan* in *zan zhenwen* 贊真文 ("guide through the true text") as "to understand, or to assist."<sup>50</sup> In general, Xuanjian drew on Chinese works such as the ancient classics *Yijing* 易經, *Daodejing* 道德經, and *Chunqiu* 春秋; Buddhist scriptures such as the *Lotus sūtra* and *Vimalakirti sūtra*; commentaries on those and other scriptures; Buddhist travel records and biographies such as the *Da Tang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記 and *Tang sanzang zhuan* 唐三藏傳; and exegetical works such as the *Huayan yinyi* 華嚴音義 and *Zhuangzi yinyi* 莊子音義.<sup>51</sup>

This variety of textual sources is seen in the *Subcommentary's* sections on statecraft, which range from setting the calendar in preimperial China to following the examples of the Buddhist monarchs Prasenajit and Aśoka. The *Subcommentary* explains several phrases in Liangbi's commentary by invoking Confucian models of rulership. These models were already part of the *Scripture for Humane Kings* and its commentaries, as shown in its emphasis on the concept of *ren* (humaneness) and its overall synthesis of Confucian and Buddhist approaches to statecraft. Liangbi's introduction to his commentary lauds the reigning emperor Tang Suzong (r. 711–726) for "reviving Yao's cultivation" and "renewing rites and music."<sup>52</sup> Xuanjian cites the Tang-era *Diwang luelun* 帝王略論 (*Brief Treatises on Emperors and Kings*) and the Liang-dynasty *Yupian* 玉篇 (*Jade Chapters*) for accounts of the legendary Yao's virtue in leading a simple life.<sup>53</sup> He then uses the Han-dynasty *Baihu tong* 白虎通

<sup>49</sup> Erik Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China* (Leiden: Brill, 1972 [1959]), p. 116; Hou Chong, "Fojiao de yixue: yi *Huguo sinan chao wei shili*" 佛教的義學, 以 "護國司南抄" 為實例, *Xi'nan minzu daxue xuebao* 西南民族大學學報 1 (2016), pp. 82–85.

<sup>50</sup> *Huguo*, p. 8; Liangbi, p. 429a15. In some cases, Xuanjian's explanations appear to be incorrect, as in his gloss of the term *rongtong* 融通, in which *rong* should mean "melled," but which he explains as one of its other definitions, "bright"; *Huguo*, p. 27.

<sup>51</sup> Hou Chong gives a fairly comprehensive overview in "Dali guo xiejing," p. 107.

<sup>52</sup> Liangbi, p. 430b22–23, 26.

<sup>53</sup> *Diwang luelun* only partially survives, but the section quoted here is almost identical to that contained in the Dunhuang ms. of this text; see Pelliot 2636 (only a few characters differ, which may be scribal errors). See Gu Yewang 顧野王 (Liang), *Yupian* 玉篇 (SKQS edn.) 13, p. 1a; *Huguo*, pp. 24–25.

(*Comprehensive Discussions in the White Tiger Hall*) to explain the phrase “renew rites and music”:

The ruler regulates the rites and makes the music to restrain the people’s emotions. Music uses methods to resemble Heaven; rites use methods to resemble Earth. All people contain the pneuma of Heaven and Earth, and possess the nature of the Five Constant Virtues, so music cleanses by countering evil, and the rites do so by preventing licentiousness 禮所以防淫佚 ([the last character is] pronounced *yi* 逸; “yin 淫” means excessive enjoyment/music) and restraining extravagance 節其侈靡 (*Qieyun*: [the pronunciation of the] character 侈 is a combination of *chi* 尺 and *shi* 氏, in the rising tone, and means extravagant; [the pronunciation of the] character 靡 is a combination of *wen* 文 and *bi* 彼, and also means “extravagant”). The rites use peace to govern people, while music changes styles and alters customs.<sup>54</sup>

These examples indicate the range of texts available to imperial monks of the Changhe kingdom and show that the notions of Confucian rulership expressed in the earlier *Dehua bei* were still very much part of the Changhe court as they were in eighth-century Nanzhao.

Liangbi’s praise of Tang Suzong spurred Xuanjian’s explanations of idealized Confucian rulership, and the specific Tang context of Liangbi’s commentary also receives attention in the Changhe subcommentary. Before mentioning Suzong individually in the introduction, Liangbi commends the “eight generations of the august Tang for revitalizing the people,” of which Xuanjian glosses “eight generations of the august Tang.”<sup>55</sup> The subcommentary manuscript initially just introduces the first eight Tang emperors (nine, including the female emperor Wu), but later Shi Daochang interpolates a much more detailed section with the dates of each of these emperors’ reign eras.<sup>56</sup> This longer section states explicitly that emperor Wu is not included in the “eight generations.”<sup>57</sup> On one hand, the *Subcommentary*’s attention to the Tang dynasty stems from the period in which Liangbi wrote his commentary, but when considered alongside the explanations of Con-

<sup>54</sup> The phrases in parentheses are written in a smaller script; *Huguo*, p. 26; *Baihu tongyi* 白虎通義 (SKQS edn.) 1, pp. 22a, 24b. Liangbi refers to the Baoying emperor’s (Tang Suzong) “recreating *qian* 乾 and *kun* 坤 and renewing rites and music” in his commentary; Liangbi, p. 430B26.

<sup>55</sup> Liangbi, p. 429B2.

<sup>56</sup> *Huguo*, pp. 15–16; 29–34.

<sup>57</sup> Hou Chong suspects that Shi Daochang abridged the longer section into the first, shorter section, but then added the longer section back, perhaps to resolve the confusion about listing nine rulers in an entry on eight rulers; Hou, “Dali guo xiejing,” p. 106.

fucian statecraft in the context of the early-tenth century, it also suggests that the Changhe court, like other regional regimes of this time, looked to the Tang as a paradigm.

The *Subcommentary* presents Chinese rulers from Yao through Tang Daizong as paradigmatic figures, but it also presents Buddhist rulers as paradigmatic figures. These two roles are combined in the person of Liang Wudi 梁武帝 (r. 502–549), whom Liangbi quotes in explaining the standard formula for opening Buddhist sutras, “Thus have I heard” (*rushi wo wen* 如是我聞).<sup>58</sup> Xuanjian explains “Liang Wudi” with reference to his extreme Buddhist devotion:

His surname was Xiao and his personal name was Yan; he reigned for forty-nine years. Though he had millions of assorted tasks, he always had a scroll in his hand, and he could expound on all the inner and outer classics. He accepted the Buddha and took the precepts, with his reverential belief increasing daily. He recited the *Nīrvāṇa sūtra* with monks, formulated the discourse of the five periods [of teachings], and frequently made offerings to thousands of monks. Inwardly he practiced the six fasts and eight precepts. He gave himself up three times and entered the monastery so his assorted ministers would pay ransom. He restricted himself to one meal per day and stopped eating pungent foods, meat, or taro. When the kingdom of Shu made gifts of lotus root and taro, it was said they had the odor of meat, so he decreed they could not be given. He ordered that throughout the empire no silk embroidery could use bird or animal patterns, because when it was cut he really could not bear it. When making offerings at the Great Temple, he used thyme and wheat for the three sacrifices.<sup>59</sup>

Liang Wudi is described as adapting his Confucian duties, such as making offerings to his ancestral lineage at the Great Temple (Taimiao 太廟), to the Buddhist principle of nonviolence. His practice of ransoming himself to support the monastic community financially drew on the legendary precedent of king Aśoka (ca. 300–232 BC), who also appears as an exemplary ruler in the *Subcommentary*.

According to Buddhist tradition, king Aśoka converted to Buddhism after expanding the Mauryan empire through violent campaigns. He promoted Buddhism by erecting 84,000 pillars throughout his empire, ransoming himself and his possessions to enrich the *samgha*, and

<sup>58</sup> Liangbi, p. 436b7.

<sup>59</sup> *Huguo*, pp. 50–51. The ms. does not include a citation for this content.

convening the Third Buddhist Council.<sup>60</sup> The *Subcommentary* mentions him in connection with Kukkuṭārāma Monastery, which Liangbi's commentary refers to as the site of early schisms in the Buddhist community.<sup>61</sup> In the entry on Kukkuṭārāma, Xuanjian cites the Tang-era *Xiyu ji* 西域記 (*Records of the Western Region*) in explaining:

Southeast of Rājagṛha “there is Kukkuṭārāma *saṃghārāma* (“Chicken Garden” – in the Tang, or Chinese, language), which was built by King Aśoka (Wuyou wang 無憂王, literally “King Without Worry”). When King Aśoka first converted to the buddhadharma, he followed and reverently practiced it, planting seeds of goodness. He summoned thousands of monks, assemblies both common and noble, and gave them offerings of the four provisions, as well as anything else they needed.”<sup>62</sup> He built this *saṃghārāma* for them to inhabit.<sup>63</sup>

The *Subcommentary* then uses the *Xiyu ji* to gloss “Wuyou wang”: “In the first hundred years after the Tathāgata entered nirvana, there was Aśoka (Ashujia 阿輸迦), which in the Tang language means “Without Worry.” His name was previously transcribed as Ayu 阿育, but this is incorrect.”<sup>64</sup> Aśoka's devotion inspired Liang Wudi along with other rulers throughout the Buddhist world. Starting in the Yuan dynasty, records about Dali recount a legend in which Aśoka's sons settled in Yunnan and became the progenitors of the Nanzhao kingdom.<sup>65</sup> By including king Aśoka in the *Subcommentary*, Xuanjian shows that this paradigmatic Buddhist monarch was known to the rulers of the Changhe kingdom and hints at how the later legend about Aśoka's sons might have arisen.

To have included both examples of Confucian statecraft and paradigmatic Buddhist rulers like Liang Wudi and Aśoka raises questions about the relationship between these two political ideologies. While the *Scripture for Humane Kings* and Liangbi's commentary emphasize their

<sup>60</sup> For an in-depth study of these and other legends surrounding king Aśoka, see John Strong, *The Legend of King Aśoka: A Study and Translation of the Aśokāvadāna* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1983).

<sup>61</sup> Liangbi, p. 430c28.

<sup>62</sup> Xuanzang 玄奘 (ca. 600–664), *Da Tang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記 (T 51, no. 2087), p. 912b14–17. The sections in quotation marks come from this work.

<sup>63</sup> *Huguo*, p. 42.

<sup>64</sup> *Huguo*, p. 43; *Da Tang xiyu ji*, p. 911a19–20. This gloss appears to be based on the previous entry on the Kukkuṭārāma; Wuyou wang does appear in Liangbi's commentary, but in a completely different section. See Liangbi, p. 438c28.

<sup>65</sup> Zhang Daozong 張道宗 (fl. late thirteenth century), *Ji gu Dian shuo ji* 記古滇說集, in *JNSLCK* 2, p. 655.

compatibility, we see from the *Subcommentary*'s entry on Liang Wudi that they sometimes conflict. The *Subcommentary*, like the *Scripture for Humane Kings* and Liangbi's commentary, privileges Buddhism, and argues for Buddhism to play an important role at court. Its entry on the phrase, "Humane Kings thus ask the masters, which is the good strategy of showing widespread respect" makes this clear.<sup>66</sup> This section cites the *Scripture for Humane Kings* and Liangbi's commentary:

For humane kings to ask the masters means that, as the scripture states, "At that time King Prasenajit arose from his throne, touched his head to the Buddha's feet, put his palms together and kneeled, then asked the Buddha, 'World-Honored One, how do bodhisattvas and mahāsattvas protect the fruits of buddhahood? How do they protect the ten stages of practice?'"<sup>67</sup> The commentary states, "He asked out of the perfect sincerity, and blessings and joy, of his three kinds of karma."<sup>68</sup> Question: Why do humane kings need to ask masters? Answer: It is to show the good strategy of widespread respect 是彰廣敬之令暮也. Therefore the following section of the commentary states: "Those above practice, and those below are transformed."<sup>69</sup> *Ling* 令 has a falling tone; it means "good" or "beautiful." Also "strategy" can be written with the characters *mou* 謀 or *mo* 謨, which are all the same.<sup>70</sup>

Here we see the *Scripture for Humane Kings*'s hierarchical vision of the ruler-Buddha/monk relationship, in which the former is below and the latter is above in an advisory role. As Charles Orzech has shown, while the *Scripture for Humane Kings* homologizes rulers and bodhisattvas from one perspective (which he labels "continuous"), from a discontinuous perspective bodhisattvas are superior because they have firmly acquired a lineage (Ch.: *zhongxing* 種性, Skt.: *gotra*), but rulers have not.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>66</sup> The Taishō version of Liangbi's commentary gives *zhu* 諸, "all," instead of *qing* 請, "invite," which appears in *Huguo*. Based on the meaning, I follow the latter. However, the Taishō version of the commentary gives *lingyu* 令譽, "good name," instead of *lingmu* 令暮, "good strategy." I suspect the former is correct, but *Huguo* goes on to explain the character *mu*, showing that Xuanjian intended to use that character. See Liangbi, p. 434B20-21; *Huguo*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>67</sup> Bukong 不空 (aka Amoghavajra; 705-774), *Renwang huguo bore boluomiduo jing* 仁王護國般若波羅蜜多經 (T 8, no. 246), p. 835B17-19; this translation is from Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, p. 216.

<sup>68</sup> Liangbi, p. 452B5.

<sup>69</sup> Liangbi, p. 488C14.

<sup>70</sup> *Huguo*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>71</sup> Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, p. 95. *Huguo* explains two kinds of lineages, the acquired and innate, which correspond to the copper-wheel *cakravartin* who rules two continents, and silver-wheel *cakravartin* who rules three continents, respectively; *Huguo*, pp. 79-81.

The *Subcommentary* suggests that Xuanjian, as an imperial monk of the Changhe court, was promoting his own role as a political advisor by writing this subcommentary to the *Scripture for Humane Kings*.

The *Subcommentary* picks up on several aspects of statecraft that arise in the *Scripture for Humane Kings* and Liangbi's commentary, but it omits references to esoteric ritual systems involving *dhāraṇī* and the wrathful *vidyārājas*, which played central roles in Bukong's own work for the Tang court. Xuanjian addresses this omission near the end of the extant manuscript by stating: "Why are spells (zhou 咒) not discussed? All the spell methods are secret speech (*miyan* 密言). This secret speech can contain the ultimate principle, so when they are practiced with meditation on wisdom and recited diligently, they prevent disasters and cause blessings, and transform people into sages. There is no comparison of the translation, and there is also no explanation [of how the *dhāraṇī* works]."72 In short, the *dhāraṇī* should not be openly discussed because they are too powerful. It is thus entirely possible that the Changhe court continued the *abhiseka* rite represented in *Nanzhao tuzhuan*, and possibly other aspects of esoteric Buddhist ritual, but that these were kept secret.

The surviving sections of the *Subcommentary* show that elite monks of the Changhe kingdom had access to a wide variety of texts on Confucian and Buddhist statecraft. Unsurprisingly, Xuanjian followed the precedents of the *Scripture for Humane Kings* and Liangbi's commentary in promoting Buddhist approaches over Confucian approaches, but he certainly did not reject the latter. This is consistent with what we know of the Nanzhao and Dali kingdoms, where the rulers used both Confucian and Buddhist language, but never seem to have had problems with Buddhism's foreign provenance. Rulers in the Dali region often represented their Buddhist tradition as coming directly from India (as with the figure of Acuoye Guanyin) to claim closer ties with Buddhism's source, given that they would always remain *Man* people from the perspective of the Chinese dynasties.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, there are few records about Daoism in these regimes, which suggests that the tensions that

<sup>72</sup> *Huguo*, p. 82. There is no heading for this entry, but based on its reference to "translation and comparison," Hou Chong shows that it is commenting on Liangbi's explanation of Sanskrit *dhāraṇī* resulting from his "comparison of the translation" to the Sanskrit texts of the *Vajrasekhara sūtra* (*Jingangding jing* 金剛頂經); see Hou's edn. of *Huguo sinan chao*, in Fang, *Zangwai fojiao wenxian* 7, p. 112; Liangbi, p. 517A6-7. I thank one of *Asia Major's* anonymous reviewers, who suggested the revised translation of *fan dui* 翻對.

<sup>73</sup> Megan Bryson, "Mahākāla Worship in the Dali Kingdom (937-1253): A Study of the *Dahei tianshen daochang yi*," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 35 (2012/13), p. 44.

flared up between Buddhists and Daoists in the Tang and other Chinese dynasties did not ignite in Dali.<sup>74</sup> The *Subcommentary* might have had little competition in shaping the Changhe court's understanding of statecraft.

CONCLUSIONS: THE *SUBCOMMENTARY*  
(*HUGUO SINAN CHAO*) AND THE CHANGHE KINGDOM

When Xuanjian compiled the *Subcommentary* the Changhe kingdom had just been founded. Former Shu had not yet defeated its armies or humiliated its envoy, and Later Tang had not yet rebuffed its overtures of marriage. In the context of the early-tenth century the *Subcommentary* made a claim to inherit the state-protection Buddhism of the Tang dynasty and the mantle of “humane king.” Zheng Renmin’s political and military strategies show that he copied Nanzhao strategies, but with the hope of gaining more territory or influence through attacks on Shu and marriage alliances. We see from Changhe’s repeated attempts to secure a bride from a neighboring regime that the tenth century offered more opportunities than had the ninth century, when Xizong’s court was the only option.

Examining the *Subcommentary* in the Changhe kingdom opens up two contexts: the history of the “Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms” and the history of the *Scripture for Humane Kings* in East Asia.<sup>75</sup> On one level, the *Subcommentary* places the Changhe kingdom in the company of other regimes that embraced the *Scripture for Humane Kings* from Tang China and created their own textual, artistic, and ritual traditions

<sup>74</sup> Most modern scholarship on Daoism in Nanzhao and Dali relies on records from the Ming and Qing: only a few records from before the Yuan dynasty survive. However, as Hou Chong has proven convincingly, the late-imperial records are generally not reliable for understanding pre-Yuan Dali; Hou, *Baizu xinshi*. It would appear, as Xiao Jihong and Dong Yun observe, that the Nanzhao elites educated in the Shu capital (i.e., Chengdu) would have encountered Daoism, and Daoist teachings would have entered the Dali region with Tang officials and abductees from Shu; Xiao Jihong 蕭齊虹 and Dong Yun 董允, *Yunnan Daojiao shi* 雲南道教史 (Kunming: Yunnan daxue chubanshe, 2007), pp. 32–39. The 9th-c. *Man shu*'s (cited in n. 8, above) reference to the 794 Nanzhao-Tang treaty as having been presented to the deities of the “Three Offices” (*sanguan*, i.e. the gods of air, land, and water) may in fact refer to a Daoist practice, and it is clear that from the Nanzhao through Dali kingdoms, court officials were conversant in some texts associated with Daoism, such as the *Yijing* and *Daodejing*; *Man shu*, p. 89; citations from the *Yijing* appear in *Nanzhao*, p. 148; and references to the *Daodejing* appear in *Nanzhao dehua bei* 南詔德化碑, in *Dali congshu: jinshi pian* 10, p. 3. However, there are no indications that any of the regimes centered in Dali – including Changhe – invoked Daoism as a central part of their statecraft or developed Daoist institutions and offices on par with those of Buddhism.

<sup>75</sup> It is possible that the late Nanzhao and Changhe courts also interacted with political entities to the south and west, but surviving records do not provide sufficient information about such encounters.

surrounding it, such as the *Ninnōkyō* 仁王經 maṇḍalas and rituals that developed in Heian Japan, and the *saṃgha*'s promotion of the scripture to elevate their own position under the Koryō state.<sup>76</sup> While geopolitical boundaries remain relevant for the *Scripture for Humane Kings* on this level inasmuch as it concerns state protection, it also circulates beyond such boundaries within the Sinitic textual sphere. For rulers in polities where Sinitic script held sway – and even in places like the Xi Xia kingdom that also used Tibetan script and created its own Tangut script – the *Scripture for Humane Kings*, its commentaries and ritual texts, could be adopted and adapted to the court's specific needs. The Xi Xia state's sponsorship of a Tangut translation shows additional innovations that may connect with the as yet indecipherable written graphs in Dali-kingdom subcommentaries.<sup>77</sup> From this perspective, to consider the *Subcommentary* and Changhe kingdom only within the context of tenth-century China is overly limiting, since the *Scripture for Humane Kings* and the Changhe court participated in more widespread religious and textual networks.

However, on another level the particular history of the Changhe kingdom and the *Subcommentary* fit very well with the political and religious landscapes of the "Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms." Although the reasons for the fall of Nanzhao remain fuzzy in historical records, making it difficult to assess whether the dynamics behind the Tang downfall affected Nanzhao as well, its collapse around the same time as the Tang dynasty places the Changhe kingdom in a similar position to other newly founded regimes of the early-tenth century. Tenth- and eleventh-century sources indicate that Zheng Maisi and Zheng Renmin followed the same kinds of strategies as rulers of contemporaneous kingdoms, such as arranging marriage alliances, attempting military conquest, and seeking religious legitimation.<sup>78</sup> The *Subcommentary* performs the same kind of work as the Former Shu *Luyi ji* 錄異記 (*Record of Marvels*), by the Daoist Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850–933),

<sup>76</sup> For the *Ninnōkyō* in Heian Japan, see Cynthea Bogel, *With a Single Glance: Buddhist Icon and Early Mikkyō Vision* (Seattle: U. Washington P., 2009); on the scripture's use in Koryō Korea, see Sem Vermeersch, "Representation of the Ruler in Buddhist Inscriptions of Early Koryō," *Korean Studies* 26.2 (2002), pp. 226–30.

<sup>77</sup> It is unclear whether the Xi Xia had the *Scripture for Humane Kings* translated into Tibetan, but there was a Tangut version, and all monastic ordinands – whether conversant in Tibetan, Tangut, or Sinitic script – were expected to master it. See Ruth Dunnell, "Translating History from Tangut Buddhist Texts," *AM* 3d ser. 22.1 (2009), p. 69; Kirill J. Solonin, "Sinitic Buddhism in the Tangut State," *CAJ* 57 (2014), pp. 161–62, n. 9.

<sup>78</sup> As Brose notes, the rulers of Wuyue sought marriage alliances with the courts of Min and the Southern Han, and the Min ruler Wang Shenzhi seems to have followed Aśoka's example in presenting himself as a *cakravartin*; Brose, *Patrons and Patriarchs*, pp. 23, 28.

which presents Shu as a supernatural place, and the Former Shu rulers as inheriting the dynastic mandate of the Tang.<sup>79</sup> Rulers in the south-east kingdoms of Wuyue, Min, and Southern Tang similarly turned to monks in newly articulated Chan lineages to bolster their regimes' authority.<sup>80</sup> These southern kingdoms were included on the inferior side of Ouyang Xiu's "Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms" rubric, and Ouyang Xiu described their rulers as uncouth barbarians, which was the same kind of language often used for the people of Dali.<sup>81</sup> This suggests that the Changhe kingdom belongs in discussions of southern kingdoms in the tenth century.

As in the "Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms," the tenth century in Dali was a period of both continuity and change. The Changhe rulers carried on the practices of their Nanzhao predecessors, but the different political climate gave them a new significance. Tenth-century developments also carried into the Dali kingdom and the Song dynasty. By the tenth century, the rulers of Shu had already taken a lesson from Tang-Nanzhao history in declining to pursue military conflict with the regimes centered in Dali. Song rulers also adopted this policy of non-engagement, which constituted a significant break from Tang approaches. The court of the Dali kingdom continued to privilege the *Scripture for Humane Kings*, as shown by the two surviving manuscripts with Liangbi's commentary, the 1052 manuscript-copy of the *Subcommentary*, the *Scripture for Humane Kings* rituals in one of the Dali-kingdom manuscripts, and the "State-Protecting Precious Pillar" ("Huguo baochuang" 護國瑤幢) represented in the 1170s *Fanxiang juan* 梵像卷 (*Scroll of Buddhist Images*).<sup>82</sup> Even if the scripture had been known to the

<sup>79</sup> Verellen, "Shu as a Hallowed Place," pp. 242–54. Starting in the Yuan era works that depicted Dali in ways even more similar to *Luyi ji's* depiction of Shu increased in number; Hou, *Baizu xinshi*, pp. 438–40. Some scholars also believe that Du Guangting served as a *qingpingguan* prime minister to the Nanzhao ruler Yimouxun 異牟尋 (r. 780–808), and that Du Guangting is depicted in cave 1 of the Shibao shan grottoes; Li Jiarui 李家瑞, "Shibao shan shidiao wangzhe xiang san ku shishi" 石寶山石雕王者像三窟試釋, in Zhou et al., *Dali Baizu Zizhizhou lishi wenwu diaocha ziliao*, pp. 59–60. However, this does not match Du Guangting's dates and the Nanzhao *qingpingguan* named Du Guangting only appears in materials from the Ming and Qing. It appears that a Ming writer borrowed the name of the Daoist figure to bolster the aura of the Nanzhao court.

<sup>80</sup> Brose, *Patrons and Patriarchs*, pp. 21, 23–28, 35.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4; Ouyang Xiu, *Xin Wudai shi* 新五代史 (Taipei: Dingwen shuju, 1980) 61, p. 747.

<sup>82</sup> For the two *Renwang jing* mss. that probably date to the Dali kingdom, see Yang et al., *Dali congshu: dazangjing pian* 1, pp. 85–233. For the *Renwang jing* rituals, see the 1136 *Zhu Fo pusa jingang deng qiqing yigui* 諸佛菩薩金剛等啓請儀軌 (*Ritual Procedures for Inviting Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and Vajra Beings*), in *ibid.*, 2, pp. 51–265. For the "State-Protecting Precious Pillar," see Li, *Nanzhao Dali guo xin ziliao de zonghe yanjiu*, p. 121.

Nanzhao court, the Changhe-kingdom *Subcommentary* clearly remained important for the Dali rulers as well.

The kingdoms centered in the Dali region present a categorical challenge because they do not fit easily into the standard historiography of China or East Asia. Treating them as their own entities does justice to their relative independence, but leaves them in a region by themselves. Treating them within the context of Chinese history threatens to subsume them into a teleological dynastic succession that does not do justice to their relative independence. With this study of the *Subcommentary* in the Changhe kingdom, I believe it is possible to combine these approaches by juxtaposing the different spheres occupied by the Changhe kingdom. The kingdom deserves to be included in studies of tenth-century China, including studies of the Sinitic textual sphere and statecraft in East Asian Buddhism. It would be difficult to jettison problematic but heuristically useful concepts like “China,” “Chinese,” and “East Asia.” The answer may not be to avoid such terms, but to combine them with other models to reveal their relative nature.

*LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS*

<i>Huguo</i>	Xuanjian 玄鑿, <i>Huguo sinan chao</i> 護國司南抄
Liangbi	Liangbi 良賁, <i>Renwang huguo bore boluomiduo jing shu</i> 仁王護國般若波羅蜜多經疏
<i>Nanzhao</i>	<i>Nanzhao tuzhuan</i> 南詔圖傳
<i>XTS</i>	Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 and Song Qi 宋祇, <i>Xin Tang shu</i> 新唐書
<i>YNSLCK</i>	Fang Guoyu 方國瑜, ed., <i>Yunnan shiliao congkan</i> 云南史料丛刊
<i>ZZTJ</i>	Sima Guang 司馬光, <i>Zizhi tongjian</i> 資治通鑑