GENERALS OF THE SOUTH

The foundation and early history of the Three Kingdoms state of Wu

Rafe de Crespigny

Internet edition 2004

Dedicated to the memory of George William Symes 1896-1980, soldier and scholar

NOTE: This document contains the text of a work which was originally published in 1990 as No. 16 of the Asian Studies Monographs: New Series of the Faculty of Asian Studies at The Australian National University.

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National Library of Australia
Cataloguing In Publication entry

De Crespigny, Rafe, 1936-

Generals of the south : the foundation and early history of the Three Kingdoms state of Wu.

Bibliography.
Includes index.
ISBN 0 7315 0901 3.

1. China - History - Three Kingdoms, 220-265. 2. China - History - Han dynasty, 206 B.C. - 220 A.D. 3. China - History, Military.

I. Australian National University. Faculty of Asian Studies. II. Title (Series: Faculty of Asian Studies monographs, New series; no. 16).

931.04

FOREWORD

to the Internet edition 2004

Since the hard-copy of *Generals of the South* is now out of print, and is easily available only through specialist libraries, it seems appropriate to offer the text in electronic form to those who may be interested in the history of the Three Kingdoms, perhaps the most tumultuous and romantic of all Chinese history. Other works in this field are at http://www.anu.edu.au/asianstudies/decrespigny/.

In the presentation below, the original English-language of the 1990 edition has been preserved, with a few minor corrections, but there are some changes in format.

Firstly, no characters are included. There are, however, detailed references to Chinese works, and those wish to do further research and checking should have no difficulty in identifying the relevant texts. Given the convenience of searching electronic documents, moreover, I have not included a full general Index.

The Bibliography is largely the same as in 1990, though I have added a few references to later works, including my own. I have also appended a list of early works discussed in the text and the notes, which was formerly a section of the Index.

Finally, rather than incorporating the Maps into the body of the document relating to each chapter, I have collected them into a single, separate portfolio.

Subject to these alterations, following the Preface immediately after this Foreword the present document gives the original text of the 1990 publication.

Rafe de Crespigny
Canberra
March 2004

PREFACE
to the 1990 edition
AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I began to study the history of the Three Kingdoms some thirty years ago, and I benefited greatly from the guidance of Hans Bielenstein, Gören Malmqvist, Fang Chao-ying, Liu Ts'un-yan, Donald Leslie, Patrick Fitzgerald, Wang Gungwu, Hsü Cho-yün, Miyazaki Ichisada and Miyakawa Hisayuki.

One of the pleasant features of work in this field has been the steady development of scholarly information and debate. In the early 1960s there was little material in Western languages apart from the massive translations from *Zizhi tongjian* by Achilles Fang the brilliant essays of Etienne/Stephan Balazs, and the studies by Donald Holzman. Since then, largely as a development of Han studies, including the work of Hans Bielenstein, the publications of the Han Project at Seattle edited by Jack Dull, and the recent appearance of the first volume of the Cambridge History of China, there is a far great quantity of established material on the nature of the first Chinese imperial state and, as a result, on the pressures which brought its disintegration at the end of the second century AD.

I would make special mention of the late Carl Leban, whose thesis on the rise of Cao Cao, and a brilliant essay on the abdication debate of 220, showed an incisive scholarship that gives additional cause to regret his early death.

Many other colleagues have been kind enough to read through all or parts of this work and give me their advice and comments. I am grateful to Hans Bielenstein, Donald Holzman, Yves Hervouet and Michelle Perazolli-t'Serstevens of Paris, Burchard Mansvelt Beck of Leiden, Bill Nienhauser of Wisconsin, Hans Stumpfelt of Hamburg, Michael Loewe of Cambridge, Clayton Bredt of Queensland and, in Canberra, Bill Jenner, Mark Elvin, Igor de Rachewiltz and, particularly, Ken Gardiner and Greg Young.

Though one often takes their services for granted, I do offer most sincere thanks to Y.S. Chan and the Asian Studies librarians of the Australian National University: they have compiled and maintain a splendid collection, and my work would be all but impossible without it.

In the preparation of the book itself, I have been fortunate to have the assistance of Winifred Mumford, who prepared the maps, and May Wang, who has drawn the characters. Both of them have been

tolerant, patient, extremely conscientious, and very generous with their time and attention.

Rafe de Crespigny
Canberra, June 1990

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INTRODUCTION

The fall of the Later Han dynasty marked the end of the first period of Chinese unification. With a brief interregnum, the house of Liu had reigned over the empire for almost four hundred years, but when the central government at Luoyang collapsed in 189 the immediate chaos was succeeded by four hundred years of division. Except for some thirty years under Western Jin, the cultural world of China was divided between two or more rival states until its reunification by Sui at the end of the sixth century.

One could generalise almost indefinitely on the significance of this Period of Division. In the traditional Chinese view, the era of disunity was long regarded as a time when internecine warfare brought political weakness and allowed the invasion of barbarians into the heart-land of east Asian civilisation; and earlier Western scholars tended to follow that political line, and look upon the period as comparable to the Dark Ages of Europe. More recently, Chinese and foreigners have begun to explore the history in more detail, and have recognised the value of the achievements of that time, not only in the heritage of literature, philosophy and art which was left for the future, but also in terms of the energy and the interest of the age itself. Among other notable developments, the centuries which followed the fall of Han saw the adaptation of Chinese thought to absorb and comprehend the teachings of Buddhism, notable changes in the racial and social structure of the Chinese people and a great expansion of colonisation over the south.

And besides this legitimate historical interest, the first years of division, the period of the "Three Kingdoms," is the great age of romance in Chinese literature, comparable to that of the Arthurian legend in Britain or the cycle which gathered about Charlemagne in France and Germany. For more than a thousand years the story and drama cycles, culminating in the celebrated novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, have entertained and inspired the scholars, the poets and the common people of China.

The present volume is concerned with one aspect of that great tradition: the history of the development of the state of Wu, under the control of the Sun family, in the territory south of the Yangzi. The establishment of this separate state, and its maintenance for the best part of a hundred years, was a critical factor for the centuries

that followed. On the one hand, the independence of Wu prevented Cao Cao, victor of the civil war in the north, from restoring the unity which had been lost by the last emperors of Han. At the same time, however, by confirming and developing the Chinese presence in that frontier territory, the generals of Wu established the conditions not just for their own short-lived political survival, but also for the dynasties which took refuge there after the overthrow of Western Jin at the beginning of the third century, and which maintained their cultural heritage through the next three hundred years.

So the history of the state of Wu has broad implications for the whole history of medieval China. The viewpoint of the present work, however, is deliberately more restricted. It is necessary, of course, to consider the general pattern of events at the time, but I have sought to analyse them in terms of the interests of the Sun family and their associates, and from the perspective of the lands of the south.

This is the story of how one family in one region rose to local military power, and the time scale itself is very short. Sun Quan was born in 182 as the second son of an assistant county prefect, and he placed his claim to the title of emperor less than fifty years later.

Such remarkable fortune was based firstly upon the brave career of Sun Quan's father Sun Jian, who rose from obscurity to second-rank command in the civil war, and then upon the achievement of Sun Quan's brother Sun Ce, who was compelled to build rather upon the reputation of his father than upon any substantial inheritance, but who conquered the territory south of the Yangzi and left it for the benefit of his brother. For his own part, Sun Quan is remembered as the leader of a remarkable group of strategists and fighting men, and it was his personality and his statesmanship, less easy to assess, that gave authority to the work of his most celebrated commanders, Zhou Yu, Lu Su, Lü Meng and Lu Xun.

These matters of personality, politics and war were played out in a particular physical and social environment. Firstly, the preconditions for a viable separate state had been established by the steady Chinese colonisation and development of the south during Han; and then, in more general terms, the prospects of success and survival in the civil war depended to a considerable degree upon questions of family and status.

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The first great warlords, men such as Yuan Shao, Yuan Shu and Liu Biao, came of distinguished official lineage and substantial landed property. Some of their spectacular but short-lived rivals, Dong Zhuo, Lü Bu and Gongsun Zan, sought unsuccessfully to establish a high position without the authority which such social rank could give them, but they were never able to maintain themselves in long-term rivalry against the weight and prestige of the men of great family. Though Cao Cao, founder of Wei, came of notable family, it has been well argued that the edge which gave him success may be found in the fact that his father had been adopted by a eunuch at court, and the high rank and prosperity he could claim were thus in more need of energy and aggression to defend them.[1]

Elsewhere, in the long term of the civil war, the successful survivors were men, literally, on the margin: the Gongsun family of Liaodong in present-day Manchuria, the Shi of the far south, and the Sun family of the lower Yangzi. Each of these leaders had sufficient local prestige to establish a government, and they were also far enough away from north China not to be swamped in the maelstrom of that central conflict. And one must also admire the achievement of Liu Bei, who came from the northeast of the empire, who claimed with limited justification to represent the old imperial clan, but who found acceptance and survival in the west.

It was the state of Wu, however, founded and governed by an undistinguished family from a frontier of the Chinese world, which outlived its rivals and established an empire in the lands beyond the Yangzi. The government of Sun Quan and his successors defied the power of the north for most of a century, controlling the best part of three provinces of Han, and developing that territory into a prosperity and culture which made the fortune of south China for the future. In some respects this achievement compares less well with the lost grandeur of Han, the splendour of Wei and the arrogance of Shu-Han, but in the context of the time, the place and the structure of society, limited success, rather than extravagant failure, was a triumph in the art of the possible.

In later times, the value and importance of the history of Wu was overshadowed by the romantic tradition, which found its chief tension and interest in the struggle between the "usurping" power of

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[1] See, for example, Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers*, 446 and 537-40, and de Crespigny, *Man from the Margin* [also on Internet publication].

INTRODUCTION

Cao Cao and his state of Wei and the "legitimate" heroes of Liu Bei and his band of brothers in Shu-Han. In this great contest, which owes as much to the dramatic arts as to those of the historian, the position of the men of Wu has been reduced to that of bit players, frequently with no more than walk-on parts, and sometimes, sadly, as foils and buffoons against whom the major heroes can display their wisdom, courage and skill.

Like most others, I was first introduced to the story of the Three Kingdoms by means of the novel and the dramas, and it was that splendid fiction which led me to investigate the history behind it all. Repeatedly, however, there is contradiction and confusion between the romantic tradition and the historical one, and the conflict is made all the more confusing by the fact that the tales told to us by Chen Shou and his rivals, collected in the commentary of Pei Songzhi, are themselves a mixture of fact and fiction. In disconcerting fashion, the history presented by *Sanguo zhi* often differs from the fiction of *Sanguo yanyi* rather as an alternative form of romance than as a neat contrast of truth with falsehood. Pei Songzhi remarked upon the problem, and throughout the present work I have been faced with a kaleidoscope of possible stories. In a concluding chapter I discuss the historiography of the period, and in this respect, unlike the major school of modern criticism, which concentrates largely upon the later version of the stories as expressed in the story cycles, drama and the novel, I give first consideration to the earliest chroniclers of that age. For this viewpoint, the later development of romance is no more than a supplement to the basic question of how it really was.

To deal with that basic question, I have largely used a narrative form. The first chapter discusses the situation in south China at the end of Han, and the eighth considers the nature of government, society and economy in the third-century state of Wu. A central part of the work, however, offers an account of the development of the state, with particular attention to time and place, and with concentration upon the chieftains of the Sun family and the men and women who supported and served them.

I take this approach quite deliberately, for I strongly believe that if we are to understand any period of Chinese history we must have a clear picture of time and place. There is a general tendency in modern Sinology to present broad judgements on general themes,

but such argument can be supported only on a firm basis of fact. As a first step to analysing and assessing the course of events, we need to know what those events were, and in the case of the Three Kingdoms there are many incidents which every schoolboy knows of, but which did not happen in the way they are commonly told.

So the purpose of this work is to give a picture of the period which saw the fall of Han and the establishment of an independent state in south China. Such a picture must represent social, political and economic factors of the age, it must also include the time, the place, and the personal perceptions of the people concerned. Moreover, it is important who those people were: it was critical to Sun Jian's career that he came of obscure and distant background in a society which was dominated by gentry landowners and their clients; it is remarkable that Sun Ce achieved so much success before he reached his mid-twenties; it was vital for the fortunes of the family enterprise that Sun Quan was of sufficient age and authority to receive the allegiance of the various commanders who had served his elder brother, and it was significant for the state that he lived to rule it for so long. In such brittle dynasties, personality and individual relations played a very large role, too often neglected in the search for more general themes.

And after all, if the achievements of these people set a pattern for the future and caught the imagination of those who came after them, it is only fair to look for the facts which served as basis for the legend. Even after such a length of time and behind such a refraction of romance, however blurred the view of history may be, the "third kingdom" of Wu still presents a heroism of its own.

CHRONOLOGY

of the history of the Sun family and of the state of Wu
155-229

This table is concerned primarily with the history of the Sun family and the state of Wu; it does not offer a full survey of the history of China at the time. Some major events, not immediately relevant to the fortunes of the Sun family, are indicated in *italics*.

Dates are given in terms of Western years AD. There is, of course, always some uncertainty and the possibility of confusion, notably because of the overlap at the end of the Chinese year and the beginning of the Western year.

155	birth of Sun Jian
172-174	Sun Jian on campaign against the rebellion of Xu Chang in Kuaiji; he receives commissioned appointment as an assistant county magistrate
175	birth of Sun Ce
182	birth of Sun Quan
184	Sun Jian on campaign against the Yellow Turban rebels in Nanyang commandery and the storming of Wan city
185-186	Sun Jian on campaign against the rebels in Liang province
187-189	Sun Jian as Grand Administrator of Changsha
189	*death of Emperor Ling and regency of the He family*; *attempted coup by the eunuchs and death of He Jin*; *Dong Zhuo seizes power and places Liu Xie, Emperor Xian, on the throne*
190	Sun Jian joins Yuan Shu in the alliance against Dong Zhuo; *Shi Xie holds power in Jiao province*
191	Sun Jian captures Luoyang from Dong Zhuo; Sun Jian attacks Liu Biao and Huang Zu in Xiangyang; death of Sun Jian
192	*Dong Zhuo killed in Chang'an*
193	Yuan Shu defeated by Cao Cao and retreats to Yang province; Sun Ce calls upon Yuan Shu; *Tao Qian attacked by Cao Cao in Xu province*
194	Sun Ce joins Yuan Shu at Shouchun; *Liu Yao appointed Inspector of Yang province*; Sun Ce attacks Lu Kang in Lujiang for Yuan Shu

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195	Sun Ce attacks Liu Yao south of the Yangzi; Liu Yao retreats to Yuzhang; Sun Ce seizes Danyang and Wu commanderies; *Emperor Xian escapes from Chang'an*
196	Sun Ce defeats Wang Lang and captures Kuaiji commandery; *Emperor Xian comes to Cao Cao at Xu city*
197	Yuan Shu proclaims himself Emperor; Sun Ce renounces his allegiance to Yuan Shu and allies himself with the Han court under Cao Cao
198	*Lü Bu and Cao Cao defeat Yuan Shu*; Sun Ce defeats Taishi Ci and Zu Lang in western Danyang; *death of Liu Yao in Yuzhang*
199	*death of Yuan Shu*; Sun Ce defeats Liu Xun and captures Lujiang
200	Sun Ce defeats Huang Zu and captures Yuzhang from Hua Xin; death of Sun Ce, succeeded by Sun Quan; *Cao Cao defeats Yuan Shao at Guandu*
201	*Liu Fu appointed as Cao Cao's Inspector of Yang province at Hefei*
202	*death of Yuan Shao in north China*
203	Sun Quan attacks Huang Zu in Jiangxia and destroys his fleet
204	mutiny in Danyang, put down; operations in Poyang; *Cao Cao defeats Yuan Shang and captures Ye city*
205	conquest of Poyang; He Qi confirms control of the Min River valley in present-day Fujian
206	Zhou Yu attacks Mo and Bao encampments in Jing province; operations against Huang Zu
207	operations against Huang Zu; *Cao Cao defeats the Wuhuan at White Wolf Mountain*
208	defeat and death of Huang Zu; *death of Liu Biao*; *Cao Cao takes Jing province*; *Liu Bei is defeated at the Chang Slope and flees to Xiakou*; Cao Cao is defeated at the Red Cliffs by the army of Sun Quan, commanded by Zhou Yu, in alliance with Liu Bei and Liu Qi; Sun Quan attacks Hefei without success

SUN AND WU 155-229

209 Cao Cao demonstrates in strength at Hefei; He Qi establishes Xindu commandery south of the Huang Shan; Zhou Yu captures Jiangling city in Nan commandery

210 death of Zhou Yu, succeeded by Lu Su; first settlement of Jing province with Liu Bei; appointment of Bu Zhi as Inspector of Jiao province

211 Sun Quan shifts his capital to Jianye; *Cao Cao defeats the warlords of the northwest*; *Liu Zhang invites Liu Bei into Yi province*

212 Sun Quan fortifies Jianye and establishes the base at Ruxu

213 Cao Cao attacks Ruxu, then withdraws

214 Sun Quan captures Huan city in Lujiang; *Liu Bei takes over the government of Yi province*

215 the second settlement of Jing province with Liu Bei; *Zhang Lu surrenders Hanzhong commandery to Cao Cao*; Sun Quan attacks Hefei without success

216 *Cao Cao takes the title King of Wei*

217 Cao Cao attacks Ruxu, Sun Quan makes a formal surrender, and Cao Cao withdraws; death of Lu Su, succeeded by Lü Meng; Lu Xun campaigns against the hills people from Danyang to Kuaiji

218

219 *Liu Bei defeats Xiahou Yuan and captures Hanzhong commandery from Cao Cao*; *Liu Bei proclaims himself King of Hanzhong*; *Guan Yu attacks Cao Ren in Nanyang commandery and besieges Fan city*; Lü Meng attacks and destroys Guan Yu; Sun Quan takes control of Jing province

220 *Cao Cao dies*; *Cao Pi succeeds as ruler of Wei*; Bu Zhi is replaced in the south by Lü Dai;
10th month: *Han abdicates to Wei and Cao Pi takes the imperial title*; Sun Quan sends tribute to Wei

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221	*Liu Bei proclaims himself emperor in succession to Han and in rivalry to Wei*; Sun Quan establishes his capital at Wuchang in Jing province; Liu Bei embarks on campaign against Sun Quan; Sun Quan declares himself subject to Wei and is granted title as King of Wu
222	Lu Xun defeats Liu Bei and destroys his army; Sun Quan breaks with Wei; Cao Pi sends armies against Sun Quan's positions on the middle and the lower Yangzi; Sun Quan restores the alliance with Shu
223	*death of Liu Bei*; *Zhuge Liang acts as regent in Shu*; Cao Pi withdraws from the attack against Wu; Wu capture Qichun commandery
224	Cao Pi attacks the lower Yangzi, then withdraws
225	Cao Pi constructs the Canal to Smash the Caitiffs and again attacks the lower Yangzi, again withdraws; *Zhuge Liang conquers the southwest for Shu-Han*
226	*Cao Pi dies*, *succeeded by Cao Rui under a regency including Sima Yi*; unsuccessful attacks by Wu against Jiangxia and Xiangyang; death of Shi Xie, Lü Dai destroys the Shi family and takes all Jiao province for Wu; Quan Zong brings hills people south of Danyang under control
227	Meng Da in Xincheng seeks to turn against Wei, but is destroyed by Sima Yi before Shu or Wu can assist him
228	*Zhuge Liang campaigns in the Wei valley*; Wu forces ambush and defeat Cao Xiu of Wei in Lujiang; *Gongsun Yuan takes control in the northeast*; Sun Quan seeks alliance with Gongsun Yuan
229	Sun Quan proclaims himself emperor; renewed treaty of alliance with Shu-Han

CHAPTER ONE

South China under the Later Han Dynasty

Introductory summary
Han and the south
Jing province and the middle Yangzi
Jiao province and the far south coast
Yang province and the lower Yangzi
The enforcement of authority

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

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,

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:[1]

> ... 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.

[1] *SJ* 129, 3270; Swann, *Food and Money*, 447-448.

> 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,][2] the conditions are suitable for the five grains,[3] for the mulberry and the hemp, and for the six kinds of domestic animals.[4] 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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[2] 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.

[3] 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.

[4] The six kinds of domestic animals are traditionally defined as the horse, the ox, sheep, pigs, dogs and chickens.

already established in the south by Han times.[5] 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,[6] in separate sections below. We have, unfortunately, no such regional descriptions of the empire in the time of Later Han,[7] 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*.[8] The situation had changed over

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[5] 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.

[6] 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.*

[7] 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.

[8] 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.

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.*[9]

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.[10]

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[9] 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.

[10] 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

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.

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.[11]

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.[12] Moreover, there

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11 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.

12 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

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.[13] 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.[14]

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.[15]

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.

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

14 See Chapter 2.

15 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.

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,"[16] 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.[17]

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16 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.

17 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.

SOUTH CHINA

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.[18] 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.[19] 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.[20]

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.[21] 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.

18 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.

19 See the translations by Hawkes, *Songs of the South*, 101-114.

20 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."

21 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

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.[22] 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.[23] 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.[24]

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*.

22 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.

23 *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.

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

south to the region of the lower Yangzi and met his death at the hands of the jealous warlord Sun Ce.[25]

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.[26]

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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25 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].

26 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.

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.[27]

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.[28]

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

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

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.[29] 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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29 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.[30]

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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30 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 poémes anciens*, 13.

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.[31] 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.[32]

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."[33] 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.[34] Under Later Han, these offices were not maintained

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

32 Swann, *Food and Money*, 336, translating *HS* 24B, 1180.

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

34 *HS* 28B, 1665-66; *cf. HS* 28B, 1654.

and supervised so strictly by the central government, but the work continued and there is archaeological evidence of the impressive scale of the industry.[35]

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.[36] 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.[37] 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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35 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.

36 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.

37 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.

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,[38] 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 Dangyang. 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.[39] Certainly later, and

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38 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.

39 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

until the early third century, the capital of Chu, still known as Ying, was in the vicinity of Yicheng in Hubei.[40] 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.[41]

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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.

40 *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.

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

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.[42]

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.[43]

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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42 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.

43 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.

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.[44]

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.[45]

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.[46]

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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44 *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.

45 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.

46 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.

that the quantities produced at that time were not sufficient to justify their cost.[47] 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.[48] 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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47 *SJ* 129, 3268; Swann, *Food and Money*, 445. There is no record of such production in the geographical treatises of *HS* and *HHS*.

48 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.

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.[49]

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.[50]

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

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

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.[51] 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.[52] With the fall of

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51 *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.

52 *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

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.[53]

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.[54] 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.

53 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.

54 These maps are discussed in de Crespigny, "Maps from Mawangdui."

references to ivory, silver and copper.[55] Archaeological excavations in the district have confirmed the descriptions of Panyu as a great centre of trade and the manufacture of fine lacquer ware,[56] 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.[57]

During Later Han, there was major development of Chinese authority and settlement in the whole region of Jiao province.[58]. In

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55 *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.)

56 For example, Wang, *Han Civilization*, 84-85.

57 See note 64 below.

58 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

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.[59]

Upstream of Cangwu, Yulin commandery controlled the main stream of the West River and its tributary the Liu.[60] 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.

59 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.

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

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.[61]

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,"[62] 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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61 Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 306, and *Cambridge Han*, 65 [Bodde, "The State and Empire of Ch'in"].

62 Wang, "Nan-hai Trade," 29-30.

active merchant marine which could be commandeered in time of need.[63] The remains of ancient shipyards at Guangzhou, old Panyu, demonstrate the capacity of vessels constructed there in the time of Nan-Yue,[64], 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,[65] 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.[66] 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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63 *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.

64 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.

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

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

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.[67] 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.[68]

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.[69]

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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67 *HS* 28B, 1671.

68 Yü, *Trade and Expansion,* 178.

69 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.

reigns the imperial positions were gradually withdrawn. Dan'er was abolished in 82 BC, and in 46 BC Zhuyai commandery was also ended.[70] 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.[71] There was, however, no serious attempt to restore Chinese authority until the time of the Three Kingdoms and the empire of Wu.[72]

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.[73] 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.[74] The major administrative units were the commanderies of Jiaozhi, on the Red River delta, with its

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70 *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"].

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

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

73 Schafer, *Vermilion Bird,* 31.

74 *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.

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.[75]

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.[76] 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.[77]

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.[78] 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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75 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.

76 *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.

77 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.

78 Schafer, *Vermilion Bird*, 16-17.

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.[79]

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.[80] 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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79 *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.

80 Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 63-67.

present-day Da Nang.[81] 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.[82]

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.[83]

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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81 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.

82 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.

83 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.

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.[84]

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.[85] 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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84 Yü, *Trade and Expansion,* 177-178; also Chapter 5. Longbian is generally equated with the city known in the West as Cattigara.

85 *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].

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.[86]

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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86 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.

and passing commerce.[87] 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.[88] 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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87 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.

88 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.

the Wuyi Shan, and then followed the coast southwards to the region of present-day Guangdong.[89]. 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.[90] 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

89 See note 52 above.

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

subordinate military district to become the separate county of Yongning.[91]

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.[92]

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.[93]

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91 *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.

92 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.

93 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

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.[94]

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.[95] 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.[96] 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.[97]

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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.

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

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

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

97 Wang, *Han Civilization*, 105.

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.[98]

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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98 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].

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.[99]

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

Upstream and southwest of Danyang, occupying the greater part of present-day Jiangxi province, was Yuzhang commandery.[100] 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."[101]

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.[102]

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

101 *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.

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

Xiang River,[103] 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.[104]

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.....[105]

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103 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.

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

105 The verses are translated by Schafer, *Vermilion Bird*, 22.

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.[106] 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.[107]

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. [108]

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

107 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.

108 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.

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.[109] 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.[110] 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.

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.

109 Bielenstein, "Census," 140, and *RHD* I, 146-151.

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

And it is very possible that this arrangement continued for much of Later Han.[111]

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.[112] 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.[113] 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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111 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.

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

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

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.[114]

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.[115]

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

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

115 See above and Chapter 3.

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.[116] 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. [117]

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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116 Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 270.

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

SOUTH CHINA

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,[118] 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.[119] 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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118 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.

119 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.

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 t he 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 marquisates 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.[120]

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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120 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*].

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.[121] 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." [122]

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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121 *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.

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

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.[123]

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.[124] It seems most probable that those

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123 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.

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

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.[125]

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).

125 *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.

the system was regularly maintained in that frontier region.[126] 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.[127]

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126 Yen Keng-wang [1961] I, 162.

127 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,

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 though 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.

bureaucracy, in 181, while the Zhou family of Shu county in Lujiang supplied many imperial officials, including two Grand Commandants.[128] In more limited terms, the Lu family of Wu county in Wu commandery had been local leaders for generations and produced several officials;[129] 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.[130]

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.[131] 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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128 *HHS* 76/66, 2471-72; and *HHS* 8, 345 and *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1259.

129 *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.

130 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.

131 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.

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.

The shaded area indicates the territory of the empire of Wu in 229 AD

CHAPTER TWO

Founder of the Family : Sun Jian

Introductory summary
His birth, his background and his early career (*c*. AD 155-184)
The rise to high command (184-189)
The war against Dong Zhuo (189-191)
Civil war and the last campaigns (191-192)
A Note on the Great Seal of State

Introductory summary:

Sun Jian was a man of undistinguished family from an isolated region by present-day Hangzhou. He came to note as the leader of troops against rebels, first in his own region of Wu and Kuaiji, then in operations against the great uprising of the Yellow Turbans in 184, and he later held command in Liang province in the northwest.

Appointed Grand Administrator of Changsha commandery, Sun Jian brought swift military order to the region and established personal authority. In 189, the death of Emperor Ling was followed by chaos in the capital which gave opportunity to the frontier general Dong Zhuo to seize power. This usurpation, however, brought widespread rebellion and marked the beginning of the civil war which ended the power of Han.

Sun Jian brought an army north to join the conflict, and took service under Yuan Shu, one of the great gentry commanders in the "loyal rebel" alliance. As fighting commander of Yuan Shu's forces, Sun Jian fought his way to Luoyang and drove Dong Zhuo west to Chang'an. Soon afterwards, however, the alliance broke up, and north China became an arena for contending warlords. Sun Jian was sent by Yuan Shu to attack Liu Biao the Governor of Jing province, but he met his death on that campaign.

SUN JIAN

His birth, his background and his early career (*c*. AD 155-184):

Sun Jian was born, probably in 155,[1] in the county of Fuchun in Wu commandery in Yang province of Later Han. The site of the former county city of Fuchun is now Fuyang, on the northern bank of the Fuchun River, some thirty kilometres southeast of present-day Hangzhou.

We do not have a great deal of information on the background and early life of Sun Jian. According to *Wu shu*, the official history of the imperial state founded by his son Sun Quan, the family had a lineage over six hundred years old, traced back to the celebrated general Sun Wu, who served the ancient state of Wu at the end of the sixth century BC and who was credited with the authorship of the classical work, *The Art of War*. The descendants of Sun Wu, ancestors of Sun Jian, continued as officials of Wu at least until the destruction of that kingdom about 473. *Wu shu* adds that the Sun

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[1] According to *Wu lu*, quoted in the commentary to the biography of Sun Jian in *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1101, Sun Jian was thirty-seven *sui* at the time of his death.

The main text of *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1100, gives the date of his last campaign as Chuping 3 (192/193). *Yingxiong ji*, also quoted in the commentary, gives the date of Sun Jian's death as the seventh day of the first month of Chuping 4 (25 Feb 193). This could be reconciled with the main text of *SGZ* if we assume that the military operations began at the end of Chuping 3.

The *Hou Han ji* of Yuan Hong, 27, 3b, has the date of Sun Jian's death in the fifth month of Chuping 3; but despite its chronicle form, the dating of *Hou Han ji* in its present form is often erratic.

Sima Guang, however, in *ZZTJ* 60, 1928, sets the date in Chuping 2 (191/192), and in his *Kaoyi* commentary he notes that a memorial of Sun Jian's son Sun Ce, written about 197 (translated and discussed in Chapter 2), refers to the death of Sun Jian when Sun Ce himself was seventeen. Since Sun Ce died in Jian'an 5 (200/201) at the age of twenty-six *sui*, Sun Jian should have died nine years earlier. Sima Guang also cites the *Han ji* of Zhang Fan and *Wu li*, both cited in *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1107 PC note 5, which give the date of Sun Jian's death as Chuping 2.

Considering the progress of events at the time, as discussed below, and assuming also that Sun Ce, writing an official memorial, would be carefully informed about the date of his father's death, I accept the argument and evidence presented by Sima Guang, and date the death of Sun Jian to the latter part of the Chinese year Chuping 2, the winter of 191-192.

If this is correct, and if we can accept the statement of *Wu lu* about his age at that time, then Sun Jian was born in 155 AD.

family had a burial ground to the east of the city of Fuchun, and that wondrous signs were seen about the graves.[2]

Naturally enough, the official chroniclers of the new state of Wu were duty bound to recount something of the father of their first emperor, and it is not surprising if those who went to look for material were supplied with tales of an ancient lineage and of portents appropriate to the head of a great house.

It is possible that the Sun family of Fuchun were descended from the legendary Sun Wu, but after so many centuries there can have been limited relevance or value to the claim. More significantly, perhaps, the fact that the distant Sun Wu was the only famous ancestor ascribed to the family implies that no other relative had risen to high office since the fall of the ancient state in the fifth century BC, and it is almost certain that no member of the clan had held any substantial post under the Han dynasty. In *Sanguo zhi*, as in other standard histories, it is common practice to mention the ancestry of the subject of a biography and to indicate the titles and official careers of his relatives. And where the main text of *Sanguo zhi* fails to give this information, the commentary of Pei Songzhi is often able to quote private clan records, local histories or more general works.[3] The fact that the chroniclers of Wu mentioned no officials of Han who could be related to Sun Jian strongly suggests that his family had played a very small part in the three and a half centuries of the history of the dynasty.

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[2] *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1093 PC note 1; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 20.

On Sun Wu, see his biography in *SJ* 65, 2161-62. On the book "The Art of War," *Sunzi bingfa*, see Griffith, *Sun Tzu.*

[3] *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1259, for example, describes the offices held by earlier members of the family of Zhou Yu, including two men who became grand commandants, highest position of the Han bureaucracy, and Zhou Yu's father Yi, who became Prefect of Luoyang, capital of the empire; and PC note 1 to *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1343 quotes the *Lushi shi song*, evidently a clan record, describing the positions, as colonel and commandery chief commandant, held by the grandfather and father of Lu Xun; and PC note 1 to *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1377 quotes the *Jin shu* of Yu Yu on the early family history of He Qi, including the fact that his father Fu became Chief of the small and outlying county of Yongning in present-day Fujian province. On this basis, any official position held by an ancestor of Sun Jian, no matter how unimportant, would surely have been mentioned.

Though *Sanguo zhi* mentions his ancestor Sun Wu, there is no good account of Sun Jian's father. An anecdote preserved among some tales of marvels suggests that he was called Sun Zhong, but neither *Wu shu* nor *Sanguo zhi* record the personal name of the man who was, after all, the grandfather of an emperor.[4] At the least, we must take this as an indication that the family into which Sun Jian was born was obscure and unimportant.

Concerning Sun Jian's mother we are told only that

> when his mother was pregnant with Sun Jian, she dreamt that her intestines came out of her and wound around the Chang Gate of the city of Wu. She woke up and was afraid, and she

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[4] In the fifth-century compilation *Yi yuan*, attributed to Liu Jingshu of the Liu Song dynasty, 4, 1a, translated by Straughair, "Garden of Marvels," 77-78, we are told that Sun Zhong of Fuchun, who became the father of Sun Jian, was a worthy man who earned his living by growing melons. One day, a beautiful three-year-old child appeared before him, and asked him for one of his wares. Sun Zhong served him with courtesy, and then some men standing, impressed by his fine conduct, by revealed themselves as divine officials, and offered Sun Zhong a choice: whether his descendants should hold the rank of marquis for many generations, or whether they should be emperors, but for only a few generations.

Sun Zhong chose to have his family become emperors. There were celebrations, a suitable grave-site was chosen for the family, and the spirits changed themselves into the form of white geese as they left.

Yi yuan mentions an alternative version of the tale: that Sun Jian was mourning his father's death when he was approached by a man who gave Sun Jian that choice. Sun Jian, as in the first account, chose the imperial alternative; the man showed him a suitable spot for his father's grave, and then disappeared.

The story of Sun Zhong and the melons is cited again by *Meng qiu* B, 23a-b. This work, compiled by Li Han of the tenth century, is basically a list of common sayings and the anecdotes which explain them. There, the expression "Sun Zhong offers melons" is listed and discussed in terms of the first version from *Yi yuan*, that a small work of goodness may earn a great reward.

So there was evidently a folk tradition of this nature, and it was collected into the *Yi yuan.* On the other hand, the story is not endorsed by Chen Shou or Pei Songzhi, and it has no useful connection with any facts in the history. Even the emphasis on the matter of the grave site is contradictory: *Wu shu*, as we noticed above, says that the Sun family had long been resident at Fuchun, and possessed an established burial ground. There were wonderful lights and clouds there, but no melons, children, or messengers from on high.

In such circumstances, it is difficult to give credence to any details of the story, and the personal name of Sun Jian's father must remain undetermined.

> told the elder women of her neighbourhood. The neighbour women said, "How do you know that isn't a good sign?" Then Sun Jian was born, and he was not a boy of ordinary appearance; he was generous, intelligent and fond of unusual behaviour.[5]

The city of Wu, present-day Suzhou, was about a hundred and fifty kilometres from Fuchun, and the Chang Gate, chief entrance on the western wall, was one of the celebrated sights of the region, so the future mother may well have seen the place in reality before it appeared in her dream. One must, however, sympathise with her, experiencing one of the more dubious portents of future greatness, while despite Sun Jian's fine appearance, the interpretation of the dream can have been made little clearer by the fact that he was born the second of twins and his elder brother Sun Qiang also grew to manhood.[6]

Fuchun lay in a frontier region. Though it was close to the centres of Chinese population along the shores of Hangzhou Bay, the county was situated at the edge of the hill country of northern Zhejiang, where few Chinese settlements had been established up to that time.[7] The area as a whole had been part of the Chinese

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[5] *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1093 PC note 1 quoting *Wu shu.* A more detailed and slightly different account and interpretation from a fourth-century text is provided by Cutter and Crowell, *Empresses and Consorts*, 213.

[6] The biography of Sun Jian's nephew, Sun Ben, in *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1209, says that Sun Ben was a son of Sun Qiang, who was the twin of Sun Jian. Though Sun Qiang lived long enough to sire Sun Ben and his brother Sun Fu, he died while they were still children.

[7] Fuchun, as we have seen, was on the Fuchun river, southwest of present-day Hangzhou. Some distance to the north, the county of Yuhang, in Wu commandery, was in a separate valley due west of present-day Hangzhou.

South of Fuchun, the county of Taimo (or Damo) in Kuaiji commandery, west of present-day Jinhua, was on a tributary of the Fuchun river upstream from Fuchun county and further into the mountains; it is likely, however, that Taimo was connected to the main part of Kuaiji by the line of the present railway, across a low watershed to the Puyang River, rather than downstream past Fuchun, which was in a different commandery.

West of Fuchun, the county of Yuqian in Danyang commandery, close to the present-day city of the same name, was in a different valley. Like Taimo, it represented an extension of Chinese authority from a different hinterland, not a territory which lay between Fuchun and the gradually expanding frontier with the non-Chinese.

world for centuries, but it was not a centre of great interest during the Han period, and major development had followed the routes south from the middle Yangzi towards present-day Guangdong, rather than to this corner of the east. Though there was trade and other contact with the non-Chinese peoples of the hills, and some immigration of Chinese from the north, Fuchun under Later Han was something of a backwater.

The local Sun family had evidently been in this region for some generations, for they had an established grave site across the river to the east of the city. Legend tells us that strange lights appeared above the tombs, and there was a multi-coloured cloud which reached to the heavens and spread out for several *li*. More practically, the family burial ground, whether or not it was the site of wonderful omens, is evidence of some stability and status in the community.

Sun Jian's biography says that while he was still young, no more than fifteen or sixteen, he was appointed a junior civil officer in the county administration. This, in itself, may show the position of his family. Had Sun Jian belonged to one of the great clans of the region, he could have gained entry into the civil service by recommendation to the throne, he might have served a short time in the local office of the Grand Administrator of Wu commandery, but he would then have been nominated as a "Filially Pious and Incorrupt" candidate from the commandery administration or even as "Flourishing Talent," a recommendation granted by the province.[8] A young man of great family, with considerable local influence and with relatives already among the bureaucracy, would treat the local administrators as senior and respected members of his own class, and could expect to receive their favour, patronage and recommendation almost as a right.

Sun Jian had no such position and no hope of such consideration, but his family was at least sufficiently well known for him to gain appointment in the local county office. If he had

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See *HHSJJ* 112/22, 50a, 49a, 45b and 39a, and *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* II, 51-52.

[8] On the recommendations "Filially Pious and Incorrupt" (*xiaolian*) and "Flourishing [or Abundant] Talent" (*maocai*), see de Crespigny, "Recruitment," 69-71, and Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 134-137.

come from the poorest classes he would not have had sufficient time free from the daily struggle for subsistence to be able to offer his services, and it is very unlikely that he would have been given employment. As it was, for a young man of some ambition and leisure, office in the local government could be the first step to a political career and, even should he rise no higher, the contacts that he made and the influence that he could gain through his service would be some protection against the possibility of petty oppression in the future. To a large extent, in imperial China, office in government at any level was as much a means of personal and family insurance as it was an opportunity for public service.

In Han times, the term *li* served as a general description of any junior officer in the civil administration. In the commanderies and counties, the holders of these low-ranking posts were appointed locally, and the term could refer to a clerk in the office or to one of the yamen runners. Sun Jian did not occupy an important post, and from his later career as a fighting man we may guess that he held his initial position as a policeman or guard at the county offices.

According to Sun Jian's biography, he first gained effective notice at the age of seventeen *sui*, and if the date of his birth has been calculated correctly, the incident must have taken place in the year 171. At that time, he went with his father on a trip to Qiantang, which lay northeast from Fuchun, at the mouth of the Fuchun River, by present-day Hangzhou.[9] As they travelled, they learnt that the local pirate, Hu Yu, had set up a camp close by, had robbed travellers of their goods, and was now dividing shares with his band. None of the boats on the river dared to go past. Sun Jian asked permission of his father to attack them, but his father replied only that "This is nothing to do with you."

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[9] Qiantang had been a county seat under Former Han (*HS* 28, 1591), but the county had been disestablished for most of Later Han. The town, of course, remained, but it was probably administered by the neighbouring county city of Yuhang (note 7 above).

Towards the end of Later Han, probably about this time, Qiantang was restored to county status: in 185 the general Zhu Jun was rewarded with title as Marquis of Qiantang, and it is very likely this was a county fief (*HHS* 71/61, 2310).

Nevertheless, Sun Jian climbed up on the bank and went alone, carrying his sword, towards the bandits. When he came in sight of them, he waved his arms and pointed to one side and then the other, as if he was giving signals to soldiers deploying for attack. The pirates thought that Sun Jian was the leader of government troops come to capture them, and they scattered in flight. Sun Jian chased after them, and he caught one man and cut off his head and came back with the evidence of his victory. His father was very surprised.

The pirate Hu Yu was only a petty criminal, the defeat of his band was a matter of no more than local significance, and there is no reference to the skirmish anywhere else in the histories. According to his biography, however, as a result of this exploit the county office appointed Sun Jian as a temporary Commandant, so he had now made a name for himself and had gained a post as a military officer.

The account of this incident contains the only reference to Sun Jian's father in the official histories of the time, and it is noticeable that his reaction to Sun Jian's fine ambition is not enthusiastic. "This is nothing to do with you" is a curious speech from the father of such a hero. While the evidence is unsupported, and any passages claimed as direct speech must be doubted, there was at least a tradition that Sun Jian's father was a man of no great hardihood, and there are indications which suggest that he was a merchant. The trip to Qiantang need not have been the first that he had made, and his disapproval of his son's proposed sortie and his preference for minding his own business fit very well with the traditional picture of the Chinese trader. In the Confucian view, merchants were the least valuable class of society, and if the merchants were regarded with disdain by officials, they would have few feelings of public spirit. On the other hand, if Sun Jian had hopes of an official career, it would not have been difficult for the son of a reasonably prosperous merchant family to obtain his appointment to a minor post in the local government.[10]

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10 On the status of merchants in Han, see, for example, Ch'ü, *Social Structure*, 113-122. There was some attempt to restrict the entry of merchants into the bureaucracy, but it does not appear to have been consistently or

CHAPTER TWO

Sun Jian's appointment as a junior officer came at just about the same time as the outbreak of the rebellion of Xu Chang, a man who pretended to have supernatural powers and who made a rising at Juzhang in Kuaiji commandery, now in the region of Ningbo on the south of Hangzhou Bay.[11] According to the Annals of Emperor

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effectively maintained, and in any case appears to have been applied specifically to those individuals who had registered as traders in a market, not to their relatives and descendants: Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 132.

11 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1093, describes Xu Chang as a *yao ze* "heretic rebel" (Chapter 1 at note 26) who proclaimed himself "Emperor of the Brightness of Yang," and who was assisted by his son Xu Shao. The *Lingdi ji* of Liu Ai, quoted in commentary note 2 to that text, adds that Xu Chang named his father as King of Yue, while *HHS* 8, 334, the Annals of Emperor Ling, says that Xu Sheng of Kuaiji named himself King of Yue. Yue was the name of the ancient state and the people of that region below Hangzhou Bay, and Eichhorn, "Chang Chio und Chang Lu," 298, describes the rebellion as a nationalist revolt of the Yue people. It seems more likely, however, that the name was taken from the region rather than from the people, and Xu Chang's forces included a substantial Chinese component.

Dongguan Hanji 3, 5b, says that the names of the rebels were Xu Zhao, who called himself General-in-Chief, and his father Sheng, who was named King of Yue. *HHS* 58/48, 1884, being the biography of Zang Hong, son of Zang Min, and *HHS* 102/12, 3258, the Treatise of Astronomy, agree.

By changing the character Zhao to Shao, Chen Shou avoided the tabu on the personal name of Sima Zhao (211-265), posthumously entitled Emperor Wen of Jin (*JS* 2, 32 and 44), so there is no real incompatibility.

Nevertheless, where *HHS* and *Dongguan Hanji* refer to the rebels as Xu Sheng and his son Shao/Zhao, *SGZ* and *Lingdi ji* say that the rebels were Xu Chang, his son Shao/Zhao, and Xu Chang's father (unnamed, but presumably Xu Sheng). *ZZTJ* 57, 1831, says that Xu Sheng called himself Emperor, so Sima Guang has combined the differing accounts, but his *Kaoyi* commentary does not discuss the matter.

There is, however, one particular reason for suggesting that Xu Chang was the name of one of the rebel leaders. According to the apocryphal book *Chunqiu zuozhu qi*, "Helpful Forecasts from the Spring and Autumn Annals, which was in circulation during Later Han, the dynasty was to lose its dominion because of/by means of *xu chang.*

Tjan, *White Tiger Discussions* I, 117, matches this prophecy with the change of the name of the capital of Cao Pi, first Emperor of Wei, from Xu to Xuchang in 221, soon after he had compelled the abdication of the Han Emperor Xian in his favour: *SGZ* 2, 77. *SGZ* 2, 64 PC quotes from a long memorial which was presented at that time by the Assistant Grand Astronomer Xu Zhi, discussing the prophecies which foretold the succession of Wei to Han, and including a

Ling in *Hou Han shu*, the rebellion broke out in 172 and was not put down until 174. According to Sun Jian's own biography, the commandery administration appointed him a Major and had him raise troops in Wu commandery. He collected more than a thousand men and took part in the campaigns which destroyed the rebels.

Both the early military appointments that Sun Jian held were a little unusual. In the first instance, after the defeat of Hu Yu and his pirates, Sun Jian evidently held temporary appointment as commandant in Fuchun county. It was not a substantive post, and he may have been no more than a senior assistant to the regular commandant.[12] Formally speaking, he was still a civilian official,

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reference to the passage from *Chunqiu zuozhu qi*, which he duly interprets in relation to the city of Xu/Xuchang (now Xuchang in Henan). On the political background of this memorial, see Leban, "Managing Heaven's Mandate," particularly at 328, and the more recent work of Goodman, *Ts'ao P'i Transcendent*, 101-102.

It is very possible, however, that the rebel of the Xu surname, operating in Kuaiji fifty years earlier, may have taken the personal name Chang because he expected to fulfil the prophecy on his own account - or he may have devised the prophecy to match his own name.

See also de Crespigny, *Huan and Ling*. II, 473-475, note 41 to Xiping 1

12 On the duties of commandants in counties during Later Han, see Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 100-101.

The expression *jia* here rendered as "temporary, is understood by Bielenstein simply as "acting:" see, for example, *Bureaucracy*, 121, referring to an "Acting Major" and an "Acting Captain." I note, however, that Bielenstein also renders the term *xing* as "Acting, as in the status of the first appointments to the post of General Who Crosses the Liao: *Bureaucracy*, 120; on this I agree with him (*e.g. Northern Frontier*, 4). In this context, *xing* may be understood as an abbreviation for *xing ...shi*: "to practice/act in the affairs of such and such an office."

The term *jia*, on the other hand, appears as a prefix to the ranks of major and captain in *HHS* 114/24, 3564, and the Treatise of Officials there explains it as *fu'e*r "assistant."

It is possible that the terms *xing* and *jia* were commonly used as synonyms, but I suggest the qualification *jia* may have had a sense of exceptional appointment, where a man was being given a post to which he was not formally entitled by virtue of his current substantive rank; there is perhaps something of an analogy to the use of "brevet" ranks in the British Army before the Second World War.

By this interpretation, the prefix *jia* to Sun Jian's appointment as a county commandant recognises that he had not yet received a commission as a member

but his duties required him to supervise the military security and the police of the county, as well as the annual conscription for military service.

From this experience of minor para-military authority, Sun Jian was called up by the commandery office, given the rank of major, and sent to recruit troops against the rebels. Such "recruitment" was actually a press system: in normal times there was regular conscription for short-term military service, generally a period of basic training followed by a year of largely unskilled guard or garrison duty, and in local areas there were small units at commandery and county headquarters composed largely of volunteers, as Sun Jian had been. Fully trained regular soldiers were generally stationed only at the capital, on the northern frontier, or in special garrison camps, again in the northern part of the empire.[13] In time of local emergency, such that presented by the rebellion of Xu Chang, extra troops had to be levied on the spot, and Sun Jian was given a special commission and a small escort, and sent to seize any man of military experience as a conscript for the campaign.[14]

With the men he collected by this means, Sun Jian did well enough to attract the notice of the Inspector of Yang province, Zang Min, who was in overall command of the local forces. Zang Min recommended Sun Jian to the capital, and an imperial letter appointed him Assistant of Yandu county in Guangling commandery, on the sea coast near present-day Yancheng in Jiangsu.[15]

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of the regular imperial bureaucracy and was not formally entitled to the substantive post.

One may note that the term *shou* is also used on occasion as a qualifier for offices, and may likewise be rendered as "acting;" it too appears to have brevet significance comparable to *jia*.

13 On the military recruitment and conscription system of Later Han see Chapter 1 at note 123, and, de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 45-50.

14 For earlier examples of this emergency press, see Bielenstein, *RHD* II, 69 and 207 ff.

15 On the county of Yandu, see *HHSJJ* 11/21, 21b. Geologically, the tectonic plate of China Proper is gradually tilting, so that the northern part is rising and south China is sinking. At the same time, the coastline of present-day northern Jiangsu, like all the region of the Yangzi delta, has been extended

We have observed that commissioned entry into the imperial civil service could be obtained through recommendation by a commandery or provincial government as a "Filially Pious and Incorrupt" or "Flourishing Talent." A "Flourishing Talent" candidate could be employed at once, but since only one recommendation was allowed to each of the thirteen provinces in any year, together with a few more from very senior officials at the capital, not many candidates gained entry by this means. The more common route of entry, as "Filially Pious and Incorrupt" from a commandery, admitted the future official to a position among the Gentlemen cadets who attended court as ceremonial guards of the emperor. In theory, the time spent at the palace gave the emperor and senior court officials the opportunity to observe and judge the character of the candidate. In fact, however, by the later years of Han, the probation was no more than a matter of form, and the recommendation from local government was the effective means of entry into the imperial service.

The principle behind the procedure of recommendation and appointment was that any person who wished to hold senior rank must receive the commission of the emperor. The lowest positions in the government, both in the capital and in the empire as a whole, could be filled by local and general recruitment, but those who held such posts were in much the same position as non-commissioned officers in an army: no matter how long they served they could not rise above a certain rank. On the other hand, gentlemen who had received the imperial commission could be appointed from the capital to take charge of any local government in the empire, and they could rise through successive posts at the capital or in the provinces to reach the highest offices of the land. This gap between the locally appointed, non-commissioned officers and the officials with commissions from the capital was generally bridged by the process of recommendation.

Up to this time, though Sun Jian had commanded troops in the government service, all his appointments had been made by local

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eastwards by the silt brought down the Yangzi and the Huai. As a result, though the ancient site of Yandu is now some forty kilometres inland, during Later Han the city was very close to the sea. The character *yan* no doubt refers to a local industry of salt collection from pans laid out in the tidal waters.

administrations, and he had no imperial recognition. When Zang Min sent in his report on good conduct, however, and Sun Jian received a letter from the imperial government to grant him the post at Yandu, that document represented his commission into the imperial civil service, and Zang Min's recommendation, though not in the usual form of candidacy, had gained Sun Jian a vital step in his career.

It was about this time that Sun Jian was married. He was now aged nineteen by Western reckoning, and he was established in a respectable position. His wife, the Lady Wu, whose personal name is not recorded, came from the city of Wu, the capital of the commandery, but her family had migrated to Qiantang. Her parents both died when she was young, and she lived with her younger brother Wu Jing and other relatives.[16] The Wu family may have been of somewhat higher status that Sun Jian's, and we are told that at first the relatives disapproved of Sun Jian as idle and untrustworthy. Sun Jian, though quite taken by the beauty and character of the Lady Wu, was humiliated and angry at the rejection of his suit, and it was the Lady Wu who smoothed things over and persuaded her family to let her take the gamble. Sun Jian's new status in the government service would also have reassured the Wu family that the alliance was a worthwhile investment.

The first son of the marriage was Sun Ce, born in 175. The second son, Sun Quan, future Emperor of Wu, was born in 182. Two more boys, Sun Yi and Sun Kuang, were born in later years, and also at least one daughter. At the same time, Sun Jian acknowledged one son, Sun Lang, by another woman, possibly a recognised concubine, perhaps a more casual acquaintance, and the history refers to two other daughters, probably not born to the Lady Wu.[17] It does not appear, however, that there were major

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16 The biography of the Lady Wu is in *SGZ* 50/Wu 5, 1195-96, the chapter of the biographies of the consorts of the imperial Sun family, translated by Cutter and Crowell, *Empresses and Consorts*, 122-124. The biography of the Lady's brother Wu Jing is incorporated with that of his sister.

17 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1101, at the end of the biography of Sun Jian, gives the names of his four sons Ce, Quan, Yi and Kuang; the commentary to that text quotes the *Zhi lin* of Yu Xi, which adds the information that a younger son,

strains between Sun Jian and his wife, and the Lady Wu and her brother were important advisers and allies to the Sun family in years to come.

Sun Jian served as Assistant at three counties one after another, first at Yandu, then at Xuyi and then at Xiapi. The site of Xuyi is now north of the town of the same name in Jiangsu, south of the Hongze Lake, and Xiapi was east of present-day Picheng in northern Jiangsu; both counties were in Xiapi kingdom in Xu province, and Xiapi was the capital of the kingdom.[18] It was the practice of Han that commissioned officials should not take part in the government of their own native regions, and Sun Jian's postings were all to the north of the Yangzi, more than three hundred kilometres from his home city. He was presumably given his recommendation and first appointment in 174, when the rebellion of Xu Chang had been crushed, and for the next ten years he remained an official in the local administration of Xu province.

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whose name was Lang, with the alternate personal name of Ren, was born to Sun Jian by a concubine.

The situation with regard to daughters is more uncertain. The biography of the Lady Wu, in *SGZ* 50/Wu 5, 1195, says that she bore Sun Jian four sons and one daughter. The commentary of Lu Bi to this passage, however (at *JJ* 1a-b), cites the Qing scholar Qian Dazhao, and notes that there are three sisters of Sun Quan, son of Sun Jian, referred to in the texts:

a. one elder sister was married to Hong Zi, who is described as admiring the abilities of Zhuge Jin in that man's biography, *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1231;

b. one elder sister, daughter of a woman of the Chen family and thus a half-sister, was given in marriage by Sun Quan to Pan Mi: *SGZ* 61/Wu 16, 1399 PC note 1 quoting *Wu shu*;

c. a younger sister was given by Sun Quan to be the wife of the rival warlord Liu Bei in an effort to confirm their alliance about 209; she left Liu Bei and returned to Wu about 211: *e.g. SGZ*32/Shu 2, 879, and *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 949 PC note 2 quoting *Zhao Yun biezhuan*; also Chapter 5.

It seems likely that it was the younger sister of Sun Quan who was the child of Sun Jian and the Lady Wu. The two elder were probably both half-sisters of Sun Quan and his brothers: we are told specifically that the lady referred to in b. above was the child of a woman of another family, and neither Pan Mi nor Hong Zi were remarkably distinguished men.

Once again, we are not told the personal names of any of these female members of the Sun family, not even that of Sun Quan's full sister, the wife of Liu Bei.

18 On the counties of Xiapi and Xuyi, see *HHSJJ* 111/21, 23b and 22b.

Yandu and Xuyi were comparatively minor counties, headed by a Chief, with a population less than ten thousand households. Xiapi was larger, with a more considerable population and greater importance as the site of a commandery capital. The head of the county administration was a Prefect, who had slightly higher rank and salary, and the Assistant presumably shared some of that prestige.[19] Despite this, Sun Jian had gained no real promotion in the service, he was still only an assistant magistrate, and he held no independent responsibility. On the other hand, *Jiangbiao zhuan*, the local history of the lands beyond the Yangzi, compiled in the third century and quoted in the commentary to Sun Jian's biography, tells us that

> Wherever Sun Jian went he gained a good reputation, and the officers and people loved him and trusted him. There were always hundreds of his old friends from his home district and young adventurers who came visiting him. Sun Jian looked after them and cared for them like his own family.[20]

In 184 Sun Jian was thirty years old by Chinese reckoning, he held a minor post in the imperial service at Xiapi, he was experienced in war, and he had gathered a small group of friends and followers who might be prepared to support him in the future.

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19 On prefects, chiefs and their assistants, see the discussion in Chapter 1, and Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 101.

The *Hou Han junguo lingzhang kao* of Qian Dazhao, in *ESWSBB* II, 2074, produces evidence that the county of Xiapi was headed by a prefect. The supplement to that work, however, compiled by Ding Xitian, in *ESWSBB* II, 2081, produces evidence to show that at some stage the county was headed only by a chief. It seems, however, that in the latter part of Later Han it was a prefectural office

Neither of the two works have any comment to make on the size or status of the other two counties in which Sun Jian served, and the commentary of Ma Yulong, quoted in *HHSJJ*, which is sometimes also helpful, has nothing more to offer.

20 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1094 PC note 3 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 31.

The rise to high command (184-189):

The Chinese year which began on 31 January 184 was a *jiazi* year, first of a new series in the sexagenary calendar. This year was also the beginning of the end of the power of the Han dynasty, as major disorder in two parts of the empire disrupted the administration of the provinces and strained the resources of the government at the capital. In the east, there was the rebellion of the Yellow Turbans led by Zhang Jue, and in the northwest there was rebellion in Liang province.[21]

Under such pressures, the armies of Emperor Ling were barely able to hold their own, but the difficulties of the empire gave Sun Jian the opportunity he was fitted for, and his achievements first against the Yellow Turbans and then in the northwest gave him rank and honour which he could never have expected in normal times of peace.

Zhang Jue was a man from Julu commandery in Ji province, in the south of present-day Hebei. For several years he had used a form of Taoism to cure the sick by confession of sins and by faith healing, and as people came to follow his teaching he and his brothers Zhang Bao and Zhang Liang made a plan for rebellion against the Han. The religion and the politics of the Zhang brothers were based on belief in an apocalyptic change in the order of the world, and they told their followers that in the *jiazi* year, beginning of the new cycle, the sky would become yellow, and that under this new heaven the rule of Han would end and a new era of government begin. The characters *jiazi* became a symbol of the coming change and later, when the followers of Zhang Jue went to battle they wore a yellow cloth bound about their heads as a badge. From this there came the name Yellow Turbans.[22]

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21 Michaud presents a survey of the Yellow Turban rebellion, but a more detailed and imaginative account is provided by Chapter 3 of Leban, "Ts'ao Ts'ao," 60-118. See also *ZZTJ* 58, 1864-75; de Crespigny, *Huan and Ling*, 174-189, and *Cambridge Han*, 338-340 [Mansvelt Beck, "The Fall of Han"]. On the rebellion in Liang province, see Haloun, "The Liang-chou Rebellion," and de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 146-162.

22 The Yellow Turban movement, like orthodox and other rebel movements of this time, was strongly influenced by the theories of the Five Powers.

CHAPTER TWO

By the second half of the second century AD, confusion in the imperial government at the capital and tension in the social and political pattern of the provinces had produced a discontent among the people which found some solace in unorthodox religions, and which was reflected even in Confucianism by the superstitions of the New Text school and beliefs in the miraculous powers of sacred texts. At the court in Luoyang, Emperor Huan, predecessor of Emperor Ling, had held state sacrifice to Huang-Lao and the Buddha.[23] In the provinces, there were heterodox sects which maintained their independence or opposition to the government: Xu Chang, whose forces Sun Jian had fought in the early 170s, was only one of their number.[24] With its belief in a new order of nature,

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From the end of Former Han, it had generally been accepted that the dynasty of Han ruled under the auspices of the power of Fire, whose associated colour is red, and that the government which succeeded it would represent the Power of Earth and the colour yellow: according to the theories of the Five Powers, Fire produced - *i.e.* was succeeded by - Earth. On these speculations, see *Cambridge Han*, 360-361 [Mansvelt Beck, "The Fall of Han"].

It was thus quite appropriate for Zhang Jue and his associates to adopt the colour yellow as a badge, though the claim that the colour of the sky would change from blue to yellow may be considered rather a general sign of heavenly approval of their cause than a direct aspect of the theories of the Five Powers themselves.

We may observe, finally, that though the term *huang jin* is commonly rendered as "Yellow Turbans," a convention which I have followed, the headgear involved was almost certainly not a true turban *à la* Sikh, but rather a simple band of coloured cloth tied about the forehead. The custom can still be seen observed by mourners at traditional Chinese funerals; it gained international celebrity from Japanese Kamikaze pilots in the Second World War and its later adoption by Yukio Mishima, and it was used by students of the democracy movement at Tiananmen in 1989.

23 For further discussion, see de Crespigny, "Politics and Philosophy," 73-80.

24 *SGZ* 8/Wei 8, 264 PC note 1 quoting *Dian lue*, says that in the Xiping and Guanghe periods of Later Han (172-178 and 179-183) there were a great number of *yao ze* "heretic rebels." One was Zhang Jue, another was the Rice Sect of Hanzhong, on which see Chapter 6, and a certain Luo Yao was active in the region about Chang'an in the lower Wei valley.

There are earlier references to *yao ze* in the annals of *Hou Han shu*: for example in Yang province in 132 (*HHS* 6, 260), in Youfufeng in 150 (*HHS* 7, 296), in Bohai in 165 (*HHS* 7, 316), and of course the Xu group in Kuaiji in 172-174.

and its plan for a new beginning, the Yellow Turban sect of Zhang Jue was to prove the most dangerous of these enemies of Han.

In preparation for his revolt, Zhang Jue sent disciples out to gain support and organise followers throughout the North China plain. They were encouraged in their recruitment by local political discontent, and by droughts and plague among the people. The rebels even had allies at the imperial court, and they were able to make their preparations while government officials were either ignorant of their intentions or intimidated by their power.

Zhang Jue planned that his followers should rise together throughout the empire, but before the call to arms had been issued the plan was betrayed, the rebel sympathisers in Luoyang were arrested and executed, and the revolt in the provinces had to begin ahead of time, in the second month of 184.[25] Despite the premature

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On the background of these sects, see the articles by Stein, "Remarques sur les mouvements du Taoisme", and by Seidel, "Image of the Perfect Ruler."

One should note, however, that although a group of rebels may be described as *yao* by the official histories, such a description tells us no more than that they were alien to the established state cult of Confucianism. Except for the Yellow Turbans and the sect of Zhang Lu, there are no details of their beliefs. Indeed, though we may assume that there were some similarities of faith and superstition common to these movements, there is certainly no reason to assume that any one of them would be in philosophical, religious or (least of all) political agreement with another. See also Chapter 1 at note 15.

Leban, "Ts'ao Ts'ao, 69-70, notes there is a gap of more than ten years between the record of the rising of Xu Chang, defeated in 174, and the outbreak led by Zhang Jue. He suggests this is evidence of Zhang Jue's long-term control over the followers he was gathering, requiring them to avoid local small-scale risings in preparation for the great rebellion to come. I suspect, however, that this assumes too much forethought and discipline. I incline to believe the hiatus was partly a matter of chance, and while there may have been a number of small-scale disturbances, as *SGZ* 8 implies, they were adequately controlled by the local authorities without need for attention by the court. Certainly, however, the great uprising of Zhang Jue must have been planned for months and even some years ahead.

25 The Biography of Sun Jian, *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1094, says that the rising took place on the *jiazi* day of the third month. The Annals at *HHS* 8, 348, however, say that it was in the second month, and the government had made a response early in the third month, well before the *jiazi* day; the year was *jiazi*, not the day.

Leban, "Ts'ao Ts'ao," 79-88, discusses the question of the date originally planned for the rising, arguing that Zhang Jue and his peasant followers would

call and an inevitable lack of co-ordination, tens of thousands of men rose in rebellion, government offices were plundered and destroyed and the imperial armies were immediately forced onto the defensive.

The Yellow Turban forces were concentrated in three areas. The group led by Zhang Jue and his two brothers gained their support from the region just north of the Yellow River, near Zhang Jue's home territory of Julu and his base in Wei commandery. A second major rising took place in Guangyang and Zhuo commanderies in You province, in the neighbourhood of present-day Beijing. The third centre of rebellion was in the three commanderies of Yingchuan, Runan and Nanyang. This force had evidently been intended to co-operate with the traitors inside Luoyang in the attempt to seize the capital, but even without that support, the rebels in this region were a major threat.[26]

In the first weeks of the uprising, the government of Emperor Ling was chiefly concerned with finding and executing the traitors at the capital and with the immediate defence of the city.[27] In the third month, when these preparations had been made, three armies were sent out to deal with the rebellion. One was sent east against Zhang Jue. The other two, commanded by Huangfu Song and by Zhu Jun, were sent against the rebels in Yingchuan, Runan and Nanyang.[28]

Zhu Jun was a man from Kuaiji commandery, and according to Sun Jian's biography he recommended Sun Jian's appointment as Associate Major in the Army, to call up troops and join his forces.

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have intended to rebel after the sowing season in north China, probably in the fifth month, mid-summer.

26 On Yingchuan and Runan, see *HHSJJ* 110/20, 1b-11a. On Nanyang commandery and on Wan city, now Nanyang in Henan, see Chapter 1 above.

27 It was at this time that there were re-established Chief Commandants of the Eight Passes, which defended the approaches to the capital (*HHS* 8, 348). These stations had been disused since the earlier years of Later Han, but they were now restored and their garrisons were fully manned.

28 The biographies of Huangfu Song and of Zhu Jun are in *HHS* 71/61, 2299-2308 and 2308-13; that of Huangfu Song contains much of the information on the course of the Yellow Turban uprising. Another biography of Zhu Jun, from the *Xu Han shu* of Sima Biao, is quoted in *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1094-95 PC note 3; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 33-34.

The Treatise of Officials of *Hou Han shu* describes a Major in the Army as the second in command of a battalion. On occasion a Major With a Separate Command could also be appointed, with a large or small force according to circumstances. As Associate Major, collecting his own troops, Sun Jian's new appointment was of the same type as his earlier service in the campaign against Xu Chang. [29] With such widespread rebellion to deal with, the imperial commanders were anxious to gain any reinforcements that they could, and the territory of the lower Yangzi, not directly affected by Zhang Jue's movement, was close enough to be a convenient source of recruits for the imperial army.[30] Zhu Jun must have heard of Sun Jian as a loyal fighting man from his own region, and there were certainly other officials who also were sent special commissions and authority to recruit soldiers for the emergency. Sun Jian collected his troops, and he marched to join Zhu Jun's army with a thousand men under his command.

According to Sun Jian's biography, some of his contingent was made up of the young men from his own district who had gathered to him at Xiapi, [31] and besides these he also called up travelling merchants or peddlers and the trained soldiers of the region of the Huai and Si Rivers, being the area about Xiapi. So the force with which he went to war was made up partly of men who were prepared to accept him as a personal leader and partly of wanderers, men who were not settled on any particular piece of land and so had few rights to consideration in a subsistence peasant economy.

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29 On the two levels of regular appointment as Major, see *HHS* 114/24, 3564. Sun Jian's position, marked by the prefix *zuo*, was evidently a junior one: *cf.* note 12 above, discussing *xjng*, *jia* and *shou*.

30 From the argument in note 24 above, there is no reason to believe that the rebellion of Xu Chang of the early 170s had any connection with the sect of Zhang Jue in the early 180s. In any case, some of the troops recruited in this region by Sun Jian and other emergency commanders had presumably shown their hostility to such rebels on the previous occasion.

31 *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1205, being the biography of Sun Jian's youngest brother Sun Jing, says that when Sun Jian first went into action, Sun Jing gathered some five or six hundred local and family followers and went to join him.

It seems likely this is a reference to Sun Jian's recruitment of followers in 184, and that would imply Sun Jing was responsible for a considerable component of his elder brother's forces.

The rest of his band was made up of those men of military age who had served their term as conscripts under basic training but who remained liable to summons. All these, whether personal followers, unplaced persons or citizen levies, were raised and commanded by one man, and as this impromptu method of recruitment continued in the wars that followed, any military leader was considered to have some interest and rights in the men that he led, while the troops looked more to their immediate commander than to the general or the empire that he served.

The fighting against the Yellow Turbans of Yingchuan, Runan and Nanyang was frequently fierce, with varying success. In the third month of 184, soon after the rebellion had broken out, the Yellow Turban Zhang Mancheng defeated and killed the Grand Administrator of Nanyang, and in the fourth month, at the beginning of summer, the imperial army under Zhu Jun was defeated by the Yellow Turban Bo Cai in Yingchuan, while the Grand Administrator of Runan was defeated by another force of rebels.

In the middle of the year, however, the tide turned. In the fifth month Huangfu Song and Zhu Jun combined their armies to defeat Bo Cai, and in the sixth month they destroyed the Yellow Turbans of Runan in a battle at Xihua, now Xihua in Henan. Then the two generals went separate ways, Huangfu Song to join in the attack on the rebels north of the Yellow River, and Zhu Jun to deal with the Yellow Turbans of Nanyang.

By this time, a new Grand Administrator had defeated Zhang Mancheng and killed him. In that campaign, however, the Yellow Turbans were able to capture the capital of the commandery, Wan city, and they took refuge there. For the next several months, the core of the campaign was the fighting in and around Wan city, until the place was finally stormed and the defenders massacred in the eleventh month, midwinter at the beginning of 185.

Sun Jian followed Zhu Jun throughout his campaigns, and his biography records that wherever he faced there were none who could withstand him. An anecdote from *Wu shu*, however, quoted in the Pei Songzhi commentary to Sun Jian's biography in *Sanguo*

zhi, tells of one occasion that was not unalloyed victory, and is a little more interesting for that:[32]

> Sun Jian was following up a success and he had gone a long way in advance. Then his party had the worst of it in a skirmish near Xihua. Sun Jian was wounded and fell from his horse, and he was lying among some bushes. The men of his command were fled and scattered and did not know where he was.
>
> The horse Sun Jian rode was a piebald. It galloped back to the camp, pawed at the ground and neighed impatiently. Then the officers and men followed the horse to the bushes and they found Sun Jian.
>
> They brought him back to the camp, and after about two weeks his wound was sufficiently healed that he could go out and fight again.

The biography of Sun Jian also tells how he led the attack on Wan city, being first over the wall in the final, successful breakthrough. In the biography of Zhu Jun, however, which contains a detailed account of the protracted campaign, there is no mention of Sun Jian, and it appears his biography has magnified his exploits. On the other hand, Sun Jian was evidently a successful military commander, and after the final victory at the end of the year he was mentioned in dispatches to the throne and was promoted to be Major With a Separate Command.

The capture of Wan city was the last great defeat of the Yellow Turbans. Their forces in the North China plain had been destroyed in the field by the imperial armies during the summer, their strongholds were besieged and captured, and the three Zhang brothers were dead. The remaining, scattered rebels were pursued by commandery and county forces in various mopping-up operations, and in the twelfth month of the Chinese year, mid-February of 185, the government issued a proclamation of celebration, changing the reign title to the slogan *Zhongping* "Pacification Achieved."

Certainly, the armies of Han had gained a glorious victory, and it was a remarkable achievement that they had removed so quickly the threat of Zhang Jue's rebellion. The cost, however, was very

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32 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1094 PC note 2 quoting *Wu shu.*

high. Over wide areas the offices of the government had been destroyed, magistrates had been killed, and whole districts were cut off from the writ of the central government. The enemy had been slaughtered in their hundreds and thousands, more innocent people had been left homeless or destitute by the wars, and the economy and society over great parts of this most populous region of the empire were left in ruins and without resources. Unrest remained, bandits appeared in every district, and the government, in no position to put down all the lesser disturbances, was forced to patch up the situation as best it could. A long period of consolidation was needed to restore some measure of peace and prosperity, but that breathing space was not given.

For peace had been achieved only in the east. In the winter of 184/185, while the Yellow Turbans were still active, a mutiny broke out among the non-Chinese auxiliaries stationed in Jincheng commandery in Liang province. The mutineers were joined by tribesmen of the Qiang people, and their forces overwhelmed the local authorities and occupied the capital of the commandery. The Grand Administrator was captured and killed, and some of his Chinese officers joined the rebels. By the spring of 185 the imperial position in Liang province was completely overthrown and the rebel forces, now a mixture of mutineers, Qiang tribesmen and local Chinese, advanced down the valley of the Wei and attacked Chang'an, ancient capital of Han.

In this new crisis, Huangfu Song, conqueror of the Yellow Turbans, was given command of an imperial army in the west. He was, however, unable to defeat the rebels, and after four months he was replaced by Zhang Wen, who had lately been Minister of Works, one of the highest posts in the civil administration. At last, in the eleventh month, mid-winter of 185/186, the rebels were defeated in battle at Meiyang, near present-day Wugong in Shenxi, and turned back to the west. Zhang Wen divided his army, sending a detachment under Dong Zhuo against the Qiang while the main force besieged the rebel leader Bian Zhang in Yuzhong near present-day Lanzhou. Neither attack, however, was successful,

both divisions were forced to retreat, and the rebels remained secure in Jincheng.[33]

When Zhang Wen took over command from Huangfu Song in the eighth month of 185, Sun Jian was appointed a member of his staff. There is no account of what Sun Jian had been doing in the few months since the defeat of the Yellow Turbans in Nanyang, but many troops were transferred from the east to deal with the threat from Liang province, and Sun Jian may already have served under Huangfu Song before he was noticed by Zhang Wen. Very likely he had been recommended by Zhu Jun to Huangfu Song and then to Zhang Wen. Sun Jian's own biography says that Zhang Wen went to the west in the third year of Zhongping, 186, and he sent in a memorial with a request for Sun Jian's services, but the other sources for the history of the rebellion in Liang province make it clear that Huangfu Song was replaced by Zhang Wen in 185, not in 186, and Sun Jian would have joined Zhang Wen's staff at that time. The reference to the third year rather than the second year of Zhongping is miswritten.

The account given in Sun Jian's biography, however, both about the course of the campaign against the rebels and about Sun Jian's own part in the enterprise, is quite unsatisfactory. The main item is a story designed to show Sun Jian's dislike and distrust of Dong Zhuo, the man who later usurped the authority of the imperial government at Luoyang.

According to this, Zhang Wen brought his army to Chang'an, and from there he summoned Dong Zhuo. Dong Zhuo, however, was slow to come and when he did arrive he was discourteous and insubordinate. Sun Jian, who was in attendance on Zhang Wen, then presented a lengthy argument, with historical examples and allusions from the classics, urging that Dong Zhuo should be executed for his refractory behaviour towards his superior officers. Since the speech is described as being delivered in a whisper to Zhang Wen alone, it is difficult to see how it could have been recorded at the time, and it is impossible to rely upon the account

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33 On the campaigns of Huangfu Song and Zhang Wen, including the battle of Meiyang and the manoeuvres which followed, see de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 150-151.

as it is presented. It is, perhaps, just possible that at some stage in the campaign Dong Zhuo objected to his orders, and Sun Jian then urged Zhang Wen to punish him.[34]

On the other hand, Dong Zhuo was in fact Zhang Wen's most successful commander. He had done well in the earlier abortive campaign under Huangfu Song, and he played a great part in the victory of Meiyang which eventually caused the withdrawal of the enemy to the west. Moreover, in the commentary of Pei Songzhi to a later part of the biography of Sun Jian, there is an extract from the book *Shanyang gong zaiji* which contains a record of a discussion of this campaign by Dong Zhuo himself. Like any version of direct speech in the histories, the passage must be suspect, but Dong Zhuo is described as speaking with the historian Liu Ai, and Liu Ai may well have kept a note of the incident.[35]

According to this record from *Shanyang gong zaiji*, when Zhang Wen proposed to send Zhou Shen and Dong Zhuo in command of separate columns to the west, Dong Zhuo suggested that the two units should nevertheless co-operate, and that he should remain as reserve in the rear while Zhou Shen led his men against the enemy. His idea was that the rebels would be afraid to commit themselves against Zhou Shen for fear they would then be attacked by Dong Zhuo's force. Dong Zhuo was concerned that if

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34 The incident is recorded in *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1095; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 34-36, with a shorter version in *HHS* 72/62, 2330; *cf. ZZTJ* 58, 1882; de Crespigny, *Huan and Ling* I, 197-198.

35 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1098-99 PC note 8 quoting *Shanyang gong zaiji*; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 45-47.

This conversation is said to have taken place about the time Sun Jian was leading his troops to attack Dong Zhuo during the civil war in 190-191. Liu Ai is described as Chief Clerk to Dong Zhuo. He was a historian, author of annals of the reign of Emperor Ling (*Lingdi ji*: note 12 above) and of the reign of Emperor Xian, and he is known to have been in Chang'an as late as 195, after the death of Dong Zhuo.

Duke of Shanyang was the title granted to Liu Xie, the former Emperor of Han, after his abdication in favour of Cao Pi in 220 (*HHS* 9, 390, and *SGZ* 2, 76; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 10). The dynastic title of Emperor Xian was given only after his death in 234 (*HHS* 9, 391; and Fang, *Chronicle* I, 443). These "Parallel Annals" (*zaiji*), compiled by Yue Zi of the Jin dynasty, are thus a history of the last thirty years of Han, with a title adapted to the prejudices of the successor dynasties.

See also de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*,157-158.

the two armies went forward independently, the rebels would be able to watch both columns, concentrate their forces where they wished, and attack them separately. In fact, this is what happened. The two parts of the imperial force were each caught by the enemy in unfamiliar country with extended lines of communications. Dong Zhuo was surrounded by the Qiang and had to trick his way out, while Zhou Shen was also caught by a counter-attack and abandoned his baggage train as he fled.

Dong Zhuo went on to say that Sun Jian had proposed much the same strategy to Zhou Shen as he had to Zhang Wen: that Zhou Shen should use the majority of his troops to establish a secure base while Sun Jian went forward with a detachment. The enemy would be tied down by the threat of the main attack, and Sun Jian and his troops could raid their strong points and their communications without interference. An army of rebels would be afraid to engage any part of the imperial forces in a major battle, because they could be held in that engagement and crushed when the main body came up. Like Zhang Wen, however, Zhou Shen refused to accept the strategy.

The plan that Sun Jian proposed to Zhou Shen is also mentioned in *Hou Han shu*, and that account is clearly based on *Shanyang gong zaiji*. Surprisingly, however, the main text of the biography by Sun Jian in *Sanguo zhi* makes no mention of his proposal. Instead, we are told that when the rebels heard how Zhang Wen's great army was coming against them, they

> separated and scattered and all begged to surrender. Then the army came home, but the imperial advisers held that since they had not actually fought with the enemy, it was not appropriate to give any rewards.[36]

This is quite wrong. The imperial army had fought a battle at Meiyang, but the rebels had not been scattered and they did not surrender in any numbers. The account in Sun Jian's biography is contradicted by all other records of the rebellion in Liang province. It may be that the biographer sought to explain why Sun Jian received no immediate reward when he came back to the capital, or he may have been so concerned to show Sun Jian's disapproval of

36 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1095; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 36.

Dong Zhuo that it would have been embarrassing to describe them as suggesting similar strategies. In either case, this is one example of how unreliable such a text can be when the hero of the story is a minor figure in the events described, and when those events occurred at such a distance of time and space.

We may note, moreover, that Sun Jian did not only serve as a staff officer but appears to have commanded troops in battle at this time. Not only did he accompany Zhou Shen and offer to act as an advance guard, but in the record of conversation in *Shanyang gong zaiji* Liu Ai refers to his embarrassing defeat by rebels in operations outside Meiyang, presumably before Dong Zhuo's success. Dong Zhuo observed that Sun Jian had poor quality troops at that time, and that he was nonetheless a good commander.

Sun Jian returned to the capital in 186, and he was there appointed Gentleman-Consultant in the civil administration.

A Gentleman-Consultant, as the title implies, held position as an adviser at the imperial court. With salary ranked at Six Hundred *shi*, the post was not a high one, and Sun Jian would actually have lost rank in making the transfer. The salary of a full Major in the Army was assessed at One Thousand *shi*, and a Major With a Separate Command was slightly senior. This, however, was Sun Jian's first position in the regular civil service, and the post of gentleman-consultant was often used as a holding position for men being considered for substantial senior appointment.[37] Certainly,

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37 The position of Gentleman-Consultant is listed in the Treatise of Officials, *HHS* 115/25, 3577. It was often held by men of scholarly achievement, with appropriate functions. In 79, for example, gentleman-consultants took part in the debate on Confucian theory held at the White Tiger Hall (*HHS* 3, 138; Tjan, *White Tiger Discussions* I, 6); and in 112 gentlemen-consultants were sent to pray for rain to break a drought (commentary to *HHS* 103/13, 3278).

Appointments from the post of gentleman-consultant were commonly to other advisory positions, to the university or the imperial secretariat, or as inspectors or prefects in the provinces. On several occasions, a man who had been gentleman-consultant was given swift promotion, reaching high office after only one or two transfers.

Quite frequently, however, an experienced official who had left office for a time (occasionally in formal disgrace) would be appointed as gentleman-consultant and then appointed once more to high rank. For example, about 185 Lu Kang, Grand Administrator of Lean, was dismissed and punished

this is what happened here. In 187, after only a few months rest following his return from campaign in Liang province, Sun Jian was appointed Grand Administrator of Changsha commandery, with salary of Two Thousand *shi*. The rank was the highest that could be held in the bureaucracy outside the capital, and the territory was one of the key regions of the empire.

Changsha commandery, with its capital at Linxiang, near the modern city of Changsha, controlled the lower basin of the Xiang River in present-day Hunan. Immediately to the south, the upper reaches of the Xiang were governed by Lingling commandery, and the valley of the tributary Lei River was under Guiyang commandery. As at the present time, the Xiang and its tributaries provided the main communications route from central and northern China through the Nan Ling ranges to the rich and exotic lands of present-day Guangdong and the far south. The registered population of Changsha, more than a million at this time, reflected both the wealth of communications through the region and the related migration into the south which was a feature of the

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for lese-majesty when he protested against the extravagances of Emperor Ling. He was, however, restored to office as a gentleman-consultant, and soon afterwards he was appointed Grand Administrator of Lujiang commandery: *HHS* 31/21, 1113-14.

Earlier, in 159, the Prefect of the Masters of Writing, being the head of the imperial secretariat, Chen Fan, sent in a memorial on behalf of some dissident officials. Emperor Huan was extremely annoyed and Chen Fan was compelled to retire to his own estates. Some time later, however, he was recalled as a gentleman-consultant, and within a few days he had been promoted direct to ministerial office as Superintendent of the Imperial Household: *HHS* 66/56, 2161.

The closest parallel to Sun Jian's appointments at this time appears in the biography of Duan Jiong, a celebrated military commander one generation earlier. Duan Jiong had done well as a junior officer on the frontier, but he was punished for exceeding his authority and was sentenced to a term of convict labour. He was then appointed gentleman-consultant, and in 156 he was made General of the Gentlemen of the Household and sent to put down rebellion in the eastern commanderies of Taishan and Langye. He did well, and was enfeoffed as a marquis. See *HHS* 65/55, 2145; Young, *Three Generals*, 64-65, and for a similar incident in Duan Jiong's career a few years later, also *HHS* 65/55, 2147; Young, *Three Generals*, 68. Duan Jiong, it may be observed, was an excellent fighting soldier, but few would have claimed that he was a man of scholarly distinction.

demography of Later Han, and it made Changsha one of the larger commanderies of the empire.[38]

The territory, however, was a troubled one. According to Sun Jian's biography, a rebel leader of Changsha, Ou Xing, had given himself the title of a general and was attacking and besieging cities with an army of more than ten thousand men. Then Sun Jian was sent to the commandery as Grand Administrator, and he worked out a plan of attack and destroyed Ou Xing and his followers within a month of his arrival. He next turned against the rebel leaders Zhou Chao and Guo Shi, who had been making trouble in Lingling and Guiyang and who had been in alliance with Ou Xing. Sun Jian went outside the borders of his own commandery to pursue them and destroy their forces.

According to another source, the Annals of the reign of Emperor Ling in *Hou Han shu*, the rebel Guan Gu of Lingling had taken the title of General of the Peaceful Heaven and was ravaging Guiyang commandery. In the tenth month of 187 he was attacked and beheaded by Sun Jian the Grand Administrator of Changsha.[39]

There is some disagreement about the names of the rebel chieftains that Sun Jian defeated, therefore, but no real problem about the course of events. Most likely there had been groups of rebels and bandits active in Changsha and the neighbouring territories for some time, probably at least since the troubles with the Yellow Turbans further north in 184. By 187 the disturbance had become sufficiently serious to attract the special attention of the court, and Sun Jian, as a man of proven military experience, was sent to restore order. It is said that when he came to his new post he issued orders saying, "Treat the good people carefully and mildly and keep the official documents according to regulations. Leave the robbers and killers to me!"

The names of the bandit leaders are not of great importance. The organisation of such groups is seldom very permanent, and it is easy to imagine that the rebels of the three commanderies Changsha, Lingling and Guiyang had operated in some loose

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38 On Changsha commandery and its neighbours Lingling and Guiyang, see Chapter 1.

39 *HHS* 8, 354; and *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1095; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 36-37.

association. When Sun Jian came to Changsha, he first settled the immediate problem of Ou Xing and then turned against the other groups. By the time he did so, Guan Gu had been replaced by Zhou Chao and Guo Shi, and it was these men who were destroyed by Sun Jian. The records of the court, far from the scene of this varied action, could easily be confused over the names of such minor figures, but the essential point is that by the end of 187 Sun Jian had put down the troubles in the basin of the Xiang.

As Grand Administrator of Changsha, Sun Jian was responsible for civil administration as well as the military security, and in normal times such a post would have been held by a regular civilian official. Sun Jian, however, had been appointed on his military record and his administration was unusual. Once his position was established he was also able to intervene in aid of the governments of Lingling and Guiyang against the rebels within their borders, and according to his biography the three commanderies all acknowledged his authority.

Stricly speaking, without special permission Sun Jian had no right to take any action outside the borders of his own territory, and it does appear that for the most part he was acting under appropriate supervision from the provincial authorities.[40] He was not, however, particularly concerned about these niceties, and he would rather claim that the exceptional disorder and the general spread of rebellion demanded exceptional measures. It was, for example, about this time that the Chief of Yichun county in Yuzhang commandery asked for help when he was attacked by bandits. Sun Jian made ready to go, but then one of his clerical officers objected: though Yichun was just over the eastern borders of Changsha, it was not only in a different commandery but also in a different province. Sun Jian replied,

> I have none of the civil graces. Warfare is my work. If I cross the borders to attack some rebels, that is simply giving help to a

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40 From the relationship and later incident with the Inspector of Jing province Wang Rui discussed below, Sun Jian was accompanied, and nominally supervised, by that officer on his campaigns in Lingling and Guiyang. This was the normal requirement for a grand administrator operating outside his specific territory. From all accounts, however, Sun Jian took the leading role and received all credit for the success of the government forces.

neighbour. Even if I am committing a crime, why should I feel ashamed?[41]

According to his biography, he was enfeoffed as Marquis of Wucheng as a reward for his good work, and from this we may judge that the court approved his policy.

The enfeoffment was a very particular honour. Marquis was the highest noble rank that could be given to a man who was not a member of the imperial Liu family, and it was by no means the regular expectation of a grand administrator. Often enough, a marquis would be granted only a village or district as his fief, but Wucheng was a county in Wu commandery, just south of the Tai Lake. With the title there came also an income based upon the tax revenues of the territory, and although he had no practical authority in his fief, and would not necessarily be expected even to live there, the generosity of the Han government had clearly made the fortunes of Sun Jian and his family. Already this was an extraordinary combination of ability and good luck for a young man of undistinguished origins from the distant countryside. In 187, Sun Jian was perhaps thirty-two years old by Western reckoning.

Sun Jian remained Grand Administrator of Changsha for two more years. By his successes against the rebels he had justified his remarkable promotion and his high civil appointment, and he was evidently regarded as a valuable supporter of the dynasty. When chaos came to the imperial capital in 189, and civil war to the empire in the following years, Sun Jian controlled the lands and the people of his own commandery, he had established his influence with the administrators who were his neighbours, and he was prepared to bring an army north to aid the emperor.

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41 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1096 PC note 2 quoting *Wu lu*, which also says that the Chief of Yichun was a nephew of Lu Kang, Grand Administrator of Lujiang commandery.

Yichun lay near the present-day city of that name in Jiangxi. Yuzhang commandery of Later Han was under Yang province.

On further connection between the two families of Sun and Lu, see Chapter 3 at note 14.

The war against Dong Zhuo (189-191):

In the fourth month of the sixth year of the Zhongping reign period, on 13 May 189, Emperor Ling died.[42] He had been brought to the throne as a child, and he was only thirty-four *sui*, some thirty-three years old by Western reckoning, when he died. He left two sons, Liu Bian, aged fourteen *sui*, the child of his Empress the Lady He, and Liu Xie, aged nine *sui*, born to his concubine the Beauty Wang. The Empress He had killed the Lady Wang, and Liu Xie was brought up under the care of the Emperor's natural mother, the Empress-Dowager Dong. Hitherto, neither boy had been named Heir-Apparent and successor to the throne, but from his death-bed Emperor Ling did nominate the younger son, Liu Xie, and entrusted him to the eunuch Jian Shi, who was with him at the time, and who had been given command of troops at the capital.

The power of the widowed Empress He and her clan, however, depended upon the succession of the boy Liu Bian, and they forced that succession through in a matter of hours. Within the next few weeks, Jian Shi and the Empress-Dowager Dong were dead, and the General-in-Chief He Jin, brother of the Lady He, now Empress-Dowager, controlled the government.[43] But then He Jin thought to turn against the eunuchs.

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42 *HHS* 8, 357. The events at the capital which followed the death of Emperor Ling are recounted in the next entries of *HHS* 8, the Annals of Emperor Ling; in *HHS* 10B, 449-50, being the record of the Empress He and the Beauty Wang; in *HHS* 69/59, 2247-53, the biography of He Jin; in *HHS* 78/68, 2537, the biographies of the eunuchs; and in other places. They are summarised in *ZZTJ* 59, 1894-1905; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 2-26.

43 The Empress He, later Empress-Dowager, whose personal name is not recorded, was a woman of Wan city in Nanyang commandery. She had been brought into the imperial harem as a result of the annual selection, which took place in the eighth month of each year (Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 63). She was evidently a woman of striking appearance, she attracted the Emperor's attention, and she was fortunate enough to bear him a son which survived infancy. She was promoted to be Honoured Lady, and in 180 she was made Empress. Her biography is in *HHS* 10B, 449-50.

The father of the Lady He had died before this time. In 181, however, he was posthumously honoured with the position of General of Chariots and Cavalry, and enfeoffment as Marquis of Wuyang. In 183 the mother of the Lady He was granted enfeoffment as Lady of Wuyang.

CHAPTER TWO

During the reign of Emperor Ling, the eunuchs of the palace had dominated the government. In 168, when the young emperor first came to the capital, they had been under threat from the regent Dou family, but they overthrew their enemies in a coup d'état. Since then the eunuch group had maintained their influence and prosperity through patronage of their own supporters and proscription of their obvious opponents, and they had relied successfully on the favour and trust of the Emperor. It was under their auspices that the Lady He had become Empress, and even though their imperial patron was gone, they had expected

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He Jin was actually the elder half-brother of the Empress: he was the son of her father by another woman, possibly a concubine but perhaps an earlier wife. He was brought to the capital when his sister became Honoured Lady, was given various senior appointments, including a period as Grand Administrator of Yingchuan commandery, and was named General-in-Chief at the time of the Yellow Turban emergency in 184. His biography is in *HHS* 69/59, 2246-53.

The Empress He had another half-brother, whose personal name was Miao. He was the son of her mother, who had evidently been married before. At some stage, either after the remarriage of his mother or, more probably, after the rise to fortune of his sister, Miao changed his surname to He, and he is generally described as He Miao, "younger brother" of He Jin, though the two men were not blood relations and Miao was evidently the elder (*HHS* 104/14, 3299, with *jijie* commentary at 6a quoting the Qing scholars Hong Liangji and Qian Daxin; also *HHS* 103/13, 3275 and *HHSJJ* 69/59, 6a). In 187, He Miao successfully put down a rebellion in Henan commandery, quite close to the capital, and he was rewarded with the position of General of Chariots and Cavalry, formerly held by his step-father, and with enfeoffment as a marquis (*HHS* 69/59, 2246).

Though He Jin and He Miao appear to have been reasonably competent in carrying out their official responsibilities, they owed their advancement solely to their relationship with the Empress, and the posts of General-in-Chief and General of Chariots and Cavalry had long been used rather as perquisites of the family of the imperial relatives by marriage than as substantive military commands. Moreover, it appears that the Lady He's father or members of his family had practised the trade of butchers. This had not been sufficient to disqualify the Lady He from entering the imperial harem and achieving the highest position there, and indeed the very lack of distinguished background and social influence made the Lady He an excellent candidate in the eyes of the eunuchs, who held major control over the government and who had no wish to import a powerful rival faction. When they did obtain responsibility for the regency, however, there is no question that the ancestry, family background and social status of the He group put them at a disadvantage in dealing with the aristocratic gentry who held high offices in the bureaucracy of the central government.

continuing support from the new Empress-Dowager and her brother He Jin.

He Jin, however, as effective head of the government, was under additional, contradictory pressures. The He were not one of the great families of the empire, and He Jin felt that he needed the support of powerful gentry and official clans to maintain his authority. In particular, the members of the Yuan family of Runan, which had held the highest civil offices in the empire for four generations, were among He Jin's chief supporters, and Yuan Shao and Yuan Shu, nephews of the Grand Tutor Yuan Wei, held command among the guards and troops about the capital.[44] These two younger men now reflected the long-held resentment of the palace favourites held by the gentry officials, and they demanded reform of the government and destruction of the eunuchs as price of their support.

The position of the eunuchs was very insecure. In 168 they had been able to destroy the General-in-Chief Dou Wu by claiming the authority of the emperor to call in another army against him. He Jin, of course, was also aware of that precedent, but the death of Jian Shi had removed the link between the eunuchs of the palace and any military forces outside. To intimidate the eunuchs and to bolster his own position, He Jin summoned Dong Zhuo to bring his army into camp near the capital. The Empress He and He Jin's step-brother He Miao spoke for the eunuchs, Yuan Shao and Yuan Shu spoke against them, He Jin could not make up his mind, and the eunuchs became desperate.

On 22 September 189, a group of eunuchs waylaid He Jin and killed him as he came from the palace. They tried to brand him as a rebel and bring his soldiers under their own control, and they named supporters of their own party to the critical posts controlling the capital. But their plan was hopeless and it failed. Yuan Shao and his associates took command of the guard

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44 Biographies of Yuan Shao are in *HHS* 74A/64A, 2373-2403, and in *SGZ* 6, 188-201; biographies of Yuan Shu are in *HHS* 75/65, 2438-44, and in *SGZ* 6, 207-10. The biographies of earlier generations of the Yuan family are in *HHS* 45/35, 1517-24; Yuan Wei is mentioned at 1523.

regiments, and then they burnt the gates and stormed the palace and massacred every eunuch that they found.

One group managed to escape, taking the Emperor and Liu Xie with them. They were chased and killed, and the children were brought back, but as the party returned to Luoyang they met with Dong Zhuo and his army, and the young Emperor went back to the capital under that care.

Before this time, the plots and coups and rebellions had been kept inside the capital, but the balance of political power which had been maintained under Emperor Ling was now destroyed. On the evening of 24 September, when the palace was stormed and the eunuchs were killed, the flames from burning buildings had lit up the sky. Dong Zhuo saw them from his encampment, he realised there was trouble and he led his army forward to the city. As he gave that command, the rule of the Han dynasty was ended.

Established in Luoyang, Dong Zhuo had no difficulty in gaining control. The two imperial princes were in his hands, the eunuchs had been killed, He Jin was dead and He Miao had also been assassinated in the disorders of the coup. The troops which had been under their command turned to Dong Zhuo, and the Lady He was left without any practical support. Similarly, despite their influence, the Yuan family and the other leaders of the civil administration could not rely on any forces at the capital strong enough to contend with Dong Zhuo and his veterans from the frontier, and they could do nothing at that time but accept his authority.

Dong Zhuo did not hold his power for very long, but the way he had gained it and the way that he used it meant the end of legitimate government in the empire.[45] He had no good right to be in the capital at all, he held his power solely because he was the man in command of the army, and only another army could remove him. More than that, within a few weeks of his coming to Luoyang, he removed Liu Bian from the throne and set Liu Xie in his place. Some months later Liu Bian and his mother were dead. There was minimal argument about the rival claims of the two

45 Biographies of Dong Zhuo are in *HHS* 72/62, 2319-31, and in *SGZ* 6, 171-79.

children: Dong Zhuo was simply removing one emperor and setting his own nominee upon the throne. He did this through his military strength, and control of the empire was now held by force. The child Liu Xie, known to history as Emperor Xian, last of the Han, reigned for more than thirty years, but he never held authority of his own.

Within a very short time, however, Dong Zhuo was faced with armed opposition from "loyal rebels" outside the capital. Yuan Shao, Yuan Shu and a number of other leaders fled from Luoyang to the east and south, and they joined with local and provincial administrators to raise armies for an attack. By the beginning of 190 the allies had collected their troops, and the whole force, known as the soldiers "east of the mountains," set up their camps in an arc from the northeast to the south of Luoyang. Yuan Shao, leader of the alliance, was north of the Yellow River in Henei commandery; another group, based upon Chenliu, occupied the southern bank of the river due east of the capital;[46] and a third army was commanded by Yuan Shu, with headquarters at Luyang in Nanyang, present-day Lushan in Henan. The men who joined them in the attack on Dong Zhuo included administrators who had been appointed during the reign of Emperor Ling, some who had been sent out by Dong Zhuo but now turned against him, and other leaders such as the future warlord Cao Cao, who fled from the capital like Yuan Shao and Yuan Shu, then raised troops from family followers and local conscription.[47]

Sun Jian, down in Changsha, also collected an army and came to join the alliance against Dong Zhuo. On his way, however, he took the opportunity to kill two imperial officials, Wang Rui the Inspector of Jing province and Zhang Zi the Grand Administrator of Nanyang.

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46 At this time, the course of the Yellow River in this area was a little north of its present line.

47 The biography of Cao Cao, founder of the state of Wei, is in *SGZ* 1, 1-55. We may note that the political hostility between Dong Zhuo and the Yuan clan was turned into a vendetta when Dong Zhuo slaughtered the former Grand Tutor Yuan Wei, senior member of the family, and all his relatives who had remained at Luoyang: *HHS* 45/35, 1523.

According to *Wu lu*, quoted in Pei Songzhi's commentary to the biography of Sun Jian, Wang Rui had accompanied Sun Jian on the campaign against the rebels in Lingling and Guiyang two or three years earlier, and on that occasion he made some slighting remark about Sun Jian's military appointment.

It was quite appropriate, and indeed formally necessary, that Wang Rui should have been with Sun Jian in the operations against the rebels outside Changsha. On the other hand, the function of an inspector in this situation was primarily to supervise the military action and prevent any individual commander from establishing a local military dominance. The real credit for the campaign had gone to Sun Jian, and this, together with his remarkable promotion to Grand Administrator and his subsequent enfeoffment as a marquis, caused jealousy and tension. Wang Rui, a man from good gentry family, presumably made some unguarded remark that a commandery would be better in the hands of trained and experienced administrators, while fighting men should act only as assistants.[48] Whatever the insult, Sun Jian remembered it.

The headquarters of the Inspector of Jing province were at Hanshou in Wuling commandery, northeast of present-day Changde in Hunan. From Changsha, Sun Jian passed to the west of the Dongting Lake and his route led past Wang Rui. The story told in *Wu lu* says that Wang Rui had also raised soldiers to join the alliance against Dong Zhuo, but that he had an old quarrel with Cao Yin, the Grand Administrator of Wuling, and he let it be known that he planned to use his troops to kill Cao Yin before he

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48 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1096 and 1097-98 PC note 2 quoting *Wu lu*; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 38-39.

PC also quotes the *Wangshi pu*, a family record of the Wang clan, which says Wang Rui was the great-uncle of Wang Xiang, who served the Wei and then the succeeding Jin dynasty in the mid-third century. The biography of Wang Xiang is in *JS* 33, 987-90, and the beginning of the biography is translated by Fang, *Chronicle* II, 254.

The family came from Langye, and had held official rank for some generations under Han. Wang Xiang's grandfather, the brother of Wang Rui, was at one time Inspector of Qing province.

So Wang Rui came from an established family background, with some distinction in the empire, and certainly with substantial landed property. All the more reason, then, for him to speak scornfully of a newcomer such as Sun Jian.

led them away to north. Cao Yin, as Grand Administrator, had his capital at Linyuan, which is now west of Changde and was quite close to Hanshou. He was frightened of Wang Rui, and he thought to turn Sun Jian's arrival to his own advantage, so he forged an imperial order and sent it to him. The document claimed to be a message from a special imperial commissioner, it accused Wang Rui of various crimes, and instructed Sun Jian to execute him. Sun Jian accepted the order, brought his army forward to Hanshou, and gained entrance to the city by pretending that his men had come only to look for supplies. When he explained the real purpose of his visit, Wang Rui committed suicide.

From Sun Jian's point of view, this was all very satisfactory, and he was probably not greatly concerned that the dispatch he had received might be false. He could always claim he believed it to be genuine, and for his own purposes the opportunity to eliminate Wang Rui was extremely useful. Not only did he satisfy a private grudge, but he also gained control of Wang Rui's soldiers and added them to his own army. If Wang Rui could threaten the Grand Administrator, he held the majority of the troops in Wuling, and he may have had levies from other parts of the province. Sun Jian had his own troops from Changsha, and also detachments from Lingling and Guiyang. Now he combined Wang Rui's troops with his own, and he could collect more men as he marched. His biography suggests, probably with exaggeration, that by the time he came to Nanyang his army was numbered in the tens of thousands.

At some stage during this northern march, Sun Jian was also joined by his nephew Sun Ben, and a small contingent from his home country. Sun Jian's elder twin brother, Sun Qiang, had died some years earlier, leaving two sons Sun Ben and Sun Fu. The elder, Sun Ben, can have been no older than his late teens, but he had held local office in Wu commandery. When the crisis over Dong Zhuo broke out and the leaders of the empire began to raise troops, Sun Ben travelled to join his uncle and to serve under him.[49]

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49 *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1209, being the biography of Sun Ben. On Sun Qiang, see note 6 above. The biography of Sun Fu is in *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1211-12.

We have noted earlier that when Sun Jian was raising troops to join the campaign led by Zhu Jun against the Yellow Turbans, a part of his force was composed of personal and family followers led by his younger brother Sun Jing. The Sun family was neither large nor powerful, but even a small unit could serve as the personal guard of a commander, and now that Sun Jian commanded a large army he had all the more reason to look for a nucleus of retainers whom he could trust among the amorphous mass of his ordinary troops. Sun Jian and other commanders of this period are known to have maintained groups of Companions, and in the uncertainty of the time such personal followers, family connections and associates were extremely important.[50]

With his great army from the south, Sun Jian came forward to Wan city, capital of Nanyang commandery, and met with the Grand Administrator Zhang Zi, who had been appointed to that position by Dong Zhuo.

According to *Xiandi chunqiu* and the biography of Sun Jian in *Sanguo zhi*, Sun Jian sent a message ahead to ask Zhang Zi for supplies for his army. When Sun Jian came up, the two officials exchanged gifts and Sun Jian paid his respects to Zhang Zi; on the following day Zhang Zi returned the visit. While Zhang Zi was thus in Sun Jian's camp, Sun Jian's Registrar, his senior clerical officer, came in and reported that in fact there had been nothing done in Nanyang to provide for the visiting army. Zhang Zi was frightened and tried to escape, but Sun Jian arrested him, and after a short further enquiry he was judged guilty of treason and was executed according to military law.

A version given by *Wu li* differs in some details: there it is said that Zhang Zi was unwilling to visit Sun Jian, but Sun Jian pretended to be seriously ill, and offered to turn his troops over to Zhang Zi's command. When Zhang Zi came to his tent to take up the offer, Sun Jian leaped from his bed, swore at his visitor, and cut his head off on the spot.[51]

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50 On Sun Jing, see note 31 above. Zu Mao, hero of the battle near Liang described below, is referred to as a Companion in *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1096.

51 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1096 and 1097-98 PC note 3; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 39-41. See also note 54 below.

However the affair was managed, Zhang Zi was killed. Although he had been a nominee of Dong Zhuo, there were several examples to show that men appointed by Dong Zhuo could be quite prepared to change sides and fight with the rebels.[52] It appears, however, that Zhang Zi had some reservations about the men from the east of the mountains, and he may have been reluctant to give them his full support.[53] Since Yuan Shu's forces were based in the north of Nanyang, any obstruction there would have cut Sun Jian off from his own sources of supply in the south, and it would have been dangerous if the ruler of such an important commandery had been unsure of his commitment to the cause. The commandery troops of Nanyang, moreover, provided a useful addition to his army and, as in the case of Wang Rui, Sun Jian had reason to look for some excuse to eliminate a potential rival.

When he had settled the administration at Wan, Sun Jian went forward to Luyang and joined forces with Yuan Shu. On the journey north, he had already received provisional appointment as

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52 For example, Han Fu the Governor of Ji province and Liu Dai, Inspector of Yan province, had both been appointed to those offices by Dong Zhuo, but turned against him when Yuan Shao began his rebellion (*HHS* 72/62, 2326, and *HHS* 74A/64A, 2375).

It may be recalled that the supervision of provinces in Later Han had traditionally been entrusted to an inspector, but an edict of 188 provided for some appointments to be made as governor, chosen from men of higher rank and experience than inspectors. In the hierarchy of the civil service governors would regularly outrank the grand administrators of their subordinate commanderies, so provinces became the major units of the empire and a provincial administration was headed by an inspector or by a governor according to circumstances.

Han Fu had first been named as Inspector of Ji province (*HHS* 72/62) but by the time of Yuan Shao's plans for rebellion he had taken the title of Governor (*HHS* 74A/64A). Either the texts are confused, or Han Fu had arranged his own promotion.

53 In this regard, we must note that Sun Jian was acting well outside his rights as Grand Administrator when he left Changsha to join the attack against Dong Zhuo. As we see below, he did hold a new appointment from Yuan Shu, but this was hardly a regular commission. Zhang Zi's reaction to Sun Jian's request for assistance, therefore, would serve as a touchstone of his acceptance of and support for the cause of the "loyal rebels, and both *Sanguo zhi* and *Wu li* refer to such a reluctance of Zhang Zi's part.

General of the Gentlemen of the Household,[54] and he was now recommended as Acting General Who Smashes the Caitiffs and Inspector of Yu province.

The qualifying terms "provisional" and "acting" to the posts which Sun Jian received from Yuan Shu reflect the idea that the appointments were still subject to imperial confirmation, and the expressions "memorialised" or "recommended" indicate that Yuan Shu was reporting his actions to the throne. In fact, of course, any recommendation from Yuan Shu to the boy Emperor Xian would be quite ineffective: Yuan Shu was the declared enemy of Dong Zhuo, and Dong Zhuo was in complete control of the actions and the published decisions of the young ruler. However, the Yuan and their allies had said that they were acting in the Emperor's name to save him from the oppression of the over-powerful minister, and so they went through the formalities of recording and announcing their recommendations of officers, and they could claim to believe that the Emperor would confirm their actions as soon as they had removed him from the clutches of Dong Zhuo. When these loyal rebels began their campaign, some had taken titles for themselves, and the situation soon got out of hand, but few of the contending warlords at the end of Han failed to pay that lip-service to the authority of the Emperor.[55]

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54 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1097 PC note 3 quoting *Xiandi chunqiu.* The term rendered here as "provisional" is *jia*, on which see note 12 above.

Generals of the gentlemen of household were usually court appointees, in charge of a corps of probationary officials or guards about the imperial court: Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 24 and 27, and de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 46-47. However, officers with this rank had served on active campaigns in the past: at the beginning of Later Han (Bielenstein, *RHD* II, 204 and note 5), against non-Chinese people on the northern frontier (*e.g.* de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 108, 130 and 340), and most recently during the campaign against the Yellow Turbans: for example, Zhu Jun (*HHS* 71/61, 2309) and Dong Zhuo (*HHS* 72/62, 2320).

55 The character rendered as "memorialised" or "recommended" is *biao*.

Since this whole nomination system was completely non-legal, and since the Emperor's approval could seldom be obtained for any appointment and could generally be disregarded if it was, there was nothing to prevent more than one man being nominated for the same position by rival warlords. Yuan Shao later had occasion to set up one of his own officers as inspector of Yu province, and sent him to attack Sun Jian.

The appointments which Sun Jian now held gave him both military and civil authority, and established him as the chief lieutenant of Yuan Shu. As Inspector of Yu province, he had authority in six commanderies, including Yingchuan and Runan, and this wealthy region was the homeland of the Yuan family. Certainly the rank of an inspector was lower, and the power was less well-defined, than that of a grand administrator, but the position conferred the right to raise troops from the whole province, and Sun Jian's new title as a general gave him command in the field second only to that of Yuan Shu.

By his destruction of Wang Rui and Zhang Zi, Sun Jian had left vacancies for the positions of Inspector of Jing province and Grand Administrator of Nanyang, and he also relinquished his own post in Changsha. He accepted the authority of Yuan Shu, and Yuan Shu was able to take over Nanyang. When news of Wang Rui's fall reached the capital, however, a new inspector was appointed in his place. Liu Biao, a member of the imperial clan, had at one time been involved in the factions of the early years of the reign of Emperor Ling, and had spent some twenty years in exile from the capital. He had been recalled to Luoyang, however, during the short hegemony of the He family, and he was now appointed by Dong Zhuo to restore order in Jing province.[56]

Yuan Shu blocked the main road to the south, and the breakdown of government after the passage of Sun Jian had led to banditry and clan fighting. Liu Biao, however, managed to make his way to Jing province unaccompanied, and he established his headquarters at Yicheng county in Nan commandery, south of Xiangyang on the Han River in present-day Hubei. Dong Zhuo's

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At this time, however, it is unlikely that the nomination of Sun Jian by Yuan Shu was made in despite of any existing inspector of Yu province. A certain Kong Zhou had held the title, and had joined Yuan Shao's rebellion (*HHS* 74A/64A, 2375), but no mention of him is made after that time, and it is probable that he had changed his post or retired or died by the time that Sun Jian was appointed. It is not likely that Yuan Shu would needlessly antagonise one of his associates at this stage by proposing his own man for a place which was already occupied.

56 Biographies of Liu Biao are in *HHS* 74B/64B, 2419-24, and *SGZ* 6, 210-13.

government may have hoped that Liu Biao's past history, as a member of the faction which had been proscribed by the eunuchs, and as one of He Jin's supporters, would make it possible for him to arrange some form of co-existence with Yuan Shu and the rebels. This did, at first, prove to be the case: Yuan Shu accepted Liu Biao's occupation of the greater part of Jing province, and Liu Biao recommended Yuan Shu as Grand Administrator of Nanyang; but Liu Biao took no part, on either side, in the fighting between Dong Zhuo and his enemies.

Sun Jian does not appear to have been involved to any significant degree in Yuan Shu's disposal of the spoils he had won on his way to the north. In some respects, it is a little surprising that he was transferred away from Jing province, where he had established some authority, to become Inspector of Yu province, with which he had small previous connection. Moreover, the effective result of these arrangements was that Yuan Shu received secure command only of Nanyang, while all the rest of Jing province was transferred to Liu Biao, who was Dong Zhuo's nominee and remained, at best, a neutral.

One imagines that Sun Jian must have been under some pressure to acquiesce in these arrangements, and it must be recognised that his political position was not a strong one. Men like Liu Biao, Yuan Shu and other commanders of the rebellion came from the most distinguished families of the empire, and Sun Jian, no matter what temporary authority he might have gained from his manoeuvres in Jing province, had no comparable personal status. Once he came to the north, he had to take a position as effective client and supporter of someone like Yuan Shu. He could have been destroyed only too easily if the prestige of the great families had been turned against him, and he could strive only for their acceptance and tolerance, never for equality with them.

Under Yuan Shu's overall command, therefore, Sun Jian took charge of the main attack against Dong Zhuo's position at Luoyang. He first established his headquarters in Luyang, with Yuan Shu, and from there he made arrangements for lines of supply. Then he marched north against Liang county in Henan commandery, now west of Linru in Henan. As the modern name implies, the city of Liang lay on the upper reaches of the Ru River, and an advance

north or west along the valley would bring Sun Jian's army to the crest of a ridge of the Xiong'er Shan. From there he could descend on Luoyang from the south. Guangcheng, one of the passes which defended the capital, was established west of Liang, but a fortified post would not long delay so strong a force as Sun Jian commanded.[57]

Dong Zhuo recognised the threat, and he sent out an army, under the command of his officers Xu Rong and Li Meng, which met with Sun Jian's forces near Liang. In a great battle, Sun Jian was defeated, and he was forced to flee for his life. One of the men of Sun Jian's body-guard took the red cap that Sun Jian usually wore as a mark of distinction, and so attracted the enemy pursuit. Sun Jian then managed to break out of the lines that were encircling him, and made his escape.

Some of his associates were less fortunate. According to the biography of Dong Zhuo in *Hou Han shu*, the Grand Administrator of Yingchuan, Li Min, was captured by Xu Rong's army and was executed by being boiled alive, while other soldiers of the rebel forces were killed with hot oil. It is some slight relief to find it recorded that Zu Mao, Sun Jian's rescuer, managed to escape.[58]

The last days of this Chinese year were successful ones for Dong Zhuo. Wang Kuang, the Grand Administrator of Henei, had been sent by Yuan Shao to press an advance along the Yellow River towards Luoyang, and he camped at the Meng Crossing, northeast of the capital. Dong Zhuo sent soldiers against him, and Wang Kuang's army was completely destroyed. So Dong Zhuo's defence had been successful on both fronts, and the attack by the main force east of the mountains was quite broken down. Sun Jian in the south gained no further support or co-operation from the allied armies on the Yellow River.

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57 Guangcheng was one of the eight passes re-fortified at the time of the Yellow Turban rebellion in 184 (note 28 above). The Guangcheng Pass presumably guarded the approach from the upper reaches of the Ru River, which flows east into the basin of the Huai, towards the watershed of the Xiong'er Shan, and the valleys of the Yi and Luo rivers, which combine near Luoyang and then join the Yellow River.

58 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1096, and *HHS* 72/62, 2328.

Dong Zhuo's battle with Wang Kuang, however, and the enemy's temporary concentration on the Yellow River front, appear to have provided Sun Jian with the diversion he needed after his defeat by Xu Rong, and gave him time to recover the ground he had lost. Xu Rong had probably achieved his success chiefly through the suddenness of his attack and by some element of surprise, and he had destroyed only a part of Sun Jian's forces. Certainly, the pursuit was not pressed, and Sun Jian was able to regain command of his men and re-organise them with surprisingly little difficulty. On the other side, Xu Rong may have over-estimated the effects of his victory and have assumed that Sun Jian would be incapable of further operations for some time to come; but for his own part, in collecting and controlling his scattered troops after a heavy defeat, Sun Jian's achievement was considerable. By late February or early March of 191, the first month of the new Chinese year, Sun Jian had moved forward to the village of Yangren, northwest of Liang, further up the valley of the Ru River from the scene of his defeat, and there he had established a camp. Though the defeat of Wang Kuang had proved decisive on the eastern front, in the south, for Dong Zhuo, all was to be done again.

According to *Yingxiong ji*, which is quoted in the Pei Songzhi commentary to Sun Jian's biography, five thousand more troops, foot-soldiers and horsemen, were sent south against Sun Jian. They were commanded by Dong Zhuo's officer Hu Zhen, and the famous fighting man Lü Bu was in command of the cavalry. They attacked Sun Jian's fortified camp at Yangren, but were completely routed. The story has it that Lü Bu and the other officers were contemptuous of Hu Zhen, and they planned together to deceive their commander and their own men, to wear them out and drive them into panic. Whatever the truth of the matter, Sun Jian remained at Yangren, and Dong Zhuo sent no more expeditions to attack him.[59]

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59 On the fighting about Liang and Yangren, see *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1096, and 1098 PC note 5 quoting *Yingxiong ji*; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 41-43

HHS 72/62, 2328, followed by *ZZTJ* 52, 1919; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 65, has a different order of events, which I have followed in the narrative here. As I remark in *Biography*, 72-73 note 60, I suspect that the quotation from

At this time, however, as Sun Jian prepared for his move on the capital, he was suddenly put into danger and difficulty through the suspicions of Yuan Shu. One of Yuan Shu's officers suggested that if Sun Jian should succeed in capturing Luoyang, he might turn against Yuan Shu, presumably in an echo of Dong Zhuo's own military usurpation. Yuan Shu seems to have been influenced by the argument, and he cut off the supplies to Sun Jian's army. He may have intended only to demonstrate his power, or he may have sought to have Sun Jian break off the campaign altogether. Certainly, he made Sun Jian extremely anxious: he rode more than fifty kilometres from Yangren to Luyang in a single night in order to explain himself to Yuan Shu. He drew on the ground to show his dispositions and plans, and he assured Yuan Shu that he thought only of attacking Dong Zhuo for the good of the state and the honour of the Yuan family. Yuan Shu was satisfied, the supplies were sent on as before, and Sun Jian went back to his army.[60]

Yuan Shu may have had some reason for his anxiety, since it was also at this time two of Dong Zhuo's senior officers visited the camp at Yangren to ask Sun Jian for peace and alliance. They promised that if Sun Jian would recommend any of his relatives for posts as inspector or grand administrator Dong Zhuo would arrange the appointments. Sun Jian replied,

> Dong Zhuo has turned against heaven and denies all law. He has destroyed the imperial house and overturned its power. I shall not be able to rest until I have killed you and all your families, as a sign to the world. How can I make peace and alliance with you?[61]

Yingxiong ji, describing the disastrous operations of Hu Zhen, has been misplaced in the main text of *SGZ,* and it should appear in chronological order after the reference to the defeat of Sun Jian at Liang: the story in fact relates to Sun Jian's subsequent success at Yangren.

60 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1096-97, and 1098 PC note 6 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 43-44.

61 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1097; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 44-45. It is just after the record of this incident that *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1098-99 PC note 8 inserts the passage from *Shanyang gong zaiji* describing the conversation between Dong Zhuo and Liu Ai about the former strategy of Sun Jian at the time of the campaign against the rebels of Liang province (see above).

In fact, Sun Jian had little to gain by changing sides. He came from the south of the Yangzi and his military reputation had largely been made there, while his troops and supplies were sent to him from Yu and Jing provinces by arrangement of Yuan Shu. If he did abandon Yuan Shu, even though Dong Zhuo may have had some personal respect for him, he would have held no great position at the capital. He and his men would be cut off from their home territories, and his soldiers could well turn restive. And the course of the rebellion east of the mountains had shown that the titles of local government which Dong Zhuo could offer would be of little use of Sun Jian and his family unless they had a strong army to back their claims. Suspicious and unreliable though Yuan Shu might be, Sun Jian would find him a more useful master than Dong Zhuo could prove.

Despite his fine and ferocious words, however, it appears that Sun Jian respected the flag of truce, and the envoys of Dong Zhuo were allowed to return to Luoyang.[62] We have seen that Dong Zhuo did not treat prisoners leniently, and in this civil war there had been another mission of truce, containing men of very high rank, who had been massacred by Yuan Shao and Yuan Shu.[63] So it is possible that Yuan Shu had suspicions of Sun Jian when he learnt that messengers had come to his camp from Dong Zhuo and that they had been allowed to return to tell the tale. Yuan Shu may well have felt that he needed reassurance from Sun Jian about his loyalty to their common cause - but he was evidently satisfied with Sun Jian's prompt response.

With this misunderstanding out of the way, Sun Jian took his army forward from his advanced base at Yangren and crossed the

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62 *HHS* 72/62, 2328, and *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1097, say that one of the leaders of the embassy was Dong Zhuo's officer Li Jue. After the assassination of Dong Zhuo at Chang'an in 192, Li Jue was one of the military commanders who seized power in his stead (*e.g. HHS* 72/62, 2333-34, *SGZ* 6, 180-81).

63 *HHS* 74A/64A, 2376, describes the killing of members of an embassy sent by Dong Zhuo to Yuan Shao and Yuan Shu in the summer of 190: it included two ministers and other very high officials. Of the five leaders, only the scholar Han Rong, who had been made Grand Herald by Dong Zhuo, was spared because of his personal reputation. The parallel passage is in *ZZTJ* 59,1916; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 53.

Xiong'er Shan, by the fortified pass of Dagu, some fifty kilometres south of Luoyang.[64]

Dong Zhuo now came out himself to face him, and the two armies fought amongst the tombs of the emperors of Later Han. The graves of the rulers, with temples and funeral-mounds, had been established outside the capital.[65] During the time Dong Zhuo had occupied Luoyang, he had arranged to pillage their treasures, and now Sun Jian's line of advance turned the sacred places of the dynasty into a battlefield. Dong Zhuo's army had the worst of it, and he retired to the west, along the road towards Chang'an, and camped at Mianchi in Hongnong commandery. A second army, under the command of Lü Bu, waited for Sun Jian under the walls of the city, and there was one more battle before Lü Bu led the last of Dong Zhuo's soldiers from Luoyang, and Sun Jian held possession of the city.

It was a glorious achievement, but an empty victory. Luoyang had been plundered and burnt and ruined, and Dong Zhuo had driven the Emperor and his court to Chang'an almost a year earlier. Of the civilian population, those who had not been compelled to move to Chang'an had made their escape into the surrounding country. *Jiangbiao zhuan* says that

> The former capital was deserted, and for several hundred *li* there was no smoke or fire [from a dwelling that was still inhabited]. Sun Jian came forward to the city, and he was sad and wept.[66]

From a military point of view, moreover, Sun Jian's position was very weak. After Wang Kuang's army had been destroyed near the Yellow River some months before, there had been no further

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64 The Dagu or Taigu Pass was another of the eight passes whose fortifications had been restored in 184. It was on the road to the south of Luoyang through the Xiong'er range, just east of the Yi River. A modern motor-road follows that route (*cf.* note 57 above).

65 The imperial tombs of Later Han had been established mainly in two areas, to the northwest and to the southeast of Luoyang (Bielenstein, *Lo-yang*, 83-87). Sun Jian's battleground was to the southeast, and would thus have involved the funerary parks and temples of Emperor Guangwu, founder of Later Han, and his successors Zhang, He and Huan.

66 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1099 PC note 9 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.*

advance on that line by the men from the east of the mountains. Sun Jian had conquered by his own efforts, but there was no allied force close enough to support his position or help him develop his advantage. He sent out a detachment to harass his enemies' retreat, but Dong Zhuo and Lü Bu had withdrawn their armies into the protection of fortified positions along the Chang'an road, and they could choose any time to make a counter-attack against Sun Jian's isolated force. Despite his victory, he could not remain long at Luoyang.

Before he left the capital, Sun Jian carried out the rites which his loyalty to the Han dynasty required of him. He cleared out the debris from the imperial temples and repaired the damaged tombs, and he held a great sacrifice, killing a bull and a ram and a pig, to the honour of the ancestors of the imperial clan. More than this, it is said that one of the soldiers under his command found the Great Seal of State of the Han dynasty in a well of the imperial pottery works.

According to *Wu shu*, quoted in the commentary of Pei Songzhi to the biography of Sun Jian in *Sanguo zhi*, the seal had been thrown away at the time of the massacre of the eunuchs in 189, and it had not been recovered. Then, when Sun Jian was in camp in the city, a rainbow-coloured light appeared above the well. Everyone was afraid, and no one dared to draw water there. Sun Jian had one of his men go down into the well, and he found the seal and brought it up. According to *Shanyang gong zaiji*, Sun Jian at first kept possession of the seal, but Yuan Shu compelled him to give it up, threatening to keep his wife under arrest unless he did so.

The commentary to Sun Jian's biography contains a variety of further stories and discussions of this discovery. Stripped of the miraculous symbolism which must accompany the story of such a sacred object, the basic record is not incredible. It is quite possible that one of Sun Jian's men found the seal among the ruins of the capital, and he may have found it in the well of the pottery. Such an important discovery would soon become known and Sun Jian, as commander of the army, would take it into his keeping, while Yuan Shu, Sun Jian's superior officer, would naturally expect to be given it as soon as possible.

In the commentary to Sun Jian's biography, however, the historian Yu Xi and the commentator Pei Songzhi both appear to believe that Sun Jian managed to keep the seal, that it remained in the possession of his descendants, the emperors of Wu, and that it was never handed back. There is no evidence to support this theory; on the contrary, we are told that when Yuan Shu died in 199 his seal was sent to the imperial court of Han. By that time, Yuan Shu had tried and failed to establish himself as the emperor of a new dynasty, and there seems no reason to doubt that he had made use of the Great Seal of State for that purpose. It seems clear that Sun Jian had possession of the seal for a very short time before he handed it, whether under threat or not, to Yuan Shu.[67]

With this trophy of victory and heavenly favour, Sun Jian abandoned the desolate and useless capital of the emperors of Han, and he returned to Yuan Shu at Luyang.

Civil war and the last campaigns (191-192):

Sun Jian had captured Luoyang in about the third month of the Chinese year, but even as he was fighting there the alliance against Dong Zhuo had come to an end, and the allies had ended all pretence of co-operation. Yuan Shu, who regarded himself as the head of his family, was jealous of the prestige enjoyed by Yuan Shao as leader of the alliance, and he spread stories against him, saying that "Shao is not a true son of the Yuan clan" and "Shao is our family slave." When Yuan Shao heard about this he was predictably furious.[68]

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67 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1099 PC note 9 quoting *Wu shu*, *Shanyang gong zaiji*, *Jiangbiao zhuan*, *Zhi lin* and some remarks by Pei Songzhi himself; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 48-51. See also the *Note on the Great Seal of State* below.

68 *HHS* 74A/64A, 2373, says that the father of Yuan Shao was Yuan Cheng, and *HHS* 75/65, 2438, says that the father of Yuan Shu was Yuan Feng, who had been Minister over the Masses in the reign of Emperor Ling. The two men would therefore have been cousins, and Yuan Shu is described as the younger cousin in *SGZ* 6, 207.

For his own part, Yuan Shao had been worried that he had no territorial base, and no real authority other than the nominal leadership of an alliance which was already showing signs of breaking up. Early in 191 he put pressure on Han Fu and persuaded him to yield his place as Governor of Ji province, and about the same time he sent an army against Yuan Shu's possessions. Naming a certain Zhou Yu of Kuaiji as rival Inspector of Yu province, Yuan Shao sent him to make a surprise attack on Sun Jian's territory while Sun Jian was still away.

Three brothers from Kuaiji, Zhou Xin, Zhou Ang and Zhou Yu, all came into the service of Yuan Shao about this time. According to *Kuaiji dianlu*, a local history of that commandery, quoted in the Pei Songzhi commentary to Sun Jian's biography in *Sanguo zhi*,[69] when Cao Cao was collecting troops in Chenliu commandery for the beginning of the rebellion against Dong Zhuo in 189, he sent to Zhou Yu and invited him to join the campaign. Zhou Yu collected two thousand men and went with Cao Cao to the north. It seems likely that the brothers went to the wars together. They evidently came from a powerful family, for Cao Cao had heard of them and invited Zhou Yu from a distance, and they were able to collect a large number of soldiers for his command. Later, while the armies were grouped against Dong Zhuo, they changed to serve Yuan Shao, and while Zhou Yu was fighting to confirm his duplicate

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Commentary to *HHS* 74A/64A, 2373, however, quotes the *Hou Han shu* of Yuan Shansong, and *SGZ* 6, 188 PC note 1 quotes the *Wei shu* of Wang Shen, both of which state that Yuan Shao was the son of Yuan Feng by a concubine, and that he was then adopted by Yuan Cheng. Yuan Shao would thus have been the half-brother of Yuan Shu, and Yuan Shu's comments on his status in the family would have been based upon the difference in rank of their respective mothers.

SGZ 6, 188-89 PC note 2, however, quotes a story from *Yingxiong ji*, which tells how Yuan Cheng died when Yuan Shao was still young, and Yuan Shao later carried out exceptional mourning in his honour. Pei Songzhi's remarks indicate a more direct relationship than that of mere adoption between Yuan Cheng and Yuan Shao.

HHS 45/35,1523. being part of the biographies of earlier members of the Yuan family, also refers to Yuan Shao as the son of Yuan Cheng, who died young, and to Yuan Shu as the son of Yuan Feng.

69 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1100 PC note 10; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 52.

appointment as Inspector of Yu province, his elder brother Zhou Ang was named Grand Administrator of Jiujiang, in Yang province north of the Yangzi and west of present-day Nanjing.

On his march toward Luoyang, Sun Jian had sent a detachment to occupy the city of Yangcheng in Yingchuan commandery, now southeast of Dengfeng in Henan, in the valley of the Ying River, and when he moved back from Luoyang this outpost remained to watch for any action by Dong Zhuo from the west. However, although the city was in Yu province and under Sun Jian's government as Inspector, it was also within Yuan Shao's sphere of influence in Ji province and Henei commandery to the north of the Yellow River. It was at this point, therefore, that Zhou Yu launched his attack, and Yangcheng was taken by surprise.

According to *Wu lu*, when Sun Jian heard of Zhou Yu's attack, he sighed and said,

> Together we raised loyal troops, intending to bring aid to the nation. The rebels and bandits are on the point of destruction, and yet people can act like this. Whom can I work with?[70]

In fact, these first moves in the struggle between the two Yuan marked the beginning of a new stage in the confusion of wars which brought the end of Later Han. As the alliance against Dong Zhuo broke up, the lines were drawn for battle in the whole area of the North China plain, and the warlords and their armies prepared for the fighting which should leave one man master of China.

Yuan Shao, former leader of the alliance against Dong Zhuo, had already taken over Ji province, and he also sent one of his

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70 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1100 PC note 10; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 52.

There is complete disagreement between the various sources about which of the Zhou brothers was sent against Sun Jian in Yu province. *HHS* 75/65, 2439, says it was Zhou Xin, and *HHS* 73/63, 2359, agrees, but the parallel text to *HHS* 73/63, in *SGZ* 8, 242, says that it was Zhou Ang, and this has been followed by *ZZTJ* 52, 1926; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 76.

Wu lu, however, says that it was Zhou Yu, and since this is followed by the very circumstantial account of the careers of the three brothers taken from *Kuaiji dianlu* (note 71 above), I have accepted that version.

That there appears to have been no close connection between the Zhou family of Kuaiji and the Zhou family of Lujiang: in particular, the Zhou Yu of Kuaiji referred to here is not the same person as the Zhou Yu from Lujiang who became the friend of Sun Ce and the great general of Sun Quan.

lieutenants to occupy Qing province. Liu Yu and Gongsun Zan, as Governor and chief military commander, held You province in the north in an uneasy co-operation,[71] Yuan Shu claimed supremacy in Nanyang and in Yu province, and Liu Biao, in the south, controlled the lower reaches of the Han River and had nominal command of the rest of Jing province south of the Yangzi. Further east, between the lower courses of the Yellow River and the Huai, the established administrators had not yet been required to show their loyalties to one man or another, but that choice was soon to be forced upon them.

In the mean time, the great commanders had already taken sides, and when Sun Jian led his army against Zhou Yu, he had also a thousand cavalry from You province, led by Gongsun Yue, under his command. The manoeuvres by which this co-operation had come about are summarised in a passage of *Zizhi tongjian*, and they are typical of the convoluted personal and political relationships of the time:[72]

> Liu He, son of Liu Yu, was Palace Attendant [to the young Emperor Xian]. The Emperor was hoping to return [from Chang'an] to the east. He sent Liu He to steal away from Dong Zhuo, travel in secret through the Wu Pass,[73] go to Liu Yu, and order him to lead troops to come and receive him.
>
> Liu He came to Nanyang, but Yuan Shu hoped to gain something from Liu Yu, so he kept him there and would not allow him to go further. He promised Liu He that when reinforcements came they would all go to the west together, and he had him write a letter to Liu Yu.
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> Liu Yu received the letter, and he sent several thousand horsemen to join Liu He. Gongsun Zan realised that Yuan Shu had ideas of rebellion, and he tried to prevent these soldiers from going, but Liu Yu refused to listen to him.

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71 On the rivalry between Gongsun Zan and Liu Yu in You province, see de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 400-403, and also below.

72 *ZZTJ* 52, 1925-27; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 77-78, based upon *HHS* 73/63, 2355-56, and *SGZ* 8, 241-42.

73 The Wu Pass was southeast of Chang'an, on the road to Nanyang commandery.

> Then Gongsun Zan became afraid that Yuan Shu would hear about this and become angry with him, so he sent his cousin Gongsun Yue to lead another thousand horsemen to Yuan Shu, and he secretly encouraged Yuan Shu to keep hold of Liu He and take over his troops. Because of this, Liu Yu and Gongsun Zan became enemies.

So Gongsun Yue and his cavalrymen went with Sun Jian to attack Zhou Yu at Yangcheng, and then Gongsun Yue was killed in one of the first skirmishes of the campaign. Gongsun Zan was furious at the death of his young relative, he blamed everything on Yuan Shao, and he led his army to attack the northern borders of Yuan Shao's territory.

Zhou Yu had gained some success with his first attack, and it was some time before Sun Jian recovered the ground he had lost. After some set-backs, however, including the death of Gongsun Yue, he regained control of the situation and defeated Zhou Yu in several battles. Then Yuan Shu led an attack on Zhou Ang in Jiujiang, and Zhou Yu took his army away to the southeast to go to his brother's help. There his army was defeated again, and he abandoned his campaigns and went back to his home country in the southeast.[74]

Yuan Shu had now engaged Yuan Shao's forces on two fronts and with considerable success. He had not yet conquered Jiujiang commandery, but Sun Jian had restored the position in Yingchuan, and Zhou Yu's army was effectively eliminated as a fighting force. For Yuan Shao, on the other hand, the situation was extremely difficult: besides the failure in the south, he was also under threat from the north. Gongsun Zan had rejected all Yuan Shao's protestations of goodwill and disregarded all Liu Yu's attempts to make peace. Instead, he brought an army to the borders of Yuan Shao's territory in the northern part of present-day Shandong, he encouraged the rulers of cities to rebel in his favour against Yuan Shao, and he named his own men as rival inspectors of Ji, Yan and Qing provinces.

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74 On the later experiences of the Zhou family of Kuaiji with the Sun and their associates, see Chapter 2.

Faced with such a combination of enemies, Yuan Shao made alliance with Liu Biao, the Inspector of Jing province. From Yuan Shao's point of view, a diversion on Yuan Shu's southern front would gain him valuable time. For Liu Biao, Yuan Shu already controlled the wealthy commandery of Nanyang, and there was always a possibility that he might wish to expand south. On the other hand, if Yuan Shu was defeated, Liu Biao might hope to occupy Nanyang. Since the time of his appointment, more than twelve months earlier, Liu Biao had put down the banditry and the civil feuds which he had found when he arrived, and he had stationed troops near Xiangyang on the Han River, at the border between his own territory and that of Yuan Shu. This force was commanded by his officer Huang Zu. For his part, Yuan Shu was prepared to take advantage of his recent successes, and he sent Sun Jian to lead his army to the south.

Liu Biao sent Huang Zu to take up a position to the north of Xiangyang, between the county city of Deng and the town of Fan, both in Nanyang commandery and on the north bank of the Han River, and he came forward from his headquarters at Yicheng to hold Xiangyang in support. Then Sun Jian came up. He completely defeated Huang Zu's formations and flung them back across the Han, and then he surrounded Xiangyang to prevent Huang Zu from taking his troops into the city. Some remnants of Huang Zu's forces fled to take refuge in the hills called Xian Shan, a ridge south of Xiangyang city. Sun Jian led a force of light-armed horsemen into the hills to search them out, and in that fighting in the wilderness Sun Jian was killed.

The main text of Sun Jian's biography in *Sanguo zhi*, and also *Dian lue* and *Yingxiong ji*, quoted in the commentary, have varying accounts of the death of Sun Jian.[75] Their descriptions of the general course of the operations can be reconciled, but *Dian lue* says that Huang Zu made a sortie from Xiangyang by night, and that the battle near Fan and the fatal pursuit all took place in darkness. Both the main text and *Dian lue* say that Sun Jian was shot by an arrow, though *Yingxiong ji* asserts that he was hit on the head and killed by a rock thrown down from a height above. There

75 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1100-01 and PC note 1; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 52-53.

is no way to tell precisely how Sun Jian met his death, but the suggestion of a night engagement seems very possible, even if the main battle had taken place in daylight: in confused fighting, seeking quickly to follow up his initial success, Sun Jian might well have found it necessary to lead the advance forces of his own army in pursuit of the enemy, and in the darkness amongst that broken terrain it would not have been difficult for him to become separated from his companions or be struck down in their midst.

It appears that the body of Sun Jian fell into the hands of his enemies: *Sanguo zhi* tells us that Huan Jie, a man of Changsha, had been nominated as a Filially Pious and Incorrupt candidate by Sun Jian at the time he was Grand Administrator of the commandery about 189. When Sun Jian was killed, Huan Jie went to Liu Biao to ask for the body, and Liu Biao granted his request.[76] It was then returned to the family, and Sun Jian was buried at Qu'a in Danyang commandery.[77]

The death of Sun Jian ended the fighting between Liu Biao and Yuan Shu's army. Liu Biao remained in possession of Xiangyang, but made no move further north. Sun Ben, nephew of Sun Jian by his elder twin brother Sun Qiang, took command of the army and went back to Yuan Shu, and Yuan Shu went through the formality of a recommendation that Sun Ben should take the place of Sun Jian as Inspector of Yu province.

Sun Ben, as we have seen, had joined Sun Jian at the time of his march north from Changsha against Dong Zhuo, little more than a year earlier, and at this time he was only twenty years old. His appointment as an inspector did not carry a general's command with it, as Sun Jian's had done, and although it was a courtesy by Yuan Shu, it was not an important post. With the death of Sun Jian, there was no member of his family influential or trusted enough to take his place among Yuan Shu's senior officers. Sun Jian had served Yuan Shu well, and in years to come his relatives could look for patronage and favour from Yuan Shu, and could expect to hold command under him as proven allies. For the time being,

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76 The biography of Huan Jie is in *SGZ* 22, 631-33.

77 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1101. PC note 1 quoting *Wu lu* adds that the name of Sun Jian's tomb was Gaoling, "The High Mound."

however, Sun Jian's death had put an end to the higher ambitions of his family.

Over such a distance of time, and with such sources as we have, it is difficult to assess the qualities of a man like Sun Jian. The people of his own time, and the historians who came after, generally acknowledge him as a loyal subject of Han. But he was pre-eminently a fighting man. As he fought, the power of Han collapsed and he died in one of the private quarrels that brought down the unified empire.

Sun Jian rose to high command because the times of disturbance could use a man of his abilities. He was not uniformly successful in battle and he suffered some notable defeats, but it is possible to suggest that one of his chief military virtues was his ability to discipline and control his troops. One anecdote in his biography, which tells how he was caught by the enemy outside the walls of Luyang and yet was able to order his soldiers and bring them back to safety, may illustrate this,[78] but perhaps better proof is given by his recovery after the defeat at the hands of Xu Rong near Liang. If Sun Jian was forced to flee for his life, it was no small achievement that he managed to regroup his forces and resume the advance.

Indeed, the whole campaign to Luoyang was a remarkable achievement for one isolated army fighting its way through a series of battles and defence-works against a number of different enemy forces, with an uncertain supply chain and a suspicious chief commander in the rear. Success in such an enterprise required the ability to hold the army together, composed as it was of a mixture of regular soldiers, conscripts from different regions and personal followers, any of whom, for one reason or another, might prove unreliable and willing to desert. The methods of raising troops in this civil war did not always produce good soldiers, and the men that were gathered needed a leader who could make them fight for him.

This, it would seem, was Sun Jian's great quality: to gain the confidence and also the control of the men he commanded. He was still only in his mid-thirties when he died, but his achievements

78 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1096; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 41.

had gained his clan some position in the empire, and the memory of his name was of advantage to his sons.

A Note on the Great Seal of State:

The Great Seal of State, literally "Seal Which Transmits the State," was the insignia of the emperor. It was a central item at the ceremony of succession,[79] and it was worn at the belt on state occasions. There were other seals, six at the time of Later Han, which were used for certifying various documents.[80]

Predictably, several legends accrued to the history of the Great Seal of State, hereafter discussed as the "Seal." We are told, for instance, that the Seal was carved originally for the First Emperor of Qin, using jade from Lantian, or, according to another source, the celebrated piece of jade which had been handed to the King of Chu by the mythical Bian He.[81] The calligraphy was attributed to the notorious Chancellor Li Si: not inappropriately, since Li Si was said to be the man responsible for the reform of the Chinese script in accordance with the unifying policies of Qin.

At the fall of Qin, the last ruler of that state surrendered the Seal to the future Emperor Gao of Han, and it remained in the possession of the dynasty until it was seized by the usurper Wang Mang; at his overthrow, it again came to the possession of the restoring Emperor Guangwu. Thereafter it remained among the treasures of the house of Han until it was lost at Luoyang in the disorders of 189, found by Sun Jian in 191, and so transferred into the hands of Yuan Shu.[82]

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79 See, for example, *HHS* 96/6, 3143, the Treatise of Ceremonial, originally part of the *Xu Han shu* of Sima Biao; Mansvelt Beck, *Treatises*, 86. The putting on and taking off of the Seal were notable elements in the ceremonies of accession and the later deposition of Liu He, brief ruler of Former Han, in 74. See, for example, Dubs, *HFHD* II, 204, and Loewe, *Crisis and Conflict*, 120.

80 See the *Du duan* of Cai Yong as quoted in commentary to *HHS* 1A, 33, and Dubs, *HFHD* I, 56 note 3.

81 On Bian He, see *SJ* 83, 2471.

82 On this history see, for example, *SJ* 6, 228 note 7, the *Zhengyi* commentary of Zhang Shoujie of Tang quoting Cui Hao of Han (translated by

Yuan Shu proclaimed himself Emperor in 197, and he died in 199. We are then told that his officer Xu Qiu took the Seal which Yuan Shu had stolen, brought it to Xu city, where Emperor Xian was residing under the control of Cao Cao, and handed it in.[83]

The seal found by Sun Jian is described by the *Wu shu* of Wei Zhao as being about four inches square at the base,[84] surmounted by a ring carved in the form of five interlaced dragons. There was a small piece broken off one corner, which is attributed to an occasion recorded in the biography of the Grand Empress-Dowager Wang of Emperor Yuan of Former Han, an aunt of Wang Mang: about AD 6, when Wang Mang was planning to take the throne, he sent to require the Seal of her, and the Lady Wang, in disgust, threw the Seal on the ground.[85]

The inscription on the base of the Seal is a matter of some confusion and uncertainty. According to the *Wu shu* of Wei Zhao, the inscription on the seal found by Sun Jian was "For he who has received the Mandate from Heaven, long life and eternal glory."[86] Yu Xi, in his *Zhi lin*, gives the alternative reading "great prosperity" for the last two characters.[87] One may observe, however, that Wei Zhao died in 273 as a subject of Wu, when the Seal was in the hands of the enemy state of Jin, while in the time of Yu Xi, being the first half of the fourth century, under Eastern Jin, the Seal was again somewhere in the north: on this later history, see below. So neither of these scholars ever saw the object which they were describing, nor did they have any practical way to

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Chavannes, *MH* II, 108-110 note 5), *HHS* 1A, 33 commentary quoting the *Du duan* of Cai Yong of the second century and the *Yuxi pu* "Register of the Jade Seals" compiled by Xu Lingxin of Tang, and commentary note 1 to *HHS* 120/30, 3673, the Treatise of Carriages and Robes originally part of the *Xu Han shu* of Sima Biao There is an account of the seals of Later Han in *Dong Han huiyao* 9, 131-133.

83 *HHS* 75/65, 2442-43, *SGZ* 6, 209-10, the biography of Xu Qiu in *HHS* 48/38, 1620-21 (where the commentary of Li Xian gives the sound of his personal name.), and *SGZ* 1, 30 PC note 2 citing *Xianxian xingzhuang*.

84 A Han *cun*"inch" was approximately 23 mm.

85 *HS* 98, 4032.

86 *Shou ming yu tian; ji shou yong chang*.

87 *qie kang*.

determine the correct inscription. Cui Hao, a scholar of the fifth century, says that *Han shu* has another form of the inscription as "By the decree of majestic Heaven, long life and prosperity to the Sovereign Emperor;" there is, however, no such statement in the present text of *Han shu*.[88]

After the Seal which Yuan Shu had held was returned to the court of Han it remained in the formal possession of Emperor Xian for the next twenty years, and it was transferred to Cao Pi, son of Cao Cao, when he took the imperial title and received the abdication of Han on 11 December 220.[89] The Seal was again transferred to Sima Yan, first Emperor of the Jin dynasty, at the time of the abdication of the Wei Emperor Cao Huan on 4 February 266.[90]

The Great Seal of State of the [Western] Jin dynasty, which was evidently this seal, is said to have fallen into the hands of the Xiongnu leader Liu Cong at the time of the sack of Luoyang in 311, the event which marks the effective end of the Western Jin period.[91] Thereafter, however, the records become confused, complicated and uncertain.

According to the Treatise on Regalia of *Jin shu*, which was given its present form in the seventh century, the Seal passed from the hands of Liu Cong, ruler of the Former Zhao or Northern Han state, to his successor Liu Yao.[92] In 329, with the destruction of Liu Yao by the general Shi Le, the Seal was transferred to his state, known as Later Zhao, and when that government fell into disorder and ruin in 352, the Seal was returned to the court of [Eastern] Jin, now south of the Yangzi.[93] In recording the recovery of the Seal, *Jin shu* states that the inscription read "Receiving Heaven's Mandate, long life and prosperity to the Imperial Sovereign."[94] Xu

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88 *Hao tian zhi ming; huangdi shou chang*. On Cui Hao, see note 82 above.

89 *SGZ* 1, 62; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 10-11 and 35-39; also Leban, "Managing Heaven's Mandate."

90 *SGZ* 4, 154, and *JS* 25, 772.

91 *JS* 102, 2659.

92 *JS* 25, 772, also *JS* 6, 151, and *JS* 103, 2684.

93 *JS* 107, 2797, *JS* 79, 2071, and *JS* 8, 198.

94 *JS* 8, 198: *Shou tian zhi ming*, *huangdi shou chang*.

Guang, a scholar of the fourth and fifth centuries, cited in commentary to the Treatise of Carriages and Robes of the *Xu Han shu* of Sima Biao, has this version, but he cannot necessarily be relied upon as authority for the inscription of the Seal of Later Han.[95]

The later history of the Great Seal of State, however, is of marginal relevance to the story of Sun Jian; and one must suspect that the true and original Seal may have disappeared somewhere along that line of transmission.

The best collection of translations in a Western language on the matter of the Great Seal of State is the work of Daudin. Though his interpretations of some titles and proper names are unreliable, the general thrust of his information, translated from a variety of Chinese sources, is reasonably clear.[96]

More recently, Rogers, in his translation of *The Chronicle of Fu Chien*, has discussed the history of the Seal in the fourth century, arguing that the Chinese accounts are based primarily on the requirements of hagiography and exemplary history. His own opinion is that:

> The present writer does not believe that even a shred of objective fact necessarily underlies any given notice of this seal.[97]

Rogers criticises Daudin, with other Chinese, Japanese and Western scholars, for accepting the story of the Seal rather too

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95 Quoted in the commentary of Liu Zhao to *HHS* 120/30, 3673.

96 Daudin discusses the question in detail at 129-157. See also Chavannes, *MH* II, 108-110 note 5.

97 Expressed in note 279 on page 102, and discussed also at 54-55.

At 102 Rogers cites further the opinion of Kurihara Tomonobu [1952], who suggests that the whole idea of the Seal was a device by Emperor Guangwu, founder of Later Han, to emphasise the legitimacy of his succession from Former Han.

This is very possible, and the account of Wang Mang's seizure of the Seal from the Grand Empress-Dowager, sitting as it does in a special passage of her biography, certainly has the flavour of later propaganda against the usurper. On the other hand, it is clear that the Later Han dynasty did possess a Great Seal of State, whether or not that seal had indeed been carved for the First Emperor and handed on through the line of the rulers of Former Han.

readily. To be fair, however, Daudin, in the introductory remarks to his translation, remarks that:

> ...cet objet précieux fut en effet égaré au cours des guerres, contrefait par des usurpateurs, détérioré ou détruit dans les incendies, de sorte que même avant la dynastie des T'ang, l'authenticité du sceau de Ts'in-Che-Hoang était très contestable.

There remains the question, however, whether Sun Jian did find the sacred item, as he appears to have claimed, at Luoyang after his defeat of Dong Zhuo.

I doubt one can draw any firm conclusion. The story of the find in the well of the pottery office is strange and suspicious; on the other hand, one hardly feels that Sun Jian had good opportunity to arrange the carving of an acceptable forgery in the middle of a hard-fought campaign or in the confusion of its aftermath. Unlike fragments of the True Cross, or the lance-head which pierced the side of Christ, a convincing copy of the Seal would require some craftsmanship. And if we postulate the argument that Sun Jian, or more plausibly Yuan Shu, prepared the item in advance and pretended to discover it at Luoyang, then the technicalities of the plot, and the risk of embarrassment if something went wrong - as it easily could - make the whole business remarkably complex. It seems easier to believe that Sun Jian found the Seal, or was given it by someone who knew the hiding place.

We may observe, moreover, that the story of Sun Jian's recovery of the Seal, followed by Yuan Shu's seizure of it, and its later restoration to the Han court dominated by Cao Cao, is of no particular propaganda value to any of the protagonists, except perhaps, for a short time, Yuan Shu, and he does not appear to have gained great credit from its possession. There does appear to have been some legend that Sun Jian retained possession of the Seal and handed it on to his descendants, the later rulers of Wu, but there is nothing in the historical record which implies that Sun Ce or Sun Quan or their successors ever claimed to have the treasure, and the discussion on this point is not well-founded.[98] At the other end of

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98 See *Jiangbiao zhuan* by Yu Pu and *Zhi lin* by Yu Xi in *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1099 note 9; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 48-49.

the story, there appears no evidence to show that Emperor Xian, or his master Cao Cao, gained any added authority or credibility from the fact that the Seal was restored. Emperor Xian was generally accepted as the nominal ruler of China, and while Cao Cao certainly gained from his ostensible position as "protector" of the powerless sovereign, his position was hardly enhanced by his puppet's possession of the Seal.

So in this particular case there was limited opportunity for propaganda advantage to any of the protagonists other than Yuan Shu, and it is doubtful that he was in a good position to manipulate Sun Jian, to Sun Jian's own embarrassment, so comprehensively.[99] I am therefore inclined to accept the historical record of the event, at least insofar as the statement goes that Sun Jian, when he was at Luoyang, obtained the Great Seal of State of Later Han. Thereafter, the record of transmission to Yuan Shu and then to Cao Cao and his successors and to the rulers of Jin seems as good as can be expected under the circumstances. Later, however, at the sack of Luoyang in 311, the history became too confused, and the opportunities for distortion and propaganda too tempting, for anyone now to tell the real from the false.

Chapter 6 of *Romance* says that Sun Jian attempted to hide the seal in the hope of keeping it, and perjured himself to the commander-in-chief Yuan Shao, denying that he had it in his possession. Such a dramatic scene, however, requires that Yuan Shao should have been physically present, with his army, at Luoyang; there is no evidence in the historical texts that Yuan Shao was anywhere near the capital at this time.

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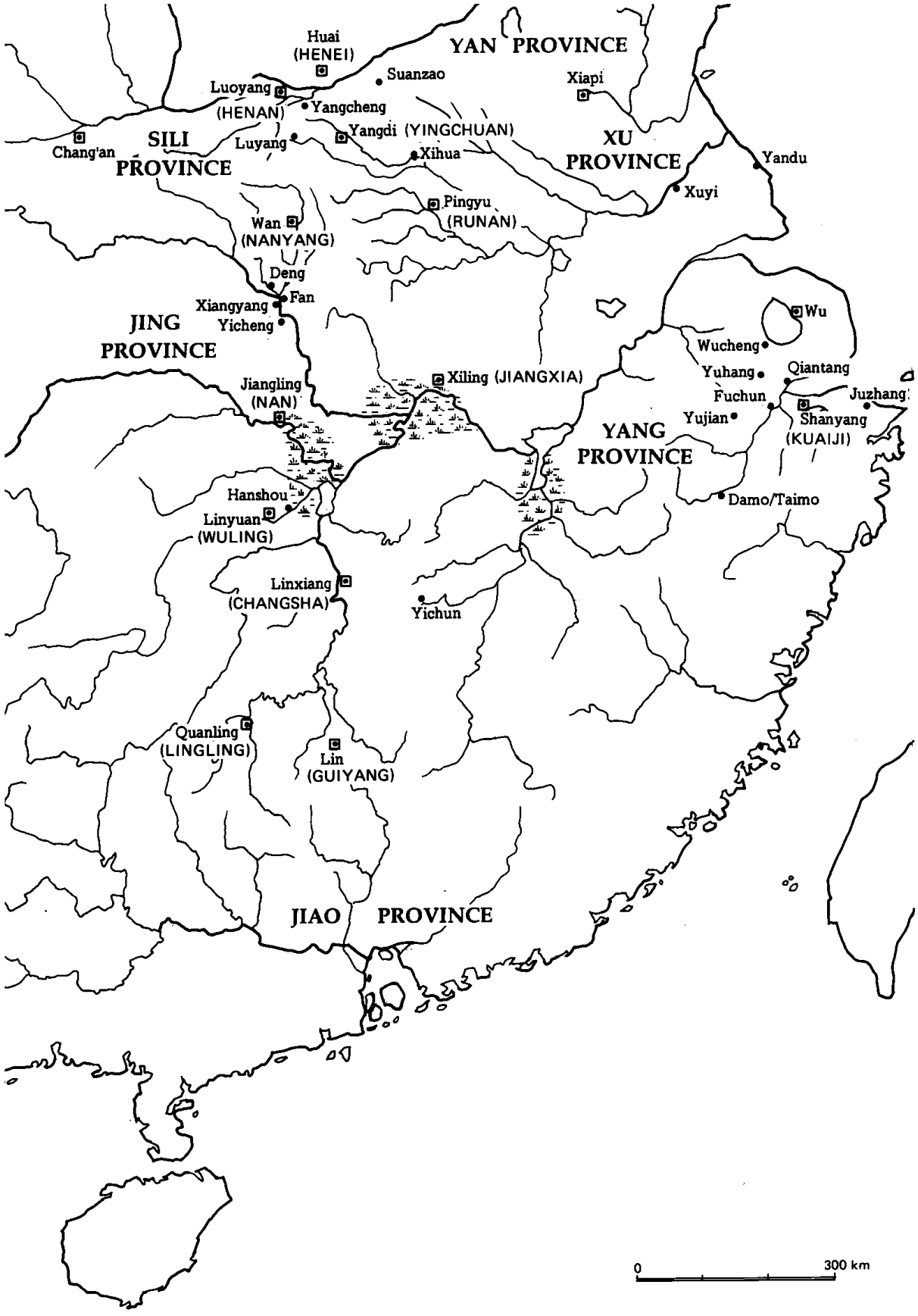
99 It is just possible that Yuan Shu had a false Seal prepared some time later, at his leisure, and used Sun Jian's capture of Luoyang to provide it with a spurious provenance after Sun Jian was conveniently dead: this would follow the pattern postulated by Kurihara for Emperor Guangwu (note 97 above). We still have the problem, however, that Yuan Shu gained no notable prestige from his possession, and by this point, as Rogers would observe, the entire discussion has disappeared in a blur of imagination and fantasy.


Huai
(HENEI)
YAN PROVINCE
Suanzao
Xiapi
Luoyang
(HENAN)
Yangcheng
Yangdi (YINGCHUAN)
Chang'an
SILI
PROVINCE
Luyang
Xihua
XU
PROVINCE
Yandu
Xuyi
Pingyu
(RUNAN)
Wan
(NANYANG)
Deng
Fan
Xiangyang
Yicheng
JING
PROVINCE
Wu
Wucheng
Yuhang
Qiantang
Xiling (JIANGXIA)
Jiangling
(NAN)
Fuchun
Juzhang
Yujian
Shanyang
(KUAIJI)
YANG
PROVINCE
Hanshou
Damo/Taimo
Linyuan
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HEDONG
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Luoyang
to Chang'an
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HONGNONG
SHAN
Dagu Pass
XIONGER
Yangcheng
Luo R
Guangcheng Pass
Yangren
Yangdi
Yi R
Liang
YINGCHUAN
Ying R
Luyang
Ru R
NANYANG

CHAPTER THREE

The Young Gentleman: Sun Ce

Introductory summary
His early life and his service with Yuan Shu (175-195)
The south of the Yangzi and the break with Yuan Shu (195-197)
The move west and the middle Yangzi (198-199)
The last campaigns (200)
Sun Ce and the legend of Gan Ji: a medley of texts

Introductory summary:

Sun Ce, eldest son of Sun Jian, was still a boy when his father died. At the age of eighteen, he took service under Sun Jian's former patron, Yuan Shu, and was given some minor commands. In 195, however, he obtained approval for an expedition to acquire territory south of the lower Yangzi, and in a brilliant series of campaigns, contending against formal officials and local chieftains, he conquered the commanderies of Danyang, Wu and Kuaiji.

By this time, Yuan Shu, from a comparatively weak position in the valley of the Huai, had ventured to proclaim himself emperor in rivalry to the Han dynasty. The usurpation, however, was rejected, other warlords turned against him and Sun Ce took the opportunity to declare his independence.

From his base on the lower Yangzi, Sun Ce extended his power to the region of the Poyang Lake. He had ambitions further upstream, towards the territory of Liu Biao in Jing province, but before he could consolidate his position he was assassinated by retainers loyal to a local clan leader. He died at the age of twenty-five.

His early life and his service with Yuan Shu (175-195):

Sun Ce, eldest son of Sun Jian, was born in 175, almost certainly at Yandu, where Sun Jian held his first appointment as Assistant in the

county.[1] With the Lady Wu, his mother, he followed his father from one government post to another, but in 184, when Sun Jian went to join Zhu Jun in the war against the Yellow Turbans, the family stayed at Shouchun, a county city which was the headquarters of the inspector of Yang province, now Shouxian in Anhui. At that time Sun Ce was no more than nine years old by Western reckoning, his brother Sun Quan had been born in 182, and a third brother Sun Yi was born in 184.[2]

It is possible that Sun Jian's family were with him at the capital during his brief appointment as Gentleman-Consultant in 186, and it is certain they joined him in Changsha when became Grand Administrator in that commandery. In 190, when Sun Jian led his army from Changsha to the north against Dong Zhuo, he left Sun Ce with his mother and younger brothers, and the family went to stay at Shu county, the capital of Lujiang commandery in Yang province: the city lay west of present-day Lujiang in Anhui, about 150 kilometres south of Shouchun.

Sun Ce at this time was about fifteen years old, and though his biography says that he took the family to Shu, it seems more reasonable to suppose that the arrangements were made by Sun Jian and the Lady Wu. Again, according to Sun Ce's biography, even while he was at Shouchun in 184 and 185, he had already made a name and gained friends among the leading men of the district; this too seems rather unlikely, or exceptionally precocious for a boy of nine. We are also told, however, that it was at this time he met Zhou Yu, who had been born in the same year, 175, and the two became friends. It was because of their friendship that Sun Ce and his family went to stay at Shu a few years later, and we are told that Zhou Yu paid his respects to Sun Ce's mother the Lady Wu, and shared everything with Sun Ce.[3]

The Zhou family of Lujiang was one of the great clans of the empire. A paternal great-uncle and an uncle of Zhou Yu had held the

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[1] The biography of Sun Ce is in *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1101-12.

SGZ 46/Wu 1, 1109, says that Sun Ce was twenty-six *sui* at the time of his death in 200 AD; he would therefore have been born in 175. On Sun Jian's appointment as Assistant of Yandu county, see Chapter 2.

[2] On the children of Sun Jian, see Chapter 2 at note 17.

[3] The biography of Zhou Yu is in *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1259-64.

post of Grand Commandant, highest of the bureaucracy, and other members of the family for generations had been members of the imperial civil service. The seat of the family was at Shu, and they were obviously wealthy. When the Lady Wu and her children arrived there in 190, the Zhou gave them a large house to live in. Zhou Yu's biography does not refer to any earlier meeting with Sun Ce at Shouchun, but suggests rather that the two young men first became acquainted in Shu. It ascribes the grant of the house to Zhou Yu, but although the chief connection between the two families certainly seems to have been the friendship between the two boys, then aged fifteen, it is again unlikely that Zhou Yu at that age had direct control over the family property.

From the point of view of the Zhou family, though the Sun were not of comparable or distinguished background, the courtesy and generosity need not be mistaken. By 190, Sun Jian was a Grand Administrator and held command of a powerful army. He looked clearly to be a coming man, and in the times of growing disorder even such a clan as the Zhou could well afford to establish good relations with his wife and children.

Towards the end of 191 Sun Jian was killed in battle near Xiangyang. His body was brought back for burial at Qu'a, a county in his home commandery of Wu, now Danyang in Jiangsu. Sun Ce and the family went to Qu'a to attend these ceremonies, and they stayed there for a short time before shifting again to Jiangdu county in Guangling, on the northern bank of the Yangzi south of present-day Yangzhou.

From the time of the death of Sun Jian, Yuan Shu's fortunes declined. He was forced to abandon the attempt to expand his territory south into Liu Biao's territory in Jing province, and by the beginning of 193 he was compelled to shift his headquarters northeast from Nanyang to Fengqiu in Chenliu commandery, by Fengqiu in present-day Henan.[4]

In the first months of 193 Yuan Shu was attacked from the north by Cao Cao, now Governor of Yan province in alliance with Yuan

[4] The present-day city of Fengqiu is north of the Yellow River, but the course of the Yellow River in this region during Han times lay further to the north, and the city was south of that stream. See *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* II, 44-45 and 46.

Shao, and in a series of battles and defeats he was driven southeast into present-day Anhui. Yuan Shu still commanded a large army, the strongest in the southeast, but this single campaign had lost Nanyang to him forever, had removed almost all his influence in the region of the Yellow River, and compelled him to regroup his forces in the valley of the Huai, with new headquarters at Shouchun.[5]

The sudden arrival of his father's old commander brought a great change to the situation of Sun Ce. According to his biography, the young man had become well known while he was still in Shu with the Zhou family, and "all the people between the Yangzi and the Huai looked up to him." At any rate, he had collected something of a following, including Lü Fan, a refugee from Runan commandery, who brought Sun Ce a hundred retainers of his own, and Sun He, who had served under Sun Jian and had at one time commanded his body-guard.[6] Sun Ce's biography says that he first went to Yuan Shu in 194, but from *Jiangbiao zhuan*, which is quoted in the commentary to the biography, and from related texts in the biographies of Wu Jing, Sun He and Lü Fan, it appears that Sun Ce was already in contact with Shouchun in 193.[7] It is almost certainly this early period which is described in the *Jiangbiao zhuan* story of Sun Ce's visit to Yuan Shu:

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[5] On this campaign, see *SGZ* 1, 10, *SGZ* 6, 207-08, and *HHS* 75/65, 2439.

SGZ 6 and *HHS* 75/65 both say that Yuan Shu killed the incumbent Inspector of Yang province, Chen Wen, and took control of the administration. However, *Yingxiong ji*, quoted in *SGZ* 6, 208 PC note 2, says that Chen Wen had died of illness shortly before Yuan Shu arrived.

Yingxiong ji adds that the inspectorate of Yang province under Yuan Shu was then entrusted to his officer Chen Yu: on Chen Yu's later career, see note 48 below.

[6] The biography of Lü Fan is in *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1309-11.

The biography of Sun He is at the beginning of that of his nephew Sun Shao in *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1214. According to the main text, his surname had at one time been Yu, but because of the affection in which he came to be held by Sun Ce, it was changed to Sun. According to *Wu shu*, quoted in *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1214 PC note 1, Sun/Yu He was a distant cousin of Sun Jian on the male side, but had been adopted across into the Yu family, a female line, in order to maintain that lineage; he later returned to the Sun clan.

[7] *SGZ* 50/Wu 5, 1195, *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1309, *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1214.

> Sun Ce went straight to Shouchun to see Yuan Shu, and he wept and said, "At a former time, when my late father came from Changsha to attack Dong Zhuo, he met with you at Nanyang and he made alliance with you and became your friend. By ill fortune he died, and his loyal work could not be completed.
>
> "Considering the favour that you gave my father in the past, I wish to offer you my services. Would your excellency give a test to the sincerity of my feelings?"[8]

It is said that Yuan Shu was most impressed by Sun Ce's address and bearing, but he did not at first give him any substantial command. Sun Ce was just eighteen in Western terms, and Yuan Shu may have considered him still too young. Nevertheless, Sun Ce had established connection with Shouchun, and some of his father's old soldiers came to join him. Soon after this first approach to Yuan Shu, Sun Ce moved south across the Yangzi and joined his uncle, Wu Jing, who was Grand Administrator of Danyang commandery.

With the death of Sun Jian in the winter of 191-192, the Sun group had lost a great part of its influence in Yuan Shu's camp. Sun Jian's nephew Sun Ben had formally taken over his troops, but it does not appear that he held any significant command, however, and though he received courtesy appointment as Inspector of Yu province, it seems that the greater part of Sun Jian's array had naturally been taken over by Yuan Shu and his senior officers, while Sun Ben returned to the south soon afterwards, accompanying Sun Jian's funeral. He does not appear to have rejoined Yuan Shu until that warlord arrived in Shouchun.

There remained, however, groups of recruits and followers which had owed a personal allegiance to Sun Jian or his relatives, and who had formed the loyal core of his greater command. Men such as Sun

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[8] *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1103 PC note 1 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*.

The main text of Sun Ce's biography says that Sun Ce first went to join his uncle Wu Jing in Danyang and then to Yuan Shu in 194. It is claimed, moreover, that Tao Qian, the Governor of Xu province, hated Sun Ce, and this was an incentive for him to approach Yuan Shu: note 11 below.

Jiangbiao zhuan describes Sun Ce's journey to see Yuan Shu at Shouchun as *jing dao,* which I have rendered as "went straight," but which might, in this context, imply that Sun Ce travelled off the obvious routes, in some secrecy.

He, Cheng Pu, Huang Gai and Han Dang[9] evidently continued to serve in identifiable units, but they played no important role under Yuan Shu. Yuan Shu had his own followers and clients, and he made small attempt to attract Sun Jian's former lieutenants or to offer them opportunities for advancement in his service. It was Sun Ce's request that these men should be allocated to him in right of inheritance from his father, and Yuan Shu's neglect of them worked to his advantage: young as he was, Sun Ce represented a new rallying point for those who had sought a career under the banner of Sun Jian.

An exception, of course, was Wu Jing, younger brother of Sun Ce's mother the Lady Wu, who had been appointed to senior rank and held command of an army. For one reason or another, however, it does not appear that he was able to obtain the personal loyalty of Sun Jian's old associates. Despite the fact that the Wu family were originally of higher quality than the Sun, Wu Jing was evidently not in a position to take over the leadership of the group. To some extent, no doubt, this is due to the memory of the personal authority of Sun Jian, and also to the fact that Wu Jing was after all a junior relative by marriage. At any event, as Sun Ce developed his career, his uncle Wu Jing acted as a supporter and assistant, not as a rival.[10]

After Sun Ce had advertised his connection with Yuan Shu by the visit to Shouchun in 193, Jiangdu became dangerous for the family. Yuan Shu, at Shouchun, had taken over the formal government of Yang province, but Guangling commandery, which contained Jiangdu, was in Xu province. Tao Qian, Governor of Xu province, had become anxious when Yuan Shu came to Shouchun, and he was not pleased to discover that the son of one of Yuan Shu's former lieutenants was settled in the southern part of his territory with a

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[9] Cheng Pu, Huang Gai and Han Dang have biographies in *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1283-84, 1284-85, and 1285-86.

[10] Another kinsman, Sun Xiang, who was a second cousin of Sun Jian and had served under him, was also in Yuan Shu's service. He was promoted to be a general, and when Yuan Shu claimed the imperial title in 197 he named him Administrator of Runan. Sun Ce wrote at that time to invite him, but though Sun Ben and Wu Jing were able to join him south of the Yangzi, Sun Xiang was too far away. He died at Shouchun, Yuan Shu's capital, presumably about 199, during the last days of the fallen state. See *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1210

band of followers.[11] When Sun Ce went to see Yuan Shu, he left his mother and brothers in the care of Zhang Hong, a scholar of Guangling commandery, but after he had seen Yuan Shu he sent his companion Lü Fan to bring the family back to Qu'a. Tao Qian had Lü Fan arrested as a spy and intended to put him to torture, but some of Lü Fan's own men rescued him, and all the party came safely to the south of the Yangzi.[12]

Tao Qian had fair reason for his apprehensions about Yuan Shu and the Sun family. Once settled at Shouchun, Yuan Shu had begun to take over the neighbouring commanderies, and he sent Wu Jing and Sun Ben to Danyang, as Grand Administrator and Chief Commandant, where they drove out the established Administrator Zhou Xin.[13] Yuan Shu had encouraged Sun Ce to join his relatives -

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11 The county of Jiangdu and the commandery of Guangling were in the territory of Xu province. *SGZ* 46 (Wu 1), 1101, says that Tao Qian hated Sun Ce, but one wonders why the family ever settled within his territory if the danger was sufficiently obvious.

There are biographies of Tao Qian in *SGZ* 8, 247-50, and *HHS* 73/63, 2366-68. A man from Danyang commandery, he had served under Zhu Jun against the rebels in Liang province. When Dong Zhuo seized power in Luoyang in 189, Tao Qian was already in Xu province. He maintained relations with the government of Dong Zhuo and his successors at Luoyang and then at Chang'an. It is probable that Tao Qian met Sun Ce's father, Sun Jian, at the time of the campaign in the northwest, and they were certainly in opposing alliances at the time of the civil war against Dong Zhuo. Most probably, however, the threat from Tao Qian arose only after Sun Ce had confirmed a formal association with Yuan Shu.

12 *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1309: after this incident, Lü Fan was such a close friend of the Sun family that when he called upon them he would be given food and drink before the Lady Wu, Sun Ce's mother.

The biography of Zhang Hong is in *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1243-47. He had been a student at the Imperial University in Luoyang, and had also studied privately. He was offered several appointments at the Han court, but always refused to serve.

SGZ 46/Wu 1, 1102-03 PC note 1 quoting *Wu li*, tells how Sun Ce went to call upon Zhang Hong when he was mourning the death of his mother. At first Zhang Hong was reluctant to discuss affairs of state at such a time, but then he warmed to the enthusiasms of his young visitor, and encouraged him to aim for a role in the southeast comparable to that of the hegemon lords Duke Huan of Qi and Duke Wen of Jin in the time of Zhou: he could support the house of Han and play a dominant role in the affairs of the empire.

13 These three men have all appeared earlier. Wu Jing was the elder brother of Sun Jian's wife the Lady Wu; Sun Ben was Sun Jian's nephew, son of his elder

very probably, of course, as a means of getting the importunate young man out of his way - and Sun Ce stayed in Danyang for some months, gradually increasing the number of his followers and gaining military experience in the petty warfare against local enemies, bandits and barbarians. *Jiangbiao zhuan* says that he acquired a force of several hundred men, but then he was unexpectedly attacked and was almost killed in a skirmish with Zu Lang, one of the chieftains of the hills-people in the south of the commandery. After this set-back he collected his followers and went north again to see Yuan Shu at Shouchun.[14]

Sun Ce arrived back at Yuan Shu's headquarters in 194, and on this occasion Yuan Shu transferred about a thousand men from Sun Jian's former troops to Sun Ce's command, and he kept him stationed at Shouchun. We are told that Sun Ce was admired by senior officials and high-ranking officers, and he was awarded the flowery title of Colonel Who Cherishes Righteousness. What he wanted and expected, however, on the grounds of his father's earlier services to Yuan Shu, was an independent command to administer some territory of his own. This was a great deal more difficult to obtain, for Yuan Shu does not appear to have been particularly interested in Sun Ce and his ambitions.

At first, Yuan Shu is said to have promised that he would appoint Sun Ce as Grand Administrator of Jiujiang commandery, which would certainly have been a valuable appointment, but then he changed his mind and gave the post to another of his clients. Some time later the Grand Administrator of Lujiang, Lu Kang, refused to send Yuan Shu some supplies that he had been asked for, and Yuan Shu prepared to attack him. For his own part, we are told that Sun Ce held a grudge against Lu Kang, because on some earlier occasion he

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twin Sun Qiang, and the cousin of Sun Ce. Zhou Xin was the eldest of the three Zhou brothers from Kuaiji, referred to in Chapter 2.

There is a short account of Zhou Xin in *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1206 PC note 2 quoting *Kuaiji dianlu* and *Xiandi chunqiu. Xiandi chunqiu* has the story that he lost Danyang to Wu Jing and Sun Ben because of his soft heart: Wu Jing made a proclamation that any people who fought for Zhou Xin would be executed without mercy; and Zhou Xin, rather than cause the loss of innocent lives, disbanded his army and retired to his home country of Kuaiji.

14 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1103 PC note 2 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.*

had gone to visit Lu Kang, and Lu Kang had refused to see him but had sent out one of his clerks to meet him instead. So Yuan Shu chose Sun Ce to make the attack, and he promised him that if he took Lujiang he would be made the new Grand Administrator. Sun Ce did conquer the commandery, and we are told that he captured Lu Kang, but then Yuan Shu forgot his promise and gave the post to Liu Xun, another of his officers. Sun Ce became increasingly disillusioned.[15]

In the meantime, however, the situation in the valley of the Huai and the basin of the lower Yangzi had become increasingly confused. In 193, the same year Yuan Shu was driven into Yang province, Tao

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15 The Lu family, like the Sun, came from Wu commandery, though they were of far more distinguished lineage. The biography of Lu Kang is in *HHS* 31/21, 1112-14. See also Chapter 8.

Years before, when Sun Jian was Grand Administrator of Changsha about 188, he had gone across commandery and provincial boundaries in order to bring assistance to a nephew of Lu Kang, who was then the Chief of Yichun county besieged by bandits: Chapter 2, and, for the identity of the Chief as a nephew of Lu Kang, *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1096 PC quoting *Wu lu.*

In the light of this past favour by his father, Sun Ce might have expected to be received courteously by Lu Kang, and had perhaps hoped for employment from him. Lu Kang, however, was evidently not prepared to recognise the debt.

There is, however, some disagreement in the sources, for Lu Kang's biography in *HHS* 31/21, 1114, says that Lu Kang defended his city for two years, aided by devoted retainers and citizens. This may be a fiction designed to present the hero of the biography in the best light; but so too may be the account in the biography of Sun Ce, which says that Sun Ce captured Lu Kang.

If we combine the two, then Sun Ce may have occupied the greater part of the territory of Lujiang commandery on behalf of Yuan Shu; but Lu Kang held out in his isolated capital, the city of Shu, for some time longer. Certainly, if the siege lasted more than a year, Sun Ce cannot have been in command of the attackers when the city fell, for by that time he had long been in the south of the Yangzi.

It is thus possible Sun Ce had considerable, but not total, success in his attack on Lujiang, and that he did not actually capture Lu Kang. Because the campaign was not complete, Yuan Shu then failed to give the reward that he had promised.

We are also told that, when it became obvious that there was danger from attack by Yuan Shu, Lu Kang sent his family to seek safety in their home country of Wu commandery. In later years, the son of Lu Kang, Lu Xu, became a noted scholar at the court of Sun Ce's brother and successor Sun Quan, and Lu Kang's great-nephew Lu Xun became one of the leading generals of Wu (the biography of Lu Xu is in *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1328-29, and that of Lu Xun is in *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1343-61). Whatever happened to Lu Kang, therefore, Sun Ce does not appear to have behaved in such a way as to cause a deadly feud between the families.

Qian in his turn suffered a devastating attack from Cao Cao. That summer, Cao Cao had invited his father, the former Grand Commandant Cao Song, to come from Langye commandery to join him in Yan province. Langye was in Xu province, and Cao Song had evidently taken refuge there as the civil war began. As he came westwards, however, with a large and valuable baggage train, he was set upon, robbed and killed by some subordinate officers of Tao Qian's command. It does not appear that Tao Qian had any personal responsibility for the incident, and indeed he appears to have been trying to provide Cao Song with protection. In fury, however, Cao Cao turned his armies against Xu province. He drove Tao Qian to take refuge in Tan city, in the south of present-day Shandong, and he led a campaign of massacre in the north of present-day Jiangsu and Anhui.[16]

It is possible that Cao Cao intended to use the opportunity to conquer Xu province and add that territory to his own comparatively small holding in Yan. On the other hand, some sources suggest that on this one occasion the normally cynical and unscrupulous Cao Cao was genuinely upset, and certainly the campaign did not turn to his advantage.[17] The behaviour of his troops made it impossible for him to effect a peaceful transfer of power in the conquered territories, and in 194, when he returned to the attack, his distraction permitted a group of dissidents to make a rising and seize the greater part of his base in Yan province. Cao Cao was compelled to turn his energies to dealing with Lü Bu, the former lieutenant of Dong Zhuo who was now seeking territory of his own.[18] The unfortunate Tao

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16 On this incident and the campaign which followed it, see *HHS* 73/63, 2367, *SGZ* 8, 249 and PC note 1 quoting *Wu shu*, and *SGZ* 1, 10.

17 On Cao Cao's motives at this time, see Leban, "Ts'ao Ts'ao," 218-222 and 225-227. Many commentators, perhaps influenced by the traditional distrust of Cao Cao, have argued that his only intention was to take Tao Qian's territory, and filial piety was nothing but an excuse. Apart from Cao Cao's personal feelings, however, even at a political level the display of fury may have seemed appropriate and necessary: such an ostentatious vendetta against Tao Qian gave public expression to the seriousness with which a gentleman of the time should regard any injury to his family.

18 Biographies of Lü Bu are in *SGZ* 7, 219-21, and *HHS* 75/65, 2444-52. Lü Bu had been one of Dong Zhuo's chief military commanders (Chapter 2) and he became one of his closest associates. In 192, however, he was persuaded to turn

Qian, however, was unable to make use of the respite. He died a few months later, without re-establishing any authority, and for the next several years the administration of Xu province remained unsettled, while the whole province became a scene of petty warfare.

As these events proceeded to the north and east, a rival to Yuan Shu for the control of Yang province appeared south of the Yangzi. Liu Yao of Donglai, member of a distant branch of the imperial clan and son of a great official family of the Han dynasty, had held office in the imperial government and then took refuge in the southeast from the disorders of civil war. In 194 an imperial letter, issued by the military regime at Chang'an which had replaced the murdered general Dong Zhuo, appointed him Inspector of Yang province.[19]

Shouchun, established headquarters of the inspectorate, was occupied by Yuan Shu, and Liu Yao did not wish to come into conflict with him at once.[20] So he moved south of the Yangzi and came to terms with Wu Jing, and Wu Jing set him up in Qu'a. From this base he was able to rally support, and by the end of the year he felt strong enough to turn against Wu Jing, as an associate of Yuan Shu. He drove him from Qu'a and then occupied Danyang.

Wu Jing now asked for help from Yuan Shu, and Yuan Shu sent an army to support him against Liu Yao. He gave military command to Wu Jing and named Zhou Shang of Lujiang, uncle of Sun Ce's friend Zhou Yu, as Grand Administrator of Danyang. The two armies faced each other across the Yangzi at Hengjiang and Dangli, now southeast of Hexian in Anhui, for almost a year, but no effective action took place. To all intents and purposes, Yuan Shu

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against his master, and he assassinated Dong Zhuo. He and his party, however, were not able to maintain their position in Chang'an against the opposition of Dong Zhuo's former officers, led by Li Jue. Lü Bu was compelled to flee to the east, and most of his colleagues were killed. See *ZZTJ* 60, 1933-39; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 93-103.

19 The biography of Liu Yao is in *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1183-84.

20 *HHS* 112/22, 3486, the Treatise of Administrative Geography, says that the headquarters of the inspector of Yang province was set at Liyang in Jiujiang commandery; the commentary of Liu Zhao at note 1 to that text, however, quotes *Han guan* as saying that the office was at Shouchun. It would appear that the headquarters had been moved to Shouchun towards the end of Later Han, and we may note that Chen Wen, whose post as Inspector of Yang province was taken over by Yuan Shu, had evidently been based at Shouchun (see also note 5 above).

had lost control of the lands south of the Yangzi, and Liu Yao was gaining troops and becoming an increasing threat. A second imperial edict promoted Liu Yao to be Governor of Yang province, with the rank of a general. Then, in 195, Sun Ce asked leave to join his uncle Wu Jing and his cousin Sun Ben in the south.

According to *Jiangbiao zhuan*, Sun Ce spoke to Yuan Shu and said, "In the past, my family was well regarded among the people of the east. I wish to help my uncle attack Hengjiang. When Hengjiang is taken, I would go to my own district and call up soldiers, and I could get thirty thousand men to help you give aid to the house of Han."[21]

Since Liu Yao was successfully holding the southern bank of the Yangzi and appeared well established in Qu'a, and since Kuaiji commandery, further to the southeast, was firmly under the control of the Grand Administrator Wang Lang, Yuan Shu can hardly have believed Sun Ce had any great chance of success. However, he gave him the title of Colonel Who Breaks the Enemy Lines, and allowed him to go.

Sun Ce was allotted only about a thousand foot-soldiers and some thirty or forty horsemen, but he had a few hundred personal followers who were prepared to go with him, and he had the usual authority to recruit or impress men as he marched. Liyang, the county city in Jiujiang which was the headquarters of Yuan Shu's forces in the south, is now Hexian in Anhui and lay about two hundred kilometres from Shouchun. Sun Ce left Shouchun with some fifteen hundred men, and he arrived at Liyang with five or six thousand. There he joined the other commanders, and they made plans to cross the Yangzi.

Sun Ce's biography indicates that he took charge of the operations against Liu Yao from the time that he arrived, and there is no indication to the contrary in the parallel texts of the biographies of Wu Jing and Sun Ben. Yuan Shu had transferred Wu Jing from Grand Administrator of Danyang to become General of the Gentlemen of the Household Controller of the Army, and as a former grand administrator it might have been expected that Wu

21 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1103 PC note 2 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*.

Jing would be the senior officer in charge of the campaign.[22] In the events which followed, however, it was evidently Sun Ce who took the lead, and by the time the war against Liu Yao was over he had established authority over his relatives and comrades. In part this may have been due to the memory of his father Sun Jian, who had commanded both Wu Jing and Sun Ben, but in great measure it was due to Sun Ce's own military abilities.

The south of the Yangzi and the break with Yuan Shu (195-197):

The eastern bank of the Yangzi at Hengjiang and Dangli was guarded by soldiers of Liu Yao under his officers Fan Neng, Yu Mi and Zhang Ying, with a large store-camp at Niuzhu Mountain, now northwest of Dangtu in Anhui, and there were other forces in the counties behind them. Not far downstream to the north, moreover, there were two further armies commanded by allies of Liu Yao: Xie Li, Chancellor of Pengcheng, was at Moling city, near present-day Nanjing, and Zhai Rong, Chancellor of Xiapi, was camped a short distance south of him. The territories of both Pengcheng and Xiapi lay north of the Yangzi in Xu province, in the northern part of present-day Jiangsu. With the disorders which had followed the death of Tao Qian, however, the rulers of these territories no doubt felt threatened by their neighbour Yuan Shu to the west, and Liu Yao had evidently persuaded them to combine forces with his own and form a united front against their enemy's main line of advance.[23]

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22 General of the Gentlemen of the Household was normally the title of the commander of a unit of palace guards at the Han court. At various times, however, and particularly towards the end of the dynasty, the title could be held by the commander of troops in the field: note 54 to Chapter 2. In the Han system, the rank of a general of the gentlemen of the household, Equivalent to Two Thousand *shi*, was formally the same as that of a colonel, the title now held by Sun Ce (*HHS* 114/24, 3564, and *HHS* 115/25, 3574-76). There is no way to tell, however, what the attribute Controller of the Army indicated in the military system of Yuan Shu, or what positions Wu Jing and Sun Ce occupied in this somewhat *ad hoc* hierarchy of command.

23 Among these men, Zhai Rong is of some particular interest. He has a special mention at the end of the biography of Tao Qian in *HHS* 73/63, 2368, and a subordinate biography following that of Liu Yao in *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1185-86.

The immediate opposition, however, was the post guarded by Zhang Ying at Dangli. Despite the stalemate over the past several months, there were still very few boats prepared for a landing on the hostile bank, and there was now a delay while detachments were sent to look for some more. One has an impression, in fact, that Wu Jing had not shown any remarkable energy during his time in command, and with the arrival of Sun Ce he was ready to allow the younger man to take the initiative and the responsibility.

Xu Kun, a cousin of Sun Ce, had served with Sun Jian and now joined Sun Ce for the campaign against Liu Yao. According to his biography in *Sanguo zhi*, Xu Kun's mother, who was a younger sister of Sun Jian, was with the army at that time, and she said to Xu Kun, "I am afraid Liu Yao's people may bring a fleet of their own to attack us, and this would be dangerous. How can we afford to wait any longer? We should cut rushes and reeds to make rafts, and those will supplement the ships we already have to ferry the army across." Xu Kun spoke of this to Sun Ce, and Sun Ce followed his aunt's suggestion and Zhang Ying was defeated at Dangli.[24]

As soon as he had established his beachhead, Sun Ce attacked and stormed Liu Yao's great depot at Niuzhu, and he captured all the grain and military equipment that had been stored there. He then turned north against Zhai Rong and Xie Li. First he attacked Zhai Rong and drove him back to take refuge in his camp. Then he attacked Xie Li, and Xie Li fled away from Moling and took no

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Zhai Rong was a man of Danyang commandery, and one of the early followers of Buddhism in China. Early in his career he was sent by Tao Qian to supervise the transport of tax grain from Guangling and Pengcheng commanderies, but he seized all of it for himself, and used the proceeds to build a temple to the Buddha and to hold lavish banquets in celebration of Buddhist festivals. Later, when Tao Qian was attacked by Cao Cao, Zhai Rong fled south with more than ten thousand followers to Guangling, where he was received by the Grand Administrator Zhao Yu. Soon afterwards, however, he killed Zhao Yu at a banquet. As a result of these activities, and similar incidents in his subsequent career, Zhai Rong is little celebrated by the Buddhists of China: Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest* I, 27-28.

Zhai Rong is described as Chancellor of Xiapi in *Jiangbiao zhuan*, quoted in *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1103 PC note 3, though the title is not given in his biography in *SGZ* 49/Wu 4. He may have been awarded the position by Tao Qian or he may simply have arrogated the title for himself.

24 The biography of Xu Kun is in *SGZ* 50/Wu 5, 1197; his daughter later became a concubine of Sun Quan.

further part in the campaign. Before he could follow up these quick successes, however, Liu Yao's other commanders, Fan Neng and Yu Mi, came with a counter-attack against the camp at Niuzhu. Sun Ce went back to protect this base, and he attacked Fan Neng and the others and defeated them. It is said that he captured "more than ten thousand" men and women.

He turned north once more to attack Zhai Rong, but he was wounded in the thigh by an arrow during the fighting outside the walls of Zhai Rong's camp, and since he could no longer ride his horse he went back to Niuzhu in a carriage.

Zhai Rong learnt from a deserter that Sun Ce had been wounded, and he believed he was dead, so he sent a detachment to make a sortie against Niuzhu. Sun Ce, however, was still able to command his troops. He sent a few hundred men to face the enemy and prepared an ambush in the rear. Under instructions, the first line of battle, gave ground and pretended to run away before Zhai Rong's attack, but when the enemy charged in pursuit they were taken by surprise from the ambush, they were heavily defeated, and they lost more than a thousand men. Then Sun Ce went forward again with his army to the walls of Zhai Rong's camp, and he had his attendants call out to the people inside, "Young Gentleman Sun, what do you say of him now!"

When Zhai Rong realised Sun Ce was still alive, he raised his walls higher and dug his moats deeper and made all possible preparations for defence. The terrain was difficult, and there was limited point in a direct attack, so Sun Ce left him there and made a flank march to the east. In a series of battles, he moved north towards Moling and then southeast against Qu'a. As he marched, Zhai Rong and then Liu Yao abandoned their positions and fled southwest up the Yangzi to Yuzhang commandery.[25] Sun Ce entered Qu'a and set up his headquarters in the city.

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25 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1103-04 PC note 3 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*, contains the most detailed account of these manoeuvres, and *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1184 and 1185, gives further information on the murderous and treacherous career of Zhai Rong.

After the defeat of the allies at the hands of Sun Ce, Zhai Rong killed his former associate Xie Li, and then went to Yuzhang and killed the Grand Administrator there. He sought to take the territoyr for himself and keep Liu Yao out, but after an

Sun Ce had reached Qu'a by the twelfth month of the Chinese year, February of the Western year 196, and Yuan Shu, in acknowledgement of his success, sent him a commission as Acting General Who Destroys Criminals. At this point, Sun Ce paused to consolidate his position and establish an administration. According to *Jiangbiao zhuan*,

> Sun Ce was still young, and though he had his rank and was now well known, all the soldiers and people called him "Young Gentleman Sun." When men heard that Young Gentleman Sun was coming, they quite lost spirit, and the local magistrates and other officials would abandon the cities and run away to hide in the hills and open country. Then he would arrive, and the men of his command respected order, and they did not dare to rob or plunder: not even chickens or dogs or vegetables were stolen. And so the people were extremely pleased, and they would all come to bring cattle and wine as a welcome to the army.[26]

Sun Ce's biography in *Sanguo zhi* adds a short description:

> As a man, Sun Ce had a handsome face and an easy, friendly manner. By nature he was generous and tolerant, very good at managing men. That is why the soldiers and the people who came into contact with him were all devoted to him, and would gladly give their lives in his service.[27]

By his victories over Liu Yao and his allies, Sun Ce immediately gained great numbers of soldiers. After the second battle at Niuzhu, for example, we are told that he took over many men who had formerly served Fan Neng or Yu Mi, and it is clear that on several occasions the captured soldiers of a defeated army were able to change allegiance after the battle. Liu Yao's flight, moreover, left his troops without a leader, and numbers of them were scattered about the countryside waiting only for an opportunity to join the new government. From Qu'a, Sun Ce sent proclamations to all the counties now under his control, saying that

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initial set-back Liu Yao rallied local forces, defeated Zhai Rong and drove him away. Zhai Rong fled into the hill country, and he was killed by the people there.

26 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1104 PC note 1 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*.

27 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1104.

> No questions will be asked of any local followers of Liu Yao or Zhai Rong who come to surrender. For those prepared to join my army, one man who comes will be regarded as fulfilling [the government levy on] his household. Those who do not want to join up will not be forced to.[28]

It is said that within a few weeks he had gained twenty thousand foot-soldiers and more than a thousand horsemen, and they came like clouds from every direction.

Though the increased recruitment must have been gratifying it, was no small matter to bring these men, many of them former enemies, under effective control, and Sun Ce was fortunate, and suitably grateful, that his old friend Lü Fan took the position of Chief Controller, responsible for discipline in the new army. We are told Lü Fan made his offer during a series of friendly chess games, and Sun Ce argued at first that a man of his rank and position should not demean himself with such administrative chores. Lü Fan replied, however, that good order in the army was a matter which concerned the whole success of their enterprise: "It's like men in the same boat: if one thing goes wrong, we shall all drown. So it is just as much interest to me as it is to you!" Sun Ce laughed and agreed, and Lü Fan's work brought coherence and discipline to the enlarged array.[29]

Also at this time Sun Ce brought his mother and brothers back to Qu'a. When Liu Yao drove Wu Jing across the Yangzi, Sun Ce's family had also moved to safety and stayed in the vicinity of Liyang.[30] They now returned, and Sun Ce appointed his younger brother Sun Quan, about fourteen years old by Western reckoning, to be Chief of Yangxian, a neighbouring county in Wu commandery. Sun Quan appears to have been granted the title rather for status than

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28 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1105 PC note 1 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.*

29 *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1309 PC note 1 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.*
The title *dudu*, here rendered as Chief Controller, is a comparatively low one, and essentially administrative. The status and function of the office, however, could vary with circumstances. It appears elsewhere about this time as the position of a divisional officer in an army on active service, and in later years it indicated the command of a large regional garrison.

30 *Jiangbiao zhuan*, as cited above, says that Sun Ce's mother and brothers had been at Fuling; this was another city in Jiujiang commandery, some small distance north of Liyang.

for practical service, but Sun Ce evidently held him in considerable admiration, took counsel with him on occasion, and spoke highly of him to his own followers.[31]

Though Sun Ce had supplanted Liu Yao in the government of the settled Chinese lands of Danyang commandery and the region about Qu'a in Wu commandery, many of the people of the hill country, and the groups and clans of the region, had taken the opportunity of the fighting to extend their power and re-establish their private armies. In the hills of Wu commandery south of Qu'a, the local leader known as White Tiger Yan appears to have made himself the chief of a loose confederation. In the west, about Jing county in Danyang, now Jingxian in Anhui, Taishi Ci, an officer loyal to Liu Yao, was attempting to organise a rival administration for the commandery, and he made an alliance with the hills people nearby, on the northern ridges of the Huang Shan range.[32]

For the time being, Sun Ce ignored Taishi Ci. His main objective was to the south and east, in his family's home country of Wu commandery and Kuaiji. The Grand Administrator of Wu commandery, Xu Gong, did not prove difficult to deal with, for

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31 The biography of Sun Quan, in *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1115, says that Sun Quan was nominated for "Filially Pious and Incorrupt" (*xiaolian*) and "Flourishing Talent" (*moucai*) candidatures by his commandery of Wu and his province of Yang, and it would appear that these honours were paid him after he became Chief of Yangxian.

On the regular system of recruitment into the imperial service, see Chapter 2. In these terms, the nominations of Sun Quan made no sense, for a commissioned post such as chief of a county should required not merely nomination but also approval by the emperor, and for a *xiaolian* candidate there was supposed to be a period of probation. Obviously, in Sun Quan's case the recommendations were no more than tokens of courtesy, but he was occasionally addressed by the title "Candidate" (*Xiaolian*), so there was some lip-service to this remnant of the imperial recruitment procedures: *e.g. SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1115.

32 The biography of Taishi Ci is in *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1186-90.

Taishi Ci was a man from Donglai, the same commandery as Liu Yao. He was a man of considerable intelligence and courage, and there are anecdotes which describe his swift thinking and his loyalty to his associates, rather in the style of the knight-errant tradition. He had not, however, been given high command by Liu Yao, and this enterprise in Danyang was undertaken primarily at his own initiative.

when he attempted to oppose Sun Ce he was betrayed by his own Chief Commandant Zhu Zhi.

As Chief Commandant, Zhu Zhi was responsible for the military organisation of the commandery, and was theoretically under Xu Gong's orders, but he was an old associate of the Sun family, he had served under Sun Jian, and when he heard Sun Ce was coming he raised an army to attack Xu Gong. Xu Gong was defeated and took refuge with White Tiger Yan, and Zhu Zhi took over the office of Grand Administrator.[33]

White Tiger Yan and the other opposition groups in Wu were not sufficiently important to distract Sun Ce from his main objective in the south, and in 196 he moved to the attack on Kuaiji. The Grand Administrator Wang Lang had been in power for several years, and it could not be expected that he would prove so easy to deal with as Xu Gong in Wu. As Sun Ce advanced against him Wang Lang came forward to defend his territory on the line of the Qiantang estuary at the head of Hangzhou Bay.[34]

Sun Ce had taken the opportunity of his march through Wu commandery to call up support from his connections in that region, and his uncle Sun Jing, youngest brother of Sun Jian, came to join him at Qiantang. Wang Lang's army was at the town of Guling, just over the water, and though Sun Ce tried several times to force his way across, he had no success. Then, however, Sun Jing arranged to lead a detachment of the army a few kilometres south to a river crossing at Zhadu, returning north to take Wang Lang's forces in the rear. Sun Ce had the rest of his men light the usual number of camp-fires so that the enemy would not realise any troops were missing, and he sent Sun Jing and his men off at night. Wang Lang was taken completely by surprise and the Sun forces were established across the river.[35]

At first, Wang Lang attempted to organise a retreat and regroup his men, and he sent his lieutenant Zhou Xin, former Grand

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33 The biography of Zhu Zhi is in *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1303-05. He had served under Sun Jian in the early campaigns, he had been acting Chief Commandant in Changsha, and he had taken part in the capture of Luoyang from Dong Zhuo. He had already been in some contact with Sun Ce and his family.

34 The biography of Wang Lang is in *SGZ* 13, 406-14.

35 *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1205.

Administrator of Danyang, to hold the line against Sun Ce's attack.[36] But Sun Ce defeated Zhou Xin and killed him, and Wang Lang abandoned the greater part of his territory and took to flight. He went by ship south along the coast to Dongye, a territory administered by Kuaiji commandery but situated at the mouth of the Min River in Fujian, five hundred kilometres from Hangzhou Bay.[37]

Sun Ce evidently considered that Wang Lang was sufficiently important to be worth pursuit, presumably because of the possibility that he might attempt a return once Sun Ce had gone back to Wu and Danyang. At the same time, the victory over Zhou Xin had been so complete that he had no immediate problems in the area of Hangzhou Bay, and could leave a part of his army for basic mopping-up exercises. So he followed Wang Lang, took the city of Dongye, and received his enemy's surrender.

Shang Sheng, Chief of Houguan county, which was neighbour to Dongye, had supported Wang Lang when he came to the south, and although Wang Lang surrendered, Shang Sheng allied himself with some of the local people and continued to resist Sun Ce. When Sun Ce returned to the north he appointed a certain Han Yan as Chief Commandant of the Southern Region of Kuaiji, and gave him soldiers to attack Shang Sheng. Han Yan, however, had no success, and he was soon replaced by He Qi, member of a powerful family in Kuaiji, who had joined Sun Ce after his arrival in the commandery. Shang Sheng then offered to surrender, but he was killed by his own allies, and it was some time before He Qi could win over groups of the local people, and take advantage of disagreements among his enemies in order to attack and finally defeat them. For several years to come, He Qi remained in charge of operations for the Sun family in this region of the far southeast, and he steadily extended their influence and power.[38]

With Wang Lang defeated and Kuaiji secure, Sun Ce moved back north into Wu commandery to deal with White Tiger Yan and the other groups who opposed him. Many of the enemy leaders were

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36 On Zhou Xin, see also note 13 above.

37 On Dongye, see note 87 to Chapter 1.

38 The biography of He Qi is in *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1377-80.

killed, but White Tiger Yan and the former Grand Administrator Xu Gong were able to escape and later regroup their forces.

There are two stories of Sun Ce in this time of civil war in his native commandery. A certain Wang Sheng, who had at one time been Grand Administrator of Hepu commandery in the far south, fought against Sun Ce but was then captured. He was going to be executed, but Sun Ce's mother the Lady Wu said, "Wang Sheng was courting me at the same time as your father Now all of his sons and brothers are dead and this old man remains alone. Why should you be afraid of him?" So Sun Ce let Wang Sheng live.[39]

Similarly, it is told how White Tiger Yan fled to take refuge with a certain Xu Zhao of Yuhang, now Yuhang in Zhejiang, and later Sun Ce admired Xu Zhao's loyalty to an old friend and so did not attack him. Nevertheless, though White Tiger Yan had made his escape and was able to cause trouble in the future, Wu commandery was firmly under the control of Sun Ce.

Sun Ce named himself Grand Administrator of Kuaiji, and he restored his uncle Wu Jing to the title of Grand Administrator of Danyang. Zhu Zhi, former Chief Commandant, was Grand Administrator of Wu commandery. Sun Ce's cousins, Sun Ben and his younger brother Sun Fu, were also named grand administrators, Sun Ben to Yuzhang commandery and Sun Fu to Luling, a new unit formed from the southern part of Yuzhang, though at this time no part of Yuzhang nor the putative Luling was yet in Sun Ce's hands.

At this stage, towards the end of 196, Wu Jing and Sun Ben went back to Yuan Shu to report. Yuan Shu was engaged in a campaign to take Xu province from Liu Bei, the successor to Tao Qian, and he named Wu Jing as his Grand Administrator of Guangling commandery, the territory immediately north of the mouth of the Yangzi. Sun Ben was given command of troops at Shouchun, and a distant cousin of Sun Ce, Sun Xiang, was appointed Grand Administrator of Runan. Zhou Shang and his son, Sun Ce's friend Zhou Yu, had joined Sun Ce in the first campaign against Liu Yao, but after Sun Ce was established in Qu'a he left them to look after Danyang while he moved against Wu and Kuaiji. Soon afterwards,

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39 This, and the anecdote relating to Xu Zhao below, both come from *Wu lu*, quoted in *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1105 PC note 2.

Yuan Shu recalled Zhou Shang and Zhou Yu. He offered Zhou Yu a military command, but Zhou Yu asked instead to be made Chief of Juchao county in Lujiang commandery, northeast of present-day Chaoxian, a short distance from the Yangzi.[40] Zhou Yu was perhaps already suspicious of Yuan Shu's ambitions, he was afraid that Yuan Shu would fail, and he wanted to be stationed close enough to be able to move south and rejoin Sun Ce without great difficulty.

For by 196 or 197 Yuan Shu had decided to proclaim himself as Emperor of a new dynasty. The histories claim Yuan Shu was thinking of the imperial title as early as 191, when it is said that Sun Jian found the Great Seal of Han in the ruins of Luoyang and handed it over to him.[41] Later, in 196, Yuan Shu broached the matter in council with his officers, and although he went no further with the plan at that time, Sun Ce heard of the proposal and wrote to protest.

Wu lu, quoted in the commentary to *Sanguo zhi*, preserves the text of the letter which Sun Ce had composed by his counsellor Zhang Hong and which he sent to Yuan Shu, saying in part,

> Last winter there was a rumour you had made a great plan [to claim the empire], and everyone was afraid. Then we found that tribute was being prepared [for the Han court], and we were all relieved of our anxiety.
>
> I have just heard, however, that the discussion has started once again, and some people wish to revive the earlier proposal... This makes me even more concerned, but it is surely no more than a foolish rumour.

The letter continues, at length, to argue against Yuan Shu's plan of empire.[42] Nevertheless, despite this and other protests from his officers, Yuan Shu proclaimed himself Emperor of the Zhong

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40 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1260.

41 *e.g. SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1099 PC note 9 quoting *Shanyang gong zaiji*, and *SGZ* 6, 208 PC note 1 quoting *Wu shu.*

42 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1105-06 PC note 4 quoting *Wu lu.*

At the end of this note, Pei Songzhi observes that the *Dianlue* of Yu Huan suggests that Zhang Zhao, another counsellor of the Sun clan, was the author of this letter; Pei Songzhi, however, observes that this document is written in very fine style, that Zhang Hong was considerably superior to Zhang Zhao as a literary composer, and the letter should therefore be attributed to Zhang Hong.

dynasty in the summer of 197.[43] Sun Ce at once disclaimed all allegiance to him.

Yuan Shu appears to have had an inordinate idea of his own importance and a remarkable capacity for self-delusion. Admittedly, he controlled most of Yang province, and he was fighting for Xu province, while Sun Ce, who was officially under his orders, was acquiring more territory in the southeast. On paper, Yuan Shu thus dominated the Huai and the lower Yangzi; but this was still not a great part of the whole empire.

Besides his territorial possessions, Yuan Shu was very conscious that he came from a great official family, and he claimed seniority in the clan to his cousin or half-brother Yuan Shao;[44] on the other hand, as Sun Ce pointed out in his letter, the honours that the Yuan family had received from the Han dynasty should rather encourage him to support the young Emperor, not attempt to take his place.

Yuan Shu had also convinced himself by means of prophecies and word-play with the characters of his name that he was the man destined to succeed the Liu family in the government of the

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43 *SGZ* 6, 209 and 210 PC quoting *Dian lue*, and *HHS* 75/65, 2442.

The character *zhong*, which also appears as *chong*, is explained by the commentators as the name of the imperial state established by Yuan Shu, comparable to the name Han for the dynasty of the Liu family, or the name Cheng, taken by the warlord Gongsun Shu in the region of present-day Sichuan at the beginning of Later Han (*e.g. HHS* 13/3, 535).

It seems most probable that the name chosen by Yuan Shu was Zhong, which has the meaning of "younger" and hence implied a courteous succession from Han: in similar fashion the later state of Shu-Han, founded by Liu Bei in the west, was sometimes described as Ji-Han. The character *chong* on the other hand, as for example in the phrase *chongren*, would indicate a young ruler, still in his minority. It would not have been very flattering to Yuan Shu's pretensions, and it may have been a deliberate corruption by his enemies.

The founder of Han, of course, took the name of his dynasty from the kingdom with which he had been enfeoffed after the fall of the empire of Qin, and Gongsun Shu evidently took his dynastic name from his capital, Chengdu. It does not appear, however, that Yuan Shu had any association with a place called Zhong or Chong.

44 On the relationship of Yuan Shu to Yuan Shao, see note 68 to Chapter 2.

Yuan Shu's father, Yuan Feng, his grandfather and his great-great grandfather, together with other collateral relatives had all held position as one of the Three Excellencies, the highest formal positions in the imperial bureaucracy of Han: *HHS* 45/35, 1517-23.

empire;[45] but Sun Ce and Zhang Hong, in rational Confucianist fashion, pointed out that

> Many people of this time follow prophecies and accept superstitions. They compare words and fit them to current events, and they use this to delude their masters and to deceive the people... You must examine these carefully and think hard about them.

In the event, Yuan Shu's proclamation as an emperor proved ill-timed and mistaken. By the premature move he broke the rules of the civil war and made himself outlaw in the eyes of all other military leaders of the time, and it was not for twenty more years that another such claim was made. Yuan Shu already had powerful enemies, Cao Cao and Yuan Shao, in the north, and his position in the southeast depended in the last resort very much on his family prestige and his personal influence. He offered a marriage connection to the warlord Lü Bu, his ally in Xu province, but Lü Bu was persuaded that it would be unwise to have dealings with a rebel emperor, and he broke off relations with Yuan Shu and then attacked him in Yang province. Faced with the need to defend his claims and his territories by fighting, Yuan Shu was quite unsuccessful: by the end of 197, under attacks from Lü Bu and from Cao Cao, he had been driven south of the Huai. Thereafter he was under constant pressure, and the resources of his diminished territory dwindled as

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45 *Dian lue*, quoted in *SGZ* 6, 210 PC note 1, and *HHS* 75/65, 2439, record that there was an apocryphal saying current at the time which said, "The one to replace Han will be 'road high' (*tu gao*)." Since the character of Yuan's personal name, *shu*, can have the meaning of a road or street, and the characters of his style, *gong lu*, can have the meaning of "public (and hence 'high') road," Yuan Shu believed this was a reference to himself.

In fact, it seems probable that the prophecy was based upon the rebellion of a certain Xu Feng, who made a rebellion in the county of Dangtu in Jiujiang commandery about 144-145, and who may well have devised the saying to encourage his own cause. See *HHS* 6, 276; *HHS* 112/22, 3486; and Mansvelt Beck, *Treatises*, 211.

As the commentary to *HHS* points out, moreover, the character for the state of Wei, which was founded by Cao Cao and which did indeed take over from the empire of Han, could bear the meaning "high." See, for example, Goodman, *Ts'ao P'i Transcendent*, 102.

On another prophecy of this nature, compare note 11 to Chapter 2, concerning the phrase *xuchang*.

the result of bad harvests and his own extravagance. His power steadily declined.

In the south, Sun Ce set guards to hold the crossings over the Yangzi against his former master, and he wrote to his relatives and friends holding office under Yuan Shu and invited them to join him. Wu Jing, Sun Ben and Zhou Yu all came to him, and Zhou Yu brought with him Lu Su, one of the great commanders of the Sun family in the years that followed.[46] Sun Ce had no difficulty in holding his territory against Yuan Shu, who was far too pre-occupied with Lü Bu and Cao Cao to be able to spare him any attention, and he was immediately recognised in his position and urged to join the alliance against the rebel.

In 192, Dong Zhuo had been assassinated at Chang'an by his trusted lieutenant Lü Bu. Within a few weeks, Lü Bu had been forced to flee the capital to the east, and had sought to establish a position in Yan province and then in Xu. The young Emperor Xian of Han, however, remained at Chang'an as a pawn in the hands of some of Dong Zhuo's former officers, a group of generals headed by Li Jue, who had come to avenge Dong Zhuo and succeed to his power. Towards the end of 195 the Emperor was at last able to take advantage of the rivalries and quarrels among these guardians to make his own escape to the east. There, however, he fell into the hands of Cao Cao, and from this time on Cao Cao was able to issue orders and conduct his policy in the name of the Emperor of Han.

In 197, therefore, an edict was sent to Sun Ce, recognising him as Grand Administrator of Kuaiji, recalling the deeds of his father in the service of Han against Dong Zhuo, and commanding him to join with Lü Bu and a newly-appointed acting Grand Administrator of

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46 The biography of Lu Su is in *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1267-73.

Jiangbiao zhuan, quoted in *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1210 PC note 1, says that Sun Ben had some difficulty on getting away to join Sun Ce, and that Sun Ce's other cousin, Sun Xiang, was not able to come, because it was too far for him to travel from Runan to the south of the Yangzi. He died at Shouchun. The main text of *SGZ* 51 says that Sun Ben actually abandoned his wife and children in his escape across the Yangzi. However, since we are also told that Cao Cao married one of his sons to a daughter of Sun Ben, some of his family rejoined him later (*SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1104).

Yuan Shu does not appear to have had the forethought or the nerve to attempt to use hostages as a means of holding Sun Ce and his allies to their allegiance.

Wu commandery, Chen Yu, to attack Yuan Shu. According to *Jiangbiao zhuan*, this edict was conveyed to Sun Ce by a certain Wang Pu, and besides confirming him as a Grand Administrator it granted him succession to the marquisate of Wucheng, formerly held by his father Sun Jian, and named him a Chief Commandant of Cavalry. Sun Ce felt that the military appointment was not high enough, and he wanted to be given title as general. In order to appease him, Wang Pu gave him the brevet rank of General Who Glorifies Han.[47]

Wu lu contained the memorial of thanks sent by Sun Ce at the time of this visit from Wang Pu, which reads in part:

> Your subject is uninformed and uncultivated, and does no more than guard the frontiers. Your majesty extends his great favour far and wide, not failing to consider even the most minor contribution. You have given me the honour of a noble rank, and you have also set me in charge of a famous commandery. I respect the honour and appreciate the generosity; they are more than I deserve.
>
> In the second year of Xingping, in the twelfth month, on the twentieth day [6 February 196] at Qu'a in Wu commandery I received a recommendation from Yuan Shu appointing me as Acting General Who Destroys Criminals. Now I have received your imperial commission, and I realise the [earlier] appointment was false and made without true authority. Although I have at once renounced the title, I am still trembling and perturbed.
>
> When I was aged seventeen, I lost my support [my father]. I first held command of soldiers when I was not yet old enough to take the cap of manhood, and although I am weak and timid and not able in war, I have given the utmost attention to my orders.
>
> Yuan Shu, however, is wild and deluded, and his wrongdoings are great and serious. I trust to your spiritual authority, I receive your commands to carry out his punishment, and I shall send him

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47 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1107 PC note 5 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*.

On the significance of the prefix *jia*, here rendered as "brevet," see note 12 to Chapter 2.

SGZ 46/Wu 1, 1101 PC note 2 quoting the *Wei shu* of Wang Shen, says that Sun Ce ceded his rights in the marquisate of Wucheng to his youngest brother Sun Kuang. It was not, at that time, a matter of major importance.

in as a prisoner. May that be a recompense for those favours which have been granted me."[48]

There was, in all this, a delicate and complex game of diplomacy and strategy played by and against Sun Ce. As a result of his recent victories, he controlled Kuaiji and Wu commanderies and part of Danyang. He was probably not at all reluctant to part company with Yuan Shu, for he had certainly shown that he could manage on his own, and he wanted to confirm his position by establishing a direct relationship with the court: whether or not the Emperor was a puppet in another's hands, the official approval of the Han dynasty would enhance Sun Ce's local authority.

On the other hand, the mission of Wang Pu must at first have come as a disappointment. In exchange for recognition by the Han emperor, Sun Ce was given only confirmation of the commandery which he already held, with succession to a marquisate to which he was already entitled, and for which he had little use. Rank as Chief Commandant of Cavalry was surely insulting for one who had been operating as a general and, more importantly, it was very possibly intended to restrict Sun Ce's freedom of action in his own region, for he could have faced some formal difficulty in commanding military operations or raising troops outside the borders of Kuaiji. The semi-official title which he compelled Wang Pu to grant him had two important advantages: it restored his former military rank, and it gave open recognition to his acceptance as a loyal servant of Han.

Moreover, the appointment of Chen Yu as Grand Administrator of Wu commandery, although it was described only as a temporary arrangement, paid no attention to the fact that Sun Ce's close associate, Zhu Zhi, had been acting as Grand Administrator since his expulsion of Xu Gong more than year earlier. If Wu commandery

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48 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1107 PC note 5 quoting *Wu lu.*

In commentary at the end of this passage, Pei Songzhi observes that Sun Ce has referred to his father's dying when he himself was seventeen, and that the main text of Sun Ce's biography says that Sun Ce died at the age of twenty-six *sui* in the year 200. If these figures are correct, Sun Jian must have died in the second year of the Chuping period. The *Han ji* of Zhang Fan and *Wu li* both say that he died in the second year, but *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1100, evidently mistakenly, has the death of Sun Jian in the third year of Chuping. See also note 1 to Chapter 2.

could be separated from Sun Ce's control, he would have lost more than half of his territorial base and would be decisively weakened.

This program could already be seen in operation. Chen Yu came no closer than Haixi county in Guangling commandery, well north of the Huai near present-day Guannan in Jiangsu. From there, instead of co-operating with Sun Ce, he sent secret messengers to make contact with White Tiger Yan and other potential rebels, to have them act as agents against Sun Ce. There seems in fact to have been a plan to wait until Sun Ce had committed his army to an attack across the Yangzi against Yuan Shu and then arrange a rising which would seize Wu commandery and cut his communications with Kuaiji. This would not merely have weakened Sun Ce, but destroyed him.

Sun Ce evidently realised that possibility, or found out about it through spies of his own. His response was simple and firm. He led a punitive expedition against White Tiger Yan, and at the same time he sent an army under the command of Lü Fan against Chen Yu, who no doubt felt he was safe from attack so far north of the Yangzi. The expedition may have gone by sea, for Haixi was on the coastline of that time, and Sun Ce, at the mouth of the Yangzi, had fair access to shipping, but in any case, after a journey of two hundred kilometres, Lü Fan and his forces took Chen Yu completely by surprise. They captured four thousand of his officers and men, and their wives and children, and Chen Yu fled away to the north.[49]

Once Sun Ce had defeated Chen Yu, and had shown Cao Cao that he was not going to be taken over easily, he was prepared to continue relations with the north as though nothing had happened. In the following year he sent up a large tribute of local products from Kuaiji, and in recognition of his loyalty to the Emperor he was given substantive title as General Who Exterminates Rebels and was awarded a new fief as Marquis of Wu, the chief county of that

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49 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1107 PC note 5 quoting *Shanyang gong zaiji*, tells us that Chen Yu found refuge with Yuan Shao, and was appointed by him to a minor military post in Ji province.

Chen Yu had thus a varied career. He had first been an officer of Yuan Shu (*SGZ* 6, 208 PC note 2 quoting *Yingxiong ji*), then an associate of Cao Cao against Yuan Shu and also against Sun Ce, and finally an officer of Yuan Shao. He is not heard of again.

commandery. The short campaign against Chen Yu, and the political manoeuvres which surrounded it, had successfully confirmed Sun Ce in all his territories, now held with official approval from the house of Han.

From 197 to 199 the alliance against Yuan Shu was maintained, and Sun Ce sent his cousin Sun Fu to cross the Yangzi and occupy the city of Liyang. However, though there may have been some preparations, no large attack was launched against Yuan Shu either from the south or from the north, and the rebel emperor remained for some time, restricted but unmolested, in his diminished territory between the Yangzi and the Huai.

The move west: and the middle Yangzi (198-199):

By the beginning of 198, Sun Ce was in recognised control of the commanderies of Wu and Kuaiji, together with the eastern half of Danyang commandery. The rest of Danyang commandery, however, south and west from Jing county, had never submitted to him.

After his defeat in 196, Liu Yao had fled to Yuzhang, and Taishi Ci, one of his officers, returned to Jing to set up a new government as Grand Administrator of Danyang in Liu Yao's service. Jing is close to the hills, Taishi Ci had gained the support of the non-Chinese people there, and from that base he could watch the valley of the Yangzi between the two mountain ranges of Dabie Shan and Huang Shan. Any move by Sun Ce southwest up the river towards Yuzhang and the middle Yangzi required him first to deal with Taishi Ci. Of somewhat lesser importance, but more immediate concern, there was also a group of local leaders and tribesmen, loosely under the authority of Zu Lang, operating in the area of the Jiuhua Shan, close to the Yangzi near present-day Anqing in Anhui. Zu Lang was one of the leaders Sun Ce had attacked, and suffered defeat from, as he gained his first military experience under his uncle Wu Jing in 193 and 194.[50] Now, in 198, Yuan Shu is said to have sent agents across the Yangzi to make contact with these dissidents and encourage them to cause trouble for Sun Ce.

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50 See above.

Four years, however, had made a difference to the comparative power of the two sides. When Sun Ce heard of the disturbances, he led his army up the Yangzi, turned inland to attack Zu Lang, and defeated and captured him at Lingyang, near present-day Taiping in Anhui. At that point, he had by-passed and isolated Taishi Ci in Jing county; he now turned back to the west, attacked Taishi Ci, and likewise defeated and captured him. He faced no further opposition in Danyang commandery, and he controlled all the Yangzi River as far as the southern border of present-day Anhui province.

According to *Jiangbiao zhuan*, when Sun Ce captured Zu Lang, he said to him,

> Once before you made an attack on me, and [you were close enough to] chop the saddle of my horse. But now I have raised up an army and established my position, and I have no concern with old enmities.
>
> For any man, no matter who it might be, the only thing that I am concerned with is whether he can prove himself to be of service. You have nothing to fear from me.

Then Zu Lang made the kowtow, and Sun Ce broke his bonds and appointed him to his personal staff.[51]

Sun Ce had also had dealings with Taishi Ci in 193 or 194. At that time, Taishi Ci was in the service of Liu Yao, based at Qu'a, and there was an occasion that he was on a scouting patrol with one other soldier and met by chance with Sun Ce and a small group of followers at a place called Shenting, evidently west of Qu'a. Taishi Ci attacked at once, and he and Sun Ce fought briefly in single combat, with honours even, until more men came up from either side and they were compelled to break off the duel.

Now, when Sun Ce had captured Taishi Ci, he immediately released him from his bonds and took him by the hand, saying, "Do you remember that time at Shenting? What would you have done, if you had taken me then?"

"I cannot imagine," replied Taishi Ci.

Sun Ce gave a great laugh, and said, "Everything I am doing now, I shall share with you."

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51 *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1212 PC note 1 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*.

When the army returned east from Danyang, Zu Lang and Taishi Ci rode together in the lead, and everyone noticed the honour and trust that was shown them.[52]

There is clear contrast between Sun Ce's generous treatment of Zu Lang and Taishi Ci in Danyang in 198, and his firm repression of opposition when he was in Wu commandery in 196. There, with the known exceptions of Wang Sheng, whom he pardoned from pity, and White Tiger Yan, who was able to escape, the local leaders who opposed Sun Ce were killed. It is likely that Sun Ce felt a lenient policy in Danyang could help to settle the various Chinese and tribal groups who had given their support to Zu Lang and Taishi Ci, and would keep them quiet even when his army had left the hills. On the other hand, his pardon and his offer of friendship were genuine, and Taishi Ci, in particular, became one of his most able officers. More probably, Sun Ce felt that he could trust these two men, and he did not feel the same about his fellow-countrymen.

There is no definite pattern by which one may assess the chances of a man who changes sides in time of civil war, but as a rule of thumb we may consider a distinction between the "professional soldiers" and the "men of family." Men such as Zu Lang and Taishi Ci, and Sun Ce himself, although they might come from the gentry and possess family connections and influence, held command primarily through personal authority and ability. On the other hand, when Sun Ce entered Wu commandery, his chief opposition came from the leaders of clans and family groups, together with their armed retainers. The Sun were a family of Wu commandery, and many people came to join Sun Ce when he arrived in the southeast.[53] Those who were not prepared to join him, but insisted on fighting him, may have disapproved of Sun Ce, or may have had some quarrel with his party, or may simply have wished to maintain their independent positions of local power. In any event, Sun Ce could not trust these people to remain subservient to his authority, and he would not be very willing to incorporate discrete local groups

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52 *Ibid* and *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1188.

53 Besides Sun Ce's family and relatives, and his father's old comrade Zhu Zhi, we may also notice Dong Xi of Kuaiji (*SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1290), He Qi of Kuaiji (*SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1377, and above), and Quan Rou from Qiantang county in Wu commandery (*SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1381).

or personal bands of retainers as identifiable units into his army: they could too easily become the focus for discontent and mutiny. The best thing to do was to eliminate the leaders, and hope that the common people and soldiers would accept his own government in their place.

From this analysis, it may be suggested that the leader of a local clan, commanding his forces by reason of family relationships, had little chance when he opposed a competent military commander such as Sun Ce, and he would have to display a real promise of loyalty and some notable personal capacity if he was even to survive the meeting. The men Sun Ce were prepared to accept were those who could lead by their own authority, and who were willing to commit themselves fully to his cause. When the great armies fought the civil war in China, a man had to be more than the local leader of retainers, he needed to be a fighting man as well. Family position might give him a start, but the stakes and the requirements were higher than those of simple feuds and local bullying.

At this time, just after Sun Ce had conquered all of Danyang, he learnt that Liu Yao had died in Yuzhang commandery. Hua Xin, who had been Liu Yao's Grand Administrator of Yuzhang, was the senior official available, and he was urged to take command of all Liu Yao's forces, presumably with the title of Governor or Inspector of Yang province. Hua Xin, however, was a modest fellow, and he refused to accept supreme command. Though he kept control of Yuzhang, the other parts of Liu Yao's former territory were left to their own devices.[54]

When Sun Ce heard of this, he called Taishi Ci to him and asked him to go to the west, to reconnoitre and see what chance he might have of persuading his former companions to join Sun Ce.

According to *Jiangbiao zhuan*, Sun Ce explained his situation to Taishi Ci, saying:

> In the past, Governor Liu resented the fact that I attacked Lujiang commandery for Yuan Shu.
>
> But my late father had commanded several thousand soldiers, and they were all under Yuan Gonglu's control. It was always my

54 The biography of Hua Xin is in *SGZ* 13, 401-06. His style was Ziyu, and he is referred to in that fashion in the report of Taishi Ci, below.

intention to make myself independent, but I had to join Yuan Gonglu if I was ever to get those men back from him.

The way things were, when he ordered me to attack Lujiang, what else could I do? It was only later, when he failed to follow the proper conduct of a minister, and when he forgot himself so far as to forge that wicked plan to usurp the imperial title, then I protested but he paid no attention,.[and] I was compelled to leave him... Now Liu Yao is dead, and I regret that I was never able to explain everything to him while he was still alive.[55]

Taishi Ci went off with a small party and came back several weeks later. He reported to Sun Ce:

Hua Ziyu is a virtuous man, but he has no ability in planning and no ideas of his own. He holds the position he has, but he does nothing more.

In Luling, Tong Zhi of Danyang has seized the place for himself, and he pretends that he has an imperial commission as Grand Administrator.

In Poyang, the leaders of the local people have set up their own clan groups and have gathered men to defend the territory. They refuse to accept the officials sent there by Hua Ziyu, saying, "We have already established a separate commandery. We are waiting for the Han to send a proper Grand Administrator, and then we shall accept him."

And not only does Hua Ziyu fail to control Luling and Poyang, but more recently there are five or six thousand families in Haihun, along the cliff country by Shangliao, who have banded into clan forces. Those people are prepared to send in the tax cloth to the commandery, but not a single man will respond to any official summons.

To all this, Hua Ziyu does no more than look on.

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55 *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1189 PC note 2 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.*

The main text records some uncertainty among Sun Ce's associates as to whether Taishi Ci, so recently captured, would stay loyal to his new master: many believed that he would take the opportunity to escape. Sun Ce, however, was completely confident of his new lieutenant, and indeed Taishi Ci returned with news in exactly the time he had promised. As Sun Ce remarked, if Taishi Ci deserted, where would he go and who would trust him?

Sun Ce, we are told, clapped his hands and laughed aloud. And it was then that he decided he could take the territory of Yuzhang.[56]

In the following year, 199, Sun Ce had made his preparations and was ready to move up the course of the Yangzi towards the west. By this time, however, besides the remaining soldiers of Liu Yao, now commanded by Hua Xin or Tong Zhi, and the independent groups at Poyang and Haihun, his main objective was the army of Huang Zu.

Huang Zu was the man who had led the force that killed Sun Jian near Xiangyang in 191, and now, still in the service of Liu Biao, he commanded an army and a fleet which controlled the course of the middle Yangzi from headquarters near present-day Wuhan, at the junction of the Han River with the Yangzi. Following the death of Liu Yao, Huang Zu had naturally taken advantage of the power vacuum in the region of Yuzhang, and he extended his patrols eastwards down the Yangzi until his sphere of influence reached the territory of Sun Ce in Danyang commandery. As he moved towards the west, therefore, Sun Ce had to deal not only with merely local forces, but also with a significant and experienced rival operating from a strong base in Jing province. At the same time he gained the added incentive of revenge for his father's death.

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56 *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1190 PC note 3 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*.

The capital of Yuzhang commandery under Later Han was at Nanchang, now close to the city of the same name, capital of present-day Jiangxi province. Yuzhang commandery under Han occupied essentially the same territory as present-day Jiangxi, being the drainage area of the present-day Poyang Lake. The Pengli Lake of Han times, however, was not so large as the Poyang Lake is now, for much of the southern expanse of the present-day lake region was marsh and river land in Han times: *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* II, 51-52, and Chapter 1.

The various regions of Yuzhang commandery, referred to in Taishi Ci's report, may be identified as follows:

Luling was a county near present-day Ji'an. We have noticed earlier that it was already being regarded as a separate region, and it would appear that the new "commandery" proclaimed by Tong Zhi may have included perhaps five or six counties in the south of present-day Jiangxi, on the upper reaches of the Gan River;

Poyang was the name of a county near present-day Jingdezhen, east of the Pengli Lake;

Haihun county was near present-day Yongxiu, west of the Pengli Lake; *SJZ* 29, 17b, remarks that the Liao River, which flows into the Pengli/Poyang Lake, was called Shangliao in the area where it joins the Xiu River close to Haihun.

Even as the army was setting out, however, Sun Ce learnt of changes to his north. That year, Yuan Shu had died at Shouchun. Many of his soldiers had scattered to serve other masters, but a great number of his troops and the members of his court had gone to join Yuan Shu's Grand Administrator of Lujiang, Liu Xun.[57] When Sun Ce heard this, he was anxious about the danger from such a combined force on his flank, and he made plans to deal with the situation before he went further up-river.

Liu Xun was short of food for his new followers, and he sent messengers to Hua Xin in Yuzhang to ask for supplies. Hua Xin had nothing to spare, but he sent to ask the leaders of Haihun and Shangliao for rice. They gave very little, and after more than a month of travelling Liu Xun's messengers had gained nothing. Then Liu Xun planned to attack Haihun and take the supplies by force.[58]

At this stage, Sun Ce was writing encouraging letters of friendship, couched in most humble fashion and accompanied by presents. He remarked upon the wealth of Shangliao, and claimed that Liu Xun would have no difficulty in taking the place. For his own part, he would bring troops to act as support from the outside, but he sought no share in the proceeds. Despite warnings from his advisers, Liu Xun believed all this.[59] He should perhaps have recalled that he held his position in Lujiang only because Yuan Shu had reneged on his promise to Sun Ce, appointing Liu Xun in his stead after Sun Ce had actually conquered the territory back in 194.[60] At any rate, Liu Xun accepted Sun Ce's offers of alliance, and he led his army out of his commandery.

As soon as he realised that his plan had worked, Sun Ce divided his forces: a detachment under Sun Ben and Sun Fu was sent to

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57 According to *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1104, many of Yuan Shu's people had planned to take refuge with Sun Ce, but Liu Xun waylaid them and captured them. *Jiangbiao zhuan*, however, quoted in commentary to this passage, at 1108 note 6, makes no reference to this intention, and Sima Guang, in *ZZTJ* 63, 2019-20, also disregards the story. For Yuan Shu's former followers, Liu Xun was a more logical choice for refuge than Sun Ce, who was a declared enemy of Yuan Shu.

58 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1108 PC note 6 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.*

59 *SGZ* 14, 443-44, being the biography of Liu Ye, who was at that time an adviser to Liu Xun.

60 See above.

Pengze county in Yuzhang, by the lake junction with the Yangzi, to cut Liu Xun off from his base; and Sun Ce, with Zhou Yu, led the main army to seize Huan city, capital of Lujiang commandery, now Qianshan in Anhui. They captured Liu Xun's family and personal attendants, and also the wife and children of Yuan Shu and the former artisans and musicians and attendants of his imperial court. Sun Ce brought the great bulk of the people back to his own territory across the Yangzi, and he left one of his officers, a certain Li Shu, with title as Grand Administrator of Lujiang, in command of a garrison at Huan city. He then returned to join his cousins at Pengze.

In the mean time, Liu Xun had attempted to take Haihun by surprise, but the people were forewarned and he gained no success. When he learnt of Sun Ce's attack on his capital, he sought to return, but he was cut off by the army at Pengze and driven west up the Yangzi. He halted to prepare defensive positions near Xisai Mountain, east of present-day Daye in Hubei,[61] and from there he asked Liu Biao and Huang Zu for help.

Huang Zu's eldest son, Huang She, brought a fleet and five thousand men to the support of Liu Xun, but Sun Ce defeated the allies and drove them back to the mouth of the Han. He captured two thousand of Liu Xun's soldiers and more than a thousand ships, and Liu Xun abandoned the struggle and fled north to Cao Cao with a handful of his remaining followers. Huang She went back to join his father, and Sun Ce followed his successes by an advance and an attack on Huang Zu's headquarters at Shaxian in Jiangxia, now southwest of Wuhan in Hubei.

In a memorial to the court, Sun Ce described the action that followed:[62]

> When I attacked Huang Zu, I came to Shaxian county, where he was camped, on the eighth day of the twelfth month [of Jian'an 4: 11 January 200]. Liu Biao had sent officers to help Huang Zu, and they joined their forces against me.

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61 The name Xisai "Western Frontier" evidently refers to the position of this high ground on the southern bank of the Yangzi, at the western border of Yang province against Jing province.

62 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1108 PC note 6 quoting *Wu lu*. The account of the campaign is included in the extract from *Jiangbiao zhuan* quoted earlier in the same note.

> At dawn on the eleventh I sent forward detachments..., all advancing at the same time. I rode on a horse to order the battle lines, and I beat a fast drum to prepare our men for the fight.
>
> The officers and soldiers were roused to the effort, and their spirits were raised a thousand times. Their hearts were keen and their minds were determined; each vied with the other to carry out my orders.
>
> We crossed the rings of moats so fast it seemed we were flying. Fire spread with a favourable wind and the soldiers charged through the smoke. Bows and crossbows shot together and the arrows poured down like rain.
>
> As the sun rose to the early morning, Huang Zu was broken and destroyed. Cut down by sharp swords or burnt by the raging flames, no enemy was left alive before us, and only Huang Zu fled away.
>
> We captured his wife and his sons and daughters, seven people. We cut off more than twenty thousand heads, and another ten thousand fled to the river and were drowned. We captured more than six thousand boats and a treasure piled up like mountains...
>
> Truly all this is due to the far-reaching influence of the spiritual military authority of your sage-like government, that I have been able to put forth my feeble efforts and punish the wrongdoers.

Sun Ce must have enjoyed sending that letter. Not only was he reporting victory in a fine dramatic style, but he was also warning the imperial court, and its guardian Cao Cao, his nominal ally, that his power and ambition could extend further than the confines of Yang province in the southeast. He now sought to number Liu Biao among the enemies of Han, and so claimed the right to attack Jing province and the lands of the middle Yangzi.[63] As Cao Cao is said to

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63 In the second paragraph of the translation of the memorial above, I have omitted the list of names and titles of the commanders of the detachments of Sun Ce's army. They are given as:

> Zhou Yu, Designated (*ling*) Grand Administrator of Jiangxia and Acting (*xing*) General of the Gentlemen of the Household Who Establishes Majesty;
>
> Lü Fan, Designated Grand Administrator of Guiyang and Acting General of the Gentlemen of the Household Who Subdues the Caitiffs;

have remarked at the time, "That wolf-cub! It will be difficult to deal with him"[64]

The last campaigns (200):

The victory over Huang Zu in the last month of the Chinese year, while it may not have been quite so complete as Sun Ce described it, certainly removed Huang Zu's ability to intervene in any part of the Yangzi downstream from Jing province. Driven onto the defensive by his losses, Huang Zu collected some of his scattered troops and received further reinforcements from Liu Biao in order to face the next attack.

Sun Ce, for his part, withdrew to the Pengli Lake region and prepared to invade Yuzhang and Luling. Since he had no wish to receive the same treatment he had given Liu Xun, he could not afford to extend his communications too far towards the west until he was sure that the territory to the south was secure.

Early in the Chinese new year Sun Ce was in camp at Jiaoqiu, a few kilometres from the city of Nanchang, capital of Yuzhang commandery. According to *Jiangbiao zhuan*, Sun Ce held considerable respect for the virtues of Hua Xin, and he sent Yu Fan, a former follower of Wang Lang the Grand Administrator of Kuaiji, to persuade Hua Xin that he should surrender without a fight. Yu Fan, with truth, pointed out the strength of Sun Ce's army and the

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Cheng Pu, Designated Grand Commandant of Lingling and Acting General of the Gentlemen of the Household Who Terrifies Criminals;
Sun Quan, Acting Colonel Who Serves the Great Work;
Han Dang, Acting Colonel Who is First to Scale [the Enemy Ramparts];
Huang Gai, Acting Colonel of the Firm Attack.

Apart from the flowery military titles, a feature of this list is the manner in which Sun Ce has identified three of his officers as future grand administrators of commanderies in Jing province: the term *ling*, which has the basic meaning of "in command of," seems best understood here as indicating that the appointment is made, but has yet to be taken up. Zhou Yu, in particular, bears a direct challenge against Huang Zu, who was Liu Biao's own Grand Administrator of Jiangxia.

64 *SGZ* 6/Wu 1, 1109 PC note 7 quoting *Wu li.*

weakness of Hua Xin's own position, and so Hua Xin came out and surrendered Yuzhang to Sun Ce.[65]

Once Hua Xin had surrendered, Sun Ce had nothing more to fear from that region. Tong Zhi, self-styled Grand Administrator of Luling, still held out, but Sun Ce left Sun Fu and Zhou Yu at Nanchang to wait for an opportunity to attack him. Within a few months, they learnt that Tong Zhi had been taken ill, and they took advantage of this to go forward and occupy his territory.[66] There was a brief period of skirmishing against a nephew of Liu Biao, Liu Pan, who attempted to maintain a guerrilla war in the hill country between the two provinces, but Taishi Ci put down this disturbance,[67] and the region thereafter remained quiet, with the initiative firmly in the hands of the Sun group.

Historians and commentators have compared the dealings of Wang Lang and Hua Xin with Sun Ce. Both men were famous scholars, both lost their territories to Sun Ce, and they both later went north and became high officials of the state of Wei under the Cao family. Wang Lang, as we have seen, did attempt to fight Sun Ce, but Hua Xin gave up without a struggle, and the fourth-century scholar Sun Sheng has scathing comments on his conduct:

> He failed to maintain his honour as a loyal minister. He surrendered to the persuasions of a turncoat Confucianist [Yu Fan], and he allied himself with a greedy, brutal bully [Sun Ce].[68]

Pei Songzhi, on the other hand, is more understanding, and perhaps more realistic:

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65 The biography of Yu Fan is in *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1317-26; the account of his negotiations with Hua Xin appears at 1318 PC note 1 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.*

66 *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1210 PC note 2 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.*

It will be recalled that Sun Ce had named Sun Fu as Grand Administrator of Luling as early as 196.

67 *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1190. Taishi Ci remained in control of this region until his death in 206.

68 Sun Sheng's comments are given in *SGZ* 13, 403 PC note 5; they are also quoted in *ZZTJ* 63, 2022; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 265.

Whether or not it is fair to describe Yu Fan as a turncoat, he was recognised as a distinguished scholar, and he was used on several occasions as a persuasive envoy. His biography is in *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1317-26.

> Both men met with turbulent times, and had to deal with fierce, sharp, military threats. Neither of them was able to cope... Lord Wang stood and fought, while Hua turned from his duty and asked to surrender.
>
> The fact is, however, that when Sun Ce first appeared on the scene he had no great name and not many men under his command, so Wang could raise troops against him..... Later on, Sun Ce's power and authority had grown great, and his strength could not be matched.....
>
> If the situation had been reversed, then Hua would have fought and Wang would have surrendered.[69]

Certainly, by 200, Sun Ce commanded the most powerful army in south China, and one of the strongest in the empire.

In an earlier passage, discussing the different fates of opponents of Sun Ce during his campaigns in his home territory of Wu commandery and in the neighbouring Danyang, I sought to contrast the "professional fighting men" such as Taishi Ci with the local gentry leaders: the professional soldiers could be recruited into the victor's army, while the local leaders, particularly if they had shown a personal or family hostility, could expect no such good treatment.

We may note here, in the examples of Wang Lang and Hua Xin, a third category: men of more than local distinction, often of significant family and scholarly status, who nevertheless failed to cope with the pressures of civil war. On the one hand, they were of limited use to a practical warlord, and they frequently tended to despise such upstarts. At the same time, such men were too important to be killed out of hand, and there was some prestige to be gained from keeping them among the chief's entourage. They were little value in war, but they could serve some purpose in the rituals which needed to be found even for a warrior's state.

Sun Ce, of course, had his own scholars at court, men such as Zhang Hong, who was a personal friend, and he had limited interest in such past and potential enemies as Wang Lang or Hua Xin.[70]

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69 Pei Songzhi presents his remarks on this topic in commentary to the biography of Yu Fan, *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1319 PC.

70 Sun Ce did take Liu Yao's three sons under his protection. The eldest, Liu Ji, who was fourteen at the time of his father's death, later held high rank and

CHAPTER THREE

Soon after the capture of Kuaiji in 195, Wang Lang had been allowed to return north, where he joined Cao Cao; and Hua Xin likewise stayed with the Sun family for only a short time before he, too, was permitted to make his excuses and leave.[71] The important thing was not to kill such men out of hand, but to hand them on, if necessary, decently to someone else.[72]

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favour at the court of Sun Quan, and his brothers Liu Shuo and Liu Shang both held official posts. See *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1186.

In similar fashion, the children of Yuan Shu fell into Sun Ce's hands after his defeat of Liu Xun in Lujiang. Yuan Shu's son, Yuan Yao, held court rank in Wu, and his daughter was married to Sun Quan's son, Sun Fen. Yuan Shu's daughter was taken into Sun Quan's harem, and was at one time considered as his possible formal wife; she was passed over, however, because she had borne him no children: *SGZ* 6, 210, and *SGZ* 50/Wu 5, 1200 PC note 1 quoting *Wu lu.*

71 In 220, when Cao Pi succeeded Cao Cao as King of Wei, Hua Xin and Wang Lang held two of the three highest offices at the royal court. See, for example, *ZZTJ* 69, 2177; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 3 and 22, following *SGZ* 2, 58.

72 Some men in this category proved too insolent or too irritating to be tolerated indefinitely. One example is Kong Rong, a celebrated scholar and descendant of Confucius, who showed limited competence in the emergencies of the civil war, and was eventually compelled to seek protection at Cao Cao's court. He continued, however, to intrigue against Cao Cao and in favour of some restoration of the power of Han, and he relied upon his reputation to sneer at Cao Cao. In 208, Cao Cao had him executed. Biographies of Kong Rong are in *SGZ* 12, 370-73 PC note 1, quoting from a variety of sources, and in *HHS* 70/60, 2261-80. See also *ZZTJ* 64, 2081; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 374-374 and *sub voce*.

There was also the case of Ni Heng, who was celebrated as a scholar and as a debater, but who was also proud and arrogant (His surname commonly appears as Mi, but the version Ni seems preferable). He was recommended by Kong Rong to Cao Cao, but he behaved with gross discourtesy. Cao Cao would have liked to punish him, but he felt people would consider him intolerant and would criticise him. So he sent Ni Heng on to Liu Biao, who at first approved of him and got on well with him. Ni Heng, however, continually abused Liu Biao's attendants, and eventually someone reported to Liu Biao that Ni Heng had said he was a fine gentleman, but he lacked the ability to make up his mind. Liu Biao was angry, and he in turn sent Ni Heng on to his lieutenant Huang Zu. Huang Zu was a less tolerant man that Cao Cao or Liu Biao; there came the day that Ni Heng made some clever remark in public against Huang Zu, and Huang Zu killed him.

There is a biography of Ni Heng in *HHS* 80B/70B, 2652-58, and other biographies are quoted in *SGZ* 10, 311-12 PC note 2. His career is described in *ZZTJ* 62, 1993; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 210. The commentary of Hu Sanxing to that passage remarks that Cao Cao behaved quite well in sending Ni Heng to Liu Biao, for Liu Biao was a cultivated man, and should have been

At this time, in the north, the two great rivals Cao Cao and Yuan Shao had finally come to grips. Cao Cao, holding the Emperor in his custody at Xu city and borrowing the imperial authority to justify his actions, had steadily increased his power. Yuan Shao, who still commanded broad lands and a powerful army, felt Cao Cao was becoming a threat and resolved to destroy him. From the spring to the winter of 200, the two were engaged in a long-drawn campaign about the city of Guandu, just south of the Yellow River and north of Zhongmou in present-day Henan. By the end of the year, Cao Cao had won a complete victory and Yuan Shao's power was in decline, but for many months Cao Cao had little time to take thought for the south.[73]

To keep the peace with Sun Ce, Cao Cao had arranged a marriage alliance, which was set up soon after Sun Ce had captured Yuzhang. The daughter of one of Cao Cao's younger brothers or cousins was given in marriage to Sun Ce's youngest brother Sun Kuang, and Cao Cao's own son, Cao Zhang, married a daughter of Sun Ce's cousin Sun Ben.[74] Cao Cao made a point of showing courtesy and respect to Sun Ce and his brothers, and he had his nominee Inspector of Yang province, Yan Xiang, present Sun Quan as a candidate of "Flourishing Talent."[75] The relationship between the two disparate parties was an uneasy one, and not necessarily either stable or

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tolerant; Liu Biao behaved treacherously in sending Ni Heng to such a rough bully as Huang Zu.

The insult to Cao Cao's court, where Ni Heng showed disrespect by attending naked and beating a drum, is described with gusto in *Romance* chapter 23, and is the subject of a well-known drama, *Ji gu ma Cao*, "Beating a Drum and Abusing Cao Cao;" or *Qun chen yan*, "Banquet with a Multitude of Ministers" (Arlington and Acton, *Chinese Plays*, 38-52).

73 The campaign about Guandu is described in *ZZTJ* 63, 2015-35; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 252-290. It is discussed by de Crespigny, "Civil War in Early China," and in more detail by Chapter 7 of Leban, "Ts'ao Ts'ao," 316-381.

74 The biography of Cao Zhang is in *SGZ* 19, 555-56. He was the second son of Cao Cao by his formal wife the Lady Bian.

75 This recommendation as candidate of Flourishing Talent is evidently the one referred to in Sun Quan's biography; note 31 above. Since the regular recruitment system of Han had quite broken down, the nomination was meaningless in practical terms.

friendly, but it was not at this stage critical, and both had more immediate preoccupations.

In fact, in the summer of 200, Sun Ce rode to his last campaign. When he was in the west to fight Huang Zu and take over Lujiang and Yuzhang, the remnant troops of his old enemy White Tiger Yan had made another rebellion in Wu commandery, encouraged by Chen Deng, Grand Administrator of Guangling appointed by Cao Cao; himself a cousin of Chen Yu, the earlier nominal Grand Administrator of Wu commandery who had been driven away by Sun Ce in 197.[76]

Whether Cao Cao was directly involved or not, Chen Deng was evidently playing the same game as his cousin three years earlier, and the threat of disturbance in Wu commandery was a most effective means of keeping Sun Ce's attention safely in the southeast.

Among the rebels there was also the former Grand Administrator Xu Gong, the man who had been driven from office in 196. Shortly before that time, when Sun Ce had defeated Liu Yao south of the Yangzi but before he had moved against Wu commandery, we are told that Xu Gong had written to the court to urge that Sun Ce should be summoned to hold office in the capital so that he might be kept under control. Then Sun Ce took the commandery and Xu Gong fled to the local leader Xu Zhao, and it seems he was able to keep away from Sun Ce until this time. In one of the early engagements of the new campaign, however, Sun Ce captured Xu Gong, taxed him with that letter to the court, and then had him executed by strangling.

After this first success, Sun Ce brought his army to camp at Dantu, southeast of present-day Zhenjiang in Jiangsu. There, by the southern shore of the mouth of the Yangzi, he planned to wait a few

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76 Unlike Chen Yu (about whom see note 49 above), Chen Deng was a loyal and recognised supporter of Cao Cao. He and his father Chen Gui had played important roles in the destruction of Lü Bu, Cao Cao's rival in Xu province (*SGZ* 7, 224). There is a supplementary biography of Chen Deng in *SGZ* 7, 229-30, and the commentary of Pei Songzhi adds a long passage from a *Xianxian xingzhuan*, describing Chen Deng's later achievements in holding Guangling commandery against attacks from the south led by Sun Ce's successor Sun Quan.

On the relationship of Chen Deng with Chen Yu (they were first cousins once removed, with Chen Yu being in the senior generation), see *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1111 PC note 2 quoting *Jiuzhou chunqiu.*

days for supplies, and in the mean time he went hunting. However, though Xu Gong had been killed and his followers scattered, a few of them had taken refuge in the country nearby. Sun Ce loved to hunt deer, the horse that he rode was a good one, and none of his guards or attendants could keep up with the chase. For a little while, he was alone, and he came upon three of Xu Gong's former retainers. They seized their bows and shot at him, and one of the arrows struck him on the jaw. Then Sun Ce's attendants came up, and the three men were killed, but Sun Ce was brought back to his camp with a serious wound.

There are several anecdotes surrounding the death of Sun Ce, but the story which is told by *Wu li* is a natural and rather touching one.

> When Sun Ce was wounded, the doctors said that he could be cured, but that he should take care of himself and keep quiet for at least three months. Then Sun Ce got hold a mirror and saw his own reflection, and he said to his attendants, "With a face like this, how shall I achieve anything again, and how shall I set up my power?"
>
> He was very upset, he beat upon his armrest, and all his wounds broke open again. That night, he died.[77]

The date of his death was 5 May 200, and he was twenty-six years old by Chinese reckoning, about twenty-five in Western terms.[78]

Sun Ce and the legend of Gan Ji: a medley of texts:

There is also, however, another cycle of stories about the death of Sun Ce, loosely centred around the powers of the magician Gan Ji (or Yu Ji),[79] and these require some analysis. The crucial account is

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77 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1112 PC note 3 quoting *Wu li.*

78 The date of Sun Ce's death is given by the *Zhi lin* of Yu Xi, quoted in *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1110 PC, as the fourth day of the fourth month (identified by *ZZTJ* 63, 2029, as the *bingwu* day; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 279). His age at death is given by the main text of *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1109.

79 The surname of this Taoist teacher appears written both as Gan and as Yu. I have accepted the arguments of Fukui [1958], 63, who made a detailed survey of the evidence and adopted the reading Gan. He is followed by Mansvelt Beck, "Date of the *Taiping jing*," 149 note 1.

based upon the *Soushen ji*, "Record of Enquiry about the Spirits," by Gan Bao of the early fourth century. In this work, the account of Sun Ce's death goes as follows:

> After Sun Ce had killed Gan Ji, whenever he sat alone he would think that he saw Gan Ji by his side. This had a considerable effect upon him, he was very upset, and he quite lost his usual good spirits.
>
> Later [after the attack upon him by the retainers of Xu Gong, when] his wound was almost healed, he took a mirror to see his reflection. He saw Gan Ji's image in the mirror, but when he turned his head to look behind him there was no-one there. And this happened another two or three times. Then he struck the mirror, and cried out loud, and all his wounds broke open again, and so he died.[80]

So who was this man Gan Ji, and how was it that he was so closely connected with Sun Ce?

Apart from the stories collected in the Pei Songzhi commentary to Sun Ce's biography in *Sanguo zhi*, Gan Ji is referred to most significantly as the discoverer or transmitter of the celebrated *Taiping jing*, "The Classic of Great Peace." The *locus classicus* for this attribution is the biography of the private scholar Xiang Kai in *Hou Han shu*, which preserves the text of the memorials submitted to Emperor Huan of Han in the summer of 166. At the end of his first memorial, Xiang Kai, who was protesting against the Emperor's policies and government, includes the statement:

> Some time ago, I presented the throne with the sacred writings of Gan Ji, which had been passed to me by Gong Chong of Langye, but they did not accord with the emperor's opinions.[81]

In the second memorial, he noted once again:

> That sacred book presented by Gong Chong bases its teaching on respect for heaven and earth and an obedience to the five powers, and it also deals with the techniques required to bring the state prosperity and to help maintain a plentiful succession. The

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80 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1112 PC note 3 quoting *Soushen ji.*

81 *HHS* 30B/20B, 1080, translated in de Crespigny, *Portents of Protest*, 27; *cf* Petersen, "Early Traditions," 133-151. The memorials of Xiang Kai are also discussed in de Crespigny, "Politics and Philosophy," 65-67.

> writing is easy to understand, and it fully accords with the [Confucian] classics. Yet Emperor Shun failed to put its precepts into practice, and therefore his successors did not flourish.[82]

In the text of the biography, we are given some further explanation of Xiang Kai's references:

> Before this, in the time of Emperor Shun [125-145], Gong Chong of Langye had come to the palace and presented a sacred book in 170 chapters which his master, Gan Ji, had obtained by the waters of the Quyang Spring. It was all written on pale green silk, with vermilion borders, dark green headings, and vermilion titles. It was called *Taiping qingling shu*, "The Book of Great Peace and Pure Guidance." The text dealt mainly with the schools of Yin and Yang and of the Five Powers, and it included a number of sayings of magicians and shamans.
>
> The officials reported that the work Gong Chong had presented was unorthodox and false, outside the canon of the classics; it was, however, received and retained [in the imperial library]. Later, Zhang Jue used some of its teachings.[83]

More disconcerting, however, is the story recorded in the *Shenxian zhuan*, "Biographies of Spirits and Immortals" compiled by Ge Hong of the fourth century, which tells us that the text of *Taiping jing* was acquired by Gan Ji and Gong Chong in the time of Emperor Yuan of Former Han, who reigned from 49 to 33 B.C.[84] This would provide the work with a useful antiquity, but it also implies that Gan Ji was rather more than 250 years old at the time he met with Sun Ce.

The origins and early history of *Taiping jing* and the school associated with it have been discussed in other places,[85] and it does not seem appropriate to go very much deeper into the matter here. What we can say, however, is that there was a tradition that the man

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82 *HHS* 30B/20B, 1084; de Crespigny, *Portents of Protest*, 28.

83 *HHS* 30B/20B, 1084; de Crespigny, *Portents of Protest*, 31-32.

84 *Shenxian zhuan* 10, quoted by the Qing scholar Hui Dong in *HHSJJ* 30B/20B, 18b. This text is translated and discussed by Mansvelt Beck, "Date of the *Taiping jing*," 160.

85 For example, Seidel, "Image of the Perfect Ruler," Kaltenmark, "Ideology of the Tai-p'ing ching," Mansvelt Beck, "Date of the Taiping jing," Kandel, *Origin and Transmission*, and Petersen, "Early Traditions."

Gan Ji was involved with an early stage of the history of *Taiping jing*, that he was originally from Langye, being the commandery on the coast south of the Shandong peninsula, and that it appears he travelled further south and was operating in the territory of Sun Ce at the end of the second century AD. If the account in the biography of Xiang Kai in *Hou Han shu* is correct - and leaving aside the claims of the *Shenxian zhuan* - he was by then quite old.

Pei Songzhi presents two versions of Sun Ce's quarrel with Gan Ji. The first, taken from *Jiangbiao zhuan,*[86] says that:

> At this time there was a Taoist scholar Gan Ji of Langye, who had first lived in the east, and moved later to Wu and Kuaiji. He built spirit-houses, and he burnt incense and read Taoist books, and he could put charms upon water in order to cure sickness.[87] Many of the people of the region followed him.

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86 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1110 PC note 1; Petersen, "Early Traditions," 155-156.

87 The placing of charms upon water to make a medicine was a technique common at this time. It was used by Zhang Jue, founder of the Yellow Turbans (*HHS* 71/61, 2299), and we are told that the Rice Sect in the west, under Zhang Xiu and later under Zhang Lu, generally followed the methods of Zhang Jue, though we are not specifically told that they used charmed water: see Chapter 6.

Both the Yellow Turbans of Zhang Jue and the Rice Sect of the west believed that sickness was the mark of sin, and that those who became ill were suffering because of some wrongdoing: see the *Dian lue* of Yu Huan, quoted in *SGZ* 8, 264 PC note 1, and in commentary to *HHS* 75/65, 2436.

We are also told, however, that the Rice Sect under Zhang Xiu had a system of setting up "houses of purity," a custom which Zhang Jue did not have (note 11 to Chapter 6). People who became ill were sent to these "houses of purity" to contemplate their sins.

The name of the "spirit-houses" of Gan Ji is very close to that of the "houses of purity" in the west, and it is likely that the difference is only that of a variant form of the character. It seems probable, therefore, that Gan Ji was using the same system as that of Zhang Lu and his associates, and he also followed the theory which related sickness to sin.

It should be observed, however, that the expression *jingshe* or some variant of it was well established in other terminology than that of Later Han Taoism. The phrase appears, for example, in the pre-Qin text *Guanzi*, where it refers to the emotions held within the breast; and also in *Hou Han shu*, where it refers to the physical building of a school for Confucian scholars: see, for example, the biography of Liu Shu in *HHS* 67/57, 2190, and that of Bao Xian in *HHS* 79B/69B, 2570.

There came a time Sun Ce was on the gate tower of the capital city of the commandery [presumably the city of Wu], with all his officers and retainers assembled below. Then Gan Ji came by, splendidly dressed and carrying a small box patterned with lacquer, which he said [contained] the bell of an immortal.[88]

Two-thirds of those present left the assembly to welcome him, and though the masters of ceremonies attempted to stop them, they had no effect. So Sun Ce ordered that Gan Ji should be arrested.

All the people who served Gan Ji sent their wives and daughters to Sun Ce's mother, to ask her to intercede for him. The Lady Wu said to Sun Ce, "Master Gan has helped our army gain success, and his medicine protects our troops. You cannot kill him."

Sun Ce replied, "The fellow is a trickster, and he deceives our people. Even at a distance he has made my officers neglect the proper courtesies between ruler and follower: they turned away from me and went to greet him. I must get rid of him."

Then all the officers prepared a petition to offer their apologies and to beg that Gan Ji be pardoned. Sun Ce replied, "A short time ago, Zhang Jin of Nanyang became Inspector of Jiao province. He set aside the precepts of the wise men of the past and he rejected the law codes of the house of Han. He wore a red cloth about his head, he had drums and flutes played, he burnt incense and he read the false books of the Taoists. This, he said, would help in his administration. In the end, however, he was killed by the local barbarians. All this sort of thing is completely useless, and yet you people have failed to recognise the fact. That fellow Gan Ji is already numbered among the dead; don't waste any more paper or ink upon him."

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88 The text here has the character *hua* (following the pronunciation given by Lu Bi in *SGZJJ* 46/Wu 1, 32b). Lu Bi explains the character as meaning *qiao* "spade." He observes also that the Palace edition of *SGZ* suggests two variant readings, *lian* "sickle" or *suo* "lock, fetter, chain."

Mansvelt Beck, in a paper presented to the Conference on State and Ideology in Early Imperial China, University of Leiden, September 1975, suggests (at 16) reading *duo* "a bell" for the character *hua*; this makes better sense than the other variant readings, and I have followed it.

> Then Sun Ce made haste to cut off Gan Ji's head, and he had it hung up in the market place. All the people who had served him, however, still refused to believe that Gan Ji was really dead. They said he had done no more than leave his body, and they continued to offer sacrifices to him in the hope of good fortune.

The second story quoted by Pei Songzhi comes from *Soushen ji*, and is preliminary to the tale of the mirror haunting which we have already considered. According to this account, Sun Ce was preparing to make a surprise attack upon Cao Cao's capital at Xu, taking advantage of Cao Cao's preoccupation with the defensive campaign against Yuan Shao, and intending to seize the person of Emperor Xian. By this means, Sun Ce hoped to play the same role as Cao Cao had hitherto: with the Emperor under his "protection" he could seek to command the empire, and could label anyone who opposed him as a rebel. *Soushen ji*, however, tells us that there was a drought at this time, and as a result Sun Ce's transport barges were stranded and could not get through. Sun Ce sought to encourage his men to work on the problem, but he became furious when he found that many of them were more concerned to gather about Gan Ji, who had accompanied the army, than to attend to his own plan of campaign. He had Gan Ji arrested, tied him down exposed on the ground, and swore that he would be let go only if he persuaded Heaven to send down rain.

And indeed, suddenly clouds gathered and it began to rain, and the rivers and streams were full to overflowing.

Unfortunately, however, Sun Ce's officers and soldiers showed their delight too well: they were sure that Gan Ji would now be pardoned, and they gathered to offer him congratulations. Sun Ce, embarrassed and offended by this challenge to his authority and discipline, had Gan Ji killed.

> Sad and miserable, the officers and soldiers took Gan Ji's body and laid it away. That night a sudden mist arose and covered the corpse. Next day, they went to look, but could no longer find it.[89]

As Pei Songzhi remarks, it is impossible to reconcile the details of these two stories concerning the death of Gan Ji. Pei Songzhi also cites a comment by the scholar Yu Xi of the Jin dynasty, writing in a

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89 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1110-11 PC note 1 quoting *Soushen ji.*

work entitled *Zhi lin*, "The Forest of Records," who refers to the connection of Gan Ji with the discovery and presentation of the *Taiping jing* manuscript in the time of Emperor Shun, and who argues that a man of such seniority as Gan Ji should have been treated only with respect by Sun Ce. Yu Xi raises also some minor quibbles, in particular that Zhang Jin, the Inspector of Jiao province said to have been criticised by Sun Ce, was not appointed to that position until after Sun Ce was dead. Pei Songzhi agrees, observing that Zhang Jin was still in Jiao province in 201; so on that point, at least, the account of the death of Gan Ji in *Soushen ji* is mistaken.[90]

If one can find any common ground between the stories, it is the sense of insulted dignity which Sun Ce displayed, and which gave him the motive to eliminate Gan Ji as a rival to his authority. There is another tale, curiously similar, which offers the same message. *Wu lu*, again quoted by Pei Songzhi,[91] tells how Sun Ce went to call upon the scholar Gao Dai, a man who came originally from Wu commandery but who lived as a hermit in Yuyao county in Kuaiji, and who was celebrated for his knowledge of the *Zuo zhuan.* Sun Ce took an interest in that work, and was anxious to discuss it with him. Some unkind person, however, advised Gao Dai that Sun Ce was young and arrogant and hated to be contradicted: Gao Dai's best policy, therefore, was to agree with everything he said. Then Sun Ce was told that Gao Dai despised amateurs, so he had no real interest

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90 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1110 PC note 1 quoting *Zhi lin*. As evidence, Yu Xi quotes from a letter written by the contemporary Xiahou Dun (biography in *SGZ* 9, 267-68; here called by his style Yuanrang) to a certain Shi Weize (Weize was presumably the man's style, but nothing more is known of him). In that letter Xiahou Dun refers to Zhang Jin holding office in Lingling and Guiyang commanderies after the time of the defeat of Yuan Shao at Guandu; which event took place in the winter of 200, while Sun Ce had died in the fourth month. Yu Xi therefore argues, very reasonably, that Sun Ce could not have made any comment about the unfortunate policies and inevitable death of Zhang Jin in Jiao province.

Pei Songzhi gives his own endorsement of Yu Xi's remarks, adding that *Jiao-Guang erzhou chunqiu*, a work presented to the court of Jin by the local official Wang Fan in 287, referred to Zhang Jin as Governor of Jiao province in 201. The career of Zhang Jin is discussed in Chapter 5 at note 94. There seems no doubt that the reference to him in the story of the quarrel of Sun Ce with Gan Ji is an anachronism.

91 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1109 PC note 1 quoting *Wu lu.*

in the discussion: he would pretend to accept what Sun Ce said and would make no attempt at debate; Sun Ce's opinions were simply not worth arguing about.

The conversation went just as badly as that, and Sun Ce was furious with what he perceived as Gao Dai's contempt for him. So he had Gao Dai arrested. Gao Dai was regarded with great respect, both as a scholar and as man of honour, and great numbers of people came and sat outside Sun Ce's headquarters to beg mercy for him. Sun Ce, still more infuriated by this show and public opposition, had Gao Dai executed.

From the evidence we have, Sun Ce was an orthodox, not particularly superstitious, Confucianist, and he certainly had scholarly friends whom he respected. The approach to Gao Dai obviously went very wrong, and one might wonder who it was that played the role of Iago so effectively. Once again, however, we are shown another characteristic: Sun Ce was intensely sensitive about his authority and dignity, and he was jealous of others who appeared to have a following, even when based upon other grounds, which might rival his own. If we can accept the stories, Gan Ji and Gao Dai were both victims of this trait, but one should be careful of accepting any of these tales as they stand.[92]

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[92] There is another story on this theme, describing an exceptionally successful intervention against Sun Ce's hot-headed indignation.

SGZ 50/Wu 5, 1196 PC note 1 quoting *Kuaiji dianlu*, tells how Wei Teng of Kuaiji, who was Officer of Merit in the commandery, responsible for appointments and recommendations for office, had opposed Sun Ce on some matter, and Sun Ce was angry and intended to kill him.

Other appeals had proven fruitless, but then Sun Ce's mother, the Lady Wu, stood by the side of a deep well, and said to him, "You are building a position at the south of the Yangzi, and the work is not yet done. This is the very time you should treat your worthy men well and be courteous to your officers, passing over their faults and thinking only of their good work. Officer Wei was simply doing his duty. If you kill him today, everyone will turn from you tomorrow. Rather than see such a disaster come upon us, I would first jump into this well."

Sun Ce was alarmed, and most impressed, and he immediately let Wei Teng go free. (See also *ZZTJ* 63, 2022; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 266.)

Considering that the situation with regard to Gan Ji was very likely more dangerous than that involving Wei Teng, one might wonder why Sun Ce paid attention to his mother on that occasion and not on the later one: perhaps he had become a little older and more opinionated; or perhaps the whole cycle of stories

There is one further issue to be considered, and that is the question of Sun Ce's abortive attack against Cao Cao. *Soushen ji* has this as the occasion for the death of Gan Ji, and the main text of *Sanguo zhi* says also that Sun Ce was planning a northern expedition, but he died before he could set out. The commentary of Pei Songzhi quotes from *Jiuzhou chunqiu* "Spring and Autumn Annals of the Nine Provinces" ascribed to the historian Sima Biao of the third century, and Pei Songzhi, in a note of his own, refers in addition to the *Fuzi* book of Fu Xuan of the third century.[93] These latter two works, however, suggest that Sun Ce was making his plans while Cao Cao was engaged not against Yuan Shao at Guandu but against the Wuhuan in the region of Liucheng, towards present-day Manchuria; this campaign, however, took place in 207, long after Sun Ce's death.[94] Though Pei Songzhi observes the error, and duly discounts the authority of these sources, he is yet prepared to accept the idea that Sun Ce might have had some coup in his mind just before he died.

The commentary, however, also quotes the third century scholar Sun Sheng, who points out a number of errors in the sources, but argues, more practically, that Sun Ce was in no good position to embark upon any such ambitious program as the kidnap of the Emperor of Han. He had authority in six commanderies, but there were still Huang Zu and Liu Biao on his western flank, there were independent groups which had not yet been brought to full submission, and we are told specifically that the Grand Administrator of Guangling, Chen Deng, was in the process of forging a new local coalition against him. It was hardly a good occasion to march the bulk of his forces away to the north on an expedition which might well turn into a wild goose chase.

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is a medley of variants around a general theme, with only marginal relationship to ascertainable fact.

Romance chapter 29 has made an imaginative reconstruction of the whole incident concerning the killing of Gan Ji and the death of Sun Ce.

93 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1109. The commentary of Pei Songzhi, and the works which he quotes are in *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1111-12 PC note 2.

94 On this campaign, see Chapter 4 and de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 407-413.

Pei Songzhi, while agreeing with many of Sun Sheng's comments, suggests that Sun Ce could have hoped to deal promptly with Chen Deng and then march swiftly towards Xu city. He goes on to say,

> If Sun Ce had gained [the person of the Emperor], great power was within his grasp, and any place between the Huai and Si rivers could have been taken for his capital. Why should he limit his ambitions to the lands south of the Yangzi? He could have swung the whole balance of the empire to the region of the southeast!

This, however, is an argument difficult to accept, and once it is rejected in this form, then one may see why it is in fact most improbable that Sun Ce had any serious intention of attacking Xu and seizing the Emperor.

The point is that Sun Ce had no higher status in the empire than that of a petty warlord who controlled part of a province. Men of accepted family, such as Cao Cao, Yuan Shao and Liu Biao, could hope to make use of the Emperor as a means of giving authority to their policies, for they were of sufficient rank to make the relation a conceivable one. In earlier years, Dong Zhuo's control of the court had not prevented "loyal rebels" from rising against him, and his successors at Chang'an never received general acceptance. Even more notably, when Sun Ce's late master Yuan Shu assumed the imperial title, the contrast between his status in the empire and his extraordinary claim brought disaster very quickly.

So even if Sun Ce had obtained the person of Emperor Xian and brought him back to the south, it is in the highest degree unlikely that he would have held any sway over his rivals by means of his hostage. Far more probably, he would have brought an alliance against himself of the victor of the struggle between Cao Cao and Yuan Shao, combined with Liu Biao, and aided by fifth-column rebels in his own territory. He would have been immediately accused of lese-majesty, of profaning the sacred person of the Emperor, and he would have been treated as an outlaw. Far from enhancing his position, the possession of the Emperor would have brought Sun Ce into immediate and bitter conflict with every notable commander in the land.

If Sun Ce did plan such a coup, it is fortunate for the fortunes of his house that he died before he could attempt to put it into effect.

More probably, despite the tales and the comments which surround that putative project, Sun Ce had made the same calculations, and he never contemplated anything so grandiose. He may have been planning some minor expedition to the north, primarily to deal with Chen Deng and to seek once again to persuade Cao Cao not to interfere, directly or through agents, with the territory south of the Yangzi. At the time of his death, however, Sun Ce had comfortable control of a coherent though limited territory. This in itself was a remarkable achievement in the chaos of civil war, and it seems fair to credit him with the sense to appreciate the dangers of sudden, inappropriate ambition.[95]

It is remarkable how the death of Sun Ce attracted such a variety of anecdotes, with references and allusions to subjects as diverse as Cao Cao and *Taiping jing*, but we can make no proper judgement of which tales may be accepted, and to what degree. Discounting all

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95 It must be noted, however, that the biography of Cao Cao, at *SGZ* 1, 20, says that Sun Ce had such an intention, which was only interrupted by his death, and the biography of Cao Cao's adviser Guo Jia, in *SGZ* 14, 433, has a further story.

According to this latter text, all Cao Cao's other officers were worried about the possibility of a surprise attack by Sun Ce, but Guo Jia said, "Sun Ce is not a serious person, and he does not make proper plans... I can foresee surely that he will be killed by some common fellow." And so indeed it turned out.

The commentary which follows, however, quotes from the *Fuzi*, which has Guo Jia giving similar advice about a comparable threat from Liu Bei, who was acting in support of Yuan Shao and who was threatening Cao Cao on another front. As Pei Songzhi remarks, Cao Cao's biography in *SGZ* 1, 18, implies that Cao Cao thought for himself that he had time to deal with Liu Bei before Yuan Shao could make a move, and Guo Jia is recorded only as expressing agreement on the question, not as initiating the plan. Pei Songzhi goes on to comment on the remarkable and perhaps excessive accuracy of Guo Jia's prediction, not only that Sun Ce would be assassinated, but that it would happen before he could plan a move against the north.

This all seems rather too clairvoyant to be credible, and the anecdote concerning Sun Ce may better be regarded as a formulaic story to enhance Guo Jia's reputation for percipience, rather than as a source of historical fact.

It is by no means impossible, of course, that there was concern in Cao Cao's camp lest Sun Ce should attack: in the short term it could have been embarrassing and highly dangerous for Cao Cao's position at the critical moment when he was dealing with Yuan Shao. But possibility, anxiety and even threat cannot be taken as firm evidence that Sun Ce was really intending such a dramatic move.

the embellishments, however, we are left with a man who was wounded to the point of death, and *Sanguo zhi* has an account of his spoken testament, as witnessed by his senior advisers:

> Sun Ce's wound was very bad, and he called in Zhang Zhao and others and said, "Now China Proper is in confusion. With the resources of Wu and Yue, and the security of the Yangzi, we have enough to [keep aloof and] look on while others are fighting. Do you all try your best to aid my younger brother."
>
> Then he called Sun Quan, fastened the seal and ribbon to his belt, and said to him, "To raise the forces east of the Yangzi, to decide the opportunities between two battle lines, and to fight for supremacy in the empire: for that, you are not my equal. To raise the worthy and grant office to able men, so that each gives all his effort to hold the lands of the east: in that I am not equal to you."
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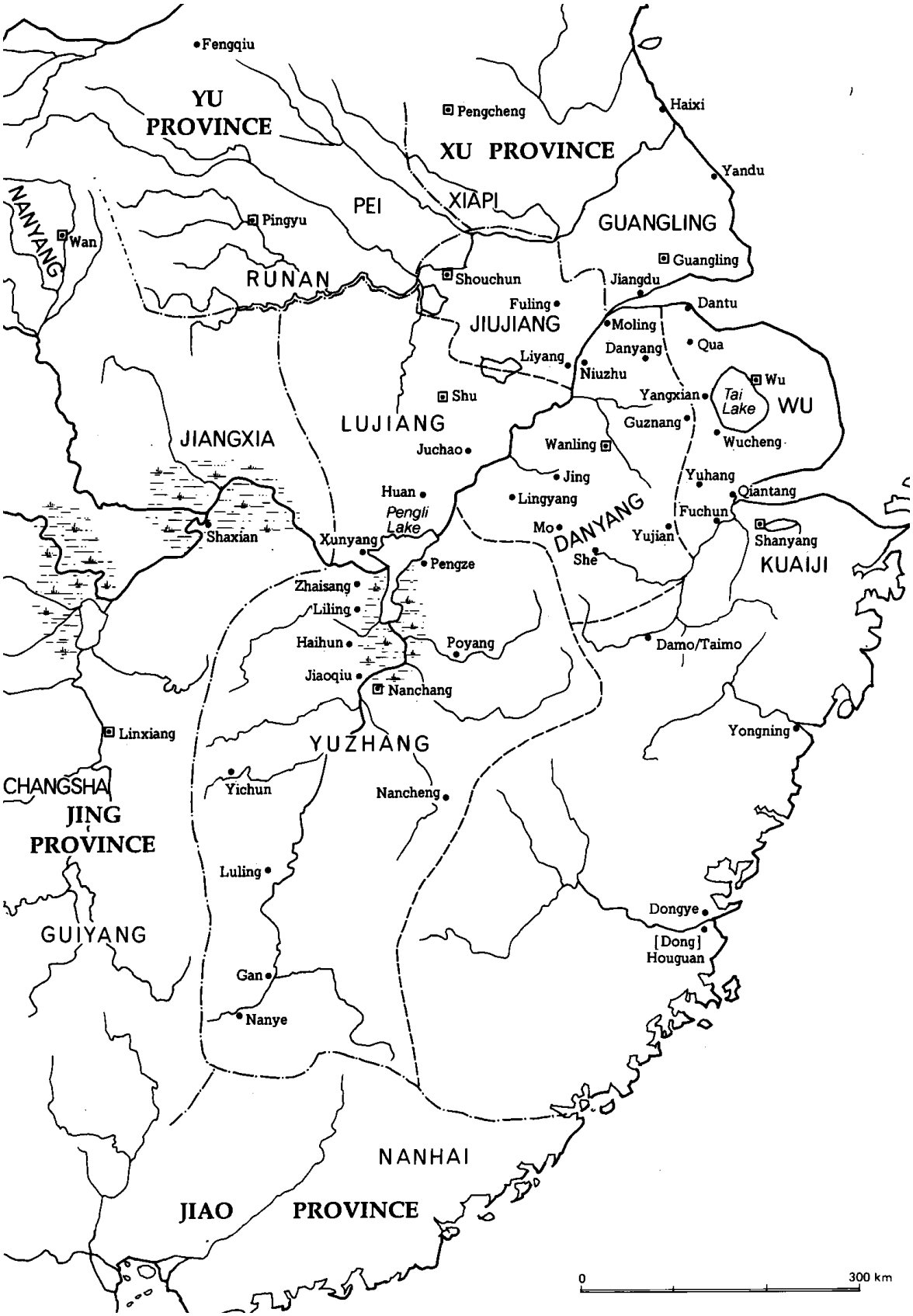
> That night, Sun Ce died.[96]

96 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1109.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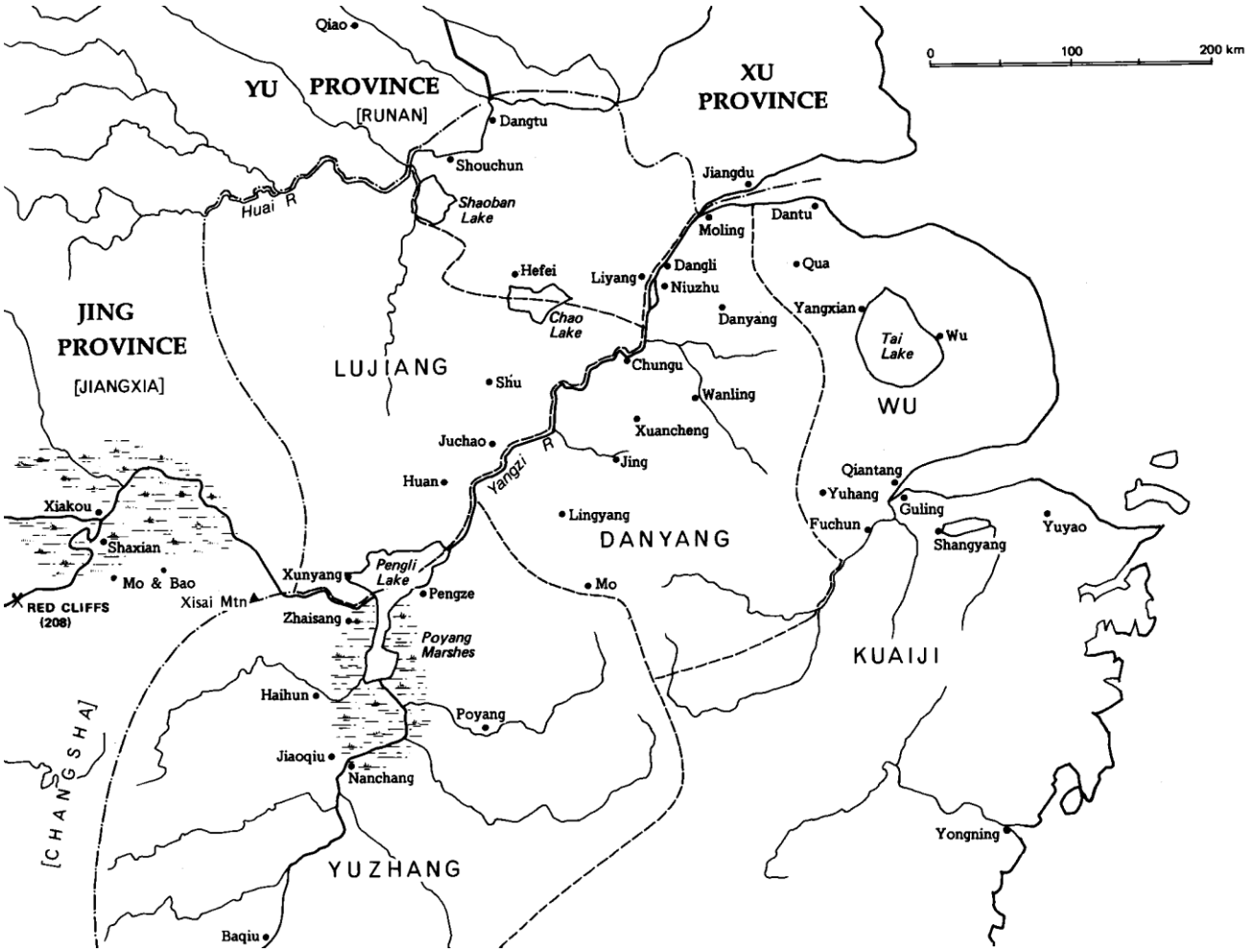
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Xunyang
Pengli Lake
Pengze
Mo
Zhaisang
Poyang Marshes
Haihun
Poyang
Jiaoqiu
Nanchang
Yongning
Baqiu

CHAPTER FOUR

To the Red Cliffs : Sun Quan 200-208

Introductory summary
The succession to Sun Ce
The establishment of Sun Quan
The war against Huang Zu
Flight of a crossbow bolt
Red Cliffs
Some Notes on Ships and Naval Warfare

Introductory summary:

Sun Quan, second son of Sun Jian and younger brother of Sun Ce, succeeded to his brother's position in 200, at the age of eighteen. Despite his youth, he was the senior male of the Sun family, and he was recognised and accepted by the commanders who had followed Sun Ce.

After a period of consolidation, the Sun group renewed the attack up the Yangzi towards Jing province, and at the beginning of 208 their army defeated and destroyed Liu Biao's general Huang Zu in battle at the mouth of the Han River by present-day Wuhan.

During this period, however, the warlord Cao Cao had established dominance in the north. He defeated his chief rival Yuan Shao at the battle of Guandu in 200, and in the following years he destroyed the Yuan clan and took control of the whole North China plain. In 208 he turned south against Jing province and the position of Liu Biao in the valley of the Han. About this time Liu Biao died, and Cao Cao received the surrender of his son and successor Liu Zong.

Liu Biao's elder son Liu Qi, however, aided by the exiled warlord Liu Bei, sought to oppose this takeover. Defeated by Cao Cao, they came south to the Yangzi and sought the aid of the Sun group. Sun Quan sent an army to the west, commanded by Zhou Yu, and the

allied forces faced the fleet and army of Cao Cao at the Red Cliffs, upstream from present-day Wuhan. After a short period of indecisive manoeuvring, an attack by fire-ships destroyed Cao Cao's fleet and compelled him to withdraw.

The succession to Sun Ce:

When Sun Ce died in the summer of the year 200, Sun Quan, born in 182, was about eighteen years old by Western reckoning.[1] For the past two or three years, he had been treated with courtesy and respect by his elder brother, associates and allies, and the formal records indicate that he had been prepared to take over power and that the transfer took place without great difficulty.

To some degree, this must have been true, and it reflects well upon the coherence of Sun Ce's party and the loyalty of the followers of the Sun family that the sudden death of Sun Ce was not succeeded by a total collapse of order and the outbreak of mutinies, separatist rebellion and succession struggles. Other warlord states of that time were quite unable to cope with such a critical event as the death of the major leader.

It was, moreover, quite fortunate for Sun Quan personally that his brother died at the time he did. Sun Ce had been married only the year before, to a girl of the Qiao family of Lujiang, after his capture of that commandery in 199.[2] There was a son, Sun Shao, born of the marriage, but he was certainly no more than a few months old when his father died, and he may have been a posthumous child.[3] There

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[1] The biography of Sun Quan, "Ruler of Wu," is in *SGZ* 47/Wu 2. At 1149 we are told that Sun Quan was seventy-one *sui* at the time of his death in 252, so he was born in 182, seven years after his elder brother Sun Ce. In 182, Sun Quan's father Sun Jian held the post of Assistant at Xiapi county: see Chapter 2 and note 1 to Chapter 3.

[2] *SGZ* 54 /Wu 9, 1260. There were two daughters of the Qiao family, and both were celebrated for their beauty. Sun Ce took the elder for his wife, and Zhou Yu the younger. See also below.

[3] On Sun Shao, see *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1112.

The commentary of Lu Bi notes (at *JJ* 36a-b) that Sun Ce evidently also left three daughters: one was married to Gu Shao (*SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1229); one was married to Zhu Ji (*SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1305; one was married to Lu Xun (*SGZ* 58/Wu

was no possibility that a small provincial state, literally fighting for its survival, could survive fifteen or more years of a minority rule; the successor to Sun Ce's power had to be a grown man.

Sun Shao, therefore, was not a serious rival to Sun Quan. Sun Yi, however, might have been. Sun Yi was the third son of Sun Jian, also born of the Lady Wu, and thus the younger full brother of Sun Ce and Sun Quan.[4] We are told in his biography in *Sanguo zhi* that he was energetic and out-going, more like Sun Ce than the somewhat reserved and perhaps more thoughtful Sun Quan. *Dian lue*, moreover, quoted in the Pei Songzhi commentary to the biography, says that when Sun Ce was on the point of death his counsellor Zhang Zhao and other advisers urged him to appoint Sun Yi, not Sun Quan, as his successor. Sun Ce, however, rejected this advice, and handed the seals and ribbons of his authority to Sun Quan.

At that time, Sun Yi would have been seventeen *sui*, about sixteen years old by Western reckoning.[5] In theory, at least, he had attained manhood, and he could have been acceptable as the leader of the forces of the Sun family. On the other hand, there is no question that such an appointment would have produced critical tensions between Sun Yi and Sun Quan, and would almost certainly have caused a division in the family. Most importantly, at that time it was Sun Quan who had been groomed for authority after Sun Ce, and Sun Yi had only just reached the age when he might have been able to gather support.

It is, in fact, difficult to believe that Zhang Zhao and his colleagues really made such a suggestion. The drastic consequences of a last-minute change would have been so obvious that no competent politician could have supported it,[6] and if any such story,

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13,1343). They must have been the off-spring of concubines or more casual acquaintances.

4 The biography of Sun Yi is in *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1212.

5 According to the biography, Sun Yi was twenty *sui* in 203: he was therefore born in 184.

6 There are, in fact, two cases about this time when a younger brother was given the preference in succession to a warlord state: Yuan Shao handed power to his youngest son Yuan Shang in 202; and Liu Biao gave the succession to his younger son Liu Zong. See below. On the other hand, although Yuan Shao and Liu Biao

revealing the lack of confidence, had been current in the Sun camp, one must imagine that at some stage Sun Quan would have taken his revenge and demonstrated his authority. Instead, though it does not seem that Sun Quan had the same affection for Zhang Zhao as Sun Ce had shown, he appears always to have treated him with respect, and in the early years of his rule he entrusted Zhang Zhao with the most responsible positions of government.

So it appears more probable that the story recorded in *Dian lue* reflects a piece of hostile propaganda, designed by outsiders to undermine Sun Quan's authority and his trust in his ministers. On the other hand, there may have been an element of truth in the possibilities for the future: had Sun Ce lived some years longer, he might have favoured Sun Yi and raised him to rival or even supplant Sun Quan. At the time he did die, however, Sun Quan was the only real candidate to succeed him. No other brother was old enough, and although there were several cousins of military age and experience, since the leadership of the Sun group in the south had been established by Sun Ce, his personal authority could hardly have been claimed by a more distant relative.[7]

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did arrange the succession as they wished, they did so against the general advice of their senior counsellors, and the results, particularly in the case of the Yuan family, were most unfortunate.

Perhaps the best answer to such a proposal was that given by Jia Xu, adviser at the court of Wei at a time that Cao Cao considered the abilities of his third son Cao Zhi superior to those of his eldest son Cao Pi. Cao Cao asked him about the choice of succession, but Jia Xu at first made no reply. Cao Cao pressed him further, and then Jia Xu said, "I kept silent because I was thinking." Cao Cao asked him what he had been thinking about. Jia Xu replied, "I was thinking about Yuan Benchu [Yuan Shao], and about Liu Jingsheng [Liu Biao], and their sons." Cao Cao laughed, and he took the point: *SGZ* 10, 331; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 513.

[7] According to *Wu shu*, quoted in *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1319 PC note 1, there was a short-lived possibility that Sun Gao, a cousin of Sun Ce and Sun Quan, might claim the succession.

Sun Gao was the elder son of Sun Jing, the youngest brother of Sun Jian who had accompanied him on his early campaigns, but then returned to the family home at Fuchun. When Sun Ce attacked Wang Lang in Kuaiji in 196, Sun Jing came to assist him with a force of household troops, but he went back to care for the family graves and other private property at Fuchun. He died there soon after Sun Quan's accession to power: *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1205.

According to *Wu shu*, Sun Gao at that time held appointment as General of the Gentleman of the Household Who Settles Firmness, and was camped at Wucheng

Given that Sun Quan was the recognised and logical heir to his elder brother, he was again fortunate in the support that he received from the core of senior officials who had served Sun Ce. Among them, the most important civilians were Zhang Zhao, Lü Fan and, a little later, Zhang Hong. The chief military men at headquarters were Cheng Pu and the famous Zhou Yu.

Zhang Zhao, then in his middle forties, was a man from Pengcheng in Xu province, the region about present-day Xuzhou in northwestern Jiangsu. He was a distinguished Confucian scholar, with particular knowledge of the *Zuo zhuan*, and he was regarded with respect in the empire at large. When he was young, he was recommended for office in the imperial civil service on several occasions, but he refused to accept.[8]

In 193, when Cao Cao attacked Tao Qian in Xu province, great numbers of the people fled south from the fighting, and it was probably at this time that Zhang Zhao moved to Yang province. In 195, when Sun Ce was beginning his campaigns south of the Yangzi,

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(the site of the marquisate which had earlier been awarded to Sun Jian), some fifty kilometres north of present-day Hangzhou. Although he came from a junior lineage, he is said to have been older than Sun Ce (being his elder cousin *congxiong*), and was thus certainly older than Sun Quan.

At this time, apparently, he thought of making an attempt to take over the government of Kuaiji commandery, and with troops under his command, from a base close to that territory, it may not have seemed an impossible coup. Yu Fan, however, old associate of Sun Ce, was Chief of Fuchun county. He was sent as messenger to Sun Gao, with warning that local government offices in all the counties would remain loyal to Sun Quan, and they would resist any move against him. The threat was effective, and Sun Gao abandoned his plan.

Though his brothers held office under Sun Quan, and his sons played a role in the later history of the state, Sun Gao does not appear to have a further official career. Unlike other members of the clan, he has no individual biography in *SGZ* 51/Wu 6.

This eclipse of Sun Gao appears to confirm, by negative example, that Sun Quan's brother Sun Yi never came forward as a serious rival to power. If he had done so, it is unlikely that he would have been granted the important position of Grand Administrator of Danyang: see above and below.

[8] The biography of Zhang Zhao is in *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1219-23.

We are told that he was equally celebrated as a scholar with Wang Lang, the Grand Administrator of Kuaiji defeated by Sun Ce in 196 {Chapter 2), and with Zhao Yu, the Grand Administrator of Guangling killed by Zhai Rong about 195 (note 22 to Chapter 3), and he was friends with both of them.

he met Zhang Zhao and appointed him as Chief Clerk, the officer in change of administration under a general.[9] Zhang Zhao was at that time about forty years old. He was also given the title of Colonel, and later General of the Gentlemen of the Household Who Supports the Army, although the appointments did not necessarily imply command of troops in the field. He was primarily a civilian administrator.[10]

According to Zhang Zhao's biography in *Sanguo zhi*, he was appointed by Sun Ce almost as regent for Sun Quan,[11] and he certainly acted as head of the administration in the first days after Sun Ce's death. In an anecdote with appropriate moral flavour, we are told that Sun Quan was so distracted by grief for the death of his brother that he failed to attend to affairs; it was Zhang Zhao who called him to his proper responsibilities, arguing that his true duty to Sun Ce was to carry on the great work, not to sit in useless mourning. Then Zhang Zhao arranged for Sun Quan to hold a review of troops and show himself to the people as their new ruler. Zhang Zhao continued to act as Chief Clerk in Sun Quan's military government.

Lü Fan was a man from Runan commandery, who had met Sun Ce when they were both at Shouchun with Yuan Shu. He joined Sun Ce with a hundred men of his own, and he went to Jiangdu in Xu province to bring back Sun Ce's mother the Lady Wu, and other members of the family.[12] He accompanied Sun Ce to the conquest

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[9] On this position under the Later Han system, see *HHS*114/24, 3564, and Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 121-124.

[10] *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1221 PC note 2 quoting *Wu shu*, records that Zhang Zhao did command forces in the field in the time of Sun Quan, attacking rebels in Yuzhang commandery and taking part in the campaign against Hefei in 208 (*SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1118). See also the comments of Lu Bi in *SGZJJ* 7, 17a, and *SGZJJ* 22, 19a.

[11] *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1221 PC note 1 quoting *Wu li*, says Sun Ce told Zhang Zhao that, should Sun Quan fail to govern well he should consider himself entitled to take over from him, or simply return to his home at Pengcheng.

It is difficult to believe, however, that Sun Ce was quite so pessimistic about his brother's abilities. Moreover, the tale has a suspicious similarity to the saying ascribed to Liu Bei, speaking on his deathbed to his great minister Zhuge Liang, perhaps with more justification for doubts, of his son Liu Shan: *SGZ* 35/Shu 5, 918.

[12] See Chapter 3.

of Danyang and Wu commanderies, and he held administrative and command positions in various newly-occupied counties. He commanded the expedition which drove away Cao Cao's agent Chen Yu,[13] and he took part in the attacks to the west, against Zu Lang, Taishi Ci, Huang Zu and the settlements in Poyang.

Lü Fan, then, was one of Sun Ce's oldest associates. He was a good-looking man, of respectable family, with a taste for extravagance and a flair for fine clothing and adornment. Apart from military operations, however, he had considerable ability in practical administration: most notably, when Sun Ce first came to the territory south of the Yangzi, Lü Fan had insisted on taking the low-ranking post of Chief Controller (here signifying the position of an adjutant), in order to set up a proper internal administration and discipline for the army.[14] He was also responsible for the finances of the enterprise, and he maintained strict control over the young Sun Quan, then Prefect of Yangxian. Sun Quan once or twice attempted to extract extra funds for his own purposes, but Lü Fan kept a careful account. One of Sun Quan's assistants, Zhou Gu, was always prepared to juggle the books, and Sun Quan was suitably grateful at the time; later, however, when he came to power, it was Lü Fan that he trusted, and Zhou Gu gained no advancement.

The other major civilian officer in the new regime was Zhang Hong, who had come to Sun Quan's service by a somewhat roundabout route. Zhang Hong was also an old acquaintance of Sun Ce: it was Zhang Hong to whom Sun Ce had entrusted his mother and brothers for safekeeping in Jiangdu at the time he first went to join Yuan Shu in 193. Later, he was with Sun Ce in the early campaigns south of the Yangzi, and he acted as the direct colleague of Zhang Zhao: according to *Wu shu*, they were jointly in charge of administration, one of them being always at base and the other in the field with Sun Ce.[15]

In 199, however, Sun Ce sent Zhang Hong as his envoy to the imperial court at Xu, under the control of Cao Cao. Zhang Hong too was a respected scholar. He had studied at a the Imperial University

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13 See Chapter 3.

14 See Chapter 3.

15 On the earlier association between Zhang Hong and Sun Ce, see Chapter 3.

in Luoyang, and he was widely read in the Confucian classics.[16] He wrote poetry, rhapsodies and essay compositions, and he was admired for his fine calligraphy. As a result, he was well received at court, he became a close friend of the distinguished scholar Kong Rong, and he was appointed by Cao Cao as Attendant Imperial Clerk, an office of the censorate. According to *Wu shu*, it was as a result of Zhang Hong's praise that Cao Cao gave Sun Ce recognition as an allied general and enfeoffment as Marquis of Wu.[17]

The position of Zhang Hong at the court in Xu was a delicate one. Formally speaking, he was a subject of the house of Han, and as a loyal officer of the imperial government he could serve the provincial commander Sun Ce or could take a post at the capital. In practical terms, however, any position which he took at Xu was held under the aegis of Cao Cao; while at the same time he still recognised a loyalty to Sun Ce, on whose behalf he had come to the capital in the first place. So there was always the possibility of divided loyalties and personal compromise, and one of the problems for a man in Zhang Hong's position was that he might end suspected and distrusted by both parties he sought to serve.

We are told that Cao Cao intended to appoint Zhang Hong as Grand Administrator of Jiujiang commandery: by this means he would be arranging for Zhang Hong to return to the south, governing a territory in the immediate vicinity of that controlled by Sun Ce, but holding the commission to do so from Cao Cao. Zhang Hong, however, recognised the trap, and excused himself, very firmly, on the grounds of ill health.

A few months later, however, Sun Ce was dead and Sun Quan had succeeded to him. According to *Sanguo zhi*, Cao Cao had it in mind to make an attack on the Sun group and take advantage of the uncertainty which accompanied the transfer of power. In fact, since Cao Cao was at that time committed to the campaign against Yuan

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16 Zhang Hong had first gone to Luoyang and studied the *Classic of History* and the *Classic of Changes* according to Jing Fang's interpretation, a somewhat mystical school of criticism which dated from the first century BC and was popular at this time. He then went to a private academy and studied the Han version of the *Classic of Poetry*, the *Li ji*, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* with the *Zuo Chronicle*.

17 *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1244 PC note 1 quoting *Wu shu.*

Shao, which was not resolved until the decisive engagement at Guandu in the winter at the end of 200, it is most unlikely he was in position to plan a major campaign to the southeast at that time: in many respects, this is the other side of the false coin whose other side tells of Sun Ce's plan to attack Xu and seize the Emperor.[18] It is said that Zhang Hong dissuaded Cao Cao from the plan, on the grounds that it would be ungentlemanly and impolitic to appear to take advantage of another's period of mourning, but his arguments may not have been needed.[19]

It was very likely with Zhang Hong's encouragement, however, that Cao Cao did instead confirm with Sun Quan the alliance he had formerly established with Sun Ce. By authority of the Han government, Sun Quan was appointed General Who Exterminates the Caitiffs and Grand Administrator of Kuaiji: apart from the slight change of title of the generalship, these were the same two positions as Sun Ce had held. Moreover, Zhang Hong was released from his position at Xu and was sent to become Chief Commandant of the Eastern Division of Kuaiji.

Formally speaking, this appointment made Zhang Hong the direct subordinate of Sun Quan in the local government of the commandery, but since Sun Quan's actual headquarters were close to the southern bank of the Yangzi, there must at first have been an element of uncertainty about his status and his proper duties. There were evidently some advisers in the new government of Sun Quan who were suspicious of Zhang Hong on account of his service with the court at Xu, for although he had been absent for only eighteen months, his former association had been primarily with Sun Ce, and he need hold no particular loyalty to Sun Quan. We are told that Cao Cao expected him to keep an eye on Sun Quan, and also that the Lady Wu, Sun Quan's mother, hoped he would exercise some

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18 See Chapter 3.

19 *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1244.

It may be that Cao Cao contemplated an attack early in 201, after his victory at Guandu, but this is also unlikely: he would hardly have wished to commit himself so quickly to the opposite direction, and Sun Quan by that time had been in his new position for eight or nine months, long enough to confirm a reasonable authority.

supervision. With this background, the initial relations between Sun Quan and Zhang Hong cannot have been easy.

When he arrived, Zhang Hong was suitably cautious. He worked closely with his old colleague Zhang Zhao, but restricted himself chiefly to drafting official documents and policy proposals, and he did not seek an active part in the administration. He also took the time to prepare a special history and eulogy of the achievements of Sun Jian and Sun Ce, which he presented to Sun Quan.[20] Sun Quan was touched by this mark of scholarly piety, and he accepted the loyalty of Zhang Hong to the Sun family, but one imagines that he still felt unhappy about the tutelage.

In 202, two years after his accession, when Sun Quan was twenty, the Lady Wu his mother died, and he freed himself from Zhang Hong's immediate services.[21] Zhang Hong was ordered to travel to

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20 It is my suggestion that this pair of biographies provided the basic material for the accounts of Sun Jian and Sun Ce which are now preserved in the main text of *SGZ* 46/Wu 1: see Chapter 9.

21 The biography of the Lady Wu, *SGZ* 50/Wu 5, 1196, says that she died in 202. *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1116, agrees, and I have followed their statements. The *Zhi lin* of Yu Xi, however, quoted in PC note 2 to the former passage, argues that there was a hiatus in the tax returns from Kuaiji commandery in the years 207 and 208, and attributes this to the mourning for the death of the Lady Wu. The argument appears to be accepted by *ZZTJ* 54, 2074; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 362.

The position of Zhang Hong, as former officer at the court controlled by Cao Cao, may have been put in further doubt at this time by pressure from Cao Cao against the independence of Sun Quan.

According to *Jiangbiao zhuan*, quoted in *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1260-61 PC note 1, in 202 Cao Cao sought to confirm the position of Sun Quan by requesting that he send hostages to court. All the ministers in council were uncertain and could not decide, but Zhou Yu went with Sun Quan to the Lady Wu, and argued that he should maintain the option of independence, and that it would be foolish for him at this time to commit himself so thoroughly to Cao Cao's domination. The Lady Wu agreed, and said to Sun Quan, "Gongjin's advice is right [Gongjin was the style of Zhou Yu]. Gongjin and Bofu [Sun Ce] were the same age in years, though Gongjin was older by a month. I look upon Gongjin as a son; you should serve him as an elder brother." So they sent no hostages.

This story is confused, however, by reference to the request that Sun Quan should send a son as hostage: Sun Quan's eldest known son, Sun Deng, was born only in 209, and Sun Quan, then age twenty, was hardly old enough to have a son suitable for sending to the north. On the other hand, since the Lady Wu died in 202,

his local command, south of Hangzhou Bay about present-day Ningbo, and he remained there for the next several years. In 207, when Sun Quan was preparing a campaign of expansion westwards up the Yangzi, Zhang Hong was recalled to his old duties, as under Sun Ce, in charge of the base while the main army was on active service. In 209, he succeeded Zhang Zhao as Chief Clerk to Sun Quan, and from that time, until his death in 212, at the age of sixty, he continued as a leading counsellor.

Zhang Hong was a respected figure at Sun Quan's court, and his talents were too considerable to be disregarded. On the other hand, Sun Quan's dispatch of him to Kuaiji was very probably intended as a demonstration of his personal authority, and Zhang Hong's return to the central government in 207 was arranged only when there was a need for his services and when it was clear that he would now be regarded as Sun Quan's own appointee. *Jiangbiao zhuan* notes that Sun Quan would address all his officers by their intimate personal names, or "style," save only Zhang Zhao, whom he always called "Lord Zhang," and Zhang Hong, whom he called *Dongbu*, "Eastern Division," in reference to his official post in Kuaiji. Certainly this was a mark of distinction and perhaps, as *Jiangbiao zhuan* suggests, of courtesy; but it may also have served as a reminder that Zhang Hong's rightful position was in that distant frontier region.[22]

Among the military men in the new government, the majority had come to prominence in the time of Sun Ce, though a few, such as Cheng Pu, Huang Gai and Han Dang, had served under Sun Jian ten or even twenty years earlier, and Zhou Tai, who originally joined Sun Ce from Jiujiang commandery, later transferred to Sun Quan's

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or possibly in 207, and Zhou Yu died in 210, it is difficult to tell when a debate on this exact topic could have taken place.

All in all, it is difficult to judge whether Cao Cao did ask Sun Quan for hostages in 202, and if he did, what hostages he asked for. It was not an unreasonable proposal, but Sun Quan suffered no immediate threat for his failure to agree. About this time, Cao Cao occasionally contemplated a full attempt to bring the south under his control, but for the next several years the opportunities which were opened up by his victory at Guandu and the subsequent death of Yuan Shao kept him most thoroughly engaged in the north.

22 *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1244 PC note 2 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*.

personal service.[23] For those who had served directly under Sun Ce, the transfer of power to Sun Quan was accepted as inevitable and necessary. According to the biography of the general Dong Xi in *Sanguo zhi*, the Lady Wu asked various advisers their opinion of Sun Quan's expectations, and Dong Xi replied:

> The lands east of the Yangzi have the security of mountains and rivers, and His Excellency [Sun Ce the General] Who Exterminates the Rebels has granted grace and favour to the people.
>
> [Sun Quan the General] Who Exterminates the Caitiffs succeeds to this foundation, and all obey his orders. If Zhang Zhao attends to civil affairs, and we others act as the claws and teeth, then the land and the people will aid and support us. There is nothing to worry about.[24]

And to confirm such words as these, Cheng Pu, doyen of the commanders loyal to the Sun family, led an army through three commanderies (presumably Danyang, Wu and Kuaiji) in a show of strength and solidarity for the new administration, and he investigated and punished any officers whose loyalty was open to question. Cheng Pu, who came originally from Youbeiping commandery, in the north of the empire east of present-day Beijing, had served with Sun Jian since the time of the Yellow Turban rebellion in 184 and had joined Sun Ce at the very beginning of his career, before he began his conquest of the territory south of the Yangzi. He was highly respected, and his support was valuable.

In romance, however, and perhaps also in reality, the leading figure of the time was the celebrated Zhou Yu, boyhood friend of Sun Ce and later his most trusted associate.

Despite their long acquaintance and their close affection, Zhou Yu and Sun Ce had not been in one another's company for most of the past five years. Zhou Yu had joined Sun Ce at the time he crossed the Yangzi in 195, but after the defeat of Liu Yao, at the beginning of 196, when Sun Ce turned against Wu and Kuaiji he left Zhou Yu in charge of Danyang commandery, and some time after

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23 On Cheng Pu, Huang Gai and Han Dang, see note 9 to Chapter 3. The biography of Zhou Tai is in *SGZ* 56/Wu 10, 1287-88.

24 From the biography of Dong Xi, *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1290-91 at 1291.

that Zhou Yu was called back to Yuan Shu at Shouchun. In 198, he left Yuan Shu and returned to join Sun Ce, but his first appointments were again in Danyang, on the bank of the Yangzi facing the territory still held by Yuan Shu in Jiujiang and Lujiang commanderies.

In 199, when Sun Ce was planning his attack up the Yangzi towards Jing province, he called for Zhou Yu, gave him the ambitious title of Grand Administrator of Jiangxia, the commandery he intended to conquer, and also appointed him Protector of the Army at the Centre. The title Protector of the Army had been used in the Qin and Han dynasties, though with somewhat varying significance; on occasion it designated an officer responsible for military discipline.[25] For Zhou Yu, it seems to have marked him as chief of staff, responsible for military administration in parallel with Zhang Zhao, the Chief Clerk, who was in charge of civil affairs. Zhou Yu also commanded troops in the field, for he is mentioned as one of the divisional commanders at the battle with Huang Zu in 199, but it seems clear that Sun Ce regarded him as his right-hand man and gave him priority over his other commanders.

So he accompanied Sun Ce to the attack on Lujiang commandery and the capture of Huan city, and it was on that occasion Sun Ce took to wife the elder daughter of the Qiao family. Zhou Yu, for his part, married the younger daughter, and was thus now related, at least indirectly, to Sun Ce. It is said that Sun Ce joked with Zhou Yu, "Though the two Qiao girls may be exiles, now they have got us for their husbands, they have all they need to make them happy."

Early in 200, after the defeat of Huang Zu and the take-over of Yuzhang commandery, Sun Ce left Zhou Yu at Baqiu, a city on the Gan River southwest of Nanchang and the Poyang marshes: from that base he could provide a military reserve for control of the new and expected conquests in that region.

A few weeks later, however, Sun Ce was dead. While his colleagues Sun Fu and Sun Ben held the region of Yuzhang, Zhou Yu brought his troops back to Wu commandery. He attended Sun Ce's funeral ceremony, and then remained at headquarters, taking

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25 See, for example, de Crespigny, "Inspection and Surveillance," 62 note 46.

his former title as Protector of the Army at the Centre and sharing with Zhang Zhao in the administration of the new government.

There was, of course, one other potential rival to Sun Quan's authority, and that was Zhou Yu. He was the trusted associate of Sun Ce, he was far more experienced in military and political matters than Sun Quan, and he was now related by marriage to the Sun family. Moreover, the Zhou, as we have seen, were one of the leading gentry families of the region, and the prestige of such a lineage would be far greater than that of the Sun.

It does not appear, however, that Zhou Yu made any attempt to take advantage of the situation, and there were factors which operated against him. Despite his close friendship with Sun Ce, and his important position, he had not been regularly involved with affairs at headquarters over the previous few years: he had spent some time with Yuan Shu and he had also held a number of separate commands. It is unlikely that he had been able to build up an effective core of support among the leaders of the Sun party, and the prestige and even the past connections of his family could not necessarily have been usefully deployed in a power struggle against Sun Quan within his own central command.

So Zhou Yu, though his future achievements were to rank him as one of the finest military commanders of his time, with reputation which would overshadow those of Sun Ce and of Sun Quan, remains in history and legend as the young, brilliant hero, not as an independent ruler. And Sun Quan, despite the potential threats to his succession of his brother's power, was able to lay the foundations of an imperial state in the south.

The establishment of Sun Quan:

At the time of Sun Ce's death, his headquarters were at Dantu, a county city in Wu commandery, on the southern bank of the Yangzi, just across the border from Danyang commandery.[26] Dantu, and

[26] For some years from this time, Dantu was also known as *jingcheng* "Capital City," probably in recognition of its central position in Sun Quan's administration. See, for example, the commentary of Lu Bi to *SGZJJ* 51/Wu 6, 13a, quoting also the commentary of Hu Sanxing to *ZZTJ* 64, 2058, and to *ZZTJ*

Qu'a which lay some 25 kilometres to the south, were the central and strategic points of Sun territory at this time:[27] to the west, they gave access to Danyang commandery and the main stream of the Yangzi; to the southeast they were an appropriate starting point for operations into Wu commandery and then further south, beyond Hangzhou Bay, to Kuaiji. It was these three territories, Danyang, Wu and Kuaiji, which were the heart of Sun Quan's power.

In formal terms, Sun Quan's control over this territory was quite secure. He was Grand Administrator of Kuaiji, appointed in succession to his brother by the imperial court under Cao Cao. The government there was maintained by his Assistant, Gu Yong, an experienced administrator who was a native of Wu commandery,[28] and he was aided by the Chief Commandant of the Western Division, Jiang Qin, an old associate of Sun Ce.[29] For some years, at least, the commandery was also under supervision from Zhang Hong. Further south, in the region of the Min River, upstream from present-day Fuzhou, the loyal and energetic He Qi was carving out a region of pacified territory among the Yue people, and extending Chinese culture at the point of the sword.

In Wu commandery, the Grand Administrator was still Zhu Zhi, and there was no significant threat to his authority. The former Grand Administrator, Xu Gong, had been killed by Sun Ce, and although we are told that Sun Ce was planning a further campaign against White Tiger Yan at the time of his death, and that campaign presumably did not take place, there is no further reference to White Tiger Yan after this time. It appears that the opposition to the Sun family in this region was on the point of collapse in any case, and required no further notable military action.

On the other hand, we are told specifically, and not surprisingly, that there was a good deal of country which had not yet been brought

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66, 2101-02; Hu Sanxing interprets the character *jing*, however, as a reference to the position of the settlement on top of a ridge of hills close to the Yangzi.

27 Qu'a was the site of the tomb Gaoling of Sun Jian (Chapter 2). Sun Ce was apparently also buried there (see the commentary of Zhao Yiqing quoted in *SGZJJ* 46/Wu 1, 36a), and when the Lady Wu died she was buried with her husband Sun Jian in Gaoling (*SGZ* 50/Wu 5, 1196).

28 The biography of Gu Yong is in *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1225-28.

29 The biography of Jiang Qin is in *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1286-87.

under full control, and throughout the region there were numbers of refugees, "who came or wandered away wherever they thought they could find good government and peace, and had no sense of loyalty to any particular ruler."[30] These people needed to be settled, by ordinary good administration in the accessible regions, and by firm military policy in the borders and hill country.

Danyang commandery, with its capital at Wanling, near present-day Xuancheng in Anhui, continued under the command of the Grand Administrator Wu Jing, Sun Quan's uncle. When Wu Jing died in 203, he was succeeded by Sun Quan's younger brother Sun Yi, now about nineteen years old.

Further afield, and notably north of the Yangzi, the acceptance of Sun Quan was less secure, and one matter had to be handled quickly.

In 199, when Sun Ce seized Lujiang commandery from Liu Xun, he appointed his officer Li Shu as Grand Administrator, in command of a garrison at Huan city. From that position, Li Shu had defended his territory with success, killing the Inspector of Yang province appointed by Cao Cao, Yan Xiang.[31] When Sun Quan took over, however, Li Shu became uncertain, and he attempted to change sides and join up with Cao Cao. He refused to acknowledge Sun Quan's authority, and he took in fugitives and rebels against him.

Sun Quan, however, contrived to isolate Li Shu. Taking advantage of Cao Cao's preoccupations in the north, and his official endorsement of Sun Quan's local authority, he wrote to Cao Cao to accuse Li Shu of the "wanton criminal act" of killing Yan Xiang, and asserted that he sought only to bring Li Shu to justice. Whether convinced by the propaganda of Sun Quan's arguments or, more probably, unable to make any move to stop him, Cao Cao abandoned Li Shu to his fate. Huan city was stormed by the Sun army, Li Shu was beheaded, Sun Quan regained control of his territory and his troops, and Sun He became Grand Administrator.[32]

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30 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1116.

31 *SGZ* 10, 312 PC note 3 quoting *Sanfu juelu.*

32 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1116 PC note 2 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.* On Sun He, see note 6 to Chapter 3.

Cao Cao had evidently missed an opportunity, but his next move was an admirable one. He appointed Liu Fu, a man from Pei state, as his new Inspector of Yang province.[33] The position was hardly an easy one: Liu Fu's predecessor had just been killed by Li Shu, only the commandery of Jiujiang was held with any confidence, and there were numerous bandit or refugee groups in all the area between the Yangzi and the Huai.

Liu Fu, however, set his new administration at the city of Hefei, and it within a few months he was able to gain the support and allegiance of the disaffected brigands and the refugees. In following years, he established farming colonies to settle the people, and he repaired dykes and dams to restore and improve the irrigation system and the agriculture that depended upon it. In many respects, the appointment of Liu Fu was Cao Cao's greatest success in the struggle against the Sun family.

For the time being, however, the disaffection of Li Shu had been solved and the territory of Sun Quan was confirmed. The next major problem occurred a few years later, probably in 204, with a mutiny in Danyang commandery.

After the death of Wu Jing in 203, his successor the young Sun Yi had sought to establish a lenient and reconciliatory government. In particular, he called into his service two men named Gui Lan and Dai Yuan, proteges of a certain Sheng Xian of Kuaiji. Sheng Xian had at one time been Grand Administrator of Wu commandery, and after Sun Ce's conquest of that region he maintained some resistance and disaffection. Eventually, he was executed by Sun Quan, and Gui Lan and Dai Yuan, who had at one time been recommended for office by Sheng Xian, took refuge in the hills. Sun Yi, however, invited them to join him, and he appointed Gui Lan to a military post and Dai Yuan as his civil Assistant in the commandery.[34]

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33 The biography of Liu Fu is in *SGZ* 15, 463-65.

34 The details of this story appear not in the biography of Sun Yi, but in that of Sun Shao, nephew of Sun He, in *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1214-16 and PC note 1 quoting *Kuaiji dianlu.*

The position of Gui Lan is described as Grand Chief Controller. The title "Chief Controller" appears with increasing frequency at this time; it was not part of the regular structure of Han, and it appears to have indicated officers with differing

The reconciliation, however, was hardly perfect, for Sun Yi was assassinated, when drunk at a banquet, by a certain Bian Hong who was associated with Gui Lan and Dai Yuan, and Gui Lan and Dai Yuan took over the administration. Sun He, recently Grand Administrator of Lujiang but now appointed to command of an army stationed at headquarters, was sent to investigate and restore order, but Gui Lan and Dai Yuan trapped him and killed him too. Then they sent north to Liu Fu, inviting him to come and take possession of the territory on behalf of Cao Cao.

At this point, however, it appears Gui Lan was distracted: not only did he take over the commandery government, he also took for himself Sun Yi's concubines and serving maids, and he then sought to compel the widow of Sun Yi, the Lady Xu, to marry him. The young woman can hardly have been more than twenty, but she behaved with remarkable competence and efficiency:[35]

> .....she said, "I beg to wait until the end of the month, then I shall arrange sacrifices and put off my mourning clothes."
>
> It was nearly the end of the month, and so Gui Lan agreed. Then the Lady Xu secretly sent someone she trusted to speak to Sun Yi's close retainers and former officers Sun Gao, Fu Ying and others, saying to them, "Gui Lan has already seized the concubines, and now I am also under pressure from him. The only reason I pretend to agree is that I want to set his mind at rest and so escape the fate he intends for me. I have made a plan, and I ask you two gentlemen to help me in this time of distress."
>
> .....When the last day of the month arrived, the sacrifice was arranged. The Lady Xu wept out all her grief; but then she finished and put off her mourning clothes and bathed herself, with scented herbs, and she moved to another apartment and contentedly hung up the curtains for the women's quarters; and she talked and laughed and made good cheer. Everyone was sick and sorrowful, and amazed that she could act in such a manner. Gui Lan spied upon her in secret, and he could have no doubts.

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functions. In the present instance, Gui Lan's post was probably equivalent to Chief Commandant in the commandery. *Cf.* Chapter 3.

35 This story is told in *Wu li*, quoted by *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1215 PC note 2. It also appears in *ZZTJ* 64, 2058-59; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 335-336.

The Lady Xu called Sun Gao and Fu Ying, had them put on maid-servants' clothing, and hid them behind the door. Then she sent someone to call Gui Lan, to tell him that she had ended her mourning and recovered her spirits, and that she held herself ready for his orders.

Gui Lan came to her very cheerfully, and the Lady Xu went to the door to receive him. She bowed just once, then she called, "You two, come now!" Sun Gao and Fu Ying came out together, and they killed Gui Lan, and the others of their party outside killed Dai Yuan.

Then the Lady Xu put on her mourning clothes again, and she brought the heads of Gui Lan and Dai Yuan as offerings at Sun Yi's grave.

During this time, Sun Quan had been with the main army in Yuzhang commandery. He returned to Danyang in time to restore order after the Lady Xu's coup, rewarding the loyal plotters, and punishing the adherents of Gui Lan and Dai Yuan. He appointed his cousin Sun Yu, son of Sun Jing the younger brother of Sun Jian, as Grand Administrator.[36] Then he marched north to Dantu, pretending to launch a surprise attack against the encampment formerly commanded by Sun He. Sun He's nephew, Sun Shao, seventeen years old, had taken over command of his father's forces, and he was ready and alert. Sun Quan was suitably impressed, and confirmed Sun Shao in the inheritance, with rank as colonel, with the power to appoint his own subordinates, and with access to supplies from the two counties of Dantu and Qu'a.

Sun Shao was certainly young for such responsibility, but so of course was Sun Quan, and he and his new government would be anxious to confirm their patronage for competent young men with a record of family loyalty. In similar fashion, Sun Quan also initiated a program of reviewing his troops and assessing his military commanders, even at the lower levels. We are told, about this time, in the biography of Lü Meng, who later became one of the finest

36 The biography of Sun Yu is in *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1206.

generals of the state of Wu, but who at that time held the rank of Major With a Separate Command, that:[37]

> When Sun Quan took over the government, he made a survey of all his junior officers, with the intention of combining those troops which had small numbers of men or inadequate supplies.
>
> In secret, Lü Meng bought equipment on credit, he prepared red uniforms for his men and had them bind their legs with cord. Then he chose the day and drew up his lines in fine fashion, and the soldiers practised their exercises.
>
> Sun Quan saw this and was very pleased, and he increased the troops under Lü Meng's command.

One can readily imagine the ragtag and bobtail appearance of some of the groups which had come to join the army under one petty leader or another, so the re-organisation and proper training of his heterogeneous force must have been a high priority for the new commander; the more so as those whom he confirmed or promoted in office would now give their allegiance to himself.

Again, Sun Quan had a policy of granting personal audiences to his officers. He is said to have done this on the advice of his Officer of the Department of Merit Luo Tong, who was formally in charge of selections and recommendations for office,[38] but he was no doubt quite capable of thinking up that idea on his own. In any case, particularly on feast days and at other ceremonies, he would hold private interviews, asking various of his followers how they were getting on, what sort of lodgings they had, and whether they had any particular matters which they wished to bring before him. All this was good, useful and important public relations.

At a higher level, Sun Quan also made a deliberate attempt to attract senior and respected men to his court, not only to strengthen his administration but also to establish a group of his own, in contrast to those men whose services he had inherited from Sun Ce. In this, he appears to have been remarkably successful: among the scholars and gentlemen who came to him at this early time, and who stayed to give good service for years into the future, there were

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37 The biography of Lü Meng is in *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1273-81. This anecdote appears at 1273.

38 The biography of Luo Tong is in *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1334-36.

Zhuge Jin, elder brother of the later celebrated Zhuge Liang, who came from Langye; Bu Zhi of Xiapi; Yan Jun of Pengcheng; and his future commander-in-chief Lu Su joined him on the recommendation of Zhou Yu.[39]

The war against Huang Zu:

Within two or three years of Sun Quan's accession, a good part of the process of consolidation was evidently complete, at least in the territories of Kuaiji, Wu and Danyang. The frontiers against the hills people were controlled and indeed expanding while, apart from the misfortunes of Sun Yi, the government of the commanderies was secured. Sun Quan was now in a position to turn his attention to his brother's earlier plans towards the south and west.

The territory of Yuzhang commandery, the region of the Pengli Lake and the Poyang Marsh, had been nominally controlled by the Sun group since 199, but it was on the fringes of their sphere of influence, and they had not yet established full authority. Further to the west, the years since the death of Sun Ce had seen no substantial change in Jing province: Liu Biao maintained his position in the north, with a loose control of the basin of the Xiang River south of the Yangzi, while his general Huang Zu, old enemy of the Sun, guarded Jiangxia commandery and the region of the lower Han, with some threat down the Yangzi towards Yuzhang. For any substantial development of his state, Sun Quan had to eliminate Huang Zu, and to this strategic interest there was added the motive of revenge for the death of Sun Jian in the campaign outside Xiangyang ten years before.[40]

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39 The biography of Zhuge Jin is in *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1231-35; that of Bu Zhi is in *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1236-40; that of Yan Jun in *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1247-48; and that of Lu Su in *SGZ* 53/Wu 9, 1267-72.

Zhuge Jin, Bu Zhi and Yan Jun were all noted scholars, and friends, who came separately to take refuge from the troubles of northern China in the lands south of the Yangzi. On Lu Su's earlier experiences, see Chapter 4.

40 On the death of Sun Jian, see Chapter 2; on the earlier campaigns of Sun Ce against Huang Zu, see Chapter 3.

In 203, therefore, Sun Quan sent his army against Huang Zu's positions on the Yangzi above the Pengli Lake. He did not achieve a decisive victory, and he may not have sought one at this stage, but he crippled Huang Zu's fleet, and the action prevented Huang Zu from intervening downstream for some time to come.

For the next year or so, Sun Quan's main concern was the region of Poyang, and indeed the whole territory of present-day Jiangxi province. Separate detachments of his army under Cheng Pu, Taishi Ci and others were sent about the marsh-lands and into the hill country along the river valleys to the south and west. Sun Quan maintained his headquarters at Jiaoqiu, near present-day Nanchang, though his administrative capital, and a reserve army under Sun He (succeeded by Sun Shao) remained at Dantu.

By 206, the Poyang region was felt to be secure, and Sun Quan's forces, under the command of Zhou Yu with assistance from the Grand Administrator of Danyang Sun Yu, expanded their attacks to the west into Jing province. The first sortie was against the people of Mo and Bao, two settlements in the lake and marsh region near present-day Jiayu in Hubei.[41] Their territory was formally in Jiangxia commandery, whose Grand Administrator was Huang Zu, but it was separated from his headquarters at Xiakou, present-day Wuhan,[42] by a morass of rivers and lakes. Zhou Yu could attack due

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41 On the siting of the "camps" of Mo and Bao, see the commentary of Lu Bi to *SGZJJ* 51/Wu 6, 2b. On the nature of the people, whom I suggest may have been refugees from the north of the Yangzi, see below.

42 The capital of Jiangxia commandery in Later Han had been at Xiling, northeast of present-day Wuhan (*HHS* 112/22, 3482). The biography of Gan Ning, however, at *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1292 PC note 3 quoting *Wu shu*, notes that Huang Zu had set his headquarters at Xiakou, and this fits with the description of the final attack given below.

Xiakou was not a county under Later Han, and the place evidently gained its importance only at this time. The site was at the junction of the Han River with the Yangzi, and it obtained its name from that fact. The Xia River joined the Han from the west just before the junction of that main stream with the Yangzi; as a result, the last reaches of the Han/Mian were also known as Xia, while the name of the commandery itself was a combination of *jiang* for the Yangzi and *xia* for the Han (*SJZS* 28, 54b, and 32, 38b-44b, and *HS* 28A, 1567-68 note 1 quoting Ying Shao). See also note 45 below, and the commentary of Lu Bi to *SGZJJ* 1, 70b.

[The biography of Gan Ning is in *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1292-95. Gan Ning came from a family of Nanyang which had migrated to Ba commandery in present-day

west, and the sortie would embarrass Huang Zu's defences, and compel him to a counter-attack.

We are told that Zhou Yu killed the leaders of the Mo and Bao people and brought back more than ten thousand of them to his camp by the Pengli Lake. Such a large number of immigrants seems somewhat unlikely, but it is very possible that Zhou Yu was able to make a forced recruitment from these people, and many of the men's families would have come with them. Despite the manner in which these new troops had been compelled to join him, they had not had any close relationship with Huang Zu, and Zhou Yu was evidently prepared to use them alongside, and under the eye of, his regular soldiers.

Huang Zu sent a force of some few thousand men against Zhou Yu, under the command of his officer Deng Long. Zhou Yu met the enemy at Zhaisang, near present-day Jiujiang on the Yangzi about the border of Jiangxi and Hubei provinces. He completely defeated them, captured Deng Long, and sent him as a prisoner to Sun Quan.

In the following year, Sun Quan came to take command of the offensive, though one may imagine that Zhou Yu remained in actual charge of the operations. On this occasion, it appears that the attack was directly against Huang Zu's positions along the Yangzi, but once more the main purpose was rather to capture people and bring them back than, at this stage, to destroy Huang Zu. Again, forced immigration was regarded as an advantage: the seizure of human resources from the enemy fully outweighed any danger from disaffection among the captives. Either they lost their loyalty to their

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Sichuan. As a young man he was a leader of brigands, but he then took to scholarship and more civilised arts. He went to join Liu Biao, but received no advancement from him. He thought to join the Sun group, but was forced to stay several years with Huang Zu.

When Sun Quan attacked in 203, Gan Ning fought against him, and killed the colonel Ling Cao. Eventually, through the good offices of Huang Zu's lieutenant Su Fei, Gan Ning was appointed Chief of Zhu county, on the Yangzi nearest to the Sun positions in the east, and in 207 he was able to change sides. He encouraged Sun Quan to make a final attack on Huang Zu, whom he described as old and now dull-witted.

When Huang Zu was defeated, Gan Ning was given an independent military command, and he interceded successfully on behalf of his former patron Su Fei, whom Sun Quan had captured and intended to put to death.]

former master once he had failed to protect them, or else the question of their possible loyalty became irrelevant when they were held under the armed control of their conqueror.

In the spring of 208 Sun Quan launched the final offensive, this time against Huang Zu's headquarters at Xiakou. Zhou Yu was in command of the vanguard, but it was a very considerable combined force which took part in the attack, and it represented a major commitment to gain a presence in the central Yangzi basin.

The history records some incidents from the battle:[43]

> Huang Zu had arranged two ships, covered with raw ox-hide,[44] across the channel to narrow the entrance to Miankou,[45] and he had two great coir ropes stretched between them with stones attached as anchors. Above this line of defence there were a thousand men with crossbows to give covering fire. The arrows poured down like rain, and the army could not get forward.
>
> The Lieutenant-General Dong Xi and the Major with a Separate Command Ling Tong[46] were together in the van. Each took charge of a forlorn hope of volunteers, all in double armour. They boarded a great barge, charged between the covered boats, and Dong Xi himself cut the ropes with his sword. The enemy

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43 The passage which follows is taken from the biography of Dong Xi, *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1291. See also *ZZTJ* 65, 2078; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 368-369.

44 On the nature of these ships, see Some Notes on Ships and Naval Warfare below.

45 Miankou is the same place as Xiakou (note 42 above), being the junction of the Han River with the Yangzi by present-day Wuhan.

Mian was another name for the Han River. The Mian was one of the chief sources of the Han, rising in the hill country of Wudu commandery in present-day southern Gansu. See *SJZS* 27, 2b quoting Kong Anguo of the Former Han period and Ru Shun of the third century AD; *SJZS* 27 and 28 describe the whole course of the Han under the name of Mian. (The name of the Xia River, a tributary which joined the Mian/Han just before the junction with the Yangzi, was used only for the last reaches of the major stream.) See also the commentary of Lu Bi to *SGZJJ* 1, 70b, citing the commentary of Hu Sanxing to *ZZTJ* 65, 2076.

46 The biography of Ling Tong, in *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1295-97 at 1296, has him at this time about eighteen years old. The father of Ling Tong, Ling Cao, had been killed by Gan Ning in 203 (note 42 above), when Ling Tong was fifteen *sui*. One imagines there was some tension in the Sun camp at this time.

craft were swept down-stream, and the main body of Sun Quan's forces were able to attack.

The city was taken by storm, and Huang Zu was killed as he fled.

This was a notable victory, and the destruction of Huang Zu marked the culmination of a program of revenge dating back to the death of Sun Jian in the fighting near Xiangyang in 191. Sun Quan did not maintain his position as far west as Xiakou, but he now dominated the course of the Yangzi for eight hundred kilometres, from the junction with the Han River east and north to the sea.

It is perhaps surprising that Liu Biao had not taken a more active role in support of his lieutenant, but there were other matters to concern him at the time, and Liu Biao was not a particularly energetic military commander. Moreover, though Jiangxia commandery was a part of Jing province, and the success of the Sun forces was a nuisance and a potential threat, it had no immediate effect upon the control of the rest of the province. From his headquarters at Xiangyang, Liu Biao's main line of communication with the south lay to the west of Jiangxia, through Nan commandery, across the Yangzi by the present-day Dongting Lake and up the valley of the Xiang River to Changsha and beyond. Jiangxia commandery was on his eastern frontier, and at that time the greater threat came from Cao Cao in the north.

Liu Biao had come to Jing province at the beginning of the civil war, and he had been able to establish himself there while Yuan Shu and his general Sun Jian were preoccupied with the attack against Dong Zhuo in Luoyang. Thereafter, once Yuan Shu's attack in 191 was blunted by the death of Sun Jian, Liu Biao had been able to maintain himself without difficulty. He suffered, of course, growing harassment from Sun Ce and then Sun Quan in the region of Jiangxia, and there was a period, from 198 to 200, when the Grand Administrator of Changsha, Zhang Xian, maintained independence and also controlled Lingling and Guiyang. Zhang Xian, however, died, and his son Zhang Yi was taken over by Liu Biao. For the next few years, Liu Biao had no immediate rivals, and his territory was generally peaceful.

That territory, however, was limited. Liu Biao does not appear to have had any control over Nanyang commandery to the north, and

his control south of the Yangzi was erratic and occasional. He exercised real authority only over the valley of the Han and the line of the middle Yangzi, the general area of modern Hubei.

In the histories of the time, and notably in passages of *Sanguo zhi*, Liu Biao is criticised and almost despised for his indolence, his lack of imagination, and even his vainglory. It is said that he usurped the regalia and the ceremonies of an emperor and that he sent no tribute to the court, but at the same time he took no effective part in the civil war raging to the north, he sided with neither Yuan Shao nor Cao Cao in their great confrontation,[47] and as a result he brought about the eventual destruction of his state.

In a sense, this is true; but many people found refuge and sanctuary under the protection of Liu Biao, and although much of the literature of the time described Jing province as the land of lonely, perhaps useless and even alien exile, it was also a haven of peace and sanity in the madness of multiple warfare which had engulfed the civilised world of China.

The poet Wang Can, for example, a man of distinguished scholarly and official lineage from Shanyang commandery in north China, had been for a time at Changan during the disorders which followed the seizure of power by Dong Zhuo, but then fled south to seek protection with Liu Biao, who was an old friend of his family. In the "Poem of Seven Sorrows," he presents a desperate picture of the miseries of the ancient capital district, but he also looks upon Jing province as alien and uncultured:[48]

When wild disorder gripped the Western Capital,
Tigers and wolves added to our despair.
So I turned about and fled the Middle Kingdom,
To far-off Jing, among the Man tribes there.

Years later, at refuge in the city of Dangyang (present-day Dangyang in Hubei), he composed the "Rhapsody on Climbing the

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47 *SGZ* 22, 631, says that Huan Jie, a supporter of Cao Cao, encouraged Zhang Xian in his rebellion in the south so that Liu Biao would not be able to lend significant assistance to his ally Yuan Shao, Cao Cao's chief rival.

48 The biography of Wang Can is in *SGZ* 21, 597-99. These lines are taken from *Qiai shi* No.1; Frodsham, *Anthology*, 26-27.

Tower," which described both the peacefulness of the country but also his own frustration in the south:[49]

Flowers and fruit trees blanket the meadow,
Two kinds of millet rich in the fields,
But lovely as it is, it is not my land -
How have I the heart to stay for long?
.....The plain is far-reaching, and though I strain my eyes,
They are blocked by tall peaks of the mountains of Jing.
The road winds back and forth, endless in its turning;
Rivers are wide and deep where one would ford.
I hate to be so cut off from my native land;
Tears keep coming in streams I am helpless to check.

In the autumn of 208, however, Liu Biao died, and the time of peace and isolation for Jing province was coming to an end. Wang Can and others found their fortune again in the north, and for Liu Biao's own family the end of independence came with some dignity and without great danger. Most other warlords did less well.[50]

Flight of a crossbow bolt:

From the time he took possession of Emperor Xian in 196, the power of Cao Cao had grown almost without interruption. The struggle with Yuan Shao reached its critical stage in the campaign and battle of Guandu, and the result, by the end of the year 200, had been a triumph for Cao Cao. Outnumbered and almost overwhelmed by the attack of his enemy, he held his ground south of the Yellow River, and then struck at Yuan Shao's lines of communication to the north. The great army of the Yuan disintegrated, and Cao Cao was confirmed in his control of the southern part of the plain.

Two years later, Yuan Shao died, leaving his power to his youngest son, Yuan Shang. Yuan Tan and Yuan Xi, his other two sons, were angry and disaffected, and the three quarrelled among

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49 From *Denglou fu*, translated by Watson, *Chinese Rhyme-Prose*, 53-54. The life and work of Wang Can has been studied in detail by Miao, *Early Medieval Chinese Poetry*, of which pages 65-79 provide a helpful discussion of the scholarship of Jing province in the time of Liu Biao.

50 For Wang Fuzhi's elegant defence of Liu Biao, see *Du Tongjian lun* 9, 12b-13a.

themselves. With some pressure and encouragement from Cao Cao, Yuan Tan turned formally against his brothers, and asked the enemy's aid. By the end of 204, Yuan Shang and Yuan Xi had been driven from their territory, and Yuan Tan was under Cao Cao's renewed attack. In 205, Cao Cao was master of north China.[51]

To complete these political and military manoeuvres, Cao Cao moved against the non-Chinese Wuhuan people in the hill country of present-day northern Hebei and Liaoning. Tadun, leader of the tribal confederacy, had given refuge to Yuan Shang and Yuan Xi. Cao Cao, however, in a remarkable campaign, involving a long flanking march beyond the imperial frontiers, brought Tadun to battle and destroyed him at White Wolf Mountain.[52] Tadun was killed, Yuan Shang and Yuan Xi fled to the warlord Gongsun Kang in present-day Manchuria; and Gongsun Kang became mistrustful of them and put them to death.

When Cao Cao returned from White Wolf Mountain, his power had no rival in north China, and his government controlled five of the thirteen provinces, the most populous and prosperous regions of the Han empire. West and northwest there were uncoordinated groups of Chinese brigands, local forces and non-Chinese tribes; in Yi province, present-day Sichuan, the Governor Liu Zhang held a tenuous and limited control of his nominal territory;[53] in Jiao province, isolated to the far south, various local groups acknowledged the loose hegemony of the leader Shi Xie;[54] and in the east of You province, present-day southern Manchuria and northern Korea, Gongsun Kang was a formal ally of Cao Cao and

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51 The history of the war between Cao Cao and Yuan Shao and his successors is told in *ZZTJ* 63-64, de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 251-338.

52 The campaign of Cao Cao against the Wuhuan, leading to the victory at White Wolf Mountain, is described by de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 407-411.

53 The biography of Liu Zhang is in *SGZ* 31/Shu 1, 868-70. Liu Zhang was the son of Liu Yan, a member of the imperial clan who had held ministerial rank and arranged to be appointed Governor of Yi province in 188; he died in 194 and Liu Zhang took over his position. The biography of Liu Yan is in *SGZ* 31/Shu 1, 865-67, and *HHS* 75/65, 2431-33. See also Chapter 6.

54 The biography of Shi Xie is in *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1191-93. See also Chapter 5.

quite happy to keep his distance.[55] As Cao Cao turned his attention to the south, Liu Biao and, to a lesser degree, Sun Quan appeared as his only rivals of note.

At the time of his death, in the autumn of 208, Liu Biao was in his late sixties. He left two sons, Liu Qi and Liu Zong. Liu Qi was the elder, but Liu Zong had married a woman of the Cai clan, niece of the Lady Cai who had become Liu Biao's principal wife towards the end of his life. As a result, the Cai group formed a strong party in favour of Liu Zong, and Liu Qi was constantly criticised and attacked and lost the approval of his father. In an attempt to nullify this pressure, and also, no doubt, to establish some independence, Liu Qi asked for and was granted the position of Grand Administrator of Jiangxia in succession to Huang Zu.[56]

As it turned out, the move was not well timed, for within a few weeks Liu Biao had been taken ill and died. The Cai group were able to prevent Liu Qi from seeing his father on the death bed, and they had small difficulty in arranging the succession of Liu Zong as Governor of Jing province. Liu Qi refused to accept the decision, and he was surely intending to make trouble, but at that time Cao Cao advanced from the north, and the quarrel was submerged by other events.

Xiangyang, the headquarters of Liu Biao and now of Liu Zong, was on the northern frontier of their territory. Though Nanyang commandery, which was largely in present-day southern Henan, had been part of Jing province under Later Han, it does not seem to have been integrated to Liu Biao's administration, but remained disputed, or neutral, ground The effective border of Liu Biao's control lay just north of the Han River, about the line of the present provincial boundary between Henan and Hubei.

As Cao Cao led an army against him, Liu Zong was in a weak position. He had inherited his father's title rather through political manoeuvring than by formal establishment, he had an indignant elder brother planning rebellion behind him, and he had no time to

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55 On the Gongsun family in the northeast, see the two articles by Gardiner, "The Kung-sun Warlords of Liao-tung."

56 According to *SGZ* 35/Shu 5, 914, Liu Qi made this move on the advice of Zhuge Liang, whom he had consulted about his problems.

take any action which would confirm his personal authority. Moreover, the approach of Cao Cao encouraged numbers of senior advisers to urge Liu Zong's surrender: Cao Cao was incomparably the strongest man in China, and here at last was the opportunity to restore unity to the empire and bring an end to warlord separatism.

For Liu Zong, the thought of military resistance was not an enticing one. There is no question he would have had to abandon Xiangyang in the face of Cao Cao's advance, and he would then have become a refugee even in his own territory. His own army would bear the brunt of the initial attack, and his personal safety was hardly assured once he joined the melee of resistance in the south. He would, moreover, be blamed by many of his own supporters, and by people outside, as the man who maintained the civil war and the miseries which accompanied it solely on account of his own petty and provincial ambitions. With such an unattractive alternative, if Liu Zong could arrange surrender on reasonable terms he was wise to do so. And that is what he did.

As Cao Cao's army came to Xinye in Nanyang, sixty kilometres north of Xiangyang, Liu Zong went to meet him, bearing his seals and insignia of office, and surrendered. Cao Cao received him with courtesy, granted him nominal appointment as Inspector of Qing province, and enfeoffed him as a marquis. The senior advisers who had encouraged his submission, fifteen in all, were also rewarded with fiefs, and numbers of scholars and officials at Liu Biao's former court were given senior posts in the central government. Kuai Yue, Grand Administrator of Zhangling,[57] became Superintendent of the Imperial Household, and Liu Xian, who had been Aide-de-Camp in the provincial government, was appointed to the Imperial Secretariat. Han Song, a staff officer of Liu Biao, had been sent on embassy to Cao Cao and had argued, when he returned, that Liu Biao should acknowledge Cao Cao's suzerainty: he had been put in prison by Liu Biao, but he was now released and named Grand Herald, and he was also encouraged to recommend other men for appointment. And the general Wen Ping, who had commanded one

57 It appears that the commandery of Zhangling had been established by Liu Biao about the county city of that name in the south-eastern part of Nanyang commandery: the site of Zhangling city is now close to Zaoyang in Hubei.

of Liu Biao's armies near Xiangyang, had initially refused to join in Liu Zong's surrender but eventually came to make his peace with Cao Cao: he was appointed Grand Administrator of Jiangxia and became one of Cao Cao's leading local commanders.

The majority of these former officers of Liu Biao came from Nanyang, and thus represented a local elite from the region of Jing province closest to central China.[58] There were other gentlemen, generally from further north, who had come to live in Jing province but had largely kept aloof from the government at Xiangyang. Deng Xi of Nanyang had at one time been Attendant Official at Headquarters to Liu Biao, but had resigned in protest at Liu Biao's continued alliance with Yuan Shao some ten years earlier. He was now appointed Palace Attendant, a privileged courtier's position, by Cao Cao.[59] Again, Sima Zhi formerly of Henei, He Xia formerly of Runan, Pei Qian formerly of Hedong, Han Ji formerly of Nanyang and Wang Can, the scholar and poet from Shanyang, all of whom had taken up residence in the southern part of the province, were welcomed to Cao Cao's company and given posts at his court or in his local administration.[60]

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58 Kuai Yue, Han Song and Wen Ping were all men from Nanyang; Liu Xian came from Lingling commandery in the far south of Jing province. Of these, only Wen Ping has a separate biography, in *SGZ* 18, 539-40; however *SGZ* 6, 215-16, PC notes 2, 3 and 5, attached to the account of Cao Cao's settlement of Jing province and of the appointments which he made at that time, includes biographies of Kuai Yue from the *Fuzi*, of Han Song from *Xianxian xingzhuang*, and of Liu Xian from *Lingling xianxian zhuan.*

Lu Bi also notes the Qing commentator Zhao Yiqing, who cites *HHS* 69/59, 2244-45, the biography of Dou Wu, regent and General-in-Chief who had been overthrown by the eunuchs in 169, at the beginning of the reign of Emperor Ling. Though most of Dou Wu's family was destroyed, his grandson Dou Fu was saved by loyal followers, and was taken to safety in Lingling commandery, where he was brought up under the surname of one of his protectors, Hu Teng. Later, he held appointment under Liu Biao and took back his original surname. After Liu Biao died, Dou Fu returned to the north with other members of his family and was given office under Cao Cao.

59 The personal name of Deng Xi also appears as Yi. See *SGZ* 1, 30; *SGZ* 6, 211 and 215; and *HHS* 74B/64B, 2424.

60 The biography of Sima Zhi is in *SGZ* 12, 386-89; those of He Xia and Pei Qian are in *SGZ* 23, 655-57 and 671-73; that of Han Ji is in *SGZ* 24, 677-78.

On Wang Can see at notes 48 and 49 above.

In many respects, this was a smooth and generous take-over of a formerly hostile territory and government. Inevitably, however, there was some opposition to the almost humiliating speed of the surrender; there was a hard core of dissidents who, for one reason or another, were reluctant to accept Cao Cao's government; and there was a good deal of uncertainty and confusion among ordinary people faced with the rapid changes of political circumstance, from the regime of Liu Biao to that of Liu Zong and now to Cao Cao. At the centre of this opposition was the figure of Liu Bei.[61]

Liu Bei, at this time in his late forties, was a man from Zhuo commandery in the northeast of the empire, near present-day Beijing. He claimed to be a descendant of Emperor Jing of Former Han; a lineage which may have been correct, but which would be difficult to prove, and which he shared, in any event, with some thousands of other people. Emperor Jing had reigned in the middle of the second century BC, he was an ancestor eighteen generations from the contemporary Emperor Xian, and Liu Bei was perhaps sixteenth or seventeenth cousin to Emperor Xian. Genealogically, this was rather a matter of mild curiosity than of practical interest, but Liu Bei made the most of it.

In more immediate terms, Liu Bei's grandfather had held office as a local prefect, but Liu Bei's father had died when he was young, and he was compelled to work with his mother weaving straw mats and sandals. He acquired, however, a local reputation for strength and character, he came to some prominence in the fighting against the Yellow Turbans in 184 and he was then appointed to various posts at county level.

When the civil war broke out in 189, Liu Bei first took up service with Gongsun Zan, an old acquaintance who had become warlord in the north, and he proceeded to make his career as a soldier of fortune. At one time or another he was in the service of, or allied to, Gongsun Zan, Tao Qian, Lü Bu, Cao Cao and Yuan Shao. His record is one of occasional victory, frequent defeat, and a concept of loyalty which was frequently disconcerting to his superiors and associates. Eventually, after a brief attempt to support Yuan Shao during the

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61 The biography of Liu Bei is in *SGZ* 32/Shu 2; he is described there as "First Sovereign."

campaign about Guandu in 200, he was driven from the field and took refuge with Liu Biao. By 208, he had been some years away from active service, and he held a garrison command at Fan city, close to Xiangyang.

The arrival of Cao Cao brought no sense of security to Liu Bei. The last time he was at Cao Cao's court, he had been involved in a plot to kill him and restore the power of the puppet Emperor Xian. It is most unlikely Cao Cao would have entrusted him with responsibility in his government, and far more probable that he would have sought only for the first respectable opportunity to eliminate him. On the other hand, Liu Bei had retained a personal following, he was known as a warrior hero, and despite his record of vacillation, he maintained a reputation for honour and a sense of public duty. The fall of Liu Biao's regime in Jing province gave him new opportunity to seek a position of his own, and the approach of Cao Cao made it fairly clear that this chance could well be his last.

In Liu Bei's company at Fan city during the autumn of 208 there were his two lieutenants, Guan Yu and Zhang Fei, and his adviser Zhuge Liang. Guan Yu and Zhang Fei had both been with Liu Bei since the earliest days. Both men were noted for their fighting skills, their courage, and their arrogant self-confidence. Zhang Fei, who had at one time been a butcher, was known also for his violent temper, which had on occasion brought trouble to himself and his party. Guan Yu, for his part, had acquired a reputation for personal honour superior even to that of Liu Bei; and based, perhaps, on better evidence.[62]

Liu Bei met Zhuge Liang only after his arrival in Jing province, and he had taken some time and trouble to attract him to his service. Zhuge Liang came from Langye, and he was the younger brother of Zhuge Jin, an officer in the service of Sun Quan. Their father had died early, and Zhuge Liang accompanied his uncle Zhuge Xuan, who had been appointed Grand Administrator of Yuzhang by Yuan Shu, but was driven from that position in the late 190s. The family

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62 The biographies of Guan Yu and Zhang Fei are in *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 939-42 and 943-44.

had then taken refuge with Liu Biao, and Zhuge Liang had come to the notice of Liu Bei. In 208 he was about twenty-seven years old.[63]

As Cao Cao's army drew closer to Liu Zong's territory, Liu Bei was left uncertain of Liu Zong's intentions. When at last he was informed of the decision to surrender, his options were very limited. There was some talk of his seizing power from Liu Zong and attempting to face Cao Cao on the spot. Such a move would have been most unlikely to be successful, and Liu Bei, in any case, preferred to advertise his loyalty to Liu Biao and his family. In this way, he could put himself at the head of any groups of people who were anxious to resist Cao Cao or who were made frightened by his approach, and he could then, perhaps in some combination with Liu Qi, the dispossessed brother of Liu Zong, seek to establish a resistance further south.

So Liu Bei led his army away. Before he did so, however, he made a point of visiting the tomb of Liu Biao, to pay his respects and demonstrate his loyalty to the memory of his former patron, and he called by Xiangyang, perhaps in a last attempt to dissuade Liu Zong from the surrender, but more probably to show himself as the claimant to leadership of the province's independence. The policy was not unsuccessful, and as Liu Bei moved down the valley of the Han, we are told that he was accompanied by a great mass of followers, fighting men and refugees.

It was inevitable there would be some exodus from the potential front line, and some people who would seek their fortune apart from Cao Cao, but Liu Bei appears to have increased the mingled hope and anxiety of the people, and to have turned the situation into a confused and perhaps panic-stricken disorder. Militarily, he gained little of value, for the mass of civilians was a hindrance to any effective moving defence, and the amount baggage which they brought with them seriously slowed his retreat.

Sending Guan Yu ahead, with a fleet on the Han River, Liu Bei continued directly to the south in an attempt to reach Jiangling on the Yangzi, near present-day Jiangling in southern Hubei. As the capital of Nan commandery, Jiangling was an important military base and supply depot. Cao Cao, however, also realised the

63 The biography of Zhuge Liang is in *SGZ* 35/Shu 5.

importance of Jiangling: he left his main force and baggage at Xiangyang and chased Liu Bei with five thousand horsemen. They caught up with the unwieldy column at the Chang Slope near Dangyang, now south of Jingmen in Hubei, and completely defeated Liu Bei's forces. Liu Bei was compelled to flee, abandoning those who had followed him, and his own close family. Zhang Fei, with a small rearguard, held the line of a river long enough for him to make his escape, and Zhao Yun, an old friend and cavalry commander of Liu Bei, was able to rescue Liu Bei's concubine the Lady Gan and their infant son Liu Shan. As Liu Bei fled to the east with a few score horsemen, Cao Cao captured the bulk of his followers and their baggage.[64]

Cao Cao did not follow up in immediate pursuit. The main objective of his drive to the south had been the base at Jiangling, and he went first to make sure of that. Liu Bei joined up with Guan Yu and the Han River fleet, and they continued their retreat to Xiakou, the junction of the Han with the Yangzi. Once there, they could do little more than wait.

In the uncertain weeks which followed the death of Liu Biao, Sun Quan and his officers had attempted to seize what advantage they could from the changing situation. As soon as the news of Liu Biao's death arrived, Sun Quan dispatched Lu Su as an envoy, officially to offer condolences to Liu Qi and Liu Zong, but also to spy out the land and make contact with Liu Bei. As Lu Su is said to have observed, there appeared at this stage to be two alternatives: if the government of Jing province remained stable, the best policy was to establish an alliance against Cao Cao; if, however, there was a succession quarrel, then there should be some advantage for Sun Quan - indeed, he might hope to detach the Yangzi region and the southern commanderies while the quarrelling factions were

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64 The account of Liu Bei's retreat, his defeat at the Chang Slope, and the heroism of Zhang Fei and Zhao Yun, is told by *Romance* chapter 41, and by the traditional drama *Changban po*, "Battle at the Chang Slope" (Arlington and Acton, *Famous Chinese Plays*, 25-37, *Peking Opera Texts*, 1356, and *Jingju jumu chutan*, 84).

The biography of Zhao Yun is in *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 948-50; this incident is mentioned at 948 and also in the biography of the Lady Gan, *SGZ* 34/Shu 4, 905. The biography of Liu Shan, "Later Sovereign" of Shu-Han, is in *SGZ* 33/Shu 3.

concerned with Xiangyang and the north. In either event, it would be important to establish some association with Liu Bei.[65] While Lu Su was on his mission, Sun Quan brought his headquarters upstream to Zhaisang, on the Yangzi near the border of Jing province.

Before Lu Su reached Xiangyang, however, he learnt of Liu Zong's succession and of the arrival of Cao Cao. He travelled to intercept Liu Bei near Dangyang, and appears to have caught up with him immediately after the disaster at the Chang Slope. With Lu Su's encouragement, Liu Bei and the remainder of his party came further to the east, and he established a new headquarters at Fankou in E county, downstream on the Yangzi from Xiakou and present-day Wuhan. At this stage, Lu Su, accompanied by Zhuge Liang, went back to Sun Quan to report.

The record of the debate at the court of Sun Quan is considerably confused by two important factors: the presence of Zhuge Liang, who is celebrated as the great counsellor and is therefore given a notable and almost decisive role; and the fact that later writers knew how events worked out. As a result, although one would normally have quite a high level of confidence in matters recorded from discussion in open court, propaganda by one side and the other has tended to distort our view.[66]

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65 Lu Su's comments on the situation at this early stage are recorded in his biography, *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, at 1169.

66 On the Sun side, the main text of *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1261-62, gives the dominant role in the debate to Zhou Yu, who is described as the one counsellor opposed to the general consensus for surrender. *Jiangbiao zhuan*, quoted in PC note 1 to that passage, adds the tale of Zhou Yu's night meeting with Sun Quan, when he calculated the men Cao Cao had and the number he would require to deal with them: see below.

Pei Songzhi, however, remarks that this account is inadequate, and biassed too heavily towards Zhou Yu. The biography of Lu Su makes it clear that the debate took place in two stages: Zhou Yu was initially absent in the Poyang region, returning to take part only after Lu Su had at least arranged that the decision should not be taken until he arrived: *SGZ* 54/Wu 9,1269-70.

Another record of the debate, with the leading role given to Zhuge Liang, and a reluctant Sun Quan persuaded by his eloquence, appears in the biography of Zhuge Liang, *SGZ* 5/Shu 5, 915. The commentary of Pei Songzhi to the biography of Lu Su, *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1269 PC note 1, points out the different emphasis between the two versions, and observes that even though Chen Shou was

Leaving aside the rhetoric, the situation and the nature of the debate are reasonably clear. Sun Quan was urged by Zhuge Liang to support Liu Bei in fighting against Cao Cao for Jing province. In this, he was supported by Lu Su, who still held comparatively junior rank, but was evidently well trusted, and was chief proponent of the "western" policy of intervention into Jing province. On the other hand, the military commitment so far from home was opposed by more cautious counsellors such as Zhang Zhao.

At one point, in an early stage of the discussion, Zhuge Liang appears to have over-played his hand. Emphasising the claims of Liu Bei, with his descent from the imperial clan and his reputation as a military commander and a man of honour, he implied that Sun Quan was fortunate to have such an ally to look after things for him. Sun Quan, justifiably indignant, remarked that he was not going to collect all the military resources of his state and put them under Liu Bei's command, particularly since Liu Bei had already been seriously defeated. Zhuge Liang reassured him that Liu Bei had been able to regather a considerable number of his men, and he had been joined by Liu Qi with troops from Jiangxia. Moreover, added Zhuge Liang,

> Cao Cao's forces have come a long way, and they are now worn out and in distress. I have heard that when they were in pursuit of Liu of Yuzhou [Liu Bei][67] their light cavalry went more than three hundred *li* in a day and a night. This is what is described by the proverb, 'The last carry of a bolt from a strong cross-bow is

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responsible for the main text of both sections of the history, he has preserved the contradiction between the two traditions.

Sima Guang presents a record of the debate in *ZZTJ* 65, 2087-92; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 386-395. I have tended here to follow that account.

Predictably, *Romance* chapters 43-44 provides Zhuge Liang with the leading role, and the drama *Shezhan qunru*, "Battle with the Tongue against a Multitude of Scholars," tells how he out-thought and out-argued the advisers of Sun Quan (Arlington and Acton, *Famous Chinese Plays*, 37, *Peking Opera Texts*, 2895, and *Jingju jumu chutan*, 85).

67 On two occasions during his career in the north, Liu Bei had acquired authority in Yu province: in 194 with the title of inspector in alliance with Tao Qian against Cao Cao; and in 196 with the title of governor in alliance with Cao Cao against Lü Bu. For this reason, he was often referred to as Liu of Yuzhou.

> too weak to pierce silken cloth.'[68] And *The Art of War* forbids this, saying it is sure to bring the greatest general to his downfall.[69]

Sun Quan was suitably impressed.

At this point, a letter arrived from Cao Cao, a splendid piece of writing:

> I have received the imperial command to attack all rebels. My standards point to the south, and Liu Zong has bound hands. I command a fleet with eight hundred thousand men, and I am coming to join you, to go hunting in Wu.[70]

The effect was noticeable, and the arguments for surrender were strengthened by the fact that Cao Cao's fleet, the main force of warships on the Yangzi based at Jiangling and formerly controlled by Liu Biao, could nullify any advantage that the Sun forces might have expected from their experience in river fighting. On land, it seemed unlikely that their numbers, even combined with Liu Bei's band of fugitives and the contingent from Liu Qi in Jiangxia, could match Cao Cao's main army now augmented by soldiers from Jing province.

Sun Quan had three options: he could surrender and make his peace with Cao Cao, almost certainly under terms which would remove forever his position as a semi-independent ruler; he could gather his forces about his own established territory, and maintain a

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68 *HS* 52, 2402, has the expression: "the fading breath of a rushing wind cannot stir fur or feathers; the last flight of a bolt from a strong crossbow has not sufficient strength to pierce plain silk from Lu." The commentary of Yan Shigu to that passage notes that the people of Qufu, in the ancient territory of the state of Lu in the Spring and Autumn period of the Zhou dynasty, were known for the weaving of a particularly fine silk.

69 The parallel passage of *Sunzi bingfa* is translated by Griffith, *Sun Tzu*, 103, as ..".marching at double time for a hundred *li*, the three commanders will be captured." Griffith evidently follows a text which reads *san jiang* no doubt in reference to the common phrase *san jun*: literally "the three armies" but in fact indicating "the royal/imperial army") rather than *shang jiang* or, as Zhuge Liang paraphrased it, *shang jiangjun.*

70 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1118 PC note 3 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.*

In traditional China, including the Han period, the annual hunt, held in the autumn or winter season, was an occasion for mobilisation and manoeuvre of troops.

limited defence; or he could commit his troops to open warfare against Cao Cao in the west, aided by whatever support he might obtain from Liu Bei and Liu Qi in Jiangxia.

The incentive for the third, "forward," policy was the alliance with the remaining independent forces of Jing province, and the possibility of a major expansion of territory if Cao Cao was forced to retreat. The disadvantage was that he would be committing a sizable army onto the further edges of the region that he controlled, with no certainty that his men could be extricated if things went wrong.

At this point Lu Su urged Sun Quan to consult Zhou Yu, who had been on a mission in the Poyang region and who now returned to headquarters. In open court, Zhou Yu argued that Cao Cao could not afford to leave his enemies in the far northwest for too long, that his army was inexperienced in fighting on water, and that the approaching winter would make it difficult for them to obtain fodder for their horses. It was very possible that the marsh country would bring sickness to his northern soldiers, who were unaccustomed and unacclimatised to it. "If you give me twenty or thirty thousand experienced men, I shall go forward to Xiakou and I guarantee to defeat him for you."

Sun Quan now accepted the argument and declared his decision. Drawing his sword, he chopped the desk in front of him and said, "If any of my officers dare to argue further that we should surrender, he will be dealt with the same way as this desk." And he dismissed the assembly.

That night, we are told, Zhou Yu went to see Sun Quan privately, and the conversation which followed, though it may not have been properly recorded, does present a reasonable picture of the strategic and political thinking in the Sun camp.

> Zhou Yu said, "When those other people saw Cao Cao's letter about eight hundred thousand soldiers and sailors, they all got frightened, and they offered you advice without thinking whether it was a matter of fact or whether he was only boasting. That was all quite pointless.
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> "Now check the real situation. The troops Cao Cao brought with him from central China were no more than a hundred and fifty or a hundred and sixty thousand, and they have been on hard

active service for a considerable time. Then he got men from Liu Biao, seventy or eighty thousand at the most, and he cannot be certain of their loyalty.

"So he is using sick and weary men to control an army with possible disaffection. Even though he has great numbers, there is certainly nothing to be afraid of. If I have fifty thousand good soldiers I am sure that will be enough to deal with them. Don't worry about it."

Sun Quan clapped him on the back and replied, "Gongjin, you have put things just the way that I hoped for. Those others are all worried about their wives and children, they thought of nothing but their own interests, and they make me very disappointed...

"It will be difficult to collect fifty thousand men right away, but I have already chosen thirty thousand, and their ships and supplies and equipment are all ready. You and Zijing [Lu Su][71] and Lord Cheng [Pu] go forward as the vanguard. I shall remain in reserve, and I shall continue to send you men and further supplies.

"If you can deal with him, then everything will be settled in our favour. If things turn out badly, come back here to me and I shall myself fight the deciding battle against him."[72]

Sun Quan, therefore, looked upon the coming campaign as only the first stage in his manoeuvres and negotiations with Cao Cao. Should he lose that initial engagement, he still expected to have sufficient strength to fight at least once more, closer to his home ground; and should he decide not to fight, he would certainly have sufficient resources to be able to negotiate a surrender on good terms. The commitment to face Cao Cao in Jing province was certainly a gamble, but the odds were not unreasonable, and the penalties for a loss were neither overwhelming nor fatal.

Not all his followers could share Sun Quan's confidence, of course, and the choice was hardly an easy one. Once the decision was made, Zhang Zhao and his colleagues at court appear to have accepted it without further demur, and they presumably concentrated their energies on damage control in the event of Zhou

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71 Zijing was the style of Lu Su.

72 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1262 note 1 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.*

Yu's defeat. Others, however closer to the threat and isolated from the discussions at court, continued to have doubts, and it was probably at this time that there came the sad case of Sun Fu.

Sun Fu was the younger son of Sun Jian's twin brother Sun Qiang, brother to Sun Ben and first cousin to Sun Ce and Sun Quan. He had followed Sun Ce since the early days south of the Yangzi, and had taken part in the campaigns against Zu Lang and in the region of Poyang. There he had been appointed Grand Administrator of Luling commandery, the new territory set up from Yuzhang commandery of Han, on the upper waters of the Gan river in present-day Jiangxi. Later, he was also given the title General Who Pacifies the South and Inspector of Jiao province, another example of the Sun group's expansionist ambitions.

At this time, however, as Cao Cao came towards the south and east, Sun Fu was worried, and we are told that he sent messengers to Cao Cao, offering a welcome. Nothing, of course, came of it at this time, but it was found out later, and then Sun Fu was imprisoned, his close advisers were killed, and his other clients and followers were scattered and distributed among members of the clan.[73]

It seems, moreover, that Sun Fu's brother, Sun Ben, was also in two minds about the policy of resistance. Sun Ben was Grand Administrator of Yuzhang, the neighbouring territory to that of Sun

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73 Some further details of this affair are given in *Dian lue*, quoted in commentary to the biography of Sun Fu, *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1212 PC note 2.

ZZTJ 63, 2039; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 295-296, dates the disaffection of Sun Fu to the beginning of Sun Quan's reign, just after the death of Sun Ce in 200 It seems most likely, however, that Sun Fu would have been more concerned about Cao Cao in 208, when he was close by in Jing province and a serious debate was being carried on whether or not to surrender, rather than at a time when Cao Cao was primarily engaged in the north, and there was little likelihood of his making an effective intervention in the south.

The only reference to the timing in the early sources is the statement by *Dian lue* that the attempted communication with Cao Cao took place when Sun Quan was at Dongye, the county on the southeast coast near present-day Fuzhou. On the other hand, as the commentator Chen Jingyun, quoted by *SGZJJ* at 10a, remarks, there is no record that Sun Quan ever visited Dongye. The Qing commentator Zhao Yiqing suggests that the text at the end of the quoted passage, which says that Sun Fu was sent in exile to the east, should be amended to read *Dongye* instead of simply *dong* "east" (*JJ* 10a). So Dongye would indeed involved in the story, but as the place of Sun Fu's exile; the reference has been confused.

Fu in Luling. He had a daughter who was married to one of Cao Cao's sons,[74] and apart from this private interest he seems to have been genuinely concerned with the threat from Cao Cao. Unlike his brother, he made no direct move to establish contact with the enemy, but the biography of Zhu Zhi notes that Sun Ben was known to have supported the sending of hostages to Cao Cao, and Zhu Zhi was sent to persuade him of the correctness of the court's policy; and to warn him against pressing the debate any further.[75] Sun Ben accepted the advice, and he did not suffer when his brother was disgraced.[76] It is disconcerting to note, however, that the heads of two commanderies in the front line against the attack, close members of the Sun family, were doubtful about the success of the plan for resistance. The decision was not an easy one, and there were surely other officers, like Zhu Zhi, sent about to encourage the faint-hearted.

For the moment, however, this uncertainty was concealed. In the tenth Chinese month, late November or early December of 208, Zhou Yu and Cheng Pu led their men and ships up the Yangzi to join Liu Bei and Liu Qi.

Red Cliffs:

Like the record of the debate at Sun Quan's court which preceded it, the history of the battle at the Red Cliffs is confused and almost overwhelmed by the accretions of romantic heroism which have developed around the conflict. Indeed, so great is the mass of fiction,

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74 See Chapter 3. Cao Zhang, son-on-law of Sun Ben, was a competent and respected military commander, but he was at this time engaged in the settlement of the north, and was not involved in the invasion of Jing province.

75 *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1304 PC note 1 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.*

76 Sun Ben remained as Grand Administrator of Yuzhang until his death a few years later, and he was succeeded in that position by his son Sun Lin. His biography in *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1210, says that at this time he had received an imperial edict, brought by the messenger Liu Yin, appointing him General Who Subdues the Caitiffs. Nothing more is known of Liu Yin, but if the reference to an edict (*zhao*) is correct, then he must have been sent from the imperial capital under Cao Cao's control. In that case, Sun Ben was in a complicated and dangerous position.

one might wonder if any fighting took place at all.[77] The bare bones of the contest, however, can be discerned, and in the description which follows I concentrate first upon the sequence of events in the real world.

Liu Bei had withdrawn his forces some fifty kilometres downstream from Xiakou, to his new headquarters at Fankou, and he was joined there by Liu Qi with the levies from Jiangxia commandery. In his discussion with Sun Quan, Zhuge Liang claimed that Liu Bei had ten thousand men, and Liu Qi another ten thousand. He was probably exaggerating, but they had likely accumulated a sizable force, though of what quality and morale it is difficult to say. In particular, Guan Yu had taken control of the warships formerly maintained by Liu Biao on the Han River; the second, presumably larger, fleet on the Yangzi had been based at Jiangling, and this was now in Cao Cao's hands. There was certainly no possibility that the combined forces of Liu Bei and Liu Qi were in any condition to resist Cao Cao's further advance, and when we are told that Liu Bei at Fankou was watching anxiously for the arrival of Sun Quan's men, we may well believe it.

Officially, Sun Quan had appointed Zhou Yu only as a joint commander of the expeditionary force, with the veteran Cheng Pu as his associate of equal rank. For the initial phase of the operations, however, it seems clear that Zhou Yu was authorised to play the leading role, and in dealings with the allies he made sure to emphasise that point.

From the assembly point by Fankou, the combined force moved up the Yangzi, past the junction with the Han, and further south to a

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77 Any historian dealing with the traditional Chinese account of a great and "decisive" battle must consider the example of the Battle of the Fei River so disconcertingly analysed by Rogers, "Myth," as a pseudo-event, invented initially to glorify the Xie family of Eastern Jin, and developed further as a warning to the rulers of Tang. Compare, however, Holzman's review of Rogers' *Chronicle of Fu Chien* in *TP* 57 (1971), 182-186.

I have sought to consider the account of the Red Cliffs in an appropriately critical light; and I come to the conclusion that some military activity did occur at that place at the time described.

place called the Red Cliffs, now close to Jiayu in Hubei. At this point they met with the spearhead of Cao Cao's advance.[78]

Following his victory over Liu Bei by Dangyang, Cao Cao had continued south to take over the arsenal and the fleet at Jiangling, capital of Nan commandery, and from there he moved east. In fact, the river route along the course of the Yangzi led first southeast and then, passing the junction with the Xiang River at the present-day Dongting Lake, northeast, so the fleet was following two sides of a

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78 There has been considerable debate on the site of the Red Cliffs. The commentary of Lu Bi, in *SGZJJ* 1, 74a-75a, has a most helpful essay on the question, and in more recent times a number of articles have been published in China: for example, by Jiang Yongxin, Shi Ding, Wu Yingshou and Zhang Xiugui, Wu Yongzhang and She Zhimei, Yang Guanyi and Ding Fang, Yin Yungong, and Zhang Zhizhe.

My own conclusions on the course and sites of the campaign largely follow the arguments of Lu Bi and the map in *Zhongguo shi gao ditu ji* I, 47, supported by *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* III, 29-30. In particular, I accept the identification of the site of the battle as being in the area of Wulin, which is mentioned in various places in the histories (*e.g. SGZ* 39/Shu 9, 980 PC note 2 quoting *Lingling xianxian zhuan* and *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1274), and I accept the modern site of Wulin, on the north-western bank of the Yangzi, as being the same as the ancient place of that name (*e.g. National Atlas* IV, C7/C8, F5).

Not all ancient sites, of course, are in the same area as their modern counterparts. Huarong county of Han, for example, was close to present-day Jianjiang in Hubei, between the Yangzi and the Han; the modern city called Huarong is south of the Yangzi in Hunan: *e.g. Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* II, 49-50, and *Times Atlas* 74, E2. Again, the place-name Wuchang now describes one of the three cities which compose the modern metropolis of Wuhan, at the junction of the Han with the Yangzi River in Hubei; during this period, however, Wuchang was another name for the county city of E, present-day Echeng, some distance down-stream. The name was changed from E to Wuchang in 220 (*SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1121), but there are anachronistic references to the city under the name Wuchang in accounts dealing with earlier years.

Among other traditions for different sites of the battle, we may note that the celebrated "First Rhapsody on the Red Cliffs" by Su Shi (style Dongpo) of the eleventh century (translated by Graham in the *Anthology* edited by Birch at 386), refers to Cao Cao "gazing towards Xiakou in the west, Wuchang in the east," which would mean he had reached a point on the Yangzi downstream of the junction with the Han. See also note 92 to Chapter 9.

On the name and site of Wuchang in the third century, see above. There is, moreover, a local tradition in Wuhan that the battle was fought at the junction of the rivers, where the metropolis is now: see, for example, Fitzgerald, *Why China?*, 92-93.

triangle. The northern bank of the Yangzi in this region was largely marsh-land, and although a number of Cao Cao's northern troops must have travelled with the fleet, if only to ensure the loyalty of the men who had so recently been in the service of Liu Biao, it is probable that a considerable part of his land forces took the direct road east from Jiangling, through the county city of Huarong, and the two arms of the attackers were then reunited near the Red Cliffs.

For Cao Cao, the obvious strategy was to force a crossing of the Yangzi. He would hardly have expected to fight his way steadily down the river against the combined opposition of Liu Bei, Liu Qi and Zhou Yu, but if he could defeat their forces and establish a bridgehead near present-day Jiayu, it was very possible that the alliance against him would disintegrate under the immediate shock of that defeat. To encourage the process, moreover, Cao Cao's forces at Jiayu could then either advance northeast against Liu Bei and Liu Qi's positions in Jiangxia, or move directly eastwards against Zhaisang and the territory of Sun Quan. Faced with such conflicting threats, it was unlikely the allies could maintain their co-operation, and very probable that each would sue for separate terms.

Cao Cao, moreover, must also have been aware of the problems which he faced, discussed earlier by Zhuge Liang, Lu Su and Zhou Yu. In this sense, time was of the essence. If he could follow up the impetus gained by the capitulation of Liu Zong, the defeat of Liu Bei at Dangyang, and the take-over of the Yangzi fleet of Jing province, then he had an excellent chance of concluding the war with one sharp action. He could not, however, afford to tie himself down to an extended campaign in a region so far from his centre of power in north China. Jing province was hardly secure, and there were plenty of enemies in central China and the west who would be ready and anxious to take advantage of any over-long absence. Though the gamble of battle appeared worth while, Cao Cao surely embarked on this last stage of his campaign with reasonably limited objectives, and with clear ideas about his line of retreat and the posts he would need to hold if he was to consolidate what he had already gained so swiftly.

The story of the battle is quite brief. We are told that Cao Cao's army was in poor condition when his men arrived at the Red Cliffs: many of the northerners were exhausted by the long campaign to the

south, and there was sickness in the tents. After an initial engagement, in which the Sun and Liu forces were successful, both sides drew back to encampments, Cao Cao near Wulin on the north-western bank, and the allies opposite him, below the Red Cliffs. It is hard to tell how long the stalemate continued, but it seems likely that Cao Cao decided to wait a few days to collect his forces, and Zhou Yu did not feel strong enough to risk a formal offensive.

At this point Huang Gai, an officer of the Sun forces under Zhou Yu's command, put forward his plan for an attack. He sent a letter by messenger to Cao Cao, asking to surrender; and indeed there may well have been other, genuine desertions at this time. Huang Gai, however, prepared a special squadron of ten warships, filled them with dry reeds and faggots, and poured fatty oil over them. Then he covered them with red tent-cloths and set up banners and dragon-pennants, while at the stern of each of ship he tied a small skiff. He left the allied ranks and brought his vessels towards the northern bank. As they passed the middle point of the river, Huang Gai applied flame, and the commanders of his other vessels followed suit. They took to the small boats, and the unmanned fire-ships, driven by the following wind, burst against Cao Cao's fleets and camp.[79]

Fire, of course, is an excellent weapon, and fire-ships have often been used by the weaker naval force against a more powerful one. In the warfare of the south, at least, fire was used frequently when conditions allowed: we have noted the despatch from Sun Ce referring to an attack with fire and smoke against Huang Zu, and there will be other occasions when we may observe its use. It is possible that Cao Cao was less aware of the danger of his situation, though one would imagine that some of the men from Jing province must have warned him. More probably, there was a limit to what he could do, faced with the reality of wooden vessels, flammable huts

79 The story of the fire-ships is told, not in the biography of Huang Gai (*SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1284-85), but in that of Zhou Yu, *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1262-63, where PC note 1 also contains an extract from *Jiangbiao zhuan* quoting the letter which Huang Gai is said to have written to Cao Cao.

and tents, and an unseasonable wind blowing against him.[80] We are told that the ships were moored stem to stern, and that the fire spread throughout the fleet and the army; possibly, however, some measures had been taken to isolate one unit from another and thus reduce the threat.

Wang Fuzhi has discussed the relative situations of Cao Cao and his chief opponent at the Red Cliffs, Zhou Yu. As he observes, in the triumphant campaign against Yuan Shao eight years earlier at Guandu, Cao Cao had been able to hold the defensive and wear the enemy army down, and he eventually broke Yuan Shao's forces by a successful attack on their supply route. At the Red Cliffs, however, the roles were reversed, and it was Cao Cao's forces which were oppressed by Zhou Yu's effective resistance. In the end, the attack by fire-ships may be looked upon simply as a catalyst for a military collapse which had become increasingly likely as time passed.[81]

Whatever the true extent of the fire, the initial shock was followed up very promptly by Zhou Yu, with a light-armed force, and the northern army was thrown into confusion. Cao Cao was compelled to order retreat.Again, the casualties are incalculable. We have terrible stories of slaughter on the road to Huarong, with sick and wounded trampled under-foot by disorganised fugitives, and we are also told that Cao Cao was compelled to burn his own ships in order to prevent them falling into enemy hands. The stories may be true, but it is also possible that a considerable number of the men from Jing province, with their ships and weapons, were able to change sides. Abandoning his immediate plans for conquest, Cao Cao returned directly to the north. He left behind, however, a strong garrison at Jiangling, and another army further north at Xiangyang, former capital of Liu Biao.

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80 In this region of the middle Yangzi, the prevailing wind during winter blows from the northwest, so Cao Cao could have expected it to be for most of the time in his favour. On the other hand, wind from the south or east, favouring Zhou Yu and his fire-ships, is not completely unusual or unexpected. (Personal communication from Professor Zhou Zhenhe of Fudan University, Shanghai, who was for several years stationed in the vicinity of Jiayu city in Hunan, close to the site of the battle.)

81 *Du Tongjian lun* 9, 21a-b.

CHAPTER FOUR

In retrospect, the engagement at the Red Cliffs must be considered one of the decisive battles of Chinese history. It is questionable if fighting and slaughter took place on so great a scale as tradition has claimed, and Cao Cao may not have regarded the enterprise at that time as of major importance. Nevertheless, no comparable opportunity occurred in later years, and the campaign of the Red Cliffs proved in fact to be his last, lost, chance to force Liu Bei and Sun Quan under his authority. Through various later developments, it was the continuing independence of these two men which rendered the full re-unification of China impossible, and confirmed the long division of the Three Kingdoms and later centuries.

Naturally enough, then, the pleasure of the allies at their local triumph was only enhanced as the passage of time revealed the full significance of the incident. A whole cycle of stories grew up around the campaign, and many of them have been preserved in works of drama and in the *Romance*. The novel devotes eight chapters to the Red Cliffs, and a parallel collection of plays in the traditional repertoire describes various events, from the time that Zhuge Liang visited Sun Quan's court and persuaded him to support Liu Bei, through to the retreat of Cao Cao past Huarong, when he was trapped and then released by the heroic and chivalrous Guan Yu.[82]

There is notable difference, however, between the historical record and the romantic tradition. From the history, it is clear that the major contribution to the allied force was that of the Sun group under Zhou Yu and Cheng Pu, that the critical action was the attack

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82 The story of the Red Cliffs occupies chapters 43-50 of the *Romance*, the very centre of the novel. Titles of the plays vary, and they are often associated under the general series known as *Qunying hui*, "Meeting of Many Heroes." Among the traditional ones are: *Caochuan jie jian*, "Borrowing Arrows with Straw Boats;" *Jiang Gan tao shu*, "Jiang Gan Steals a Letter;" *Pang Tong xian lianhuan ji*, "Pang Tong Proposes Chaining Ships Together;" *Da Huang Gai*, "Beating Huang Gai;" *Jie dongfeng*, "Obtaining an East Wind;" *Huoshao zhanchuan*, "Burning the Armada;" *Huarong dao*, "Incident on the Huarong Road."

See Arlington and Acton, *Famous Chinese Plays*, 201-210, *Peking Opera Texts*, 336, 2305, and *Jingju jumu chutan*, 86-87, which last notes that another modern composite work "Battle of the Red Cliffs," was prepared in 1958, at a time of increasing interest in the career and historical significance of Cao Cao.

with fire-ships led by Huang Gai, and that sickness in Cao Cao's army played a considerable role in his failure.[83] The account of the battle is found chiefly in the biography of Zhou Yu and the attached commentary of Pei Songzhi; there is only the briefest reference to the enterprise in the Wei section of *Sanguo zhi*, and little more in the history of Shu-Han.[84]

The romantic tradition, however, emphasises the story of Liu Bei and his great minister Zhuge Liang, and it was naturally difficult for the literary men to accept the minor role that these heroes appear to have played at the Red Cliffs. As a result, of the plays in the traditional drama cycle, only three are concerned primarily with the Sun group: two of those, appropriately enough, "Beating Huang Gai" and "Burning the Armada," deal with the attack of the fire-ships and the trickery required to persuade Cao Cao to believe in Huang Gai's false surrender; and one other, "Jiang Gan Steals a Letter," tells how Zhou Yu deceived a spy and so caused Cao Cao to execute two of his loyal and most experienced generals on the false belief that they were plotting treachery.[85]

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83 The potential for damage from infectious disease in armies with primitive hygiene and without modern medicine cannot be neglected. For cases of "the sickness of the host" in Western history see, for example, Zinsser, *Rats, Lice and History*, 154-165, which has many references to the destruction of armies through the ravages of such diseases as dysentery, scurvy, typhoid, smallpox, typhus and plague. The diseases themselves may have changed, but the vulnerability of large groups of men gathered together was a constant factor in pre-modern warfare, and remains a considerable concern in modern times. Just as military commanders failed to recognise the danger of infectious disease until it was too late, so later historians have often failed to appreciate its importance.

84 In a letter to Sun Quan, preserved in *Jiangbiao zhuan* and quoted in *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1265 PC note 2, Cao Cao complained, "In the operations at the Red Cliffs, it was only because of the sickness that I burnt my ships and retreated. It is out of all reason for Zhou Yu to take the credit for himself."

As *Jiangbiao zhuan* remarks, this may well be no more than an attempt to discredit Zhou Yu as a boaster, but the very existence of the letter implies that Zhou Yu had acquired a reputation for the success at that time. In contrast, *Shanyang gong zaiji*, cited by *SGZ* 1, 31 PC note 2, unusually for this early period, gives credit for the tactic of fire chiefly to Liu Bei.

85 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1265 PC note 2 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*, does contain an account of how Cao Cao sent his agent Jiang Gan, a man from Jiujiang, the

"Tongue Battle with Many Scholars," however, emphasises Zhuge Liang's rhetorical triumph, in persuading Sun Quan and his reluctant counsellors that they should support Liu Bei against Cao Cao; and "Incident on the Huarong Road" describes how Guan Yu caught Cao Cao at the time of his retreat, but spared him in remembrance of the favours which Cao Cao had shown him in the

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neighbouring commandery to that of Zhou Yu, known as the finest advocate of the region between the Yangzi and the Huai, to seek to persuade Zhou Yu to join him.

When his visitor arrived Zhou Yu received him hospitably, but before Jiang Gan could put any proposals Zhou Yu insisted on showing him through the camp, with all the men and stores available to him, and he held a feast to display his personal wealth and well-being. Then he spoke to Jiang Gan of his relationship with Sun Quan, like that of blood-brothers, with total mutual trust.

Jiang Gan made no attempt even to broach the subject of defection. He returned to Cao Cao and explained that the plan was hopeless: no persuasion could lead such a man astray.

Jiangbiao zhuan gives no specific date for this incident, though *ZZTJ* 65, 2099; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 407-408, sets it in 209, after the Red Cliffs campaign. It could, indeed, have taken place at any time after the accession of Sun Quan in 200.

Romance chapter 45 and the drama "Jiang Gan Steals a Letter," however, claim that Jiang Gan visited Zhou Yu at the time of the Red Cliffs, and Zhou Yu deliberately left a forged letter on his desk for Jiang Gan to steal. The letter purported to implicate Cai Mao and Zhang Yun, Liu Biao's former commanders now in the service of Cao Cao. Cao Cao executed them, and so lost valuable advice on the handling of his fleet.

Romance chapter 48 and the drama "Pang Tong Proposes Chaining Ships Together," continues the plot and tells how Cao Cao was persuaded by Pang Tong, agent of Zhuge Liang, to commit his ships into vulnerable array, chained one to another.

None of this, however, is mentioned by *Sanguo zhi*. Cai Mao and Zhang Yun are referred to as partisans of Liu Zong, son of Liu Biao, at the time of the succession dispute before the surrender to Cao Cao (see above, and *SGZ* 6, 213); they are not noted for their skill in military or naval affairs. And the biography of Pang Tong has no mention even of his presence at the Red Cliffs (*SGZ* 37/Shu 7, 953).

There are several similar occasions where *Romance* brings in historical characters and attributes them an extra role in such major events as the Red Cliffs campaign, As one further example, I may cite the death of the worthy Liu Fu, who is said to have been killed there by Cao Cao in a fit of rage. Liu Fu did die about that time, but he was actually serving as Inspector of Yang province for Cao Cao, on the frontier between the Yangzi and the Huai. It is quite improbable that he had any occasion to visit the army in Jing province at that time, still less be killed by Cao Cao: see below.

past. Two other well known plays, "Borrowing Arrows with Straw Boats" and "Obtaining an East Wind," both celebrate the achievements of Zhuge Liang, and appear to be almost completely fictitious, with no support from any near-contemporary historical record.

"Borrowing Arrows with Straw Boats" tells the story of how Zhuge Liang was challenged by Zhou Yu to produce thousands of arrows at short notice. Rather than try to have them made, he sailed empty boats, laden with straw, along the lines of Cao Cao's positions during the night, and had his men, under cover, call abuse and threats to the enemy. Cao Cao's troops responded with a rain of arrows, and Zhuge Liang was able to bring back more than a full supply, to the discomfiture and embarrassment of Zhou Yu.[86] "Obtaining an East Wind" gives Zhuge Liang the credit for the wind essential to the plans of Huang Gai's fire-ship attack, for it was he who summoned the gale by his magical arts.[87]

All these stories are matched by the account of the campaign in *Romance*, and the whole tenor of the novel reflects a tradition which

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86 The parallel account appears in *Romance* chapter 46. Earlier versions of the story, notably *Sanguo zhi pinghua*, attribute the ruse of the straw boats to Zhou Yu, not to Zhuge Liang, and indeed, in general terms, earlier cycles of stories about the Red Cliffs campaign consistently give major credit to Zhou Yu. See Plaks, *Four Masterpieces*, 449 and 471.

There is, moreover, one near-parallel to the story about the arrows and the boats. *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1119 PC note 1 quoting *Wei lue*, describes an incident during the attack by Cao Cao against Sun Quan's defensive post at Ruxu, on the northern bank of the Yangzi in present-day Anhui, in 213.

At that time, Sun Quan took ship on the river to observe the situation. Cao Cao's army sent out a hail of arrows and crossbow bolts. The missiles stuck in the side exposed to the enemy, and the increased weight threatened to make the vessel capsize. So Sun Quan turned his ship and presented the other side to enemy fire. Those arrows levelled the ship, and he was thus able to return safely to his camp.

It is likely that this incident (surely exaggerated) provided some later imagination with the story of Zhuge Liang's clever trick. It is, again, typical of the bias of romantic tradition that the concept, however distorted, was transferred from the credit of Sun Quan to that of Zhuge Liang.

87 The drama "Obtaining an East Wind," and the parallel passage in *Romance* chapter 49, say that Zhou Yu was embarrassed and in despair when he discovered that his planned attack with fire depended on a wind direction which never occurred at that time of year - it was for that reason Zhuge Liang's magical arts were so necessary. See, however, note 80 above.

praises the role of Liu Bei, Zhuge Liang and their associates, while Zhou Yu and the other men of the Sun group are shown as their unhappy inferiors in spirit, imagination and skill. Zhou Yu, in particular, the leader of the Sun forces, seeks to assert a dominance over Zhuge Liang, but is constantly foiled by the latter's wisdom and supernatural skill; he is reduced to the unattractive role of a talented man rendered frustrated and jealous by encountering a rival of matchless superiority.[88]

This matter is discussed further at other places, and there are frequent examples in *Romance* of the bias towards Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang, to some of which we shall be referring in future. The campaign of the Red Cliffs, however, is one of the more dramatic occasions that historical record is overlaid and distorted by the call of propaganda and the requirements of fiction, and the sources must therefore be read and interpreted with particular care.

The engagement at the Red Cliffs took place in the winter of the thirteenth year of Jian'an, probably about the end of Western 208. It was not necessarily a major tactical defeat for Cao Cao, but it did mark the failure of his hopes for a quick victory over the allies, and his armies would never reach so far to the south again. To that extent, the position of importance which it has acquired in legend and romance is not unjustified. In the immediate situation, however, Cao Cao was able to leave the region in reasonably good order, and his armies still controlled the northern part of Jing province from the line of the Yangzi by Jiangling and up the valley of the Han River. For the victorious allies, questions remained of how much they could profit from their success, and how they would divide those spoils.

Some Notes on Ships and Naval Warfare:

One difficulty in dealing with the military history of Wu, bound up so closely with naval warfare on the Yangzi and its tributaries, is

88 On the fictional relationship between Zhou Yu and Zhuge Liang, and the distortion which this produces in the literary picture of Zhou Yu, see, for example, Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, 69-71, and Plaks, *Four Masterpieces*, 471.

that we know very little of the tactics employed in any of the battles and skirmishes, nor of the ships and weapons used in those engagements. It is one thing to discuss the strategy involved in the approach to such a battle as that at the Red Cliffs, but once the romantic rhetoric is removed there is not much fact to fill out the story.[89]

We are told, for example, that there was a preliminary skirmish between Cao Cao's forces and those of the allies, and that Cao Cao's men had the worst of it - but there are no details of the nature of that fighting, nor any indication of the time that elapsed between the first engagement and the successful strike with fire-ships by Huang Gai. And although *Sanguo zhi* gives clear details of the arrangements for that attack, there is confusion in the texts even as to the nature of the ships that Huang Gai used, and the number of them.

Firstly, *Sanguo zhi* says that the number of vessels in Huang Gai's squadron was "several tens," but the parallel passage in *Zizhi tongjian*, which may have followed a different edition of *Sanguo zhi*, omits one character, and so allocates Huang Gai only ten ships.[90] Again, *Sanguo zhi* describes Huang Gai only as a "divisional commander" under Zhou Yu - a vague term which may indicate some informality in the command structure of the allies or, more probably, simple ignorance on the part of the historian.[91]

With regard to the ships themselves, they are described by the expression *mengchong doujian*, which served at that time as a general description for vessels of war: a little earlier in *Sanguo zhi* this term is used for the numbers of Cao Cao's fleet.[92]

The phrase *mengchong* is discussed by the Tang scholar Li Quan in his *Taibo yin jing*, and that passage has become the *locus*

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89 One of the best studies of Chinese inland naval warfare is the article by Dreyer on the Poyang campaign of 1363 between the warlord Chen Youliang and Zhu Yuanzhang, future founding emperor of the Ming dynasty.

90 Compare *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1262-63, and *ZZTJ* 65, 2093.

91 The biography of Huang Gai in *SGZ* 55/Wu 10 notes that he had lately been Chief Commandant of Danyang commandery, and after the Red Cliffs he was made a General of the Gentlemen of the Household, but we cannot judge what rank he held at the time nor how many ships he might have been expected to command.

92 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1261.

classicus for description of ships at that time.[93] We are there given a list of six different classes of warships, the *louchuan*, "Towered Warship," the *mengchong*, rendered by Needham as "Covered Swooper," the *zhanjian* "Combat-Junks," also known as *doujian* "Fighting Junks," the *zouge* "Flying Barques," the *youting*, "Patrol Boats" and the *haihu* "Sea-Hawks." The *mengchong* is said to have been protected by a covering of raw ox-hides for safety against fire and missiles, with loop-holes in the sides for cross-bows and pikes. It is emphasised, however, that the *mengchong* was a light and narrow craft, built for speed as much as for security, and in his rendering of *mengchong* by the phrase "Covered Swooper," Needham explains the character *chong* as implying "rushing violent motion."[94]

Such a description of the *mengchong*, however, does not fit well with another account of ships of this type in action at the time: early in 208, a few months before the Red Cliffs, when Huang Zu had sought to defend the entrance to the Han River from the Yangzi by great ropes across the stream, he had *mengchong* ships moored to defend it. The *mengchong* ships were evidently acting as floating fortresses, not as light skirmishing vessels.[95]

It seems likely that two things have happened to this terminology. Firstly, between the third century, when the fighting which we are discussing took place, and the eighth and ninth centuries, when the Tang scholars compiled their lists and descriptions, the role of the ships called *mengchong* changed, so they were indeed used as protected skirmishing craft, and had in fact become lighter. Secondly, as a consequence of this change in role, while the

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93 The *Tong dian* of the early ninth century, compiled by Du You, 160, 848c-849a, quotes from the *Taibo yin jing* "Secret Classic of the Great White [Planet of War (= Western Venus)]," compiled in the middle of the eighth century. This passage is quoted in turn by the commentary of Hu Sanxing to *ZZTJ* 65, 2089-90, parallel to *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1261. The text, with additions from other sources, is discussed by Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 424-425, and translated at 685-686.

94 Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 686 note a.

95 See above at note 44, quoting *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1291, where I render the phrase *mengchong* as "ships covered with raw ox-hide."

Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 449 and 680, refers twice to this engagement, but he does not take particular notice of the role of the *mengchong*.

character *meng* was still understood as meaning "covered," the character *chong* was, as Needham has argued, interpreted to describe a dashing attack. I suggest, however, that in Han and Three Kingdoms times, the character *chong* held its other, perhaps more basic, meaning of "breaking the enemy line." While the *mengchong* of Tang did this purely by speed, the *mengchong* of Han was a powerful warship, possibly equipped with a ram, whose effectiveness depended upon the weight of its approach, not its speed. I prefer, therefore, to render the term as "Armoured Breaker" rather than "Covered Swooper," and I suspect that its function was primarily to destroy the cohesion of enemy formations, allowing individual units to be isolated and surrounded, not to physically strike and sink another ship.[96]

As to the *doujian*, the Tang texts describe it as a large, open, ship, with two ranks of raised bulwarks, pierced with loop-holes. Confusingly, we are told that these fighting junks were designed for "combat," while the *mengchong* were not, which seems a strange thing to say about a warship. Needham suggests, however, that "this may have been an explanation intended for military readers used to

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96 Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 680, notes that the *Shi ming* of about 100 AD describes the *mengchong* as long and narrow, dashing against the ships of the enemy, while the eighteenth century commentator Wang Niansun, discussing the list of names of types of ships in the third century work *Guang ya* (which unfortunately gives no description of the vessels named), explains that the character *meng* should be understood as synonymous with *mao*, which can refer to a covering but which here held the sense of "rushing and colliding." Needham goes on to argue that although *meng* may have originally referred to the ram function, by Tang times it had been interpreted as describing the defensive covering.

I believe that in this Needham is correct, but it is my argument that the term *mengchong* had gained this significance by the early third century. On the question of ramming, see below.

Schafer, *Vermilion Bird*, 242, citing *Tong dian*, notes that the phrase *mengchong*, or *mengtong*, was a Tang name for the hornbill bird (*Dicheros*), while the phrase *mengtong* referred specifically to a warship. Schafer understands *chong*/*tong* as implying that the ships possessed a ram at the front: this may have been so, but the character may have meant only that they were swift and manoeuvrable enough to dart among the enemy ranks and harass them. Schafer also remarks that these vessels first appear in history in the account of the Red Cliffs campaign. This is, of course, not strictly correct, for the Red Cliffs action took place at the end of 208, some nine months after the battle with Huang Zu at Xiakou.

close combat on *terra firma*," [97] and on this basis, we may understand the *mengchong* as designed for ship-against-ship fighting, while the *doujian* were for hand-to-hand combat by boarding, or by anti-personnel missiles such as spears or cross-bows.

One may be reading too much into these scattered and often generalised references, but it seems reasonable to regard the essential division of responsibility among the major ships of these river fleets as being between those which served as fighting platforms for spearmen and archers to engage in close combat, and those covered with some form of protective material, which could be used to break the enemy line of battle and perhaps to damage their ships and men with a ram or by projectiles. In that sense, the phrase *mengchong doujian* would then describe both the specialised functions of the capital ships at that time.

We know, of course, that the term *louchuan* was used regularly for great warships of the Han dynasty. Ships of that description were used in various Chinese attacks against the far south, and a General of the Towered Ships took part in the conquests of Nan-Yue and Dong-Yue for Emperor Wu of Former Han.[98] During Former Han, moreover, there was an Office for Towered Warships in Lujiang commandery, for the construction of *louchuan* and for the training of sailors, and this organisation was very probably continued in some form during Later Han.[99] The term, indeed, had been used for centuries before Han,[100] and although the Tang texts treat *louchuan* as a particular class of vessel, distinct from the *mengchong* and the *doujian*, it may well be better understood, at least for this period, as a general description of a warship with more than one deck.

Given the existence of river currents and the uncertainties of the winds, there is no question that these ships must have carried both sails and oars, and although many were built specifically for service in war, it is probable their design was based upon local river junks. Unlike the contemporary Mediterranean world, where the trading

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97 *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, at 687.

98 See, for example, *HS* 6, 186 and 189; Dubs, *HFHD* II, 80 and 82.

99 See Chapter 1.

100 See Needham's citations in *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, at 299 and 440.

ship contrasted sharply with the specialised trireme and other warships, a Chinese fighting fleet of the early third century would have looked very much like an over-built and over-manned group of civilian vessels.[101] And they would have been escorted, of course, by a mass of small craft, from light sailing ships to canoes, anything which could be pressed into service and which might be useful in skirmishing.

There is, of course, one notable difference in the nature of river warfare as opposed to that which takes place at sea: the action is quite literally channelled into a limited area. The commander of a river fleet may normally expect to be well informed of the position and the movements of his adversary, and the conduct of naval manoeuvres is inevitably close linked to those of armies on land.[102]

In this situation, the requirements of a fleet are comparatively simple and straightforward, for it acts in many ways like a land army, and frequently as the extension of a landed force. Many of the ships are designed chiefly for the transport of troops, and though the men may fight on water they are quite as likely to disembark and engage on shore. As conservative officers observed when Lü Meng proposed to establish a bridgehead fortress at Ruxu, "We climb the bank to attack the enemy and we wade in the water to rejoin our ships. What is the use of such a fort?"[103] And though the fortress indeed proved valuable, the principle was not negated.

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101 When Lü Meng moved west along the Yangzi to attack Guan Yu in 219, he had his troops hidden in barges and dressed the men who appeared on deck of the ships in civilian clothes, so they would look like merchants. The disguise appears to have been completely successful; which would indicate that warships were not obviously specialised vessels. See Chapter 6.

102 One may compare the quite different situation of naval warfare as known in the West. There are two well-known examples. In 1588 the Spanish plan for invasion of England required a complicated, and eventually impossible, co-ordination between the sailing Armada and the forces of the Duke of Parma in the Netherlands. In 1805 Napoleon's hopes for a similar invasion from his great camp at Boulogne were eventually frustrated by the outcome of Nelson's and Villeneuve's manoeuvres in the Atlantic, which included a hunt as far as the West Indies, and which culminated in the battle off Trafalgar, far distant from the ultimate object of the exercise.

103 See Chapter 5.

This natural use of a river fleet primarily for the transport of an army was only enhanced in Han times by the fact that the weaponry of the time did not include any effective method of "ship-killing." Leaving aside the special case of fire-ships, one regular battle-ship could not normally expect to destroy another. Given the traditional Chinese techniques of ship-building, which provided watertight compartments against sinking, but no keel which could form the basis for a ram, an attacker was at far more of a disadvantage against the defender than was the case in naval warfare on the Mediterranean.[104] And before the advent of cannon, mechanical

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104 The question and the history of ramming is a long and complicated one, and it is difficult to distinguish between ships designed to hole the enemy below the water-line, those which were constructed or reinforced to withstand a fore-and-aft shock, and those which simply ran into another from the side and acquired a largely accidental or opportunistic advantage.

Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 678-680, discussing the matter, cites the *Yue jueshu* "Lost Records from the State of Yue," of which some part may be dated to the first century AD, where there is reference to *tuwei* "Stomach-striker" ships, possibly armed with sharp protuberances to hole the enemy below the water-line, and the fragmentary third-century work *Wanji lun* "Discussion of the Myriad Stratagems," by the admiral Jiang Ji of Wei, which tells how the oared ships of Wu and Yue in the Warring States period had "butted into each other as if with horns" (*xiang chu*) - though it is unclear in this case whether their opponents were overturned or sank, and it is not certain that the term *chu* has the necessary meaning of ramming below the water line. In both cases, Needham is cautious about interpreting the terms as relating specifically to rams. He does suggest, however, at 680, that *maotu* ships used at the beginning of Later Han were capable of ramming; at 681 he observes the existence of a particular type of sampan in the region of Hangzhou which, unusually for a Chinese vessel, has a bifid stem and stern with a ram-like projection; and at 681 note b he states that in the Song period there is evidence of deliberate use of the ram.

On the other hand, in his discussion of "The Po-yang Campaign" at 209, Dreyer observes that "It is also clear from the battle accounts that tactics did not depend upon the ram, so that the warships could do one another damage only by shooting arrows or other projectiles." Though this relates to events a thousand years after the time we are discussing, it is noteworthy that Chinese ships of that time did not use the ram. By contrast, in the West, after the extraordinary Austrian success at the battle of Lissa in 1866, early versions of steam-powered ironclads up to the beginning of this century were deliberately designed with ramming capacity.

missile-launchers such as the catapult or trebuchet were so slow and clumsy that they were largely ineffective against rival ships.[105]

There was indeed the possibility of fire, but the success of an attack by fire-ships required a particular combination of circumstances, notably a favourable wind, with an element of surprise or circumstances of restricted manoeuvre by the object of the attack. Such a tactic, therefore, was normally improvised on the spot, either with some light craft or unwanted ships constructed for the occasion or, as with Huang Gai, special adaptation for the purpose. Otherwise, apart from the use of arrows with inflammable material attached, which was not particularly difficult for defenders to control, the Chinese of the third century did not have a regular and effective means to deliver an attack by fire. Most notably, there was at that time no Greek Fire.[106]

For the most part, therefore, the greatest danger to a naval vessel of this time was not the enemy but the weather. The expanse of the

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105 They could, however, be used from ships or other floating platforms to attack a static fortification such as a city wall. In the warfare between Zhu Yuanzhang and Chen Youliang during the mid-fourteenth century, both sides captured cities by assault from ships. See Dreyer, "The Po-yang Campaign," 204.

106 In his admirable essay on the "The Gunpowder Epic" in *Science and Civilisation* V:7, Needham has sections on early incendiary warfare, with naphtha, Greek Fire and flame-throwers.

At 76-77, Needham observes that the Chinese of Han had access to petroleum (*shiyou*) through natural oil seepages, and there is evidence that supplies of petroleum were part of a military arsenal late in the third century. It would appear, however, that it was no more than another inflammable substance, and it is not until the tenth century that the phrase *menghuo you*, "fierce fire oil," appears to indicate the adoption of Greek Fire.

The ingredients of Greek Fire, which could be pumped and ignited against an enemy, are not known for certain. One theory is that it was a mixture of pitch and saltpetre, another that it was distilled petroleum, similar to modern volatile petrol. The technique, however, appears in the eastern Mediterranean no earlier than the latter part of the seventh century (Needham, *Science and Civilisation* V:7, 76-80). Similarly, the effective use of incendiary oils based upon naphtha was developed by the early Arab Muslim armies at about the same time, or perhaps a little later (Needham, *Science and Civilisation* V:7, 73-74).

Neither of these useful incendiaries, therefore, was available to the warriors of the Three Kingdoms, and the oil that Huang Gai used in his fire-ships at the Red Cliffs is described as *gaoyou* "fatty oil," presumably prepared from animals or fish.

Yangzi and the various lakes and tributaries was quite sufficient to present notable problems of seamanship, and there was a natural tendency to overload fighting ships with defensive construction and upper-works, to a degree where many of them were so low in the water and so high above it that they were extremely difficult to handle. The biography of Dong Xi in *Sanguo zhi* tells how he was in command of a great five-decked ship when a storm arose suddenly in the night. The ship was evidently top-heavy and of limited seaworthiness, and as it was about to founder Dong Xi was urged to make his escape. He refused to leave his post of command, however, and went down with the ship.[107] There is an account of Sun Quan under similar threat,[108] and in 222, when Cao Pi first brought his army south against Sun Quan, a number of ships in a squadron commanded by Lü Fan were caught by a violent storm on the Yangzi and were wrecked or foundered with the loss of several thousand men.[109]

In general terms, however, it seems clear that the men of the south were highly competent sailors, and their seamanship gave them consistent advantage over invaders from the north. We are told that on a number of occasions after 208 Cao Cao and his successors sought to train their men on lakes before they committed them to battle along the line of the Yangzi,[110] but practice manoeuvres in limited and artificial conditions could not match the experience which the men of Wu gained in dealing with the Yangzi and in

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107 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1291, also Chapter 6. The vessel is described as *wulou chuan*: a phrase which might imply five separate fighting turrets, but probably refers to five decks. The Tang authorities regarded three decks as normal for a *louchuan*: Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 442.

108 See note 30 to Chapter 6.

109 See Chapter 7, and *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1311, and *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1126; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 133. There was also the occasion in 232 that the fleet of Wu which had been visiting Gongsun Yuan in the northeast was wrecked in winter off the Shandong peninsula (*e.g.* Fang, *Chronicle* I, 376 and 393-394). That, however, was a matter of navigation at sea, with all its greater dangers. We know nothing of the ships involved except that they had been sent primarily to obtain horses, so there is no reason to believe they were specialised warships.

110 In the spring and summer of 209, for example, the year after the Red Cliffs, Cao Cao arranged for naval exercises on the lakes near Qiao, in preparation for attack against Sun Quan's positions south of Hefei: *SGZ* 1, 32, and Chapter 5.

regular patrols and small-scale expeditions against local trouble in the Poyang region and along the Han and the Xiang. For people of the south, rivers provided essential routes for most long-distance travel and transport of civilian goods, so mastery of navigation and the techniques of naval warfare were a natural and essential part of the military and political power of the state.

From this point of view, the defeat at the Red Cliffs gains even more importance, for Cao Cao and his heirs never again controlled a fleet comparable to that which he had acquired in 208. In skill and experience, the forces which Cao Cao had taken over from Liu Biao had been equal to those of Sun Quan and his allies. Whether by reason of internal dissidence, poor management or the mischance of fate, as a result of the Red Cliffs campaign, followed by the success of the allies against Jiangling in the next year, that great fleet was lost.

It may well have seemed to Cao Cao, and to others at the time, that the matter was of minor importance, for ships could always be rebuilt and the northern part of Jing province was yet a substantial acquisition. In fact, however, the victory gave Sun Quan and Liu Bei control of the Yangzi, and in the defence of that line of the river the southerners acquired a strategic initiative, and a dominance in skill, which they retained for generations to come.

One final point: the records of the great war-fleets which contested the Yangzi are evidence also of massive mercantile trade and industrial development in ship construction. During Han, there was a naval base in Lujiang commandery, with facilities for maintenance and construction,[111] and there were certainly private shipyards at harbours along the waterways. The transformation of the Yangzi, however, from an internal transport route to a front line of naval warfare, required and received a far greater construction capacity than before, and every defence post of Sun Quan's territory must have had workshops to construct and service their ships.

At the same time, the importance of the Yangzi for civilian trade had also expanded. The communications routes of Han were based on roads and canals which led to Luoyang, and the Yangzi was not a major artery of such a network. The development of Sun Quan's

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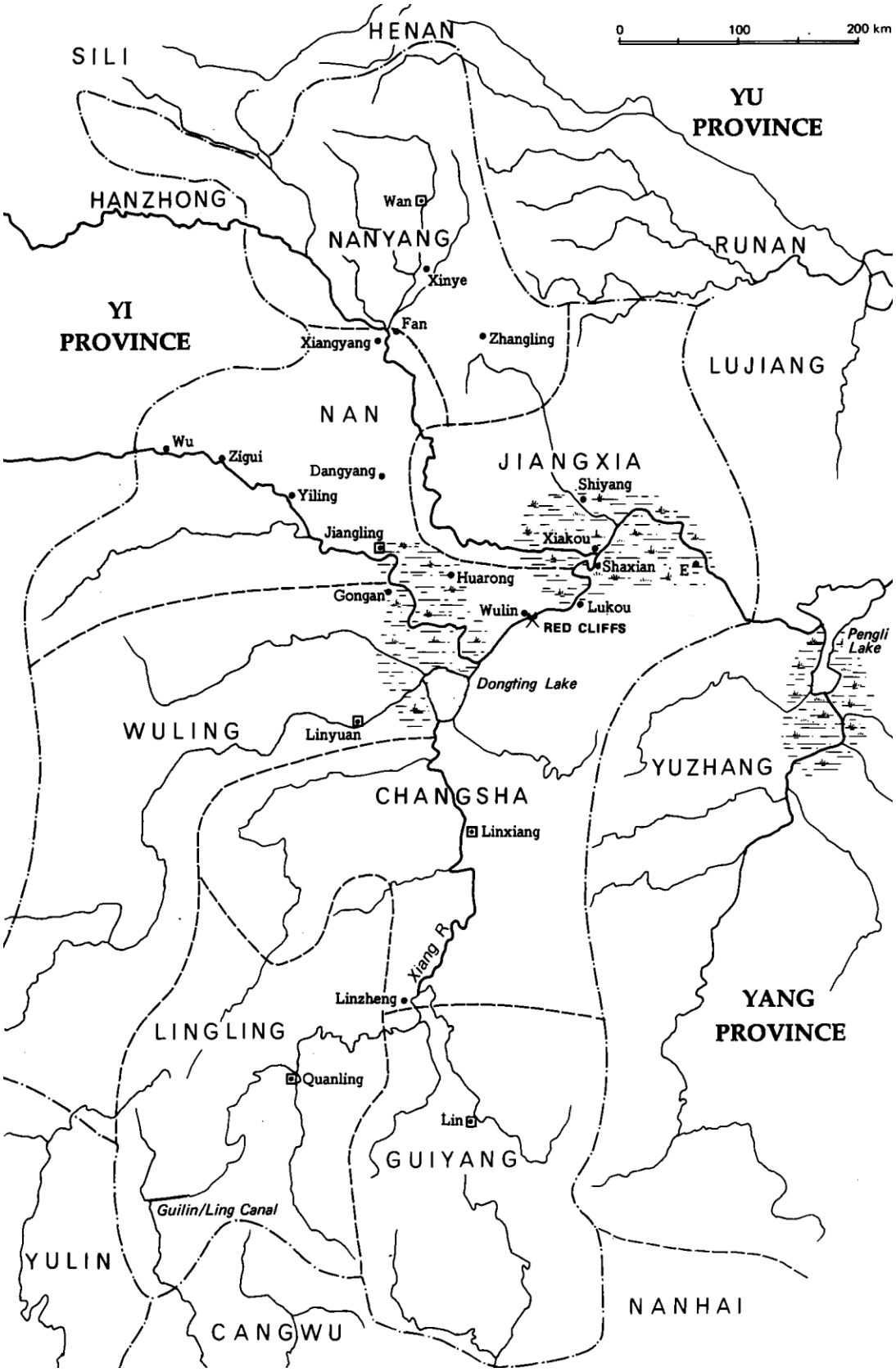
111 See Chapter 1 at note 110.

state, however, would depend increasingly upon his ability to maintain links between the middle and lower Yangzi, and the river itself was the only obvious route of access between the two regions. So the manufacture and deployment of warships was complemented by private ships for trade and transport, and the waters of the Yangzi and its tributaries saw an explosion of commercial development. As we argue above, many of the ships of war, like those of medieval Europe, were surely civilian craft which had been commandeered and converted for short-term service, and though official histories are predictably silent upon the question of mercantile trade, we know that the great invasion force sent against Jing province in 219 was disguised as a fleet of merchants. [112] When vessels sufficient to hold thirty thousand men could be presented as a normal commercial enterprise, there were surely great fleets upon that river.

112 See Chapter 6.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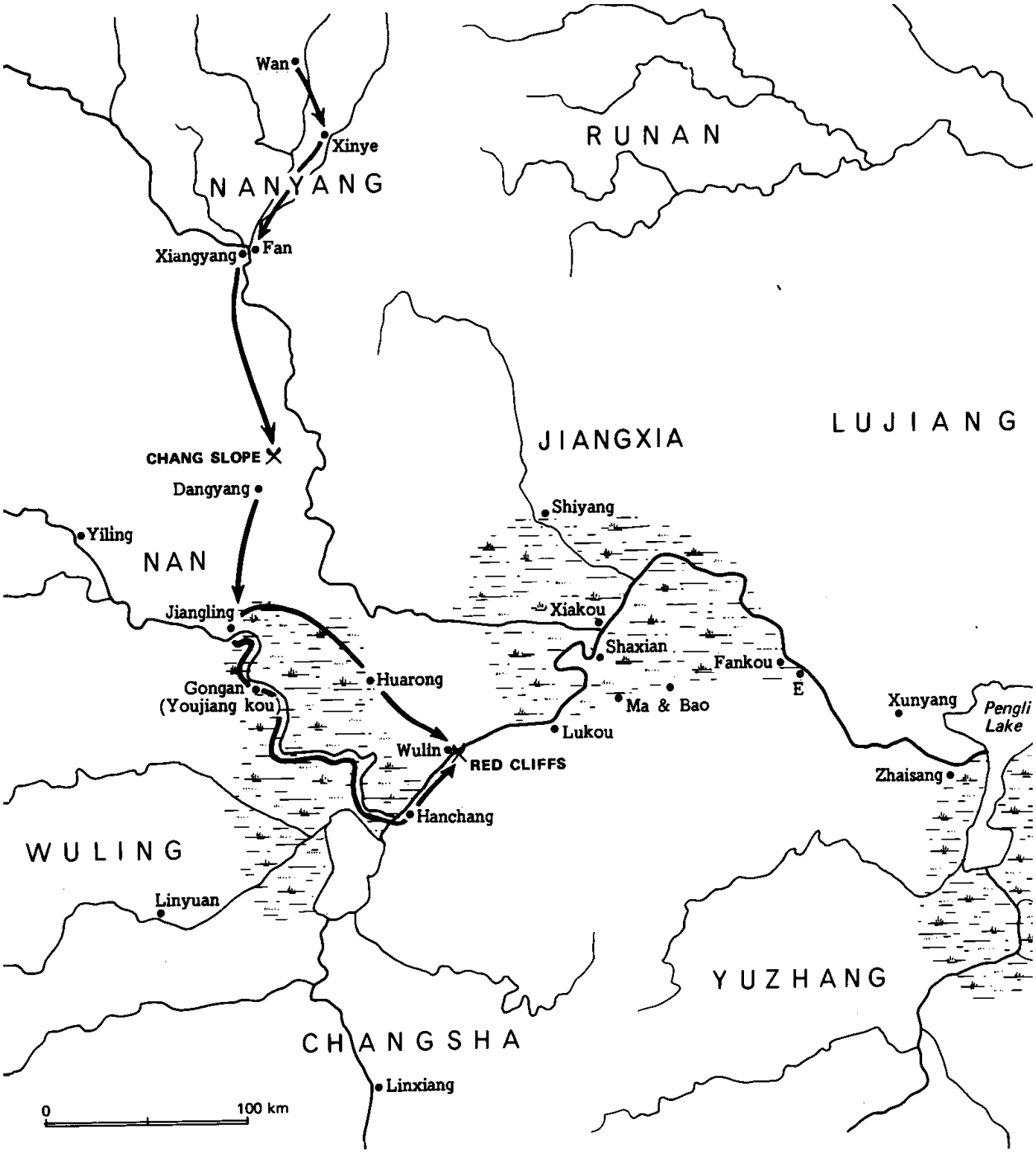

Red Cliff Campaign 208

CHAPTER FIVE

Warlord State

Introductory summary
The first settlement of Jing province (209-210)
The defences of Yang province
The hills people south of the Yangzi
The far south

Introductory summary:

After the defeat of Cao Cao at the Red Cliffs, the armies of Sun Quan attacked and captured Jiangling, thus gaining control of the middle Yangzi and the lower reaches of the Han. In the meantime, however, Liu Bei and his chief assistant Zhuge Liang had established control of the southern commanderies, along the Xiang valley in present-day Hunan. With the death of Zhou Yu in 210, Sun Quan was compelled to recognise Liu Bei's control of the greater part of Jing province.

In Yang province, to the east, Sun Quan was similarly restricted, for Cao Cao's local governor Liu Fu secured the valley of the Huai by means of agricultural colonies. Sun Quan could not develop a position north of the Yangzi, and the area between the two rivers became a no-man's land.

Within his own territory, however, Sun Quan extended his authority against the people of the hill country. In particular, the region of Huang Shan was brought under colonisation, while his officer He Qi advanced through the river valleys from the coast of present-day Fujian to the Poyang lakes and marshes.

In the far south, Jiao province was largely in the control of the local leader Shi Xie, whose capital was at Longbian near present-day Hanoi in Vietnam. In 210 Sun Quan sent Bu Zhi as Inspector, and he established an administration in the east, about

present-day Guangzhou. Though Shi Xie maintained his independence, he gave formal recognition to Sun Quan's authority.

The first settlement of Jing province (209-210):

In the last weeks of the Chinese year, the beginning of Western 209, the armies of Sun Quan strove to follow up their success at the Red Cliffs. In the east, Sun Quan led an expedition north across the Yangzi against the city of Hefei. For this purpose, he was evidently able to commit the troops which he had gathered earlier to hold in reserve during the Red Cliffs campaign, and his attack was a serious attempt to break the line of the Huai and establish a presence in the north China plain. It was a two-pronged offensive: as Sun Quan took the main force against Hefei city, he sent Zhang Zhao, his Chief Clerk, to command a second column in extended march against Dangtu, on the Huai River near Huainan in present-day Anhui, one hundred kilometres north of Hefei. They evidently hoped to isolate Hefei, cut the city off from supplies and relief and thus compel its surrender. The plan, however, failed completely. Zhang Zhao had no success at Dangtu, and Hefei withstood Sun Quan's siege and storm for more than a month. By the time reinforcements arrived from the north, Sun Quan had already retreated.[1]

The failure of this operation meant that any immediate expansion of Sun Quan's power into settled Chinese territory must take place in the west, in Jing province. There, however, despite the success at the Red Cliffs, and the impetus which this should have given the counter-attack against Cao Cao's positions, there were both military and political difficulties.

For Sun Quan, with his headquarters by the mouth of the Yangzi, the region of Jing province was still on the edge of concern. His authority extended over a long and in many respects unwieldy group of territories, from the isolated region of present-day Fuzhou, on the coast far to the south, through Kuaiji and Wu commanderies, past Hangzhou Bay and the Tai Lake, then along the southern shore of

[1] *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1118, and *ZZTJ* 66, 2097-98; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 404-405. On this campaign, see also below.

the lower Yangzi to the Poyang district of present-day Jiangxi. This crescent of control was bordered on the north by the lands under Cao Cao's government through Liu Fu, and on the south by the hill country with refugees and non-Chinese people. Both the opportunities to the south and the incipient threat from the north meant that only a limited force could be spared for any possibilities further up the Yangzi in present-day Hunan and Hubei. It was not that the chances were not apparent or welcomed; it was simply that the resources available to Sun Quan and his generals were limited.

There was, moreover, the problem of Liu Bei, and to a lesser extent that of Liu Qi. Each had shared in the victory at the Red Cliffs, and each expected a portion of the spoils. Both men, one way or another, had established a position in Jing province, they had a reputation among the people there, and they could gather more support than the outsiders from down-river. Despite the leading role which Sun Quan's men had played in the success against Cao Cao, he could not neglect the claims of his allies.

Liu Qi, in fact, did not long present a problem. In 209, within a few months of the victory at the Red Cliffs, he died in Jiangxia, and that territory was formally taken over by Sun Quan, through the appointment of Cheng Pu as Grand Administrator.[2]

Liu Bei, however, was notably more difficult to handle. He was an experienced military commander, and though his army was almost certainly smaller than that of Zhou Yu, it was not negligible in size, it was personally loyal to Liu Bei, and it was based upon local recruitment. With the death of Liu Qi, who had been awarded the titular position of Inspector of Jing province by the allies, in semi-succession to his father, Liu Bei was able to ask for that appointment in his stead. With a farce of mutual recommendations, Sun Quan proposed Liu Bei as Governor of Jing province, and Liu Bei nominated Sun Quan as Governor of Xu province and Acting General of Chariots and Cavalry. Liu Bei's headquarters were at Youjiang kou, a settlement on the southern bank of the Yangzi

[2] *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 879, and *HHS* 74B/64B, 2424, also *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1284.

downstream from Jiangling near the borders of Wuling and Nan commanderies. He renamed the place Gongan.[3]

Already, in the immediate aftermath of the victory at the Red Cliffs, Liu Bei had been able to negotiate the preliminaries to such a favourable settlement. As the allied armies moved east to follow up their success, Liu Bei left Zhou Yu to attack Cao Ren, who commanded the forces Cao Cao had left behind in Jiangling, while he himself turned chief attention to the south. Within a very short time, he received the surrenders of the grand administrators of Wuling, Changsha, Lingling and Guiyang who had recently been appointed by Cao Cao. Liu Bei then appointed Zhuge Liang to act as co-ordinator for the latter three commanderies, and Zhuge Liang set his administration at Linzheng city, near present-day Hengyang in Hunan, close to the junction of the Lei river with the Xiang. From there he had easy communications with Changsha commandery to the north, Guiyang to the south, and Lingling to the southwest, and he provided supplies and men to Liu Bei in Wuling commandery.

Zhou Yu, on the other hand, was held several months in the siege of Jiangling. We have been told that Cao Cao lost his fleet at the Red Cliffs, but it appears the Yangzi was still a significant obstacle to the attackers, and there is evidence that the division of command between Zhou Yu and Cheng Pu showed signs of strain and a lack of co-ordination.[4] Eventually, a detachment under Gan Ning was able

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[3] *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1118, and *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 879. The name Youjiang kou sometimes appears as Youkou.

The recommendations, of course, were being made formally to the court of Han under Cao Cao's control, and he would certainly not approve them. It was the same situation as had prevailed in the time of Dong Zhuo: *cf.* note 55 to Chapter 2.

[4] Years later, in 219, when Sun Quan proposed to appoint his cousin Sun Jiao as joint commander with Lü Meng for the campaign against Guan Yu. Lü Meng argued against the proposal:

"If you feel that [Sun Jiao] is the right man, you should give him the appointment. If you think that I am the right man, then use me.

"Once in the past, Zhou Yu and Cheng Pu were in command of the divisions of the left and the right and they attacked Jiangling together. The final decisions were taken by Zhou Yu, but Cheng Pu relied on his long experience and thus shared in the command. Though there was no specific disagreement, they almost wrecked the affairs of the state. This example should serve as a warning."

Sun Quan appreciated the point, and he put Lü Meng in sole command, with Sun Jiao in charge of the reserve. See Chapter 6 and *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1207-08.

to cross the Yangzi upstream of Jiangling and seize the city of Yiling, near present-day Yichang. Cao Ren sent a strong force against Gan Ning, but Zhou Yu left a minimal guard to maintain the siege of Jiangling and led the main body of the army to relieve him. They defeated Cao Ren's troops, captured numbers of horses, and returned in triumph. With a bridgehead thus established, Zhou Yu was able to bring the main body of his army across the river, and Cao Ren abandoned Jiangling and retreated to the north.[5]

Again, this was a defeat for Cao Cao's forces, and the line of his territory was now withdrawn more than a hundred and sixty kilometres to the region about Xiangyang. His enemies controlled all the lower valley of the Han, and of the territory which he had taken from Liu Zong he retained little more than Xiangyang and a northern part of Jiangxia commandery to the east. His defences at that line, however, were well established, he had little to fear from an attack for the next several years, and he could still threaten Sun Quan in the east across the Huai. For the time being, Cao Cao turned his attention to Chang'an and the northwest, and left the southerners to their own devices. The withdrawal from Jing province was a set-back, but other opportunities were now at hand.

The long-drawn fighting against Cao Ren, and the casualties incurred in that campaign, had taken toll of Zhou Yu's and Cheng Pu's forces, and quite removed the impetus from their success. There was no close pursuit of Cao Ren, and though Sun Quan's forces formally controlled Nan commandery, they were not in a strong position in Jing province. Liu Bei, on the other hand, having avoided the brunt of the fighting, was well established in the south,[6] and in

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[5] The biography of Cao Ren, cousin of Cao Cao, is in *SGZ* 9, 274-76.

Cao Ren was a competent and experienced commander, and he had served Cao Cao since his early campaigns. His biography, in the description of the attack on Jiangling at 275, refers to his personal heroism in a skirmish against heavy odds. Despite the retreat, he was awarded an enfeoffment and continued as a trusted officer. Though Cao Cao had lost Jiangling, he was evidently reasonably content with the cost and delay to the enemy.

[6] Immediately after the Battle of the Red Cliffs, Liu Bei transferred a thousand of his own men under Zhang Fei to serve Zhou Yu in the direct attack on Jiangling; for his own part, with two thousand reinforcements from Zhou Yu he proposed to attack northwards up the Han River in an attempt to break Cao Ren's lines of communication: *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1264 PC note 1 quoting *Wu lu.*

the winter of 209-210 he was confirmed in his possession of all territories south of Yangzi. For Sun Quan, Zhou Yu became Grand Administrator of Nan commandery, and Cheng Pu Grand Administrator of Jiangxia. Cheng Pu set his capital at Shaxian, on the Yangzi upstream and south of present-day Wuhan. He had to share his title, however, with the rival Grand Administrator Wen Ping, who had been appointed by Cao Cao, and who maintained his capital at Shiyang, now in the vicinity of Anlu in Hubei.

The territory of Sun Quan in Jing province, therefore, extended east and west along the Yangzi, including the marsh-lands on either side of that river, and some part of the lower course of the Han. To the north was a long frontier with the forces of Cao Cao, and on the south expansion was blocked by the lands conceded to Liu Bei. Considering that Sun Quan had defeated Huang Zu in Jiangxia before the death of Liu Biao, and that the brunt of the fighting at the Red Cliffs and afterwards had been borne by his troops, he did not have a great deal to show for such success. On the other hand, of course, he had at least survived Cao Cao's attack.

The settlement with Liu Bei was to a considerable degree enforced by circumstances. Liu Bei, of course, fifty years old, was the more experienced man, and he had been able to use his local position to gain considerable advantage. Zhou Yu, we are told, recommended that Sun Quan should attempt to give Liu Bei an important-sounding post in the east, and should grant comparable offices to Liu Bei's lieutenants Guan Yu and Zhang Fei: anything to keep them apart and away from their region of power in Jing province. Sun Quan, probably rightly, felt that Liu Bei would reject such a proposal and would only become more troublesome. For the time being the alliance seemed the best policy.

There was some recognition that Sun Quan was the dominant partner. During 209, Liu Bei went east to pay his respects to Sun Quan at his capital in Danyang, and though Sun Quan escorted him part of the way on the journey back, he did not return the visit by

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It does not appear, however, that anything came of this strategy. Gan Ning's flank attack on Yiling was the decisive break-through in the campaign, and Liu Bei quickly transferred his attention to the southern commanderies. There is no mention of operations against Cao Ren in the biographies of either Liu Bei or of Zhang Fei.

going to Gongan.[7] It was also at this time that Liu Bei was granted and took the younger sister of Sun Quan as his formal wife. The Lady Sun was probably little more than twenty years old, less than half Liu Bei's age, but she was evidently a woman of strong personality, she took general control of Liu Bei's household, and she exercised guardianship over his infant son and heir Liu Shan.[8]

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[7] *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1265 PC note 2 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*, refers to Sun Quan accompanying Liu Bei on a great "flying cloud" ship (*feiyun*): the name came presumably from the size of its sails.

[8] The records of Liu Bei's marriages and offspring are inadequate. *SGZ* 34/Shu 4, containing the biographies of the wives and concubines of Liu Bei and Liu Shan, gives details of only two of Liu Bei's women, the Lady Gan and the Lady Wu. Of these, the Lady Wu was originally married to Liu Zhang, Governor of Yi province, and she became the formal wife of Liu Bei only after the death of Liu Zhang in 219.

Although the Lady Gan was the mother of Liu Shan and was eventually honoured with posthumous title as an empress, she was not a principal wife but only the concubine of Liu Bei. A woman of Pei kingdom in Yu province, she evidently joined his household when he set his headquarters there in 194: *ZZTJ* 61, 1949; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 128.

Liu Bei had at least one, and possibly two, full formal wives before he arrived in Jing province.

SGZ 32/Shu 2, 873, says that in 196, when Liu Bei was in Xu province, his army was defeated by Lü Bu, who was allied to Yuan Shu, and his family was captured. Some time afterwards, he made an alliance with Lü Bu, and the women and children were returned to him.

SGZ 32/Shu 2, 874, says that in 198, when Lü Bu was again in alliance with Yuan Shu, his forces seized Liu Bei's capital, the county city of Pei, and Liu Bei was compelled to flee, leaving his family behind. A few months later, Cao Cao came to the assistance of Liu Bei, Lü Bu was captured and killed, and Liu Bei again had his family returned to him.

SGZ 32/Shu 2, 875, says that in 200, when he was still with Cao Cao, Liu Bei was involved in a conspiracy against him. The plot was discovered, and Liu Bei fled to Yuan Shao, again leaving his family behind. It is not recorded that they returned to him.

In none of these cases is there any statement of how many women and children were involved.

SGZ 38/Shu 8, 969, the biography of Liu Bei's loyal supporter Mi Zhu, records that in 196, after Liu Bei had been defeated by Lü Bu and was in considerable distress, Mi Zhu not only gave him funds from his own resources but also presented his own sister to become principal wife, together with two thousand servants.

It is possible that the Lady Mi died of natural causes within the next few years, and it is also possible that there was at one time another official wife, for the biography of the Lady Gan in *SGZ* 34/Shu 4, 905, says that Liu Bei was "several times in mourning for his principal wives and household" . We may note, however, that Mi Zhu, at least was not upset at whatever fate his sister suffered, and he always remained loyal.

The Lady Gan was able to accompany Liu Bei to take refuge in Jing province with Liu Biao in 200, and in 207 she gave birth there to Liu Shan, who succeeded to the throne of Shu-Han after his father's death, and who is normally known as the Later Sovereign. His biography/annals is in *SGZ* 33/Shu 3.

The Lady Gan died and was first buried in Nan commandery, presumably after Liu Bei had taken occupation of that territory under grant from Sun Quan following the death of Zhou Yu in 210 (see below). Her body was later taken to the west, and in 222, after Liu Bei had taken the imperial title the Lady Gan received posthumous honours as his empress. She was buried again in the mausoleum of Liu Bei at Chengdu: *SGZ* 34/Shu 4, 905-06, including quotation of a memorial from the Chancellor Zhuge Liang.

Until the birth of Liu Shan, Liu Bei certainly had no male children of his own with him in Jing province. Indeed, he adopted a boy about ten years old, whose personal name was Feng, and who came from the Gou family of Luohou county in Changsha, related by marriage to the Liu clan of that commandery. *SGZ* 40/Shu 10, 991, being the biography of Liu/Gou Feng, says that Liu Bei had no heir or successor until this adoption (see also Fang, *Chronicle* I, 7-8).

By the time of his death in 223, however, Liu Bei had sired two more sons, Liu Yong and Liu Li, by different concubines: *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 890, and their biographies in *SGZ* 34/Shu 4, 907 and 908.

As to the Lady Sun, she is mentioned only in passing by *SGZ* 34/Shu 4, 879. The biography of Fa Zheng, *SGZ* 37/Shu 7, 960, however, tells us that she had the courage and energy of her brothers, and that she was accompanied by more than a hundred female attendants, all of them capable of bearing arms; whenever Liu Bei visited her, he trembled for his life. *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 949 PC note 2 quoting *Zhao Yun biezhuan*, has a similar description.

The story of Liu Bei's visit to Sun Quan appears early in the dramatic tradition, notably in the play *Huanghe lou* "Tower of the Yellow Crane" by Zhu Kai of Yuan (Arlington and Acton, *Chinese Plays*, 230-251; *Kuben Yuan-Ming zaju*, 7A). The subject of his marriage to the Lady Sun is dealt with in *Romance* chapters 54-56 and is the theme of several other plays with a variety of titles, some of which overlap: *Longfeng chengxiang*, "Happy Auguries of the Dragon and the Phoenix;" *Longfeng pei*, "Dragon and Phoenix Match;" *Meiren ji*, "Strategem of the Beauty;" *Ganlu si*, "At the Sweet Dew Temple;" *Luhuatang*, "Ambush at Luhuatang;" *Hui Jingzhou*, "Return to Jing Province." See *Peking Opera Texts*, 757, 2755, 2769, 3379, and *Jingju jumu chutan*, 88-90.

The theme of *Romance* and of the drama cycle is that Zhou Yu plans to trap Liu Bei and prevent him from returning to Jing province. Liu Bei, however, is able to get away through the efforts of his officers and counsellors, and also because the

Liu Bei had gained extensive territories, but for the moment the initiative in Jing province still rested with Sun Quan and Zhou Yu. Nan commandery and Jiangxia controlled the middle course of the Yangzi, and although Liu Bei at Gongan had a presence on the river, and the southern commanderies were broad and populous, it was not impossible that he might be held within the basin of the Xiang, in a region of prosperous, constrained exile. There was small chance for him of useful expansion southwards, across the Nan Ling into Jiao province,[9] while Sun Quan could still hope for further developments and opportunities to the north.

One opportunity already appeared to present itself. In the Sichuan basin, beyond the Yangzi Gorges to the west, Liu Zhang, Governor of Yi province, had succeeded his father Liu Yan in 194.[10] His administration had been plagued, however, by a number of rebellions, from refugee groups that had come into the territory and from officers of his own command. In the northern part of Yi province, moreover, Zhang Lu the leader of the "Rice Sect" in Hanzhong commandery had established an independent theocratic state in the upper valley of the Han, and maintained a constant pressure against Liu Zhang.[11]

Though the family of Liu Yan and Liu Zhang was of the imperial clan, the relationship was not close: like Liu Bei, though on more solid grounds, they could claim descent from Emperor Jing of the

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Lady Sun herself supports Liu Bei against the treachery of Zhou Yu. On the other hand, Plaks, *Four Masterworks*, 423-424 and 438, notes the implied criticism which the novel offers on Liu Bei's interest in marriage to the Lady Sun, and also on how frequently Liu Bei is separated from or loses his family. Oscar Wilde, in "The Importance of Being Earnest," has the line: "To lose one parent, Mr Worthing, may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness." What, one might wonder, would Lady Bracknell have said of Liu Bei?

9 Sun Quan had already staked a claim to hegemony over Jiao province, by his grant to Sun Fu of the title as Inspector (see Chapter 4). The real authority in the region, however, was held by the local gentry leader Shi Xie, and it was some time before Sun Quan or anyone else was in a position to compete with him. See Chapter 6.

10 The biographies of Liu Yan and Liu Zhang are in *SGZ* 31/Shu 1, 865-67 and 868-70 respectively. There is also a biography of Liu Yan, followed by that of Liu Zhang, in *HHS* 75/65, 2431-32.

11 The biography of Zhang Lu is in *SGZ* 8, 263-66. See also Chapter 6.

Former Han dynasty, two and a half centuries earlier. Unlike Liu Bei, however, Liu Yan was a man of good gentry family, and at court he had risen to the ministerial post of Grand Master of Ceremonies, responsible for the affairs of the imperial clan. From that high rank he had obtained the governorship of Yi province in 188.[12]

Fifteen years after succeeding to his father's position, however, it was apparent that Liu Zhang was losing authority, and a number of his people were prepared to accept intervention from the east. Towards the end of 209, Zhou Yu went to see Sun Quan and urged that he be given an army to take over Liu Zhang's government and that of Zhang Lu.

It was an imaginative plan, which would certainly have stretched the resources of Sun Quan's state, but the opportunity was a remarkable one. Although he would be moving upstream from his station at Nan commandery, it should not have been difficult for Zhou Yu to gain access to the Sichuan region, and if he was correct in his information about the weakness of Liu Zhang's political support, he could look with some confidence to a welcome from dissidents, many of whom had connections with Jing and other eastern provinces and might well be prepared to accept his leadership. For the time being, Zhou Yu argued, since the retreat of Cao Ren from Jiangling the enemy at Xiangyang was generally on the defensive, and would be reluctant to mount a major attack against the alliance of Sun Quan with Liu Bei; and Liu Bei was still preoccupied with establishment of his government in the south.

Whatever the chances of success, however, Zhou Yu and Sun Quan did not have opportunity to put them into practice. As Zhou Yu was returning to Jiangling to prepare for the expedition up the Yangzi, he fell ill and died. He was then aged thirty-six.

In the ten years since the death of Sun Ce, Zhou Yu had played an increasingly important role as military commander, and he was generally recognised as the leading figure among Sun Quan's subordinates. Cheng Pu, an early follower of Sun Jian, had sometimes showed himself jealous and disapproving. Later,

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12 See *ZZTJ* 59, 1887-89; de Crespigny, *Huan and Ling*, 205-206. It is generally accepted that the appointments of governors at that time, chosen from men of ministerial rank, encouraged the formation of provincial units by subordinating the commanderies to these regional organisations: see Chapter 1.

however, when Zhou Yu consistently treated him with respect and tolerance, Cheng Pu became a close friend and admirer, and he would say to others, "To be with Zhou Gongjin is like drinking cold wine unmixed with water: you become drunk before you realise it."[13]

The death of Young Gentleman Zhou was a major blow to Sun Quan's position in Jing province. Victor at the Red Cliffs and dominant figure in the allied command, Zhou Yu had been able to maintain an authority which balanced that of Liu Bei. One might wonder, perhaps, as Liu Bei is said to have suggested to Sun Quan in private conversation, whether Zhou Yu would be prepared to serve indefinitely as the subordinate of another;[14] and one may certainly suspect that if Zhou Yu had established himself in Yi province he might in future have dealt with Sun Quan as an equal rather than as a suzerain. But that was now in the realm of might-have-been, and when Sun Quan held full mourning for Zhou Yu he was right to do so. Zhou Yu had been a pillar of great strength to his state, and it would be very hard to find a replacement for him.

From his deathbed, Zhou Yu recommended Lu Su as his successor. One version of his last letter to Sun Quan reads:

> Lord Cao is in the north, and our borders are not at peace. Liu Bei is lodging here, and that is like feeding a tiger..... Lu Su is loyal and energetic, and in dealing with affairs he has no match; he can take my place.
>
> When a man is dying, he speaks with total truth. If you can accept what I say, my death will not be useless."[15]

Sun Quan followed Zhou Yu's advice, though he did not immediately give Lu Su comparable rank. Lu Su was initially appointed as Colonel Who Displays Firmness, with four thousand men from Zhou Yu's command, his base set at Jiangling, and

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13 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1265 PC note 2 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*. *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1265, also tells us that Zhou Yu had an excellent ear for music, and that he was very particular about it. Even at a banquet, after several cups of wine, he could always recognise a false note, and he would always point it out.

14 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1265 PC note 2 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*.

15 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1271 PC note 1 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*. The main text of *SGZ* has a different version of the letter, though it is, as Pei Songzhi observes, couched in the same terms.

revenues from four counties as his source of supply. Cheng Pu, however, took the vacant position as Grand Administrator of Nan commandery; so Lu Su had neither the military rank nor the administrative authority which had been held by Zhou Yu.

Very soon afterwards, however, evidently on the advice of Lu Su, there was a major change in the arrangements of Jing province: Liu Bei was allowed to "borrow" Nan commandery; Cheng Pu returned to Jiangxia; and Lu Su was named Grand Administrator of a new commandery, Hanchang, with headquarters at Lukou on the Yangzi in the north of Changsha. He was also promoted to be a lieutenant-general, with command of ten thousand men.[16]

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16 The rank of Lieutenant-General was not a recognised regular appointment under Han, but it appeared with increasing frequency during these years of civil war. As Grand Administrator of Nan commandery, Zhou Yu had held that rank.

The biography of Zhou Yu, at *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1264, says that Zhou Yu had been allocated the four counties of Hanchang, Xiajun, Liuyang and Zhouling to provide supplies. The commentary of Lu Bi to the biography of Lu Su at *SGZJJ* 54/Wu 9, 19a-b, suggests that the same four counties were allocated also to the support of Lu Su when he took over Zhou Yu's military position. It then seems likely that these comprised the territory of his new commandery of Hanchang.

Xiajun county was in the northern part of Changsha commandery under Later Han, and Zhouling was in the east of Nan commandery close to the Yangzi below present-day Yueyang: see the Treatise of Administrative Geography, *HHS* 112/22, 3485 and 3480, and *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* II, 49-50.

Hanchang county is not recorded in the census list of the Treatise of Administrative Geography, but commentary to *SGZJJ* 47/Wu 2, 6b, presents evidence to suggest that it had been established near present-day Yueyang in the time of Emperors Huan or Ling, after the record of that census in the early 140s. Liuyang county appears to have been established about this time in the hill country to the southeast (*SGZJJ* 54/Wu 9, 9b). See also Wu and Yang, *Sanguo junxian biao fu kaozheng* 8, 2852-53.

SJZS 35, 11a, cited in *SGZJJ* 47/Wu 2, 6b-7a, identifies Lukou, Lu Su's headquarters, as a site downstream from the Red Cliffs/Wulin area, on the southeastern bank of the Yangzi.

If these identifications and interpretations are correct, then the territory controlled by Lu Su at this time occupied the basin of the Yangzi for some 120 kilometres from the junction with the Dongting Lake and the Xiang River down to the northeast of present-day Jiayu, with territory taken from the three former Han commanderies of Nan, Changsha and Jiangxia. Lu Su thus occupied the border region between the two warlords.

It is not possible to work out the precise timing of these changes, nor the details of the arguments presented at Sun Quan's council. The records are vague, and sometimes contradictory; again, as in the matter of the Red Cliffs, there are elements of rival propaganda, particularly on the question of the "borrowing" of territory by Liu Bei from Sun Quan. It seems fairly clear, however, that after the death of Zhou Yu Sun Quan allowed Liu Bei access to Nan commandery which he had not held before.[17] By this grant, Sun

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Liu Bei had evidently agreed to the transfer of the extreme northern part of Changsha to the direct control of Sun Quan, but he soon received the important city of Jiangling in exchange.

17 *Jiangbiao zhuan*, which seems to echo the opinions of supporters of Sun Quan, quoted in *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 879 PC note 3, says that Liu Bei was first established by Zhou Yu in the territory south of the Yangzi, and he later (or "further:" the texts differ between *fu* and *hou*) "borrowed" (*jie*) the various commanderies of Jing province from Sun Quan.

The biography of Lu Su, in *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1270, says that when Liu Bei came to Sun Quan's capital he asked to be given command of Jing province. Lu Su was the only person who urged Sun Quan to agree, to maintain and confirm the alliance against Cao Cao. In context, this must refer to Liu Bei's visit to Sun Quan in 209 (see above), for the item is followed by the account of the death of Zhou Yu and his recommendation of Lu Su as successor.

PC note 1 on 1271, related to this passage, quotes *Han-Jin chunqiu*, which tells how Sun Quan's officer Lü Fan urged Liu Bei should be detained in the east, but was argued down by Lu Su on the grounds that Sun Quan needed to show his grace and his sense of honour, and that Liu Bei was necessary to keep Jing province in order and defended against Cao Cao.

ZZTJ 65, 2103-04; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 414-417, dates all the debate to the year 210, just before and immediately after the death of Zhou Yu. We are told, however, in the biography of Cheng Pu, *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1284, that he initially succeeded Zhou Yu as Grand Administrator of Nan commandery, and then, after Sun Quan had divided Jing province with Liu Bei, he returned to be Grand Administrator of Jiangxia again.

From all this, it would seem that there was first an *ad hoc* allocation by Zhou Yu, on the spot, of the territory south of the Yangzi for Liu Bei to deal with in the mopping-up campaigns after the defeat of Cao Cao at the Red Cliffs. This preliminary arrangement was confirmed by Sun Quan in 209 (or possibly in early 210), when Liu Bei visited his court; the formal allocation of the southern part of Jing province was opposed by Zhou Yu (and by Lü Fan) but was supported by Lu Su. Then, after the death of Zhou Yu in 210, another adjustment was made at the behest of Lu Su, allowing Liu Bei not only to hold the southern part of the province but also giving him access to Nan commandery.

Quan withdrew his direct control from all of Jing province except a portion of Jiangxia and the main stream of the Yangzi below the junction with the Dongting Lake and the Xiang river. And it was not merely a question of Nan commandery, for he was also giving Liu Bei access and opportunity for intervention into Yi province, the very project which Zhou Yu had proposed at the time of his death.

In later years, Sun Quan regarded this decision as one of his greater errors, and he specifically blamed Lu Su. Praising him for the imagination with which he argued the plan for an empire, and also for the courage with which he proposed resistance to Cao Cao at the time of the Red Cliffs, Sun Quan went on to remark:

> Later, however, he urged me to cede territory to Xuande [Liu Bei].[18] Yet this single occasion of weakness is not sufficient to outweigh his two great actions.

And again, Sun Quan suggested that Lu Su was afraid of Liu Bei's general Guan Yu, and it was for this reason, when he felt he could not cope with the situation, he presented fine-sounding arguments to justify his policy of co-operation, and even subservience.[19]

Such a view of Lu Su has been generally accepted by both historical and literary tradition. In *Romance*, he is butt of the jokes and tricks played by the brilliant planner Zhuge Liang. Where Zhou Yu at least sought (albeit unsuccessfully) for the initiative, Lu Su could do little else but marvel at the skills and trickery of his rival. More recently, however, some historians have sought to present a more balanced judgement, and while one must recognise that the plans put forward by Lu Su were less striking than those of the splendid Zhou Yu, they were sensible and perhaps in some respects wiser.[20]

Lu Su at this time was in his late thirties, a little older than Zhou Yu. He came from a wealthy family of Dongcheng county in Xiapi

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There was later a good deal of debate as to what territory had actually been "lent" (as opposed to being granted) to Liu Bei, and upon what real or understood conditions: see Chapter 6.

18 Xuande was the style of Liu Bei.

19 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1281, recording Sun Quan's comments on Zhou Yu, Lu Su and Lü Meng, made in a discussion with his later commander Lu Xun.

20 See, for example, the comments of Yuan Mei, quoted by Lu Bi in *SGZJJ* 54/Wu 9, 18a-b, and also the recent article by Feng Junshi [1982].

commandery (which appears at this time to have been renamed Linhuai), in the region between the Huai and the Yangzi. There is no record in his biography that his family had held any official post, and he may have come from a merchant background. We are told that he first made the acquaintance of Zhou Yu when the latter came by with his army and asked for supplies. Lu Su's house had two granaries, each filled with grain; he invited Zhou Yu to take his pick. Zhou Yu was impressed and they became friends. Later, Yuan Shu offered him the post of Prefect of Dongcheng, but he left there to join Zhou Yu and they went together to join Sun Ce.[21]

Lu Su appears to have made a considerable point of using his family wealth to gain a good local reputation. When he left Dongcheng, he had three hundred people with them, including sufficient men at arms to prevent the local provincial troops from harassing them or compelling them to return.[22] He was, however, not entirely happy with his welcome at the Sun headquarters in Qu'a, and after Sun Ce died he thought of returning to the north. We are told that Zhou Yu urged him to remain:[23]

> Once in the past, Ma Yuan said to [Liu Xiu, the future Emperor] Guangwu, "At a time like this, it is not only that a ruler should look for his servants; the servant must decide which ruler he can accept."[24]
>
> Now our master [Sun Quan] is pleased about worthy men, and he gives honour to those of scholarship. He welcomes men of exceptional quality, and he chooses men of distinction.
>
> I have heard, moreover, from occult learning of former times, that the one who shall succeed the house of Liu will surely rise in the southeast.[25]... This is the time for a hero to mount the dragon and soar with the phoenix - he will ride fast.

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21 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1267.

22 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1267-68 PC note 1 quoting *Wu shu.*

23 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1268. The passage translated below is a continuation of the same text.

24 See *HHS* 24/14, 830, the biography of Ma Yuan, discussed by Bielenstein, *RHD* II, 165.

25 There is no way to tell which prophecy Zhou Yu had in mind. A great number of prognostications were circulating at this time, most of them mutually contradictory, and they were available to any local leader, whether he believed in

Then Zhou Yu urged Sun Quan to make a point of talking with Lu Su, and Sun Quan did so. Sun Quan, so we are told, spoke of a plan to serve the Han dynasty like one of the hegemons of the ancient Zhou. Lu Su, however, said bluntly,

> As I see it, the house of Han cannot rise again, and Cao Cao will not be removed in a hurry. The best plan for you is just to hold the east of the Yangzi, like one foot of a tripod cauldron,[26] and watch the battles of the empire from a distance...
>
> In the north, they will have plenty of things to worry about. Take advantage of the fact that they are preoccupied, attack Huang Zu and force him away, then go on to attack Liu Biao, and follow up to hold the full length of the Yangzi. When you have achieved that, you can take title as emperor or king and you can plan to take over the whole of China. This was the method of Emperor Gao of Han.[27]

Sun Quan disclaimed all such high ambition, but he was impressed by Lu Su. Zhang Zhao, his more conservative counsellor, disapproved of Lu Su's apparent lack of humility and caution, but Sun Quan showed him increasing respect and favour, and the wealth of the family was restored to what it had been in Lu Su's home country in the north.

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them, invented them for himself, or merely took advantage of their existence. We have observed the history of the apocryphal text concerning Xuchang/Xu Chang (note 11 to Chapter 2). We may also note here that when Liu Yan asked to become Governor of Yi province in 188, he was influenced at least in part by advice that "the territory of Yi province has the aura of the Son of Heaven:" *SGZ* 31/Shu 1, 865, and *ZZTJ* 59, 1888; de Crespigny, *Huan and Ling*, 205 (and note the commentary of Hu Sanxing, quoting the *Yueling zhangzhu* "Commentary to the Ordinances of the Months" by Cai Yong).

26 This early use of the metaphor of a tripod cauldron seems so prescient that one must consider the possibility it represents a later interpolation: in years to come, the balance between the three states of Wei, Shu and Wu was regularly described in such terms.

27 After the overthrow of the Qin empire at the end of the third century BC, the future Emperor Gao of Han was allocated the upper valley of the Han River as his fief. Within a very short time, he had broken out from this isolated region, taken over the small kingdoms of the former Qin heart-land in the valley of the Wei, and then fought successfully against the hegemon king Xiang Yu for full control of the empire. See, for example, Dubs, *HFHD* I, 66-70 and ff.

It is difficult to tell how much of this is exaggeration, but it does seem likely that Sun Quan recognised Lu Su as a useful source of advice, and as a favourite associate of Zhou Yu. By rewarding him and treating him well, moreover, Sun Quan was giving an example to other local leaders north of the Yangzi, of the sort of reward they could expect if they came to join him. On a larger scale, there was a patron and client relationship between the two men, and Lu Su could be seen as Sun Quan's personal follower.

It is in this role that one may appreciate Lu Su's contribution to the strategy of the Red Cliffs campaign. His biography has no statement of the official rank and position that he held at that time, but he was sent off as Sun Quan's personal envoy, officially to Liu Biao, and also to make contact with Liu Bei. Clearly, he possessed Sun Quan's confidence, and when he returned to take part in the debate over Cao Cao's ultimatum, his opinion, as the man most recently on the spot, was significant. Sun Quan was prepared to attend to his advice, and when Zhou Yu confirmed his judgement, the decision to fight was settled.

Against this background, of trust from Sun Quan, of ambition for the future of his state, and of energy and imagination in the decision to oppose Cao Cao and fight for Jing province, it becomes more difficult to accept the judgement of Lu Su as a defeatist, the man who handed over the predominant position to Liu Bei and allowed him the opportunity of expansion in the west. All the accounts we have of Lu Su's opinions and advice are based, of course, on records which could be invented or falsified in the light of later events, but it does appear that Sun Quan and Zhou Yu both thought highly of him, and Sun Quan's later criticism, as quoted above, can also be interpreted as the judgement of hindsight. For proper assessment, one must consider the situation as it appeared at the time, when Sun Quan decided to allow Liu Bei access to Nan commandery.

From that point of view, we know already that Liu Bei was recognised as a difficult ally and an uncomfortable subordinate. We have been told Zhou Yu had sought to remove him from Jing province to the east, but that Sun Quan had judged this impracticable. Now Zhou Yu was gone, and the situation was still more difficult, for there was no leader in Sun Quan's command who held comparable authority. His immediate colleague at the time of the

Red Cliffs, Cheng Pu, despite loyal service, age and experience, was by no means up to Zhou Yu's weight, and Lu Su, by definition, as the immediate and junior successor to Zhou Yu, had not established his position.

Liu Bei, moreover, was already interested in Yi province. Soon after the Red Cliffs campaign, Liu Zhang had made contact with him, and had even lent him a contingent of troops to help him establish a position in the south of Jing province.[28] As a result, when Zhou Yu put forward his proposal for the invasion of Yi province, Liu Bei protested that he, as representative of the imperial clan, considered himself bound as an ally to Liu Zhang. The argument was disingenuous, but it did indicate that Liu Bei was staking a claim to regard Yi province as part of his sphere of influence and concern. If Sun Quan and Zhou Yu wished to move to the west, they needed to devise some way of neutralising or compensating Liu Bei.

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28 *SGZ* 31/Shu 1, 868, says that Liu Zhang had earlier been in contact with Cao Cao, and when Cao Cao received the surrender of Liu Zong and was advancing south through Jing province, he sent his aide Zhang Song to pay his respects. Cao Cao, however, was preoccupied, and did not show Zhang Song proper courtesy. Then, when Cao Cao was defeated at the Red Cliffs, Zhang Song encouraged Liu Zhang to make contact with Liu Bei, and he continued to act as an advocate of that alliance.

Romance chapter 60 develops this story, and tells how Zhang Song made personal contact with Liu Bei, handing him a map of the territory of Yi province and the roads which led there, which enabled him to plan his later campaigns. The drama *Xian Xichuan* "Presenting the Map of Xichuan [the region of the Western Rivers]," also known as *Zhang Song xian ditu* "Zhang Song Presents the Map," has the same theme. See *Peking Opera Texts*, 2349, and *Jingju jumu chutan*, 92.

ZZTJ 65, 2095; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 399-400, has this incident, and Sima Guang quotes the fourth-century scholar Xi Zuochi), whose remarks are included in *SGZ* 31, 869 PC note 2: "For just a moment, Cao Cao showed himself arrogant; and as a result the empire was divided into three..... The pity of it."

In fairness to Cao Cao, it should be pointed out that Zhang Song was the third messenger sent to him by Liu Zhang at this time. From the first embassy, Liu Zhang received appointment as a general; the second man, who took a contingent of three hundred men, was rewarded with appointment as Grand Administrator of Guanghan; but when Zhang Song was sent Cao Cao was thoroughly engaged in the pursuit of Liu Bei, and he did not give him any reward. It was quite possibly a sense of disappointed expectation that proved to be the first motivation of Zhang Song.

Two points were thus clear. Firstly, there was no commander available to Sun Quan who was capable of an invasion of Yi province, and certainly none who was likely to attract sufficient support to bring such an enterprise to a successful conclusion. Secondly, with the loss of Zhou Yu the opportunity for Liu Bei had become apparent, and it was in the highest degree unlikely that Liu Bei would accept being ignored and by-passed while Sun Quan sent an expeditionary force across his frontier to the north.[29]

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29 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1271-72.

SGZ 32/Shu 2, 879-80, says that Sun Quan had suggested a combined attack against Liu Zhang by his own forces and those of Liu Bei. Liu Bei at first was inclined to agree, but then his adviser Yin Guan pointed out that if he committed himself to the west, he could be cut off by the troops of Sun Quan and might well lose his possessions in southern Jing province; and it was not, of course, certain that he would be able to take over Yi province. On the other hand, as Yin Guan pointed out, if he refused to take part, Sun Quan could hardly commit his forces with an exposed flank across his flank. Liu Bei followed this advice.

PC note 3 to this passage, quoting *Xiandi chunqiu*, says that Sun Quan actually sent his cousin Sun Yu to lead an expeditionary force to the west. Liu Bei refused to let the army pass, and he and his commanders Guan Yu, Zhang Fei and Zhuge Liang occupied critical points along the river to block the advance. The story is followed by *ZZTJ* 66, 2135-36; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 483-485.

Sun Yu had earlier taken part in the operation with Zhou Yu against the camps at Mo and Bao (see Chapter 4). He was thus an old associate, and would have been a possible choice as commander of the campaign. His biography, however, at *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1206, contains no reference to this incident.

By definition, moreover, such a confrontation must be dated to the period after the death of Zhou Yu and the transfer of Nan commandery to Liu Bei's control; a time that the conciliatory counsel of Lu Su was already having influence.

So I doubt the matter ever went so far, and that Sun Yu was sent on such an expedition. It seems more likely that Sun Quan could appreciate the difficulties of such a venture, and he would not have attempted to play a hard line and force the issue. If, as *Xiandi chunqiu* tells us, he had been compelled to abandon the plan, Sun Quan would have lost considerable face; and even assuming Sun Yu had been permitted to pass, his army would have been extremely vulnerable to intervention from Liu Bei against its line of communications.

I therefore incline to regard the *Xiandi chunqiu* story as a fictional development of the real situation, correctly analysed by Yin Guan; and equally well understood by Sun Quan and his adviser Lu Su.

Romance chapter 57, developing and extending this account still further, makes the futile attempt of Zhou Yu, aided by Sun Yu, to attack the west across the front of Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang, the immediate cause of Zhou Yu's frustration which brings about his death. As Winston Yang has remarked, this is the extreme

So the possibilities in the west were very limited. By force of circumstances, partly a matter of geographical range, partly the loss of Zhou Yu, and importantly the local position of Liu Bei, Sun Quan had lost the initiative. It is indeed very likely that the short period during which Cheng Pu and Lu Su were based in Jiangling, as Grand Administrator and garrison commander, had demonstrated to them the force of Liu Bei's ambitions in that region. Quite possibly, Sun Quan had reason to fear that if he did not take Lu Su's advice and relinquish Jiangling voluntarily he could be forced out of that territory by military pressure from Liu Bei, aided by the constant threat from Cao Cao's forces in the north. The western extension of Sun Quan's territories to Jiangling had ceased to offer the basis for a further thrust up the stream of the Yangzi through the gorges; it was now better regarded as a vulnerable salient, exposed to potential enemies both north and south.

On the other hand, by handing over the territory about Jiangling with good grace, and with the theoretical right of resumption, Sun Quan had gained a secure frontier in Jing province. There was no question of Liu Bei turning against the positions of Lu Su and Cheng Pu in Jiangxia: his immediate ambitions were clearly concerned with the west. At the same time, any attack by Cao Cao's forces in the north of Jing province would certainly confirm the defensive alliance, and Sun Quan and Liu Bei were now in a stronger position than they had been in the time of confusion after the death of Liu Biao and before the Red Cliffs.

It may therefore be argued that, rather than seeking the chimera of western expansion and dominance over a resentful and dangerous Liu Bei, Sun Quan's best policy at that moment was to accept the situation as it was, and concentrate instead upon real possibilities. These included the still open question of the frontier against Cao Cao in the north of Yang province; the consolidation and development of the settled region which he controlled immediately

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expression of the negative attitude of the *Romance* for the man described by the history as generous, sensible and courageous: "The Use of the 'San-kuo chih,'" 290-297, and "Literary Transformation," 71-73. Plaks, *Four Masterworks*, 446, observes that the cleverness of Zhuge Liang in dealing with Zhou Yu is taken almost too far, so that admiration for and amusement at his wit is lessened by touches of cruelty, hypocrisy and cynicism.

south of the Yangzi; and thirdly, more tentatively, the matter of Jiao province, the distant territories of present-day Guangdong, Guangxi and Vietnam. All of these, in different fashions, were matters worthy and needful of attention.

If this was the advice of Lu Su, Sun Quan had cause to accept it. The victory at the Red Cliffs had secured his survival as an independent ruler for the time, though the death of Zhou Yu had perhaps, as counterbalance, robbed him of the dream of rapid expansion along the line of the Yangzi to the west. The period of consolidation which followed, however, did much to restore that loss, and it laid the foundations for a long-lasting state and a long-term division of China.

The defences of Yang province:

We have noticed above, at intervals, the establishment of a frontier line between the territory of the Sun group along the Yangzi and the lands controlled by Cao Cao in the valley of the Huai. When Yuan Shu died in 199, Sun Ce took over many of his former followers, and he occupied the commandery of Lujiang.[30] Later, after the death of Sun Ce, his Grand Administrator Li Shu sought to change sides and join with Cao Cao, but he was destroyed by Sun Quan.[31]

Sun Quan, however, had not been able to extend his authority further to the north, and the dominant position north of the Yangzi was seized by Cao Cao's Inspector, Liu Fu, who took up his position in 200. From his headquarters at Hefei, Liu Fu was able to persuade the various rebel and vagrant groups south of the Huai to accept his authority, and we are told that tens of thousands of refugees returned to settle in their former territory. In true Confucian fashion, he established schools for them, but he also paid great attention to the re-colonisation of abandoned farmland, and he embarked on a major

30 See Chapter 3.

31 See Chapter 4.

program of water control, with dams and canals, to provide irrigation for rice paddy.[32]

At the time of the rebellion in Danyang commandery in 204, we are told that one of the men killed by the mutineers was Sun He, who had been appointed Grand Administrator of Lujiang after the overthrow of Li Shu. Sun He, however, was actually at that time in command of an army stationed at headquarters in Dantu,[33] and there is no mention that anyone was sent to replace him as Grand Administrator in Lujiang.

It appears, therefore, that in the years immediately after Sun Quan's succession, and following Cao Cao's successful appointment of the energetic Liu Fu, the territory of Lujiang had slipped from the southerners' control.[34] At best, it had become a no-man's land: extending to the north of the Yangzi, it was of less immediate concern than the heart-land of Danyang, Wu and Kuaiji, and the main drive for expansion in the first years of Sun Quan's government lay westwards, up the stream of the Yangzi, first against the territory about the Pengli Lake and the Poyang marshes, then against Huang Zu and Jing province. For the purposes of these campaigns, so long as Lujiang was not held by a strong potential enemy, the Sun armies could afford to ignore the region.

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32 See Chapter 4 and the biography of Liu Fu in *SGZ* 15, 463.

33 See Chapter 4.

34 One may observe, for example, the various reports of the local leader of Lujiang, Lei Xu. *SGZ* 15, 463, mentions him as the chief of one of a number of dissident groups, operating about the year 200 in the area between the Yangzi and the Huai, and then brought under the authority of Liu Fu.

A few years later, however, about 209 or 210, soon after the death of Liu Fu, Lei Xu was again in rebellion. Cao Cao sent his general Xiahou Yuan to attack him, and Lei Xu was thoroughly defeated (*SGZ* 9, 270). He was driven from Lujiang, but he still held a considerable number of people under his control, for *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 879, says that he came to join Liu Bei, then engaged in the settlement of his new territories in Jing province, and he was accompanied by tens of thousand of people.

The numbers are surely exaggerated, but the evidence shows that Lujiang commandery had become a region of uncertain control, and it is likely that there was a good deal of emigration to more settled regions, either north to the Huai or south across the Yangzi into Jing and Yang provinces.

Liu Fu died in 208, just about the time of the Red Cliffs campaign, and when Sun Quan took his army north across the Yangzi to attack Hefei, he might well have expected to force a bridgehead across the Huai. Cao Cao's main army had suffered a considerable defeat, with losses which would only be exaggerated in the reporting, while the death of Liu Fu had deprived the local defenders of their most effective and trusted leader.

Sun Quan and Zhang Zhao, however, achieved no success, and the biography of Liu Fu records that his people defended themselves with energy and skill, holding back a host of the enemy even though the city walls were threatened with washaway from torrential rains and had to be repaired in makeshift fashion night after night. Every plan of attack by Sun Quan was countered, and eventually he was deceived by a false report that a major army had been sent to break the siege. At this, he burnt and abandoned his encampment, and withdrew to the south.[35]

The failure of this attack confirmed Cao Cao's frontier in the southeast, and it was a notable blow to Sun Quan's hopes of expansion towards the Huai. Moreover, the achievement of Liu Fu was reflected not so much in the result of the military activity, but in the long-term arrangements which he had made for the government of the people and the defence of their territory. In eight years administration of this region, he had established an economic and political base along the Huai which proved secure against any raid or invasion from the south, and the frontier of Liu Fu is a demonstration of the effectiveness of the *tuntian* system under Cao Cao's government.[36]

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35 The ruse is attributed to the junior official Jiang Ji, whose biography is in *SGZ* 14, 450. The general Zhang Xi had been sent to the relief of the defenders, but Cao Cao's main army was still committed in Jing province, there were many soldiers sick, and Zhang Xi had only about a thousand horsemen with him. Jiang Ji arranged for copies of a false letter from Zhang Xi to be sent into the city of Hefei, claiming that he was in fact approaching with more than forty thousand men. One copy got to the city to encourage the defenders, and two others fell into the hands of Sun Quan. Sun Quan believed the information, and ordered a retreat.

36 The *tuntian* system of Cao Cao is discussed by Tang Changru [1955], 37-43, Zhang Weihua [1956], He Ziquan [1958], 8-17, Zhao Youwen [1958] Wang Zhongluo [1961], 22-23 and 89-94, and Ochi Shigeaki [1963]. In English,

CHAPTER FIVE

The term *tuntian*, which I render as "agricultural colony," had been recognised since the time of Former Han, and the technique had been used to control marginal or non-Chinese territory in the north and northwest. In particular, during the first century BC, the Han general Zhao Chongguo had recommended and carried out a program of agricultural colonies in the valley of the Huang Shui or Xining River in present-day Gansu and Qinghai.[37] They were essentially self-supporting, both in food and in military defence, and this concept of the soldier-farmer was an important element in the northern expansion and frontier defence of the Han empire. It was the achievement of Cao Cao and his advisers that they adapted the principle to the resettlement and control of the regions of central China devastated by civil war.[38]

Under Han, a tax had been levied upon each subject's land-holding.[39] The tax was low, but other exactions, such as poll

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there is a good account of the system in Crowell, "Land Policies and Systems," chapter IV.

37 See, for example, de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 63-64, and also Hsu, *Han Agriculture*, 139-141 and 236-237.

38 *SGZ* 1, 14 and PC note 1 quoting *Wei shu*. The latter passage tells, by contrast, how at this time the soldiers of Yuan Shao in the north were reduced to scavenging for mulberries and jujubes, and those of Yuan Shu in the region of the Huai looked for oysters and clams. See also *JS* 26, 782; Yang, "Economic History," 158. Two years earlier, according to *SGZ* 1, 12, the price of a single *hu* of grain (about 20 litres) had reached more than half a million cash.

There are indications that the technique had been used at earlier stages of the civil war, but the achievement of Cao Cao's government was to develop and apply the program widely and effectively.

39 On the land tax system of Han, see *Cambridge Han*," 596-598 [Nishijima, "Economic and Social History of Former Han"]. Formally speaking, the tax was based upon the annual crop. After early variations, it was settled for Former Han in 155 BC as one thirtieth of the yield; and after the restoration of Later Han, that figure was confirmed (*HHS* 1B, 50). In practice, however, for convenience of accounting, the tax was levied upon the expected yield of the land, not upon what was actually obtained or reported. As a result, land was surveyed for the government, and graded as high, medium or low quality. Each year there was then a levy based upon the notional yield: and this in effect represented a tax upon acreage.

Hsu, *Han Agriculture*, 72-75, estimates that the effective average level of taxation would have been about half a *dou*, or 5 *sheng* of grain to the *mu*, or approximately one litre to 0.045 hectare, a tenth of the English acre. Chen,

tax, civil corvee and military conscription (or payment for substitutes), placed a heavy burden on the peasant farmer. By the end of the dynasty, moreover, the expansion of private landholdings had placed an influential gentry class between the imperial government and the tillers of the soil, and the rulers of Later Han had considerable difficulty in gaining access to their revenues. The opportunities for corruption and confusion, for false reporting and evasion, were only too great, particularly since the bureaucrats responsible for the collection of the revenues generally came from the land-owning families themselves.[40]

The agricultural colonies established by Cao Cao, through concentration upon sharing the yield rather than taxing the land and equipment, removed the need for analysis and survey of the land and other materials, and by placing the peasants under direct control of the government the system eliminated, at least for the first years, the corrupting influences of private interest.

Once the colonies arranged by Liu Fu to the north of the Yangzi had taken a firm hold, Sun Quan had no resources to deal with the problem. The system was built upon the availability of land and

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however, "Economy, Society and State Power" at 139-140, argues that Hsu has underestimated the figure by half, and the rate was in fact close to one *dou* [10 *sheng*] to the *mu.* Bielenstein, *RHD* IV, 148, basing his calculations on the expected yield of an average farm, finds an effective tax rate of approximately four-fifths of a *dou*, or 8 *sheng*, to the *mu.*

This rate of tax, however, applied only to the owner of the land. Though there is disagreement among modern scholars about the percentages involved, it is accepted that a substantial number of the farmers of Han time held their lands as tenants, and rentals were regularly as high as 50% or more. See, for example, on the Former Han period at the time of Emperor Wu, *HS* 24A, 1137; Swann, *Food and Money*, 182, and on the attempts at reform by Wang Mang, *HS* 99B, 4111; Dubs, *HFHD* III, 286, and *HS* 24A, 1143; Swann, *Food and Money*, 208. On Later Han, see Hsu, *Han Agriculture*, 55-56 and 213-214, Ch'en, "Economy, Society and State Power," 133-136, and Bielenstein, *RHD* IV, 148.

40 For example, Hsu, *Han Agriculture*, 53-56, Chen, "Economy, Society and State Power," 147-148, Bielenstein, *RHD* IV, 136-137 and 157-158.

At the beginning of Later Han in 39 AD, Emperor Guangwu attempted to carry out a full survey of cultivated land in the empire. Despite severe punishments for false or inadequate reporting, it appears that the project was never successfully completed. See, for example, Hsu, *Han Agriculture*, 55 and 210-212, and Bielenstein, *RHD* IV, 136-137.

displaced people, but in the territory under Sun Quan's control there was, if anything, a shortage of people, and most of the land remained in the hands of its original owners: the wars of the Sun and their local rivals had not produced any such disruption as that experienced in central China. There were, of course, numbers of refugees from the north; some of them had joined the army, and others had taken up farmland, but many of them travelled still further south, outside the control of the Sun government, and sought to establish settlements of their own. These, and the native peoples of the hill country to the south, provided a different problem and opportunity for Sun Quan.

In the meantime, the territory between the Yangzi and the Huai remained uncertain. In the spring of 209 Sun Quan abandoned his siege of Hefei, and a few months later Cao Cao himself came in a show of strength. He had brought his main army from Jing province back to Qiao, a city south of Xu,[41] and at the beginning of 209 he held naval exercises there. In the autumn he led his army and a fleet down to the Huai river, then south to Hefei. At that point, however, he issued a proclamation, taking note of the many campaigns in which his men had been engaged, referring with regret to the losses his people had suffered through sickness and battle, and granting relief and rewards to their dependants. He made some local government appointments for Yang province, ordered an expansion of agricultural colonies at Shaobei, the great lake south of Shouchun, and then withdrew his troops to the north.[42]

It is possible that the decision to go no further against the south was forced upon Cao Cao by discontent within his army, though the texts contain no reference to any particular disturbance. More probably, the advance to the south was intended only as a warning for Sun Quan, and the withdrawal was a voluntary decision by Cao Cao. Certainly, over the past few years, those soldiers who formed the core of his army had taken part in an extraordinary series of campaigns. After the victory over Yuan Shao at Guandu in 200, Cao Cao had taken his army to the conquest of the former Yuan

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41 Qiao, near present-day Boxian, was the home county of Cao Cao: *SGZ* 1, 1.

42 The text of the proclamation is in *SGZ* 1, 32.

territories during 204 and 205, and northeast beyond the frontiers to destroy the Wuhuan alliance in 207. He had then returned, almost immediately, to the attack on Jing province which culminated at the Red Cliffs in 208. He and his men had been engaged in active service almost without interruption from one end of China to the other, and it seems quite reasonable that he should now have called a halt.

In the twelfth month, winter at the beginning of 210, the army was back in Qiao city, and for the next eighteen months Cao Cao was primarily concerned to consolidate his government over the territories he controlled. In the autumn of 211 he went again on campaign, but this was to the northwest, where he defeated and annexed the territories of the various local warlords in the valley of the Wei. He then returned to Ye, the former capital of Yuan Shao,[43] and after another pause for administrative arrangements he turned his attention once more to the southeast. In the winter of 212-213 his army came to the Yangzi.

Sun Quan must have been equally glad of the respite. Much of his attention had been taken up with the settlement of his position in Jing province, and that territory was now reasonably stable and secure. The real threat was now an advance by Cao Cao direct across the Huai, for this struck at the heart of Sun Quan's power, and it was unlikely that Liu Bei would give significant support.

We are not told of any major reforms - certainly nothing comparable to the agricultural colonies of the north[44] - and Sun Quan's strategy appears to have been chiefly concerned with the consolidation and expansion of that country which he controlled south of the Yangzi. Two specific changes, however, were the

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43 Ye county had been the capital of Wei commandery under Later Han; it was from this territory that Cao Cao later took the name of his state. The city of Ye was south of present-day Cixian in Hebei.

44 The concept of agricultural colonies was adopted by Sun Quan's government about this time, and the junior official Lu Xun was made Chief Commandant of Agricultural Colonies at Haichang, on the north of Hangzhou Bay: *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1343, and below**.** There is, however, no evidence that the system was yet used in the lower Yangzi valley: *e.g. JS* 26, 782-83; Yang, "Economic History," 159, and Chapter 8.

transfer of Sun Quan's capital, and the establishment of the Ruxu fortress.

In 211 Sun Quan shifted his capital upstream along the Yangzi from Dantu to Moling. In the following year, he fortified the hill called Shitou in the north of Moling county, and he changed the name of that place to Jianye, "Establishing Achievement." This city of Sun Quan is now the centre of the modern metropolis of Nanjing.

An area of high ground above the Yangzi delta, where the main stream of the river widened into the estuary towards the sea, the site had held military significance for centuries in the past. According to tradition, the great King Goujian of Yue had built a fortress here as a base from which to attack the rival state of Chu, north and west of the Yangzi. Later, the place was taken by Chu. In its early foundation, the city had been named Jinling "Hill of Metal," but when Chu was overthrown by the first Emperor of Qin the name of the territory was changed to the humbler and more prosaic Moling, "Hill Where the Horses are Fed."[45]

During the Han period, Moling was the seat of a county administration, and it had served as a base for the army of Xie Li, in alliance with Liu Yao against the invasion of Sun Ce in 195.[46] Once the Yangzi became again a significant military barrier, this region at the bend of the river, looking north towards Xu province and west towards Hefei, was an excellent centre and strongpoint. The new capital was eighty kilometres west of the former headquarters at Dantu, with access to the eastern territories of Wu and Kuaiji, and

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45 On the traditional early history of Nanjing, see for example, *Nagel's Guide*, 971, and Gaillard, *Nankin*, 17-48.

The name of the earlier city at this site, Jinling of Chu, is sometimes rendered as "Hill of Gold." I suspect, however, that the character *jin* here referred to a harder metal, indicating the strength of the defence post (*cf.* Jincheng, county city in the commandery of that name under Han, and an outpost against the north-western frontier: *HS* 28B, 1611). Thus the name of Moling, evidently given by the First Emperor of Qin, represented a deliberate slight against the former defenders: their stronghold had now become a meadow for his war-horses to graze.

46 *HHS* 112/22, 3486-87; on the campaign of Sun Ce against Liu Yao, see Chapter 3.

Sun Quan gained a great deal in communications up-river to the west.[47]

At the same time as he fortified Jianye, Sun Quan also constructed a naval base and fortress some 120 kilometres upstream, at the mouth of the Ruxu River. The Ruxu River flowed from the Chao Lake, south of Hefei, to join the Yangzi a short distance above present-day Wuhu. Here, it seems, the mouth of the tributary river provided an open harbour on the north bank of the Yangzi, and Sun Quan built a wall to protect the mooring.

The fortress is said to have been planned on the advice of Lü Meng, and there was some doubt among Sun Quan's other officers as to whether it was necessary: "We climb the bank to attack the enemy and we wade in the water to rejoin our ships. What is the use of such a fort?" they asked. Lü Meng replied that no-one could be certain of success in every battle, and if swift retreat was necessary, then a land-based defence line would protect the men and the ships until they could be withdrawn in safety. The argument was convincing, and the fortifications were duly constructed.[48]

The Ruxu position, about a hundred kilometres south of Hefei, was designed to serve also as Sun Quan's main bridgehead north of the Yangzi. From here, his fleet controlled the obvious crossing points, and the military presence within the encampment was a continual threat to any sortie from Hefei or Cao Cao's other garrisons. In the winter campaign of 212-213, Sun Quan offered no forward resistance to Cao Cao's advance, but concentrated his fleet and his army at Ruxu, and there withstood the attack. After a month, as the spring rains were coming, Cao Cao was compelled to withdraw without success.[49]

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47 On the establishment and the name change of Jianye, see *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1118.

We are told that Sun Quan's counsellor Zhang Hong, and his associate and rival Liu Bei, had both recommended the site to Sun Quan as a suitable one for his capital. The advice of Zhang Hong is recorded in *Jiangbiao zhuan*, and that of Liu Bei in *Xiandi chunqiu*, both quoted in *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1246 note 2.

48 *Wu lu*, quoted in *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1275 PC, indicates that Sun Quan was already considering the establishment of the fort when Lü Meng argued in favour of the program.

49 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1118 and 1119 PC quoting *Wu li.*

In following years, the defense complex of Ruxu, coupled with Sun Quan's undisputed naval command of the Yangzi, proved as effective a barrier to Cao Cao's forces as Hefei city was against Sun Quan's. The difficulty of attack for either side was enhanced by the short campaigning season available: the northern armies sought advantage in the dry season of winter, and the forces of Sun Quan, which relied upon amphibious operations, usually took the offensive in late spring and summer. As in the case of Cao Cao's attack on Ruxu in 212-213, if the defence could hold out until the beginning of the wet, the enemy was obliged to retreat and positions which had been lost then could be regained.

In between, there was a region of untenable ground, exposed to plunder and devastation by both sides. In the campaign of 212-213, Sun Quan abandoned and Cao Cao destroyed all his camps and settlements north and west of the Yangzi except Ruxu. As Cao Cao retreated, he sought to bring the people of the border region back to the north, to settle them in the region of the Huai, and to leave behind a wasteland where Sun Quan could hold no ground. The plan was not entirely successful: the people did abandon their land, but a notable number of them, rather than agree to settlement in Cao Cao's agricultural colonies, preferred to flee south into Sun Quan's control,[50] and they were encouraged by the "open-arms" program of Sun Yu, Grand Administrator of Danyang.[51]

Wu li says that Sun Quan wrote to Cao Cao, warning him that, "The spring rains are coming, you should go back quickly;" and in another part of the letter, he added, "I shall have no rest until you are dead." Cao Cao was suitably impressed with the chivalry of his opponent.

SGZ 1, 37, from Cao Cao's point of view, claims that he destroyed all Sun Quan's "western camps:" *i.e.* his military positions north of the Yangzi, and captured his Chief Controller Gongsun Yang; he then, however, withdrew his army.

50 *SGZ* 14, 540, being the biography of Jiang Ji, who advised against the move. Cao Cao later conceded that Jiang Ji had been correct, and appointed him to the post of Grand Administrator of Danyang: since that commandery was firmly in Sun Quan's hands, we cannot be entirely certain that the appointment was intended as a compliment.

51 *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1206. Sun Yu was appointed General Who Displays Firmness and appointed Grand Administrator of Danyang, a post which he had held before. He appointed Rao Zhu and Yan Lian as chiefs of Xiang'an and Juchao respectively, both being counties in the southeast of Lujiang, near the Yangzi, and

In the territory from Hefei southwards to the Yangzi, there remained in Cao Cao's hands only the city of Huan, capital of Lujiang commandery. The Grand Administrator there, Zhu Guang, also attempted to establish rice fields, with agricultural colonies, and he encouraged the people of Poyang to make a rising against Sun Quan. Sun Quan's adviser Lü Meng, who maintained his interest in this region, persuaded him that this salient was too dangerous to ignore, and in the summer of 214 Sun Quan led his army to the attack.

According to *Wu shu*, most of Sun Quan's officers were advising him to prepare for a full siege, with causeways and ramps and machines to attack the walls. Lü Meng, however, again came forward and urged the attack should be made as quickly as possible:

> It will certainly take several days before the earthworks and the siege engines are ready; and by that time the defenders will be prepared for us and there will be a relief force on its way. We cannot plan to deal with that.
>
> Moreover, we have come here with the advantage of the seasonal rain and flooding. If we delay, the water will drain away and our route will become extremely difficult. This could present a dangerous situation.
>
> Look at this city now, it cannot be very secure against us. If the army makes a fierce attack from all sides at once, we can take the place by storm. Here is the way to certain success.

Sun Quan took his advice, Gan Ning was put in charge of the scaling party and Lü Meng followed him in support. The attack began at dawn, and by breakfast-time the city was taken. Zhang Liao, Cao Cao's commander at Hefei, had learnt of the attack, and he was already on the way with a relief force when he heard that the city had fallen. He halted and went back.[52]

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set them to attract the people of that region to their government. *SGZJJ* 51/Wu 6, 2b-3a, suggests that the people of both Jiujiang and Lujiang were appealed to in this campaign. See also note 53 below.

52 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1276, and PC note 1 quoting *Wu shu.*

Lü Meng was now appointed Grand Administrator of Lujiang, but he set his headquarters at the city of Xunyang, close to the Yangzi, and Huan city was maintained only as an isolated outpost.[53]

These years of manoeuvring and campaigns had now confirmed the broad outline of the frontier. Sun Quan's forces controlled the main stream of the Yangzi from the high ground of the Dabie Shan to the sea, with military bases at Xunyang, Ruxu and Jianye. Cao Cao's people had firm control of the valley of the Huai, with an outpost at Hefei. Between them, north and west of the Yangzi, lay a region of open ground, effectively occupied by neither side, but constantly vulnerable to raiding, invasion and counter-attack.

The hills people south of the Yangzi:

Under the empire of Later Han, the commanderies of Yuzhang, Danyang, Wu and Kuaiji had between them laid claim to the whole territory of present-day Jiangxi, Zhejiang and southern Anhui and Jiangsu. In practice, however, judged by the situation of the subordinate counties, control on the ground was considerably more restricted. For the most part, the county cities lay in the open country of the Yangzi valley and estuary, and the region of the Tai Lake and Hangzhou Bay. A few settlements, such as Fuchun, the home of the Sun family, were established in valleys further inland, but for the most part the hill country from present-day Anhui southwards remained outside the authority of imperial government.[54]

This territory, marginal to the interests of the empire based upon the Yellow River basin, had been occupied during those centuries by

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53 Xunyang was a county city in the extreme south of Lujiang, close to the Yangzi and just north of present-day Jiujiang in Jiangxi.

SGZ 47/Wu 2, 1118-19, remarks that after Cao Cao's attempted withdrawal of the people in this region, "south of Hefei he held only Huan city," and Sun Quan captured that place in the following year, 214. It appears that the counties of Xiang'an and Juchao were abolished soon after Sun Yu's successful program of attraction and resettlement for the people in that region (note 51 above).

54 On the commanderies and counties of Yang province under Later Han, see *HHS* 112/22, 3485-92, *HHSJJ* 112/22, 35a-54b, and *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* II, 51-52.

two types of people: the non-Chinese original inhabitants; and small but increasing numbers of Chinese immigrants, who sought land and some freedom from government exactions beyond the effective frontiers of the empire. The historical sources refer, with varying precision, to these groups as *shanyue*, "the southern barbarians of the hills," as *shanmin*, "hills people," and sometimes, pejoratively, as *shanzei*, "hills bandits," but the difference is not always well maintained, and the distinction cannot be entirely relied upon.[55]

In this region, beyond the effective frontiers of Han, there was a three-way contest. The Chinese immigrants from the north sought to establish themselves in the territory held and defended by the non-Chinese inhabitants, and both groups were concerned to maintain their independence from the organised government of the empire. Their villages were thus established as small armed camps, frequently dominated by the members of a single clan, but the physical conflict between the new settlers and those whom they came to dispossess was ameliorated to some degree by intermarriage and exchange of customs. Unlike the contrast between farmer and herdsman along the northern frontier of the empire, the peoples of the south, Chinese and non-Chinese, had no patterns of economic difference to maintain their separate identities. Once the Chinese colonists had established a position in the wooded valleys of the hill country, their way of life, based primarily upon rice-paddy, with terraces on the hillsides and basic irrigation, was compatible with that of the non-Chinese, and these latter could also learn from and adapt to the techniques of the newcomers.

In the last years of the second century, as the government of the empire fell into disorder and civil war spread across north China, numbers of people came to take refuge in the south. We have noted the manner in which masses of displaced people, with their families,

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55 On the nature of these people, and also on the term *zong*, which I interpret as "clan," as for example in the phrase *zongmin*, see the article in Tang Changru [1955] on the foundation of the state of Sun Wu and the clan groups and Shanyue south of the Yangzi at the end of Han (pp. 3-29), criticised and discussed by He Changqun [1956B].

Other articles on this question, and on the expansion of the power of the Sun government in these territories, as discussed below, have been written by Fu Lo-ch'eng [1951] and Gao Yawei [1953].

household and farming equipment, wandered across central China and were eventually found settlement in the agricultural colonies established by Cao Cao; in similar fashion, a significant number were uprooted by the wars and troubles of Yuan Shu and Tao Qian in the region of the Huai, and came south to the Yangzi. At this time, notably in the 190s, Sun Ce was concerned primarily with military survival and expansion, so his new regime had little time to spare for the settlement and establishment of these newcomers, and in the first years of Sun Quan's government the priorities remained much the same.

Some refugees from the north moved south beyond the frontiers to seek settlement among the non-Chinese people and the earlier colonists, and their arrival in numbers sent waves of tension and instability through the region. Others travelled less far, and their masses added a complication and an opportunity for the warring leaders in the south. At the same time, even in the territories which had been under the nominal control of Han, there were numbers of local leaders, not members of the established gentry, who could seek to obtain independence and security on their own. The tendency for these people to form military alliances based upon clans is reflected in the term *zong* which is often used to refer to them, and one may imagine that while some of the floating population of refugees maintained identifiable units of their own, many individuals found it best to commit themselves to some local leader: the armies of Sun Ce and Sun Quan, and those of their opponents, were swelled by this source of recruitment.

Between 196 and 198, for example, in the western part of Danyang commandery, opposition to Sun Ce was led by Taishi Ci, who had contacts and support from the Shanyue people, and by the local clan leader Zu Lang, who also sought an alliance with the Shanyue. Later, when Sun Ce moved west into the Poyang region, he had to deal with the clans-people of Poyang, Shangliao and Haihun, who were claiming to establish their own governments, independent of the formal commandery offices. Eventually, from

those separatist movements, there were established the three commanderies of Poyang, Luling and (reduced) Yuzhang.[56]

One may observe there was a ready connection between the territory of Lujiang commandery, north of the Yangzi, and the Poyang region, south of the river and the Pengli Lake. Liu Xun in 199, persuaded by Sun Ce, had mistakenly regarded the Poyang area as a potential sphere of influence,[57] and when Cao Cao's officer Zhu Guang was attempting to establish a position as Grand Administrator at Huan city in Lujiang, he also encouraged the various groups at Poyang to cause trouble within Sun Quan's territory.[58] In this region the river and water system provided a means of transport across the Pengli Lake, and the north-south route was of comparable importance to the east-west line along the main stream of the Yangzi.

Finally on this matter, we may note the camps at Mo and Bao, situated near Jiayu in present-day Hubei, in the territory of Jiangxia commandery in Jing province. These two settlements were attacked by Zhou Yu, Sun Yu and other commanders under Sun Quan in 207, and we are told that their leaders were slain and the rest of the people, ten thousand of them or more, were brought back to the neighbourhood of the Pengli Lake. The incident has been mentioned earlier, and, regardless of the possible exaggeration of the numbers involved, it is clear that these people were considered an important resource for the Sun group in their war against Huang Zu.[59]

The references to the camps at Mo and Bao are too limited for any firm conclusions to be drawn, but it seems likely that the people

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56 The establishment of Luling commandery was formally proclaimed by Sun Ce about 196, though he did not control the territory until some years later: Chapter 3. The administrative unit, however, may already have obtained at least local recognition by that time. Poyang commandery was established by Sun Quan in 210: *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1118.

On the changes of commanderies and counties, see the table and discussion of Wu Zengjin and Yang Shoujing, and the parallel compilations of Xie Zhongying and Hong Liangji. *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* III, 27-28, presents a map of Yang province during the Three Kingdoms period; naturally enough, however, it cannot and does not show all the variations which applied from one year to the next.

57 See Chapter 3.

58 See above.

59 See Chapter 4.

were refugees from the north who had crossed the Yangzi to seek a shelter in the marsh-lands in the east of the middle Yangzi basin. From the context of the history, they were not closely attached to the regime of Huang Zu, Grand Administrator of Jiangxia under Liu Biao, and they were thus vulnerable to large-scale kidnapping by the forces of Sun Quan. In this respect, the settlement by the Pengli Lake may be seen as a local version of Cao Cao's system of agricultural colonies, established in the south without the formal administrative arrangements and care that was shown in the north.

All this activity, the attacks on Taishi Ci and Zu Lang, the involvement in the Poyang region and the seizure of the people from Mo and Bao, had taken place within the general bounds of the established empire. Soon after the conclusion of the Red Cliffs campaign, however, and the first settlement of Jing province which followed it, the government of Sun Quan embarked upon a program of expansion against territory which had lain hitherto beyond the effective control of Han.

A leading figure in this development was He Qi, a man of family from Shanyin, the capital of Kuaiji commandery. He Qi held junior, locally-appointed rank in the commandery, and gained reputation, when acting as temporary Chief of Yan county, for his firm dealing with a certain Si Cong, head of a local clan with strong contacts and support among the Shanyue. When Si Cong broke the law, He Qi arrested him and killed him, then led his own officers and loyal citizens to defeat the Si clan followers and the Shanyue in a pitched battle. He later held office in Taimo county, on the southwestern frontier of Kuaiji, and again he dealt firmly and effectively with the local people.[60]

When Sun Ce took over Kuaiji commandery in 196, He Qi joined him, and soon afterwards became Chief Commandant of the Southern Division, the territory about Dongye. Sun Ce had pursued the former Grand Administrator Wang Lang to that region, and forced his surrender. It was an isolated territory, not of vital importance, but it needed competent control. The responsibility had been given first to Han Yan, Chief of the neighbouring coastal

60 The biography of He Qi is in *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1377-88.

county of Yongning, but Han Yan was defeated and He Qi was appointed in his stead.[61]

It did not take very long for He Qi to defeat the local rebels and dissidents, and the next several years saw remarkable development. With dextrous use of intrigue, persuasion and military force, he induced the surrender of Chinese opponents and the alliance of non-Chinese peoples, and he expanded the territory under his control from the mouth of the Min River along the whole course of the stream through present-day central Fujian. By 203 He Qi had established his headquarters as Chief Commandant at the new city of Jian'an, near present-day Jianou, and by 205, after one last campaign against the local people to the north of that position, he had administration over some eight counties and, equally importantly, he had recruited an army of ten thousand men.[62] As the culmination of his advance up the Min River, in 205 He Qi attacked dissidents in the region of Shangrao county, and established the new county of Jianping to the south. Shangrao was near present-day Shangrao on the upper reaches of the Xin River in eastern Jiangxi, so He Qi had established a line of conquest and control from the sea near present-day Fuzhou inland to Yuzhang and Poyang.

In 208, probably at the end of the year after the Red Cliffs campaign, He Qi was called to the north, appointed General of the Gentlemen of the Household Who is Majestic and Firm, and sent to campaign against Yi and She counties in southern Danyang.

Yi and She counties, now close to the cities of the same name in southern Anhui, were on the upper reaches of the Xin'an Jiang, which flows into the Fuchun River in Zhejiang, south of the watershed of the Huang Shan. They were thus isolated from the main territory of Danyang commandery, and were largely under the control of clan and "bandit" groups. The groups were rather defensive than aggressive, and it seems probable that numbers of the people were recent arrivals from the north. When He Qi arrived,

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61 On Sun Ce's expedition to Dongye, see Chapter 3.

62 *SGZ* 60 Wu 15, 1377-78.

Though the region about Jian'an was controlled by a Chief Commandant, it was still part of Kuaiji commandery. A separate commandery of Jian'an was established in 260, during the reign of Sun Quan's son and second successor Sun Xiu: *SGZ* 48/Wu 3, 1159.

four new districts had been occupied and brought under government control, and he recommended immediately that a new county, Shixin, should be established east of She, on a lower reach of the Xin'an River.

From that base, He Qi attacked the hill camps of the enemy, each of them said to contain ten thousand households. With light-armed troops using iron darts as pitons, who climbed the cliffs and high walls which the defenders had relied upon, He Qi stormed the camps, killed the leaders, and brought the bulk of the people back to controlled settlement.[63] With this success, he recommended the establishment of another three new counties, and the commandery of Xindu, with He Qi as Grand Administrator, was established with capital at Shixin.

This new administration marked a major development in the integration of the territory controlled by Sun Quan. Xindu lay on a direct line between Hangzhou Bay and the Poyang region, with good access in both directions. For normal purposes, the Yangzi provided a better transport route, but He Qi at Xindu was able to intervene swiftly and effectively against disturbance or rebellion to the east or west. In 211, he put down a clan group rising in Yuhang county west of present-day Hangzhou, and a new county, Linshui, was established in that region. Two years later, there was a rebellion in Yuzhang commandery, and He Qi attacked the dissidents and pacified them.

In both cases, the formal references to rebellion and pacification conceal the reality of the situation, that this was government

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63 *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1379 PC note 1 quoting the *Baopuzi* book of Ge Hong of the fourth century, tells a story of this campaign. The hills people obtained the services of a sorcerer expert in *jin* "preventive" magic, who cast a spell which made the swords of He Qi's troops lose their cutting effectiveness, and their arrows turn back against them in mid-flight. After some thought, however, He Qi remarked, "I have heard that a cutting edge of metal can be 'prevented' and the poison from a snake can be 'prevented.' However, a thing which has no edge, and a snake which is not poisonous, cannot be affected by these spells. So the magic which is now working against us will become useless if our weapons have no edges."

He therefore had his men cut down trees to make cudgels, and sent a storming party up the slopes with these weapons. The defensive magic was now quite ineffective, and the enemy were utterly defeated.

aggression. There may have been some provocation, but the first crime of these people was that they wanted to be left alone. In the case of the Yuzhang group, we are told specifically that He Qi, having executed the ringleaders, chose the best troops for his army and settled the weaker ones by households among the counties: they were, in other words, brought under close control of the local administration.[64]

Three years later again, in 216, a certain You Tu of Poyang, leader of a band of local people, was sent a seal and ribbon from Cao Cao's government and encouraged to raise a rebellion. He was able to cause trouble and gain support in his own territory, and also in the neighbouring part of Danyang commandery.[65] He Qi and the commander Lu Xun attacked him, You Tu was killed, the rebels surrendered, and the government obtained eight thousand good soldiers.

In 215, He Qi had accompanied Sun Quan to an abortive attack on Hefei and, apart from the short campaign against You Tu, he remained thereafter on the Yangzi frontier. He played an important role in the defence of that region, but it was his achievements in the new territories to the south that proved critical for the development of the state, for the firm control established south of the Huang Shan range became the basis for future expansion.

Other commanders of the Sun group were similarly involved in the expansion of territory and the control of formerly independent peoples, though none at this time operated on such a broad scale as He Qi. Huang Gai, hero of the Red Cliffs victory, appears to have become a specialist in this military and administrative technique: according to his biography,[66]

> Where the Shanyue refused to submit, or where there were counties troubled by bandits, Huang Gai would be appointed as magistrate.....

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64 *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1379, where the phrase used is *xianhu* "counties and households." See also note 78 below.

65 It seems likely that the rebellion of You Tu had been instigated by Cao Cao's Grand Administrator of Lujiang, Zhu Guang: see above.

66 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1284-85; the biography of Huang Gai.

> Altogether he held office in nine counties, and wherever he went the places were pacified and settled. Later he was transferred to be Chief Commandant of Danyang. He held the powerful in check and gave help to the weak. The Shanyue admired him and turned to him.

In similar fashion, Han Dang, Zhou Tai and Lü Meng were involved in the control of the Shanyue in the Poyang region;[67] Zhu Huan was engaged in campaigns in both Poyang and Danyang;[68] and Xu Sheng pressed south into the hills from Wuhu county in Danyang.[69] Zhu Zhi, long-term Grand Administrator of Wu commandery, stayed specifically at the frontier city of Guzhang for a year in order to supervise the settlement of the people in that region,[70] and about 211 Zhu Zhi's adopted son, Zhu Ran, who had become a personal friend of Sun Quan, was given control of a new commandery named Linchuan, probably on the borders of western Danyang and eastern Poyang, to deal with the hills people immediately to the south of the Yangzi.[71] Again, between 226 and

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67 *e.g. SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1116.

68 *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1312; the biography of Zhu Huan.

69 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1298; the biography of Xu Sheng.

70 *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1305; the biography of Zhu Zhi.

71 *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1305; the biography of Zhu Ran.

Zhu Ran was a nephew, son of an elder sister, to Zhu Zhi. His father's surname was Shi. When the boy was thirteen, about the time Sun Ce first came to the south of Yangzi, Zhu Zhi had no children, and he asked Sun Ce to recognise Ran as his successor. Zhu Zhi, of course, was a most valued ally of Sun Ce in Wu commandery, so Sun Ce showed Ran every courtesy, and Ran and Sun Quan received schooling together.

The main text of *SGZ* 56 says that Linchuan was divided off from Danyang commandery, and Zhu Ran was made Grand Administrator. The commentary of Pei Songzhi, at 1306 PC note 1, says that the commandery was soon afterwards abolished, and it was not the same as the commandery called Linchuan in Pei Songzhi's own day, the early fifth century. There was a Linchuan commandery established some years later, in 257, from the eastern part of Yuzhang commandery; this appears to have occupied the territory south of the present-day Poyang Lake, and it was maintained through the Jin dynasties and into the fifth century: *e.g. SGZ* 58/Wu 3, 1153; *JS* 15, 462; *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* III, 27-28 and 55-56; IV, 5-6 and 17-18. This must be the one referred to by Pei Songzhi.

It is not possible to determine which counties were allocated to the earlier commandery of Linchuan. It was presumably set up as an administrative device

228, the temporary commandery of Dongan was established about Fuchun, and the Grand Administrator Quan Zong attacked the Shanyue in that region.[72]

In the enterprise of conquest and recruitment among the people of the margins, however, the chief successor to He Qi appears to have been Lu Xun, his colleague in the attack on the renegade You Tu of Poyang in 216.

Lu Xun was a man of distinguished family in Wu commandery. He was the great-nephew of Lu Kang, that Grand Administrator of Lujiang who had been attacked by Sun Ce on the orders of Yuan Shu in 194. At the time of the attack, Lu Kang recognised the danger and sent his family back to their home estates. His territory of Lujiang was seized by Sun Ce, and he himself eventually fell into the hands of Yuan Shu, where he died soon afterwards of illness. Despite this history, Lu Kang's son Lu Ji and Lu Xun's younger brother Lu Mao both became respected officials of Sun Quan's court, and Lu Xun was one of Sun Quan's leading military commanders and later regent of the state of Wu.[73]

When Sun Ce came to take over Wu commandery, it appears that the Lu family, very wisely, had made no move for either side. After

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for keeping a closer control of a troublesome region, and was abolished, possibly about 230, when the need had passed. See *SGZJJ* 56/Wu 11, 4b, and *SGZJJ* 60/Wu 15, 20a, citing Wu and Yang, at 2944, also Xie and Hong.

72 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1133 and PC note 1, and 1134.

73 The biography of Lu Xun is in *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1343-54; that of Lu Ji is in *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1328-29, and the biography of Lu Xun's younger brother Lu Mao is in *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1336-38.

The *Lushi shisong*, a clan record, quoted in *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1343 PC note 1, says that Lu Xun's grandfather Yu had risen to the post of Colonel of the City Gates at Luoyang, and his father Jun was Chief Commandant of Jiujiang before his early death. The main text says that Lu Xun was orphaned when he was young, and he then went to the household of his great-uncle Lu Kang, the Grand Administrator of Lujiang later attacked and overthrown by Sun Ce acting for Yuan Shu: Chapter 3.

The earliest recorded connection between the families is the incident about 188, when Sun Jian was Grand Administrator of Changsha and went to the support of a nephew of Lu Kang who was Chief of Yichun county in Yuzhang: Chapter 2 Curiously, given the later importance of the family, there is no record of the personal name of this official, but it is possible that he was Lu Jun, the father of Lu Xun.

Sun Ce's death, however, Lu Xun, then aged twenty-one and thus a little older than Sun Quan, came to court and was appointed to a series of staff and clerical positions. He was then sent out as Chief Commandant of the Agricultural Colonies at Haichang, acting at the same time as magistrate of the county. Haichang appears to have been a new administrative unit in Wu commandery, and the arrangement of agricultural colonies in this region was evidently intended to provide a centre for new settlement; it was not the same aggressive development as that of Cao Cao and Liu Fu in the valley of the Huai.

Haichang was on the northern shore of Hangzhou Bay,[74] and Lu Xun obtained his first military experience in an expedition against the hills people on the southern borders of Kuaiji. He led a force of levies under his own command against the bandit Pan Lin, captured the leader and settled his people, and Lu Xun's followers, with the new recruits, now numbered more than two thousand. From this local appointment, Lu Xun was sent with He Qi against the rebels in Poyang in 216, and he was then appointed to a colonel's command, with quarters on the Yangzi near the capital Jianye.

At this time, Sun Quan gave his niece, the daughter of Sun Ce, as wife to Lu Xun. The young woman cannot have been the daughter of Sun Ce by his formal wife the Lady Qiao, but she must have been the child of a recognised and respectable concubine.[75] When she was married, she was a little less than twenty, and her husband, recognised as the senior male representative of the Lu clan, was about thirty-five. The arrangement was not grossly incongruous in terms of age, it confirmed the attachment of the Lu clan to the Sun,

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74 The *Lushi zitang xiangzan*, evidently a collection of inscriptions from the clan temple, quoted in *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1343 note 1 *bis*, says that Haichang was later named Yanguan. *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* III, 27-28 and 55-56, shows the county of Yanguan on the northern shore of Hangzhou Bay, close to present-day Hangzhou.

75 At the time Sun Ce died, he had been married to the Lady Qiao for less than a year, and it is probable that his son Sun Shao was the only child of that marriage.

Lu Bi, in *SGZJJ* 46/Wu 1, 36a-b, notes that three daughters of Sun Ce are recorded as being given in marriage: to Lu Xun, to Gu Shao and to Zhu Ji: note 3 to Chapter 4.

and it established their fortunes in the developing regional structure of political power.

From this new position, Lu Xun's first policy was to emphasise the importance of the program of expansion against the hills people. In a formal statement of opinion, he argued,[76]

> At this time that all the brave men and heroes are fighting for power, and they look out over the empire like wolves that seek their prey. Without great hosts of men, it will be impossible to defeat your enemies and settle the disorders.
>
> In these circumstances we should consider the rebels of the hill country, who have long been a nuisance to us. They rely upon the natural difficulty of the terrain, and until these heart-lands of our country are at peace we can make no proper plans for action at a distance. We must force a settlement upon them, and take their men as soldiers.

We are told that Sun Quan accepted the argument, and Lu Xun was appointed Chief Controller on the Right, directly under headquarters command, to establish such a program. In fact, of course, He Qi and others had already put such operations into practice, for the last ten years and more, but it was intended that Lu Xun should revive the campaign and press it further.

About this time, another rebel, Fei Zhan, in Danyang commandery, received insignia from Cao Cao and made an alliance with the Shanyue. Lu Xun was put in sole charge of the operations, he attacked Fei Zhan and destroyed his forces, and he followed this success with a sweep though the border territories of Danyang, Wu and Kuaiji; the able-bodied men were conscripted for the army, and the rest of the people were brought into settlements. At the conclusion of the operations, he came back to set his headquarters at Wuhu in Danyang, the same base as had been used earlier by Xu Sheng.

One can, in Yang province, distinguish different regions of expansion, with varying military and administrative techniques applied to each of them. In the east, along the coast, the officers of Sun Quan pressed steadily against the hills people on the edges of their territory in Kuaiji and Wu commanderies. Southeast, in the

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76 *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1343-44.

area of present-day Fujian, He Qi, and his associates Jiang Qin and Lü Dai, advanced up the valleys of the Min River complex, and established county seats in regions which had never been under Chinese control.[77] South from Wuhu in Danyang, there was a useful route into the hills of the Huang Shan range along the line of the present road and railway, so Wuhu was a headquarters for operations against the Shanyue, used by Xu Sheng, Lu Xun and probably also by Zhu Ran. Further west, in the Poyang region, the marsh-lands and hill country provided a refuge for Chinese and non-Chinese, but it was refuge which was constantly under pressure of invasion, forced recruitment and settlement from the forces of Sun Quan. Finally, in the south of the established territories, the new commandery of Xindu represented a major advance and consolidation of controlled territory and people into regions which Chinese governments had not occupied effectively before.

This program of expansion by regular Chinese power, under the government of Sun Quan, against the Chinese and non-Chinese people beyond the frontiers continued for many years, but the rationale and the techniques were established at this time. Repeatedly, the achievements of the various campaigns are described in terms of able-bodied men conscripted as soldiers, and other people settled under control, while the phrase *xianhu*, "county households" appears to have indicated a system of forced settlement comparable to that of the agricultural colonies organised by Cao Cao in the north.[78]

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77 The biography of Jiang Qin is in *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1286-87, and that of Lü Dai is in *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1383-87. Both men were involved in campaigns in the valley of the Min River, after the transfer of He Qi to the region of the new commandery of Xindu, and Jiang Qin later served with He Qi in the Xindu campaigns.

78 Thus, for example, we have seen how He Qi settled the people of Yuzhang in 213 (note 64 above), and Lu Xun, after his campaign against Fei Zhan in Danyang, brought families back "to fill up household settlements" (*bu hu*): *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1344.

In these and similar contexts, the references to counties (*xian*) and households (*hu*) is best interpreted as the settlement of people in Chinese-style colonised farmland, under the effective control of local administrative offices. Unlike the *tuntian* system of Cao Cao, of which there were evidently some experimental

Unlike Cao Cao's agricultural colonies, moreover, the methods of Sun Quan's government were not designed, even at face value, to provide secure land tenure for displaced wanderers and refugees. The policy was either to take over established settlements of the hills peoples, with appropriate government levies of taxation, corvee labour and military service, or, one stage further, to bring the people of the hills by force into land where they could be held under administrative control. Agricultural colonies, such as that which was established under Lu Xun at Haichang, were marginal to the main program of expansion inland: it was not a matter of matching the people to the land, but rather the forcible seizure of people who had once been independent.

Ultimately, the survival of the state would depend upon geographical isolation and advantage, and the numbers of the people that could be mobilised for defence against the north. In 210, after the success of the Red Cliffs and the division of Jing province with Liu Bei, Sun Quan controlled the equivalent of one province of the old empire, and the population of his territory, in terms of the Later Han census figures compiled some seventy years earlier, was about four million. In comparison, the population of the provinces controlled by Cao Cao, from Luoyang east across the North China plain, could be estimated at seven times that figure.[79] For long term survival, it was essential to expand the base of population, and the government had early embarked upon that policy. Behind the

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establishments in the territory of Sun Quan, it does not appear that settlements by *xian* and *hu* entailed any particular variation from the traditional system of Han.

79 These figures are based upon records preserved in the Treatise of Administrative Geography, *HHS* 109/19-113/23: the account of Yang province appears in *HHS* 112/22, 3485-92. The date of the census list is given by *HHS* 109/19, 3389, as equivalent to 140 AD for the capital commandery of Henan, and the figures, itemised by households and individuals for each commandery, relate generally to that time.

At the end of Han, it was sometimes claimed that the population of the whole empire had fallen to only a fraction of the former numbers. The greater part of this apparent loss, however, was a rather a failure of registration than actual mortality. War, famine and migration had their effect upon great numbers of individuals and families, but the twenty years of disturbances cannot be held to have made a critical, sudden difference to the general pattern of settlement and colonisation in China as a whole.

defence line in the north, and the military and diplomatic manoeuvres which took place in Jing province to the west, the expansion and administrative colonisation of the vulnerable lands and peoples to the south was maintained as a high priority. Sun Quan and his officers were recruiting men in the south of their territory for action in defence of the north and development in the west; and the success of this enterprise would prove of major importance for the future of the new state and for the history of China as a whole.

The far south:

During the twenty years of civil war since the time Dong Zhuo seized power, the territory of Jiao province had remained isolated and largely unaffected. This region, which extended over present-day Guangdong and Guangxi together with the northern part of Vietnam, was of minimal interest to the contending warlords of central China. After Sun Jian took his army north from Changsha to join Yuan Shu in 190, except for the brief independence of the Grand Administrator Zhang Xian about 200,[80] there had been no significant local leader in the basin of the Xiang River, the region of present-day Hunan, and that territory had generally been dominated by the stronger power which controlled the northern part of Jing province. Though there were occasional attempts by one northern commander or another to maintain a presence in the further south, the distance and the difficulties of the terrain across the Nan Ling ranges made it possible for Jiao province to establish a political entity of its own.

On this basis, early in the 190s, the local leader Shi Xie, based upon Jiaozhi commandery in the Red River delta, established authority over the whole of the region.[81]

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80 On Zhang Xian's rebellion against Liu Biao in the late 190s, see Chapter 4 at note 47.

81 The biography of Shi Xie is in *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1191-94. His career is discussed in detail by Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 70-80, and Holmgren, *Colonisation*, 72-77.

According to the biography of Shi Xie, his family came originally from the state of Lu in north China, but migrated to the south in the time of Wang Mang, and took up residence in Guangxin county, capital of Cangwu commandery, near present-day Wuzhou to the northwest of Guangzhou. Cangwu occupied an important position on the West River, the main inland communications of the province, and controlled the chief trading route to the north by way of the Ling Qu canal. The Shi family prospered there. In the time of Emperor Huan, who reigned from 146 to 167, Shi Xie's father, Shi Ci, became Grand Administrator of Rinan, in the far south. Strictly speaking, the appointment was improper, for the head of a commandery under Han should not have held office in his native province,[82] but the appointment may reflect both the local importance of the Shi clan and the comparative lack of official concern for these niceties on the fringes of the empire.

Shi Xie was born in 137,[83] and he travelled to the capital, Luoyang, where he studied the Confucian classics *Spring and Autumn Annals* and *Zuo Chronicle*. He was then recommended by his local commandery as "Filially Pious and Incorrupt," and he held office as a Gentleman of the Masters of Writing in the imperial secretariat, a post which required some scholarly capacity. He later resigned and returned home, but after the death of his father he was again nominated, as "Flourishing Talent," by the provincial government. The higher grade of recommendation gave Shi Xie the right to immediate appointment in the government, and he became Prefect of Wu county in Nan commandery in Jing province, on the Yangzi by present-day Wushan in Sichuan, in the region of the gorges. He was then transferred to become Grand Administrator of Jiaozhi, again in his own province.

Ding Gong, Inspector of Jiao province in the early 180s, was evidently impressed and influenced by the Shi family, for when he was appointed Minister over the Masses in 188 he summoned Shi Xie's brother, Shi Yi, to join him at Luoyang. Ding Gong, however, left office soon afterwards, and although Shi Yi was well received,

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82 See Yen Keng-wang [1961], 348-350, and his more detailed article of 1950.

83 *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1193, says that Shi Xie died in 226 at the age of 90 *sui.*

he found it prudent to return home when the troubles broke out and Dong Zhuo came to power in 189.

As we have observed, there had been a number of rebellions in the south during the second century of Later Han, and there is a general record of disturbance during the reign of Emperor Ling, much of it through the extortion and corruption of the imperial officials appointed as grand administrators and inspectors.[84] In 181 the Inspector Zhu Jun, later patron of Sun Jian, had put down a rebellion in Jiaozhi, but in 184 there was further disturbance. The Inspector Jia Zong restored order by his lenient government, and he made a point of appointing local men as heads of county administrations.[85]

It was probably under the influence of Jia Long's policy that Shi Xie received appointment to the important position of Grand Administrator of Jiaozhi. His father had held equivalent position in Rinan, but that was on the edge of the empire, while Jiaozhi, on the Red River delta, dominated the western part of the province. Elsewhere, the region was in almost constant disturbance.[86]

The headquarters of the Inspector were in the east at Panyu county, capital of Nanhai commandery, present-day Guangzhou, but some time in the 190s, the Inspector Zhu Fu, probably a relative of Zhu Jun, was killed by local non-Chinese people,[87] and Shi Xie had

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84 See Chapter 1 and Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 64-70.

An important text on the history of the south at this time was compiled by Xie Zong, whose family had taken refuge in the south from the civil war, and who later held office as grand administrator for Wu in the time of Lü Dai (Chapter 7). When Lü Dai left the south in 231 Xie Zong, concerned at the need for effective government in the region, sent in a long memorial summarising the recent history of the territory and pointing out the need for firm and honest administration. The text of the memorial is preserved in the biography of Xie Zong, *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1251-53.

85 The biography of Jia Zong is in *HHS* 31/21, 1111-12. His achievement and his policies are discussed by Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 68-69.

86 The memorial of Xie Zong, at *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1252, tells how the Grand Administrator of Rinan, a man from Nanhai, had one of his senior officers flogged to death and was driven away from the territory; and the Grand Administrator of Jiuzhen was killed by a local mutiny brought on through a similar fit of ill temper.

87 The memorial of Xie Zong, at *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1252, says that Zhu Fu was a man from Kuaiji, the same commandery as Zhu Jun. Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 71,

opportunity to take control over the whole province. Keeping his own position as Grand Administrator of Jiaozhi, he went through the formality of nominating Shi Yi as Grand Administrator of Hepu, his next brother Shi Wei as Grand Administrator of Jiuzhen, and the fourth brother, Shi Wu, as Grand Administrator of Nanhai. Of the three remaining commanderies in the province, Cangwu was the home country of the Shi family, and Rinan must have been influenced by former subordinates of Shi Ci. Yulin commandery, in the hill country on the border between present-day Guangdong and Guangxi, does not appear to have caused any difficulty to the hegemony of Shi Xie.

For some years after the death of Zhu Fu, Shi Xie remained in undisputed control of the southern territory, and the region became, like Jing province to the north, a place of refuge for emigres from the warfare of central China. Longbian, Shi Xie's capital, on the Red River delta near present-day Hanoi, was a major trading centre, Shi Xie was admired for his authority and his scholarship, and the splendour of his court was celebrated:[88]

> Shi Xie and his brothers all governed commanderies, and they were lords over a whole province. For ten thousand *li* around, they had no superiors in rank and authority.

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says that he was Zhu Jun's son, but there is no such statement in the early Chinese sources. Taylor describes Zhu Fu as the patron of upper-class refugees escaping the depredations of the Yellow Turban rebels in the north, and presumably the other disturbances of the civil war. This may well be, but according to Xie Zong the basic cause of Zhu Fu's downfall was the exploitation of the people by the local officials he had appointed.

88 On Longbian, capital of Jiaozhi commandery, and thus of Shi Xie's government, as a centre for overseas trade in Later Han, see Yü, *Trade and Expansion*, 178-179.

The passage translated below comes from *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1192, and is translated also by Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 73-74. The biography, at 1191-92, also cites a letter from the scholar Yuan Hui, writing to the Prefect of the Masters of Writing Xun Yu, and praising not only the government but also the scholarship of Shi Xie.

Yuan Hui is described as a man from Chen state, in present-day Henan; there is no further account of him in the histories. Xun Yu was a member of a celebrated scholarly clan from the neighbouring Yingchuan commandery, who became a leading adviser of Cao Cao; his biography is in *SGZ* 10, 307-19. He was acting as Prefect of the Masters of Writing in the Han government from the time the Emperor came into Cao Cao's hands in 196 until his death in 212.

> When they came out or went in, there was the sound of chiming stones, their equipage had majesty and ceremony, flutes were blown and drums were beaten, while the horsemen and carriages filled the roads. There were always dozens of foreigners burning incense by the hubs of the wheels.[89]
>
> Their wives and concubines rode in covered coaches, and their sons and junior relatives followed the soldiers on horseback.
>
> They had the greatest honour at that time, and they caused the barbarians to submit for very fear. The Commandant [Zhao] Tuo had been no greater.[90]

Shi Xie, by the transcribed name of Si Nhiêp, is still honoured in Vietnamese national history as King Si.[91]

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89 The phrase *huren*, here rendered as "foreigners," commonly indicates "non-Chinese peoples of the north." In this instance it may best be understood as a description of people from the direction of India, to whom the term *hu* was sometimes applied since the first contact with those people came along the trade-routes of central Asia, roughly speaking from the north. See, for example, Lao Kan [1947] 90, and Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest* I, 51, and II, 336-337 note 148, also I, 290-292 and ff.

This passage has been discussed by many scholars, from different points of view with varying interpretations. Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest* II, 336-337 note 148, accepts the argument that these incense-burning foreigners may have been Buddhist monks from India or central Asia, enlisted for the occasion, though he does not agree with the further proposal of Fukui, *Research*, 109-110, that the procession itself was Buddhist. Yü, *Trade and Expansion*, 178, interprets the text as meaning that "the streets of Tonkin were filled with barbarians:" this may have been the case, but it is not a precise translation; the context shows clearly that the foreigners were specifically associated with the panoply of a formal procession.

Yü Ying-shih, therefore, together with Lao Kan, and also Tran Van Giap, "Bouddhisme en Annam," 216-220, uses this passage as evidence for sea trade with Southeast Asia and beyond. This seems the more probable route for the foreigners to come, though there is evidence that Shi Xie had contact, through present-day Yunnan, with the west and northwest of China proper: note 101 below.

Holmgren, *Colonisation*, 75-76, interprets the accompaniment of foreigners and their incense as evidence of the influence of Hindu and Buddhist practices upon the court of Shi Xie. As Zürcher remarks, there is nothing to show that this is specifically a Buddhist procession, but it does demonstrate the use of related rituals to enhance the splendour of Shi Xie's ceremonial, and it seems likely that there was a significant colony of resident or visiting foreigners to support and appreciate the performance.

90 On Zhao Tuo, see Chapter 1.

For a considerable time, the leaders in the north had other things to occupy them. Liu Biao, Governor of Jing province, was naturally interested in the lands across his southern border, but the separatist activities of Zhang Xian had acted as buffer to protect the position of the Shi family further south, and Liu Biao was concerned rather with the north than with the distant south.

In similar fashion, Sun Ce and his rivals in the lower Yangzi had no opportunity to consider action at such a distance. Sun Ce had indeed sailed to the mouth of the Min River, and there had long been communication and trade along the south-eastern coast,[92] but there was no possibility of significant political contact or control by the sea route. Later, Sun Ce's cousin Sun Fu, operating in the valley of the Gan River south of Poyang, was given title as Inspector of Jiao province, but this was rather a general threat than a serious claim,[93] and no move was made to follow it up.

The early death of Shi Wu, however, Shi Xie's youngest brother who had been made Grand Administrator of Nanhai, appears to have reduced the control of the family in that region, and provided an opportunity for outside forces to intervene. At any rate, some time after 200 the court of Han, under the control of Cao Cao, sent Zhang Jin to act as Inspector of Jiao province.

Zhang Jin does not appear to have come into conflict with Shi Xie, but he was concerned with the potential threat from Liu Biao, and he sought to build up a local military force of his own. In this he was unsuccessful, and about 203 or 204 he was killed, either by non-Chinese people or by a mutiny among his own troops. We are told Zhang Jin had attempted to maintain his authority with Taoist rituals, and in the isolated circumstances on which he was operating,

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91 Schafer, *Vermilion Bird*, 99.

92 On Sun Ce's voyage to Dongye and Houguan, at the mouth of the Min River, and the operations of He Qi on his behalf thereafter, see Chapter 2.

The *Shenxian zhuan*, "Chronicle of Spirits and Immortals," by Ge Hong of the late third and early fourth century AD, quoted in *SGZ*49/Wu 4, 1192 PC note 1, tells how Shi Xie was cured of a mortal sickness by the adept Dong Feng from Houguan. This serves at least as evidence of continuing contact, which we would expect, along the southeastern coast of China at the time.

93 See Chapters 1 and 4.

he would have needed very strong magic to survive.[94] [recheck ref in note 90 to Ch 3]

Soon after the death of Zhang Jin, Liu Biao took a hand in the affairs of the south, sending Lai Gong of Lingling commandery to become Inspector, and Wu Qu of Changsha as Grand Administrator of Cangwu.[95] Cao Cao, however, allied himself with Shi Xie, recognising him as Grand Administrator of Jiaozhi, and also appointing him General of the Gentlemen of the Household Who Comforts the South, with authority over all seven commanderies. Shi Xie, in turn, made a point of sending tribute offerings from the province to the court at Xu city, and this show of loyalty was rewarded with promotion to the rank of general, and enfeoffment as a marquis. It does not appear, however, that Shi Xie in the west or Liu Biao's people in the east of the province took any action against one another at this time.

The quick succession of events in 208, from the death of Liu Biao to the conquest by Cao Cao and then his defeat at the Red Cliffs, brought a measure of confusion and change also to the south. Wu Qu

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94 According to *JS* 15, 464-65, Zhang Jin was first appointed as Inspector, but was then given the higher rank and title of Governor, presumably in an attempt to enhance his local authority. It seems this was the first time the territory had been given the formal status of a province: note 58 to Chapter 1.

The record of Zhang Jin has been discussed in relationship to the quarrel of Sun Ce with the supporters of Gan Ji: Chapter 3 at note 90. The earliest reference to him is in *SGZ* 6, 189 PC note 1 quoting the *Xu Han shu* of Sima Biao, where he is described as a client of Yuan Shao who sought to persuade He Jin to massacre the eunuchs in 189 (*cf.* Chapter 2). *SGZ* 38/Shu 8, 965, has a passing reference to one Zhang Ziyun in a letter written by Xu Jing to Cao Cao, and at 966 note 3 the commentary of Pei Songzhi remarks that Ziyun was the style of Zhang Jin, who was a man from Nanyang, and whose story is told in more detail in the Wu section of *SGZ.*

Zhang Jin is mentioned in *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1192, and again in the memorial of Xie Zong, *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1252. See also Holmgren, *Colonisation*, 72-77, and Taylor, *Birth of Vietnam*, 71-72.

95 Apart from the death of Zhang Jin, there had also been a vacancy created for the position of Grand Administrator of Cangwu due to the death of the incumbent Shi Huang.

Shi Huang, whose surname was not the same as that of Shi Xie and his relatives, is not referred to elsewhere. We may assume that he was tolerant of Shi Xie's overall authority, and was perhaps an ally and associate.

raised troops to attack his former associate Lai Gong, and Lai Gong fled back to Jing province. Wu Qu then asked for support from Sun Quan, probably intending to use the alliance as a means to become independent. Sun Quan, however, sent Bu Zhi, recently the Grand Administrator of Poyang commandery, to take up the post of Inspector.[96]

Bu Zhi was a man of scholarly family from Xiapi commandery of Later Han, who had come south during the disorders in Xu province. He had lost all his property, but he then joined the staff of Sun Quan, and for the next several years, with the exception of a brief stint as Chief of Haiyan county in Wu commandery, he held secretarial and administrative positions at headquarters. In 210 he was appointed Grand Administrator of Poyang, and after only a few months in that post he was transferred to be Inspector of Jiao province, with supplementary appointment as General of the Gentlemen of the Household Who Maintains Firmness, and command of a thousand archers.

There is little in his record up to that time to indicate that Bu Zhi was a man of action, and it seems in some respects a strange appointment. On the other hand, such a civilian official would be in a fair position to deal with the Shi clan, and when action was required Bu Zhi was certainly energetic and competent. Soon after his arrival, with suspicions, however justified, that Wu Qu was undecided in his loyalty, he invited him to a conference, then arrested him and had him executed.

With this show of force, and subsequent victory in a skirmish against local forces at the Gaoyao narrows of the West River, Bu Zhi established his position in Nanhai and Cangwu,[97] and he not only took over the troops lately commanded by Wu Qu, but also collected units which had earlier served Zhang Jin. For their part, Shi Xie and his brothers offered formal recognition to Bu Zhi as Inspector of the province as a whole, although it does not appear that Bu Zhi made any attempt to exert an oppressive authority.

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96 The biography of Bu Zhi is in *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1236-42

97 There is a more detailed account of Bu Zhi's entry into the province in *SJZ* 37, 1176-79, where the personal name of Wu Qu appears as Chen. Gaoyao is some seventy-five kilometres west of present-day Guangzhou.

The core of the Shi family power was in the Red River basin, about present-day Hanoi, with some interest in the region of the Leizhou peninsula and Hainan island. Though we have been told how the power and prosperity of Shi Xie rivalled that of Zhao Tuo in the past, and he had at one time sought to control Nanhai commandery through the appointment of his brother Shi Wu as Grand Administrator, he was now content to leave that eastern region alone, and there is no sign that he sought to establish a real independence. On the contrary, about 217 Shi Xie sent his son Shi Xin as hostage to Sun Quan. Shi Xin was made Grand Administrator of the new capital commandery of Wuchang in the middle Yangzi,[98] while Shi Xie was given the title General of the Guards and renewed enfeoffment as a marquis, and his brother Shi Yi was also honoured.

It was at this time, moreover, that the local leader Yong Kai of Yizhou commandery in Yi province, about present-day Kunming in Yunnan, who had embarked on a rebellion against the new regime of Liu Bei at Chengdu, sent messengers to make contact with Shi Xie.[99] Shi Xie passed the communication across to Bu Zhi, and for the next several years Yong Kai and his associates were maintained as agents of Sun Quan in the southern part of Yi province.

In all this, one is struck by the comparatively limited ambition and enterprise of Shi Xie. From his high point of power, controlling the whole of Jiao province, he had tolerated and allowed the incursion of alien inspectors and grand administrators in the Nanhai-Cangwu region, and he had accepted not only the distant recognition of Cao Cao but also the more immediate authority of Bu Zhi and the court of Sun Quan. One might imagine that he could have manipulated the overtures of Yong Kai in such a way as to confirm his own autonomy, and seek to establish a semi-independent confederation of local groups across the whole of the south. None of this, however, took place, and he certainly made no effective effort to emulate the political achievement of Zhao Tuo and the state of Nan-Yue in the second century BC.

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98 On the establishment of Sun Quan's capital at Wuchang, see Chapter 7.

99 On the take-over of Yi province by Liu Bei, see Chapter 6; on the later history of Yong Kai, see Chapter 8.

Some of the explanation may lie simply in the fact that Shi Xie was now an old man, in his late seventies and early eighties. He appears to have continued an undisputed authority as head of the clan, and his very presence prevented energetic junior members from taking initiatives of their own. Furthermore, though his power was dominant in the region, there were certainly non-Chinese and very likely Chinese groups that were potential sources of trouble, and the authority of the Shi group may have benefited from the threat of great and powerful friends in the north. Whichever of these reasons may have applied, Shi Xie either would not or could not establish a long-term base of independent authority; and other members of his family would later regret that failure.

For the time being, however, during ten years of Bu Zhi's appointment, the south was largely at peace, and Shi Xie, under the guise of tribute, maintained a prosperous official trade with Sun Quan. Every year he would send an embassy, with a catalogue of gifts, many obtained by overseas trade: incense and fine cloth, pearls and great cowrie shells, ornamental glass,[100] kingfisher feathers, tortoise-shell, ivory and rhinoceros horn, and fruits such as bananas, coconuts, *longan* "dragon-eyes" and lichees. Shi Yi in Hepu also sent horses, presumably obtained by overland trade.[101] Sun Quan

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100 On the phrase *liuli* as referring to ornamental coloured glass, see Yü, *Trade and Expansion*, 198, Schafer, *Golden Peaches*, 235-237, and Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:1, 104-105. Glass appears to have been one of the chief Chinese imports from the Roman empire: *HHS* 88/78, 2919, refers to *liuli* as a product of Daqin, and *Wei lue*, in *SGZ* 30, 861 PC, lists several different varieties.It arrived in the east both by land across central Asia and by the sea route to south China.

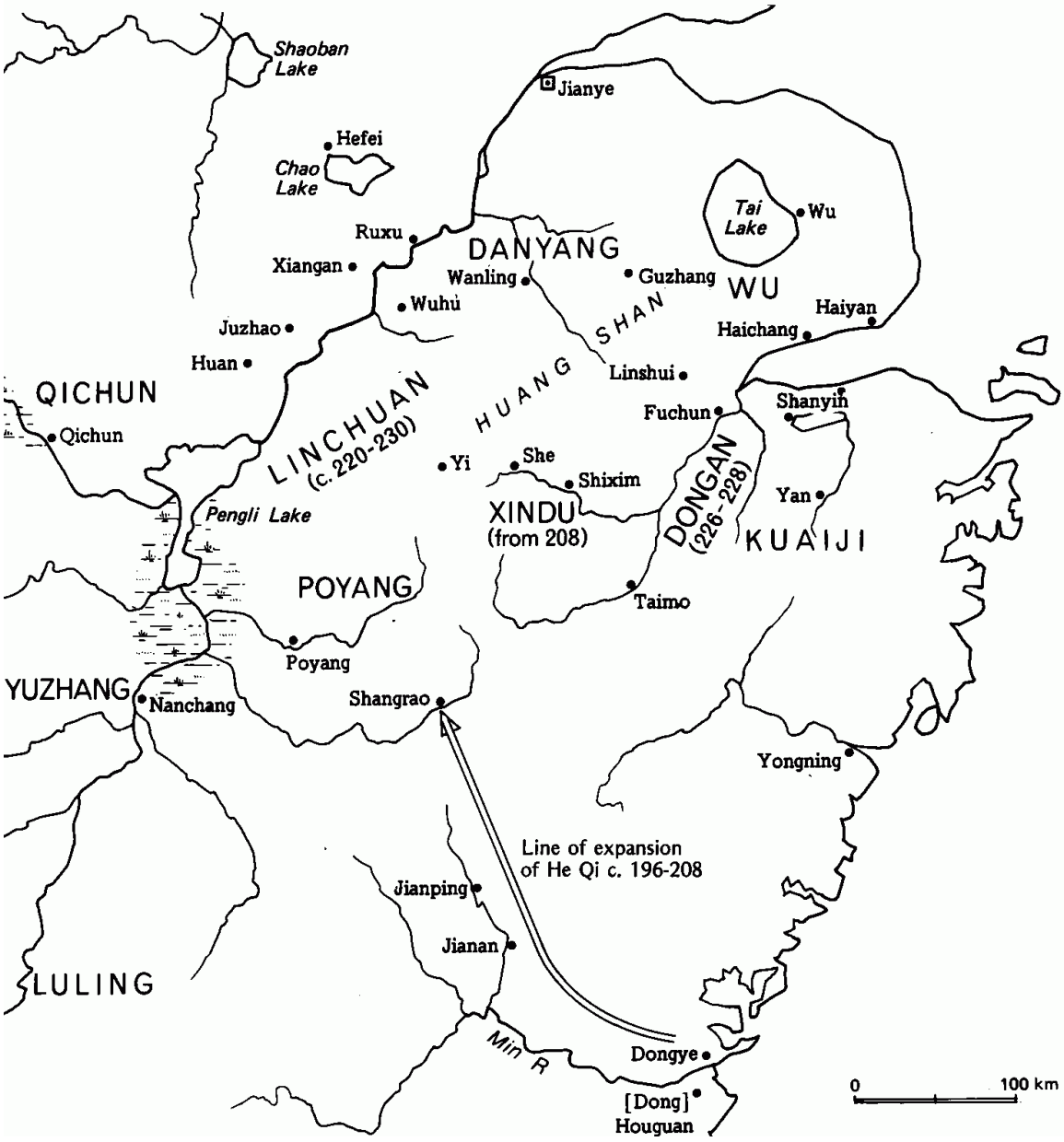
101 Since we know that Shi Xie had contact with Yong Kai and his associates in the region of present-day Yunnan, it seems likely that these horses came from the west of China. In 112 the Later Han government established horse pastures in Yuexi, Yizhou and Jianwei commanderies, all in the region of present-day Sichuan and Yunnan: *HHS* 5, 218, and de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 486 note 62.

There was, however, also at this time a trade in horses of the Yuezhi by the sea route from India to southeast Asia, and it is just possible that some animals, of the better stock, came by this round-about way. See Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 449, citing the now fragmentary work *Wu shi waiguo zhuan* of Kang Tai, written about 260 (note 38 to Chapter 8).

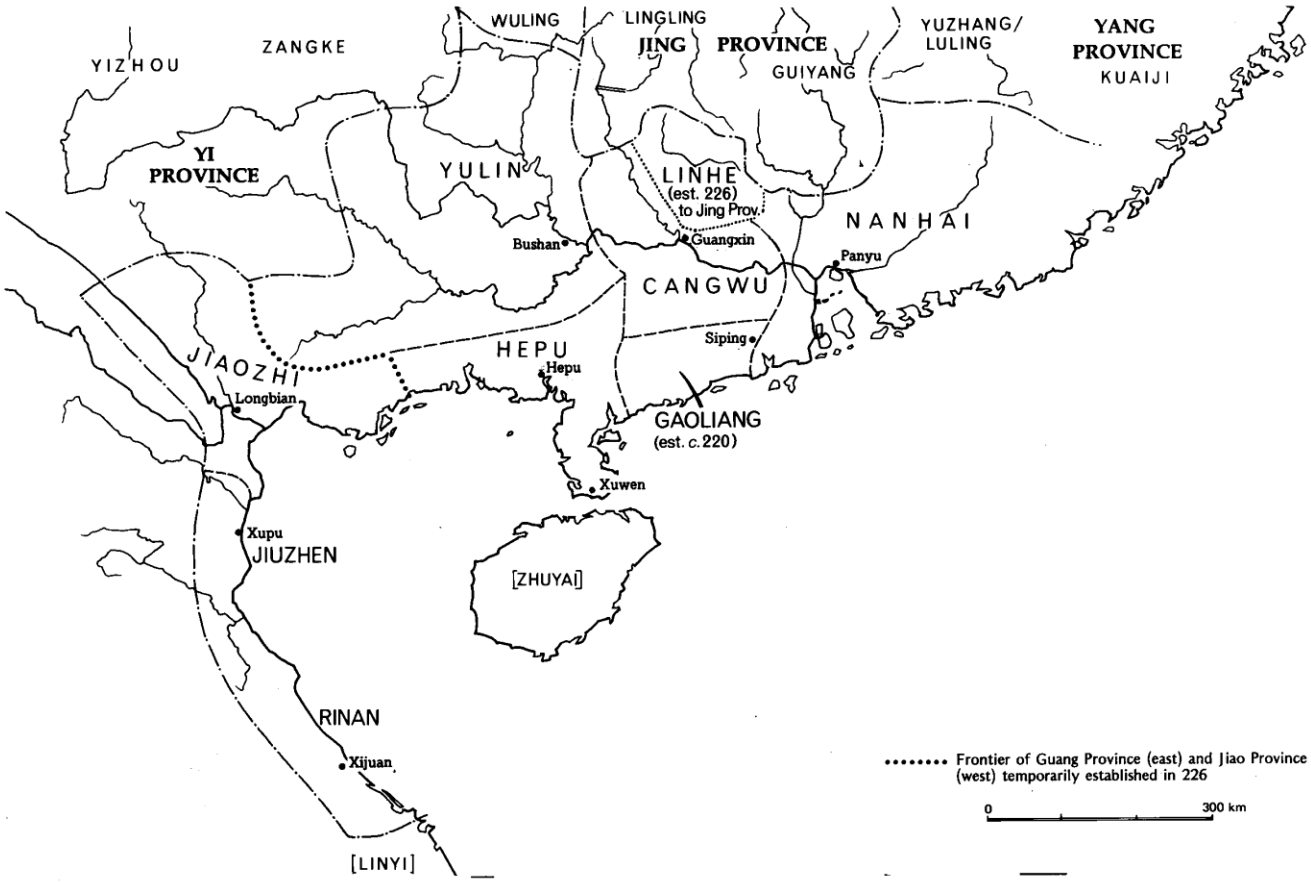
replied with protestations of friendship, and gave generous gifts in return: the quality and quantity are not specified, but we may assume the exchange was sensibly balanced.

In economic terms, it was most useful to Sun Quan to have access to the resources of the south as a means to supplement the produce of the comparatively limited territory which he held under his direct control. In his own region, Shi Xie had established and maintained an effective local administration, with successful trade on land and sea to the west and south, and security provided by the alliance with Sun Quan. The stability of this political balance, however, was predicated upon the authority of Sun Quan remaining unrivalled in the territory of the Yangzi, and that required there should be no strong alternative regime in Jing province. From every view, control of the middle Yangzi was critical to the ambitions, and even the survival, of the state of Sun Quan.

On the other items from the south, as listed here, see also Yü, *Trade and Expansion*, 177-182, and especially Schafer, *Vermilion Bird*, 197 [incense], 220 [*kau* silk or *pinikon*], 160-162 [pearls], 208 [cowrie shells], 238 [kingfisher feathers], 215 [tortoise-shell], 224-225 [ivory], 226-227 [rhinoceros horn], 186-187 [bananas], 173-174 [coconuts], 188-190 [lichees and *longans*]. On incense, pearls and cowries, see also Schafer, *Shore of Pearls*, 41-43 and 50.



Expansion of Wu in the South East


WULING
LINGLING
JING PROVINCE
YUZHANG/
LULING
YANG
PROVINCE
KUAIJI
YIZHOU
ZANGKE
GUIYANG
YI
PROVINCE
YULIN
LINHE
(est. 226)
to Jing Prov.
NANHAI
Bushan
Guangxin
Panyu
CANGWU
Siping
HEPU
Hepu
JIAOZHI
Longbian
GAOLIANG
(est. c. 220)
Xuwen
Xupu
JIUZHEN
[ZHUYAI]
RINAN
Xijuan
[LINYI]
Frontier of Guang Province (east) and Jiao Province (west) temporarily established in 226
0
300 km

CHAPTER SIX

Struggle for Jing Province

Introductory summary
Liu Bei in the west (211-214)
The second settlement of Jing province (215)
The great betrayal (219)

Introductory summary:

After the victory at the Red Cliffs, Liu Bei had obtained control of the southern commanderies of Jing province, with access to the Yangzi by Nan province. In 211 he was invited into Yi province, present-day Sichuan, to assist the local ruler, Liu Zhang, against the threat from the theocratic ruler Zhang Lu, who occupied Hanzhong commandery. Soon after his arrival, however, Liu Bei turned against Liu Zhang and took the territory for himself.

With Liu Bei thus established in the west, and with his own forces quite unsuccessful in their attempts to expand north of the Yangzi, Sun Quan became increasingly dissatisfied with the arrangements in Jing province. His claim was rejected by Liu Bei, but in 215, after a brief campaign, a new treaty was drawn up which gave him some additional territory. Thereafter, the alliance was confirmed.

In 219, Liu Bei captured Hanzhong and proclaimed himself King, and in the latter part of the year his general in Jing province, Guan Yu attacked Cao Cao's positions on the Han River. Destroying an enemy army, he laid siege to Cao Ren in Fan city.

While Guan Yu was thus engaged, however, Sun Quan and his general Lü Meng attacked his rear positions. Guan Yu was killed by Sun Quan's forces, and Sun Quan was able to take over all the territory of Jing province which he had formerly held for Liu Bei.

Liu Bei in the west (211-214):

The agreement concluded in 210 between Liu Bei and Sun Quan had given Liu Bei control of all the southern commanderies of Jing province in the basin of the Xiang River and its tributaries, together with the "loan" of Nan commandery controlling the course of the Yangzi upstream from the Dongting Lake. The territory held directly by Sun Quan covered the southern part of Jiangxia commandery, governed by Cheng Pu and facing the forces of Cao Cao's Grand Administrator Wen Ping, and the reach of the Yangzi between the Dongting Lake and the junction with the Han, including the area of the Red Cliffs: this was held by Lu Su as Grand Administrator of Hanchang.[1]

For a time, there was no further discussion of this arrangement. Liu Bei was content with what he had and was looking for opportunity elsewhere, while Sun Quan was primarily concerned with control of Yang province and the territory north of the Yangzi

[1] See Chapter 5.

towards the Huai. Cheng Pu died, and Lu Su was for a time transferred to the northern front, where he took part in the capture of Huan city in Lujiang in 214. In the following year, however, Sun Quan turned his attention once more to the west.

These few years had seen a remarkable development in Liu Bei's position. He and his advisers, notably Zhuge Liang, had successfully combined his personal prestige, political opportunity and a ruthless hypocrisy to seize Yi province in present-day Sichuan and establish a new government of considerable military strength.

When Liu Zhang, the Governor of Yi province, succeeded to the position of his father Liu Yan in 194, we are told that he was chosen because he was gentle and amenable,[2] and he was always considered a weak ruler. Nonetheless, though there had been a number of rebellions and other disturbances during his government, and it was clear that he might be vulnerable to a strong rival, Liu Zhang had so far managed to hold his own. In 211, however, he issued an invitation to Liu Bei in Jing province that he should bring an army to assist him against the Taoist Zhang Lu.

Zhang Lu's family came originally from Pei, in the eastern part of the empire, but his grandfather Zhang Ling had migrated to the west, where he established a religious sect based upon Haoming Mountain west of Chengdu.[3] According to Zhang Lu's biography, Zhang Ling taught the people from scriptures which he wrote himself, and he required of his followers an offering of rice: the sect was therefore known as the "Way of the Five *Dou* of Rice," or "Rice Sect."[4] When Zhang Ling died, his son Zhang Heng followed him as chief of the sect, and when Zhang Heng died Zhang Lu succeeded him.

About the time of the Yellow Turban rebellion of Zhang Jue in the east of China in 184, there was short-lived rebellion under a certain Zhang Xiu, described as a man from Ba commandery, who was evidently associated with the Rice Sect.[5] The trouble, however,

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[2] See Chapters 4 and 5, and *SGZ* 31/Shu 1, 867.

Liu Zhang and his two elder brothers, Liu Fan and Liu Dan, had accompanied the imperial court under Dong Zhuo when it moved to Chang'an in 190. Liu Zhang was later able to join his father, but Liu Fan and Liu Dan were killed at the time of an attempted coup by the north-western warlord Ma Teng against Dong Zhuo's successors Li Jue and others in 194. It was soon after this Liu Yan died.

[3] There is a biography of Zhang Lu in *SGZ* 8, 263-66, and a parallel account of him in *HHS* 75/65, 2435-37. The account of Zhang Ling, also known as Zhang Daoling, is given at the beginning of those texts. See also note 5 below. The history is considerably confused, not only through the normal lack of interest shown by traditional Chinese historians for such heterodox sects, but also through the hagiographic tradition which came to surround the founders of the modern Taoist church. It should be observed, moreover, that the teachings and practices of a sect could change very considerably in the course of evolution under different leadership at different times, and it is extremely difficult to judge what stage of development is described in any particular passage of a text.

Among the many and detailed discussions of the sect of Zhang Lu and his predecessors, I would mention in particular those of Maspero, Eichhorn, Fukui, Miyakawa, Michaud, Seidel and (with caution) Levy.

[4] I have discussed this religious group briefly in note 87 to Chapter 3. I refer to it hereafter as the Rice Sect. The *dou* measure of capacity in Han times was a fraction under two litres. There is, however, some debate among modern scholars whether the reference to *dou* (which can also indicate the constellation of the Big Dipper, Ursa Major) was not more symbolic than practical.

[5] The *Dian lue* of Yu Huan, quoted in commentary to *HHS* 75/65, 2436, and in *SGZ* 8, 264 PC note 1, has a comparatively detailed account of the organisation and beliefs of the Rice Sect, to which the leadership is attributed first to Zhang Xiu, and then to Zhang Lu. There is some variation between the texts, presumably due to corruption in transmission: the version preserved in *SGZ* PC is very much better.

HHS 8, 349, notes that in the seventh month of 184 the religious leader Zhang Xiu of Ba commandery made a rising. Commentary to that passage quotes the [*Lingdi*] *ji* of Liu Ai, a contemporary, which describes Zhang Xiu as a leader of the Rice Sect, and this is supported by *Dian lue*.

was brought under control without great bloodshed, and Zhang Xiu was permitted to make his peace with the authorities.

A few years later in 188, another group, calling themselves Yellow Turbans, brought trouble to Yi province and killed the Inspector Chi Jian, but the Rice Sect were not implicated in this disturbance.[6] On the contrary, when Liu Yan became Governor soon afterwards he gave frequent audience to Zhang Lu's mother, who was also an adept of the sect. About 190, moreover, he gave a joint military command to Zhang Lu and the former rebel Zhang Xiu[7] that they should attack the Grand Administrator of Hanzhong, who had been reluctant to accept Liu Yan's authority. The campaign was successful, but then Zhang Lu killed Zhang Xiu, took over their combined forces, and established his own theocratic government.[8]

In commentary at the end of the latter passage, however, Pei Songzhi argues that the personal name of Zhang Xiu has been miswritten for that of Zhang Heng. He evidently bases this comment upon the main text of *SGZ* 8, 263, which describes how the son of Zhang Ling, Zhang Heng, carried on the teachings of his father, and was succeeded in this by his own son Zhang Lu: in this lineage, there seems no room for Zhang Xiu. The *Kaoyi* commentary of Sima Guang to *ZZTJ* 58, 1872, moreover, notes that Zhang Lu later killed Zhang Xiu (see below), and it is thus highly unlikely that Zhang Xiu should be identified with Zhang Heng. In the main text of *ZZTJ* 58, Sima Guang accepts the plain statement of *HHS* 8, and evidently discounts the statement of Liu Ai connecting Zhang Xiu with the Rice Sect.

It seems possible, as I suggest in my discussion of the text of *ZZTJ* 58 (de Crespigny, *Huan and Ling* II, 557-558), that Zhang Xiu had at some time taken an active position of leadership in the Rice Sect, parallel and in rivalry to the spiritual authority of Zhang Heng; and he was later killed by Zhang Lu, inheriting his father's position.

Eichhorn, "Chang Jio und Chang Lu," 317-318, noting the passage in *Dian lue* which says that when Zhang Lu was in Hanzhong after he had killed Zhang Xiu he was obliged to maintain Zhang Xiu's teachings in order to keep the support of the people, has the imaginative proposal that Zhang Lu was not in fact particularly concerned with Taoist beliefs until that time, and that it was Zhang Xiu who had always been the effective leader of the Rice Sect.

There could be a good deal of truth in this, though Zhang Ling presumably was a Taoist teacher, and we are told that his mother was an adept. It is by no means impossible, however, that Zhang Xiu was the real founder and leader of the Rice Sect until the time Zhang Lu seized it from him and killed him, and that Zhang Ling and his son Zhang Heng had been teachers of a separate, less important group. The references to the foundation and leadership of the Rice Sect by Zhang Ling and Zhang Heng would then be later interpolations, designed to give a legitimate tradition to the claims of Zhang Lu. In any event, Eichhorn is surely correct when he remarks that Zhang Ling and Zhang Heng owe their later fame and glory simply to the success of Zhang Lu; without him, they would have remained nameless nobodies.

There is evidence, notably in the Dunhuang text of the *Laozi bianhua jing* "Sutra of the Transformation of Laozi" (MS. Stein 2295), discussed by Seidel, "Image of the Perfect Ruler," 222-227, for the existence of a number of competing, potentially rebellious groups in the region of present-day Sichuan during the latter part of the second century AD. Zhang Lu, with his predecessors, associates and rivals, were thus a few amongst many.

[6] Though Maspero, *Mélanges posthumes* II, 152 note 4, also 44 and 152, and some other scholars have suggested a fairly close connection between the followers of Zhang Lu in the west and those of Zhang Jue's Yellow Turbans in the east, Zhang Lu and his group do not appear to have been involved with the activities of the local Yellow Turbans in 188. And even if the rising of Zhang Xiu in 184 did involve the Rice Sect, it is not described as Yellow Turban activity, it was not co-ordinated with Zhang Jue's activities, and it was apparently not regarded so seriously: Zhang Xiu was permitted to surrender rather than suffering execution. The Rice Sect and Zhang Lu were not necessarily rebellious, and in this respect they did not resemble the Yellow Turbans, neither those of Zhang Jue in the east of the empire nor the group closer home in Yi province itself.

[7] Fukui [1958], 4, suggests that Zhang Xiu the rebel of 184 and Zhang Xiu the officer of Liu Yan were two different men; *cf.* however, Eichhorn, "Chang Jio und Chang Lu," 317 note 81.

[8] It should be noted that this was Zhang Lu's first recorded act of insurrection.

CHAPTER SIX

In the religious history of China, Zhang Ling is recognised as the founder of the Taoist "papacy," the school of the Heavenly Masters of the present day, and Zhang Lu is one of the foremost patriarchs. His biography notes that he taught the people spiritual arts, describing himself as "Lord Teacher"[9] .Among his doctrines there was an association of illness with wrong-doing, requiring the sick to confess their sins,[10] and in this and other matters there were similarities with the eastern schools of popular Taoist religion. From the evidence in the histories, these various sects may best be considered as local extensions and developments from a common base of ritual and belief, centred for the most part on the north China plain, but adapting their expression to different circumstances, customs and leadership.[11]

For Liu Yan, Zhang Lu's declaration of independence was a modified misfortune. Hanzhong commandery controlled the upper reaches of the Han River in the south of present-day Shenxi, and Zhang Lu now blocked communications through the mountains to the Wei River valley. Liu Yan was thus able to excuse himself from any dealings with the imperial government, and behind the buffer of Zhang Lu's insubordination he established a personal authority in the rest of Yi province.

When Liu Zhang succeeded his father in 194, the relationship with the Rice Sect was yet undetermined, for Zhang Lu had taken no action against the provincial government,

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During the time Zhang Lu was independent in Hanzhong commandery, he gave the territory the name of Hanning, but after his surrender to Cao Cao in 215, the name was changed back to Hanzhong: (*SGZ* 8, 263, and *SGZ* 1, 45). For convenience, I refer to the place consistently as Hanzhong.

[9] The accounts of Zhang Lu in *HHS* 75/65, 2435, and *SGZ* 8, 263, say that those who first came to him were called "spirit soldiers" (*guizu*) and were later named Libationers (*jijiu*). Of these titles, that of Libationer was used in certain offices by the imperial government of Han: Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 250 *sub voce*. The use of the term in the context of Zhang Lu's organisation, however, is probably related rather to their ideal ritual functions than to any deliberate patterning on Han administration.

It has been argued that the use of the character *gui* in much of the terminology of the sect indicates some despite against the non-Chinese people of the region who came to join it. It is more probable, however, that the term *gui* may be understood rather in a general sense of supernatural forces than of disapproved "demons." On the other hand, it does seem likely that much of the basis of the creed was concerned with fear and propitiation of powerful and potentially hostile spiritual forces. See Eichhorn, "Chang Jio und Chang Lu," 322-324, including note 102.

[10] The doctrines of Zhang Lu are described by *SGZ* 8, and those of the earlier sect under Zhang Xiu by *Dian lue*, as cited in note 5 above. Since it was believed wrong-doing would bring sickness, Zhang Lu's administration of the law was comparatively lenient. An offender was pardoned three times, and only then was formal punishment administered: it was presumably expected that the spirits should be given the opportunity to inflict their own justice first.

Dian lue adds that under the administration of Zhang Lu, after he had taken over from Zhang Xiu, those who had committed a small fault were required to pave one hundred paces of roadway. And there was also a custom of establishing "houses of charity" (*yi she*), like way-stations by the roads, with rice and meat set out for travellers to help themselves to what they needed.

Besides this, we are told that Zhang Lu's doctrine accepted the cycle prescribed by *Yue ling* "The Ordinances of the Months," the ritual calendar popular among the scholars of Han: (*Yue ling* was included in the anthology *Lüshi chunqiu*, 1-12; translated by Wilhelm, *Frühlung und Herbst*, 1-156, and was later incorporated as chapter 4 of *Li ji*; Couvreur, *Mémoires* I, 330-410, and see Bodde, *Festivals*, 16 and *passim*). Among the prohibitions of Zhang Lu, no slaughtering was permitted in spring or summer, and alcohol was forbidden.

[11] As discussed in note 87 to Chapter 3, Gan Ji of Langye, dealt with by Sun Ce in the lands of the lower Yangzi, treated illness by casting charms over water for people to drink, a technique associated with Zhang Jue. He also established "spirit houses," which probably performed the same function as the "houses of purity" established by Zhang Xiu. It may be suggested that Zhang Xiu and Zhang Lu, Zhang Jue and Gan Ji had each made a slightly different selection from the common heritage.

and members of his family still attended court in Chengdu. Some time later, however, about 200, there was a formal break. Zhang Lu claimed Hanzhong as his own territory, and sought to expand his authority southwards into the upper tributaries of the Jialing Jiang, the northern part of Ba commandery of Han. Liu Zhang, for his part, executed Zhang Lu's mother and other members of the sect, and placed an army in Lanzhong county to oppose him.

By 210, some fifteen years after his accession to power, the government of Liu Zhang in Yi province appeared weak, disunited and in imminent danger of collapse. A man from Jiangxia in Jing province, Liu Yan had acquired contacts and associates in the region of the imperial capital, and he had established his government in the early 190s by the firm suppression of local leaders whose authority might rival his own. Later, when refugees came into Yi province from the capital district and from Nanyang, they were organised into a fighting force known as the Dongzhou troops - men from the eastern provinces - but the local government did little to assist them, and they proved insubordinate, disruptive and a source of instability. In personal terms, several of the men who had assisted Liu Yan and supported the accession of Liu Zhang later turned against him. Zhao Wei, for example, had taken a leading role in securing the appointment of Liu Zhang as Governor in 194, but a few years afterwards, taking advantage of local resentments, he led a rebellion and laid siege to Chengdu city before he was eventually driven back, defeated and killed. Pang Xi, who had been a close friend of Liu Yan, also joined Zhao Wei's rebellion, but was able to make peace with Liu Zhang. He was then given command of the troops operating against Zhang Lu, where he achieved only limited success.

The histories describe Liu Zhang as an indecisive man, and the judgement may be fair. Certainly, he had not established a reliable base of support: he had no strong allies among the local leadership, he had alienated many of his father's former associates, and he had no authority over the refugees from the north and the east, who might have given personal allegiance. In a sense, Liu Zhang was holding power in Yi province as much through local political inertia as through any sense of government, for there was no single figure in the region who might offer a serious challenge.

By 211, however, it appeared that the situation was going to change. In the autumn of that year, Cao Cao achieved a notable victory over the combined forces of the warlords of Liang province at the battle of Huayin, on the Wei River just west of the junction with the great bend of the Yellow River.[12] From this success, Cao Cao's forces controlled the valley of the Wei as far as Chang'an, and he was able to move north against Anding commandery and south against Hanzhong. By the end of the year Cao Cao had received the surrender of Yang Qiu, warlord in Anding, he had begun the settlement of the region about Chang'an, and his general Zhong Yao had been given orders to prepare for operations against Zhang Lu in Hanzhong.

For Liu Zhang in Yi province, this threat to his old enemy presented both opportunity and danger. On the one hand, if he could take advantage of Zhang Lu's preoccupation with the north he could recover a great deal of territory and strengthen his own authority. On the other hand, if Zhang Lu surrendered to Cao Cao, Liu Zhang would be brought face to face with the dominant military power in the empire, and he would be attempting to maintain his independence with only the rump of Yi province, without natural defences. Once Cao Cao's forces had crossed the barrier of the Qin Ling ranges, the mountain

12 On this campaign, see de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 163-165.

country between the Han River and the Sichuan basin would present far less of a problem, while the armies which Cao Cao could put into the field were much greater than those of Zhang Lu. It was unlikely that Liu Zhang could survive such an assault.

Liu Zhang had few personal or administrative resources to deal with this developing crisis. The situation from that perspective was summed up for him by his adviser Zhang Song:

> The military commanders within this province, men such as Pang Xi and Li Yi, think only of their own achievements and their own position. They may well prove unreliable.
>
> You must obtain assistance from [Liu Bei of] Yuzhou. If you do not, you will have enemies attacking you from outside and your own people turning against you within your borders: that is the road to certain defeat.[13]

The argument presented to Liu Zhang was that he should use the prestige and military authority of Liu Bei to provide himself with a base of loyal support. He was assured that Liu Bei would respect him and serve him because they were both members of the imperial clan, so he would obtain an access of military strength sufficient to defeat Zhang Lu and a core of personal support which would enable him to dominate the various factions in Yi province thereafter.

Such advice was valid, however, only on the assumption that Liu Bei would remain loyal and be content to take second position to Liu Zhang, and in this respect the argument was at least doubtful and at worst dishonest. Doubtful, because with the best will in the world it must have been hard to imagine that Liu Bei, who already controlled a significant territory of his own in Jing province, would be prepared to abandon that position of independence in order to assist a weak ruler such as Liu Zhang. Dishonest, because we have repeated statements in the histories that many of Liu Zhang's advisers were in close communication with Liu Bei, and were urging him to come and take over in Yi province.

In this debate, besides Zhang Song, the advisers supporting the alliance with Liu Bei included Fa Zheng and Meng Da, both originally from Youfufeng near Chang'an. Those who argued that Liu Zhang should attempt to solve his problems with his own resources appear to have been local men, such as Huang Quan of Baxi commandery and Wang Lei of Guanghan.[14] These latter, however, were overruled, and the invitation was issued to Liu Bei.

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13 *SGZ* 31/Shu 1, 868, and see also *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 881. On the term "Yuzhou" as a reference to Liu Bei, see note 67 to Chapter 4.

Zhang Song, it may be recalled, was the man sent to Cao Cao at the time of the Red Cliffs campaign in 208, who subsequently became a supporter of Liu Bei (note 28 to Chapter 5).

14 The biography of Fa Zheng is in *SGZ* 37/Shu 7, 957-62, and that of Huang Quan is in *SGZ* 43/Shu 13, 1043-45.

Huang Quan was a man from Langzhong county, near the present-day city of the same name. Langzhong had been made the capital of a new commandery which was established by Liu Zhang in 194 and given the name Baxi in 201.

The administrative geography of the region of Ba commandery of Later Han became somewhat complicated at this time, and a summary explanation may be helpful.

Ba commandery of Later Han had occupied the valleys of the Jialing River and its eastern tributaries the Qu and the Ba, together with the basin of the Yangzi downstream from the region of present-day Chongqing. The capital was at Jiangzhou, close to the river junction by present-day Chongqing.

In 194, however, Liu Zhang divided that territory:

1 the valley of the Jialing, with the Qu and the Ba became (truncated) Ba commandery, with capital at Langzhong;

Liu Zhang gave orders for preparations to welcome Liu Bei, but the formalities of the reception were rivalled by the popularity which accompanied the newcomer's great reputation, and the history says that Liu Bei came into Yi province for the first time as if he was returning to his native home.[15] With an army of his own, supplemented by an escort sent from Liu Zhang and quantities of supplies and presents provided also by his host, Liu Bei advanced up the Yangzi to Jiangzhou, near present-day Chongqing, then followed the Jialing and Fu rivers north to the city of Fu, by present-day Mianyang. Here Liu Zhang came to meet him, and in a scene like the Field of Cloth of Gold, with chariots and canopies brilliant as the sun, the two leaders held festival.

As Liu Bei passed by Jiangzhou, the Grand Administrator of Ba commandery, Yan Yan, loyal to Liu Zhang, observed in despair, "This is like a man sitting alone on a little hill, and he calls out a tiger to protect himself."[16] And already during the meeting at Fu, Zhang Song, Fa Zheng and some of Liu Bei's own advisers were telling him that he should take Liu Zhang captive immediately. Liu Bei replied that it was too early for such a step, that his reputation as a man of honour would suffer if he betrayed Liu Zhang so quickly, and he had not yet established a following among the people of the province. For the time being, he and Liu Zhang recommended one another with honourable titles. Liu Zhang allocated Liu Bei still more troops and quantities of supplies, then sent him north to Jiameng to take command of all operations against Zhang Lu. Liu Bei, for his part, gave generous donations and showed most gracious behaviour, to win the hearts of the people to himself.

From such a record there seems no question that Liu Bei was merely waiting for the opportunity to take over Liu Zhang's position. On his side, Liu Zhang was presumably hopeful that the alliance with Liu Bei would give credit to his government against the disparate forces which he had attempted with limited success to control, and at the same time he might expect that the presents and patronage which he gave Liu Bei would be sufficient to keep his associate in second position. In his capital at Chengdu, Liu Zhang still controlled the treasury and taxation resources of the province and Liu Bei, isolated in

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2 the valley of the Yangzi in the region of the Gorges became Guling commandery, with capital at Yufu, by present-day Fengjie;

3 the basin of the Yangzi about Chongqing and the lower reaches of the Jialing River became Yongning commandery, with capital at Jiangzhou;

4 the south-eastern segment of the commandery, in the hill country about the lower valley of the Wu River, was established as the Dependent State of Badong, with headquarters at Fuling near present-day Pengshui.

In 201, the names of the three commanderies were changed about:

1 the truncated Ba commandery, as in 1 above, was renamed Baxi;

2 Guling commandery, as in 2 above, was renamed Badong;

3 Yongning commandery, as in 3 above, was renamed Ba commandery.

Thus the city of Jiangzhou by present-day Chongqing was capital of the large Ba commandery of Later Han until 194, then became the capital of the small commandery of Yongning, and then in 201 became again the capital of (a reduced) Ba commandery. And the county of Langzhong, home territory of Huang Quan, was a regular county in the large Ba commandery of Later Han until 194, then became the capital of truncated Ba commandery, and then in 201 became the capital of Baxi commandery.

Later again, in the time of Liu Bei, the Dependent State of Badong was established as an independent commandery named Fuling.

On these and other variations, see in particular the tables of Wu Zengjin and Yang Shoujing, 2920-22, and 2927-28.

15 *SGZ* 31/Shu 1, 868. The text has the expression (*ru gui*); Liu Bei had never been in the province before.

16 *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 943 PC note 1 quoting *Huayang guo zhi.*

the north from his base in Jing province, might be reluctant to embark upon open insurrection. It is doubtful, however, if Liu Zhang appreciated the degree to which his own supporters and counsellors were prepared to serve the interloper's cause.

Rather more than a year after Liu Bei had arrived in Yi province, his opportunity came. The pretext, curiously enough, was the attack mounted by Cao Cao against Sun Quan's positions on the lower Yangzi in the winter and early spring of 212-213. In that region, though Sun Quan was compelled to give ground, his defence line of the Yangzi, based primarily on the new fortress at Ruxu and his local naval supremacy, held firm against the invader, but there were no doubt anxious moments for Sun Quan and his ministers as Cao Cao's strategy developed. In any event, it is said that Sun Quan wrote to Liu Bei to ask for his assistance, and Liu Bei asked leave to join his old ally.[17]

The biography of Liu Bei says that Sun Quan specifically asked him for aid, but one must have some doubts about that. The campaign was taking place a thousand kilometres away in a direct line, and far more than that by the natural route of the Yangzi. It is possible that Sun Quan proposed Liu Bei's lieutenant Guan Yu, who had remained in Jing province, should make some sortie north along the valley of the Han in order to relieve the military pressure further east. Certainly, in his letter to Liu Zhang, Liu Bei emphasised that Guan Yu was in trouble in Jing province, and that he should return to lend his support against Cao Cao and his armies. Zhang Lu, remarked Liu Bei, is firmly on the defensive and presents no immediate threat.

Predictably, Liu Zhang was reluctant to support this move. He had, after all, brought Liu Bei into his territory to attack and conquer Zhang Lu's territory, and a year after the operations had begun Liu Bei was still on the same line. Now he was proposing to take not only his own forces, but also the men he had been given by Liu Zhang, to embark on a different campaign quite outside Liu Zhang's area of interest or control. So Liu Zhang basically rejected the proposal, allocated Liu Bei less than half of the troops that he asked for, and similarly reduced his supplies.

Now, however, Liu Bei could claim to hold a *casus belli* against Liu Zhang. In a fiery proclamation, emphasising his wider responsibilities to his old allies and his subordinates, and with telling phrases about the manner in which he and his men had laboured in the service of the ungrateful Liu Zhang, Liu Bei turned his men against Chengdu. The fact that Cao Cao's attacks had been limited and generally unsuccessful on both fronts along the Yangzi might seem to have proven Liu Zhang's point, that Liu Bei's presence there was unnecessary. Liu Bei, however, was operating on the principle that because he had been given inadequate support for his expedition to the east, he was therefore entitled to turn west against his patron and employer. Logically, this was meaningless double-think; in practical terms, it was excellent propaganda, giving Liu Bei and his supporters all the justification they needed for the rebellion against Liu Zhang.

Once the decision was made, Liu Zhang's power was ended, though the result was due at least in part to his own lack of ruthlessness. He may not have been a decisive man, but he was also not a cruel one, and he rejected plans for isolating Liu Bei with a scorched earth policy along the approaches to Chengdu. Though a number of his generals deserted or were betrayed to Liu Bei, there were many people who remained loyal. The city of Luo, capital of Guanghan commandery but close to Chengdu, maintained its defence for a year under the command of Liu Zhang's son Liu Xun, while Yan Yan in Jiangzhou, who controlled the essential communications between Liu Bei and his base in Jing province,

17 See Chapter 5, and *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 881.

held firm until he was overwhelmed by an attack from the forces of Zhuge Liang, Zhang Fei and Zhao Yun, advancing west along the Yangzi.[18] Liu Zhang, however, failed to take the chances which these isolated acts of loyalty might have offered him, and he was betrayed by too many deserters and false advisers.

By the summer of 214, Liu Zhang was trapped in Chengdu, faced with a combined attack by Liu Bei, the reinforcements from the east, and also the army of Ma Chao, soldier of fortune from the north whom Liu Bei had enticed to join him.[19] After a few weeks siege, rather than subject his people to further miseries of storm and sack, Liu Zhang came out from Chengdu and surrendered to Liu Bei. He was allowed to retain the title of a general and a great part of his treasure, but he was sent downstream, out of Yi province, to Gongan on the middle Yangzi. In the meanwhile, Liu Bei held a splendid feast at Chengdu, showered honours on his old and new supporters, and handed the official treasury over for pillage to his victorious soldiers.

The second settlement of Jing province (215):

It is difficult to believe that Sun Quan gained any sense of vicarious achievement or satisfaction from Liu Bei's takeover of Yi province. It was, after all, a territory for which he had had held ambitions of his own, and once it was in Liu Bei's hands it was permanently barred to Sun Quan. Liu Bei, moreover, who had formerly been the junior partner in their alliance, now controlled the better part of two provinces, and he and his men were clearly energetic military operators. Though Sun Quan was decidedly more secure in his own territory than Liu Zhang had ever been in his, the demonstration of Liu Bei's adaptability was not designed to make any colleague feel secure. And Liu Bei, thanks to the arrangements made after the death of Zhou Yu, held an excellent position in Jing province. In the traditional pattern often followed by diplomats of nineteenth century Europe, Sun Quan sought some "compensation" from his successful ally.

There were obvious signs of difficulty as early as 211, when Liu Bei first went to Jing province. The Lady Sun, sister to Sun Quan and chief wife to Liu Bei, returned at that time to her brother's court, and she attempted to take Liu Bei's son and heir, Liu Shan, with her. She was escorted by a flotilla of ships from Sun Quan, but Liu Bei's commanders Zhao Yun and Zhang Fei intercepted the convoy. We know nothing of the details of the negotiations, which must have been delicate and tense, but the result was that the boy Liu Shan remained behind while the Lady Sun continued her journey. The marriage, and the alliance at that level, were effectively ended.[20]

Over the next years Sun Quan was pre-occupied with Yang province and his defences against Cao Cao on the lower Yangzi, while the greater part of Liu Bei's troops continued to be stationed in Jing province. By the latter part of 214, however, the situation between

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18 We may note that the dispatch of this force from Jing province must have left Guan Yu, Liu Bei's commander there, with limited troops to face any attack from Cao Cao - further evidence that Liu Bei was actually more concerned to seize Yi province from Liu Zhang than to support his ally Sun Quan in the east.

19 The biography of Ma Chao is in *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 944-47. He was the son of Ma Teng, a man of mixed Chinese and Qiang parentage, who had been a leader of rebels in Liang province in the 180s. Ma Chao succeeded to his father's position, but was driven from the north after the battle of Huayin in 211: de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 161-165. Ma Chao later became one of Liu Bei's chief commanders in Hanzhong.

20 *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 949 PC note 2 quoting *Zhao Yun biezhuan*.

the Yangzi and the Huai was temporarily stable: Sun Quan had seized Huan city and the south of Lujiang commandery, and though Cao Cao made a brief military demonstration in the region of the Huai, he soon abandoned plans for a further attack and returned to Xu city. At the same time, to effect his conquest and settlement of Yi province, Liu Bei had called the greater part of his army to the west, and Guan Yu held command of diminished forces in Jing province.

Early in 215, therefore, Sun Quan sent a formal note to Liu Bei, in the hands of his minister Zhuge Jin, elder brother of Zhuge Liang,[21] asking that the commanderies of Jing province should be handed over to him. The request was put in terms of the territory being "returned" to Sun Quan, though it would seem that Liu Bei had taken possession of the southern territories in his own right after the victory at the Red Cliffs, and Nan commandery was the one territory which could be said to have been "loaned" by Sun Quan. Nan commandery, however, was the vital link in the communications between Jing province and Yi province through the Yangzi Gorges, and Jiangling, capital of the commandery, was the headquarters of Guan Yu.

Liu Bei had no intention of giving up any territory, but his reply was prevarication: he was making plans for a campaign in the north to conquer Liang province, but as soon as he had control of that region he would hand over all his holdings in Jing province. Sun Quan was quite unimpressed, and remarked in disgust, "This is borrowing and not returning."[22] He issued letters of appointment for officials in his service to take over Changsha, Lingling and Guiyang commanderies, and when Guan Yu, predictably, refused to allow these men entry, Sun Quan sent Lü Meng with twenty thousand men to back his claim.

The strategy of the campaign was well-planned, and executed with a neat sense of timing. Sun Quan's forces operated in two divisions: Lu Su remained at his headquarters, Lukou in Hanchang, to face and fix Guan Yu upstream at Gongan; covered by this, Lü Meng was able to advance unimpeded to the south and deal with the three commanderies one by one. Liu Bei's grand administrators in Changsha and Guiyang surrendered to the overwhelming local force, but by the time Lü Meng reached Lingling, to the west of Guiyang and with some communication to the north, Liu Bei had come with reinforcements to Gongan and Guan Yu was free to intervene.

By this time Sun Quan had advanced to Lukou, and Lu Su moved south and west to intercept Guan Yu's relief force, facing him again at Yiyang in western Changsha. The two armies were halted, and the leaders accused one another of false dealing, while urgent messages were sent south for Lü Meng to return and join the confrontation before Lu Su and he were attacked and destroyed separately.

Lü Meng, however, was able to play one last game of bluff. With the orders for retreat already in his hands, he announced to his officers that he would storm the city of Quanling, capital of Lingling commandery, the very next day, and he had an envoy sent to the Grand Administrator, Hao Pu, describing the situation quite falsely: that Liu Bei was under attack in Hanzhong, far to the west, while Guan Yu was held in the north of Jing province by the advance of Sun Quan; there was thus no hope of relief. Hao Pu

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21 The biography of Zhuge Jin is in *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1231-36.

Born in 174, he was seven years older than Zhuge Liang. The family came from Langye, but when their father died Zhuge Liang was still young. He accompanied his uncle, who was Grand Administrator of Yuzhang during the mid-190s, and he later went to join Liu Biao: Chapter 4. Zhuge Jin had evidently gone his own way before that, and became a member of Sun Quan's personal staff.

22 On the transfer of territory to Liu Bei and Guan Yu in previous years, see Chapter 5 at note 17.

believed him, and came out to surrender. Lü Meng received him with courtesy, and escorted him to the river bank to board the ship which would take him away to the north - but then, as a parting cut, he showed Hao Pu the orders which he had received and which explained the true situation - and as Hao Pu read the document Lü Meng was roaring with laughter at his own success.[23]

The capture of Lingling was useful, though it did not prove a permanent gain at this stage. Sun Quan was naturally worried about the consequences of a long campaign in Jing province, and he was primarily concerned to hold what he could of his new gains, not necessarily all of them. On the other hand, much to Sun Quan's advantage, Cao Cao at this time was moving south into the upper valley of the Han. Long expected and now a reality, that threat was enough to persuade Liu Bei that his best policy lay in some swift agreement so that he could turn his chief attention to the north of his newly-acquired territory in Yi province.

So the two erstwhile allies renegotiated their division of Jing province. Lingling was returned to Liu Bei and Guan Yu, but it was agreed that the Xiang River would now form the frontier between the two, and Sun Quan thus gained Guiyang and the major part of Changsha.[24]

The settlement was surely recognised as incomplete and unstable. The commanders on each side had convinced themselves of the righteousness of their claim, and the Xiang River was a communications route north and south rather than a barrier east and west. For the moment, however, both sides had more to concern them in the north, dealing with their common enemy Cao Cao on one front or the other from the upper Han to the lower Huai.

In the autumn of 215, Cao Cao launched his attack on Hanzhong, and in the winter, after a short and confused campaign, Zhang Lu surrendered. He was granted honours by Cao Cao, his church received official approval, and he ended his days as comfortable pensioner.[25]

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23 The major account of this campaign is in the biography of Lü Meng, *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1276-77, which includes the account of his embassy to Hao Pu.

Hao Pu later entered Sun Quan's service, and was appointed Commandant of Justice, a ministerial position. In 230, however, he was forced to commit suicide for his credulous support of the traitor Yin Fan. See *SGZ* 62/Wu 17, 1418 and PC note 1 quoting *Wu lu* and *Wu li*; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 321-322, with 334 and 336.

24 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1119-20, and *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 883, indicate that the three commanderies of Jiangxia, Changsha and Guiyang were now held by Sun Quan; *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, states that the Xiang River was now the boundary.

Under Later Han, Changsha commandery extended considerably to the west of the Xiang River (*Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* II, 49-50). If all the commandery had been transferred to Sun Quan at this time, it would have made an awkward salient into Liu Bei's territory, and interrupted his communications with Lingling in the south. *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* III, 29-30, shows a Hengyang commandery controlling the western part of earlier Changsha. The commandery of Hengyang was established by the state of Wu only in 257 (*SGZ* 48/Wu 3, 1153), but it seems possible that the division had been made for a short time at this period.

The negotiations surrounding this settlement are dramatised in a play "With a Single Sword, Lord Guan Goes to the Feast" by the celebrated Yuan composer Guan Hanqing, a work of which variant editions survive, and which presents a summary the facts with strong favour to the achievements of Guan Yu and to the detriment of Lu Su and Sun Quan's other counsellors. See Liu Ching-chih [1980], chapter 3, *Peking Opera Texts*, 2409, and *Jingju jumu chutan*, 96, also *Romance* chapter 66.

25 An account of the campaign appears in the biography of Zhang Lu, *SGZ* 8, 264-65. There was short period of resistance by Zhang Lu's younger brother Zhang Wei, and Zhang Lu took temporary refuge in Ba commandery, south of Hanzhong, before his final surrender.

Some of Cao Cao's advisers now urged him to follow this success by moving into the main part of Yi province. They argued that Liu Bei had not yet established his regime, that the overthrow of Zhang Lu must have unnerved his supporters, and he would thus be vulnerable to a swift attack. In the region of Ba, moreover, south of Hanzhong, there were non-Chinese people interested in their own independence and prepared to support Cao Cao if they could obtain it with his support, and Zhang Lu had held considerable influence there.[26]

To move south from Hanzhong, however, Cao Cao would have been advancing into isolated territory, across the grain of the mountain ridges, and the consequences of defeat, or even a lesser set-back, would have been far more serious for his army and even for his state than the misfortune at the Red Cliffs seven years earlier. So his moves in that direction were only tentative. A probing advance into Ba commandery by his commander Zhang Ge was defeated and driven back by Liu Bei's general Zhang Fei at Dangqu, near present-day Quxian,[27] and Cao Cao thereafter sought only to confirm the frontier in the upper valley of the Han. Leaving his senior general Xiahou Yuan in command, he returned to the east. Liu Bei, for his part, remained at Chengdu to establish his government.

While Cao Cao and Liu Bei were thus occupied in the west, Sun Quan had sought to follow his moderate success in Jing province with a renewed attack north of the Yangzi against the Huai. In the summer of 215, soon after the second settlement with Liu Bei, he took personal command of a major assault on Hefei city.

The expedition, however, resulted only in a humiliating disaster. Zhang Liao and his colleagues, commanders of Cao Cao's local forces in Hefei, were outnumbered several times by the army from the south, but they put forth a sortie against Sun Quan's men before the siege had been properly joined, and they caused such disruption that the attackers were compelled to retreat within a matter of days.

The major source on the campaign is the biography of Zhang Liao in *Sanguo zhi*, which emphasises his personal prowess, and his total rout of the enemy: neither Sun Quan nor any of his followers dared to stand against him.[28] On the other side, however, even the records of the Wu section of *Sanguo zhi* support the tale of misfortune. The biography of Lü Meng, who accompanied the expedition, says that he fought gallantly, with the aid of Ling Tong, as rearguard to protect the army during its retreat. And the biography of Sun Quan tells how he was cut off by the enemy at a river crossing close to Hefei city, and was almost captured by Zhang Liao. The commentary quotes *Xiandi chunqiu*:

> Zhang Liao asked one of the men from Wu who had surrendered, "There was a commander there with a purple beard, long body and short legs, good with a horse and expert with a bow; who was that?"
>
> The prisoner replied, "That was Sun of Kuaiji."

Seidel, "Image of the Perfect Ruler," 227 and note 35, notes that Zhang Lu appears to have acknowledged Cao Cao as the rightful master of the empire, and claimed the authority of the Taoist religion to do so.

26 *SGZ* 1, 45-46.

27 *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 883, and *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 943.

28 *SGZ* 17, 518-19. There is an account of the campaign in *ZZTJ* 67, 2141-42; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 493-495.

> Zhang Liao and [his fellow general] Yu Jin met later, and they agreed that if they had only known who the man was they would have pressed the attack harder and caught him. All the army was unhappy to have missed the opportunity.[29]

And *Jiangbiao zhuan* tells how:

> Sun Quan rode a swift horse to the bridge of the crossing, but the southern end had already been broken down, and there was a gap ten feet across.
>
> Gu Li got behind the horse, and he had Sun Quan grasp hold of the saddle and loosen the reins, and then Gu Li used a whip to encourage the animal forward, and so it managed to jump across and Sun Quan was able to escape.[30]

Finally, He Qi with three thousand men came to give cover to Sun Quan and he was escorted back to headquarters on board ship. Sun Quan gave a banquet to his officers, and He Qi spoke on their behalf,

> Your honour is a ruler of men, and you should always be most carefully guarded. In the action today, when you almost suffered misfortune, your servants were frightened and afraid as if Heaven and Earth might fall to ruin. We beg that you take this as the warning for a lifetime.

Sun Quan reassured him, "I am grateful and ashamed. I have now engraved caution upon my heart, and it is not just a note on my girdle."[31]

Two particular items may be noted in accounts of this campaign. Firstly, the biography of Gan Ning, which tells of his intervention to assist the escape of Sun Quan, mentions in passing that there was sickness in the army, and this was a reason for the withdrawal. The story may be correct, and such a misfortune could have serious effect on the morale and capacity of a large army such as Sun Quan had gathered.[32]

Secondly, at the end of the biography of Sun Quan's officer Chen Wu, who died on this campaign, *Jiangbiao zhuan* tells us that Sun Quan attended his funeral in person to show him honour, and arranged for his favourite concubine to be buried in the tomb with him. This was a strange revival of a thoroughly unattractive custom, and the commentator Sun Sheng is predictably scathing:

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29 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1120 PC note 2 quoting *Xiandi chunqiu.*

30 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1120 PC note 2 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.* This text goes on to say that Gu Li had originally been a junior servant in attendance on Sun Quan, but because of his honesty and courtesy he had been made Inspector of Companions, an officer of the bodyguard; on the Companions, a system which had evidently now been formalised, see Chapter 2 at note 30. In reward for his services on this occasion, Sun Quan enfeoffed Gu Li as marquis of a chief village.

Jiangbiao zhuan, quoted in *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1133 PC note 2, tells of another, later, time when Sun Quan was sailing on the Yangzi near Wuchang in his great ship the "Chang'an." A storm blew up, and although Sun Quan believed the ship could sail safely before the wind, Gu Li drew his sword and compelled the helmsman to steer for shelter at Fankou. Sun Quan, presumably somewhat put out by the fact that Gu Li had over-ridden his orders, twitted him, "A-li, were you so frightened of the water?" Gu Li, however, knelt down and said, "The great king is master of ten thousand chariots. You treat lightly the unfathomable deep, and you make sport of the furious waves. But your ship was built too high, and if you should meet with some unexpected misfortune, what would become of our nation? That is why I dared threaten death [to the helmsman]." Sun Quan now admired him all the more, and from this time on, as a sign of respect, he never called Gu Li by his personal name, but would always address him by his surname.

31 *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1380 and PC note 1 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.* The reference to the girdle is evidently taken from *Lunyu* 15.5; Legge, *CC* I, 296, which tells how the disciple Zizhang noted down Confucius' teachings on the end of his sash.

32 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1295. *Cf.* also note 83 to Chapter 4.

When Sun Quan had the living follow the dead like this, it is surely only appropriate that the prosperity of his dynasty should have been short-lived.[33]

In general terms, the debacle at Hefei did nothing for the morale and position of Sun Quan's forces on this northern front, nor for his own reputation as a military commander. Though the propaganda of Zhang Liao's biography claims that at one stage Sun Quan was too frightened to come down and fight, other records describe him as a competent, even courageous, warrior, with appropriate skills of horsemanship and archery. Unlike his elder brother, however, Sun Quan could claim no significant success as a general on active service. He was capable of commanding an army, and he had maintained a competent defence against Cao Cao's attacks in earlier years, but he had never been involved in a notable offensive. At the time of the Red Cliffs, Zhou Yu and Cheng Pu commanded the troops directly engaged against Cao Cao, and Sun Quan was in charge of the army in reserve. For the attack on Huan city in 214, Lü Meng appears to have taken the leading role; and in the recent campaign against Guan Yu and Liu Bei in Jing province, the mobile force was commanded by Lü Meng, with Lu Su in support, and Sun Quan again as the reserve.

Sun Quan was brave, and on occasion even foolhardy. We are told that he took delight in hunting tigers, and on at least one occasion an animal got close enough to tear the saddle of his horse. Later, he was persuaded to have a special carriage made, with some protection and loopholes to shoot from inside, but it was still a dangerous sport and it is said that Sun Quan took delight in being attacked by several wild beasts at a time.[34]

His personal character and authority, therefore, were not in question, but it was a source of some weakness for a warlord state that its commander-in-chief had no great military reputation. Despite past set-backs, Liu Bei was recognised as a fine military commander, and no-one could sensibly criticise Cao Cao on that score. Sun Quan, however, owed most of his success to his subordinates, and he continued to do so. He did not command a serious attacking force again, but he demonstrated the administrative and political skills appropriate to the ruler of a state, and even if he was not a great tactician, he had a good grasp of strategy and excellent subordinates to carry out his plans in the presence of the enemy.

In 216, after the success over Zhang Lu in Hanzhong, Cao Cao had returned to his city of Ye, and in the summer he was raised in fief to become King of Wei under the empire of Han.[35] In itself, this was a clear sign of the future, for in the four hundred years since the

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33 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1289 and PC note 1 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan* and the comments of Sun Sheng.

Earlier examples of burial alive, alleged to be a custom of the "semi-barbarous" state of Qin, are referred to in the celebrated "Yellow Birds" ode of *Shi jing* I.9.6; Legge *CC* IV, 198-200, in *Mengzi* I.1.4.6; Legge *CC* II, 133-134, and in *Zuo zhuan*, Wen 6; Legge, *CC* V, 244. *Zuo zhuan* Xuan 15; Legge, *CC* V, 328, also mentions the projected burial of a widow by a gentleman of the state of Jin, though this was not carried out.

SJ 6, 265; Chavannes, *MH* II, 195, tells how the women of the harem of the First Emperor of Qin, as well as the workmen who had constructed his tomb, were killed at the time of his burial, and evidence of human sacrifice has indeed been found among the modern excavations at that site. During Former Han, however, the burial of human victims was banned: *HS* 53, 2421; Wang, *Han Civilization*, 208.

In more modern times, one particularly unattractive feature of the Ming and Qing periods was the self-immolation, often encouraged by social pressure and family interest, of "virtuous widows." See T'ien, *Male Anxiety and Female Chastity*.

34 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1120, and *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1220, the biography of Sun Quan's cautious adviser Zhang Zhao.

35 *SGZ* 1, 47. The same text notes that in the spring of that year Cao Cao had personally engaged in the ceremony of ploughing the sacred field, hitherto an imperial prerogative: Bodde, *Festivals*, 223-228 and *ff*.

time of the founding Emperor Gao of Han, it had been an agreed convention that no person outside the imperial house of Liu should be granted royal honours.[36] Cao Cao had made himself Duke of Wei in 213, which was already an exceptional position,[37] but this new enfeoffment was still more significant.

In the winter of 216-217, little more than a year after Sun Quan's failure before Hefei, Cao Cao came south from Ye to the Huai and the Yangzi. By the eleventh month he was at Qiao, and in the spring, in the first month of 217, he brought his army forward to Juchao in Lujiang, close to the Yangzi by Huan city.

As at the time of the earlier attack by Cao Cao in 212-213, Sun Quan placed his army entirely on the defensive, notably in the Ruxu fortress. Chastened, perhaps, by the experiences of 215, he appears to have taken limited direct interest in the operations, and gave tactical command to Lü Meng, in charge of the land forces, and Jiang Qin with the fleet. Cao Cao attacked Ruxu, but had no success in the immediate fighting, and although Sun Quan's fleet was damaged by a storm, Cao Cao could not take advantage of it.[38]

Not long afterwards, in the second month of spring, Cao Cao left the southeast. Unlike the previous occasion of 213, however, he did not withdraw all his troops; instead he left behind his senior generals Xiahou Dun and Cao Ren, the veteran Zhang Liao, and twenty-six "armies," evidently a considerable force, still at the advanced base of Juchao.[39]

This was an interesting arrangement, and faced Sun Quan with an awkward situation. Given the strength of his fortifications at Ruxu, and his unchallenged command of the Yangzi in this region, he was not concerned with the threat of actual invasion. On the other hand, it would be difficult to dislodge such a large force of the enemy, established firmly on the defensive, and it could certainly not be done without great cost to his own men. This was no longer a matter of cutting out such an isolated city as Huan, or even an attack on Hefei. And yet, as long as Xiahou Dun kept his army in being so close to the Yangzi, Sun Quan's own movements were seriously restricted, and any operations to the east, whether in the Poyang region or in Jing province, would be under constant threat from raid or interception.

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36 *e.g. SJ* 9, 401; Chavannes, *MH* II, 414, and *HS* 3, 100; Dubs, *HFHD* I, 201.

There was one exception to this rule, made by the short-lived Gengshi Emperor, who enfeoffed chieftains of the Red Eyebrows and others of his supporters in AD 24: see Bielenstein, *RHD* II, 52-54. This was, however, an unusual occasion, and the later fate of the Gengshi Emperor at the hands of his over-mighty subjects did not make those enfeoffments a helpful model or precedent.

37 The position of duke under the Later Han dynasty had generally been reserved for the titular descendants of the ancient royal houses of Zhou and Shang/Yin: Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 108.

At the time of his enfeoffment as Duke of Wei, Cao Cao was also granted the Nine Distinctions: *HHS* 9, 387. The last occasion that the Nine Distinctions had been awarded was in 5 AD, at the end of Former Han, when they were granted to Wang Mang, who took the imperial throne for himself for years later. For further discussion, see note 15 to Chapter 7.

Three of Cao Cao's daughters were also taken into the Emperor's harem as Honoured Ladies, the second rank after that of Empress, and 215, after the Empress Fu and her family had been destroyed on a charge of treason, one of Cao Cao's daughters became Empress: *HHS* 9, 388, and *HHS* 10B, 452-55.

38 See the biography of Dong Xi, in *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1291, which tells how he refused to leave his post of command, however, and went down with his foundering flagship: also Chapter 5.

39 *SGZ* 9, 268, the biography of Xiahou Dun.

The twenty-six military units are described as *jun* "armies," though it is unlikely that they were so large as this rendering would imply. They were probably separate but associated camps, perhaps of regimental size, five hundred to a thousand men each.

In these circumstances, Sun Quan sent Xu Xiang, who held the rank of Chief Commandant but who was really a personal aide, to negotiate terms.[40] It did not prove particularly difficult. In exchange for withdrawal of the northern armies, Sun Quan made formal "surrender" to Cao Cao, and they renewed the alliance of peace and marriage which had been broken at the time of the Red Cliffs.

The terms of the surrender appear very easy, and there is no record of any request for tribute or hostages. Xiahou Dun's forces were rather a card to play for the short term than the advance guard of a major initiative against the south, and Cao Cao would be reluctant to tie his men up in an exposed salient while there were so many other problems elsewhere. Nevertheless, the manoeuvre had shown its effectiveness against Sun Quan, and his surrender was an admission of weakness, involving some loss of face. Moreover, by acknowledging Cao Cao's authority at this time, Sun Quan acquiesced in his claim to the title of king, with all that implied for the Han dynasty. It would be difficult for him to make propaganda in future as a loyal supporter of the imperial house against the usurper. The offensive along the Yangzi had been as much a political affair as a military one, and both sides could be reasonably satisfied with their bargain.

It was also in this year 217 that Lu Su died. Sun Quan paid him all respects, and personally accompanied the cortège to his tomb. In his stead, as commander of the forces in Jing province, he appointed Lü Meng, who took over the headquarters at Lukou, with title as Grand Administrator of Hanchang, and with personal supplies allocated from the counties of Xiajun, Liuyang, Hanchang and Zhouling, the same grant as that to Lu Su. The army under his direct command numbered ten thousand men.

We have noted Lü Meng on several occasions, from first appearance among the junior leaders when Sun Quan succeeded to power in 200, to his role as commander of a detachment against Cao Ren in Nan commandery in 208, to his more recent experience on active campaigns in Jing province and north of the Yangzi. Given the distance of Jing province from Sun Quan's headquarters, and the uncertainty of the settlement there with Liu Bei and Guan Yu, Lü Meng's new appointment made him the most important military commander under Sun Quan.

Lü Meng was originally a man of Runan commandery, but he came to the south of the Yangzi in his early teens and joined his brother-in-law Deng Dang, who was an officer under Sun Ce's command. It would appear that Lü Meng's father had died and he and his mother, whatever their status may have been in the north, were poor refugees. Later, however, Lü Meng made something of a name for himself, he became an attendant to Sun Ce, and when Deng Dang died he was given command of his troop. It was about that time Sun Quan came to power, and Lü Meng was able to impress him and gain advancement by his uniformed and well-drilled men.[41]

Lü Meng appears always to have been energetic and aggressive, and his early reputation, like that of his friend and colleague Gan Ning, was rather that of a bullying fighter than a gentleman general. Later, we are told, as he began to be given more important commands, Sun Quan and others urged him to acquire some veneer of culture. One account, in *Jiangbiao zhuan*, describes a conversation with Sun Quan, who urged Lü Meng and Jiang Qin to study in order to improve themselves. Lü Meng replied that he was too busy with military affairs to have the leisure to read.

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40 Xu Xiang does not have a specific biography in *Sanguo zhi*, but he is mentioned several times in that of his colleague Hu Zong: *SGZ* 62/Wu 17, 1413-18.

41 See Chapter 4.

Sun Quan said, "Why should I want you to plough through the classics like some academic. Just browse about, and take note of things that have happened in the past.

"You say you're too busy, but surely I have more responsibilities than you have. When I was young, I read the *Classic of History* and the *Classic of Poetry*, the *Ritual*, the *Zuo Chronicle* and the *Tales of the States*. The only one I have never read is the *Classic of Changes*...

"You should look at the *Art of War* by Master Sun, the *Six Stratagems*, the *Zuo Chronicle*, the *Tales of the States*, and the three histories."[42]

With this reading list, and with other encouragement, Lü Meng did embark on a course of scholarship, and he impressed his superiors, such as Lu Su, not only with his sense of military planning but also with his skilful turn of a classical phrase.[43]

Lü Meng, however, was not Sun Quan's first choice to succeed Lu Su on the western front. The scholar Yan Jun, an expert on the classics, had held a series of posts at headquarters, and Sun Quan intended to make him the new commander. Yan Jun, however, made firm excuses, pleading that he was only a scholar and had no training in war, and when Sun Quan examined the question further, Yan Jun confirmed his demurrals by repeatedly falling off his horse.[44]

Yan Jun was admired by the people of his time for this show of sensible modesty, and he later rose to significant rank in civil offices at the court. One may suspect that he would have been a less active commander than Lü Meng.

According to Lü Meng's biography, from the time he was appointed in the west he made a fine show of respect and friendship for Guan Yu, and gave every sign that he intended to continue the policy of Lu Su in that region. We are also told, however, that he discussed future strategy with Sun Quan, and urged him to a forward policy in Jing province:

Guan Yu and all those people are boastful of their strength. They are unstable, and we cannot trust them. The reason Guan Yu has not yet turned eastwards against us is the influence of your majesty's spiritual understanding, and because I and some others are there to face him. However, if you do not act while we are strong, and then one day we are gone and you wish to muster forces again, how will you manage it?

Sun Quan was most impressed with this argument, but he raised with him the alternative policy, of expansion against Xu province. Lü Meng replied,

Now Cao Cao is a long way away, north of the Yellow River. He has destroyed the Yuan group, and he has collected You and Ji provinces. He does not yet have time to spare to look to the east [and deal with us here].

I have heard that the soldiers guarding Xu province are not enough even to talk about; if you go there you can take them. But that region is all dry land, and good cavalry can gallop there. If your honour takes Xu province now, Cao Cao will surely

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42 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1274-75 PC note 1 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*. Of the works recommended by Sun Quan, the *Six Stratagems* was a text ascribed to the Zhou period, and the "three histories" describe *Shi ji*, *Han shu* and *Dongguan Hanji*, this last being the history of Later Han compiled under that dynasty (see Chapter 9).

43 *Jiangbiao zhuan*, *loc.cit.*, tells how Lu Su had formerly tended to discount Lü Meng's abilities but then happened to pass by his headquarters after Lü Meng had taken his special reading course. He was surprised with the new scholarship and complimented Lü Meng. Lü Meng replied with an appropriate classical proverb, and Lu Su made a point of calling upon Lü Meng's mother as earnest of his new friendship and collegiality: de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 417.

44 *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1248 and 1249 PC note 1 quoting *Zhi lin.*

come to fight for it within ten days, and even if you defend the territory with seventy or eighty thousand men it would still be cause of anxiety.

The best thing to do is to take Guan Yu and seize all the Long River. Those lands are very broad.

Sun Quan felt that these words were absolutely right.[45]

One must suspect that this conversation, at least in its detail, is largely imaginary. Cao Cao had defeated Yuan Shao at Guandu in 200, and destroyed the last of his family in the northern campaign of 207. Since that time he had no rival in the North China plain. In recent years, moreover, Cao Cao had found opportunity to pay a good deal of attention to the Yangzi frontiers, and Sun Quan had not found his defences in Xu province nearly so negligible as this speech of Lü Meng would imply.

Rather than trying to reconcile the anachronisms, or explain the apparent gross and misleading flattery of Lü Meng, it seems better to accept the passage as the invention of a historian, designed to bring out the contrasting strategy between the "northern" policy against Xu province and the valley of the Huai, and the "western" policy against Jing province and Guan Yu's positions there, and also to establish the position of Lü Meng as an advocate of the latter program.

The question of dry land and cavalry was obviously important, and experience had demonstrated the weakness and the scant expectation of success for Sun Quan's forces north of the Yangzi. Far from capturing Hefei, Sun Quan was now faced by an established defence line along the Huai, supported by supplies from agricultural colonies, and Cao Cao's offensive of 216-217 had largely deprived him of the initiative for the foreseeable future.

If Sun Quan was to expand and develop his state as an independent power, he must look to the west and the south. The south, as we have seen, was being colonised with energy and considerable skill, but there were limits to the aid which renegades and non-Chinese could be compelled to give, and dangers in a commitment too far in that direction. In the west, to say the least of it, expansion since the Red Cliffs triumph had been disappointing. Sun Quan still controlled less than half of the territory of Jing province, and he was faced with a powerful ally or rival who might at any time decide to turn against him. For the last several years, the advice of Lu Su had been appropriate, and Sun Quan's chief attention had been given to the struggle against Cao Cao and development of the territory in Yang province. Now, however, by force of elimination, he must consider the possibilities and dangers of the west.

The great betrayal (219):

So the death of Lu Su in 217, and the formal surrender to Cao Cao in the same year, marked a potential change of policy, and this was only confirmed by the appointment of Lü Meng as commander in Jing province. With the information available to them, Liu Bei and Guan Yu would have done well to be cautious.

In fact, for one reason or another, the men of the west do not appear to have troubled to read the signs. It is possible Guan Yu was indeed misled by Lü Meng's dissemblance, but it seems more likely that he had limited respect for his neighbour. In the ten years since the Red Cliffs, Liu Bei's power had expanded greatly, and he had achieved considerable

45 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1278.

military success. Sun Quan, by contrast, had suffered a succession of defeats in his enterprises north of the Yangzi about Hefei, and his power looked much the same as it had before: a local warlord with small capacity beyond his immediate territory.

Admittedly, Sun Quan's forces had achieved some success in the campaign in Jing province in 215, but that had been a matter rather of trickery and lucky timing, and one might argue that the relative positions of the two sides could be seen from the agreement to return Lingling commandery as a condition of truce. Had Sun Quan felt strong enough to face Guan Yu and Liu Bei in the field, he would no doubt have done so, and would not have yielded territory which he had already gained. So Guan Yu and his master had reason to discount the effectiveness of any initiative taken by Lü Meng, and their first priority lay to the north. Once they had established a firm position against Cao Cao, it should not be difficult to expand eastwards against Sun Quan.

Liu Bei's chief current concern was in the north of Yi province, on the front against Hanzhong commandery. During 218 there was some skirmishing in the territory of Ba commandery between forces of Cao Cao and Liu Bei's generals Zhang Fei and Ma Chao, but by the end of that year Cao Cao's men had been driven back. Liu Bei then took command of a expedition against the upper Han valley, and Cao Cao brought an army to Chang'an, planning to cross the Qin Ling range and support Xiahou Yuan in an attack on the south.

Before Cao Cao could arrive, however, in the early spring of 219, his troops in Hanzhong were decisively defeated at Dingjun Mountain, near the Yangping Pass and Mianyang city, present-day Mian county in Shenxi. Xiahou Yuan was killed in the rout, and the remnants of the army, now commanded by Zhang Ge, could do no more than hold the passes to the north. In the third month, Cao Cao came to their support, but Liu Bei had control of the river valley. There were some minor skirmishes, but no direct entanglement, and in mid-summer Cao Cao was compelled to take his men back across the mountains to Chang'an. Liu Bei now held Hanzhong.

It was a remarkable success, and the battle at Dingjun Mountain was one of the decisive victories of the time. By that one stroke Liu Bei eliminated the immediate threat to his territory and gained an easily defensible mountain frontier against his major enemy. With his base in Yi province secure, he could plan with confidence for the future.

In the autumn of that year, to confirm his control and to make propaganda as rival to the usurper in the north, Liu Bei proclaimed himself King of Hanzhong. In doing so, he was able to create a link with his ancestor the founding Emperor Gao of Former Han, who had become King of Han in 206 BC. The ceremony was held at Mianyang city, near the scene of his victory at Dingjun Mountain, and messages were formally addressed to the Emperor of Han, assuring him of Liu Bei's intention to act on behalf of the dynasty, and returning the seals and ribbons as general and marquis which had been granted him in the past. (One may wonder how the documents were actually delivered.) The new king, however, continued to maintain his capital at Chengdu, albeit with a military post-road to the northern frontier region.[46]

At the time of his accession Liu Bei gave new titles and honours to all his leading supporters, and in particular he named Guan Yu as General of the Van, first but essentially equal in rank with Zhang Fei, with Huang Zhong who had joined Liu Bei in

46 *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 884 to 887 and 887 PC note 2 quoting *Dian lue.*

Jing province,[47] and with the new-comer Ma Chao. It is said that Guan Yu was angry not to have been given clear distinction above his colleagues, as Liu Bei's oldest associate and leading commander, and he was only with some difficulty persuaded to accept the new title and insignia without making a public show of his indignation.[48] Besides this matter of hierarchy, moreover, it was probably a matter of some embarrassment that the striking success in Hanzhong had been gained without him. Guan Yu may well have felt some loss of prestige, and resolved to add something more to this wonderful year.

And indeed, there were signs that this twenty-fourth year of Jian'an might well prove to be an *annus mirabilis* for the enemies of Cao Cao, and notably for Liu Bei. Striking eastwards down river from his new position on the upper Han, and north from Zigui county on the Yangzi just inside Jing province, Liu Bei ordered a two-pronged attack on Cao Cao's positions in the western part of present-day Hubei, the new commanderies of Fangling and Shangyong. Both territories surrendered, and Liu Bei had thus established a position east of the main ranges which surrounded Yi province, with a threat to the lower valley of the Han about Xiangyang and to the central commandery of Nanyang.[49] In the eighth month, in the middle of autumn, Guan Yu came north with his main forces both land and river, to support these moves and launch a direct attack on Cao Cao's defences at Xiangyang.[50]

Xiangyang, with its sister city Fan across the Han River on the northern bank, was a strategic centre of Jing province and had been the capital of Liu Biao's government before 208.[51] It was on the southern borders of Nanyang commandery, about 120 kilometres from the old capital, Wan, and had good communications in that direction and then into the North China plain and also the region of Luoyang. In Cao Cao's hands, this territory was a barrier to any attack from the south, but if Guan Yu could capture it he would have access, either for raids or for full invasion, into the heart-land of the empire.

Cao Cao's defences in this area were commanded by his cousin Cao Ren, whose headquarters were at Fan city, on the northern bank of the Han River. When Guan Yu approached, a second army, commanded by Yu Jin, was sent to aid Cao Ren. They remained camped, in seven divisions, on open ground north of the city.

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47 The biography of Huang Zhong is in *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 948. He had held office in Changsha under Liu Biao, and joined Liu Bei when he took over the southern commanderies after the Red Cliffs campaign. He then accompanied Liu Bei into Yi province and took part in the attack on Chengdu.

48 *SGZ* 41/Shu 11, 1015-16, the biography of Fei Shi.

49 *SGZ* 40/Shu 10, 991, the biography of Liu Bei's adopted son, Liu Feng.

Cao Cao's Grand Administrator of Fangling, Kuai Qi, who was probably a relative of Kuai Yue, Cao Cao's supporter in Jing province in the time of Liu Zong (see Chapter 4), was killed. Shen Dan, Cao Cao's Grand Administrator of Shangyong, surrendered and sent his wife and family as hostages to Chengdu. He was given the title of a general, enfeoffed as a marquis, and appointed Grand Administrator of Shangyong as before, while his brother, Shen Yi, was also given a general's command and appointed Grand Administrator of the new commandery of Xicheng, just west of Shangyong. They probably had some local influence, and their attachment was worth maintaining.

Meng Da, who had commanded the expedition north from Zigui, was a former officer of the deposed Governor Liu Zhang, and was evidently not entirely trusted by Liu Bei: both sets of victorious troops were kept on station in the Shangyong region, with Liu Feng in overall command.

50 For the description of the early fighting in the campaign about Xiangyang, see the biography of Guan Yu in *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 941, that of Cao Ren in *SGZ* 9, 275-76, that of Yu Jin in *SGZ* 17, 524, and that of Pang De, a hero of the defeated forces, in *SGZ* 18, 546. The story is also told in *ZZTJ* 67, 2160-62; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 532-534.

51 See Chapter 4. Sun Jian, it will be recalled, had been killed in this region fighting for Yuan Shu against Liu Biao in 192.

At this point, however, there came seasonal but exceptionally heavy rain, not only locally but also in the mountain country of the catchment area for the Han River to the west. There was a flash flood and Yu Jin's forces were taken completely by surprise. Guan Yu commanded a considerable fleet, brought up along the course of the Han, and as the river broke its banks his sailors were in their element against the soldiers from the north. Yu Jin's men were driven onto isolated hillocks of higher ground, and Guan Yu's boats concentrated against these places of refuge one by one. Great numbers of Yu Jin's men were drowned, and almost all the rest of his army, including Yu Jin, was taken prisoner.

This was a major local disaster, and there was now a very high possibility that Guan Yu could establish a position in the north. Cao Ren's army was trapped inside Fan city, and the walls served as a defence against the floods as much as against the enemy: on some faces, Guan Yu's ships could sail right up to them. Elsewhere Guan Yu set up several lines of siege-works, and the city was cut off completely from outside. South across the Han river, the county city of Xiangyang was also isolated and under siege, and some secondary positions surrendered, but the major attention was paid to Cao Ren, and the fall of Fan city could have been a misfortune for Cao Cao even greater than the loss of Hanzhong commandery.

Cao Ren may have contemplated retreat before the siege was fully joined, but the existence of his army, even in this critical position, was enough to prevent Guan Yu from exploiting success and causing disruption further to the north. Cao Ren still had several thousand men with him, including cavalry. The horses were of little use in the floods, but they could be a source of food, and there was surely no shortage of water. In token of his determination to hold out, he held a ceremony of oath-taking and drowned a white horse to make covenant with his men.

After the initial attack and the disaster to Yu Jin, the siege and defence were maintained for several weeks, and Cao Cao gathered forces for the relief. By the tenth month, the beginning of winter, he had set up a base at Luoyang, and a force under Xu Huang had been sent forward - not strong enough to break the siege, but able to harass Guan Yu's fixed positions and offer some encouragement to Cao Ren and his men.[52] On the other hand, Cao Cao was not yet ready to commit himself to the fray, and he was indeed advised by his attendant Huan Jie not to do so. The very fact that he held his power in reserve would encourage Cao Ren and his men to hold out, and would demonstrate his military strength.[53]

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52 *SGZ* 17, 529-530, the biography of Xu Huang, also *ZZTJ* 67, 2166-68; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 543-545.

53 *SGZ* 22, 632, the biography of Huan Jie.

Huan Jie had an interesting and varied career. He came originally from Changsha, and had been recommended for office by Sun Jian when he was Grand Administrator there in the late 180s. He held office in the imperial secretariat at Luoyang, but later joined Sun Jian on his campaigns during the civil war, and when Sun Jian was killed Huan Jie was sent on embassy to request his body from Liu Biao.

He evidently returned to Changsha, and it is said that he encouraged the rebel Grand Administrator Zhang Xian to stir up trouble against Liu Biao in order to prevent him intervening in support of Yuan Shao against Cao Cao at the time of the campaign about Guandu in 200.

Some time after the defeat of the Changsha rebellion, Huan Jie was again taken into Liu Biao's service: an appointment which speaks well of Liu Biao's tolerance, or reveals his ignorance of Huan Jie's political activities. He left office again, however, pleading that he was sick, because he wished to avoid entanglement with the family of Liu Biao's wife of the Cai clan.

In many respects, this show of confidence was as important to Cao Cao's position as the eventual defeat of Guan Yu. His rise to power had not been without political opposition, and there had been a number of small and unsuccessful plots against him by civilians at Xu and at Ye.[54] In this transitional period, Cao Cao could never be entirely confident of any but his closest associates, and he could not afford to stretch people's divided loyalties or offer them too great temptation to turn against him. No matter what ranks and titles might obtain, his government was still that of a warlord, and it was important to maintain his military prestige.

Through late autumn, therefore, and into the winter, Guan Yu and Cao Ren were bound in the siege at Fan city, and both sides had reason for their commitment to that position.

At the beginning of Guan Yu's campaign against the north, there was limited opportunity for Sun Quan or Lü Meng to take any action. Guan Yu left garrisons along the Yangzi at Gongan and Jiangling, and if Lü Meng had made any early move Guan Yu could have returned with his army and his fleet down the line of the Han River and offered an effective counter-attack against Jiangxia. The very success of Guan Yu's operations against Yu Jin, however, committed him more closely to the hope of ultimate success against Cao Ren, and he began to draw upon his reserve troops, thus weakening his positions along the Yangzi.

It is possible that Sun Quan made some move against Hefei about the time Guan Yu first struck against the north,[55] but if he did it was rather a demonstration or a feint than a real attempt at conquest, and the major intention was probably to reassure Guan Yu. More specifically, it was now revealed that Lü Meng was ill, and he was recalled to Sun Quan's headquarters while Lu Xun was sent to take his place as acting commander at Lukou. Lu Xun wrote effusive and encouraging letters to Guan Yu, and certainly there appeared small threat from an army which was in the process of reorganising its command structure. Guan Yu became still less concerned about his eastern front.[56]

When Cao Cao captured Jing province, he took Huan Jie into his personal service, and Huan Jie later became a supporter of Cao Pi, the Heir-Apparent and successor. After the accession of Cao Pi and the proclamation of the new dynasty, Huan Jie became Prefect of the Masters of Writing of Wei, but died soon afterwards.

54 In 214, for example, the Empress Fu of Emperor Xian of Han had been dismissed and died for attempting to incite action against Cao Cao: *HHS* 10B, 454.

In 217-218 there was a plot to seize Xu city by means of a military coup organised by a number of ministers and other officials. They planned to kill Cao Cao and call on Guan Yu to support the Han government. There was fighting but the rebellion was quickly defeated:*SGZ* 1, 50.

In the winter of 218 there was a mutiny among the garrison of Wan city in Nanyang, which was not put down until the spring three months later: *SGZ* 1, 51.

In the autumn of 219 there was a plot to seize Ye city, and several thousand people, including officials and leading gentry, were punished for their involvement: *SGZ* 1, 52 and PC note 1 *bis* quoting [*Wei-Jin*] *shi yu*; *SGZ* 8, 263; *SGZ* 21, 599; *et alii*.

None of these incidents presented immediate danger to Cao Cao's authority, but they demonstrate some tensions in the state, and serve as warning what might happen if his power should appear to be wavering.

55 The only reference to an attack on Hefei at this time appears not in the biography of Sun Quan, but in that of the Wei officer Wen Hui, in *SGZ* 15, 479, where it appears rather as the opportunity for an anecdote describing Wen Hui's perspicacious analysis of the dangers faced by Cao Ren at Xiangyang. See also *ZZTJ* 67, 2161; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 532.

56 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1278, the biography of Lü Meng, and *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1344-45, the biography of Lu Xun.

Lü Meng's sickness was real, but that did not prevent him from planning operations with Sun Quan. At one stage, Sun Quan intended him to hold a joint command with Sun Jiao, but he was persuaded to grant Lü Meng full authority over the direct attack, and Sun Jiao was given command of a reserve army.[57] The main striking force was brought up to strength by gradual reinforcements, but it was gathered at Xunyang city in Lujiang commandery, well behind the frontier. Guan Yu's intelligence service gave him no warning, and he was, indeed, sufficiently disdainful of Sun Quan's reactions that he seized some supplies for his armies from one of Sun Quan's storage bases on the Xiang River.[58]

At some stage Sun Quan and Cao Cao appear to have been in communication on the matter, though the anecdotes which describe their mutual plotting are contradictory. According to one version, Cao Cao invited Sun Quan to attack Guan Yu, and offered him recognition as ruler of all the lands south of the Yangzi. Another story suggests that Sun Quan took the initiative by writing to Cao Cao, advising him of his plans, but asking him to keep the matter secret so that Guan Yu would be taken by surprise. Cao Cao, believing that his interests were best served by setting Guan Yu and Sun Quan at each others' throats, sent messages to Guan Yu; but then Guan Yu refused to credit them and maintained the siege against Fan city.[59]

It is possible that Cao Cao may have sought to urge Sun Quan against Guan Yu, and he may also have attempted to frighten Guan Yu away by threatening him with that possibility, but it is hard to imagine what real benefit Sun Quan could have hoped to gain by entrusting his secret plans to Cao Cao. As with other great events of the time, one suspects that tales of romance and trickery have gathered around this incident, and such stories are rather imaginative anecdotes than the records of serious diplomacy.

In the intercalary tenth month, about early December of 219, Sun Quan's forces moved against the west. Jiang Qin was in command of a fleet which moved up the Han to guard against any counter-stroke. Sun Jiao brought his men forward to the region about the junction of the two rivers, to act as a reserve and also as a holding force in case Cao Cao's forces in the northern part of Jiangxia commandery sought to intervene against their line

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Lu Xun's biography tells how, when Lü Meng was returning from his post in the west, Lu Xun argued with him that he should rather take the opportunity to attack Guan Yu. His ideas fitted so well with the plans of Lü Meng and Sun Quan that he was naturally appointed to take Lü Meng's place.

Lu Xun, however, was not given the same rank as Lü Meng, for he was made only a Lieutenant-General. This further encouraged the belief that Sun Quan was planning no initiatives on that region.

Extracts from Lu Xun's congratulatory letters to Guan Yu are preserved in his biography.

57 *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1207-08, the biography of Sun Jiao; and see note 4 to Chapter 5.

58 The place is described as Xiangguan, "The Pass on the Xiang," but cannot be further identified. It seems most probable that it was a small fortress by a crossing place of the Xiang River, between the territories of Sun Quan and Liu Bei, probably close to the junction of the Xiang with the Yangzi, south of Guan Yu's base at Gongan and near present-day Yueyang.

SGZ 54/Wu 9, 1278, suggests this incident was the trigger for Sun Quan to move against Guan Yu, but it is clear that preparations had been made well before. The Xiangguan incident may have served as an item of propaganda to justify the attack.

59 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1120, has the simple story that Sun Quan wrote to Cao Cao, advising him of his plans. Cao Cao, hoping to turn Guan Yu and Sun Quan against one another to his own advantage, had the letter sent to Cao Ren in Fan city who in his turn passed it to Guan Yu.

SGZ 14, 440, the biography of Dong Zhao, an old associate of Cao Cao, tells how he advised Cao Cao to betray Sun Quan's confidence. Cao Ren's men in Fan were encouraged, but Guan Yu paid no attention. (Though Cao Ren was quite surrounded, messages were shot by arrows between his troops and those of Xu Huang operating outside Guan Yu's lines).

of communications. Lü Meng led the main attack, starting from the rearward position at Xunyang, and moving upstream along the Yangzi with most of his troops hidden in barges, while the ships were rowed by men dressed in plain clothes to look like merchants and traders. They took Guan Yu's outposts by surprise and captured them one by one before they could get out word.

Guan Yu's two chief defence posts were at Gongan, where the garrison was commanded by a certain Shi Ren,[60] and Jiangling, the capital of Nan commandery, held by Mi Fang. Both men, apparently, felt that they had been treated too casually by Guan Yu, and it is said that he had threatened them with punishment for some confusions in the despatch of supplies while he was in the north. Whatever the level of their disaffection, Shi Ren proved vulnerable to the diplomatic wiles of Lü Meng aided by Yu Fan, the man who had formerly persuaded Hua Xin to surrender to Sun Ce and who seems to have specialised in such diplomacy.[61] Then the army came to Jiangling, and Shi Ren added his voice to persuade Mi Fang to change sides.

By this one stroke, Lü Meng had changed the military strategy of the region. Guan Yu abandoned his operations at Fan city and Xiangyang and came directly southwards. He was not followed by Cao Cao's forces, for they preferred to let their two southern enemies fight things out. It was in fact, possible, despite his disadvantage, that Guan Yu might be able to drive Lü Meng away, or at least compel another negotiated settlement. He was faced, however, not only by a military coup, but also by admirable propaganda.

With the capture of Jiangling, Lü Meng had obtained control of Guan Yu's treasury and his family, and the families also of many of his soldiers. Lü Meng and his master Sun Quan placed strong emphasis on their righteous position in Jing province, and they advertised their friendship and protection. Lü Meng enforced rigid prohibitions against looting and made public display of the civil proprieties:

> One man of Lü Meng's command, who came from Runan [Lü Meng's own commandery], took a straw rain-hat from a family of the people in order to cover a coat of mail belonging to the government.
>
> Even though the armour was public property, Lü Meng still held that the man had disobeyed his orders, and he could not remit the law simply because he came from his own district. He wept, and beheaded him.
>
> In the army there was fear and trembling, and no-one dared even to pick up things which had been dropped on the road.
>
> Moreover, Lü Meng sent men of his Companions morning and evening to ask after the old people and to enquire what they might lack. He gave medicine to the sick, and clothing and food to those who were hungry and cold.[62]

As Guan Yu's army approached, he and Lü Meng sent messengers to one another, and Lü Meng showed the utmost generosity. In particular, he had the men from Guan Yu's army taken about freely, to meet with their own and their colleagues' families, so they would report back how well they were treated and how little there was to gain from fighting. Guan Yu's men from Jing province were now rather inclined to desert than to join him in an attack against their own homes and kindred.

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60 There is some confusion over the name of his man. It appears that his personal name was Ren, but the surname is given in *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 941, as Fushi, and this is followed by *ZZTJ* 67, 2160. Other texts, however, *SGZ* 45/Shu 15, 1090, SGZ 47/Wu 2, 1120, and SGZ 54/Wu 9, 1278, refer to him as Shi Ren. It seems likely that the character *fu* is a mistaken addition to the text of *SGZ* 36.

61 See Chapter 3.

62 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1278-79.

In the mean time, Lu Xun had been sent further upstream towards the Yangzi Gorges and the route by which support must come from Yi province. He seized Yidu commandery, whose capital was near present-day Yichang on the Yangzi, and then sent detachments west against Zigui and north against Fangling. Lu Xun also put in a special order for seals of gold, silver and copper to give official appointments to the local Chinese and non-Chinese leaders who came to support him, confirming them in their new allegiance.[63]

By the eleventh month, a few weeks after the start of the operation, Guan Yu was isolated in the region of Dangyang, between the Yangzi and the Han, with Sun Quan's forces on three sides and Cao Cao's at the north. The greater part of his army deserted him, and in a final petty skirmish he and his son Guan Ping were captured and killed.[64]

It may be doubted whether Sun Quan was pleased with this last development. He had earlier offered Guan Yu the opportunity to surrender, and if he had been returned a prisoner or even escaped as a solitary refugee it would have been obviously embarrassing to Liu Bei. As it was, Guan Yu could be claimed to have received a martyr's death, and Liu Bei was bound to seek revenge.[65]

In all other respects, moreover, Sun Quan continued to make his occupation of Jing province as conciliatory and bloodless as possible. Guan Yu had controlled the region as a warlord and agent from outside, the man with the most powerful army. Though Sun Quan had taken power simply by the fact that he was for the time the stronger, he did attempt to maintain as many as possible from the former local administration in office, and he came in person to take up residence in Jing province, first at Jiangling and then at the military base Gongan. For the present, he could assume that Yang province was secure, and the gesture did a good deal to demonstrate his local authority and secure the support of the local people. To confirm his new regime, moreover, Sun Quan announced that on account of recent widespread sickness, there was remission of all taxes from the province for that year.

Among the prisoners taken on this campaign, Cao Cao's unfortunate general Yu Jin, captured amongst the floods at Fan city a few months before, and then held in Jiangling by Guan Yu, came now into Sun Quan's hands. He was treated with courtesy, but he was not yet sent back to the north.[66] The former Governor of Yi province, Liu Zhang, who had been deposed and exiled by Liu Bei, and had also been at Jiangling, was re-appointed to that title, with temporary residence at Zigui. He was evidently intended to act as a

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63 *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1345.

64 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1121, *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1279, and *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1299-1300, the last being the biography of Pan Zhang, one of the commanders sent in pursuit of Guan Yu, refer to the capture of Guan Yu and the remnants of his party. *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 941, tells how Guan Yu was beheaded at Linju.

65 *SGZ* 47 and *SGZ* 55, cited in note 64 above, give credit for the capture to the major Ma Zhong, serving in the army of Pan Zhang. *ZZTJ* 67, 2170; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 550, takes the implication that Ma Zhong personally beheaded Guan Yu.

SGZ 36, 942 PC note 3 quoting *Shu ji*, suggests that Sun Quan had hoped to keep Guan Yu alive and use him as an assistant against Cao Cao and Liu Bei, but his attendants pointed out that Guan Yu had always remained loyal to Liu Bei and would never serve anyone else. So Sun Quan had him killed. Pei Songzhi, however, remarks that this is a most unlikely story: it is hard to imagine Sun Quan would ever believe Guan Yu might support him; and in any case the operations against Guan Yu's remnant forces were taking place a considerable distance away, so he was in no position to make detailed decisions about life or death.

66 There was one unfortunate incident, when Sun Quan was riding with Yu Jin, and Yu Fan accosted Yu Jin, saying, "You are a surrendered prisoner. How dare you keep your horse level with our lord's?" He was about to hit him with a whip, but Sun Quan intervened to protect Yu Jin.

focus for opposition to Liu Bei in the west, but he died soon afterwards.[67] And Mi Fang, the man who had surrendered Jiangling, later held command in Sun Quan's forces.[68]

Within the newly-conquered territory, Sun Quan appears to have met negligible opposition, which may perhaps be typified by the case of Fan Zhou, a local official in Wuling who sought to raise the people in support of Liu Bei. It was thought at first that a considerable army would be required, for Fan Zhou claimed support among the non-Chinese of the hills. Sun Quan, however, asked the advice of a certain Pan Jun, who came from Wuling, and had now changed allegiance and been appointed to Sun Quan's staff. Pan Jun assured him that quite a small force would be sufficient.

"How can you treat Fan Zhou so lightly?" asked Sun Quan.

"Fan Zhou comes from an old family in Nanyang," replied Pan Jun. "He can make good speeches, but he has absolutely no idea about making plans. The reason I know this is because Fan Zhou once arranged a feast for the local people. By midday, there was still no food, and numbers of the people got up and went away. Once you have seen a performance like that, you can guess the rest."

Sun Quan laughed, and he sent Pan Jun there with five thousand men, and they cut off heads and put down the rebellion.[69]

On his own side, Sun Quan suffered two notable losses. Firstly, his officer Jiang Qin, who appears to have something of a specialist as a fleet commander, and who had been put in charge of the naval operations on the Han River, died of illness on his way back from the campaign. Secondly, still more important, Lü Meng also took ill and died soon after the end of the fighting.

Lü Meng was known to have been sick earlier in the year, and we have seen that he used his illness as a means to allay Guan Yu's anxieties. Soon after the fall of Jiangling and the arrival of Sun Quan in the province, however, even before he could receive the fief which should reward his achievements, his condition became acute. He was taken into care with lodgings next to Sun Quan's own quarters at Gongan, and rewards of gold were offered to any doctor who could cure him.

When acupuncture was applied, Sun Quan was miserable for him. He constantly wished to see Lü Meng's face, but he was afraid to be a nuisance so he would peer through a hole in the wall to see how he looked.

If he saw that Lü Meng could eat a little, Sun Quan would turn and smile to those about him and would even laugh. If Lü Meng refused his food, Sun Quan would sigh, and at night he could not sleep.

Then Lü Meng got better, and an amnesty was given in celebration, and all Sun Quan's ministers sent in their congratulations.

Later, however, he had a relapse, and Sun Quan went to attend him personally, and he ordered Taoist masters to pray under the stars on his behalf.

Lü Meng died, at the age of forty-two, in the inner apartments. Sun Quan was struck with the utmost grief and distress.[70]

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67 *SGZ* 31/Shu 1, 870.

68 He took part in operations during 223 under the command of He Qi against the Wei forces in Qichun, the eastern part of Later Han Jiangxia commandery: *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1130, and *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1380, and Chapter 7.

Since Mi Fang had initially held office under Cao Cao, but then left to follow Liu Bei, he achieved the remarkable record of serving each of the three rival states which succeeded to Han.

69 *SGZ* 61/Wu 16, 1397-98, the biography of Pan Jun, PC note 1 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.*

JING PROVINCE

We have seen earlier, in the account of the death of Sun Ce, how the story of the magician Gan Ji and the accursed mirror proved more popular than the human account of Sun Ce's death. The death of Lü Meng is likewise ascribed by *Romance* to the majestic vengeance of Guan Yu, reaching even beyond the grave:

> [Sun Quan] rewarded his soldiers and spread a great feast at which Lü Meng was in the seat of honour. He made a speech, saying,
>
> "After long waiting, the desire of my heart has come to me very easily through the magnificent efforts of my friend Lü Meng....."
>
> Then he filled the goblet and in person presented it to the guest of the evening.
>
> Lü took the cup, but as he raised it a sudden change came over him. Dashing the cup to the ground, he seized Sun Quan, crying, "O green-eyed boy! O red-bearded rat! Do you know me? .....After I quelled the Yellow Turbans, I went hither and thither for thirty years. Now I have fallen victim to your base plots and you have overcome me. If living I have been unable to gorge upon the flesh of mine enemy, dead I will pursue the spirit of this bandit Lü. I am the Marquis of Hanshou, Guan Yunzhang."[71]
>
> Terror stricken, Sun Quan was the first to fall prostrate, and all his officers followed him.
>
> Thereupon Lü Meng fell over dead, with blood gushing from all his orifices.[72]

Many people, of course, prefer propaganda and fiction to historical fact.

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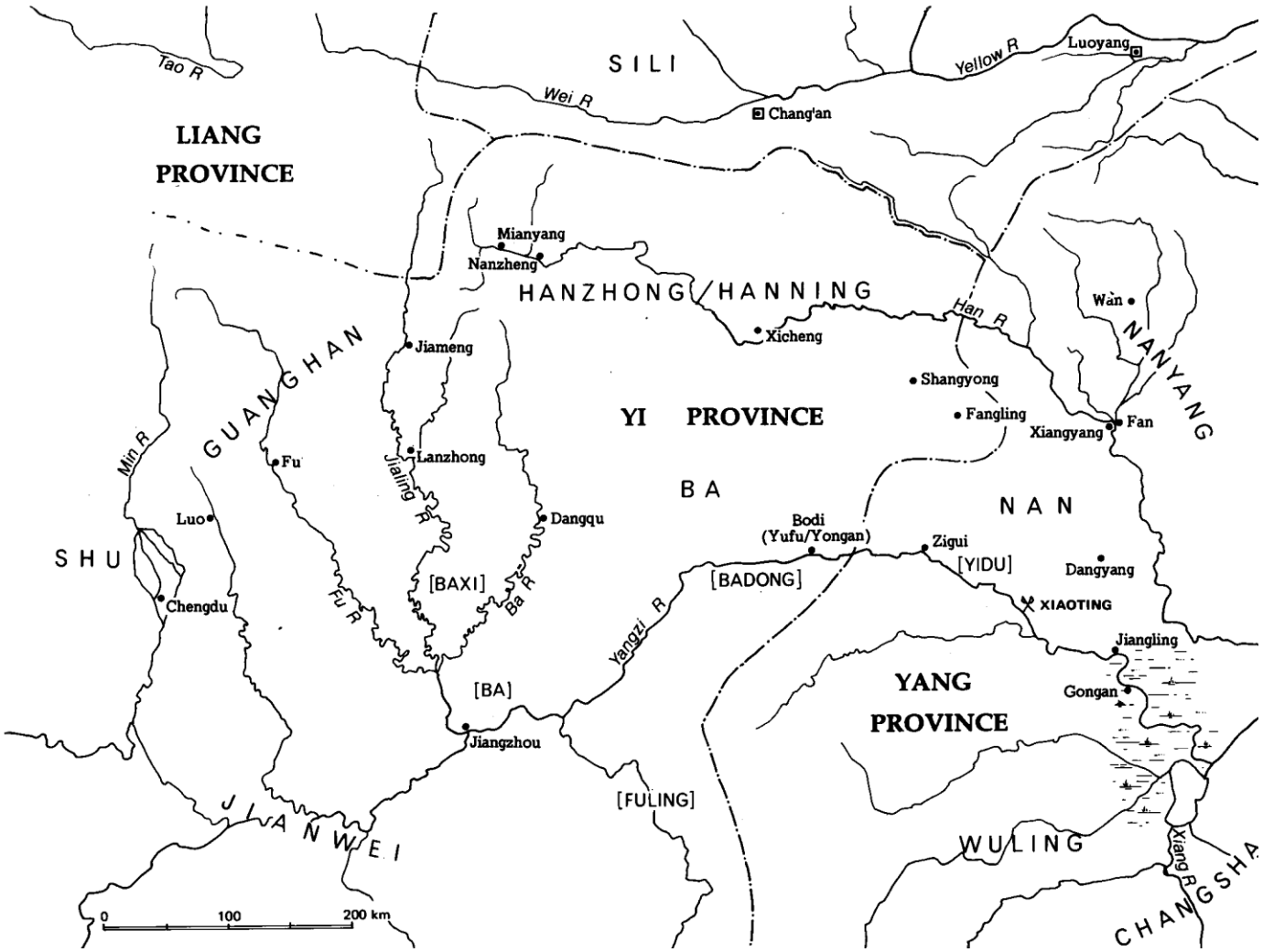
70 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1279-80. Lü Meng's final illness, and that of the admiral Jiang Qin, may have been caused by a general sickness in Jing province, cited at this time by Sun Quan as a reason for tax relief. On the other hand, though plague had affected Sun Quan's attack on Hefei in 215 [see note 32 above], and devastated the capital of Wei in 217, there is no specific reference to disease among the contending armies in 219.

71 Yunzhang was the style of Guan Yu, who had also held the fief of Hanshou Village.

72 *Romance*, chapter 77; translated Brewitt-Taylor, *San kuo* II, 180-181, amending the transcription to pinyin. This incident is also dramatised in a play "The Ghosts of Lord Guan and General Zhang [Fei] Return to Sichuan" by the celebrated Yuan composer Guan Hanqing, a work of which variant editions survive. See Liu Ching-chih [1980], chapter 4, also *Peking Opera Texts*, 4415, and *Jingju jumu chutan*, 101.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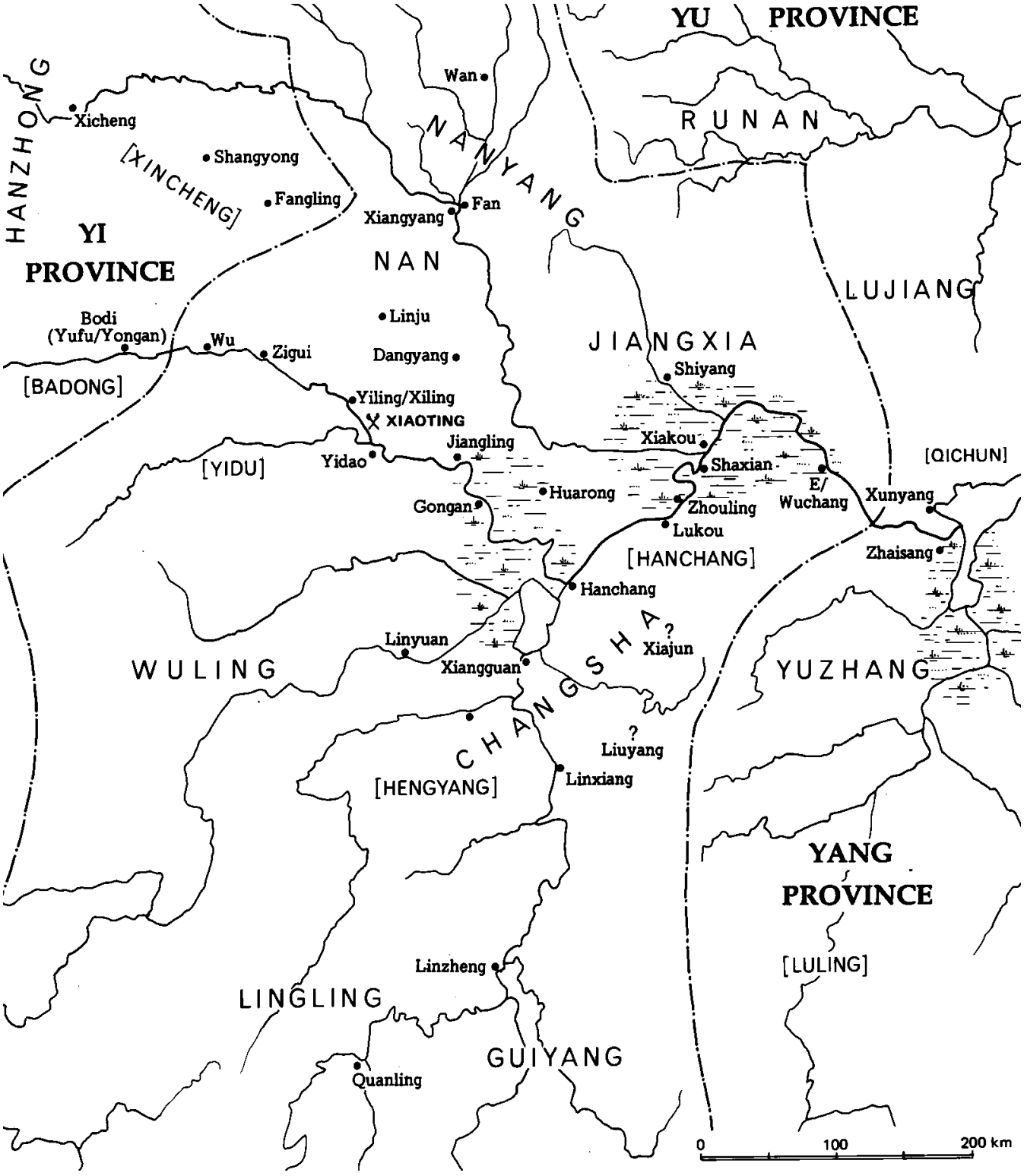
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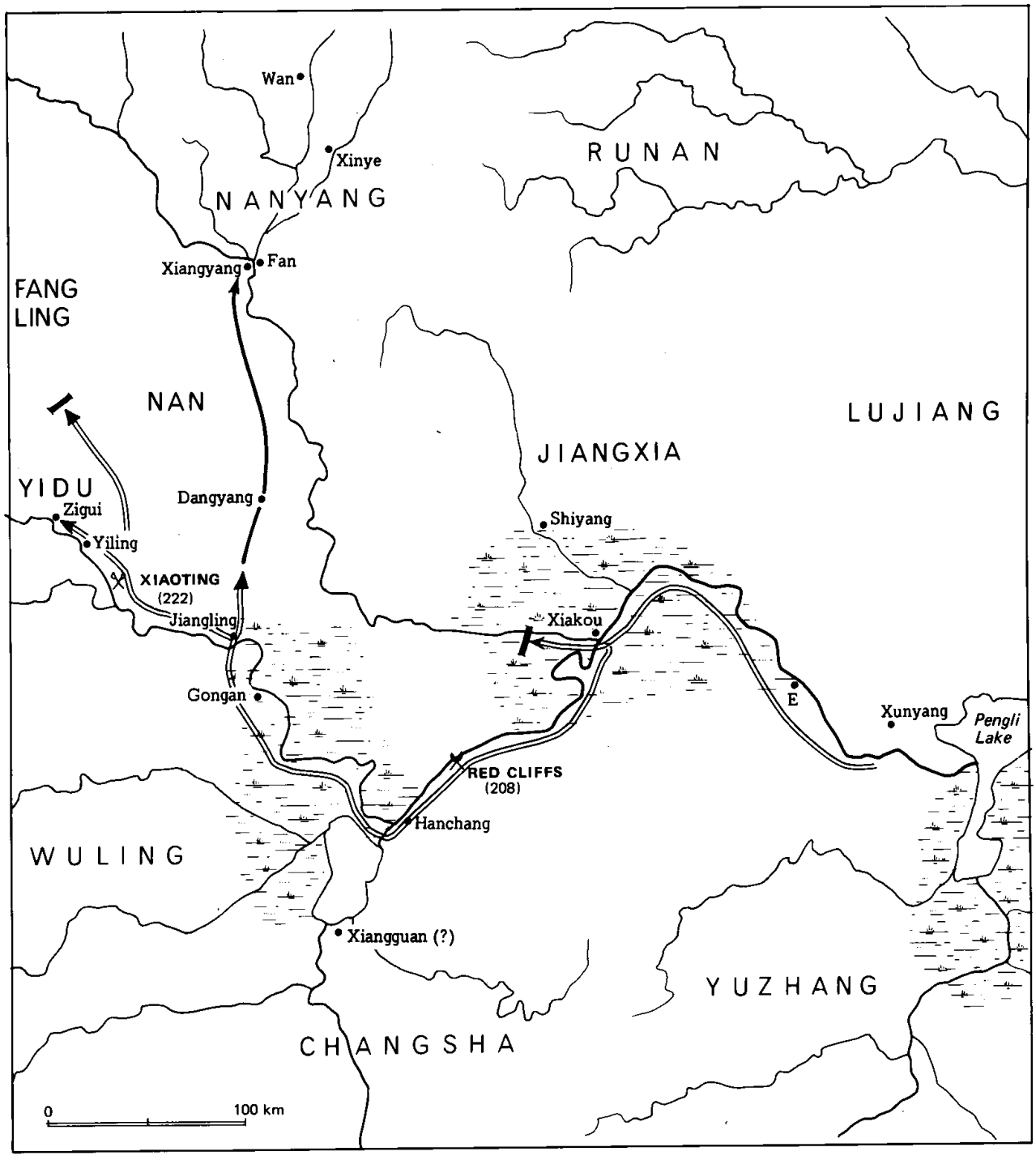
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(222)
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RED CLIFFS
(208)
Hanchang
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Xiangguan (?)
YUZHANG
CHANGSHA
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100 km
Lu Meng's advance
Lu Meng's blocking actions
Guan Yu's attack to the north

CHAPTER SEVEN

Claim to the Mandate 222-229

Introductory summary
Liu Bei's revenge
Security in the north
Expansion in the south
Parity of esteem

Introductory summary:

After the death of Cao Cao in 220, his son and successor Cao Pi proclaimed himself Emperor of Wei in replacement of Han. Liu Bei, in the west, followed suit, claiming to maintain the rightful descent of the imperial line. He also made preparations for an attack on Sun Quan to avenge Guan Yu and regain the territory which he had lost in Jing province.

Cao Pi enfeoffed Sun Quan as King of Wu. Sun Quan accepted the title and the alliance with the north so that he might be free to deal with Liu Bei's invasion.

In 222 Sun Quan's general Lu Xun defeated Liu Bei's army. Sun Quan now cut the connection with Cao Pi, and successfully defended the line of Yangzi against him. In 223 he restored the alliance with Shu-Han.

In the far south, after the death of Shi Xie in 226, Sun Quan's officer Lü Dai destroyed the Shi family and took over their territory. Sun Quan now controlled the greater part of three provinces of Han.

In 229 Sun Quan proclaimed himself Emperor of Wu.

Liu Bei's revenge:

During the two years which followed the destruction of Guan Yu and the conquest of Jing province, a central element of Sun Quan's policy was the preparation, both military and diplomatic, for dealing with the attack that would be brought by Liu Bei downstream from Yi province. There was no question that the invasion would come: the coup against Guan Yu was too easily seen as treachery to an ally, and the death of Guan Yu, Liu Bei's most senior comrade and commander, gave an element of blood-feud to the already bitter quarrel. For his own honour and, equally important, his personal prestige, Liu Bei could not accept the loss with any show of equanimity, and it was impossible to contemplate a truce or any secure peace.

In such a situation, it was essential for Sun Quan that he should not be faced with a threat from the north at the same time as he was dealing with Liu Bei, and in this matter of diplomacy he was both astute and fortunate.

The death of Guan Yu had taken place in the twelfth month of Jian'an 24, the beginning of the Western year 220. We are told that Sun Quan had the head of the defeated general sent to Cao Cao as a token of homage, while he arranged for the rest of

the corpse to be buried with all honour.[1] This somewhat contradictory proceeding can have done little to assuage the grief and anger of Liu Bei and his associates, but it produced a positive response from Cao Cao. Sun Quan was recommended as General of Elite Cavalry, the next-but-highest rank in the traditional military structure of Han, he was recognised as Governor of Jing province, and he was newly enfeoffed as Marquis of Nanchang, the capital of Yuzhang commandery.[2]

Cao Cao at that time was by the Mo Slope, south of Luoyang on the road to Xiangyang, where he had set up his rear base for the defence against Guan Yu. With the emergency at an end, he withdrew the troops that had been on active service, left Cao Ren to reconstitute the positions in that region, and returned to the north. He reached, however, only as far as Luoyang, and died there on 15 March 220, at the age of sixty-five.[3]

The death of Cao Cao, dominant figure in Chinese politics for the last twenty years, naturally brought a pause to the ambitions of the state of Wei against its rivals. He was succeeded by his eldest son Cao Pi, thirty-three years old, who had been established as Heir-Apparent to the kingdom of Wei in 217.[4] For the most part, the succession was recognised and approved, but there had been some uncertainty earlier, whether Cao Cao's third son Cao Zhi might not be a more suitable candidate, and his second son Cao Zhang also believed that he had an interest. Neither claim was strongly pressed or widely supported at the time, and Cao Pi and his ministers were astute enough to nullify the opposition.[5] Nevertheless, the period of transition in a warlord state, from the rule of an active man with celebrated achievements to that of his largely untried heir, introduced a period when the new chieftain would attempt to confirm his authority by ritual display rather than by political or military risk.[6]

The continued formal subservience of Sun Quan to the government of Wei, therefore, served the interests of both parties. Cao Pi gained the prestige of recognition from an outside power, and Sun Quan gained the benevolent neutrality of his most powerful potential enemy. At the time he dispatched Guan Yu's head to Cao Cao he had also returned the prisoner Zhu Guang, former Grand Administrator of Lujiang who had been captured at the storming of Huan in 214, and he sent an emissary with tribute and a mission to purchase horses. Some months later, when Cao Pi had come to power, he again sent various items of tribute. He did not, however, seek to confirm the relationship by sending any hostages, nor did he make any territorial concessions.

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[1] *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 942 PC note 3 quoting *Wu li.*

[2] *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1121. Sun Quan's former appointments under the Han government controlled by Cao Cao had been Grand Administrator of Kuaiji and General Who Exterminates the Caitiffs, titles which had been granted him at the time of his brother's death and his succession to power in 200. Though Sun Ce had been Marquis of Wu, Sun Quan had not been granted any enfeoffment until this time.

[3] *SGZ* 1, 53; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 1 and 15.

[4] The biography of Cao Pi, and the chronicle of his reign, is in *SGZ* 2. His posthumous title is Emperor Wen of Wei. After Cao Pi had taken the title of Emperor at the end of this year, Cao Cao his father was given posthumous title as Emperor Wu of Wei.

[5] On the possibility of Cao Zhi's succession to Cao Cao, see, for example, *ZZTJ* 68, 2150-52; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace,* 511-514. On Cao Zhang's interest in the succession, see *ZZTJ* 69, 2176; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 2 and 29-20. The biographies of Cao Zhi and of Cao Zhang are in *SGZ* 19, 557-76, and 555-57.

[6] *ZZTJ* 69, 2175-77; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 1-4 and 18-23, describes some of the events and discussions which attended the succession of Cao Pi. Among other incidents, there was a disturbance among the troops at the capital, and there was a purge of the political adherents of Cao Zhi, while Cao Zhi himself was demoted. See also *SGZ* 15, 481-82 and PC note 2 quoting *Wei lue.*

CLAIM TO THE MANDATE

In the tenth month of this year, on 11 December 220, Cao Pi took the final step in the establishment of his dynasty, receiving the abdication of Emperor Xian of Han and proclaiming himself first Emperor of Wei. The ceremony took place at the city of Xu, which was now, to match a prophesy, renamed Xuchang, "Xu Rising."[7]

Sun Quan was reserved on the matter, but he accepted the end of Han and he made no protest or break with the Wei. In particular, he accepted the new reign title proclaimed by Cao Pi, and he continued to send tribute gifts as required.[8]

In the summer of the following year, on 15 May 221, Liu Bei responded to Cao Pi's challenge, and had himself proclaimed Emperor at Chengdu.[9] By this time, moreover, he had prepared his armies for the revenge attack against Sun Quan, and in the autumn he embarked on that campaign.

In military terms, this period of eighteen months, through 220 and the first half of 221, had been quiet. In the autumn of 220, Liu Bei's general in the west of present-day Hubei, Meng Da, changed sides to join the Wei. He had felt under criticism for failure to assist Guan Yu in the fatal campaign the year before, and he had quarrelled with his supervisor Liu Feng, the adoptive son of Liu Bei. Though some regarded him as a turncoat, Meng Da was given command as Grand Administrator of the new commandery of Xincheng for Wei, which claimed the whole region of present-day Hubei, and incorporated the smaller commanderies of Fangling, Shangyong and Xicheng. Soon afterwards, under Meng Da's influence, the renegade Shen Dan, who had been Grand Administrator of Shangyong first under Cao Cao and then under Liu Bei, turned back to his first allegiance. Liu Feng was driven away and returned to Chengdu. It was suggested by Zhuge Liang that Liu Feng might cause difficulty for the succession of Liu Shan, Liu Bei's own young son and heir - Liu Feng had evidently outlived his usefulness and he was ordered to commit suicide.[10]

This activity on his northwestern frontier did not concern Sun Quan directly, and was a fairly natural adjustment after the destruction of Guan Yu.[11] It did, however, ensure that Liu Bei's only means of access to Jing province was along the narrow line of the Yangzi Gorges.

Sun Quan had remained in residence in Jing province, and in 221 he established his second capital, at E city, which he renamed Wuchang. By the end of autumn, the city had

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[7] *HHS* 9, 390, *SGZ* 2, 62, *ZZTJ* 6, 2182; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 36-39, and see Leban, "Managing heaven's mandate," which discusses the various prophecies used to justify the abdication and accession. On the change of the name of Xu city to Xuchang, which took place in the following year (*SGZ* 2, 77), see also note 12 to Chapter 2, and *cf.* the name of the capital city of Wuchang established by Sun Quan, note 12 below.

[8] Late in 221, Cao Pi made what was regarded as an excessive demand for exotic tribute items. Sun Quan sent them: *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1124 PC note 6 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 59-60 and 89-90.

[9] *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 887-890.

[10] *SGZ* 40/Shu 10, 991-94.

Liu Shan was seventeen *sui* when he succeeded his father Liu Bei in 223, so in 220 he was thirteen years old by Western reckoning. On the earlier history of Liu Bei's family, and the adoption of Liu Feng, see note 8 to Chapter 5.

Liu Bei at this time had two younger sons, Liu Yong and Liu Li, born to concubines. Both of them received royal titles: *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 890, and *SGZ* 34/Shu 4, 907 and 908, which gives their biographies.

[11] *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1121, notes that some five thousand households came south from the counties of Yin, Zan, Zhuyang, Shandu and Zhonglu, being the northern part of Nan commandery and the southwestern part of Nanyang, along the Han River, to settle under Sun Quan's control. It does not appear, however, that Sun Quan actually gained territory, as opposed to population, from this incident. More probably, the evacuation, which was initiated by the surrender of the local Wei commander, Mei Fu, is an indication of a developing no-man's land along that frontier.

been provided with defensive walls. At the same time, a special commandery was established about the city, controlling the length of the Yangzi from the junction with the Han east to the region of the Pengli Lake - this new capital district extended across the borders of the two Han provinces controlled by Sun Quan, and gave him a central site of communications both east and west.[12]

In the latter months of 221, as Liu Bei's expedition gathered way on its approach down the Yangzi, Sun Quan's officer Zhuge Jin sent a letter urging him to turn back, and Sun Quan too made offers of peace.[13] Several of Liu Bei's own advisers had doubts about the wisdom of the enterprise and its likely success, but no arguments would dissuade him, and certainly Sun Quan was offering no satisfaction or recompense for the past.

His more important exchange of missions was with the north. In the autumn of 221, he sent a most obsequious memorial, confirming himself as a subject of Wei, and he also sent back the general Yu Jin and other prisoners of war who had surrendered to Guan Yu in the campaign about Xiangyang. There was some debate at Cao Pi's court whether it would be possible to reject the submission of Sun Quan, which was obviously forced by the circumstances of Liu Bei's attack, and instead join with Liu Bei to eliminate Sun Quan.[14] Such a campaign, however, would clearly have entailed risks, and it was argued strongly that rejection of a peaceable suppliant would be a serious political error, destroying the air of credibility and natural authority which the regime was seeking to establish. The obviously enforced abdication of Han, natural and inevitable as it might appear in terms of *Realpolitik*, had nevertheless put a strain upon the acceptance of the new regime; a second crisis of good faith might have opened up even more serious tensions.

So a return embassy was sent to Sun Quan, granting him the Nine Distinctions, and also awarding him the title King of Wu. The embassy arrived in the eleventh month, being December of 221, though we have, curiously, no exact date for the ceremony. Certainly it was a triumph for Sun Quan, but it was most important not for the formalities of rank but rather for the confirmation of political agreement with Cao Pi. Sun Quan had obtained neutrality from the north; and in exchange, by accepting this royal honour from the Wei he had confirmed his allegiance and ended any possibility that he could claim to act in future as supporter and champion of displaced Han.[15]

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12 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1121.

The name of the city of Wuchang, which may be rendered as "Military Prosperity," appears thus for the first time in Chinese history. It should be noted, however, that the site of Sun Quan's Wuchang was not at the same place as its modern namesake, by the junction of the Han River with the Yangzi, where it forms part of the conurbation of Wuhan, but some eighty kilometres downstream, at the city which has been renamed Echeng.

13 *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 890; *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1232-33.

Zhuge Jin was at this time Sun Quan's Grand Administrator of Nan commandery, with headquarters at Gongan, which posts he had taken over after the death of Lü Meng. There was some talk that he might be planning private contact and surrender to Liu Bei, but Sun Quan denied any such possibility, and his commander Lu Xun agreed. See also Fang, *Chronicle* I, 50-52 and 74-75.

14 On this debate, see in particular the biography of Liu Ye, *SGZ* 14, 446 and 447 PC quoting the *Fuzi*; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 52-53 and 79-81.

Liu Ye was a man from Jiujiang commandery who had joined the service of Liu Xun and attempted to warn him against Sun Ce's trickery in 199 (Chapter 3 at note 58). He then went to Cao Cao, and held high rank and favour under Cao Pi. On this occasion, however, his advice was over-ruled.

15 Sun Ce had held the title Marquis of Wu at the time of his death. This enfeoffment, however, is the first occasion Sun Quan was associated in title with the region. He had formerly been Marquis of Nanchang, capital of Yuzhang, under the auspices of the now demised Han dynasty: note 1 above.

The marquisate of Wu, of course, took its name from the county; the kingdom from that of the commandery. Hereafter, I refer on occasion to the whole state of Sun Quan by the name of Wu.

The honour of the Nine Distinctions is described in *Bohu tong* 20, xxx, translated by Tjan, *White Tiger Discussions* II, 504-509, and is discussed also in his Introduction, in the first volume of the work, at 25-29 and 37-39.

The Nine Distinctions had earlier been awarded to Wang Mang in AD 5, a few years before he took the throne for himself in AD 9, and they were granted to Cao Cao at the time of his enfeoffment as Duke of Wei in 213. The edict of award to Wang Mang is cited in *HS* 99A, 4074-75, and is translated by Dubs, *HFHD* III, 208-210. The edict of award to Cao Cao appears in *SGZ* 1, 39, which text is translated by Tjan, *White Tiger Discussions* I, 26-27.

The edict of award to Sun Quan appears in *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1122, and lists the Nine Distinctions, and the reason for each grant, as follows:

1 Because you have given peace and comfort to the southeast and granted government to the lands beyond the Yangzi, so the people may follow their occupations in peace and none of them go astray; therefore we grant you the Great Carriage and the War Carriage, one of each, with Two Black Stallions.

2 You have paid attention to the revenues of the state and you have encouraged farming, so the granaries and storehouses are filled to completion; therefore we grant you the Clothes and Bonnets of Honour, with Red Slippers to match.

3 You reform the people by your virtue, and ceremony and teaching are brought to effect; therefore we grant you Suspended Musical Instruments to be displayed in your palace.

4 You have propagated good customs among the people, and by your moral influence you have brought the many tribes of the Yue to submit; therefore we grant you the right to dwell behind Vermilion Doors.

5 You have made best use of your talents and good judgement, and you give appointments to the just and worthy men; therefore we grant you the right to ascend the Inner Staircase.

6 Your loyalty and bravery are displayed together, and you clear away and eliminate evil and vice; therefore we grant you One Hundred Warriors Rapid as Tigers.

7 You have shown your authority far and wide, you have displayed your power in Jing and the south, you destroy and exterminate criminals and wrong-doers, and so the caitiffs are taken; therefore we grant you the Ceremonial Axe and the Battle Axe, one of each.

8 You have given good government and peace within your territory, and your valour and good faith are shown abroad; therefore we grant you One Scarlet Bow with One Hundred Scarlet Arrows and Ten Black Bows with One Thousand Black Arrows.

9 You have taken loyalty and respect as the basis for your conduct, and generosity and diligence are your virtues; therefore we grant you One Goblet of the Black Millet Herb-flavoured Liquor, with a Jade Libation Cup to match.

Predictably, this series of virtues and achievements, with associated honours, follows the pattern of the edict of award for Cao Cao eight years earlier, and in general terms, behind the varied and flowery rhetoric, one may see some relation between the various virtues and achievements and the grant of distinction which matches it. Thus peaceful government is rewarded by the Carriages and Horses; prosperous government is rewarded by Garments of Honour; reform and ceremony by Musical Instruments; extension of moral civilisation by the Vermilion Door; the appointment of good officials by the Inner Staircase. Thereafter, the sixth, seventh and eighth Distinctions are granted for different aspects of military prowess; and, finally, personal virtue is rewarded with the Ceremonial Liquor and the Libation Cup. For some further discussion, see Tjan, *White Tiger Discussions* I, 27-29, and II, 504-509.

In theory, it would appear the Nine Distinctions could be awarded individually to a feudal lord who had established his achievements or virtues in one field or another. Again in theory, the Distinctions were particular privileges granted by an imperial ruler to his subordinate: the most obvious is the Warriors Rapid as Tigers, which was the name of a regular unit of the imperial guards of Han (*e.g.* Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 24 and 27); the point of the sixth Distinction was that a subordinate ruler was granted the right to a body-guard of that name.

Cao Cao in 213 had been awarded three hundred such warriors by the Han dynasty, but Sun Quan was given the right to only one hundred by Cao Pi. The other notable difference between the entitlements listed in the two edicts is in the third grant: Cao Cao received Suspended Musical Instruments *and* Six Rows of Dancers; Sun Quan received only the Musical Instruments.

As we have seen, however, the only other men recorded as receiving the Nine Distinctions were Wang Mang and Cao Cao. Both received them in full, and in each case the grant proved a preliminary to the seizure of full power soon afterwards. Cao Pi was certainly showing Sun Quan high honour.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Though Liu Bei had embarked on his campaign against Sun Quan in the seventh month of 221, soon after his proclamation as Emperor, it was some time before his troops were readied for the invasion. Apart from the problems of concentrating such a major expeditionary force for advance along the narrow defile of the Yangzi Gorges, his arrangements received an early set-back when Zhang Fei, his senior general and sworn brother to Liu Bei and Guan Yu, was killed by renegades who then fled to Sun Quan.[16] By the winter, however, an army claimed to number forty thousand men had been brought into position and prepared for the offensive.[17]

Sun Quan's most westerly outpost was at Wu county, where the mountain range is cut by the great Wu Gorge on the Yangzi. Behind that, the main frontier force was at Zigui, near the present-day city of that name and just inside the last main gorge, the Xiling Xia. In anticipation of the attack, this territory had been re-organised as the commandery of Guling, and Pan Zhang, the man who had been responsible for the killing of Guan Yu, was appointed Grand Administrator and military commander of this first line of defence.[18]

Towards the end of 221, Liu Bei launched his first attack. Sun Quan's local commanders were defeated, and Pan Zhang was driven back. Liu Bei's advance guard occupied Zigui, and his agents made contact with the non-Chinese people of Wuling commandery, in the hill country south of the Yangzi, encouraging them to join forces against Sun Quan.

To deal with the threat, Sun Quan appointed Lu Xun as chief of operations, bearing the staff of authority, with fifty thousand troops under his command. Zhuge Jin, as general and Grand Administrator of Nan commandery based on Gongan, appears to have been

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In the same edict, besides the Nine Distinctions, and the seal, tassel and imperial edict of enfeoffment as King of Wu, Sun Quan was also given a variety of other honours. These included golden tiger tallies from the first grade to the fifth and the left side of bamboo message tallies from the first grade to the tenth. In symbol of his sovereign status in the east, Sun Quan was awarded Green Soil (*qing du*) from the eastern side of the imperial Altar of the Soil, wrapped in cloth of the *baimao* "white rushes" plant. (On this ritual in Later Han, see the *Du duan* of Cai Yong, 12a-b, discussed by Mansvelt Beck, *Treatise of Later Han*, 90-91: *cf*. the far more summary account presented in *HHS* 95/5, 3020-21).

In somewhat more practical, as opposed to purely symbolic and ritualistic terms, Sun Quan was granted appointment as General-in-Chief with credentials to govern Jiao province, and authority over the affairs (*ling ... shi*) of the Governor of Jing province. In the fifth month of the following year, moreover, a special edict of Cao Pi's government rearranged the provincial borders of Han in this region: the commanderies south of the Yangzi in Jing province *and* in Yang province, being those held by Sun Quan, were grouped under a new Jing province; the northern part of Jing province, being that controlled by Wei, was renamed Ying province, and the northern part of Yang province continued under that name. The change was nominal, and was not retained for long, but it did mean Cao Pi was formally confirming Sun Quan's authority in all the territory that he controlled. (*SGZ* 2, 80, and see note 36 below).

16 *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 944; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 49-50 and 73-74.

17 The figures of forty thousand men for the army of Liu Bei, and fifty thousand for the defence forces under Lu Xun (see below), are probably exaggerated. We may recall, however, the discussion of Zhou Yu with Sun Quan on the eve of the Red Cliffs campaign, when Cao Cao was seriously credited with more than a hundred thousand men, and Zhou Yu asked for fifty thousand men with which to oppose him. Armies at that time could be large, though how many of the troops were effective soldiers is another question. On this occasion, I suspect the numbers of men engaged may have been as many as half those we are told of: between twenty and twenty-five thousand on either side.

18 There is a map of the campaign in *Zhongguo shi gao ditu ji*, 48 The chief accounts are in the biography/annals of Liu Bei, *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 890, and in the biography of Lu Xun, *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1346-48. Much of the material is translated in Fang, *Chronicle* I, 49-124.

SGZ 32 here refers to Lu Xun as Lu Yi; Yi was Lu Xun's original personal name: *SGZ* 58, 1343.

commander of reserves and lines of communications.[19] Lu Xun's own headquarters were in the newly-established Yidu commandery, whose capital was at Yidao, present-day Yidu, but the main concentration point of his forces was on the northern bank of the Yangzi, between Yidao and Yiling county, further upstream by present-day Yichang. As he remarked in a report to Sun Quan,

> Yiling is the vital strategic point, the key defence post on this frontier. It is easy to take it, and equally easy to lose it; and if we lose it there is no question of just one commandery; the whole of Jing province will be at risk.[20]

For the time being Lu Xun was prepared to allow Liu Bei the region upstream about Wu and Zigui; the critical battle would come when Liu Bei sought to break out from that territory.

In the first month of spring in 222, Liu Bei arrived to take command at Zigui. His army was arranged in divisions, with an advance guard and a main body, but Liu Bei, now just over sixty years old, decided the strategy of the campaign, and gave his orders in person. In the second month, he led the greater part of his forces along the south of the Yangzi towards Yidao, while a secondary troop under the general Huang Quan advanced in parallel on the northern bank against Yiling.

At this time Lu Xun was in his late thirties. He had gained considerable experience, as we have seen, in the campaigns to develop Yang province, he had been recommended by Lü Meng as his deputy when plans were being made against Guan Yu, and he had served with distinction in that campaign.[21] On the other hand, he had not held a command of such responsibility before, while the facts that he was man of good gentry family, was married to the daughter of Sun Ce, and was a long-time personal adviser to Sun Quan, did not necessarily guarantee his ability as a high-level commander. The generals under his orders included a number of men with far longer service in the cause of the Sun family: among them, for example, were Han Dang, who had served Sun Jian on his earliest campaigns and joined Sun Ce when he first crossed the Yangzi; and Zhu Ran, Pan Zhang and Xu Sheng, all of whom had been with Sun Quan since the earliest days. Any of these men might hold themselves at least equal to Lu Xun in experience and competence, and they were not necessarily a band of loyal brothers.[22]

In this respect, Sun Quan had a definite problem among his officers. Both Lü Meng and Jiang Qin had died of illness at the time of the attack against Guan Yu in 219, and it was not easy to find a leader who had the ability to fight and the personal authority to control his subordinates. There had been similar trouble with the general Zhou Tai, a brave soldier who was given command of the defences about Ruxu after Cao Cao's attack in 216. At that time, Zhu Ran and Xu Sheng were also under his orders, but they made considerable difficulties, and it required personal intervention by Sun Quan to restore

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19 *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1232.

20 *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1346; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 101.

21 See Chapters 5 and 6.

22 The biographies of Han Dang, Pan Zhang and Xu Sheng are in *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1285-86, 1299-130, and 1298-99. The biography of Zhu Ran is in *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1305-08.

After the death of Lü Meng, Zhu Ran had been granted the Staff of Authority and set in command of the defences of Jiangling city, the capital of Nan commandery under the Han dynasty. Lu Xun's appointment, therefore, represented a slight demotion for him.

some measure of co-operation and proper discipline. Zhou Tai remained at that post some time longer, but he never took command on active service.[23]

Lu Xun, therefore, had rivals and critics among his own subordinates, and it is a measure of his ability and Sun Quan's good fortune that he was able to hold his men together against an experienced and aggressive enemy.[24] Despite various urgings to action, Lu Xun insisted upon the defensive, and he was primarily concerned to keep his army intact and force caution upon Liu Bei. Through spring and summer, though others grew impatient, Lu Xun restricted his actions to a minimum, seeking only to prevent Liu Bei from a notable break-through, and preventing him from concentrating his forces at any point. The invader was rather shepherded than opposed outright.

With the long supply route of the Yangzi behind him, and the army of Lu Xun uncommitted in front, Liu Bei was compelled to move slowly, and he advanced his forces through a series of encampments and local defence positions along the high ground on either side of the river. By the end of summer 222, his northern force under Huang Quan had engaged the defences of Yiling, and an advanced party on the south was besieging the city of Yidao, where the garrison was commanded by Sun Huan.[25] Liu Bei had his headquarters at the village of Xiaoting, and he now sent troops south to maintain contact with the non-Chinese people of Wuling, granting them insignia of office and presents of gold and silk.

Lu Xun had steadily refused engagement. When his generals protested, he explained that Liu Bei had all advantage in the hills, and even on open ground he was not yet prepared to take the risk of battle - too much depended on the outcome. When his advisers urged him to rescue Sun Huan in Yidao, he argued there was yet no need, and Sun Huan was in no immediate danger. When Liu Bei attempted to entice him by sending a few thousand men to set up camp in open ground, Lu Xun suspected a trap; and when he saw the ruse was unsuccessful Liu Bei did indeed bring out the reinforcements which he had held in reserve as an ambush.

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23 The biography of Zhou Tai is in *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1287-88. At 1288 we are told how Zhu Ran, Xu Sheng and others were all his subordinate commanders, but none of them would accept him.

Sun Quan made a special tour of inspection to the Ruxu fortress and he called all his officers and held a great banquet. He himself brought wine before Zhou Tai, and he had him open up his robes and pointed to the marks of his old wounds, asking him how he had come by each one.

Zhou Tai replied with the story of each of those old engagements. When he has finished, Sun Quan told him to do his clothing up again, and they made merry all the rest of the night. Next morning, he sent a messenger to grant him an imperial umbrella. From that time on, Xu Sheng and the others all accepted Zhou Tai's authority.

A similar story, quoted from *Jiangbiao zhuan* by PC note 1, tells how Sun Quan spoke to Zhou Tai with the utmost affection, using his intimate style, and describing him as a most worthy minister of Wu. He awarded him a special escort, and a band of drums and horns. See also de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 509-510.

24 On at least one occasion, Lu Xun had to confront his subordinates and challenge them to defy the authority he had been given: *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1347-48; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 103 and 121.

25 The greater part of the biography of Sun Huan, *SGZ* 51/Wu 6, 1217, describes his engagement against Liu Bei. He was at that time twenty-five *sui*, and held the junior rank of General of the Gentleman of the Household Who Gives Tranquillity to the East.

Sun Huan was the second son of Sun He, a cousin of Sun Ce by the female line who had been adopted into the Sun surname: note 6 to Chapter 3.

SGZ 58/Wu 13, 1347, says that Lu Xun was urged to move to the rescue of Sun Huan because he was a member of the royal family, while Sun Huan also expected stronger support at the time. Later, however, he congratulated Lu Xun on his planning. See also Fang, *Chronicle* I, 102-103 and 120.

It can hardly have been easy for Lu Xun to hold back when all his advisers were looking for action. The story may be no more than a cliché of the solitary hero, but there is no evidence in any other biography that Lu Xun had support in his council for this Fabian strategy. At the same time, however, Sun Quan seems to have had no lack of confidence. The conquest of Hanzhong commandery by Liu Bei in 219 had been made possible by the mistaken aggression of Cao Cao's general Xiahou Yuan, and it is likely that Sun Quan and his commander had heard something of that campaign. So it was Lu Xun's intention to wait out Liu Bei's first plan of attack, and maintain his men in readiness for the time when, as he said, Liu Bei had been standing a long time without any obvious success, when his troops were fatigued and their spirits were down, and Liu Bei had lost concentration.[26] Sun Quan was prepared to trust his judgement.

In the sixth month, Lu Xun turned at last to the attack. The gradual advance through the hills country had separated Liu Bei from his fleet, and his position was now extended along either side of the Yangzi, while the chain of encampments which he had established was vulnerable to attack from the flank. A first, minor, sortie by Lu Xun was unsuccessful, and may rather have been intended as a feint. Then, however, ignoring the threats which Liu Bei had sought to apply against the garrisons at Yiling and Yidao, Lu Xun struck directly at his enemy's main position near Xiaoting. The soldiers of Wu were ordered to carry each a bundle of rushes, to burn the palisades of the various camps: attack with fire, which had worked so well on the water at the Red Cliffs, here proved its worth on land.

Liu Bei was driven from his position, and retreated to higher ground in the hope of regrouping, but the damage was already done. Lu Xun's attacks isolated his divisions and rendered his army uncontrollable. Several units were surrounded and overrun, others were compelled to retreat in haste, and were caught and destroyed piecemeal.[27] As a measure of the speed with which Liu Bei's position collapsed, we may observe that his whole northern army under the general Huang Quan, which had been engaged against Yiling city, was completely cut off, so that Huang Quan and all his men were compelled to abandon the field and march north to surrender to the neutral Wei.[28] In Wuling commandery, south of the battle, the tribesmen abandoned the losing side, and Liu Bei's agent Ma Liang was killed.[29]

Not all of Liu Bei's army was destroyed, and great numbers escaped, but only at the cost of equipment, boats and baggage, and it was little more than a disorganised rabble which regained the territory of Yi province. It is said that Liu Bei was almost been captured, but he re-established his headquarters at Bodi "White Emperor" city in Yufu

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26 *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1346; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 101 and 118.

27 *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1347, tells of the death of two of Liu Bei's generals , together with the barbarian (*hu*) chieftain Shamoke, and the surrender of several other commanders.

The *Ji-Han fuchen zan* of Yang Xi, quoted in *SGZ* 45/Shu 15 at 1088-89 and 1089-90, tells of the heroic deaths of Fu Yong and Cheng Ji. There is parallel text in *Huayang guo zhi* 6, 13a, and *ZZTJ* 69, 2203-04; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 102-103 and 118-120.

28 *SGZ* 43/Shu 13, 1044, the biography of Huang Quan.

Huang Quan was well-treated and rose to high favour in the state of Wei. One of his sons, Huang Yong, accompanied him; but his wife and the rest of his family remained in Shu, where his other son, Huang Chong, later died in battle against Wei: Fang, *Chronicle* II, 432-433.

29 The biography of Ma Liang is in *SGZ* 39/Shu 9, 982-83. He was a man from the Xiangyang region, an associate of Zhuge Liang, who had been appointed to the high court office of Palace Attendant when Liu Bei claimed the imperial title.

county. The name of the county was changed to Yongan "Perpetual Peace," and Liu Bei remained there for the rest of his life.[30]

Li Bei's loyal general Zhao Yun came up with reinforcements to hold the frontier at that point and, rather touchingly, the biography of Liu Bei claims that when Sun Quan heard Liu Bei had re-gathered his forces at Bodi, he was filled with the utmost fear, and hastily sent envoys to ask for peace.[31] Little, indeed, could be further from the truth. There was no longer any threat from Liu Bei to Sun Quan's position in Jing province, and some of Sun Quan's more ambitious generals were urging that they should renew the attack and pursue Liu Bei the whole length of the Gorges into Yi province. Even on its own terms this would have been a dangerous venture, but the critical reason for halting the campaign at this stage was the growing threat from the north. Cao Pi was evidently losing patience with Sun Quan's diplomatic pretences, and the armies of Wu had now to prepare quickly for defence on the northern front.

Security in the north:

With the full defeat of Liu Bei in the late summer and early autumn of 222, Sun Quan had obtained all possible benefit from his formal submission to Cao Pi and the empire of Wei, and he wasted very little time in breaking that connection. It had never been popular with his officers, and even at the time of his enfeoffment as King of Wu there had been those who argued against accepting such a rank from the usurping Emperor, and who suggested that Sun Quan should take some independent title as Lord of Nine Provinces, claiming hegemony in support of Han.[32] This was, as we have discussed, quite inappropriate and impractical in the circumstances, and the submission to Cao Pi was an essential preparation for dealing with Liu Bei. On the other hand, the alliance with the north was always a matter of expediency, and there seems no probability that Sun Quan intended it to last any longer than it needed.

The destruction of Liu Bei left Sun Quan with a surprisingly free hand, and it is unlikely that anyone at the time had expected such a triumph. Very probably, Cao Pi had hoped that his two major enemies would remain embroiled in the south, and he would then be able to take advantage of Liu Bei's preoccupations by making an attack upon him in the west, while at the same time he could blackmail Sun Quan with the threat of intervention upon one side or the other. The speed of events, however, appears to have taken the rivals by surprise,[33] and Sun Quan was able to repudiate the alliance within nine months of its agreement.

The break proved remarkably easy, for Sun Quan had not committed any hostages to the court of Cao Pi. His eldest son, Sun Deng, whom he had named as his Heir-Apparent to the kingdom of Wu, was born in 209, and was thus about twelve or thirteen years old

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30 *SGZ* 36/Shu 6, 950 PC note 1 quoting *Zhao Yun biezhuan.*

31 *SGZ* 32/Shu 2, 890.

32 For example, *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1123 PC note 3 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.* The phrase "Nine Provinces" in may be understood here as referring to the whole empire, the traditional nine regions of classical times, not just a majority of the administrative units under Han. The expression appears also, for example, in the title of the historical work by Sima Biao, *Jiuzhou chunqiu*.

33 *SGZ* 2, 80; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 104, tells how Cao Pi heard of the manner Liu Bei had extended his encampments through the hill country, and forecast his defeat. Even if this anecdote is true, it is doubtful whether anyone foresaw such a catastrophic rout of the invaders.

by Western reckoning. At the time Sun Quan was made a king, Cao Pi sought also to enfeoff Sun Deng as a marquis and appoint him a General of the Gentlemen of the Household, honours which evidently implied and required his attendance at court in the north. Sun Quan sent up a letter of apology, saying that his son was too young and delicate in health to be sent away from home, and for the time being Cao Pi did not press the matter.

The question was raised at the occasion of other embassies in the following months, but Sun Quan continued to temporise. Cao Pi appears to have believed the assurances, and he evidently considered that he could afford to wait. In the autumn of 222, however, realising that Sun Quan's critical need for alliance was passing, Cao Pi attempted to force the issue, and he sent a special embassy to the court of Wu to extract a formal covenant of agreement, and to obtain Sun Deng as hostage. Sun Quan "politely refused to receive the envoys."[34]

This, of course, meant war, and war came very quickly. In the ninth month, Cao Pi gave orders for three armies to move south against the Yangzi. One, under Cao Zhen and Xiahou Shang, attacked Nan commandery and its capital Jiangling on the middle Yangzi, the other two were deployed along the lower Yangzi south of the Huai: Cao Ren against the fortress at Ruxu and Cao Xiu against Dongkou, or Dongpu kou, which was evidently another, lesser fortified harbour situated downstream in the neighbourhood of Sun Ce's old crossing place by Liyang city of Later Han.

Sun Quan made one further attempt to avoid open conflict, sending a letter in humble language, and suggesting that he might retire to Jiao province if that would appease Cao Pi's indignation. And he also sent a letter to Hao Zhou, who had formerly acted on his behalf in Wei, suggesting that he would be interested in a marriage alliance between Sun Deng and a lady of the Cao clan.[35]

None of this, however, had any more than the most marginal influence in delaying the attack. Cao Pi was determined to obtain the guarantee of a hostage: "When Sun Deng comes in the morning, I shall recall my troops in the evening of that same day."

At this ultimatum, surely by no means unexpected, in the tenth month, being early November of 222, Sun Quan declared his independence of Wei. He continued to call himself King of Wu, but he now proclaimed his own reign title of Huangwu and he confirmed his preparations for defence along the Yangzi.[36]

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34 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1123 and 1125; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 107. At 1126, however, we are told that even during the conflict which followed, Sun Quan and Cao Pi continued to negotiate and exchange embassies. The full and formal breach was not made until the following year: note 41 below.

35 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1126.

Hao Zhou was an officer of Yu Jin, who had been captured by Guan Yu at the fighting about Fan city in 219, and who was returned to the north by Sun Quan in 221. He had spoken most earnestly in Sun Quan's cause at the court of Wei, and guaranteed to Cao Pi that Sun Quan would fulfil his undertakings and send hostages. He was at one stage sent on an embassy to Sun Quan, but when the agreement came to nothing, Hao Zhou's career at court was ended. He does not, however, appear to have been punished for his mistaken advice.

The biography of Hao Zhou from *Wei lue* is quoted in *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1127-29 note 3; it contains an account of his correspondence with Sun Quan.

36 Establishment of the calendar was the prerogative of an independent sovereign. In the following year, Sun Quan also proclaimed a different system of calculating days and months: *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1129. On this, and on the significance of the reign-title Huangwu, see below at note 70.

In response to this declaration of independence, Cao Pi went back on the arrangement of provinces which he had declared earlier in the year, by which Sun Quan, as Governor of Jing province, had held authority in

A few weeks later, in the twelfth month, January of 223, Sun Quan completed his circular diplomatic coup by sending an envoy to Liu Bei's government of Shu-Han in Yi province. The embassy was returned, and the two states renewed the alliance which had been broken by the attack on Guan Yu a little over three years before.

In military terms, Liu Bei at that time was of negligible importance. We have been told by his biography that the armies of Wu were frightened to attack him once he had re-established himself at Bodi. On the other hand, *Wu lu* tells how Liu Bei offered at this time to bring troops to support Wu against the attack from Wei. Lu Xun replied, somewhat unkindly,

> I am afraid that your army has still not recovered from the recent disaster. Now that you have sought and obtained peace, the most important thing for you do is to restore your strength. This is no occasion for you to return to all-out war.
>
> If you fail to make proper assessment, but seek instead to collect again your scattered remnants and offer them once more at this great distance, then I fear you may not escape alive.[37]

One must admire the diplomatic and military energy and skill which Sun Quan and Lu Xun had shown: in a little more than one year Sun Quan had acquired rank second only to an emperor, had defeated his immediate enemy, declared himself as an independent ruler, and then restored the defensive alliance which at least confirmed his former enemy's neutrality and could yet be developed further. In many respects he was now back on the path of policy which his former adviser Lu Su had recommended. In the intervening period, however, he had seized all of Jing province, humiliated Liu Bei, and out-manoeuvred both Cao Cao and Cao Pi. Honesty and good faith had often been in short supply, but it was nonetheless a brilliant record against equally tough and unscrupulous opposition.

It now remained, of course, to hold the line of the Yangzi against the forces of the north, but this did not prove so difficult. The advance by the armies of Wei was no mere show of strength, but Cao Pi and his advisers realised the odds were against them, and it is said that Cao Pi spent some anxious moments when he believed that Cao Xiu, in a fit of over-confidence, might commit his army on a raid across the river. His adviser Dong Zhao assured him he need have no such worry: even if Cao Xiu was hot-headed enough to court such disaster, his wiser subordinates would be quite well aware of the dangers and would refuse to support him. Cao Pi may have been re-assured that Cao Xiu would not do anything rash, but there is nothing in the record to suggest that anyone under his command had any confidence of the most limited success.[38]

In fact, Cao Xiu's army achieved very little. At an early stage of his attack, there was a moment when a break-through appeared possible. A number of ships of the Wu fleet, commanded by Lü Fan, were caught by a violent storm and were driven against the bank held by Wei. Numbers of men were drowned or killed or captured, and there was a short period when the southerners' defences fell into disarray. Cao Xiu's army, however, could not follow up the success quickly, and by the time they did so further ships had come up with reinforcements. Cao Xiu sent his general Cang Ba with a storming party on light

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the commanderies south of the Yangzi. Ying province was abolished, and Yang province and Jing province were restored to the system of Han: *SGZ* 2, 82, and *cf.* note 15 above.

37 *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1348 PC note 1 quoting *Wu lu*; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 110. *Cf.* note 31 above.

38 *SGZ* 14, 441, the biography of Dong Zhao.

boats in an attempt to establish a beach-head by taking the small fortress of Xuling. They were caught and defeated, however, and the Wei armies gained no further success.[39]

Further upstream, at Ruxu, the defence was under the command of Zhu Huan. When the fortress held out, Cao Ren sent a naval detachment which sought to capture an island, Zhongzhou, where the defenders' wives and children were camped. The attack was defeated, and the siege force about Ruxu burnt their camp and retreated.[40]

In many respects, the operations in Nan commandery appear to have been the most critical. As Cao Zhen and Xiahou Shang advanced to the south, Cao Pi moved to Wan city in Nanyang so as to be closer to that action. This, after all, was the region which had only lately come into the control of Sun Quan, the defences had already been pushed hard by Liu Bei, and despite the renewed agreement the men of Wu could not be entirely sure that he might not join against them.

The danger point was at Jiangling, capital of the commandery on the northern bank of the Yangzi, and Sun Quan's Grand Administrator there, Zhu Ran, was besieged through all the winter and spring. At one stage, there was a plot by some of the frightened defenders to open the gates and surrender to the mercy of the enemy, but it was discovered and crushed. At another time, during a period of low water, the attackers were able to seize an island in the river, join it with pontoon bridges to their camps on the northern bank, and thus cut the defenders off from support and supplies. The position, however, was too exposed for the Wei forces to maintain themselves in safety, and the Wu armies launched a counter-attack which recaptured the salient. At last, after six months, there was sickness in the invaders' camp, and they withdrew to the north. By the beginning of summer Cao Pi had returned to Luoyang.[41]

The attack on Nan commandery and the middle Yangzi had shown the best potential for success, but Cao Pi did not attempt any further invasion along that front in future years. Jing province may have been less well attached to Sun Quan than his home territory in the east, but there were two difficulties which must have influenced the northern strategy. Firstly, there was the possibility of intervention from Shu in the west if the invaders should prove too successful and be committed too thoroughly south of the Yangzi. Second, it does not seem that the naval strength of Wei, based upon the Han River fleet, could ever be effectively co-ordinated with operations on land.

At the time of the Red Cliffs, Cao Cao had already taken Jiangling, and he was able to advance to the east with a fleet and an army in combination. From a starting point as far north as Xiangyang, however, any fleet of Wei had to be based upon the Han River, and this could be of no assistance to land operations against Jiangling. On the other hand, if the army sought to accompany the fleet down the Han without first capturing Jiangling, their southern flank would be constantly exposed to attack. And though the Wei held an

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39 *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1311, and *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1126; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 133.

40 *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1312-13, the biography of Zhu Huan; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 149.

We are told here that the sickness particularly affected Cao Pi's army before Jiangling. *SGZ* 2, 82, however, notes that there was a general epidemic in the late spring of 223, while *SGZ* 9, 276, and *SGZ* 2, 82, remark that Cao Ren, who had been commander of the attack against Ruxu, also died of illness at this time.

41 As a gloss to the successful defence by Zhu Ran, we may note the titles of the fiefs he was awarded. After the defeat of Liu Bei, he was made Marquis of Yongan, that is, of the renamed county in which Liu Bei had taken refuge. After the withdrawal of Cao Pi and his forces, however, the name of the fief was exchanged to Marquis of Dangyang, being the county territory in Nan commandery north towards Xiangyang: *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1306. The changed title demonstrated Sun Quan's defiance of Cao Pi, and also offered a belated courtesy to the restored alliance with Liu Bei.

advanced position in the northern part of Jiangxia commandery, and might have contemplated an advance on that line, east of the Han, their communications would still have been exposed to the threat from Nan commandery in the west. The salient in Jiangxia was always a zone of defence for the Wei, not the starting point for an offensive.[42]

The forces of the north, of course, were always at a disadvantage in river fighting, and it was extremely difficult for Cao Pi's men to match Sun Quan's in naval matters, whether by numbers or in skill. Downstream, as we shall see, Cao Pi did attempt to cope with this problem in attacks on Yang province. In Jing province, however, he was faced with the final, insuperable, difficulty of the marsh-land which extended over much of the frontier. The marshes were an obstacle to any efficient manoeuvre by army or navy, and there is considerable evidence that they also harboured disease which could be extremely damaging to warriors from the dryer lands of the north.

Both Cao Cao in 208 and Cao Pi in 223 had seen their armies affected by sickness and, though the history does not say so specifically, this may well have been a critical consideration in Cao Pi's decision to concentrate in future upon the eastern section of the frontier, south of the Huai, rather than risking his men in the ill-drained wilderness about the lower reaches of the Han.

In the fourth month of 223, Liu Bei died at Bodi, aged in his early sixties. His son Liu Shan, sixteen years old by Western reckoning, succeeded him, but the real power in the state was held by Zhuge Liang.

Sun Quan, not unreasonably, was doubtful of the stability of the new regime in the west. By the winter, however, Zhuge Liang had established his authority, and his envoy Deng Zhi, a man who came originally from Nanyang commandery, was able to persuade Sun Quan that the new government was secure. Sun Quan gave Lu Xun plenipotentiary authority to deal with Zhuge Liang and the government of Shu, and alliance against the Wei was confirmed and maintained thereafter, with embassies exchanged at intervals by either side.[43]

In the summer of 223, Sun Quan's general He Qi attacked and eliminated an outpost of Wei in the new commandery territory of Qichun, on the southern slopes of the Dabie Shan,[44] but for the next twelve months the northern front remained quiet. In the autumn

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42 Early in 223, as Cao Zhen's army was advancing towards Jiangling, Sun Quan had ordered the fortification of "the hills of Jiangxia," almost certainly referring to the outcrops of higher ground in the vicinity of Xiakou, at the junction of the Han with the Yangzi, present-day Wuhan: *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1129, and *SGZJJ* 56/Wu 2, 25b.

43 *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1348, and *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1130 and 1131 PC note 4 quoting *Wu li*. It appears to have been at this time, after the death of Liu Bei and the renewed agreement with the government of Shu under the regency of Zhuge Liang, that Sun Quan made the final break with Cao Pi: *cf.* note 34 above.

44 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1130, and *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1380.

The Grand Administrator of Qichun was Jin Zong, a former officer of Sun Quan who had deserted and joined the Wei. It appears he was given the commandery appointment at this time, in the hill country of the Dabie Shan on the border region between Lujiang and Jiangxia, so that he could disturb the communications routes along the Yangzi and across that river to the south.

There is evidence that Qichun commandery had been established a few years earlier, evidently on the basis of the county of that name in Jiangxia commandery of Later Han, but the territory had been abandoned by Cao Cao at the time of his withdrawal in 213: *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1118. From this time, after the defeat of Jin Zong's infiltration, the territory was held by Wu.

SGZ 60 observes that one of the subordinate commanders in He Qi's attack on Qichun was Mi Fang, the erstwhile officer of Guan Yu who had surrendered Jiangling to Lü Meng in 219: note 68 to Chapter 6. Qichun was evidently a proving ground for renegades.

of 224, however, Cao Pi embarked on a strategic program against the lower Yangzi. Using the tributary rivers of the Huai, he brought ships and men from Xuchang to Shouchun and then further southeast to Guangling, on the northern bank of the estuary opposite Jianye, present-day Nanjing.

In the past, attacks from the north had been launched further upstream, on the narrower reaches by Ruxu or Liyang. On this occasion, Cao Pi was operating in an area where the river was significantly wider, but he hoped that the ships he brought with him might be sufficient to establish a local supremacy and support an invasion force. It is possible that this was no more than a reconnaissance in strength, for the river was at its height with the autumn floods. The Wei forces, however, had evidently gained some surprise, for the defences in that area were weak. A local general, Xu Sheng, organised the preparation of dummy defence walls and turrets along the southern bank of the Yangzi from Jianye downstream to Jiangcheng, and the Wu were also able to concentrate a reasonable fleet to oppose Cao Pi. No real fighting took place, and by the end of the year Cao Pi had returned to Xuchang.[45] This, however, was only the first stage of his plans. Early in 225 Cao Pi arranged for the construction of the Canal to Smash the Caitiffs,[46] and by the end of the summer a new and larger naval force was on its way to the southeast. In mid-summer Cao Pi had moved to Qiao city, and during the autumn he travelled with the army along the water route to the Huai and then downstream into Xu province. By the early winter he was again at Guangling. His headquarters were established in the former capital of the commandery, and it was claimed that the army under his command was more than a hundred thousand.[47]

This time Sun Quan's forces were ready for the attack, but far more serious from Cao Pi's point of view was the weather. The winter was harsh and early, the Yangzi was partially frozen, and the ships of Cao Pi were blocked by ridges of ice along the shore, with additional danger from small bergs breaking off and floating with the current. Looking at the unassailable barrier, Cao Pi sighed, "Alas. It is truly the will of Heaven which divides the south from the north." And he gave the order to withdraw.[48]

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45 *SGZ* 2, 84, *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1131 and PC note 1 quoting the *Jin ji* of Gan Bao, and *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1298, the biography of Xu Sheng; also Fang, *Chronicle* I, 165-166 and 174-176.

46 *SGZ* 2, 84. The course of the Canal to Smash the Caitiffs cannot now be determined, but it presumably improved the water transport and communications among the network of streams along the upper reaches of the Ying and Ru rivers in present-day southern Henan and northwestern Anhui.

47 *SGZ* 2, 85, and *SGZ* 28, 774, mention a mutiny among the troops at Licheng, in the vicinity of present-day Lianyungang in northern Jiangsu. The rebellion was quelled, and the leader, Tang Zi, fled to Wu by sea. The incident had no notable effect upon Cao Pi's campaigns. See Fang, *Chronicle* I, 185 and 194. (Fang interprets Licheng as a military unit rather than as a commandery.) However, since we are told that the local Grand Administrator was killed, it appears that Licheng was a new commandery which had been established on the borders between the Han dynasty commanderies of Donghai and Langye).

48 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1132 PC note 3 quoting *Wu lu*, and *SGZ* 2, 84-85.

SGZ 2, 85 PC note 1 *bis* contains the text of a poem said to have been composed at this time by Cao Pi and quoted in *Wei shu.* It tells how:

I marshal my troops by the shores of the Jiang,
How that stream surges and boils!
Halberds and lances like the mountain forests,
And the rays of the sun gleam upon black armour.....

Wu lu, without such literary excursion, claims that a raiding party from Wu was able to attack Cao Pi's headquarters by night, throw the enemy into confusion, and bring back trophies and insignia.

Curiously, the main text of *SGZ* 47, the annals of Wu, makes no reference to this campaign. See also Fang, *Chronicle* I, 186-187 and 197-198.

CHAPTER SEVEN

There was considerable difficulty in extracting the invasion force, with its ships and boats, from the exposed position they had come to. At one stage there seemed a possibility that the vessels would be stranded in the iced-up water-courses, so that they and their escort would become a prey to the attacks of Wu when conditions eased. The local commander Jiang Ji, however, dug extra canals, and he broke the ice-jam by bringing water into retaining dams behind the ships, then breaking the dams so that the ships were swept clear by a man-made bore.[49]

Cao Pi returned past Xuchang and visited Luoyang, but it is probable he intended to return to the attack in the southeast. In the summer of 226, however, Cao Pi became ill and died. He was only forty years old, he had reigned for six years since the death of his father, and he was succeeded by his son Cao Rui, later known as Emperor Ming, who was a little over twenty.[50]

Before he died, Cao Pi had established a council of regency, and although this marked a notable step in the rise of power of the Sima family which later took over the throne, the operations of the government were not yet affected seriously by faction quarrels. Nonetheless, the change from a single ruler in the prime of life and political ability to a young man as yet untried, with a group of powerful subjects sharing his authority, naturally provided opportunities for enemies of the state. For the next few years, Wei was on the defensive against Wu, and also against Shu in the west.

In the autumn, Sun Quan led an attack against the Wei positions in Jiangxia commandery, and while another army under Zhuge Jin was sent further north up the Han against Xiangyang. Though loyal and competent, Zhuge Jin was not known as a fighting soldier, and his expedition was defeated by the new regent, Sima Yi.[51] It was very likely intended as a feint, but it did not delay the sending of reinforcements to Jiangxia.

At the beginning of the campaign, however, Wen Ping the Grand Administrator of Jiangxia for the Wei had limited troops and was under heavy pressure from the invaders. An account in *Wei lue* tells us that he gained time by opening the gates of his capital, Shiyang on the Han River, and ordering all his people to keep quiet. He himself stayed at his official residence and made no move. When Sun Quan approached with his army, he could only suspect a trap, and so he halted and then withdrew.

Apart from this incident, Wen Ping maintained his defence for several weeks, Sun Quan could make no headway, and the invaders were compelled to retreat as reinforcements arrived from the north.[52] Further to the east, a secondary campaign in Lujiang commandery near Xunyang was defeated and driven back by Cao Zhen.[53]

In the winter of the following year, 227-228, Wu and Shu engaged in their first joint action. Meng Da, who had formerly changed allegiance from Shu to Wei, and who had been maintained as Grand Administrator of Xincheng, in the Han valley east of Nanyang, sought to change sides once more. Zhuge Liang, whose headquarters were now in Hanzhong commandery, encouraged him to do so, and sent a small expeditionary force in his support, while Sun Quan also despatched an army from the south. Sima Yi, however,

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49 *SGZ* 14, 451-52; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 187 and 199.

50 *SGZ* 2, 86; *SGZ* 3, 91; and *JS* 1, 4; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 201-202 and 212-214.

51 *SGZ* 3, 92.

52 *SGZ* 18, 549-50, the biography of Wen Ping, and PC note 2 quoting *Wei lue*; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 215-216, and also *SGZ* 3, 92; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 203, which tells how the imperial agent Xun Yu was sent with a small escort to mobilise local reinforcements.

53 *SGZ* 3, 92.

reacted more swiftly than anyone had expected, and Meng Da was attacked, captured and executed before either of the allies could come to his aid.[54]

For the next few years, chief military activity took place in the northwest, in the region of Hanzhong, Chang'an and the Liang province of Later Han, where Zhuge Liang sought to establish a military presence north of the Qin Ling ranges in the valley of the Wei. This strategy was of no more than marginal interest to Sun Quan, and the campaigns indeed proved indecisive, but they relieved the pressure against his frontier which had obtained before the death of Cao Pi in 226.

In the summer and autumn of 228, moreover, Sun Quan scored a considerable coup. He arranged for his Grand Administrator of Poyang, Zhou Fang, to pretend to turn renegade and invite the armies of Wei to come to his support. The northerners were deceived, and Cao Xiu with ten thousand men was sent south towards Huan city in Lujiang to make contact with Zhou Fang, while at the same time two further armies were sent, under Sima Yi against Jiangling in Nan commandery on the middle Yangzi, and under Jia Kui against the region of Ruxu to the east.

The Wu, however, with Lu Xun as commander-in-chief, concentrated their forces against Cao Xiu. They engaged him in battle near Huan city, defeated his men and put them to rout, and they followed up the pursuit towards the Jiashi pass, north of Huan across a saddle of the Dabie Mountains. There was a very good chance that Cao Xiu's entire force could be cut off and captured, but then the Wei general Jia Kui realised the danger, and he turned aside from the march against Ruxu to come to the rescue. Cao Xiu and the greater part of his men escaped, but they had been thoroughly defeated, and they left behind armour and weapons and great quantities of baggage. The plan had worked as well as could reasonably be expected, there was no comparable threat from the north for a number of years, and initiative on the Yangzi frontier had largely turned to Sun Quan.[55]

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54 *SGZ* 3, 93 PC quoting *Wei lue*; *JS* 1, 5-6; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 230-232, 245-247, 249 and 262. On the dual expeditions of support for Meng Da, see *JS* 1 and Fang, *Chronicle* I, 231 and 247 at 15.8.

55 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1134, and *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1387-92, the biography of Zhou Fang; also *SGZ* 9, 279-80, the biography of Cao Xiu; *SGZ* 14, 452, the biography of Jiang Ji; *SGZ* 15, 483, the biography of Jia Kui; *SGZ* 26, 723, the biography of Man Chong; together with *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1313, the biography of Zhu Huan; *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1348-49, the biography of Lu Xun; and *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1382, the biography of Quan Zong. See also Fang, *Chronicle* I, 254-256 and 276-282.

From the number of references to this campaign, and the comments of the officers, particularly on the Wei side, one may gather that the ill-fated enterprise served as a cautionary experience to the government and to Cao Rui.

Zhou Fang, prime mover in the stratagem, was a man from Yangxian in Wu, the county where Sun Quan had first served as a magistrate in the time of Sun Ce. He had thus early acquaintance with Sun Quan, and trust must have been an important element in this risky game of deception.

Two earlier incidents may have influenced the development of this plan. About 226 and 227, when the local clan leader Peng Qi was in rebellion in the Poyang region, he invited support from the north. At that time the counsels at the court of Wei were more cautious, Peng Qi received no assistance, and he was destroyed by Zhou Fang and others: *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1131 and 1134, *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1387, and in particular *SGZ* 14, 458 PC note 2 quoting *Sun Zi biezhuan*; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 223 and 233. About the same time, moreover, the commander of Sun Quan's garrison at Wuchang, Han Zong, defected to Wei. Han Zong was the son of Han Dang, who had served as a loyal officer of the Sun family since the time of Sun Jian, but Han Zong was afraid that he might be punished for his immorality and bad conduct, and so he took all his family and dependents, and his father's coffin, and fled to the north.

It seems probable that these matters, and particularly the experience with Peng Qi, inspired Sun Quan and Zhou Fang with the idea of the deception, on this occasion with circumstantial and treacherous details.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Expansion in the south:

A delicate diplomatic and military balancing act, and the fortune of Cao Pi's early death, had enabled Sun Quan to confirm his frontier along the Yangzi against the north and his possession of the newly-conquered Jing province in the west. Through the hill country, the process of conquest and colonisation continued, most notably through the agency of Quan Zong, who in 226 was appointed as general and Grand Administrator of a new commandery, Dongan, extending over the border regions south of Danyang and west of Wu and Kuaiji. Two years later, it was claimed that ten thousand people had been brought under administration, and the marcher commandery was broken up into its former component parts.[56]

In the west of Jing province, the mountain people of the region known as Wuqi had long maintained their independence from the encroaching Chinese. They defied the great general Ma Yuan at the beginning of Later Han, and they had, as we have seen, operated independently in loose alliance with Liu Bei until the defeat of his invasion in 222.[57] For the next few years, however, they posed no immediate threat to Sun Quan's security, and his concerns lay rather with the government of Chinese people and the defence against Chinese enemies from the north. Unlike the region of the east, Jing province was so newly come into his hands that there was no useful occasion or profit from an attempted expansion beyond its established frontiers along the hills.

The capture and possession of Jing province, however, presented great opportunities in Jiao province to the south. There, as we have seen, the dominant position had long been occupied by Shi Xie and his clan, but Sun Quan had been able to place officers of his own, notably the Inspector Bu Zhi, who had held that post since 210, establishing his administration in the eastern part of the province by the Bay of Canton, and had maintained a relaxed trading and tributary relationship with Shi Xie in the Red River basin about present-day Hanoi.[58]

In 220, Bu Zhi was recalled to the north, and with a substantial army he took part in the operations against Liu Bei's invasion. In particular, he held guard against Liu Bei's non-Chinese allies of Wuqi, and after the victory in the Yangzi Gorges Bu Zhi brought his men south to confirm the pacification of Lingling and Guiyang commanderies. After a short spell at headquarters, he was stationed at Oukou in Changsha, near present-day Hengyang in Hunan, by the junction of the Lei river with the Xiang. From that base he acted as garrison commander and military chieftain of the southern part of Jing province.[59]

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56 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1133 and 1134, and the biography of Quan Zong in *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, at 1382. *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1133 PC note 1 quoting *Wu lu*, says that the capital of Dongan commandery was at Fuchun, being the old homeland of the Sun family.

Quan Zong was a man from Qiantang whose father had joined Sun Ce when he conquered Wu commandery in 196. Quan Zong himself had attracted numbers of refugees from the north as his clients, and he had also acquired experience as a coloniser of the non-Chinese people of the hills. In 229, when Sun Quan took the imperial title, Quan Zong was married to one of his daughters, the Princess Luban: see Chapter 8 at note 113.

57 See Chapter 7.

58 See Chapter 6.

59 *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1237. *SGZJJ* 52/Wu 7, 31a, quotes the Qing scholar Xie Zhongying, who says that the site of Oukou is now unknown. I note, however, that one of the tributaries of the Lei River in southern Hunan is now called the Ou River. It seems likely that under some circumstances the whole of the Lei River may have been described as the Ou. The site of Oukou would then have been by the junction of the present

Lü Dai, Bu Zhi's successor in the south, was an experienced and trusted officer. Originally from Guangling, he had served Sun Quan in Wu commandery during the early years of his reign, he had been engaged on campaigns against the non-Chinese people south of Hangzhou Bay, and he had at one time been sent on embassy to Zhang Lu in Hanzhong commandery before the conquest by Cao Cao. In 215 he took part in Lü Meng's campaign against Liu Bei's positions in the southern part of Jing province, and he defeated a local rebellion there. He was then appointed Grand Administrator of Luling commandery, in the southern part of present-day Jiangxi, and from that position he took Bu Zhi's place as Inspector of Jiao province.[60]

At the very beginning of his new appointment, Lü Dai showed his energy. First, he was able to bring about the surrender of the local chieftain Qian Bo of Gaoliang, on the sea-coast between the Bay of Canton and the Leizhou peninsula, and he recognised Qian Bo as Chief Commandant there. Then, further to the north, he attacked and subdued a number of non-Chinese groups on Yulin commandery, along the river systems of present-day Guangxi. Finally, on Sun Quan's orders, he turned north against the bandit Wang Jin, who came from the south of Guiyang commandery, and who was established in the mountain country of the Nan Ling north of Nanhai commandery. It is said that Lü Dai captured Wang Jin and more than ten thousand of his people; and both here and in the previous campaigns one can observe the process of colonisation and recruitment under the traditional guise of self-defence against "rebels" and "bandits." As reward for his achievements, Lü Dai was given the rank of a general, the Staff of Authority, and enfeoffment as marquis of a chief district.

In these early years of the 220s, Lü Dai confirmed the position of his government in Nanhai and Cangwu commanderies, and he also extended his influence over the greater part of present-day Guangdong and Guangxi, while the area of Shi Xie's control was largely restricted to Jiaozhi commandery in the Red River basin, with Jiuzhen and Rinan commanderies along the coast of present-day Vietnam.

In 226, Shi Xie died at the age of ninety *sui*, and Lü Dai was ready to remove the last vestiges of his clan's former power.[61] Shi Xie's son Shi Hui was given title as General Who gives Tranquillity to Distant Lands and office as Grand Administrator of Jiuzhen, but the honours and recognition were false. The critical territory in the region was the commandery of Jiaozhi, where Shi Xie had been Grand Administrator. Sun Quan, on Lü Dai's advice, named a certain Chen Shi, colonel in his service, in Shi Xie's place, and that appointment would have removed the Shi clan from the heart of their power and left Shi Hui and his brothers isolated in the far south.

To confirm this attack, Sun Quan also declared the division of Jiao province into two: the eastern part, in present-day China, from Hepu commandery to Nanhai, was named Guang province and Lü Dai continued as inspector; the western part, in present-day

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Lei River with the Xiang, near modern Hengyang. This would be a good position for the military supervision of the three southern commanderies of Jing province, Changsha, Lingling and Guiyang, and the area had been used for that purpose by Zhuge Liang in the period immediately after the victory at the Red Cliffs in 208. Zhuge Liang's base had been at Linzheng city, and I suspect Oukou was a military encampment established close by.

60 The biography of Lü Dai is in *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1383-87. Ten years earlier, before Bu Zhi was appointed to Jiao province, he had been Grand Administrator of Poyang, a neighbouring commandery to Luling.

61 On the government of Shi Xie in Jiao province before the 220s, see Chapter 5. The account of the destruction of the Shi family is told by Shi Xie's biography in *SGZ* 49, at 1193, and in the biography of Lü Dai in *SGZ* 60, at 1384-85.

Vietnam, from Jiaozhi through Jiuzhen to Rinan, kept the name of Jiao province. Dai Liang, a general in Sun Quan's service, was named Inspector of this territory, with ultimate authority over Shi Hui in Jiuzhen commandery.

The clear intention was to force Shi Hui into either total subservience or outright defiance. Shi Hui chose the latter course. Taking his father's title as Grand Administrator of Jiaozhi, he set guards at the ports and at the land passes from Hepu, and he refused entry to Chen Shi and Dai Liang.

Lü Dai, however, was ready for such a move, and he came with an army and a fleet to escort the new officials to their place. Naturally enough, there was some uncertainty in the Shi camp at the thought of open warfare, there was a flurry of rebellion against Shi Hui, and Lü Dai arrived before Shi Hui had time to prepare his full defence. As Lü Dai came up, he sent Shi Kuang, son of Shi Yi and nephew of Shi Xie, who had lived in Wu as a hostage, to act as envoy and persuade his cousins to surrender. Shi Hui and his five brothers came out to receive Lü Dai in suppliants' guise, with their clothes pulled down to expose their shoulders. Ignoring their pleas and his own undertakings, Lü Dai had them executed and sent their heads to Sun Quan.

This act of treachery removed the power of the Shi clan. Shi Yi, Shi Kuang and others were allowed to live, but they were reduced to common status and deprived of all their possessions.[62] There was some short-lived local resistance in Jiaozhi and then in Jiuzhen, put down by Lü Dai with the utmost firmness, and the power of Sun Quan was confirmed along all the southern shore.[63]

The division of Jiao province was abolished as quickly as it had been made, and Lü Dai became once more the chief of the region, with enfeoffment as Marquis of Panyu. Further to the south, he sent embassies by sea to the various states of the peninsula, and envoys came in return, bearing tribute from Linyi on the coast of southern Vietnam, Funan in the region of Saigon/Ho Chi Minh City, and Tangming, in the area of present-day Cambodia.[64] Besides the prestige they gave the court of Sun Quan, these visits confirmed that the sea trade into southeast Asia would be peacefully maintained, so the prosperity of the Shi family at the entrepot in northern Vietnam was now continued to the advantage of Wu.

Though the destruction of the Shi clan had been a model of brutal success, and Lü Dai had extended the power of Sun Quan without challenge into the furthest territories of the south, there was one region where the opportunity for expansion had been lost. As we have observed, about 217 the local leader Yong Kai of Yizhou had sought to maintain independence from the government of Liu Bei in the northern part of Yi province, and his request for support had been passed through Shi Xie to Sun Quan's representative Bu Zhi.[65]

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62 Besides Shi Yi and Shi Kuang, we are told that Shi Yu, younger brother of Shi Xie and Shi Yi, and Shi Xin, a son of Shi Xie who had also been hostage at the court of Sun Quan, escaped the massacre. Shi Yi and Shi Kuang were later found guilty on some other charges, and were executed. Shi Xin, the putative heir to Shi Xie, died without children; his widow was granted a ration of grain and a donation of cash: *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1193.

63 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1134, notes that in 228 the name of Hepu commandery was changed to Zhuguan "Office for Pearls." The name, however, was later changed back to Hepu.

64 On Linyi and Funan, see Chapter 1; on Tangming, see Stein, "Lin-yi," 131. The embassies of these three states are recorded in *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1385, though they are not precisely dated to 226. On later embassies and contacts, see Chapter 8 at note 38.

65 See Chapter 5.

After the death of Liu Bei in 223, Yong Kai made a serious attempt to establish a separatist regime involving his own commandery of Yizhou and also Yongchang, Yuexi and Zangke. He was supported by local non-Chinese people, notably the chieftain Meng Huo, but he met considerable resistance from other groups loyal to the government at Chengdu, and he was not able to gain a permanent position. In 225, Zhuge Liang attacked and conquered the south, Yong Kai was killed, and Meng Huo, after repeated defeats, was compelled to surrender.[66] Zhuge Liang established numbers of the non-Chinese chieftains as local officials, confirming their authority under his hegemony, and this region of present-day southern Sichuan, Guizhou and Yunnan remained reasonably quiet under the government of Shu for the next several years.[67]

It does not appear that Yong Kai ever received significant support from the government of Sun Quan, and this must have been due both to the distance of his area of operations and also to the political interposition of Shi Xie along the route. The valley of the Red River and its tributaries does afford communication from the coast inland towards present-day Kunming, but Bu Zhi and Lü Dai were never in a position to take advantage of this means of access and Zhuge Liang was thus able to establish undisputed control of the south.

Even in this perhaps lost chance, however, there was cause for some satisfaction. The disturbances caused by Yong Kai and Meng Huo removed Zhuge Liang's attention from any involvement in the affairs of Jing province during the time of Cao Pi's attacks against Wu in the early 220s; and once that matter was settled there was no real occasion for dispute between the allies about their territorial frontiers. Lü Dai's conquest of the western part of Jiao province, therefore, gave the government of Wu an extensive and prosperous territory without any rival claimants.

In 233, after thirteen years in the south, Lü Dai was recalled to take Bu Zhi's place in the garrison at Oukou. On the one hand, as his orders noted, Jiao province was now peaceful and settled, but at the same time, though the point was unstated, the change avoided any possibility that Lü Dai might have separatist ambitions of his own. In any event, his achievements, and those of Bu Zhi, were considerable. With a minimal expenditure of military resources, they had first set up a presence in the south, and then established full authority. As a result, the kingdom of Wu now extended over three provinces of Han, and the court of Sun Quan gained profit and prestige from the trade of the southern seas.

Parity of esteem:

By the beginning of the year 229 AD, Sun Quan had thus established a coherent and powerful military and political authority in south China. In the original heart-land of his power, south of the Yangzi in Yang province, the lower course of the great river provided an impregnable line of defence, and colonisation of the country to the south was bringing

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66 This campaign of Zhuge Liang in the south is one of his celebrated feats of arms, described in his biography, *SGZ* 35/Shu 5, 921 PC note 2 quoting *Han-Jin chunqiu*, and in *Huayang guo zhi* 4, 4b-5a; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 185-186 and 194-196, while a map of the campaign appears in *Zhongguo shi gao ditu ji* I, 48. An exaggerated account occupies chapters 87-91 of *Romance.*

67 The settlement established by Zhuge Liang Is a contrast with the policy of Wu, which generally sought to impose a form of Chinese administration and colonisation, rather than rule through local chieftains.

increasing population and economic development. In central China, the southern basin of the middle Yangzi, more than half the area of Jing province in Later Han, was securely in his hands: both his rivals, on the north and on the west, had sought to wrench the territory from his grasp, but neither had been successful. And in the far south, the aggression of Lü Dai had brought all the lands and the trade of the region under his control.

Certainly, the empire of Wei in the north was far more populous and potentially more powerful. After the death of Cao Pi in 226, however, the position of the Cao family had become more tenuous, and the new emperor Cao Rui was not a man of great personal authority. Wei, moreover, had a number of external problems apart from Sun Quan: to the northeast the energetic young warlord Gongsun Yuan occupied southern Manchuria with a guarded independence;[68] northwest, the greater part of Bing and Liang provinces of Later Han, the northern territories of present-day Shanxi and Shenxi, Ningxia and the greater part of Gansu, were now beyond all but the most nominal Chinese control. Further afield, the court of Wei had received embassies from the oasis kingdoms of central Asia, and had re-established Chinese authority along the Silk Road,[69] but the line of communications along the Wei River valley and across the Yellow River to the Gansu corridor had to be defended against the armies of Shu-Han based on Hanzhong commandery to the south.

As for Shu-Han, though the propaganda of Liu Bei had sought to justify a claim to empire on the basis of a distant relationship to the imperial clan and a virtuous authority, the high profile of foreign policy could not conceal the fact that the territory of the state was no greater than the single province of Yi under Later Han. Despite the efforts of Zhuge Liang in the south, and his consistent efforts to break out north from the upper Han valley, the catastrophic defeats of Guan Yu and Liu Bei by Sun Quan's forces had not been cancelled by any great success against the lands about Chang'an.

In these circumstances, Sun Quan could contemplate his own claims to imperial splendour, for if his was not the greatest state, he was surely the second of three.

Sun Quan, moreover, had already adopted many of the rituals of independence. Admittedly, he held the title King of Wu on the basis of a grant from Cao Pi, acting as Emperor of Wei. On the other hand, he had proclaimed his own reign-title in 222, and in 223 he had also announced a calendar based upon the Qianxiang system of the late Han scholar Liu Hong, rather than upon the Sifen method which had been used by Han and was followed by Wei and Shu. From this time, even the days of the month in Wu were different to those of the other states. Traditionally, determination of the calendar was the prerogative of a sovereign, so Sun Quan had proclaimed himself peer to his two enemies, and the court of Wu was noted for its interest and competence in the calculations and science of mathematics, astronomy and the calendar.[70]

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68 On events in the northeast, see Fang, *Chronicle* I, 260-261 and 289, and Gardiner, "The Kung-sun Warlords" II, 141-142 and 147-150. Gongsun Yuan, son of Gongsun Kang and grandson of Gongsun Du, had seized power after overthrowing his uncle, the incompetent Gongsun Gong, in 228.

69 Embassies were received at the Wei court in 222, and the government of Cao Pi restored the Wu and Ji Colonels, officials responsible in Han times for the supervision of the Western Regions: *SGZ* 2, 79; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 98, and see Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 110-113.

Wei lue, quoted in *SGZ* 30, 858-63, has substantially more information about the land routes to the west than does the parallel text in *HHS* 88/78. It may be argued that this reflects the first reports of the situation in the Western Regions after the restoration of contact: personal communication from Dr Gardiner.

70 Liu Hong, who designed the *Qianxiang* "Celestial Appearances" calendar with his colleague Cai Yong, was a man from Dong commandery who later held position as Commandant of the Eastern Division of Kuaiji. He was a most competent mathematician and astronomer, he presented a memorial on lunar

CLAIM TO THE MANDATE

Already in 223 Sun Quan's senior officials had urged him to claim the imperial title. *Jiangbiao zhuan* gives some account of his refusal: on the one hand, since he had been unable to prevent the abdication of the Han Emperor and the overthrow of that imperial house, it was not entirely proper that he should not seek to step so quickly into the vacated place. At the same time he sought to keep his options open in relation to the government of Wei - it was yet too soon to commit himself firmly against the great power to the north, and he was equally concerned at the possibility of an alliance between Wei and Shu combined to destroy him.

Six years later, however, the situation was more stable and more favourable. Both rival states had junior and less impressive rulers, and Sun Quan had successfully withstood the attacks from Wei, while Shu was unprepared for another attempt against his western frontier on the Yangzi Gorges. Politically, the occasion was propitious, and in

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eclipses to the court of Emperor Ling of Han in 179, and he was the actual compiler of the text of the third section of the Treatise on Pitchpipes and the Calendar, *HHS* 93/3. For his memorial on eclipses, see *HHS* 92/2, 3042-43, with commentary quoting his biography from the *Hou Han shu* of Yuan Shansong. For his authorship of *HHS* 93/3, see the Discussion by Sima Biao at 3082; analysed by Mansvelt Beck, *Treatises of Later Han*, 66, the Preface by Liu Zhao to the commentary to the treatises (presented as an appendix to the Beijing edition of *HHS*), and the parallel treatise of *JS* 17, 498. On Liu Hong, see also Needham, *Science and Civilisation* III, 29, 421 *et saepe*.

On the calendrical calculations of Later Han, see the three parts of Eberhard's "Contributions to the Astronomy of the Han Period" (reprinted in *Sternkunde und Weltbild*), and Sivin, "Cosmos and Computation." The *Taichu* "Grand Beginning" calendar of Former Han was adjusted by the *Santong* "Three Sequences" system designed by Liu Xin in the time of Wang Mang and was used by Later Han until 85, when a variant of the ancient *Sifen* 四分 [Quarter Day] calendar, compiled by Bian Xin and Li Fan, was put into effect. The *Sifen* system is described in *HHS* 93/3, and is discussed in detail by Eberhard, "Contributions to the Astronomy of the Han Period III," 204-220 [191-207].

As Liu Hong was the true compiler of the third chapter of the Treatise of Pitchpipes and the Calendar, so is Cai Yong acknowledged by Sima Biao to have been the compiler of the second chapter, *HHS* 92/2 [*HHS* 93/3, 3082, the Discussion of Sima Biao, with the other references above], and his report on the calendar appears at 3038-40.

The *Qianxiang* system prepared by Liu Hong and Cai Yong is presented in *JS* 17, 504-05 ff, and is discussed by Zhu Wenxin [1934], 91-95. Eberhard, "Contributions to the Astronomy of the Han Period III," 204 [191], describes the work as "a more scientific study of the problem," and notes particularly that It sought to remove the influence of the theories of the New Text School and the influence of the apocryphal books, relying instead upon real observation and experience: see also Mansvelt Beck, *Treatises of Later Han*, 67. Sivin, "Cosmos and Computation," notes at 65 that Liu Hong was the first great astronomer to take eclipse cycles seriously, but though the *Qianxiang* calendar was theoretically better than the *Sifen* it did not greatly increase the number of confirmed predictions. Eberhard and Müller, "Contributions to the Astronomy of the San-Kuo Period," 149-150 [*Sternkunde und Weltbild*, 229-230], argue that although the calculation of the length of the year of the *Qianxiang* calendar was actually less satisfactory than the *Sifen* system, the *Qianxiang* represented a competent approach to fulfil the two requirements of a calendrical system: to agree as far as possible with observation, and to simplify calculation.

The main presentation of Eberhard and Müller's article is a translation of an essay by the third century scholar Wang Fan of Wu. At 149 [229] they remark that "The advance of mathematical science was particularly noticeable during the San-kuo period, when in the southern kingdom of Wu many mathematicians and astronomers were employed. Their astronomical work is not so fundamentally individual as that of the earlier men [of Later Han], but from a mathematical point of view it is more advanced."

In practical terms of the variance of the dating system from one state of the three to the next, one may compare the main chronology presented by Hsüeh and Ou-yang, *Sino-Western Calendar*, which follows the calendar of Wei and Jin, and their supplementary Tables 1 and 2, which give a summary account of the calendars of Shu and Wu: though the overall pattern is naturally the same, there are a number of places of difference.

the spring of 229 the neighbouring territories of Wuchang and Xiakou duly reported the appearance of a yellow dragon and a phoenix.

By the end of the second century, it had been generally accepted that the colour which should succeed to the red of Han was yellow, symbol of Earth. The Yellow Turbans had proclaimed that a yellow heaven would replace the blue sky of Han, and in the cycle of the five forces it was expected that Earth would emerge from the Fire of Han. It was for this reason that the reign-title proclaimed by Cao Pi when he received the abdication of Emperor Xian of Han was Huangchu, "Yellow Beginning;" and when Sun Quan announced his independent position by setting a new calendar, he named the year 223 as the first of Huangwu, "Martial Yellow." Now the dragon and the phoenix, magical and imperial creatures of appropriate colour, provided a suitable introduction to the announcement of a new empire.

Apart from this, however, there were not a great many propitious omens to support Sun Quan's claim. His officer Chen Hua had obtained a reputation at court for the occasion that, on an embassy to Wei, he had interpreted classical text to provide an authority for an imperial ruler in the south and east, and in Wu there had been a popular jingle which went,

A carriage of yellow gold, coloured and elegant;
Open the Chang Gate, and out comes the Son of Heaven.[71]

However, though the classics could always be re-interpreted, and popular songs, the voice of the people, were sometimes assumed to reflect the voice of a deity, there is no further substantial evidence of portentous support for Sun Quan.

Nonetheless, on 23 June 229, Sun Quan held ceremony at the Altar of Heaven established in the southern suburb of his capital Wuchang, and proclaimed himself Emperor of Wu. He unfurled a great banner with the insignia of a yellow dragon, and he also changed the reign period to Huanglong, "Yellow Dragon."[72]

The book *Wu lu* recorded his petition to heaven on this occasion.[73] In that text, he recites how Han held the government for twenty-four generations and four hundred and thirty-four years, but then its inspiration came to an end and good fortune was exhausted, so that all was lost and the state was divided and crumbled.

> And so that evil minister Cao Pi snatched the sacred vessels, and Cao Pi's son Cao Rui has succeeded to his wicked work. They have destroyed the proper orders of names [between ruler and subject] and they have disrupted the system of good government.
>
> I was born in the southeast, and I encountered these times. I succeeded to a position, and I now hold military power. It is my ambition to give peace to the world. I receive the commands of heaven, I carry out its punishments, and whatever I do, I do it for the people.
>
> My ministers and officials and officers, and the men in authority in every city of the commanderies and provinces, all believe that the favour of Heaven is gone from the house of Han and the sacrifices of Han to Heaven are likewise ended. So the imperial position is empty, and there is no ruler to maintain these sacrifices.

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71 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1132 PC note 2 quoting *Wu shu*, and *SGZ* 47/ Wu 2, 1134.

72 *SGZ* 62/Wu 17, 1414, the biography of Hu Zong. Hu Zong was commissioned to compose a rhapsody for the occasion, he is known to have composed the oath of covenant between Wu and Shu-Han later that year (see note 78), and it would appear that he was recognised as poet and essayist laureate to the court of Wu. He probably also wrote Sun Quan's proclamation of claim to empire.

73 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1135-36 PC quoting *Wu lu*.

CLAIM TO THE MANDATE

> Favourable signs and fortunate omens have been reported one after another, all interpretations point to me, and I am compelled to accept. Fearful of the Mandate of Heaven, I have no choice but to obey. Respectfully I have chosen this auspicious day to mount the altar, to make the burnt offering and to take the position of sovereign. If only you will accept this sacrifice and give your aid to the rulers of Wu, so the prosperity from Heaven may last forever.

Sun Quan thus based his claim upon two predications: that the imperial position had been vacated by Han and had not been filled by any worthy successor; and that his own accession was justified by the virtue of his government, in particular by his concern for the people. He specifically dismissed the claims of his rival in Wei by describing them as criminal usurpers. As to Shu, without mentioning Liu Bei, he simply states that the fortune and tradition of Han is ended, so that claim to succession was irrelevant.

From the point of view of later historians, Sun Quan's claim to the imperial title was unacceptable. With an elegant essay in *Zizhi tongjian,* Sima Guang discussed the concept of the "True Succession" (*zhengtong*) as it applied to the history of Wei and Shu. On the one hand, as he observed, Zhou, Qin, Han, Jin, Sui and Tang had each united China under their rule and had maintained succession for a number of generations. By that standard, none of the states Wei, Shu and Wu qualified for recognition as true emperors: and indeed, as at the end of the power of the Zhou kings, there was for a time no true unifying ruler.

On the other hand, as the compiler of a chronicle history, Sima Guang was required to determine some sequence of identification for the years of division. Unlike the West, China had no common and agreed point for the calculation of years, and at any one time it was essential to decide upon the reign title of one rival state or another. Sima Guang, just for that purpose, accepted the principle that Han had transmitted the throne to Wei, and Wei in turn passed it to Jin. Thereafter the succession was traced through the Southern Dynasties until Sui and Tang.

Sima Guang emphasised, however, that he made that determination simply in order to chronicle the events which took place in the various states:

> ... we are not honouring one and treating another with contempt, nor making distinction between orthodox and intercalary positions.

In later time, Sima Guang's approach was rejected by the Neo-Confucian philosophers, who endorsed the legitimacy of the claim of Liu Bei and his state of Shu as successors to Han. In particular, Zhu Xi based the chronicle of his abbreviated *Zizhi tongjian gangmu* on the chronology through Shu Han.[74]

It is a curious chance that such an alternative is available. For Sima Guang, taking the chronology through Wei, the Chinese year which extended from Western 22 February

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74 For Sima Guang's justification of the choice of the calendar of Wei as the basis for his chronology, see *ZZTJ* 69, 2185-88; Fang, *Chronicle*, 45-49. For Zhu Xi's contrary opinion, see his preface and the *Fan li* "Rules" chapter of introduction to *Zizhi tongjian gangmu*; in that work the period 220-263 follows the calendrical system of Shu-Han, and for the period 264-280, when Shu-Han had fallen but Wu still maintained its independence, the dates are set in smaller script, to indicate Zhu Xi's disapproval of the still-divided empire; he follows a similar method for the long period of division between 420 and 589.

The fourth century scholar Xi Zuochi was apparently the first to argue that the Shu-Han dynasty should be regarded as legitimate successor, by blood relationship, to Later Han, and Shu-Han's calendar should therefore be taken as the basis for continuing chronology by reign title. (Xi Zuochi's memorial is preserved in *JS* 82, 2154-58; see also note 66 to Chapter 9.)

For further discussion of the debate on dynastic legitimacy, see *Cambridge Han*, 373-376 [Mansvelt Beck, "The Fall of Han"].

220 to 9 February 221 is described as Huangchu 1, based upon the proclamation by Cao Pi after his accession to the imperial throne on 11 December 220. For Zhu Xi and the sympathisers of Shu, the year is called Yankang 1, being the reign title proclaimed under the auspices of the puppet Han government during that year (which had begun as Jian'an 25); in the following year, on 15 May 221, Liu Bei assumed the imperial throne and proclaimed his own reign title of Zhangwu.

Forty years later, in 263, Liu Bei's son Liu Shan surrendered to Wei, but Shu-Han was not entirely conquered until the next year, which would have been counted Yanxing 2. And on 8 February 266, at the very end of the following Chinese year, Sima Yan, founding Emperor of Jin, took the throne from the house of Wei, and the entire year from 3 February 265 was retrospectively given title as the first of the Taishi period.[75] For Sima Guang, therefore, the chronology from 263 through 265 and 266 would be represented by Jingyuan 4 and Xianxi 1 of Wei, then the Taishi period of Jin. For Zhu Xi it was Yanxing 1 and 2 of Shu, and then the Taishi period of Jin.

This whole debate is now of no more than academic interest, but the academic argument has had great influence upon modern views of the three rival claimants. Upon a base of continuous chronology, scholars can debate the merits and legitimacies of Wei and Shu, but no such chronology can be established for Wu: any count of the years between 221 and 228 must make use of the system of Wei or of Shu; and the surrender of Sun Hao, last ruler of Wu, in 280, though it was celebrated in Jin by the proclamation of the new reign-title Taikang, cannot be reconciled with the establishment or fall of that dynasty.

If, however, as we must, we ignore the fatal years to come and the future debates of scholars, then the position of Sun Quan in 229 was by no means illegitimate, neither in his own terms nor in the political theory of the time. The most obvious example was the period of the Warring States at the end of Zhou, with the rise of Qin and the foundation of Han. As Sima Guang observed, it was in the Han period that

> scholars began to propound the theory of mutual engendering and mutual destruction of the five Elements. Arguing that Qin had occupied an intercalated position between the elements of Wood [Zhou] and Fire [Han], they considered it as the dynasty of a hegemon, and would not accredit it as that of a true King. In this manner arose the theory of orthodox and intercalated positions [in the succession of dynasties].
>
> Thus the Zhou dynasty was ended [in 254 BC], and the empire of Qin was not proclaimed [until 221 BC], but scholars such as Sima Qian of Former Han maintained their chronology through whichever state was appropriate, without political implications and judgement.

For Sun Quan, therefore, the years between 221 AD and 229 were simply intercalary, a period of confusion before the virtues of Wu became apparent. By these terms, it is not the foundation in 229 that embarrasses his claim to empire, but the end of his dynasty in 280. Later critics have looked upon Cao Cao and the Wei dynasty as no better than hegemons, just because, with the preponderance of power in China, they failed to reunite the empire - and how much more does this apply to Wu, which also failed and eventually fell. The view of hindsight is not always kind or fair.

Concentrating, then, upon the situation in 229, we may observe that even in those terms Sun Quan's claim presented some interesting questions on the meaning and nature of the imperial title. This was shown most dramatically by the reaction in Shu.

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75 *JS* 3, 50-51; Fang, *Chronicle* II, 515.

CLAIM TO THE MANDATE

As we have seen, by 223 Sun Quan had reached an understanding with the government of Shu, now controlled by Zhuge Liang on behalf of Liu Bei's son Liu Shan. There was no question that the alliance was valuable to both parties: if one of them should make an agreement of neutrality with Wei, and allow that state to concentrate upon the other, the victim of the full northern attack would be soon in desperate straits. Whether co-ordinated or not, the existence of threats from Sun Quan across the Huai or along the Han were important to the hopes of Shu, and Zhuge Liang's campaigns against the valley of the Wei were a most valuable distraction for Sun Quan.

But now the claimant imperial government in the west was faced by the pretensions of Wu. The Sun family had no possible connection with the imperial house, and Sun Quan owed his former royal title to a grant from the usurping Wei. If, in his proclamation, he claimed to rule by virtue, that was quite as disconcerting to a claim based upon legitimate descent as it was to a dynasty which had benefited from abdication. Moreover, while the empire of Wei could simply reject Sun Quan's claim as that of an upstart rebel, the government of Shu had to deal with him as an ally of great importance.

It appears that there was debate at the court of Shu. Certainly there were some prepared to say that Sun Quan's claim to parity was unjustified, that there was no advantage in the alliance, and that all agreements with him should be abandoned. Zhuge Liang, however, contrived a form of words which could satisfy both the *amour propre* of the dynasty and the *Realpolitik* of the current situation.[76] He gave examples of how Emperor Wen of Han had been prepared to treat with the Xiongnu, even in humble language, and how Liu Bei himself, despite the injuries he had suffered, eventually accepted a treaty:

> In each case they were coping with emergency, thinking profoundly of the advantage in the long run; they did not act like men of the common sort.

Sun Quan, moreover, was an aggressive and energetic ruler. Though he and the forces of the north were currently at stalemate along the Yangzi frontier, should Shu maintain its planned attack against Wei, then Sun Quan in alliance would either make an attack of his own or would take advantage of the occasion to develop his strength by colonisation and recruitment in the south. In either case, he was a useful ally to hold Wei in check - without an alliance, however, he might decide to expand against the territory of Shu.

> If we now take advantage of his ... friendliness toward us, our northern expedition [against the valley of the Wei] can proceed without anxiety concerning the east, and Wei will not be able to concentrate all their forces westwards against us.
>
> In the light of this great advantage, it is not yet appropriate to emphasise Sun Quan's crimes of usurpation and rebellion.

On this basis of expediency, the government of Shu swallowed its pride, at least for the time being, and sent an envoy of ministerial rank, the Commandant of the Guards Chen Zhen, to congratulate Sun Quan on his new glory. He arrived at Wuchang in the late summer, some two months after Sun Quan's accession.[77]

The simple recognition, however, was not enough. Almost certainly at the initiative of Sun Quan, the two states also adopted a formal treaty by oath and covenant, recognising one another's identity, and dividing the territory of Wei, when it should be conquered, between the two of them. The major ceremony was carried out at Wuchang by Sun Quan and Chen Zhen, who mounted an altar together and smeared their mouths with blood

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76 *SGZ* 35/Shu 5, 924-25 PC quoting *Han-Jin chunqiu*; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 292-293 and 302-304.

77 *SGZ* 39/Shu 9, 984-85, being the biography of Chen Zhen.

from slaughtered animals, and it is clear that the matter had been planned and agreed to earlier. The text of the covenant, admired by the literary men of the time, and composed by Hu Zong, a scholar-official in the service of Sun Quan, tells us that Zhuge Liang, as Chancellor of Shu, had engaged in a parallel ritual:[78]

> Although there is heart-felt faithfulness between Han and Wu, yet since our lands are apart and borders divide us we should have a written alliance.
>
> The power and authority of the Chancellor Zhuge are shown far and wide. He shelters and maintains his own state and he commands the army abroad. His fidelity moves the *yin* and the *yang*, his loyalty affects Heaven and Earth.
>
> And he renews the bonds of covenant and publishes the oath of alliance, so the lands and the peoples of the east and the west may hear about it. He has set up an altar and killed the beast of sacrifice and reported it to the gods; again he has smeared his mouth with blood and has written down the promises once more; and so he renews it for eternity.....
>
> From this day on Han and Wu are in alliance. They join their strengths and they unite their hearts, and they attack the bandits of the Wei together. They give help to one another in time of danger and they give sympathy in times of anxiety. They share in calamities and they share in rejoicing; in good or ill they take part together, and nothing shall ever divide them.
>
> If anyone should injure Han, then Wu will attack them. If anyone should injure Wu, then Han shall attack them. Each will keep to his own territory, and neither shall invade or attack the other.
>
> This shall be handed down to generations to come, that it may continue forever in the manner it has begun, while every agreement that is made shall follow the pattern of this one.

As to the common enemy, Cao Rui was described as the "little fellow" who followed his father Cao Pi's path of evil and disgrace, while their predecessors, from Dong Zhuo down to Cao Cao , were no more than rebel ministers, who had plundered and seized the powers of the state:

> Reaching for the limits of cruelty and the extremities of wrong, they put the four seas into turmoil and ripped the nine provinces to shreds. The empire has lost its government, the hearts of the people are bitter and angry.
>
> ..... In this present day, for the destruction of Cao Rui and the arrest of his followers, who can undertake the task unless it is Han and Wu?
>
> And now, to attack the evil men and destroy the oppressors ..... we should first divide up their territory and take away their lands so the hearts of the people may know to whom they shall turn.

Accordingly, as earnest of the future, it was agreed that Shu-Han should have the Later Han provinces of Bing, Liang, Ji and Yan, the northwest and the north of the empire, while Wu would take the territories of Xu, Yu, You and Qing provinces, being the south and centre of the North China plain, with southern Manchuria and Korea. The former capital territory, the province of Sili of Later Han, was divided, with the region about

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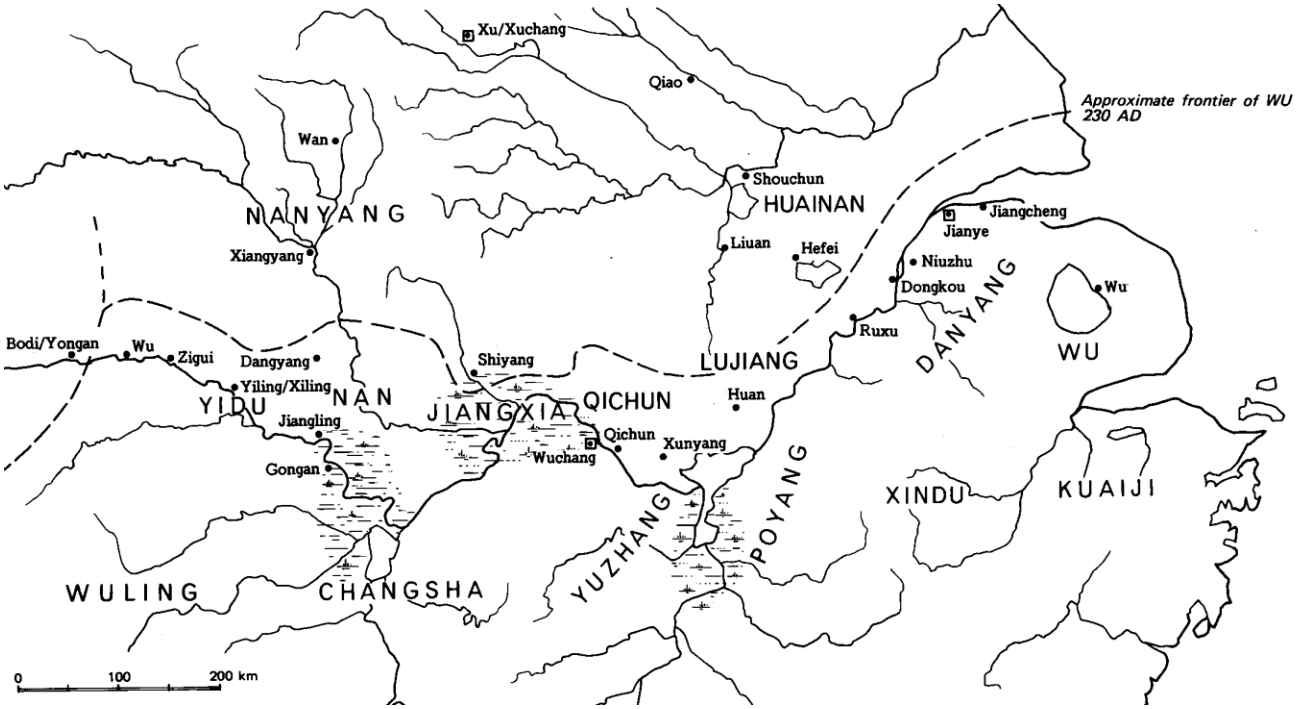
78 The text of the covenant is preserved in *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1134-35. The biography of Hu Zong, *SGZ* 62/Wu 17, 1414, ascribes the composition to Hu Zong, and makes particular note of its fine literary quality. See also note 72 above.

Chang'an, in present-day Shenxi, going to Shu and that of Luoyang, present-day Henan, to Wu.[79]

All this, of course, was theoretical, but it did establish spheres of influence for the two parties, and it confirmed that Zhuge Liang and his forces would be attacking northwards into the Wei valley, not interfering with Sun Quan's interests in the middle Yangzi and the Han, still less in the region of the Huai. In practical terms, though the fine words of the treaty covered a natural mistrust and bitterness on both sides, the recognition by Shu meant that Sun Quan could feel reasonably secure of his defences in the west, by the Yangzi Gorges, and could give major military priority to his dealings with Wei in the north and to the maintenance of control inside his own territory. For the time being, his government was secure, his status was effectively recognised by his rivals, and his empire held sway over three former provinces of Han. No small achievement for an insignificant family from the marginal city of Fuchun; it remained to be seen what could be built upon this foundation.

79 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1134, and *SGZ* 39/Shu 9, 985; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 293.


Xu/Xuchang
Qiao
Approximate frontier of WU 230 AD
Wan
Shouchun
HUAINAN
NANYANG
Jiangcheng
Jianye
Xiangyang
Liuan
Hefei
Niuzhu
Dongkou
DANYANG
Wu
Bodi/Yongan
Wu
Zigui
Dangyang
Shiyang
LUJIANG
Ruxu
WU
Yiling/Xiling
YIDU
NAN
JIANGXIA
QICHUN
Huan
Jiangling
Qichun
Xunyang
Gongan
Wuchang
POYANG
XINDU
KUAIJI
YUZHANG
WULING
CHANGSHA
0
100
200 km

CHAPTER EIGHT

Empire in the South

Introductory Summary
The forms of government
Patterns in the later history of Wu (230-280)
The social and economic structure of Wu
The achievement of Wu

Introductory Summary:

Though Sun Quan had claimed the imperial title in 229, and made some pretence of establishing the forms of an imperial court, the government of Wu continued to reflect the structure of a warlord state. In human terms, the time of the foundation of Wu was dominated by military commanders who held authority through their personal courage and energy, and were celebrated for their individualism, and it was no small achievement that Sun Quan was able to keep such a group under control.

Politics at court were largely dominated by the intrigues and conflicts of powerful individuals and families. In particular, unlike the bureaucracy of Han, substantial official positions, and particularly those involving the command of troops, were regularly transferred by inheritance from one generation to the next. In the course of time, however, there was a shift of influence in the central government from the first generation of men who had risen to power in the early years of the state, many of them from the north and all chosen for their personal ability and loyalty, to men from south of the Yangzi, whose families had prospered under the Sun regime.

Outside the court and the capital, moreover, great independent authority was held by these local families, which consolidated their power through the acquisition of tenants and other dependents who sought protection from the uncertainty of the times and the demands of government. This development, already begun in the time of Han, meant that the power of the central government was limited, and its capacity to exploit the resources of the state was heavily restricted. To a degree, the state of Wu was run for the protection and the benefit of the great families who were its nominal subjects.

In this respect, with the establishment of a separate state in the south, the produce and profits of trade were no longer drained away to the north, while the pressures of defensive war encouraged the colonisation of new territory. At the same time, the capital at Jianye was celebrated for its splendour, and scholars of Wu made substantial contributions to the culture of China as a whole. The ultimate achievement of Wu was the expansion of Chinese civilisation in the south, preparing that ground for centuries of independent survival after the non-Chinese seizure of the north in the early fourth century.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The forms of government:

Internally, Sun Quan's regime made gestures towards the formalities of an imperial court. In 221, when Sun Quan was enfeoffed as King of Wu by Cao Pi, Sun Shao of Beihai had been appointed Chancellor, Gu Yong was made Prefect of the Masters of Writing,[1] and some appointments were made to the traditional ministries of Han. By 229, Sun Shao was dead and Gu Yong had succeeded him as Chancellor, with authority over the business of the imperial secretariat.

At the lower level of central government, though some names and appointments are given, there is not a great deal of detail in the texts. It appears, however, that Sun Quan established only six of the nine ministries which had been maintained at the imperial court of Han, and those posts were not always filled: the titles were used rather as supernumerary honours for men of political importance, sometimes with substantial duties elsewhere, rather than as part of a practical administration.[2]

One appointment should be noticed, that of the senior official and scholar Zhang Zhao. There had been surprise amongst the followers of Sun Quan when Zhang Zhao was not appointed Chancellor of the Kingdom of Wu in 221, and the post was given instead to the rather less distinguished Sun Shao, an immigrant from the north. Then, when Sun Shao died in 225, Zhang Zhao was again passed over in favour of Gu Yong. On the first occasion, Sun Quan explained that he was only doing Zhang Zhao a kindness, relieving him from the arduous responsibility; the second time he observed more specifically that Zhang Zhao was too strict and critical, and it would be embarrassing for both of them if he became the official head of the bureaucracy.[3] In 229, however, we are told that Sun Quan was even more open, and that he had long held a grudge against Zhang Zhao for advising surrender to Cao Cao before the Red Cliffs:

> When he had proclaimed himself Emperor, Sun Quan called an assembly of all his officials, and he attributed the accomplishment to Zhou Yu. Zhang Zhao held up his staff of office and prepared to recite the achievements and the virtues of the new Emperor. Before he had uttered a word, however, Sun Quan said, "If I had followed Lord Zhang's advice, I would now have been begging for my food." In great shame, Zhang Zhao fell to the ground, dripping with perspiration.[4]

As far as official ranks and titles go, Zhang Zhao had been named General Who Supports Wu, with status next to the Excellencies, and he held a marquisate valued at ten thousand households, but he resigned all his offices soon after the proclamation of the empire. If Sun Quan, the master he had served so long and so loyally, had indeed behaved in such boorish fashion, this is hardly surprising. Zhang Zhao died in 236 at the age of eighty. We

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[1] Sun Shao has no regular biography in *SGZ*. The record of his death as Chancellor, however, appears in the chronicle for the year 225 in *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1131, and there is a brief biography for him, taken from *Wu lu*, in PC attached to that entry.

The biography of Gu Yong is in *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1225-28. He was a man from Wu commandery, a pupil of the great scholar Cai Yong, and he had at one time held appointment as Assistant in Kuaiji commandery, acting as Grand Administrator for Sun Quan.

[2] The formal structure of the government of Wu is discussed in *Sanguo huiyao* 9 and 10, in the various chapters of *Lidai zhiguan biao*, and in the compilation of Hong Yisun in *ESWSBB* II. *ESWSBB* II also contains tables of the senior civil and military appointments in Wu, compiled from the scattered references in *SGZ* by Wan Sitong and Huang Dahua.

[3] *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1221; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 183.

[4] *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1222 PC quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan.*

are told he devoted himself to scholarship, though he sometimes returned to court and quarrelled with Sun Quan, who would apologise and show him honour once more. It had always been an uneasy relationship.

The highest military commander of Wu was the Supreme General-in-Chief Lu Xun, with concurrent appointment as Chief Protector on the Right, giving formal responsibility for military discipline and court martial, and specific command of defences on the middle Yangzi. His headquarters were at Wuchang, and in the ninth month of 229, when Sun Quan moved his capital from Wuchang back to Jianye, Lu Xun was left with administrative and military responsibility for Jing province and the region of Yuzhang, the whole western part of the empire of Wu.[5]

Next after Lu Xun was the General-in-Chief and Chief Protector on the Left Zhuge Jin, with headquarters at Gongan, on the Yangzi south of Jiangling, and a watching brief to the west against Shu.[6] Lu Xun's position as forward commander on the north and west was taken by Bu Zhi, General of the Elite Cavalry based at Xiling, close to the border with Shu through the Gorges and to the frontier against Wei.[7] Also in Jing province there were armies under the General of Chariots and Cavalry Zhu Ran, concurrently Protector of the Army on the Right, and the General of the Right Pan Zhang.[8] The region required serious occupation.

In the east, besides the forces under Sun Quan's direct command at Jianye, and the local troops which could be raised from Danyang, Wu and Kuaiji, the fortress of Ruxu, on the northern bank of the Yangzi, was commanded by the General of the Van Zhu Huan, who had succeeded Zhou Tai about 220, and who bore the Staff of Authority as a reflection of his responsibilities for that exposed garrison.[9] Until his death in 228, the Governor of Yang province had been Lü Fan, veteran servant of Sun Ce and Sun Quan, who had also been granted title of honour as Commander-in-Chief.[10] For the next several years, however, there appears to have been no appointment to that position, presumably because of the re-establishment of the capital at Jianye, from where the territory could be supervised directly by Sun Quan's own staff.

In the far south, subject to the supervision of Lu Xun in Jing province, the territory of Jiao province was still controlled by Lü Dai, holding title as General Who Maintains the South in Peace. Lü Dai's special status gave him authority over the whole region as a single unit, but elsewhere, in the rest of Wu territory, the commandery was the basis of civil government. The critical decisions of the state, however, were based on military considerations, and the essential posts were those of the generals in their various strategic garrisons.

This, indeed, is what one might expect of a warlord state. There was no way that a regional power such as Wu would find it appropriate or desirable to reconstruct the massive bureaucratic apparatus of the now deceased Han. Wei, in the north, had slightly higher pretensions, and the structure of government, to some extent taken over from Han, is better documented and was certainly more complex. But all three states were brittle,

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5 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1135, and *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1349.

6 *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1232 and 1235.

7 *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1237. Xiling was the new name given to the city of Yiling in Yidu commandery after the victory over Liu Bei in 222: *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1126.

8 *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1306, and *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1300.

9 *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1313-14.

10 He was awarded the title in 228, but died before he received the insignia: *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1311.

dependent upon continuing success, or at least competence, in war, and constitutional formalities were a luxury. The fall of Han demonstrated how much that dynasty had depended upon military force, but the long reign of the house of Liu had allowed a thick layer of civilian velvet to cover the iron hand of power; among the new states of the Three Kingdoms, the reality of war was too immediate to be concealed so effectively.

On the other hand, though policies were largely determined by men in military commands, those of more clerical or scholarly abilities still had a role to play. All armies had a need for administrative support, and some men known for their scholarship were also recognised as practical counsellors, regardless of their fighting prowess or their ability to command troops in the field. Sun Quan himself needed advisors and secretaries to maintain the links of his power, while for the sake of prestige in dealing with his rivals and allies he also maintained a form of imperial government. And there was some prestige and influence to be found in appointment as an envoy.

Relations between the contending parties of the Three Kingdoms were not maintained by long-term resident ministers: the conventions of modern diplomacy are a Western development, which can be traced to the rival states of Renaissance Italy but which were never approved in traditional China.[11] On the contrary, if the servant of one state spent too long at the court of another, he faced the possibility of suspicion that he had changed sides, or at least suffered undue influence. Zhang Hong was suspect for some time in Wu on account of his service at the court under Cao Cao's control.[12] And Zhuge Jin, minister of Wu but a brother of Zhuge Liang in Shu, had to behave with great circumspection lest he be suspected of private dealings with the rival state.[13]

It was the normal pattern, therefore, that envoys were sent from one court to another on individual missions of limited duration, and this system was maintained even between allies. Though Wu and Shu exchanged regular embassies, neither of them kept an accredited minister at the court of the other, so information on policy was not assessed day-to-day, but only on the discrete reports of individual visitors.[14]

The very nature of these embassies, moreover, tended to set them into a pattern of hostile repartee. When Xing Zhen came as envoy from Cao Pi for the enfeoffment of Sun Quan as King of Wu, he sought to enhance the status of his master by failing to get down from his carriage when he met with Sun Quan, but he was faced down by Zhang Zhao and publicly abused by Xu Sheng.[15] For the return embassy, ostensibly to give thanks, Sun Quan dispatched a certain Zhao Zi from Nanyang, who was known as a learned man of quick wit and repartee, and we are told that Zhao Zi debated with Cao Pi in his own

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11 See, for example, Mattingley, *Renaissance Diplomacy*. On the Chinese pattern maintained at a different time but in comparable circumstances, see Franke, *Diplomatic Missions*, discussing the exchange of envoys between the Song dynasty and its northern rivals the Liao and Jin from the tenth to the thirteenth century.

12 See Chapter 4.

13 *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1231-32, tells how Zhuge Jin was sent as an envoy to Liu Bei in 215. Liu Bei was then an ally of Sun Quan, but Zhuge Jin spoke with his brother only in public assemblies, never meeting him in private (de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 488). In 221, however, when Zhuge Jin wrote to Liu Bei to urge that he should give up his plan of attacking Wu, he came under suspicion of dealing privately and treacherously with the enemy: *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1232-33, and PC note 2 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 50-52 and 74-75.

14 See, for example, *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1145, where we are told how visitors returning from Shu in 244 forecast a break in the alliance, but Sun Quan rightly assessed the information as mistaken.

15 *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1221, and *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1298; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 58-59 and 88.

court, extolling the merits of Sun Quan and the capacities of his servants.[16] A few months later, when Cao Pi sought further tribute and also required Sun Deng as hostage, another ambassador, Shen Hang of Wu commandery, also noted as a scholar, was sent to bring the goods, but also to make apologies for not sending Sun Quan's heir. He was similarly tested by Cao Pi, and emerged with credit.[17]

In many instances, these envoys were not of great rank or significance in the politics between states. There was, of course, the example of Zhuge Liang in 208, persuading the court of Sun Quan that it was possible and sensible to defy Cao Cao. Despite the eulogies of later romance and drama, however, Sun Quan and his advisers were well able to determine their own policy, and they were not to be convinced against their best interests.[18] Again, the embassy of Deng Zhi, sent by Zhuge Liang from Shu in 223 to establish an alliance with the Wu against Wei after the death of Liu Bei, was an occasion for delicate high-level negotiation,[19] and that of Chen Zhen in 229, recognising the imperial claim of Wu, was an important formal occasion.[20] On the other hand, when Sun Quan sent Zhang Wen on the return embassy to Shu, he apologised for giving him such a lowly task;[21] while Shen Hang, when asked whether Sun Deng would indeed be sent to Wei, avoided the question by saying that he was not of sufficient rank to be informed about Sun Quan's true plans - hardly the statement of a man with plenipotentiary authority. And there was the embarrassment of Hao Zhou, the officer of Wei who was convinced Sun Quan would honour his agreements and send Sun Deng as hostage, and who offered Cao Pi the lives of his family in pledge of his faith. In the event, of course, such confidence proved quite misplaced, and although Hao Zhou's family was spared, his political career was ended.[22]

Even between allies, however, the game of one-up-man-ship appears as an essential part of the ritual of embassies. We are told there was one occasion a messenger from Shu-Han to Wu was particularly arrogant and boastful, so that Sun Quan, embarrassed and at a loss, wished for the wit of Zhang Zhao to combat such a turbulent envoy.[23] And in the biography of Xue Zong we are told how the envoy Zhang Feng from Shu was making fun of ministers at the court of Wu until Xue Zong observed:

What is Shu? When it has a dog, it is independent;
when it has no dog, it is Shu.
A sidelong eye and a bent body,
and a worm going into its belly.

Zhang Feng challenged him to analyse the character Wu, and Xue Zong replied:

With no mouth, it is Heaven;
when it has a mouth, it is Wu.
Its lord can deal with all nations,

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16 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1123 and PC note 4 quoting *Wu shu*; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 59 and 88-89.

17 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1123 and 1124 PC note 6 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 60-61 and 92-93.

18 See Chapter 4.

19 Chapter 7, and the biography of Deng Zhi in *SGZ* 45/Shu 15, 1071-72; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 144-145 and 162-163.

20 Chapter 7.

21 *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1330; on the embassy, see below.

22 See Chapter 7 at note 35.

23 *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1222; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 293-294.

and it is the capital of the world.[24]

Xue Zong had a gift for exchanging riddles in this fashion, and he was, more substantially, a long associate of Lü Dai in Jiao province and responsible for an important memorial on the history and on appropriate policy in the far south.[25]

One may doubt whether these exchanges did anything to improve relations, to encourage trust or to exchange useful information between allies, but perhaps we mistake the point: literary repartee was a part of Chinese tradition, and it formed an established genre in collections of anecdotes.[26] Displays of extempore wit enhanced the prestige of the ambassadors and of the scholars who debated them, they added a touch of liveliness and entertainment to the court, and they demonstrated the courage of the debaters and the tolerance of the ruler. The very presence of such guests from an alien power, received with courtesy and granted a patient hearing, at least showed a common interest and humanity - and one must assume that, outside the public displays of court and banqueting hall, some proper discussion took place.[27]

From the patterns of appointments and influence described, however, the government of Wu had comparatively small concern for civil affairs. As one example, by contrast to the state of Wei, there was no serious attempt to establish a program of agricultural colonies which might rival the achievement of the enemy along the Huai. We do have reference to the appointment of Lu Xun to supervise the agricultural colonies at Haichang county near Hangzhou,[28] and there was at some time a special agricultural region at Piling, along the southern shore of the Yangzi estuary. It seems likely that both these territories were the scene of colonisation: at Haichang there was opportunity for land reclamation and for production of salt from the sea, and at Piling there was marsh-land which offered room for the extension of irrigation agriculture. These, however, were local developments, and we may note that in 202 the county of Piling, together with three neighbouring counties, was granted as personal appanage to Zhu Zhi, general and Grand Administrator in Wu commandery. Later, in 222, Zhu Zhi was enfeoffed as Marquis of Piling, and during the last years of Wu the same title was held by a grandson of Lu Xun, so the government of Wu gained limited advantage from any special measures in that region.[29]

In 226, following the death of Cao Pi and the easing of military threat from the north, Sun Quan issued a proclamation urging that the people should be encouraged to develop the work of agriculture. Lu Xun presented a memorial suggesting that military commanders should be involved in the colonisation of arable land, and Sun Quan issued

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24 *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1250-51, and PC note 2 with text criticism by Pei Songzhi. The first stanza plays with the character *shu*, referring first to its extension, with the addition of the "dog" radical, into *du* "independent," and then to its component parts; the first, second and fourth lines rhyme. The second stanza refers to the component parts of the character *wu*; the second and fourth lines rhyme.

25 *SGZ* 53/Wu 7, 1251-53, and see note 84 to Chapter 5.

26 One may consider the examples in *Shishuo xinyu*, translated by Mather, and particularly section 25, "Taunting and Teasing."

27 Franke, *Diplomatic Missions*, at 16 and 17, emphasises the importance of ritual and "play" as a means of controlling and civilising human and inter-state conduct.

In more modern terms, it is generally accepted in a democracy that the futile hostilities of public and parliamentary debate are marginal to real negotiations between different parties and political interests.

28 See Chapter 5 at note 78.

29 On the establishment of the area subordinate to the Colonel Director of Agriculture for Piling, see Wu and Yang, 2938/1, and *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* III, 26-27. On the appanage and later fief of Zhu Zhi, see *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1303-04. On the marquisate of Piling held by Lu Jing, see *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1360.

an enthusiastic response, announcing that he and his sons would personally take part in such work. The Treatise of Economics of *Jin shu* tells us that the state of Wu was thenceforward dedicated to agriculture and the raising of grain,[30] but this is surely an exaggeration, for the government was always concerned rather with military expansion than with agriculture. Some years later, in 240, when there was a severe famine, Sun Quan was compelled to recognise that the demands of the army and of corvee work were interfering with farming, and he urged restraint on his military commanders and his local administrators.[31]

For the situation south of the Yangzi was different to that of the north. Cao Cao and his successors in Wei had been faced with the problems of a settled society which had been disrupted by civil war. Agricultural colonies brought the vagrant people under a new pattern of administrative control, and did much to ensure the supply for operations against enemy forces with comparable difficulties.

In their frontier region of the south, however, the major concern of Sun Quan and his government was not so much to restore stability in Chinese settled areas, but to increase the numbers of people and the amount of farmland under their control. Their chief interest and advantage lay in aggressive action beyond their immediate borders, not, as in the north, in settlement and defence of people who were already under their rule. Their military activity certainly relied upon a reasonably effective agricultural base of supply, but this was not the top priority: at the simplest level of calculation, there was more advantage to Sun Quan in the conquest and colonisation of a village or settlement which had been outside the control of his government than there was in the marginal improvement of yield in some territory that was already settled and obedient.

So the situation of Wei called for effective mobilisation of the resources of land and people in a large but limited region, but the best plan for Wu was to increase those resources by expansion against an open frontier. There was no need for a sophisticated program of political and economic development, for the commandery and county structure of Han, suitably amended and intensified, allowed for consistent local aggression against the Chinese and non-Chinese people of the hills and valleys, and this steady pressure could be backed, where necessary, by particular military force. As each advance was made, the people were placed under the control of new counties, they were registered as citizens and subjects, and their human and economic resources were made available for further expansion against their neighbours or for defence across the Yangzi against the north. The development and maintenance of the state of Wu were neatly linked in a traditional policy of warfare and colonisation.

It is difficult to assess the speed of this expansion. We have noted the campaigns of He Qi, extending authority from the isolated coastal counties by present-day Fuzhou up the valleys of the Min River into present-day Jiangxi and southern Zhejiang,[32] while Lu Xun, Quan Zong and others gained control over the upper Zhe River south of the Huang Shan mountains.[33]

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30 Sun Quan's published statements are recorded in *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1232-33, with reference to Lu Xun's intervention. *Cf. JS* 26, 782-83; Yang, "Economic History," 159. Indeed, Lu Xun's proposals may be interpreted not so much as giving priority to agriculture, but simply encouraging military commanders to pay at least some attention to it, in addition to their more obvious responsibilities.

31 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1144.

32 See Chapter 5.

33 See Chapters 5 and 6.

CHAPTER EIGHT

In 234, at the instigation of the energetic and ambitious Zhuge Ke, eldest son of Zhuge Jin, a new assault was launched against the hills people of Danyang. Zhuge Ke was made Grand Administrator of the commandery, and was empowered to co-ordinate operations in the whole region. The citizens were held in a system of fortified villages, all communication with the hills was forbidden, troops were sent to collect any grain that was sown outside the area of control, and at the same time he offered amnesty to those who surrendered. We are told that forty thousand people were starved into submission, and the new recruits were divided among the various military commanders. This operation gave the final consolidation to Chinese authority in the Huang Shan region between the Yangzi and the Zhe River,[34] but the process continued elsewhere on the open frontier, sometimes by official campaigns, regularly by informal, undocumented, private enterprise.

The best method to assess the expansion of Wu is by comparison of the counties listed at the time of the census of Later Han, about 140, with those which appear in the Treatise of Geography of *Jin shu*, compiled soon after the conquest in 280. Since the Jin dynasty figures for population are based upon a taxation list, they cannot be taken as a full census, and it is not meaningful to make comparison at that level. The existence of a county, however, is good evidence of Chinese control.

On this basis, the change is remarkable. Between 140 and 280, within the territory of Wu south of the Yangzi, the number of counties had doubled, and they occupied territories where no such establishment had been seen before.[35] There were recognised settlements in present-day southern Zhejiang, Jiangxi and Fujian, there was strong development in the far south along the West River and the coastal route from Guangzhou towards the Red River delta in Vietnam, and all the former frontier region south of the Yangzi was now consolidated under central government. Though initiative for that achievement came from the needs of the state of Wu, it was Jin which received its chief benefit: at the beginning of the fourth century, when that dynasty was driven from the north, the émigré court found refuge and eventual security in the lands which had been held and developed under Sun Quan and his successors.

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34 The biography of Zhuge Ke is in *SGZ* 64/Wu 19, 1429-42, and the account of the campaign against the hills people of Danyang in the middle 230s is at 1431-32; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 441-442, and 519-520. The precise date of the program is given by *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, which records (at 1140) Zhuge Ke's appointment in 234 and (at 1142) his successful return in 237. See also note 38 below.

35 The accompanying map is based upon research discussed in de Crespigny, "Prefectures and Population." See also the work of Bielenstein, "The Chinese Colonisation of Fukien," 103-106.

The map shows county establishments of Later Han and Western Jin for the region of Wu from the Yangzi south to the Red River delta. In this territory, the number of counties had doubled, from 160 to 322. In Shu-Han during the same period, the number of counties increased by only 20 per cent, from 117 to 141 and some expansion to the far south was balanced by withdrawal in the west.

On the lists of commandery and county units in the *Xu Han shu* of Sima Biao, now forming the Treatise of Administrative Geography attached to the *Hou Han shu* of Fan Ye, see Chapter 1 at note 10. The arrangement of *Jin shu* 14-15, the Treatise of Geography, is similar, and relates to the early years of the Taikang period, which was proclaimed after the conquest of Wu in 280. The list of counties is generally reliable, but the figures for population are given only by households, and these are low and summary. Bielenstein, "Census," 154-155, argues that they are taxation figures, numbering only able-bodied males, and they cannot be usefully compared to the figures for Later Han, which reflect a complete poll-count.

Patterns in the later history of Wu (230-280):

Sun Quan, born in 182, was a little under fifty years old when he took title as emperor. He died in 252, at the age of seventy *sui*,[36] and the empire of Wu lasted fifty years, until the conquest by Jin in 280. In a sense, Sun Quan's proclamation of 229 may be regarded as a mid-point in the imperial history of his family, from the first achievements of Sun Jian in the 180s to the fall of dynastic fortune a hundred years later.

In the early years after the claim to empire, Sun Quan attempted to expand his ambitions to an imperial scale. Besides his interests in the south, where he re-established a Chinese presence on the island of Hainan,[37] there were emissaries from Funan and other countries beyond the southern seas.[38] In 230 Sun Quan despatched a force to take control of non-Chinese people on the island of Taiwan, and he sought diplomatic

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36 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1147.

37 The conquest of Hainan in 241, and the restoration of the Han territories of Zhuyai and Dan'er, is recorded in *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1145 (*cf.* Chapter 1 at note 70). We are told, however, that the expedition required thirty thousand troops.

38 An embassy from King Fan Xun of Funan is recorded in the chronicle for 242, just after the conquest of Hainan: *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1145. *Liang shu* 54, 783, also tells us that the envoys Zhu Ying and Kang Tai were sent out on courtesy visits. On their return, both men wrote accounts of Funan, and fragments of the work of Kang Tai have been preserved. They were surely also given instructions to examine the strength of the kingdoms to the south, but the Wu government was evidently persuaded that Funan could not be brought under direct control. See Wang, "The Nan-hai Trade," 33, and Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development*, 38, 48-68, also Chapter 1 and Chapter 7.

Liang shu 54, 798, also says that in 226 a merchant from Daqin named Qin Lun came to Jiaozhi and was sent on to the court of Wu. It is generally accepted that the name Daqin indicated the Roman empire, though details of the route there and the significance of the Chinese descriptions of that region have long been a source of controversy. The basic Chinese texts for this period are *HHS* 88/78, 2919-20, and *SGZ* 30, 860-62 PC quoting *Wei lue*.

The surname for Qin Lun is surely an ethnikon, in the same fashion as that of the celebrated Buddhist missionaries An Shigao, a man from Parthia (Anxi), and Kang Senghui, whose family came from Sogdiana (Kangju): see, for example, Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest* I, 26 and 47. It may even be that the whole name of Qin Lun should be understood as "Discussant of [Da]qin."

HHS 7, 318, and *HHS* 88/78, 2920, record an earlier mission from Daqin, also approaching by the southern sea route, which was received at the court of Emperor Huan of Han in 166. It is, of course, most unlikely that these earlier visitors were accredited envoys; one must assume that they too were enterprising merchants, from whatever real place of origin, who sought prestige and profit from the trade and generosity of the Chinese court.

There is, moreover, some difficulty with the dating given by *Liang shu* 54 for the visit by Qin Lun. The year is named specifically as Huangwu 5, equivalent to 226, but we are told that Qin Lun was first received by the Grand Administrator of Jiaozhi commandery, Wu Miao. 226, however, was the year Jiaozhi was seized from the Shi family by Lü Dai, we have a detailed account of the appointments in that important region during that year, and Wu Miao is not mentioned (Chapter 7 at note 61). Moreover, the record goes on to tell how Qin Lun was at the court of Sun Quan when Zhuge Ke returned from his expedition of colonisation and expansion in Danyang: he brought back some dwarf men, or at least people of small stature, presumably aborigines of the hills, and Qin Lun remarked that he had not seen people like that before. Yet we know Zhuge Ke began that campaign in 234 and did not conclude it until 237, and it is most unlikely that Qin Lun stayed at the court of Wu for ten years.

Despite the uncertainties, I believe the visit did take place, probably in the 230s. Admittedly, Wu Miao is not mentioned anywhere in the records of *Sanguo zhi*, but it is possible that there was a Grand Administrator of that name in Jiaozhi some time after the conquest by Wu, while the date 226 appears a natural error: it was the time that the authority of Sun Quan first extended over the whole of south China, and was thus an obvious, though mistaken, date for a later writer to identify.

relations and an effective alliance with the Gongsun state in Liaodong, present-day southern Manchuria. Neither of these initiatives was successful.

The history remarks succinctly of the expedition to Taiwan that the gains did not repay the costs,[39] and the contact with Gongsun Yuan, north across the Yellow Sea, was made difficult and ultimately impossible by the dangers of the weather off the Shandong peninsula, interference and ambush by the naval forces of Wei, and a lack of any firm commitment on the part of Gongsun Yuan himself. Eventually, in 238, armies of Wei under Guanqiu Jian and Sima Yi destroyed Gongsun Yuan and incorporated his state into the northern empire. Sun Quan could no nothing to help his erstwhile vassal.[40]

Indeed, behind these imaginative enterprises, the formal military history was not impressive. Despite several attempts, the armies of Wu were unable to break the defences of Wei in the region of Hefei, and those defences were confirmed by the construction of a "New City" at Hefei during the 230s.[41] Perhaps the greatest opportunity, and the greatest failure, occurred in 255, when Guanqiu Jian and others seized the city of Shouchun in a rebellion against the political dominance of the Sima family in Wei. They asked for help from Wu, but the southerners were unable to provide effective assistance, and Guanqiu Jian was destroyed. In 257, another general of Wei, Zhuge Dan, likewise rebelled at Shouchun and also sought assistance from the south, but the city was recaptured in the following year and the northern hold on the line of the Huai was confirmed.[42]

In similar fashion, though more understandably, given the geographical and political difficulties, the state of Wu could make no gains in the west towards present-day Sichuan and the state of Shu-Han. As early as 234, the death of the great minister and general Zhuge Liang brought the signs of potential disorder in Shu, and the court of Sun Quan contemplated intervention but could not arrange a program.[43] Still more seriously, in 263, when the armies of Wei began their final attack on the west and the government of Shu asked aid from Wu, there was little they could do. Rebellion in Vietnam prevented a full

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39 On this project, and the objections offered by Lu Xun and Quan Zong, see *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1136, *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1350, and *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1383; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 314, 323-326 and 337.

The original commission called for the conquest not only of Yizhou, generally identified as the island of Taiwan, but also of Tanzhou, perhaps the Ryukyus. A few thousand people from Yizhou were brought back, but the expedition did not even get to Tanzhou, which was too far away. *SGZ* 58/Wu 13 remarks that the gains from the expedition did not make up for the costs, *SGZ* 60/Wu 15 says that eighty or ninety per cent of the expeditionary force died of illness, and *SGZ* 47/Wu 2 tells how the unfortunate commanders returned one year later, and were put to death for their failure.

40 The biography of Gongsun Yuan, whom Sun Quan had sought to enfeoff as King of Yan, is in *SGZ* 8, 253-61. On the abortive relationship of the government of Wu with Gongsun Yuan, see Gardiner, "The Kung-sun Warlords II," 150-157, and, for example, *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1136, 1138 and 1139 PC note 3 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 375-376, 403 and 473-413.

41 On the building of the New City at Hefei, see the biography of the Wei general Man Chong in *SGZ* 26, 724-25; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 385-386 and 412. *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1136, appears to date the enterprise to 230, but the record in the biography of Man Chong appears more consistent.

The important point about the New City was that it was established some thirty *li* (twenty kilometres) from the nearest lake of the region, and was closer to Shouchun in the north. It could thus be supported by the land-based armies of Wei, and was more difficult for attack by the forces of Wu, which relied upon water routes.

42 The biography of Guanqiu Jian is in *SGZ* 28, and the account of his rebellion is at 763-66. The biography of Zhuge Dan is also in *SGZ* 28, and the account of his rebellion is at 770-73. On the course of the operations about Shouchun, see Fang, *Chronicle* II, 190-196, 259-264, and 290-294.

43 *SGZ* 45/Shu 15, 1075-76, being the biography of Zong Yu, who was sent at that time as an envoy to Wu; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 441.

military commitment elsewhere, and though the forces of Wu sought to mount attacks along the Han and across the Huai, they were not sufficiently energetic or successful to distract the armies of the north from their conquest in the west.[44] Again, after Shu surrendered, the Wu attempted to salvage something from the wreckage by an advance up the Yangzi to take over the eastern territories of their late ally, but they were blocked at the Gorges and gained nothing.[45]

And in the end, after the Jin dynasty of the Sima family had taken over the government of Wei in 265/266, the sheer power of that new state, combining the north and the west of China, ensured that the independence of Wu could not long continue. Long-planned, the final invasion was made with overwhelming force and resulted in predictable triumph. Sun Hao, grandson of Sun Quan and last ruler of Wu, ended his days as a subject of Jin, with the title Marquis Who Returns to Obedience.[46]

For the government of Wu, the long reign of Sun Quan provided a welcome stability and a contrast to the situation in Wei: there, after Cao Pi had reigned only seven years, his son and successor Cao Rui died in 239, leaving only an adoptive son, nine years old, and bringing thereby great weakness to the dynasty. In Shu-Han, though Liu Shan, son of Liu Bei, was sovereign from 223 to his defeat and surrender in 263, no-one regarded him as an effective ruler.

Sun Quan's very longevity, however, brought difficulties for his successors and misfortune at his death. His eldest son Sun Deng died in 241.[47] The next surviving son, Sun He, replaced him as Heir-Apparent, but his position was bedevilled by feuding between those who supported Sun He and another faction which encouraged his uterine younger brother Sun Ba against him. In 250 Sun He was deposed and Sun Ba was compelled to commit suicide,[48] and though the elderly Sun Quan later considered restoring Sun He, he was persuaded instead to allow the succession to pass to his seventh and youngest son, the seven-year old Sun Liang, under the guardianship of Zhuge Ke.[49]

This was a recipe for further intrigue and instability. In 253, eighteen months after the death of Sun Quan, and following a disastrous attack against Hefei, Zhuge Ke was assassinated by Sun Liang under the influence of Sun Jun, a distant cadet of the imperial family, descended from the younger brother of Sun Jian. When Sun Jun died in 256, his cousin Sun Lin succeeded to his dominant position at a restless court.[50] Sun Jun's former ally Teng Yin, made an unsuccessful attempt at a coup against Sun Lin,[51] and in 258 Sun

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44 See, for example, *SGZ* 48/Wu 3, 1161; Fang, *Chronicle* II, 405 and 411.

45 See, for example, the biography of Luo Xian from *Xiangyang ji*, quoted in *SGZ* 41/Shu 11, 1008-09 PC; Fang, *Chronicle* II, 460-461 and 463-464. Luo Xian was a general of Shu who held back the advance of Wu at the border fortress of Yongan on the Yangzi, and later surrendered to Wei.

46 *SGZ* 48/Wu 3, 1177: the title *Guiming hou* may be understood more literally as "Marquis Who Turns to [and accepts] the Mandate [of Heaven awarded to the Emperor of Jin]."

47 The biographies of Sun Deng and four of his brothers are in *SGZ* 59/Wu 14. The death of Sun Deng, aged in his early thirties, is recorded at 1365.

48 See, for example, *SGZ* 59/Wu 14, 1368-69, and 1371-72; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 651-652, 682-685, II, 70-71

49 *SGZ* 59/Wu 14, 1370 PC note 3 quoting *Wu shu*; *SGZ* 64/Wu 19, 1433-34 PC note 1 quoting *Wu shu*; Fang, *Chronicle* II, 86-88.

Zhuge Ke thus held comparable position to that of his uncle Zhuge Liang in Shu-Han a generation earlier. His record was less successful, but the family achievement was remarkable.

50 Fang, *Chronicle* II, 134-137, and 240. The biographies of Sun Jun and of Sun Lin are in *SGZ* 64/Wu 19; that of Sun Jun is at 1444-46, and that of Sun Lin at 1446-51.

51 Fang, *Chronicle* II, 240-241. The biography of Teng Yin is in *SGZ* 64/Wu 19, 1443-44.

Liang, now in his mid teens, sought to rid himself of the over-powerful minister, but was instead defeated and dethroned. Sun Lin replaced him with Sun Xiu, sixth son of Sun Quan and some twenty-two years old.[52] A few months later, Sun Xiu arranged a successful coup against Sun Lin and took power himself.[53]

Apart from this achievement, however, the government of Sun Xiu was not particularly effective, and his death in 264 came just at the time when the state of Shu had surrendered to Wei in the west. In that period of emergency, Sun Hao, son of the former Heir-Apparent Sun He and aged in his early twenties, was chosen as an adult ruler who might restore the fortunes and energies of the state.[54] He achieved, however, only limited success, and indeed in the long term there was little to be hoped for against the might of Jin.[55]

So, after the three founders, Cao Cao, Liu Bei and Sun Quan, few of their successors in any of the rival dynasties were able to maintain real authority. It is possible that an energetic central government in Wu might have responded more effectively to the crisis of the 260s, but the confusions at court were a reflection of inherent weaknesses in the very structure of the state, and it is questionable if any later sovereign could have established real control.

Despite these internal problems, there was one basic reason for the long independence of Wu, and that was the notable difficulty of conquering the state, or even defeating it. The geography of the Yangzi, from the Gorges to the sea, presented a most effective barrier for defence; and military capacity of the time was not sufficient for any side in the civil war to win a decisive victory.

One can go further. There is no question that minor skirmishes and raids could be carried out with intense ferocity, and middle-range engagements, such as those of Sun Ce and Sun Quan against Huang Zu, when the fortunes of the nascent states within a particular region depended on the outcome, were often hard-fought and bloody.[56] Above this level, however, the armies and navies of the major contenders were neither trained nor equipped to inflict substantial damage on one another. Those masses of men were collected from a variety of different groups, there was no system of communication to co-ordinate their manoeuvres, and it was all their commanders could do to keep them together - frequently it proved to be more than they could do. Most great campaigns were stalemated, and a result was achieved only when one side or another suffered a break-down of control, a collapse of morale, and a panicked retreat.

Of the three most important engagements in this period, none was decided in simple combat. Instead, victory was achieved by the commander who maintained his own force intact while his enemy's disintegrated.

At Guandu in 200, Cao Cao set defence lines and held off an attack by Yuan Shao, then sent a raiding party which intercepted the enemy supply trains; and Yuan Shao's

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52 *SGZ* 48/Wu 3, 1155; Fang, *Chronicle* II, 295-298.

53 *SGZ* 48/Wu 3, 1157; Fang, *Chronicle* II, 301-302.

54 *SGZ* 48/Wu 3, 1162; Fang, *Chronicle* II, 464-465.

55 Sun Hao is commonly criticised as an oppressive ruler and a man of poor moral fibre. There is some evidence to support the argument, but his reputation suffers from the historical tradition that the last sovereign of a conquered state must, by definition, be lacking in virtue - and the difficulties of his situation might excuse some harsh and ill-considered words and deeds.

56 See, for example, Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. Descriptions of the battles may have gained from literary embellishment, but they were serious engagements, hard-fought on both sides.

great army dissolved and fled.[57] At the Red Cliffs in 208, there was some indecisive early fighting, but Huang Gai's attack with fire-ships precipitated the retreat or rout of the invader.[58] In the campaign by the Yangzi Gorges in 222, Lu Xun refused battle against Liu Bei and waited until his enemy had become jaded and careless; then he launched an attack at one strategic point, and the whole of the Shu position collapsed.[59]

One may argue exceptions to the general rule, and Cao Cao did achieve some remarkable successes in battle, as in his victory over the Wuhuan in 207,[60] and his destruction of the north-western warlords in 211.[61] On both occasions, however, he was dealing with an unstable military alliance, and his success owed a great deal to the surprise effect created by his strategy of oblique approach. In ideal fashion, the enemy was demoralised by manoeuvre before the armies made physical contact.[62]

There is an occasion that one reasonably coherent Chinese army defeated another in combat, and that is the campaign in Hanzhong commandery during 219: Cao Cao's general Xiahou Yuan was defeated and killed in a substantial encounter at Dingjun Mountain, and Liu Bei took Hanzhong commandery. Cao Cao's forces, however, were rallied by Xiahou Yuan's lieutenant Zhang Ge, and they held their ground for several more months. In the end, it was the difficulty of supply through the Qin Ling passes, coupled with an increasing desertion rate among his troops, which compelled Cao Cao to order retreat.[63] The death of Xiahou Yuan was a notable event, and the achievement of Zhang Ge is a tribute to his own abilities and to the coherence of the army, but the example tests and proves the rule: the final result of the campaign was not determined by a single battle, but by more general questions of strategy, supply and morale.

For the armies of this time were ramshackle affairs. The regular forces of the Han dynasty, professional soldiers based at the capital and experienced troops on the northern frontier, were well-disciplined and efficient, comparable to, though not necessarily of such a high standard as, the legionaries of contemporary Rome.[64] From the end of the reign of Emperor Ling, however, the mobilisations required to deal with rebellion and civil war brought vast numbers of men to the competing banners, and there were neither time nor resources to train them properly. Many men with experience in the old imperial army gained advancement as commanders of the new recruits, but their units were overwhelmed by the hordes of newcomers, and the traditions, skills and discipline were lost.

There was some minimal organisation in the armies of the contending warlords, such as the obvious division between horsemen and foot-soldiers, and we have observed that a commanding officer would surround himself with a core of Companions, skilled soldiers

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57 A description of the battle of Guandu, taken from a number of texts, appears in *ZZTJ* 63, 2032-35; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 283-289. See also de Crespigny, "Civil War in Early China," and Leban, "Ts'ao Ts'ao," 316-381.

58 See Chapter 4.

59 See Chapter 7.

60 See de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 408-411.

61 See de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 163-165.

62 One should not forget that Cao Cao wrote a notable commentary to the *Book of the Art of War of Sun Wu*.

63 See Chapter 6. A description of the campaign in Hanzhong commandery, taken from a number of texts, appears in *ZZTJ* 68, 2156-58; de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 524-527.

64 On the regular military organisation of Later Han, see Chapter 1, de Crespigny, *Northern Frontier*, 45-52, and the Introduction to de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*.

who owed him personal allegiance and served as body-guard. As for equipment, uniforms, supply and general co-ordination, however, the texts indicate either that they were completely lacking or, when they were present, it was considered exceptional. For the most part, these armies were simple armed mobs, with soldiers driven variously by loyalty or fear of their commanders, by personal desperation, and by the hope of plunder to enhance their miserable lives. And they were accompanied by a mass of camp-followers - sometimes these were wives and children, but more normally they were cooks and prostitutes, peddlers and gamblers, and a few who specialised in care of the sick and wounded.

The command structure and fighting techniques of these armies were based upon small groups of men dependent upon individual leaders. The heart of each unit of battle was the commander himself, supported by his Companions, and the most important tactic was expressed in the common phrase "break the enemy line." In aggressive action, the commander and his Companions acted as spearhead for a drive at the enemy array, and if they were successful they could hope to be followed by the mass of their followers, spreading out to exploit success and to attack the broken enemy from the flank and the rear.

As a technique of battle, such a system is well known. It was certainly used by Alexander the Great, and in sophisticated form it was the essence of German *Blitzkrieg* in the Second World War: concentration of overwhelming force at a particular point, breakthrough by shock, and swift exploitation to roll up the enemy positions left and right and disrupt their lines of supply. In earlier modern times, one may observe a similarity with the "forlorn hope," establishing a position within the enemy defence line as preparation for a full assault.[65]

Though the tactics are the same, however, the method is disconcertingly different when it is used by men without the advantages of armoured transport or the confidence of disciplined support behind them. For a primitive army, such a style of attack requires immense courage by the leader and his immediate followers, and a high level of personal authority to attract the main body of his men to follow in the charge.

In one of Sun Jian's earliest engagements, the attack upon Wan city at the time of the Yellow Turban rebellion, we have a description of this form of attack against fortifications:

> Sun Jian himself was responsible for one side of the siege. He climbed the wall and was the first to get in. The soldiers swarmed like ants to follow him, and because of this they completely defeated the enemy.[66]

The story may over-emphasise Sun Jian's achievement, but the position of leader and followers is well displayed. And there are repeated accounts of personal heroism by the commanders of one side or another during later years. We may call to mind the gallant attack of Dong Xi and Ling Tong against the defences of Huang Zu at Xiakou in 208 and, from the other side, the sortie of Zhang Liao and his men which humiliated Sun Quan's army before Hefei in 215.[67]

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65 The English expression is a corruption of the Dutch *verloren hoop* "lost troop." This body of picked men, generally volunteers, was sent to establish a position within enemy lines, particularly inside the breach of a wall, and the main body of attackers would then seek to exploit this initiative.

66 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1094; de Crespigny, *Biography*, 32-33. I suggest In Chapter 2, however, that the account of the campaign in Sun Jian's biography is certainly simplified, and the description of his achievements may be exaggerated.

67 See Chapter 4 and Chapter 6.

This reliance upon leadership, mass and morale is a natural technique for dealing with the problems of an ill-disciplined force, and the approach can be identified in the pre-Qin book of *Mozi*.[68] For more recent times, Huang has given a similar description of the armies of the late Ming dynasty operating against the Manchus. We are told that Western observers regarded the Chinese forces as being of poor combat quality, and they sought to make up for this by simple numerical strength. The clumsy mass could not be manoeuvred, but

> It needed an elite corps of highly seasoned fighters to open up avenues of attack so that the bulk of the soldiers could then swarm in behind them, sustain the momentum of the attack, and exploit the results. These battle formations were nonetheless commanded by men of courage, who were themselves versed in the martial arts and who personally led their soldiers in valiant charges.[69]

Inevitably, the role for the high command of such an army was very limited. A major force, perhaps thirty thousand men, occupied a great area of ground, and placed heavy demands on the resources of an even wider territory. It was composed of disparate units with individual leaders, a great part of whose time was spent in foraging, while the poor techniques of communication limited all attempts at control and manoeuvre. And the cohesion of such a mass was particularly at risk when on the move: if an advance or an attack was checked, a notable leader discomfited or slain, numbers of men would be confused and uncertain, and they could rapidly fall into panic and flight. There was small opportunity for sophisticated tactics or strategy, there must have been a constant concern about morale, and every general had to recognise that the mass of troops and weapons at his command was both brittle and volatile

So great advantage lay with the defence, and the sensible plan was to wait for the enemy to commit himself, to hope and expect that he would suffer some check, and to strike then at his most vulnerable point. Such a program, to wait for the right moment, to identify it, and to seize it, called for swift judgement and considerable moral courage, but in general terms the situation favoured the defence and, so long as there was no excessive commitment to any particular sortie, a minor set-back could usually be restored. In effect, a well-conducted and determined defence would expect to hold out for a substantial length of time, and there was always the possibility that the attacker could be caught off balance and driven to utter ruin.

These comments apply with still greater force to the naval defence of the Yangzi. As we have discussed, in the aftermath of the Red Cliffs, Cao Cao lost possession of Jiangling and the fleet that was based there. Thereafter, ships could be prepared in the north for an expedition down the Han River, but the route led through swamp and marsh-land, it was vulnerable to flank attack, and the state of Wu could make full preparations to greet the invaders. Otherwise, for the whole length of the Yangzi from the Gorges to the sea, the Wei had no position on the bank and no water-borne access, and although Cao Pi made several attempts to cross the lower Yangzi, the difficulties proved insuperable. Without a permanent base on the river, his ships had to be brought from the Huai by portage or canal, and it was quite out of the question that they could rival those of Wu. From Jiangling, Wuchang, Ruxu and Jianye, the defence could move to cover any incursion - and they had, of course, ample warning of the advance. So long as the fleet of Wu remained in being, no attack from the north had any prospect of success.

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68 See, for example, the chapter *Bei yifu* of the book of *Mozi*.

69 *Cambridge History of China* 7, 579-580 [Huang,"The Lung-ch'ing and Wan-li reigns, 1567-1620"].

In corollary, despite many efforts and several opportunities the men of Wu failed to gain any position beyond the Yangzi. The forward defences of Wei, at the New City of Hefei and the strategic base at Shouchun, remained unattainable to the southern armies, and most of the region between the Yangzi and the Huai was a no-man's land between two rivals - with raids and destruction from both sides, neither could establish a settled presence. In the long run, from the point of view of population and expansion, this stalemate worked to the disadvantage of Wu, but the final conquest took place only after the fall of Shu-Han in Sichuan, when the forces of Jin could mobilise a massive fleet on the upper Yangzi, sail it through the Gorges, and demolish the navy of Wu on their own home waters.[70]

The social and economic structure of Wu:

We have considered the proclamation of empire as a mid-point in the history of the dynasty of the Sun family and their state of Wu, and although the date itself is not critical, it may be looked upon as one marker in the steady transition from an aggressive military regime to a less ambitious regional government. To put it another way, from the 190s to the 220s Sun Ce and Sun Quan had been the leaders of a dynamic enterprise which sought successfully to extend its power from the lower Yangzi westwards into Jing province and then across the far south. After that time, however, following the defeat of Liu Bei in 222, the northern and western frontiers of the state were largely fixed, and despite Sun Quan's ambitions and efforts, they did not develop any further. It was not so much that there were no more worlds to conquer, for indeed there were; but the power of Wu had reached the limits of its capability. The resources of the south had shown themselves sufficient to maintain a state of independence, but they were by no means adequate for the conquest of the other great regions of the old Han empire, and the days of heroic expansion were over.

In these circumstances, and with the lapse of time, one may also observe a change in the nature of the state itself. In discussion of Wu, the modern scholar Tang Changru has described the Sun family as little more than the leaders of an alliance of clans. Emphasising the local status of the Sun in their home county of Fuchun, he suggests that though the family was of minimal national importance it was nonetheless powerful in that locality.[71] Tang observes also that the groups which joined the alliance under the Sun may be classified into two: those which were indigenous to the south, particularly to the region of Kuaiji, Wu and Danyang, and those who had come as emigrés from the north of the Yangzi. And he points out that although the northerners occupied important positions in the regime during its early years, by the closing period of Wu the high positions of state were held by men whose families had been established in the south since long before the end of Han.[72]

On his own terms, Tang is correct. The last men of northern descent to hold substantial power in Wu were Zhuge Ke, the powerful minister assassinated in 253, and the

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70 For earlier discussion of this question, see Some Notes on Ships and Naval Warfare In Chapter 4, also The Defences of Yang province in Chapter 5 and Security in the North in Chapter 7. On the campaign of the admiral Wang Jun in 280, see his biography in *JS* 42, 1208-10, translated, summarised and discussed by Needham, *Science and Civilisation* IV:3, 694-695.

71 Tang Changru [1955], 19.

72 Tang Changru [1955], 23.

unsuccessful Teng Yin, destroyed in 258. From that time the government was essentially in the hands of the cadets and relatives of the Sun clan and other men from the south.

However, when we consider the origins and early history of the state, it is less easy to look upon Sun Ce and the young Sun Quan as no more than leaders of a gentry alliance; or, if we are to do that, there remains the question why it was the Sun family which succeeded where so many others of potentially greater power and authority had failed.

It is, for example, perfectly true that Sun Jian and his sons were of some local status, but it is difficult to argue convincingly that medium prosperity in an outlying area gave them rank and authority that would be recognised by any truly powerful clan in Kuaiji commandery as a whole, and I have sought to demonstrate in earlier chapters that Sun Jian and Sun Ce were consistently placed at disadvantage by their lack of real social standing. Whether we consider the relationship of Sun Jian with Yuan Shu, or the impossibility of Sun Ce making a serious attempt against Cao Cao's hold of the emperor in 200, we are surely dealing with men who would, at best, have been regarded as parvenus by their competitors for power.

And this picture is confirmed by the origins of the commanders who followed Sun Jian and his son during the 180s and 190s. Han Dang, for example, came from Liaoxi commandery in the northeast; he was favoured by Sun Jian for his fighting skills, but he had gained no advancement in the regular imperial army because he was not a man of great family position.[73] Zhu Zhi of Danyang was probably one of Sun Jian's first followers, and was certainly in his service by 188,[74] while Huang Gai, commander of the fire-ships at the Red Cliffs, was a man from Lingling who joined Sun Jian in Changsha at the beginning of the civil war.[75] Jiang Qin and Zhou Tai from Jiujiang, Chen Wu from Lujiang and Lü Fan of Runan were fighting men who chose to follow Sun Ce at the very beginning of his career in the early 190s.[76] None of these men came from Kuaiji, and they joined Sun Jian and Sun Ce because of their personal authority and ability, not because of family or local connection.

Even in his nominal home country south of the Yangzi, moreover, Sun Ce had to face two dangerous sets of rivals: at one level, there was the Governor Liu Yao and the grand administrators such as Xu Gong and Wang Lang, all men of rank and family; and at the same time there were many local magnates who had no respect for the pretensions of the young warlord, and who were only brought to heel by battle and death. Eventually, when the conquest was complete, the great clans of the region were compelled to accept the hegemony of the Sun, but that leadership amongst the gentry was neither willingly granted nor easily achieved, and the first notable recruits to the cause were men such as Dong Xi of Kuaiji, a big man noted for his skill at arms,[77] Ling Cao of Wu commandery, who is described specifically as soldier of fortune,[78] and Xu Sheng who had come to Wu commandery as a refugee from Langye.[79]

Sun Ce and his companions, indeed, may better be regarded as vagabond adventurers than as recognised gentry. Certainly Zhou Yu and others came from notable families, but

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73 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1285 and 1286 PC note 1 quoting *Wu shu*.

74 *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1303.

75 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1284.

76 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1286, *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1287, and *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1289.

77 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1290.

78 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1295.

79 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1298.

they were entering a time of civil war, they realised the dangers and the opportunities, and they resolved to take their chances with a young and energetic commander. So the allies with which Sun Ce and Sun Quan first established their position were serious military men, whose position as members of the gentry at one level or another gave them the means to gather troops - retainers or vassals or fellow-refugees - but whose fortunes thereafter would not be based upon birth but upon personal achievement in political and military conflict.

Again, among the chieftains who served Sun Quan in his early days, men from the north played an all but dominant role. Of the two commanders against Cao Cao at the battle of the Red Cliffs, Cheng Pu came from Youbeiping, near present-day Beijing, and Zhou Yu came from Lujiang, north of the Yangzi. Zhou Yu's successor Lu Su was a man from Xiapi, or Linhuai, also north of the Yangzi, and Lü Meng, commander against Guan Yu, came from Runan, north of the Huai. It was only with the appointment of Lu Xun of Wu commandery to command the defences against Liu Bei in the early 220s that a man from south of the Yangzi rose to comparable position. And on the civilian administrative side, the veteran Zhang Zhao was a man from Pengcheng, again north of the Huai, Sun Shao the first Chancellor came from Beihai, on the Shandong peninsula, and Zhuge Jin, who became General-in-Chief when Sun Quan proclaimed his empire, and who was the brother of Zhuge Liang the Chancellor of Shu-Han, was a man of Langye. The second Chancellor, Gu Yong, did come from Wu commandery, and he was succeeded by Lu Xun, but Bu Zhi, conqueror of the far south, who became Chancellor briefly in his old age, was another man from Xiapi/Linhuai.

There were, of course, important and trusted commanders and officers from south of the Yangzi, notably the Lu from Wu commandery, the two Zhu clans from Danyang and from Wu, Quan Rou from Qiantang in Wu, and He Qi and Yu Fan of Kuaiji.[80] The point is, however, that in the early years of the state the struggle for power was a career open to talent. As Sun Ce said to Taishi Ci, who came from Donglai on the north of the Shandong peninsula, "The only thing that concerns me is whether a man can prove himself to be of service."[81] There was no distinction of family background or place of origin.

From this open beginning, however, the structure of the state became steadily more restricted. In particular, it was established principle that when a man died the right to command his troops was transferred to his son. Sun Ce himself had first gone to Yuan Shu to seek command of his father's men, and the core of that force was indeed composed of family retainers and others brought into service by Sun Jian.[82] These were personal regiments, and they were regarded as a military appanage which it was only right should be inherited. So the young Sun Shao was granted his father's garrison command after the assassination of Sun He, and Ling Tong, at the age of fifteen *sui*, succeeded to his father's position as a colonel after Ling Cao was killed in battle.[83] Still more specifically, when

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80 *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1343, *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1303, *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1312, *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1381, *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1377, and *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1317.

81 *SGZ* 49/Wu 4, 1186.

One may observe the similar policy of Cao Cao, placing emphasis upon practical achievement rather than family background or formal moral quality. See his ordinances of 203, 210, 214 and 217: *SKC* 1, 24, 32, 44 and.49-50 (the first and last citations being in PC quoting the *Wei shu* of Wang Shen).

82 See Chapter 2.

83 See Chapter 4 at note 46.

Later, when Ling Tong died, Sun Quan took his two sons under personal protection, and when they came of suitable age he gave them command of their father's troops: *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1297.

there was a proposal to augment the personal following of Lü Meng by adding the troops of three officers who had died, Lü Meng himself objected, arguing against the injustice to the three men's sons. It was certainly possible for Sun Quan to make changes in command on the basis of military reason, and Lü Meng benefited from the process when other men's troops were allocated to him on account of his superior ability. But that was at an early stage, and represented an executive decision rather than a matter of inheritance.[84] Basically, except for cause, a man's troops remained with him and his family.

This, of course, meant that the military units were themselves hereditary: the warlord armies were maintained by marriage and breeding, so the veterans of each generation handed on their duties to the young men of the next. And to bring the model of feudalism still closer, we have the allocation of territory and people as private appanages to supply a general and his troops, so that when Lu Su succeeded to Zhou Yu's position as commander in Jing province, he also acquired the civilian resources of the four counties which supported that post. The system of semi-feudalism continued and developed: in 234 the commander Chen Biao was admired for the fact that he chose out able-bodied men from his personal appanage of two hundred families and returned them to the government to serve as soldiers; but the implication of such a story is that a considerable part of the economic and human resources of the state were being alienated to individuals and their families.[85]

Despite the principle of military inheritance and appanage, however, there were still restrictions on the possibility of a family thus involved in the army and the court maintaining high position for very long. The basic inheritance of a father's troop did not guarantee a high command, nor even secure status in the government. We are told that the son of Lu Su did rise to high rank, and a grandson inherited his fief and held command of troops.[86] On the other hand, while the daughter of Zhou Yu was married to the Heir-Apparent Sun Deng, one of Zhou Yu's two sons died young, and the other, though likewise married into the imperial clan, was later found guilty of some crime and was exiled to Luling. He was later brought back to court, and the prestige of the family was to some extent maintained through Zhou Yu's nephew and great-nephew, but the Zhou family were now only on the margins of power.[87] Similarly, the son of Cheng Pu was made marquis of a village at the time of the empire in 229, and the son of Lü Meng succeeded to his father's fief, with income from three hundred households and fifty *qing* of land, but neither of them achieved distinction of their own.[88]

For those who were at first more successful, affairs of state produced their own dangers. We have noted the fate of the high-flying Zhuge Ke. Gu Tan, grandson of the Chancellor Gu Yong, and Zhang Xiu, son of Zhang Zhao, were both noted supporters of the Heir-apparent Sun He: when Sun He was dismissed, Gu Tan was exiled to the south and Zhang Xiu was compelled to commit suicide.[89] Lü Ju, son of Lü Fan, held high command in the army, but he rebelled against Sun Lin in 256 and was destroyed.[90]

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84 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1275; *cf. SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1273, and Chapter 4.

85 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1290. Chen Biao was the son by a concubine of Chen Wu, former general of Sun Quan, on whose unusual funeral see Chapter 6 at note 33.

86 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1273.

87 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1265-67.

88 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1284, and *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1280.

89 *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1230-31 and 1225.

90 *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1312.

So the fortunes of politics were not sufficient to ensure the survival of an immigrant family in a leading role within the state of Wu, and once the fluctuations and uncertainties of the early years were passed, and the situation on the frontiers had settled, there was small occasion for new men to appear at the court. The defeat of Guan Yu and the conquest of Jing province in 219 produced only one man of note, Pan Jun: he had earlier served Liu Biao and then Liu Bei, and he was later given substantial office by Sun Quan, proving himself particularly effective in dealing with the barbarians to the west of his own commandery Wuling.[91]

As a result, by virtue of attrition amongst their émigré rivals, it was the clans from the south of the lower Yangzi which came to dominance in Wu during the generations which succeeded the first years of foundation. In part this was because of their natural connection to the heart-land of the state and their early history of support for the Sun family - and there were many families which picked the wrong side in the civil war and which were not heard of again - but the important thing for the leading families of local origin was that they had a base upon which they might maintain their power.

At the end of the third century, when Zuo Si composed his "Rhapsody on the Capital of Wu," he referred to the four leading families of that state and territory, being the Yu and the Wei, the Gu and the Lu. All of them possessed great mansions in Jianye, and they were accompanied on their tours of the city and surroundings by bands of armed retainers:

Prancing horses follow track upon track;
Vermilion wheels join rut upon rut.
With armament displayed, they return to their homes,
Where weapon-racks and crossbow frames are installed.[92]

All four families came originally from the southeast, the Yu and the Wei from Kuaiji, and the Gu and the Lu from Wu county, present-day Suzhou, in Wu commandery.

The Yu family owed its fortunes in the state of Wu primarily to Yu Fan, minister and adviser to Sun Ce and Sun Quan. Yu Fan was a contradictory man. As member of gentry family, he had held senior position on the local staff of the Grand Commandant Wang Lang, but he readily joined Sun Ce when he came to Kuaiji. He was a scholar and debater of considerable skill and reputation,[93] and he showed useful loyalty to Sun Quan from the beginning of his succession to power.[94] He also held and expressed many unpopular opinions, frequently justifiably and correctly, he was often drunk, and there must have been times when he was extremely irritating. He was eventually sent away to the far south for his rudeness to Sun Quan and to Zhang Zhao, and he died there in exile in 233.[95]

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91 See Chapter 6.

92 *Wen xuan* 5, 1141, from "Rhapsody on the Capital of Wu," translated by Knechtges at 399. On this work, see below.

93 Yu Fan had joined Sun Ce at the time of his attack against Wang Lang in Kuaiji, and he persuaded Hua Xin to surrender Yuzhang to Sun Ce.

In scholarship, Yu Fan was admired by Kong Rong for his commentary to the *Book of Changes* (*SGZ* 59/Wu 12, 1320), and he also wrote on the *Daode jing*, on the *Analects* of Confucius, and on *Guo yu* (*SGZ* 59/Wu 12, 1321-22).

94 See note 7 to Chapter 4.

95 *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1320, refers in general terms to Yu Fan's frequent arguments with Sun Quan and 1321 tells of his exile. For the particular occasion he was nearly killed outright by Sun Quan at a banquet, see below.

He was survived, however, by several sons, and many of them became distinguished and held high rank.[96]

Gu Yong, as we have seen, became Chancellor of the empire under Sun Quan. His family had held substantial position under Han, and when he was young he was recognised and admired by the great scholar Cai Yong.[97] Gu Yong's sons and grandsons continued to hold significant office in Wu.[98]

And the Lu family, which we have noted at intervals during the history of this period, was long-established indeed. *Hou Han shu* refers to their lineage in the southeast from the time of Former Han. Lu Hong became Prefect of the Masters of Writing under Emperor Guangwu, founder of Later Han, and his grandson Lu Xu was implicated in the suspected treason of Liu Ying, King of Chu, during the reign of Emperor Ming.[99] Lu Kang, Grand Administrator of Lujiang and enemy of Sun Ce, was the grandson of Lu Xu. The general Lu Xun, long a dominant figure in the state of Wu, was a great-nephew of Lu Kang, while Lu Xun's younger brother Lu Mao and Lu Ji, son of Lu Kang, both also held high office.[100] Their descendants continued this prosperity, combined with considerable literary achievement, through the last years of Wu and into the Jin.[101]

Yu Fan later sent in a memorial protesting at the plan for alliance with Gongsun Yuan. When the project did fail Sun Quan remembered his words and sought to recall him, but Yu Fan had already died: *SGZ* 59/Wu 12, 1324 PC note 1 quoting *Wu shu* and *Jiangbiao zhuan*.

96 *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1327, and PC notes 1 to 4 quoting *Kuaiji dianlu*.

Later descendants of Yu Fan held position under the Jin, and Yu Xiaofu was a favourite of Emperor Xiaowu and held high office in the early fifth century: *JS* 76, 2012-15, and *cf*. Zhou Mingtai at 2716, who traces the lineage only to Yu Fan's grandson.

97 *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1225 and 1226 PC note 2 quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan* and *Wu lu*. *Jiangbiao zhuan* says that Cai Yong gave Gu Yong his own personal name as sign of his respect and affection.

SGZ 52/Wu 7, 1225 PC note 1 quoting *Wu lu*, says that Gu Yong's great-grandfather had been Grand Administrator of the important commandery of Yingchuan. We are not told of the intervening generations, but Gu Yong held commissioned office as magistrate of various counties while he was still young, so it would appear the family had maintained status.

98 Gu Rong, grandson of Gu Yong the former Chancellor of Wu, after a dangerous career at the court of Western Jin became a senior assistant to Sima Rui, founder of Eastern Jin: *JS* 68, 1811-15. His descendants held more junior office, though it appears the family maintained their position for some further generations into the Liu Song dynasty of the fifth century. See the *Shishuo renming pu* "Register of personal names in *Shishuo xinyu*" compiled by Wang Zao of Southern Song, and claimed to be based upon family registers, 62a-66a, and Zhou Mingtai, *Sanguo zhi shixi biao*, at 2712.

99 The biography of Lu Xu, which refers to Lu Hong and to the status of the family in the southeast, maintained for generations past, is in *HHS* 81/71, 2682-83, the Chapter on Men of Unusual Conduct. When Liu Ying was accused of plotting rebellion, Lu Xu and a number of his colleagues were arrested and put in prison. When food was sent in to them, Lu Xu wept at the sight of it, and explained that he recognised the way in which his mother cut the pieces of meat and onion. On the basis of this display of filial sympathy, the case was re-examined, and Lu Xu and his colleagues were released, albeit under life-long proscription from further official appointment. On Liu Ying, see *Cambridge Han*, 258 [Bielenstein, "Wang Mang, the restoration of the Han dynasty, and Later Han"].

100 On Lu Ji, see below.

101 Of four grandsons of Lu Xun, two were killed fighting the invading forces of Jin in 280, but the two younger, Lu Ji and Lu Yun, received patronage and favour at the northern court, and were distinguished as scholars and men of letters: *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1360-61 PC note 2 quoting *[Lu] Ji [Lu] Yun biezhuan*, also their biographies in *JS* 54.

Lu Xun's lineage appears to have died out with Lu Ji and Lu Yun, but the record continued through descendants of Lu Xun's brother Lu Mao. Lu Mao's grandson Lu Ye was a minister under the Jin, and Lu Ye's younger brother Lu Wan was a leading figure in the first generation of exile in the early fourth century. Lu Wan's son Lu Na was also a senior official, and Lu Na's nephew Lu Daosheng was minister of justice of

In contrast, however, though the Wei are listed among the four great clans of the state, the family does not play a notable role in the history recorded by Chen Shou, nor in the works quoted by Pei Songzhi. Wei Lang, a gentleman from Kuaiji, had been involved in the Faction affair against the eunuchs of the court of Emperors Huan and Ling at the end of the 160s, and he committed suicide in 168.[102] His grandson Wei Teng held office as a local magistrate in several counties, and became Grand Administrator of Poyang, but his chief claim to remembrance is an occasion that Sun Quan was angry with him. Wei Teng was in serious danger of being put to death, but his friend Wu Fan, who came from the same county and was recognised at the court of Wu as a expert in calendrical calculations and in divination by the wind, pleaded successfully for his life.[103]

In this respect, the reference to the Wei family by Zuo Si provides an insight to the structure of the state of Wu. Though Wei Teng served as a Grand Administrator, such position was not of itself worthy of notice by historians concerned with the mainstream of political history, and the Wei family, in contrast to the Yu, the Gu and the Lu, played no great part in the central government of Wu. They were, nevertheless, established and maintained as a great clan.

The great Wei family, as described by Zuo Si, is a notable example of the manner in which a clan could maintain high status without any close connection to the court or the government. There were, however, large numbers of families in a comparable position at the lower levels of society and the economy. Throughout the lands of the southeast, those local leaders who supported Sun Ce and Sun Quan in the early years had gained immediately at the expense of their rivals, and they also obtained influence in the developing imperial state. With the effluxion of time, their positions as local magnates were increasingly well secured, and they could not readily be overthrown by the chances of politics. Besides, this, in acceleration of a process which can already be observed during Later Han, these local men of power attracted numbers of people into their service. Many of their followers came voluntarily for protection, others found their direct and personal protection more attractive and secure than the risks of individual enterprise and the demands of taxation, and there were also, of course, those men and their families originally conscripted or recruited for official military service who later transferred allegiance to their personal commander and his family.[104]

These leading local families could be and were kept under control, not only by the threat and reality of the military force available to central government, but also by a system of internal hostages. The process was not necessarily onerous, and relatives of

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Jin in the early fifth century: *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1339 PC note 1 quoting *Wu lu* and *Jin yangqiu*, and *JS* 77, 2023-27. *Shishuo renming pu*, 27a-31a, continues the genealogy for another four generations, to Lu Shan who held high rank at the court of the Chen dynasty in the latter part of the sixth century (see also Zhou Mingtai at 2717-20).

102 The biography of Wei Lang is in *HHS* 67/57, 2200-01, the Chapter on the Proscribed Party. *SGZ* refers to him as a member of the list of worthy men praised by the dissident students of the time, and there is passing reference to him in *Kuaiji dianlu*, quoted in *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1325 PC.

103 *SGZ* 63/Wu 18, 1422-23. 1423 PC note 1 quoting *Kuaiji dianlu*, has a short biography of Wei Teng, describing him as the grandson of Wei Lang. *Cf.* the commentaries at *Wen xuan* 5, 1141-43, and the note of Knechtges at 398.

On Wu Fan and the divination by wind, see Chapter 1.

104 On local leaders and their attraction of tenants and retainers through commendation, see, for example, *Cambridge Han*, 627-630 [Ebrey, "Economic and Social History of Later Han"], and on the privatisation of official recruits, see Yang Chung-i, "Evolution of the status of dependents," summarised in Sun and DeFrancis, *Chinese social history*, at 144-145, and Ch'ü, *Han Social Structure*, 503 note 458.

powerful families might hold pleasant positions at court, but there was a general requirement in Wu, as in the other states of the Three Kingdoms, that men who held strategic or politically sensitive positions should guarantee their loyalty in this form.[105] Such forced obedience, however, is not the same as willing effort for the cause of the state, and it was the lack of commitment by the great families of the region, rather than their active disloyalty, which limited the energies of Wu.

Indeed, many local magnates had no interest or concern with the politics of the state of Wu. Most of the records have been written in terms of dynastic or imperial history, but the bulk of the population was occupied with more local business. If a great family such as the Wei could remain largely outside the affairs of court, we can be sure that other groups of middling gentry were similarly independent, and were content not to be noticed by the central government and its chroniclers. In effect, the apex of government in Wu, recorded by the histories with tales of generals and ministers and intrigue at court, rested upon a broad class of village and county gentry, who might accept office in one commandery or another, but who had small interest or concern with the politics of the capital. From this point of view, one may suggest that the same pattern was maintained as in the last years of Later Han: basic dues were paid to the imperial government, but so long as it remained intact the details of its activities were largely irrelevant to local power, influence and survival.

Years earlier, this attitude had been summed up by the argument of Lu Su in 208, when he encouraged Sun Quan to reject the advice of his more conservative advisers and to defy the claims of Cao Cao:[106]

I could accept Cao Cao, but someone in your position cannot do so. Let me explain.

If I received Cao Cao, he would send me back to my home district, he would have me graded by name and rank, and I would do no worse than be appointed as a junior official.[107] I could ride in a carriage drawn by oxen, with an escort of soldiers, and I could mingle with the gentry. I would be given promotion, and I would certainly finish with a province or a commandery.

But if you receive Cao Cao, where would you go?

Sun Quan might have hopes of imperial state, but his subordinates had more limited ambitions, they could expect to maintain some position under any regime, and they had no particular commitment to the fortunes of Wu.

Even on such basic matters of coinage and taxation, moreover, the government of Wu had limited authority. One of the most significant changes, for the immediate fortunes of the state of Wu and also for the historical development of later centuries, was an increasing tendency to economic regionalisation and the growth of local interests. For the time of Han, there is evidence of widespread trade and exchange of goods, based to a

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105 The clearest statement is in *SGZ* 48/Wu 3, 1177 PC quoting *Soushen ji*, where it is said that "Because Wu was a new state, it had not established a firm basis of trust. The administrators and military commanders of positions on the frontiers were all required to send their wives and children, and these were known as *baozhi*." Although this statement is only preliminary to an anecdote of the supernatural, there is no reason to doubt its basis of fact.

See also Yang, "Hostages in Chinese History," particularly at 50-53, and Pong Sing-wai [1964].

106 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1270.

107 The reference to grading by name and rank is identified by modern scholars with the recruitment system of nine categories (*jiu pin*), administered by the officials known as Impartial and Just (*zhongzheng*), which was developed in the state of Wei by Cao Cao and his son Cao Pi. See, for example, Holzman, "Système médiévale des fonctionnaires," 392-393.

considerable degree upon a monetary economy. The years of disturbance, however, had brought disruption of commerce across the whole of China, and by the third century, at every level of the economy, those families which had maintained their landed estates were increasingly concerned with their own self-sufficiency.

Currency and inflation problems had already appeared during Later Han, but at the beginning of civil war, when the government of Dong Zhuo replaced the traditional *wu-shu* coinage with smaller units it destroyed the monetary system of the empire, and in 221 the government of Cao Pi formally declared that grain and silk should be the official means of exchange in Wei. The coinage was later revived in the north, and was maintained in formal circulation by the government of Jin, but official economy still relied upon commodity exchange. Similarly, though Sun Quan attempted in 236 to establish an official currency of large coins, with a monopoly of copper and prohibitions against private minting, the policy was a failure and the project was ended in 246.[108]

As a result, just as the great families could hold their private followers from the direct control of government, so, throughout the countryside, local magnates could deal with their tenants and dependents in a system of barter and exchange of service. There was no opportunity for the government to obtain profit from the monopoly of minting and the enforcement of tax payments in cash,[109] and it was difficult to obtain information or enforce demands. Taxation and other levies were obtained rather by negotiation on the basis of quotas than by formal assessment of value and obligation, and the greater part of economic activity in the community remained beyond the reach of government.

Behind the military stalemate along the Yangzi, therefore, the social and political structure of the south was based on low-level control by leading families, monopolising the infrastructure of local administration, and maintaining a sensible distance from the court and the capital. The formal histories do not often refer to the men of such families, but it was that network of local power, colonisation and demographic expansion, which confirmed the development of Chinese authority in the south under the superficial auspices of the state of Wu. And eventually, where Sun Ce and Sun Quan had held the initiative over their local allies, in later years the local families, with their private armies of retainers, and their resources of agricultural land and vassals to work it, gained dominance in the state as a whole and over the policies of the court.[110]

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108 The coinage policies of this period are described in *CS* 26, 794-5; Yang, "Economic history," 191-2. See also the article of Ho Tzu-ch'üan, "Manorial economy," summarised in Sun and DeFrancis, *Chinese social history*, at 140. On the large coins of Wu, and the attempt to enforce a monopoly of minting, see *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1140, 1142 an 1146 PC quoting *Jiangbiao zhuan*.

109 On the Han governments' monopoly of minting, and the compulsory payment of taxation in cash, see *Cambridge Han*, 587-589 [Nishijima, "Economic and Social History of Former Han"].

110 Ebrey, *Aristocratic Families*, has traced the Cui lineage, from the northern territory of Boling, through the vicissitudes of the period of division which succeeded the fall of Western Jin at the beginning of the fourth century, and Johnson, *Medieval Chinese Oligarchy*, has shown that the great families of Tang were concerned to claim descent from Han, Three Kingdoms and Jin. Grafflin, "Great Family," points out, however, that three of the five so-called "super-elite" clans of the aristocracy traced their prosperity to association with the Sima government of Jin, and they suffered considerably from the misfortunes of that dynasty at the beginning of the fourth century and again at the beginning of the fifth, while the remaining two houses did not in fact appear on the national stage until the fourth century.

As Grafflin observes, at 65-66, and as Fogel discusses in his introduction to Tanigawa, *Medieval Chinese Society*, xvii-xxix, the question of the hereditary aristocracy and gentry in the Chinese society of the Period of Division has been a feature of Japanese intellectual debate particularly since the time of Naito Konan in the first part of the present century. Miyakawa [1956] and Utsunomiya [1962] are regarded as members of the Kyoto school which follows the basic arguments of Naito, while Tanigawa and Kawakatsu Yoshio are

The personal authority of Sun Quan had to some extent concealed this situation, but after his death in 252, in a time of younger, weaker rulers, it became very clear. We have noted the argument of Tang Changru, that the conflicts at the capital, of Zhuge Ke against Sun Jun, and of Teng Yin against Sun Lin, represent a transfer of power in the central government from the men of the north to those of the south. As Deng Zhi of Wei observed to Sima Zhao after Zhuge Ke's failed attack on Hefei in 253, the great families of Wu, relying upon their military strength and their retainers, now held the real power of the state, and without support from an established ruler the minister Zhuge Ke would not survive their hostility. And indeed he proved to be correct.[111]

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less committed to the approach. Kawakatsu, in particular, has published detailed analyses of the structure of elite leadership in the third century, [1970] and [1974], and subsequent periods, and more recently in [1982]. See also the discussion of Naito and his school by Fogel, and his review article "New Direction."

It is a matter of only marginal concern to the history of the state of Wu in the third century, but there is some interest in tracing the later histories of the leading families of the south. Though his research is not entirely comprehensive, the study is made very much easier by Zhou Mingtai's *Sanguo zhi shixi biao*.

Rather as one might expect, though three of the four great families of Wu, as listed by Zuo Si in his "Rhapsody on the Capital of Wu," and discussed above, showed remarkable longevity, many of those whose members held power in Wu failed to maintain their prominent position after the conquest by Jin in 280, and the turmoil which accompanied the exile of that dynasty to the south at the beginning of the fourth century.

As examples, *SSXY* B, 68b-69a [VIII.142]; Mather, *New Account*, 243, refers to four old families of Wu commandery which had been prominent in the past, being the Lu and the Gu, the Zhang and the Zhu, and in another passage, *SSXY* B, 50a-51a [VIII.20]; Mather, *New Account*, 217, six names are given, being the same four together with a member of the Wu clan and a member of the Yan.

Of these families, Zhang Yan was a minister of Wu, his son Zhang Bo was author of *Wu lu* (see Chapter 9), Zhang Bo's brother Zhang Chang was praised in *SSXY* for his moral qualities, and another brother Zhang Han was a respected poet and had a short official career towards the end of Western Jin: *JS* 92, 2384. Zhu Tan, Wu Zhan and Yan Yin all retired from public life after the fall of Wu, and no member of their families has a biography in *Jin shu.*

In similar fashion *SSXY* B, 62a [VIII.85]; Mather, *New Account*, 232, and *JS* 78, 2062, refer to the four leading families of Kuaiji in the middle of the fourth century. The Yu are included, but the Wei [as in Cao Cao's state of Wei] of the third century had been replaced by another clan, whose surname is written with a different character ["surround"] but is likewise transcribed as Wei (see also the anecdote in *SSXY* B (8), 65b [VIII.112]; Mather, *New Account*, 238, which refers to the decline of the first Wei clan: Mather has made a slight mistake in his note, for he identifies the declined Wei with the prosperous Wei; *cf.* his correct analysis in the Biography section at 598 and 599). Of the two other families, the Kong came from the north at the end of Later Han, but do not appear to have risen to prominence until the latter part of the Wu period(*JS* 78, 2051), while the Xie came to the south at the beginning of Eastern Jin (*JS* 49, 1377-79, and 79, 2069-90).

Though the He clan from Kuaiji, descendants of He Qi the conqueror of Fujian, are not mentioned among the elite group of four, He Qi's great-grandson He Xun was a high minister at the beginning of Eastern Jin, and other members of the family held substantial position in the southeast region for ten generations: *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1377-81, *SGZ* 65/Wu 20, 1456-59, *Renming pu* 55a-60a, and Zhou Mingtai at 2721.

Again, though *SSXY* and *JS* have no discussion of the leading families of Danyang, Zhang Kai, great-grandson of the veteran minister Zhang Zhao of Wu, held high office and was awarded a marquisate in the first year of Eastern Jin: *JS* 76, 2018-19.

In general, however, few of the families which held a leading political position in third-century Wu were able to maintain their status under later dynasties. The two chief exceptions are the Lu family, which, as we have seen, could claim distinguished lineage from the first century to the sixth, and the He of Kuaiji. Sadly enough, one family which largely disappears from history within a generation of the fall of Wu is the Sun - but that is another story.

111 *SGZ* 28, 777. Several scholars, including Tang Changru [1955], at 22-23, and Miyakawa [1956], at 33, cite and discuss this passage. The expression "retainers" is here expressed by the phrase *buqu*: the compound originally referred to the units of the regular imperial army of Han, but by this time it may be

Still more significantly, at these highest levels of the state, we may observe the growing, ultimately dominant, role of various cadet branches of the Sun clan, markedly aided by palace politics in which two daughters of Sun Quan, Sun Luban the Princess Quan and Sun Luyu the Princess Zhu, played a considerable part.[112] This constant conflict at the capital limited the authority of the ruler and the effectiveness of his government, and at the same time these personal factions and rivalries among members of the imperial clan, with no power base of their own among the general community, meant that the politics of the centre operated more and more in a closed system, isolated from and irrelevant to the interests of the provinces.

In these later years, the government was no longer that of an ambitious and expansionist state, but represented little more than a group of magnates concerned to maintain their own wealth and authority. Faced with such a collection of family interests, operating at every level from the court to the countryside, the Sun rulers were never in a good position to establish strong instruments of government, including the control and development of agriculture and the machinery of war, with which they might compete more efficiently against their rivals. And in the long run Wu was a marginal state, with a government which held power through its past military success, but which lacked the authority to establish coherent and effective policies against local interests.

On the other hand, through traditional historians of China may lament the division of the empire of Han, and may think less of the rulers of Wu for their failure to establish a truly imperial government, we should not assume that grand centralised authority was an advantage to the people or the culture of China. On the contrary, the break-up of Han and the limited power of Wu were of considerable advantage to the development of China.

In general terms, the independent existence of the state of Wu meant that the lands south of the Yangzi were no longer subject to exploitation for the irrelevant concerns of a central imperial government. During the Han dynasty, the wealth of the south, whether it was developed from the mines and fields within the boundaries, or acquired by trade beyond the seas, had been regularly removed to the profit of the court, or deployed to aid imperial ambitions along the northern frontier. For a government based upon the Yellow River and the Yellow plain, south China was always of secondary political importance, and was looked upon as little more than region for exploitation, with occasional difficulties from marginal rebellion.

From this perspective, the very existence of the separate state of Wu was an immediate gain for the people of the south. The long stream of the Han River, and the network of canals and waterways which led across the Huai to the north now gave a line of attack for armies to invade from the north, and the costs of maintaining defence along the Yangzi were considerable. But those waterways had formerly been a route by which prosperity was drained away and now, as communications to the north were broken, the wealth of the south remained in that region. The additional expenses of a local court and a regional

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interpreted as a private military force, or even simply civilian dependents. See the classic article by Yang Chung-i on "Evolution of the Status of 'Dependents'," and note 104 above.

112 Sun Luban, married to Quan Zong, was the elder full sister of Sun Luyu, married to Zhu Ju, whose biography is in *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1340-41. Sun Luban encouraged the dismissal of Sun He from the position of Heir-Apparent and later supported Sun Jun, who became her lover. Sun Luyu supported Sun He, and was later slandered by Sun Luban and done to death by Sun Jun. Sun Luban was eventually involved in the failed coup of Sun Liang against Sun Lin; her husband was killed and she herself was sent into exile. See Fang, *Chronicle* I, 683-684 and 690, II, 70-71, 86, 160, 181, 199, 228, 295-297 and 313.

army could readily be absorbed in the profits to be made from the monopoly of southern trade and the reduced demands of tribute to the north.

In this context, it was in no sense necessary that the court and the capital should dominate the economic resources of the state, and the armed forces of the central government were most usefully deployed in formal defence along the Yangzi, and as an occasional support for large-scale enterprises of colonisation. Otherwise, the continuing development of the region was well assured by the individual enterprise of local leaders and commanders. They had no particular loyalty to the warlord state which shielded them, the offered little but exploitation and war to their poor dependents, and the non-Chinese people suffered desperately from their aggression, but it was the energy of these gentry magnates that developed the prosperity and the independence of the south.

The achievement of Wu:

Despite rhetoric and show, the empire of Wu was in no way a reconstruction of the fallen dynasty of Han. Much of the veneer which formerly covered the force of government was now gone, and there were times when men acted rather with haste than with dignity. We have, for example, the story of Sun Quan's gross discourtesy to Zhang Zhao at the very height of the enthronement ceremony, when he proclaimed aloud and in public that he owed his success to Zhou Yu, while Zhang Zhao's advice would have condemned him to beggary. The tale, of course, is too good to be entirely trustworthy, and one cannot be sure that that Sun Quan did indeed speak out in such shameful fashion.

On the other hand, Sun Quan could display a notable impatience with various attempts by worthy scholars to insist upon decorum at inappropriate times. There are a number of stories about how he would give a banquet and get drunk. On one occasion he was reprimanded by Zhang Zhao, who compared his conduct to that of the vicious and last King Zhou of the ancient Shang/Yin dynasty. In another story we are told that Yu Fan refused to return the royal toast: he lay down on the ground and pretended he could drink no more, then returned to his place after Sun Quan had passed him by. Sun Quan was furious at the insult and drew his sword to kill him. When his minister Liu Ji grasped him about the arms to hold him back, Sun Quan complained peevishly that Cao Cao had been allowed to kill Kong Rong, and why couldn't he kill Yu Fan? Liu Ji assured him that Yu Fan certainly deserved such a fate, but it might affect Sun Quan's own reputation, and Sun Quan was surely a better man than Cao Cao? So Yu Fan was spared, and Sun Quan issued orders that if in future, when he was drunk, he ordered a man to be killed, the execution should not be carried out until he had sobered up and thought about the matter some more.[113]

One has the impression that wild parties were a feature of court life at Wu, that there were times they resembled a croquet match in Wonderland, and that it was always dangerous to refuse a cup of wine.[114]

There are a number of other incidents which confirm Sun Quan as a man of energy and impetuosity, sometimes erratic in his behaviour, and on occasion discourteous and ungenerous. But he was surely a man of strong personality. This was, after all, a warlord

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113 The stories are put together by *ZZTJ* 69, 2198-99; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 61-62. They are drawn from a number of sources, being the biographies of Zhang Zhao in *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1221, of Yu Fan in *SGZ* 57/Wu 10, 1321, and of Liu Qi in *SGZ* 52/Wu 4, 1186.

114 In the later case of the unfortunate historian Wei Zhao, it was truly a fatal discourtesy. See Chapter 9.

state, and it was essential for the ruler to maintain authority over a group of very tough military commanders.

In such circumstances, Sun Quan's conduct with regard to Zhang Zhao, and his outburst against Yu Fan, may reflect the tensions in the society which he ruled. During the time of Han, there were formal and official links to regulate personal and family alliances and rivalries, and set boundaries to individual conduct; even then, however, there were notable incidents of bloody vendetta, sometimes disguised as political protest, but frequently displayed as plain and brutal private feuding. Now, in time of civil war, that framework of conduct had broken down, and survival, let alone success, depended upon a man's personal qualities and the allies he could make to assist him.

So this was an age of the individual, one of the comparatively few periods in Chinese history that some people were able to escape from the traditional bonds of expected conduct, and could even be admired for their style and skill. Where the rulers of the end of Han, men such as Emperor Huan and Emperor Ling, are known to us only by the occasional slanted anecdote, judged from the viewpoint of their role in history rather than as men of personal character, and hemmed about by the demands of protocol and courtly debate, the warlords who took over their power, men such as Cao Cao, Liu Bei and Sun Quan, depended for success upon the strength of their personality and the force with which they expressed it.

In this, of course, we may see the attraction of the stories and plays which deal with the Three Kingdoms, and above all the splendid figure of Cao Cao, cynical strategist and brilliant villain. Though one must doubt some of the tales that are told, and even the general judgement of traditional historians, there are surely echoes of reality in the legends that gathered about him and about the other heroes.

In comparison with Cao Cao, Sun Quan presents a less impressive figure. He was fortunate enough to inherit the military base established by his elder brother, and the great victories of Wu were won by his generals, notably Zhou Yu, Lü Meng and Lu Xun. Sun Quan was not himself a great military commander, and he suffered some serious and embarrassing set-backs when he took the field in person. He was, nonetheless, a man of physical courage, large ambition, and surely a strong nerve. In the two great campaigns which established the state, the defence at the Red Cliffs against Cao Cao and the attack on Guan Yu and Liu Bei in Jing province, Sun Quan was prepared to make harsh decisions and act upon them with energy. His commanders at the front made the immediate tactical decisions, but he had the strength to back their judgement, and he would surely have shared their fate had matters gone awry.

And the generals who consented to serve him were men of character and style. Zhou Yu impressed all who dealt with him; Lü Meng first made his mark when he dressed his troops in smart red leggings, he turned himself into a passable self-taught scholar, and he was a man of trickery and a decided sense of humour. And there was the contrast between a man such as Jiang Qin, who lived in most humble fashion, with his mother and his concubines in simple dresses of plain cloth, until Sun Quan ordered that they should be dressed from his own palace wardrobe;[115] and He Qi the conqueror of the southeast, who took particular pride in the splendour of his raiment:

> By nature, He Qi was extravagant and gay, and he loved military affairs. His arms and his armour and his engines of war were always first-class, the ships that he rode in were engraved with red chasing, he had black umbrellas, screens of deep red, halberds

115 *SGZ* 57/Wu 10, 1287.

> and lances decorated with flowers and fruits, while the green hides which covered his warships looked from far off as if they were mountains.[116]

Gan Ning, we are told, had been the leader of a group of "knight-errants" when he was young, and he retained some of the same customs when he joined Sun Quan's service:

> Gan Ning would kill for pleasure, and he gave outlaws refuge and lodging in his commandery offices. Whenever he went in or out, if he was on land there were horsemen and chariots drawn up in array, and if he travelled by water there were lines of small craft, all with followers in embroidered clothing. Wherever he halted he used a silken rope to moor the boat, and when he moved on again he cut the rope and left it, to show how little he cared.[117]

In real terms, reference to activity as a "knight-errant" may better be regarded as a euphemism for banditry or, at best, conduct as a masterless fighting man.[118] Many of the Sun supporters, such as Zhou Yu, Lu Su, Cheng Pu, Lü Fan, He Qi and others, were men of family, who came accompanied by retainers or who had held some office or recommendation from the government, and we are told that Quan Zong, for example, took particular care to act as patron and attract refugees from the north into his service.[119] There were, however, a number of others whose background was questionable. Ling Cao of Wu commandery, who appears to have been one of the hills people in that region, is described as a "wandering bravo," but he served Sun Ce and Sun Quan loyally as the leader of many attacks until his death at the hands of Gan Ning in battle against Huang Zu.[120] Pan Zhang, the man who killed Guan Yu, began as an impoverished drunkard: when creditors came to his gate he would merely assure them that one day he would be wealthy and powerful, and he would repay them then. Later, he became General of the Right under the imperial government, but he appears to have remained a ruffian, a scrounger and a scoundrel - in many respects an excellent commander for the time:

> Pan Zhang was rough, fierce man, whose orders were always respected. He loved to play a fine part, and even when the soldiers under his command were no more than a few thousand he would always act as if he had ten thousand.
>
> When he was on campaign and halted for camp, he would set up a market in the army [and draw commission on the sales], and if there was anything his troop lacked, he would look for the chance to take what as needed.
>
> By nature, however, he was wasteful and extravagant, and in his later years he became even worse: if one of his officers or soldiers happened to be well off, he would sometimes kill him and take his property; and he often defied the law. When investigating officers sent in memorials about this, however, Sun Quan considered Pan Zhang's record, and he would make no further investigation.[121]

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116 *SGZ* 62/Wu 15, 1380.

117 *SGZ* 57/Wu 10, 1292 PC note 32 quoting *Wu shu*.

118 The term *youxia* has been discussed by James Liu as *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, but the reality of most of the cases cited, even in literature, does not well reflect Western understanding of the English term. For a devastating, but to my mind quite reasonable, critique of these "heroes" in literature, see Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, 86-114, discussing *Shuihu zhuan*. On the concept and conduct of *youxia* in Han, see Ch'ü, *Han Social Structure*, 185-195.

119 See his biography in *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1381.

120 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1295, and note 42 to Chapter 4. The phrase rendered as "wandering bravo" is *qingxia*, one of the alternative expressions for *youxia*: Ch'ü, *Han Social Structure*, 186. *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1297, refers to Ling Cao as a man from the hill country.

121 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1300.

Gan Ning, however, was perhaps the most spectacular of Sun Quan's military commanders. Originally from Nanyang, he migrated to the west, and besides his early experience as a knight-errant or bandit, briefly interrupted by a term as Assistant in Shu commandery, he later took up a serious interest in scholarship. He was certainly extremely brave, he is described as rough and fierce, but he was also open and friendly, good at planning, caring for his soldiers, thought little of personal property and always showed respect for scholars. There was, predictably, a permanent feud between him and Ling Tong, whose father he had killed, and Sun Quan took pains to keep them apart.

Lü Meng had admired and acted as patron to Gan Ning from the beginning, but that relationship also was sometimes strained:

> One of the boys in Gan Ning's kitchen did something wrong and then ran away to shelter with Lü Meng. Lü Meng was afraid Gan Ning would kill him, so he did not immediately send him back. Later, however, Gan Ning brought a present for Lü Meng's mother, and came up into the hall to offer it. The kitchen boy came out and went to Gan Ning, and Gan Ning promised Lü Meng he would not kill the lad.
>
> As soon as he got back to his ship, however, Gan Ning tied the boy to a mulberry tree and shot him with arrows till he died. Then he told his men to secure the mooring ropes, took off his clothes and went to bed.
>
> Lü Meng heard about this and was furious. He beat a drum to gather his soldiers to attack Gan Ning. Gan Ning heard the noise, but he stayed in bed.
>
> Lü Meng's mother came barefoot and said to him, "His excellency [Sun Quan] treats you like a brother and entrusts you with great affairs. How can you take the occasion of some private grievance to attack Gan Ning and seek to kill him? Should Gan Ning die, even if our master asked no questions about it, you would still be failing in your duty as his servant."
>
> Lü Meng had always been very obedient to his parents. He attended now to his mother's words and abandoned at once his thoughts of vengeance. He went to Gan Ning's ship and he laughed and called out to him, "Xingba, my mother has a meal waiting for you; come quickly!"
>
> Gan Ning wept and sobbed and said, "I let you down." And he went with Lü Meng back to visit his mother, and they made merry and feasted the whole of the day.[122]

Such men as these were violent and emotional, their behaviour was often cruel and erratic, and it sometimes passed even the lenient bounds of the time. In 237, the general Zhu Huan quarrelled bitterly with his commander-in-chief Quan Zong, killed numbers of his attendants, and then "pretended he was insane," left the army, and returned to Jianye for a cure. He probably was suffering from a bout of homicidal mania. Sun Quan, however, soothed him down, treated him with honour, and sent him back to the front with a largely independent command. Zhu Huan remarked that now he had the opportunity to return to active service, his ailment would cure itself.[123]

There is, of course, one central reason for these frequent descriptions of extravagant conduct, and that is the military techniques which we have considered above: if the coherence of an army depends upon the confidence which ordinary soldiers hold for their commanders, and aggressive action depends upon the personal courage of these men, to "break the enemy line" and have that success followed up by their companions, then a flamboyant style and strong, even brutal, personality, are important and indeed essential

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122 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1295. Xingba was the style of Gan Ning.

123 *SGZ* 56/Wu 11, 1314; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 551-553.

attributes of military achievement. Conduct as a gaudy hero or swashbuckling bully was part of a military leader's stock-in-trade, and one cannot ignore the nervous tension required by any man who must maintain his authority by regular personal defiance of an enemy array.[124]

So the needs of warfare in that heroic age tended to produce leaders who were arrogant, aggressive and occasionally hysterical, and this military egocentricity had inevitable influence on the political and social structure of the state as a whole. Since these were the sort of people that Sun Quan was dealing with, one can understand occasional vagaries in his own behaviour.

In such a society of individual conduct, women had some opportunity to play a part for themselves. We are told of good advice being offered and accepted, as in the case of Lü Meng and his mother just cited above, the advice of Sun Ce's aunt on forcing the crossing of the Yangzi at the beginning of his campaigns, and the occasional comments of the Lady Wu, mother to Sun Ce and Sun Quan.[125] Sometimes, however, the women take a more active role, as did the widow of Sun Yi when she planned and executed revenge against his assassins.[126] Though very little is told of her, Sun Quan's sister, married for a time to Liu Bei, was a woman with considerable force of personality,[127] and we may also consider Sun Luban, eldest daughter of Sun Quan and wife of Quan Zong, who played a remarkable role in politics at court. She helped to engineer the dismissal of Sun He as Heir-Apparent, she became the mistress of the chief minister Sun Jun, and she was heavily involved in plans for the overthrow of Sun Jun's successor Sun Lin.[128] During the Han, though the imperial harem was generally less a haven of sensuality than a centre of desperate political ambition, the roles of women were circumscribed, and the patterns of their conduct were quite strictly laid down. By contrast, if the turmoil of the Three Kingdoms period gave opportunity for men of talent, there was also, unusually in traditional China, some room as well for women of enterprise and spirit.

On the other hand, though there were times that military tempers could be soothed or persuaded to listen to calmer counsels, there is little to show that the civil administration of the state was able to establish any real control. Perhaps the decisive example of this institutional weakness may be seen in the case of Zhang Wen and his associates soon after the establishment of the kingdom.

Zhang Wen was a man from Wu commandery, son of a clerical officer under Sun Quan.[129] He was soon recognised as a scholar and a man of the most upright morality, he was highly praised by the senior civilian officials Zhang Zhao, Gu Yong and Liu Ji, and he was admired by Zhuge Liang. In 224 he was sent on embassy to Shu, to reassure them that Sun Quan's negotiations with Cao Pi of Wei were not an indication of any lack of support for the alliance, but rather compelled by force of circumstances. Zhang Wen carried out the mission with success, but word came back to Sun Quan of the flattering terms with which he addressed the court of Shu, and Sun Quan was not entirely pleased.

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124 On such tactics, see above at note 69.

125 As, for example, her appeals to Sun Ce to spare Wang Sheng and later Gan Ji in Chapter 3; and her reported encouragement to Sun Quan to defy Cao Cao in 208: note 21 to Chapter 4.

126 See Chapter 4.

127 See note 8 to Chapter 5.

128 See note 112 above.

129 The biography of Zhang Wen is in *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1329-33.

Then, however, Zhang Wen took responsibility for recommending his fellow-countryman Ji Yan to be in charge of personnel.[130] Ji Yan, it appears, was a strict man, and he insisted on judging and demoting those who had done wrong. He was increasingly criticised, and several colleagues warned Zhang Wen against such a rigid policy. Lu Mao and Zhu Ju argued that:

> ... the monarchy has just lately been established, ... and this is the occasion one should give men employment ... by overlooking their faults. If we distinguish between good and bad ... and emphasise regular monthly criticism ... we would certainly improve custom and display a brilliant example. Unfortunately, however, such a program is not easily put into practice. It would be better to emulate the overflowing love of Confucius in ancient times, and follow the example of tolerance which was shown by Guo Tai in more recent days.[131]

The message was clear: it was not acceptable that strict standards of morality should be applied to the government of Wu. When Ji Yan ignored the warnings, and Zhang Wen failed to keep him in order, the trouble came to a head. Ji Yan was ordered to commit suicide, and Zhang Wen was reprimanded and dismissed. As Zhuge Liang is said to have remarked when he learnt of the crisis, "He sought to distinguish too sharply between good and bad."[132] On such a precedent, there was no incentive to exercise censorial power, nor any serious supervision over practice of government.

As Hsü Cho-yün has remarked, the rival states came of different origins. The government of Wei established by Cao Cao can be considered as a reconstruction of the imperial tradition in north China. The state of Shu-Han was based upon the take-over, through coup d'état, of the local government in Yi province, and it too represented the expectations of Han tradition, though on a smaller, regional, scale. The military enterprise of Wu, however, was built from nothing but the success and expansion of a warlord state. Where Cao Cao and Liu Bei may be said to have subverted the government institutions of Han, Sun Ce and Sun Quan achieved their power by replacing them with a new regime of their own. Naturally enough, the formalities of the new government paid lip-service to the traditions of the past, but the state of Wu, as Hsü has said, represented a new type of establishment, based upon force.[133]

So it was no small achievement for Sun Quan, that he maintained authority for more than fifty years over such a collection of energetic, eccentric and frequently brutal individualists. The fourth-century commentator Sun Sheng disapproved of the usurpers of Wu, and looked with satisfaction at their eventual failure, but he did appreciate and recognise Sun Quan's personal qualities:[134]

> If we look at the way Sun Quan cared for his men, he inclined his heart and he gave his utmost consideration in order to obtain their strength even unto death. He wept for Zhou Tai's injuries,[135] he put the concubine into the grave with Chen Wu,[136] he

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130 The texts vary slightly, but it seems that Ji Yan became a member of the Masters of Writing, the imperial secretariat, with particular responsibility for selection of officials. The story appears in *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1330, *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1337, *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1340; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 167-168 and 175-179.

131 *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1337; *cf.* Fang, *Chronicle* I, 167. Guo Tai was a celebrated judge of character and capacity during the 160s: his biography is in *HHS* 68/58, 2225-31.

132 *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1333-34 PC quoting *Kuaiji dianlu*; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 167-168 and 175-179.

133 Hsü [1967], 200.

134 *SGZ* 55/Wu 10, 1297-98 PC note 1 *bis* quoting Sun Sheng (appended to the account of Ling Tong's two sons as cited in note 83 above).

135 See note 23 to Chapter 7.

prayed for the life of Lü Meng,[137] and he cared for the sons of Ling Tong: this was how he encouraged the resolve of his followers.

For this reason, though there was little to be said of his authority or his political virtue, his personal sense of affection so touched the people that he was able to keep Jing [province] and [the region of] Wu under his control, and that is why he was able to maintain his unlawful power for so long.

In the light of this background, however, it is not entirely surprising that the literary and scholarly achievement of the state of Wu compares rather poorly with that of the state of Wei under Cao Cao and his successors. Certainly, we are told that southern scholars such as Zhang Hong and Gu Yong were respected by expert critics, men such as Yu Fan and Xue Zong composed works of quality, and Sun Hao, last ruler of Wu, was a competent lyricist - but this cannot be compared to the galaxy of talent in the north. Cao Cao himself and his son Cao Pi were poets of ability, Cao Zhi, younger brother of Cao Pi, was one of the greatest in Chinese history, and they were supported by Wang Can and his colleagues, the so-called Seven Masters of the Jian'an period, followed by Ruan Ji, Xi Kang and the other Sages of the Bamboo Grove.[138] Similarly, in philosophy, though men of Wu wrote essays and commentary on the Confucian classics, including particularly the Book of Changes, and on classical Taoism, there was nothing to match the works of Zhongchang Tong, Xu Gan, Xun Yue and the remarkable Wang Bi and He Yan, combining Confucianism and Taoism in the Study of the Mysteries.[139]

There is, however, one exception to the unfavourable comparison. Lu Ji and to Lu Yun, grandsons of the general Lu Xun, were both less than twenty years old at the time of the conquest of Wu by Jin, but both achieved distinction in the north.[140] In particular, Lu Ji was one of the leading composers of rhapsodies and lyric poetry in his day, and he was celebrated also for his "Rhapsody on Literature," a masterpiece of systematic criticism, and for commentaries to the classics.[141] He is commonly classified as a writer of the Western Jin, and his works were indeed composed in the last years of the third century, but by background and youthful training he may be equally regarded as representative of a last flowering in the literary culture of Wu.

And in another field of scholarship, mathematics and astronomy, the men of Wu had a leading role. We have discussed the calculations of the independent calendar established by Sun Quan, and noted the contribution of scholars from the southeast such as Wang Fan and Lu Ji, the son of Lu Kang, who was compared to the great Zhang Heng of Later Han

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136 See Chapter 6 at note 33.

137 See Chapter 6 at note 70.

138 On Wang Can, see Chapter 4, and on the Seven Masters and the Cao family, see for example Miao, *Early Medieval Chinese Poetry*, and Frodsham, *Anthology*, 26-32.

On Ruan Ji, Xi Kang and their colleagues, see Holzman, "Les sept sages," *Vie et pensée*, and *Poetry and Politics*.

The poetry of Wu is collected in *Quan Han Sanguo Jin nanbeichao shi* 6.

139 On the philosophy of this period, see for example *Cambridge Han*, 682 and 715 [Loewe, "The Religious and Intellectual Background"], 804-806 [Ch'en, "Confucian, Legalist and Taoist Thought in Later Han"], and 829-832 [Demiéville, "Philosophy and Religion from Han to Sui"].

"Study of the Mysteries" is Demiéville's rendering of the Chinese term *xuanxue*, and he observes that there were three "mysteries," the *Laozi*, the *Zhuangzi*, and the *Book of Changes* with its appendices.

140 See note 101 above.

141 See, for example, Frodsham, *Anthology*, 89-91, and Knechtges, *Wen xuan*, 38, who observes that "If the size of his *Wen xuan* corpus means anything, Lu Ji was one of Xiao Tong's favourite poets. His fifty-two poems make up the largest *shi* selection in the anthology."

and who, in similar fashion, constructed a working armillary sphere.[142] There are frequent references in later texts to scholars of the imperial observatory of Wu, and Chen Zhuo, who had been chief of the observatory just before the conquest, repeated the lost work of the great Zhang Heng of Later Han and compiled a definitive map of the constellations at the beginning of the fourth century.[143] Though the men of Wu were perhaps no more than competent in traditional philosophy and letters, they could claim distinction in other branches of knowledge.

When Sun Quan appointed his eldest son Sun Deng as Heir-Apparent to the kingdom in 222, he arranged that he would have young men of good quality about him as personal friends and companions. The first chosen were Zhuge Ke, son of Zhuge Jin, Zhang Xiu, son of Zhang Zhao, Gu Tan the grandson of Gu Yong, and Chen Biao the son of Chen Wu. As Sun Deng grew up, this policy developed further, and a coterie of scholars was gathered about his personal court. According to later Buddhist texts, the translator Zhi Qian was recognised by Sun Quan as a man of wide learning and was attached to this group as an instructor to the Heir-Apparent.[144] Zhi Qian was a layman, not qualified to take up formal missionary activity, but his work of translation was not matched in south China until the end of the following century.

There was some knowledge and acceptance of Buddhism in China from at least the first century AD, and it seems very likely there was a Buddhist community in the area of the lower Yangzi. Liu Ying, King of Chu, had been recorded as a patron, we have observed the unfortunate case of the energetic but untrustworthy Zhai Rong,[145] and we are told that Zhi Qian worked on Buddhist scriptures that he found in that region, probably at Jianye itself.

In his study of the *Buddhist Conquest of China*, Zürcher gives some credence to the story of Zhi Qian's connection to the court of Sun Quan,[146] and he notes that Sun Quan's patronage represented an important development in the acceptance of Buddhism in China. In the north, during the second century AD, Emperor Huan of Han had sought to establish himself as a patron of Buddhism, but the official worship was confused with that of the Huang-Lao sect, and Buddhism at Luoyang remained on the margins of intellectual interest.[147] Concepts of Buddhism were influential in the philosophy of the gentry at the court of Wei, but their chief concern was given to the synthesis of Confucianism and Taoism which reached its fullest expression in the Study of the Mysteries.[148] Contact with the imperial family of Wu, and the support which was given to the work of

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142 See, for example, Needham, *Science and Civilisation* III, 359 and 386, and also note 69 to Chapter 7.

Lu Ji the mathematician, son of Lu Kang, must be distinguished from his cousin thrice removed, the scholar and writer Lu Ji, who was a grandson of Lu Xun.

143 See, for example, Needham, *Science and Civilisation* III, 264 and 387, also 100, 200, and 384-385.

144 The biography of Zhi Qian is in *Gaoseng zhuan*, "Lives of Eminent Monks," 1, combined with that of Kang Senghui; Shih, *Biographies*, 20-31. *Chu sanzang ji ji*, "Collection of Notes concerning the Translation of the Tripitika," 13, has a more expansive account. See Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest* I, 49-50 and II, 335 notes 125 and 129.

145 On Buddhism in Later Han, see Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest* I, 18-43. On Zhai Rong, see also note 22 to Chapter 3.

146 On Buddhism in the Three Kingdoms period, particularly in the state of Wu, see Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest* I, 46-55.

147 See, for example, Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest* I, 36-40, de Crespigny, "Politics and Philosophy," 72-75.

148 See note 146 above, also Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest* I, 46.

translation and exposition, meant that the doctrine was presented in coherent form for the contemplation and comprehension of a Chinese elite.

The leading figure in this process was the celebrated monk Kang Senghui, who came to the court of Sun Quan in 247. Though he traced his ancestry to Sogdiana, by present-day Samarkand, we are told that his family had been living for generations in India, and Kang Senghui was born in Jiaozhi commandery by present-day Hanoi. He joined the Buddhist order in his teens, and he acquired a good Chinese education as well as a knowledge of Sanskrit and the Tripitika. Under Kang Senghui's influence, and despite some later vicissitudes due to the hostility of Sun Lin and possibly of Sun Hao, the Buddhist church expanded its presence, and the Jianchu monastery was established and maintained under imperial patronage.[149]

Despite his brother Sun Ce's fatal quarrel with Gan Ji, Sun Quan was seriously interested in metaphysical speculation, and his patronage of Kang Senghui may be seen as parallel to his cultivation of Taoist teachers and magicians. We have noted the influence of the diviner Wu Fan, and it may be observed that Yu Fan had been exiled from court because he made fun of Sun Quan and Zhang Zhao discussing questions of immortality.[150] In 241, even as Sun Deng was on his death-bed, he encouraged his father to maintain cultivation of the doctrines of Huang-Lao, and towards the end of his reign Sun Quan was impressed by the spiritual Wang Biao, who persuaded him to change the reign title in 251 to Taiyuan "Grand Origin," no doubt in hope of a revival of the state, and an extension of his own life.[151]

And finally we may consider the physical achievement of Sun Quan: the new capital of Jianye, founded upon ancient Moling. In the north there were the three great cities of Wei: Luoyang, Ye and Xuchang, each adorned and embellished by Cao Cao and his successors. In the west there was the old-established city of Chengdu. In culture and splendour, however, Jianye could rival each of these.

When Zuo Si of Jin composed his "Three Capitals Rhapsodies" at the end of the third century, he claimed in his Preface to have taken particular care that his descriptions of the regions and the metropolises of the three states should be true and accurate. He consulted maps and gazetteers, local custom and ancient tradition, and he rejected the hyperbole which his predecessors Sima Xiangru, Ban Gu and Zhang Heng had shown, introducing impossible plants and imaginary creatures into their romantic accounts of hunting parks, palaces and cities. So his "Rhapsody on the Capital of Wu," one section of the Three Capitals Rhapsodies, should present a true picture, albeit enhanced, of Jianye and its imperial state, composed by a late contemporary.[152] From his work, therefore, we may read how:

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149 Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest* I, 52. As Zürcher observes, one must be careful in accepting too much of the hagiography maintained in such stories, some of which claim even that Sun Quan was converted to Buddhism: *Buddhist Conquest* I, 278. It would seem, however, that the growth of Buddhism under the empire of Wu is well enough established.

Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest* II, 335 note 129 notes a Buddhist tradition that the Lady Pan, mother of Sun Liang who became empress of Sun Quan, demonstrated her support of the doctrine by establishing a monastery at Wuchang in 229; there is, however, no early support for this statement.

150 See above at note 95.

151 *SGZ* 59/Wu 14, 1365, and *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1148, discussed by Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest* I, 53.

152 The biography of Zuo Si is in *JS* 92, 2375-77, and is summarised by Knechtges, *Wen xuan*, 483-484. Zuo Si was born at Linzi in Qi, near present-day Linzi in Shandong, in 250 and he died about 305. Soon after the Rhapsodies were completed, at the end of the third century, commentaries were compiled for each of the sections: that for "Rhapsody on the Capital of Wu" was written by the scholar Liu Kui.

They formed jasper and carnelian into terraces and chambers.
High gateways tower upward;
Through door after door chariots run side by side.
Vermeil watchtowers stand in pairs;
The imperial highway is as smooth as a whetstone.
Where it is planted with pagoda trees,
Crossed by clear streams,
Dark shade hangs heavy and thick,
A limpid current flows slow and easy.
Seven *li* of official stations all in a row
Are packed ridgepole to ridgepole along the southern road.
Military camps are arrayed like the teeth of a comb;
Offices and bureaus are scattered like chess-pieces,
At Hengtang and Chaxia,
The city houses are lavish and grand.
The Changgan settlements stretch long and far,
With soaring eaves adjoined one to another.[153]

And how in the markets:

Merchants and pedlars huddle shoulder to shoulder.
Garbed in ramie and kudzu cloth,
Chaotically congested, they are massed and crowded together.
Light chariots, under slack rein, pass through the market streets;
Storied boats, sails unfurled, pass by the waterfront stalls,
Fruits and cloth gather here in ever constant supply;
Imported from afar are cone shells and glass.[154]

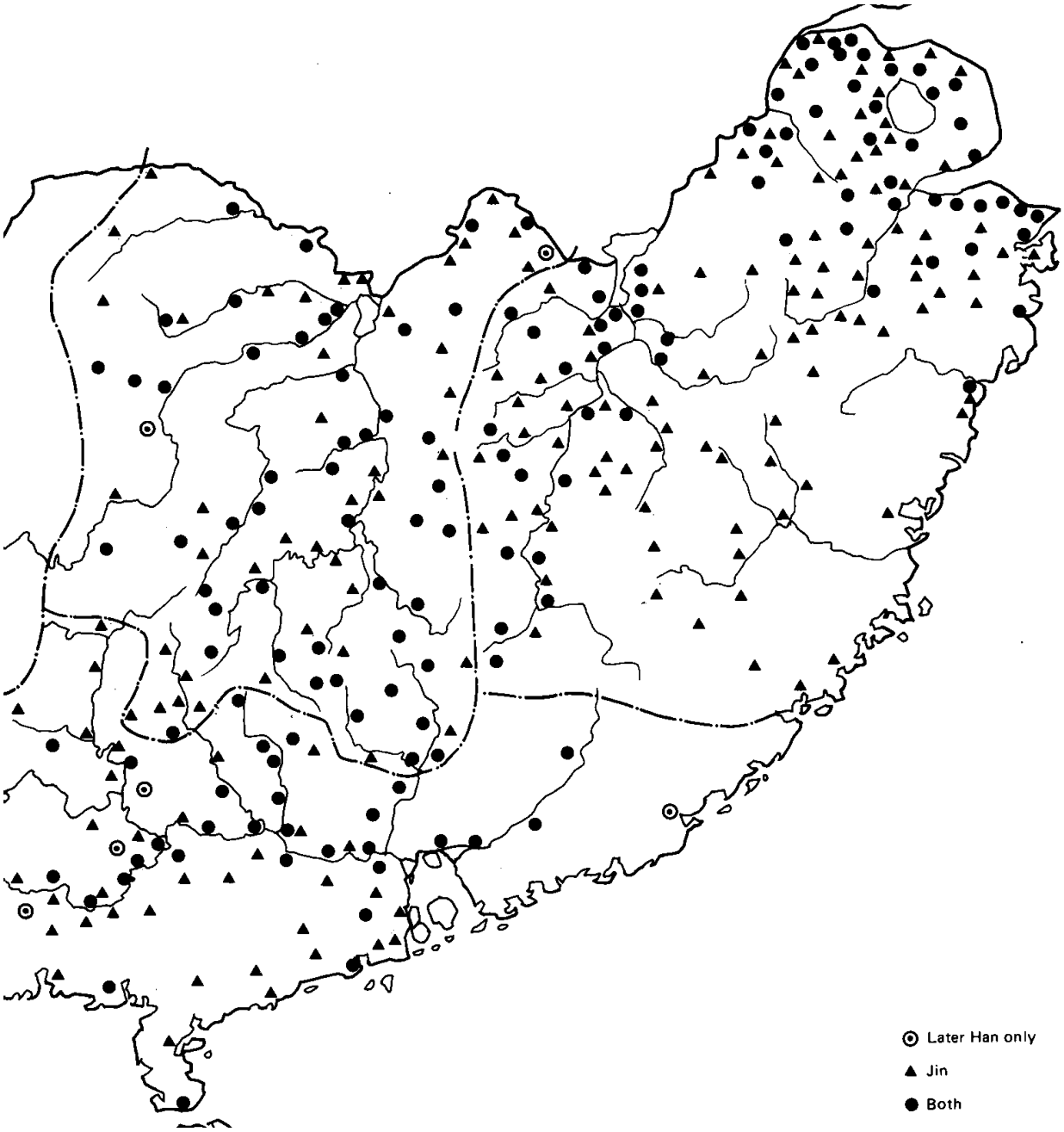
Despite its pretensions, the imperial state of Wu was a limited and brittle structure. For the time it lasted, however, it was a splendid achievement, and we may fairly praise the manner in which Sun Quan pursued his opportunities, with imagination, taste and skill. He was a patron of the arts and of scholarship, the city of Jianye was his creation, and within his lifetime it became one of the great metropolises of China. Through the conquest of the far south and the control of overseas trade which accompanied that achievement, Sun Quan had access to the exotic riches of southeast Asia, and his state gained wealth as middle-man for the north.

In longer terms, the settlement of Chinese people and their culture in the south, already commenced during the Han period, was confirmed and expanded under Wu. In later times, from the fourth century to the sixth, while the north lay under the political control and cultural influence of alien occupation, the lands south of the Yangzi continued a Chinese tradition. In that respect particularly, Sun Quan deserves great credit. He inherited a provincial warlord state, he developed it to a centre of culture and power, and he laid new foundations for the future of China.

The "Three Capitals Rhapsodies" appear in *Wen xuan* 4-6, 865-1481. The Preface to Zuo Si's work [4, 865-79] is translated by Knechtges, *Wen xuan*, 337-341. "Rhapsody on the Capital of Wu" [5, 1021-1258] is most elegantly rendered by Knechtges, *Wen xuan*, 373-427.

153 From Knechtges, *Wen xuan*, 399.

154 Knechtges, *Wen xuan*, 401-403.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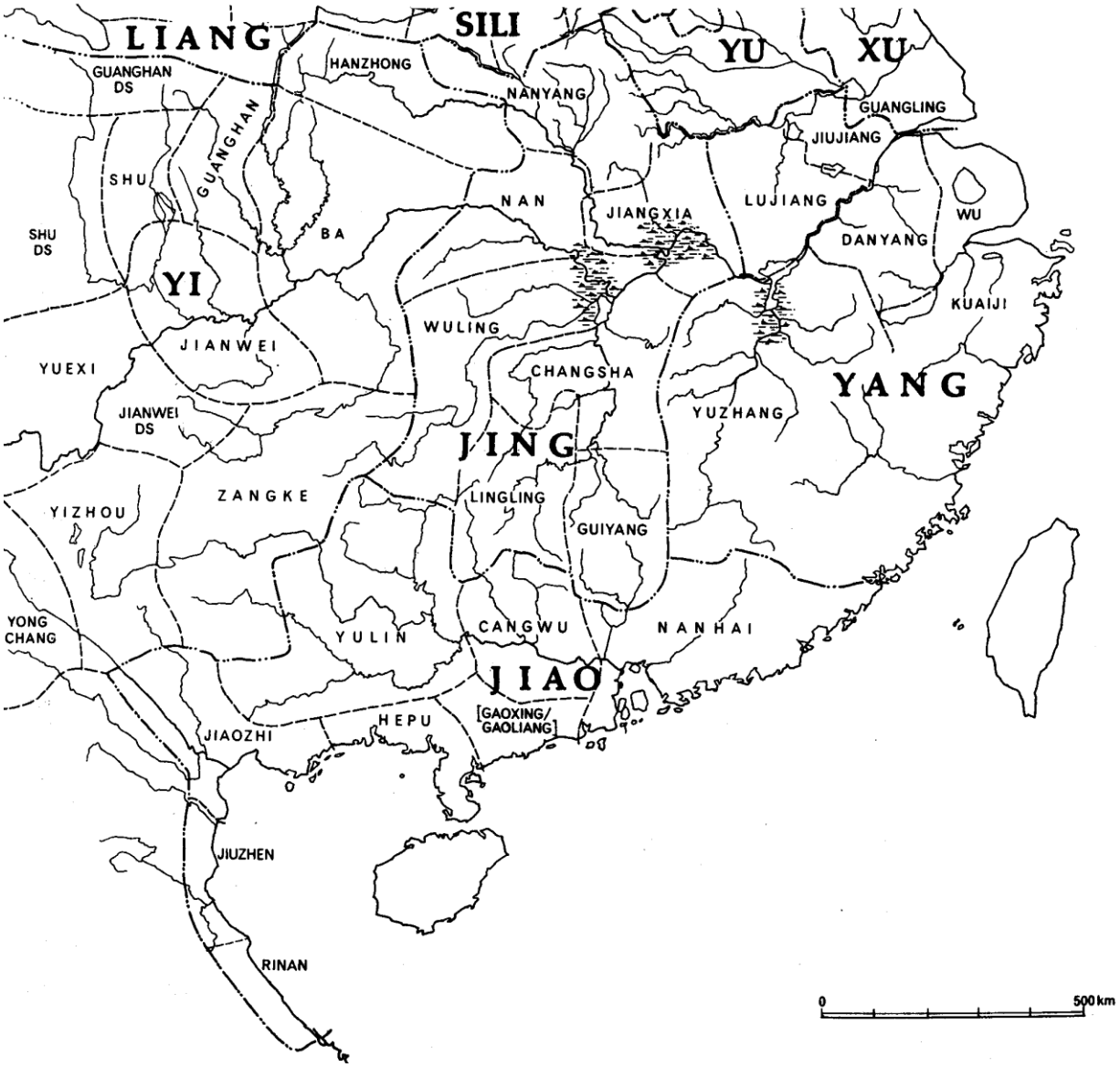
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[YIZHOU]
CANGWU
JIAO
ZHUGUAN
GAOLIANG
JIAOZHI
JIUZHEN
[ZHUYAI]
RINAN

CHAPTER NINE

An Essay on the Sources for the History of Wu 170-230

Introductory summary
Chen Shou and Pei Songzhi
Historians of the South
Historical writing in the third and fourth centuries
Story cycles: exaggeration and allegory
The distortions of Romance

Introductory summary:

Sanguo zhi, the official history which deals with the period of the Three Kingdoms, contains both a main text by Chen Shou of the third century and, equally important, a commentary compiled by Pei Songzhi of the early fifth century.

The work of Pei Songzhi collects material from sources available at his time and, unusually for a Chinese historian, Pei Songzhi identifies the source and the author from which that material is taken. As a result, we have a remarkably broad and detailed picture of the type of historical writing in the third and fourth centuries.

On the history of Wu, there were some general works, such as *Wu shu*, compiled by an official committee under the government of that state, the private compilations *Wu li* and *Wu lu*, likewise based upon archival material, and *Jiangbiao zhuan*, based upon local material gathered soon after the conquest of Wu by Jin. There are also, however, a quantity of local histories, biographies and collections of works, and numerous clan records.

Many of these works contain largely fictional anecdotes and accounts of the supernatural, and it is often difficult to judge whether an item of information should be accepted as fact, fiction, fantasy or allegory. The situation is further confused by the later development of story cycles about leading figures of the time, and by the vast popularity of the novel *Sanguo yanyi*, "Romance of the Three Kingdoms," which reached its developed form more than a thousand years after the events it celebrates, and which presents a strongly favourable view of Liu Bei, Zhuge Liang and the state of Shu-Han. One purpose of the present work has been to restore the balance, and to recount the history of Wu on the basis of fact, rather than the bias of romance.

Chen Shou and Pei Songzhi:

Sanguo zhi, the history of the Three Kingdoms, presents a special case in the historiography of China. Chen Shou, a former subject of Shu-Han, compiled the initial

work some time after the conquest of that state,[1] but it was at first only one general history among several. It was the imperial command that Pei Songzhi should compile a commentary which established Chen Shou's writing in the canon of Chinese tradition.

Pei Songzhi was born in Hedong in present-day Shanxi in 372.[2] He held office under Liu Yu, a general originally in the service of the Eastern Jin who seized the imperial title in 420 and established his own dynasty of [Liu] Song. Pei Songzhi held rank as an administrator under the new regime, and he was recognised for his scholarship. In 428 he received an imperial order to compile a commentary to the existing *Sanguo zhi* by Chen Shou, and the completed work, with its accompanying memorial, was presented to the throne in the following year. It seems certain that the project was already in train some time before the official commission.[3]

In his memorial of 429, Pei Songzhi gave keen but qualified praise to the basic text:

> The argument and design of Chen Shou's work are admirable, and in most things it is well judged. Indeed it is a garden of knowledge and the finest historical work of recent times.
>
> It is, however, rather too short, and there are a number of omissions.
>
> I have received the imperial decree to search into detail and to devote my efforts to discover every source. I have looked into old traditions from the past, and at the same time I have recovered records which have been neglected.

The remarkable thing about the new compilation, which supplements Chen Shou's work and just about doubles the length of the whole, is that Pei Songzhi not only collected the sources, but identified them in his commentary. He was, moreover, not at all concerned to smooth variant accounts and discrepancies into an orderly, coherent narrative. On the contrary, some of the texts which he quotes completely contradict the main text, and there are a number of occasions where Pei Songzhi himself will quote a series of different stories about the same incident.

In his memorial of presentation, Pei Songzhi set out his policy:

> If there is something that Chen Shou failed to mention, and if it is something that should be remembered, then I have collected other records to fill in the gap. Sometimes there are two accounts of the same incident, though there may be errors or irrelevancies in the text. Sometimes an event is described in two quite different ways and I do not feel that I can decide between them. In all such cases I have put in the variant versions to show the different traditions. If one account is clearly wrong, and what it says is not logically sound, then I note which is right in order to correct the mistake. On occasion, I argue with Chen Shou in his judgement of events or on minor points of fact.

So Pei Songzhi presents the raw material of his research. Where possible, he provides the name of the author and the title of the work from which he has drawn his information, and

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[1] There are biographies of Chen Shou in *Huayang guo zhi* 11, 9a-10a and in *JS* 82, 2137-38. Both texts are reproduced at the end of the Beijing edition of *Sanguo zhi*, pages 1475-76 and 1477-78.

On the historiography of *Sanguo zhi*, see also the introduction to the Beijing edition, and the preface by William Hung to Harvard-Yenching Index No. 33. For a modern interpretation of Chen Shou as the historian of "fear," forever concerned about the political dangers of his work, see the article by Honda [1962].

[2] The biography of Pei Songzhi is in *Song shu* 64, 1698-1701. The text is reproduced at the end of the Beijing edition of *Sanguo zhi*, pages 1479-81.

[3] Pei Songzhi's memorial of presentation is reproduced at the end of the Beijing edition of *Sanguo zhi*, pages 1471-72.

he shows no apparent concern that the record should reflect well upon one particular party or another, nor even that it should impress the reader with a moral message.

Here is a considerable contrast with the tradition of history-writing at this level in China before that time, and an equally great difference to that which came later. At the time Pei Songzhi was writing, the two great models were the *Shi ji* of Sima Qian and the *Han shu* of Ban Gu. Both were compiled as private works, but their authors held position in the official history offices of their day, and to a very high degree they are concerned to present a coherent narrative of events, with background messages on good conduct and on the right way of government.[4]

It is well enough agreed among modern scholars that the tradition of China was deeply and sincerely concerned with the past and with the records of proper action. It was the duty of the historian to tell the truth and to offer moral judgement, just as Confucius was assumed to have done when he compiled the *Spring and Autumn Annals* for the state of Lu. The choice of events to be recorded, however, and the praise or blame implicit in that choice, was inevitably the result of the historian's judgement, and there is automatic, unconscious, bias towards the interests and attitudes of the landed class which produced scholars and officials, dominant members of the community.[5]

Furthermore, the very fact that Sima Qian, Ban Gu and their followers were members of the official history offices meant they were not only assisted by the established historical tradition, but were also dependent upon it. The hierarchy of information based upon the imperial court, from the Diaries of Activity and Repose to the annals compiled at intervals through the dynasty, added to again by edicts, memorials and other documents in the archives, provided a massive body of sources and a bureaucratic technique for handling it. The work of the historian was to weave this material into a story which might serve as guidance and even as a warning for future rulers.

Shi ji and *Han shu* were the greatest, but by no means the only, early works in this tradition. *Dongguan Hanji*, compiled by the history office of Later Han throughout that dynasty, was all but complete;[6] and the *Xu Han shu* of Sima Biao, compiled one hundred years later, described the doom of Later Han with a strongly didactic inspiration.[7] At the end of the second century Xun Yue, in his *Han ji*, sought to account for the problems of the present by lessons from Former Han,[8] and in the middle fourth century Yuan Hong compiled the matching *Hou Han ji*, in chronicle form with occasional comments.[9] There

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[4] On the compilation of *Shi ji*, *Han shu* and the *Hou Han shu* of Fan Ye, see, for example, Chavannes, *Mémoires historiques* I, vi-lxi; Watson, *Ssu-ma Ch'ien*, *Grand Historian of China*; Hulsewé, "Notes on the Historiography of the Han period;" and Bielenstein, "Prolegomena," in *RHD* I, 9-81. Loewe, "Introduction" to *Cambridge Han*, 2-6, contains a general essay on written sources for the history of Han.

[5] See, for example, Gardner, *Chinese Traditional Historiography*, and Gardiner, "Standard Histories."

[6] On the history of the work finally entitled *Dongguan Hanji*, "Han Records of the Eastern Lodge," see Bielenstein, *RHD* I, 10-11, and *Lo-yang*, 29-30, also Loewe, *Early Chinese Texts*, 471-473.

[7] See Mansvelt Beck, *Treatises of Later Han*.

[8] On Xun Yue (148-209; biography in *HHS* 62/52, 2058-63), see the works by Ch'en Ch'i-yun. On *Han ji*, see particularly Ch'en Ch'i-yün, *Hsün Yüeh: Life and Reflections*, 84-126.

[9] Yuan Hong (328-376) was a celebrated scholar and writer of Eastern Jin. His biography is in *JS* 92, 2391-99, and he is the subject of several anecdotes in *Shishuo xinyu*: Mather, *Tales of the World*, 610 *et saepe*. Yuan Hong composed a number of pieces on the Three Kingdoms, but *Hou Han ji* was his major work of history.

Both the *Han ji* of Xun Yue and the *Hou Han ji* of Yuan Hong have survived largely intact. Naturally, much of the early history of the Three Kingdoms is covered by Yuan Hong's work, which concludes with the abdication of Emperor Xian in favour of Cao Pi and with Liu Bei's claim to the throne in 221.

were several other works on the Han dynasty in the two centuries which followed the end of the empire,[10] and at the very time Pei Songzhi was working on his commentary, his younger contemporary Fan Ye was beginning the annals and biographies which comprise his *Hou Han shu*, the canonical History of Later Han.[11]

Fan Ye's compilation fits the mould established by *Shi ji* and *Han shu.* The chapters of annals, based so far as possible on the archival records then remaining, present a chronological account of the imperial court and government, while the great majority of biographies tell us of the lives of men of political significance and of their official acts. The work is done with design and skill, which may be appreciated by close reading, and it presents an elegant and coherent argument. It is, however, in the bureaucratic tradition of official history: it pays chief attention to those matters which affected the prosperity and destruction of the dynasty and government of Han, and it seeks to distinguish romantic fiction from official fact.[12]

The work of Pei Songzhi, on the other hand, has preserved a medley of disparate texts which reflect the literary and historiographical activity of their time far better than the standard dynastic histories. Pei Songzhi has noted not only the official histories of the rival states, he cites unofficial histories and local records, clan registers and individual biographies, folk-tales and stories of the supernatural. And he also records the writings of pure propaganda and the comments of later essayists and critics, while just occasionally he inserts a judgement or comment of his own.[13]

The effect is remarkable, for we are presented with a broad sample of the material which had been compiled during two hundred and fifty years, from the latter part of the second century to the beginning of the fifth. There is no comparable collection for any earlier period. It is possible and indeed likely that similar works existed during the centuries of Han, but the materials on which they were written were flimsy, copies were few, and the main stream of tradition represented by *Shi ji*, *Han shu* and the official

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Unfortunately, however, and particularly for a chronicle history, some items appear misplaced. For the most part, *Hou Han ji* has been overtaken by the *Hou Han shu* of Fan Ye, compiled half a century later, though there are occasions where Yuan Hong's account of an incident is better than that of the standard history.

10 Bielenstein, *RHD* I, 12-13, discusses these early works on the history of Later Han.

11 There are biographies of Fan Ye in *Song shu* 69, 1819-31, and in *Nan shi* 33, 848-56. Born in 398, a generation younger than Pei Songzhi, he died in 446.

12 *Hou Han shu* does include some items which are better regarded as tales of ghosts and magic than as sober history. One may consider, for example, the Chapter on Diviners and Magicians, *HHS* 82/72A-B, translated by Ngo and by DeWoskin, and the story of Wang Chun in the Chapter on Men of Unusual Conduct, who was miraculously rewarded for his kindness to a dying student, and later solved a murder by interviewing the ghost of a female victim in a haunted post-house: *HHS* 81/71, 2680-81; de Crespigny, "The Ghosts that Were."

Shi ji and *Han shu*, which I have similarly classed in the bureaucratic tradition, likewise contain chapters which are essentially non-factual: the Biography of Lord Meng Chang, in *SJ* 75, is treated by Bauer and Franke, *The Golden Casket*, as fiction.

For the most part, however, the traditional, bureaucratic, historians distinguished the material they were dealing with, and their readers understood which sections were intended as descriptions of fact and which were exemplary fiction. As Franke remarks, in his Introduction to the English-language edition of *The Golden Casket*, at 6, "historical novellas...are embedded in compilations such as [*Shi ji*]..., from which they can easily be extracted." Fan Ye generally maintains the separation, and he seldom inserts grossly exaggerated or obviously fictitious anecdotes into his biographies of notable political figures. This is quite different to the open style of Pei Songzhi's compilation.

13 A list of the works and authors cited by Pei Songzhi, based upon the compilation of Shen Jiaben, is provided in de Crespigny, *The Records of the Three Kingdoms*.

histories so dominated the field that few rival accounts were popular enough to survive. Many of the works cited by Pei Songzhi survive only in the fragments which he quoted, and in later encyclopaedic compilations of the Tang period. Very few have maintained an independent existence.

In some respects, indeed, Pei Songzhi was rather an encyclopaedist than a historian, and it is those later encyclopaedias which have maintained his style of compilation, while the histories of the dynasties which followed the Three Kingdoms, from *Jin shu* to *Sui shu*, represent a confirmation of the official style, compiled for the most part by committees of scholars working under imperial patronage. It was a great achievement of Tang to re-establish the official tradition of historiography: new histories were compiled and commentaries were added to *Shi ji*, *Han shu* and *Hou Han shu*. The result, however, perhaps not unintentional, was that the initiative represented by Pei Songzhi was abandoned, and the writing of history returned to its earlier mould, in which source differences were ironed out to produce a flowing narrative.[14]

In their review of *Sanguo zhi*, the eighteenth century editors of *Siku quanshu* complained that Pei Songzhi was inconsistent and erratic, that he often included irrelevant items, and that his arrangement was haphazard.[15] The criticism is justified, and there are many cases where a modern historian will find himself either confused by the selection, or doubtful of the reliability of the information. And yet this very eclecticism makes the work of Pei Songzhi a repository of so much information on what may well be described as the Matter of the Three Kingdoms.[16]

Quite exceptionally, moreover, for the Chinese tradition, the material which has been preserved is clearly identifiable. When Pei Songzhi first quotes from a work he indicates the title and the author, and very often we are able to discover, from either this information or some other source, further details on the scholar concerned and the provenance of his work. Thanks to Pei Songzhi, we have a collection of the material which dealt with the period from the end of the second century to the latter part of the third century, and which was compiled between that time and his own.

By contrast, the regular Chinese history incorporates its information, as a matter of course, into a single narrative. We know, for example, that a great part of the information in *Shi ji* has been taken directly from *Zuo zhuan*, from *Intrigues of the Warring States* or from similar works of the Zhou period. The earlier source of this material can often be identified by comparisons, but it is not so identified by Sima Qian.[17] And the same principle may be observed in the *Zizhi tongjian* of Sima Guang, more than a thousand years later: the historian chose his material from earlier works, he sometimes lightly redrafted the passages, and he arranged the information with elegance and skill, but he

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14 On the history offices and the historical work of Tang, see, for example, Lien-sheng Yang, "The Organization of Chinese Official Historiography," and Wang Gungwu, "Later Standard Histories."

15 The comments of the *Siku quanshu congmu tiyao* are reproduced at the end of the Beijing edition of *SGZ*, 1473-74.

16 Here and below, I have been greatly influenced by the discussion and analysis of Johnson, "Epic and History in Early China," who considers the story of the pre-Qin hero Wu Zixu as it may originally have appeared in a legendary cycle of stories, and as it was later transmitted, in blander style, by Sima Qian (*SJ* 75).

17 In *Mémoires historiques*, for example, Chavannes supplies marginal notes to his translation, indicating the earlier sources from which Sima Qian appears to have taken material.

did not provide any regular system to account for the original source which he used.[18] Still more to the point, a historian in such a tradition feels no prime obligation to discuss alternative stories: once a particular item has been chosen, other versions are neglected and often lost. In some respects, when reading such a work as *Shi ji*, one should not only contemplate the records that Sima Qian has preserved for us, but should also mourn those many tales which were available at the time, which failed to be identified and preserved, and which are now gone for ever.

From this point of view, the main text of *Sanguo zhi*, compiled by Chen Shou, is well inside the bureaucratic tradition. We are told that Chen Shou had access to the records of the three rival states. Born in 233, he held clerical office at the court of Shu-Han and then, after the conquest, rose to official position in Jin through the patronage of the great minister Zhang Hua. Chen Shou was a little over thirty at the time of the fall of Shu-Han, something under fifty when the empire of Wu surrendered in 280, and he died about 300. He composed a number of other scholarly works, and there is every reason to believe that he had adequate opportunity for consultation of the contemporary government sources.[19]

Historians of the South:

A number of other general, or at least broadly concerned, histories were written during the third century. Each of the three courts had its own official history project, and the *Wei shu*, *Shu shu* and *Wu shu* were evidently designed to follow the pattern of *Dongguan Hanji* which had been compiled through generations of Later Han.[20] There were

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18 In his *Kaoyi* commentary, Sima Guang does compare and discuss some variant items of information in his sources. This, however, is done on a case-by-case basis, where specific texts are in disagreement. There is no consistent attempt to identify sources in general.

In his translation of *ZZTJ* chapters 60-78, Fang, *Chronicle*, has analysed and compared the text of *ZZTJ* with those of the earlier works from which Sima Guang took his material for the history of the period 220-265. In *Huan and Ling* and *Establish Peace* I have likewise sought to identify the original texts, but without Fang's detailed comparisons.

19 The two biographies of Chen Shou differ on the date of his death. According to *JS* 82, he spent a long time under the Jin without position, then held some minor posts in the capital and the provinces. About 297 he was appointed as Palace Cadet of the Heir-Apparent, but died before he could take up the post. According to *Huayang guo zhi* 11, Chen Shou held the position of Palace Cadet, and then became Cavalry Regular Attendant, a position of high rank, but was dismissed after the fall and execution of Zhang Hua in 300, and died soon afterwards.

20 On *Wei shu*, see Hou Kang, *Bu Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3174/3-3175/1, Yao Zhenzong, *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3220/3-3221/1, and *SGZJJ* 1, 3a-b. The biography of the author, Wang Shen, is in *JS* 39, 1143-46.

On *Shu shu*, see Yao Zhenzong, *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3221/1-2. No work of that title is quoted by Pei Songzhi, but *Huayang guo zhi* 11, 8b-9a, refers to a certain Wang Chong, who held the office of Gentleman at the Eastern Lodge, and who took part in the compilation of a *Shu shu*. There is also a passing reference to a *Shu shu* in *SGZ* 45/Shu 15, 1079 (*SGZJJ* 12b), where Chen Shou says that in 240 the scholar Yang Xi compiled the *Ji-Han fuchen zan* "Eulogies of the Ministers who Assisted Junior Han," and that many items from that collection had been incorporated into the *Shu shu*. It seems probable that much of the *Shu shu* was absorbed into *Sanguo zhi*.

There is a curious controversy, however, about the actual "history office" of the state of Shu. In his Criticism (*Ping*), at the end of the biography/annals of Liu Shan, "Later Sovereign" of Shu, Chen Shou says that the state of Shu did not employ historians, that there was no office responsible for collecting essential material, and that as a result many items of information, notably accounts of portents, are missing. Chen Shou suggested that the military urgencies of the time prevented Zhuge Liang from paying proper attention to that responsibility: *SGZ* 33/Shu 3, 902-03.

semi-official compilations by historians who either worked for the government or had access to the archives: Liu Ai, who held position under Dong Zhuo in the 190s and was at the imperial court under Cao Cao in 216, compiled annals of the reign of Emperor Ling, the *Lingdi ji*, and continued with annals of the reign of Emperor Xian.[21] Yu Huan, who is described as a subject of Wei, wrote a *Dian lue*, "Authoritative Account" and a *Wei lue*, "Authoritative History of Wei," dealing in turn with the last years of Han and with the history of the successor state.[22]

We know of these, and of a multitude of other works, primarily because of the extracts preserved in the commentary of Pei Songzhi. One must recognise, however, that great quantities of the material which they contained have been incorporated, without trace, into the compilation of Chen Shou. Like his fore-runners in the bureaucratic tradition, Chen Shou seldom acknowledged his sources, and Pei Songzhi, when putting together his commentary, was seeking only to supplement, not duplicate, the text of Chen Shou. So much of the text of Chen Shou has taken over material which had originally been presented in the official histories of the states or in other major works; and, curiously

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As we have seen, however, there is evidence that the state of Shu, like its rivals, had a history office, or at least that it had such institutions as an Eastern Lodge, presumably parallel to that of Han, and a body of scholars who recorded events and compiled works of history. The biography of Chen Shou in *Huayang guo zhi* says that he held appointment as Gentleman of the Private Library in the Eastern Lodge of Shu, and that office would surely have collected and preserved some documents.

There has been considerable debate on the statement by Chen Shou, and the opinions of various scholars are summarised in the commentary of Lu Bi to *SGZJJ* 33, 21a-b. The best explanation appears to be that Chen Shou was saying the state of Shu did not establish a regular archive: various items of information were recorded, but there was no system for collecting and keeping data day-by-day in the manner which the Han had developed, and so he could not find all the details that he wanted. The men appointed to the history office had not paid attention to their responsibilities, and although individuals were able to compile works of history, no such project was formally and properly maintained by the state.

We have seen above, discussing the administrative structure of Wu in Chapter 8, that there were a number of administrative posts which were formally filled but whose incumbents had other priorities. In Wu, however, the compilation of the official history was regarded as a matter of some importance, and this may also have extended to the maintenance of regular records. See also below at note 27.

21 On Liu Ai, see Chapter 2 at note 35. *Lingdi ji* and *Xiandi ji* are quoted by Pei Songzhi: *e.g. SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1094; and *SGZ* 1/Wei 1, 13 (*JJ* 34b).

Sui shu 33, 960, lists a *Han Ling-Xian erdi ji*, "Annals of the Two Emperors Ling and Xian of Han," by Liu Fang, while *Jiu Tang shu* 46, 1991, and *Xin Tang shu* 58, 1459, have a work of the same title ascribed to Liu Ai. It seems that the personal name Fang in *Sui shu* has been miswritten for Ai. The Tang encyclopaedia *Chuxue ji* 30, 737, quotes a *Handi zhuan*, "Account of the Emperor[s] of Han" by Liu Ai, and refers to the year 194, which was in the reign of Emperor Xian. By definition, the phrase *Xiandi* could not have been included in the title of any book before 234, when the abdicated Emperor died and received his posthumous title, but it appears that Liu Ai, or perhaps some later collaborator, continued his chronicle under the more general name, that the specification *Xiandi* was added later, and the whole work was variously known in one or two books, sometimes described as *ji* and sometimes as *zhuan*. See also Yao Zhenzong, *Hou Han yiwen zhi*, 2352/1-2. Only fragments of the books now remain.

22 *Sui shu* 33,961, has a *Dian lue* by Yu Huan, a Gentleman of the Palace of Wei, in 89 chapters; *Jiu Tang shu* 46, 1994 and 1989, has *Dian lue* in 50 chapters and *Wei lue* in 38 chapters listed in the Miscellaneous Histories (*za shi*) and Standard Histories (*zheng shi*) categories respectively; *Xin Tang shu* 58, 1464, has only *Wei lue* in 50 chapters listed in the Miscellaneous Histories category, indicating that the title may have been miswritten for *Dian lue*. It seems possible that the *Dian lue* listed by *Sui shu* represents a combined work, being 50 chapters of the original *Dian lue*, covering the last years of Han, together with 38 chapters of a continuation *Wei lue*, and one further chapter of introduction. See Yao Zhenzong, *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3224/1-2.

Though there is some blurring between *Dian lue* and *Wei lue*, it is clear from quotations that *Wei lue* covered the period at least to 254 AD: *SGZ* 4, 130 PC note 2; Fang, *Chronicle* II, 165-167 and 184-187.

enough, when a passage was adopted by Chen Shou, that very fact disqualified it from being quoted and identified in the commentary of Pei Songzhi.

For the most part, this is not a matter of major concern. Pei Songzhi's collection is sufficiently wide-ranging that we may assume most historical sources of importance in the third century are at least represented in his commentary, and one needs only to be aware that the range of quotations preserved will not necessarily represent the original scope of the work.[23] In some cases, however, it seems likely that Chen Shou has taken information from some important but lesser source so comprehensively that Pei Songzhi had no reason to quote the original work, and its very identity has been lost thereafter.

As an example, we may consider the biographies of Sun Jian and his son Sun Ce, described in the first chapter of the section in *Sanguo zhi* on the state of Wu. The main text of *Sanguo zhi* presents a detailed anecdotal account of the life of Sun Jian to his death in 192/193, and then picks up the story of the career of Sun Ce, with his first major action being the attendance upon Yuan Shu about 193-194. Pei Songzhi supplements Chen Shou's biography of Sun Jian with some anecdotes of his early life and career, including the portents observed by his mother at the time of her pregnancy, but the bulk of material in the commentary relates to the general history of the empire, with items such as the biography of Sun Jian's early patron Zhu Jun and comments about him by Dong Zhuo, chosen to present his career in a broader context. And indeed, as I have discussed in the study of Sun Jian's life, there are a number of occasions, such as the account of his involvement with the campaigns in Liang province and the story of his discovery of the Great Seal of State, when Chen Shou's information appears erratic and unsatisfactory as compared with facts well established from other sources.

These comments apply less strongly to the biography of Sun Ce. Chen Shou's text there is supplemented by extracts from *Jiangbiao zhuan* and *Wu lu*, with items of the latter work quoting from memorials, letters and other documents composed by Sun Ce or on his behalf. For this period, particularly between the time of Sun Ce's establishment as an independent warlord about 195 and his death in 200, we have a fairly integrated account of his career both from Chen Shou and from Pei Songzhi; and this is supported by other sources, notably the biographies of men and women associated with Sun Ce in the foundation of the state of Wu.

The two biographies reflect the different careers of the father and of the son. Sun Jian was a player, albeit with a minor part, upon the wide imperial stage, but Sun Ce was a man of primarily local importance, and the details of his life do not generally lend themselves to checking against great events elsewhere. There is less room for contradiction between the sources; but we may also observe that there was a quantity of additional material which was not used by Chen Shou but was later preserved by Pei Songzhi.

One text, however, which is known to have existed, but which is not cited by Pei Songzhi, is the Record and Eulogy of Sun Jian and Sun Ce, compiled by Zhang Hong and

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23 There were, of course, a great number of works not quoted by Pei Songzhi. Fragments of some of them have been preserved in later collections, such as the great Tang encyclopaedias, while others can be known only by their titles, often through the Treatises of Bibliography of *Sui shu*, *Jiu Tang shu* and *Xin Tang shu*. The compilations of Hou Kang and Yao Zhenzong, already cited, represent a reconstruction of the list of works written during the Three Kingdoms period, and similar lists have been compiled for the Jin period by Ding Guojun, Wen Tingshi, Qin Rongguang, Wu Shijian and Huang Fengyuan, *qqv*. Bibliography *sub voce*.

presented to Sun Quan soon after his succession to power in 200. *Wu shu*, quoted by Pei Songzhi, tells us that

> Zhang Hong considered the merits of [Sun Jian the General Who] Smashes the Caitiffs, defeating Dong Zhuo and putting him to flight, and supporting the house of Han, and how [Sun Ce the General Who] Attacks the Rebels pacified and settled the lands outside the Yangzi and established the state, and he believed that these affairs should be recorded and commemorated, to manifest their achievements.
>
> When the work was completed, he presented it to Sun Quan, who studied it carefully and was touched by grief. He said to Zhang Hong, "You are indeed aware of the traditions of my family."[24]

There is every reason to believe that this work of Zhang Hong was taken into the archives of Sun Quan's government, that it was preserved until the end of the state of Wu, and that it was available to Chen Shou when he compiled the main text of *Sanguo zhi.* Indeed, I suggest that the text of the chapter containing the biographies of Sun Jian and Sun Ce is a very close copy, made by Chen Shou, of the information originally collected and presented by Zhang Zhao. The earlier work has thus been overwhelmed by, but yet survives in, the later.

Nevertheless, while it is encouraging to believe that the present history of the careers of Sun Jian and Sun Ce can be traced back within a few years of their time, one must bear in mind that the circumstances of the embryonic warlord state of Wu could not guarantee mature reflection and well-balanced history. The very description of Zhang Hong's work implies an element of hagiography. and it cannot have been easy for him to reconstruct the career of Sun Jian, which took place for the most part in territories other than south-eastern China, and which had ended ten years earlier.[25] For the most part, he must have dealt with a broad outline of generally accepted facts, and filled in the work with anecdotes from local tradition and the recollections of former associates. This is the pattern we would expect to find, and this is the form which the history takes. With such a distant view, and erratic sources of information, the biography of Sun Jian must be read with great care.

The story of Sun Ce is more securely based. If we accept that the basic history was compiled soon after his death, then it is probable that many documents were still extant, and certain that many former comrades were ready and eager to tell of the heroic days just past. Difficulty would come rather from the wealth of material, and a natural tendency to exaggeration.

Despite this, something is lacking in the accounts of that period. Outside the biography of Sun Ce himself, and the documents preserved by Pei Songzhi, there is little information about those years. The biographies of his leading generals and counsellors frequently say only that the man accompanied Sun Ce on a particular campaign, or that he was stationed at a particular place. There are anecdotes, some of doubtful reliability, but not until the time of Sun Quan does one have the sense of a broadly-based historical tradition.

This cannot be really surprising. Sun Ce held independent power for only five years, and the tension and excitement of the time would not encourage the maintenance of

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24 *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1244 PC note 2. See also Yao Zhenzong, *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3223/3, and Chapter 4 at note 20.

25 One must observe that Zhang Hong, writing after 200, was separated by almost half a century from the time of Sun Jian's birth and young manhood.

regular archives and chronicles. Historical work on the period was eventually carried out by the government of Sun Quan, and although they had taken place such a short time before, and had been of such vital importance for the establishment of the state, the local triumphs of Sun Ce in the lands south of the Yangzi paled almost to insignificance when compared to the stirring and desperate years which followed, with war on open fronts to the north and the west, and the great crisis of the Red Cliffs. Sun Ce was worthy of legend, but Sun Quan created a greater drama after him.

Wu shu, the official "History of the State of Wu," was first commissioned by Sun Quan, probably about 250. Our authority for the matter is a memorial of Hua He submitted to Sun Quan's grandson and last successor, Sun Hao, about 273.[26] Hua He says that towards the end of his reign Sun Quan ordered the Prefect Grand Historian Ding Fu and the Palace Gentleman Xiang Jun to compile the *Wu shu.* According to Hua He, however, neither Ding Fu nor Xiang Jun were competent historians, and a few years later, in the time of Sun Quan's youngest son and first successor Sun Liang, probably about 252, another committee was established to take over the work. The leading scholars involved were Wei Zhao, Zhou Zhao, Xie Ying, Liang Guang and Hua He himself.

The biography of Wei Zhao, leader of this group, tells us something of his career and the difficulties that the historical bureau was faced with.[27] Born about 200, Wei Zhao was a man from Wu commandery who acquired a high reputation for scholarship. He was appointed Prefect Grand Historian about 252, presumably in succession to Ding Fu, by Sun Liang acting on the recommendation of the powerful minister Zhuge Ke. Zhuge Ke was destroyed at the end of 253, but Wei Zhao and his colleagues continued their work, and Wei Zhao was also placed in charge of the collation of books for the Palace Library, first as a Gentleman and later with title as Supervisor of Academicians; his responsibilities were said to be comparable to those of the celebrated Liu Xiang, editor of the Confucian classics during the last years of the Former Han dynasty.[28]

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26 The memorial is quoted in *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1256, the biography of Xie Ying, on whom see below. The biography of Hua He is in *SGZ* 65/Wu 30, 1464-69.

27 The biography of Wei Zhao is in *SGZ* 65/Wu 30, 1460-64. His personal name frequently appears as Yao. The change was made to avoid the tabu on the character of the personal name of Sima Zhao, father of the founding Emperor Wu of Jin, who was later given the posthumous title of Emperor Wen of Jin: *JS* 2, 32 and 44.

28 On Liu Xiang, celebrated scholar and expert on the Guliang Commentary to the Spring and Autumn Annals during the first century BC, see Tjan Tjoe Som, *White Tiger Discussions* I, 91-93, and Loewe, *Crisis and Conflict*, 240-243 and 300-303.

On the comparison of Wei Zhao with Liu Xiang, see *SGZ* 65/Wu 20, 1462. We should note here that there is some potential confusion in the names of the libraries and similar offices established by the various states of the Three Kingdoms; in my description below I follow the discussion of Hong Yisun, *Sanguo zhiguan biao*, 2775-2777.

In the state of Wei, it appears that Cao Cao had a Private Library (*mishu* or *bishu*) with two responsibilities, one being the collecting and collation of works which had been lost from the imperial libraries of Han in the time of the disturbances which accompanied Dong Zhuo's seizure of power, and the other, significantly more political, being the checking of material which was handled by the regular imperial secretariat, the Masters of Writing. This roughly matched the system of Han, but early in the reign of Cao Pi the office was divided, with the supervisory section was named as the office of Palace Writers (*zhongshu*) and the Private Library maintained as a scholarly enterprise.

It is possible that there was a comparable arrangement in Shu-Han, though there is only passing reference to the office of Palace Writers. We have discussed in note 20 above the likelihood that the Private Library in the Eastern Lodge, where Chen Shou held appointment, may have contained and collected literary and archival material.

During the reign of Sun Xiu, elder brother and successor to Sun Liang, who took a particular interest in scholarship, Wei Zhao was invited regularly to the palace, until protests by the powerful Zhang Bu persuaded Sun Xiu to desist. Wei Zhao was known for his ideals of honesty, and Zhang Bu was said to have been concerned lest he inform the ruler of his minister's failings - Sun Xiu felt obliged to accede to Zhang Bu's objections, but he was not pleased.

Sun Xiu died in 264 and Zhang Bu remained in a position of influence and power, but Wei Zhao continued to serve the new government of Sun Hao. His work in the library appears to have been completed, for we are told that the post was abolished and he was reappointed as a Palace Attendant, with the additional title of State Historian on the Left and continuing responsibility for the official history. His colleague Hua He was State Historian on the Right.[29]

During the twenty years since the establishment of this second committee for the official history, Zhou Zhao and Liang Guang had died. We are told nothing more about Liang Guang, but at the end of the biography of Bu Zhi, who had been Inspector of Jiao province, became Chancellor of the empire of Wu in 246, and died in 248, there is a long and favourable discussion of Bu Zhi and of the Prefect of the Masters of Writing Yan Jun, which text is attributed to Zhou Zhao. A supplementary note from Chen Shou says that Zhou Zhao was an émigré from Yingchuan, that he was associated with Wei Zhao, Xie Ying and Hua He in work upon *Wu shu*, and that he also became a Gentleman of the Palace Library. Later, during the time of Sun Xiu, he was sent to prison for some crime, and although Hua He memorialised on his behalf, he received no relief.[30]

The misfortune of Zhou Zhao presumably took place some time after 260, and the unsuccessful appeal in his favour by Hua He was only the first of a series. About 272 Sun Hao asked Wei Zhao to prepare a chapter of "annals" for his father Sun He. Sun He, third son of Sun Quan, was named for a time as Heir-Apparent but had been dismissed before the death of his father. When Sun Hao came to the throne he gave his father a posthumous imperial title, but such a proclamation, however appropriate in terms of filial piety, could not alter the fact that Sun He had never been the ruler of the state. Wei Zhao, therefore, observed that Sun He should be allocated only a biography, not a chapter of annals. Sun Hao was not pleased, he was very likely similarly dissatisfied when Wei Zhao poured scorn on a rush of favourable omens which had been reported by people seeking advancement from the new ruler, and he was angry and suspicious when Wei Zhao, who had sought to retire from court on the grounds of old age, refused a ceremonial toast at a banquet, claiming medical reasons for not drinking wine. On this last offence, Wei Zhao was sent to prison. Hua He pleaded for him, citing in particular the importance of Wei Zhao to the success of the history project, the significance of that work for the reputation

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There is no record of an office called the Private Library in the state of Wu. Wei Zhao, however, is described as a *zhongshu lang*, and the description of his responsibilities seems to indicate scholarly and not censorial concerns. I suggest, therefore, that the *zhongshu* of Wu was comparable rather to the Private Libraries of Wei and Shu than to the office of the Palace Writers in those two states; so in this context I render the term as Palace Library.

29 *SGZ* 65/Wu 30, 1462 and 1467. Hua He at this time held the formal position of Prefect of the Eastern Lodge, an appointment which is also recorded as being held by the scholars Zhu Yu (*SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1326 PC quoting *Kuaiji dianlu*, and *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1394 PC quoting *Kuaiji dianlu*) and Zhou Ju (*SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1392). Apart from the special commission of Wei Zhao and his colleagues, it seems likely that the Wu state maintained an Eastern Lodge, in the same manner as the Han had done, as a repository of literary and archival material. See also note 20 above on the existence of a similar institution in Shu.

30 *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1240-42.

of the dynasty, and comparing the whole enterprise to the *Shi ji* of Sima Quan and the *Han shu* of Ban Gu. Once again, however, his appeal had no success, and Wei Zhao was executed, at the age of more than seventy. His family was sent into exile in Lingling commandery.[31]

Xie Ying, last of Hua He's colleagues, had led a military and political as well as a scholarly life.[32] At one time he held command in the garrison at Wuchang, but about 273, soon after the disgrace of Wei Zhao, Xie Ying was punished for his involvement in a mistaken strategy, and was punished with exile in the far south. At some stage, however, Xie Ying found time to compile a major history of Later Han in one hundred chapters,[33] and in the memorial referred to above Hua He argued that Xie Ying was one of the few men who could assist his work. On this occasion his words received a hearing: Xie Ying was recalled to the capital and appointed State Historian on the Left, evidently in succession to Wei Zhao.

The project, however, did not advance much further. In 275 Hua He himself was dismissed for some minor offence, and he died at home a year later. Xie Ying, in the mean time, had been involved in unlucky intrigue and was once more exiled to the south. He was again recalled, and appointed to a ministerial position, but his chief service to the declining state of Wu was to compose the document of surrender Sun Hao sent to his victorious rival, Sima Yan the Emperor of Jin. Xie Ying travelled to Luoyang, and he may well have met Chen Shou there, but he died soon after the surrender, in 282.

So the history office of Wu during the later period of that state was an area of some sensitivity, and it is likely that the change of committee after the death of Sun Quan reflects a contest of factions. Though Hua He claimed that Ding Fu and his associate Xiang Jun were incompetent, we know Ding Fu was enough of a scholar to have compiled studies of the rituals and the official selection systems of Han,[34] and there is reference to the work of those two men which provides evidence of political controversy.

In the Annals of the reign of Sun Quan we are told of the death in 225 of Sun Shao, not a member of the imperial clan but a man originally from Beihai, who had been appointed first Chancellor when Sun Quan became King of Wu in 221.[35] There had been debate over his appointment, first because Sun Shao was given the post instead of the veteran minister Zhang Zhao, whom many considered to have a far better claim,[36] and later, during his term of office, because Sun Shao was fiercely criticised by the reformer Zhang Wen and his outspoken protege Ji Yan. Ji Yan later suffered comparable accusations

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31 Not drinking at an imperial banquet in Wu was obviously a health hazard. Compare the difficulties experienced by Yu Fan under Sun Quan: Chapter 8 at note 113.

32 The biography of Xie Ying is in *SGZ* 53/Wu 8, 1254-57, following that of his father Xie Zong. Xie Zong had married a daughter of Sun Quan, so Xie Ying was connected to the imperial family.

33 Sources vary on the question of whether Xie Ying's work was entitled *Hou Han shu* or *Hou Han ji*. Fragments comprising one chapter, described as *Hou Han shu*, are preserved in the collection *Qijia Hou Han shu*. See also Yao Zhenzong, *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3219/3.

34 See Yao Zhenzong, *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3228/1, discussing the *Hanguan yishe xuanyong* "Selection and Appointment in the Official System of Han," listed in *Xin Tang shu* 58, 1476 and Yao Zhenzong, *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3230/3-3231/1, referring to the *Han yi* "Rituals of Han," by Ding Fu, cited in *Nan Qi shu* 9, 117.

35 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1131.

36 *SGZ* 52/Wu 7, 1221, and Chapter 8 at note 3.

from his enemies and was compelled to commit suicide, while Zhang Wen was dismissed and disgraced.[37]

The commentary of Pei Songzhi, attached to the record of the death of Sun Shao, contains an extract from the *Zhi lin*, "The Forest of Records," by the scholar and commentator Yu Xi of the Jin dynasty.[38] Yu Xi observes that he had been surprised a person so eminent as Sun Shao failed to obtain an individual biography in the history, and he asked the learned Liu Tingshu his opinion of the matter. Liu Tingshu believed that the original *Wu shu*, as compiled by Ding Fu and Xiang Jun, would indeed have contained such a text, but he noted that Sun Shao had been attacked by Zhang Wen. He suggested that Wei Zhao, a sympathiser of Zhang Wen, had echoed Zhang Wen's disapproval of Sun Shao and thus deprived him of a formal biography.

Such an explanation is plausible, and there are comparable *lacunae* in other histories. We are told that when Zhuge Ke came to power at the end of the reign of Sun Quan he sought to demonstrate liberal and reformist policies,[39] and it is possible that his change of the history committee was motivated as much by political as by scholarly consideration. In any event, the eclipse of Ding Fu and Xiang Jun was almost complete, and those portions of their work which were regarded as acceptable were surely taken over by their rivals and successors.

On the other hand, though the bibliography of *Sui shu* records a holding of the *Wu shu* of Wei Zhao and his colleagues in twenty-five chapters of an original fifty-five, and the two Tang bibliographies claim holdings of the full fifty-five chapters,[40] the work was later lost. No substantial, identified, portion now remains outside the quotations of Pei Songzhi - and the likely incorporation of great quantities of material, without attribution, by Chen Shou.

So the official history of Wu was evidently not completed. The death of Wei Zhao and Hua He removed the two chief organisers of the project, and it is doubtful whether Xie Ying, last survivor of the second committee, had the time, the inclination or the opportunity to finish the work before his death. *Wu shu* is quoted in biographies of Cao Cao and of Dong Zhuo, indicating that the period covered included the career of Sun Jian during the last years of Han rule,[41] but there is not a great deal of information about men who played a role in the last years of the empire of Wu, and in all the annals of the three successors to Sun Quan Pei Songzhi's commentary has only one, rather irrelevant, quotation.[42] One cannot be certain, of course, that this lack of citations occurs because the *Wu shu* had little information on the period, or because Chen Shou had taken over its material, but the situation seems to confirm the complaints of Hua He about the difficulty of maintaining the program.

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37 The biography of Zhang Wen is in *SGZ* 57/Wu 12, 1329-34, and the affair of Ji Yan is described at 1330-31; see also Fang, *Chronicle* I, 167-168 and 176-179, and Chapter 8 at note 131.

38 *SGZ* 47/Wu 2, 1132 PC note 1 quoting *Zhi lin*.

39 *e.g. SGZ* 64/Wu 19, 1434; Fang *Chronicle* II, 105.

40 *Sui shu* 33, 955, *Jiu Tang shu* 46, 1992, *Xin Tang shu* 58, 1455, Yao Zhenzong, *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3221/2-3222/1, and *SGZJJ* 1/Wei 1, 29b.

41 *e.g.SGZ* 1/Wei 1, 11 PC note 1, where *Wu shu* is quoted on the murder of Cao Cao's father Cao Song in Xu province in 194, and *SGZ* 6/Wei 6, 172 PC note 2 quoting *Wu shu* on the early career of Dong Zhuo in the northwest.

42 *SGZ* 48/Wu 3, 1167 PC note 1 *bis* quoting *Wu shu* on a prophetic dream of the minister Ding Gu of Sun Hao.

Besides this work of the history office, based upon the official archives, there were three substantial private works on the history of the whole state of Wu: *Jiangbiao zhuan*, "Account of the Lands Beyond the Yangzi," by Yu Pu; *Wu lu*, "Record of Wu," by Zhang Bo, and *Wu li*, "Calendar of Wu," by Hu Zhong. All are quoted extensively and to good purpose by Pei Songzhi.

Yu Pu was a man from Gaoping, on the north China plain, who lived in the second half of the third century.[43] He was a scholar and commentator on the Confucian classics, and he also composed essays and poetry. After the conquest of Wu, he was appointed to the local government of the Poyang region in present-day Jiangxi, and there he compiled *Jiangbiao zhuan*, a history of the south written by a scholar from the north. Yu Pu died early in the fourth century, but *Jiangbiao zhuan* was presented by his son, Yu Bo, to the throne of Emperor Yuan of Eastern Jin, who gave orders that it should be placed in the imperial private library. By that time, the Jin government had been driven from the north by non-Chinese invaders, and the reconstructed empire was appropriately interested in the history of its predecessors of the south.

Jiangbiao zhuan is described by Pei Songzhi in his memorial as a thorough work, though uninspired in style. Evidently drawn from a different local tradition than that which formed the basis for *Wu shu*, it provided a rich source of material for the early history of the state, including the career of Sun Ce and the first years of Sun Quan. Some stories appear unduly anecdotal or exaggerated, and they can be contradicted by sources of greater reliability, but the general thrust of the history is consistent with information from other texts. The bibliography of *Sui shu* has no listing for the work, but the two Tang histories record it in thirty chapters.[44] It survives now only in fragments.

Zhang Bo, compiler of *Wu lu*, is said to have been the son of Zhang Yan, a man from Wu who became Grand Herald and died in 266 while returning from an embassy to Wei.[45] Zhang Yan himself compiled a work entitled *Mo ji* "Private Records." It is cited only twice by Pei Songzhi, but it provides the source for the celebrated "Second Memorial on the Occasion of Starting a Campaign" sent by Zhuge Liang to his master Liu Shan, Later Sovereign of Shu-Han about 228, and discussion of a letter from Zhuge Liang to his enemy Sima Yi of Wei.[46] Zhang Yan was evidently interested in such documents, perhaps in the form of a commonplace book, and he was evidently involved in negotiations with Shu-Han at an appropriate time.

Zhang Bo was probably born between 220 and 230, and he succeeded to his father's interests. We know nothing of his official career, but he must have had access to the archives of the state of Wu, for his *Wu lu* preserves a number of early documents, such as the letters and memorials of Sun Ce. Other items quoted by Pei Songzhi must be based on official records, and the work probably included a treatise of geography, or a history of the administrative units of the empire. Several pieces, however, not specifically documentary, are simply anecdotes or fragments of history. Zhang Bo lived into the

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43 The biography of Yu Pu is in *JS* 82, 2139-41.

44 *Jiu Tang shu* 46, 1995, *Xin Tang shu*, 58, 1464.

45 On Zhang Yan, see *SGZ* 48/Wu 3, 1165 and 1166 PC note 1 quoting *Wu lu*. On the relationship of Zhang Bo to Zhang Yan, see the *Suoyin* commentary of Sima Zhen of Tang to *SJ* 66, 2173 at note 3. On *Wu lu*, see *SGZJJ*, 37/Shu 7, 4a.

46 For the Second Memorial, see *SGZ* 35/Shu 5, 923-24 PC note 3 quoting *Han-Jin chunqiu* "Chronicle of Han and Jin" by Xi Zuochi, particularly at the end of the citation, where it is observed that this text did not appear in the *Collected Works* of Zhuge Liang, but was preserved in the *Mo ji* of Zhang Yan. On the letter to Sima Yan, see *SGZ* 35/Shu 5, 935-36 PC note 1.

period after the Jin conquest, for an extract from *Wu lu* gives a date for the death of the last ruler, Sun Hao, in the winter at the beginning of 285.[47] The bibliography of *Sui shu* has no entry for *Wu lu*, but the two Tang histories record the work in thirty chapters. It survives now only in fragments.

The third private compilation on the history of the state is the *Wu li* of Hu Chong.

The biography of Hu Chong's father, Hu Zong, records that he was a man of notable scholarly and literary attainments who came to the south as a refugee from Runan commandery and joined Sun Ce when he conquered Kuaiji in 196.[48] He served at the court of Sun Quan, he was granted enfeoffment when Sun Quan became King of Wu in 221, and he died in 243. Hu Chong, who was probably born about 210, inherited his position, and survived to serve the conquering state of Jin; according to *Wu lu* he was a member of the imperial secretariat and ended as Grand Administrator of Wu commandery under the new regime.

During his service to the government of Wu, Hu Chong had been the Prefect of the Palace Writers, a senior clerical office, and in that capacity he had access to official material. His *Wu li* has information on the date of Sun Jian's death which is probably more reliable than some other sources;[49] and it provides the more rational account of the death of Sun Ce - in contrast to the eerie story in *Soushen ji* about the appearance of the ghost of Gan Ji.[50] From the quotations used by Pei Songzhi, the material in *Wu li* was closely connected with the court and the imperial family. There are occasions *Wu li* provides information on such matters as portents and embassies; and it is also *Wu li* which tells the story how Sun Shao was murdered and his wife took revenge on the assassins.[51]

There is no entry for *Wu li* in the bibliographical chapters of *Sui shu*, but the work is recorded in some six chapters in the two Tang histories.[52] It survives now only in fragments.

Of these sources, therefore, *Jiangbiao zhuan* was compiled from local materials after the end of Wu, but the official *Wu shu*, and the private works *Wu lu* and *Wu li*, were all prepared by men who were subjects of the state and who had access to archival material. It is perhaps curious that Zhang Bo and Hu Chong are not recorded as official historians of Wu, but we can have confidence in their essential reliability, and although individual texts are sometimes contradictory or confusing, the historiographical tradition, thanks to the records maintained by Pei Songzhi, is very strong.

Historical writing in the third and fourth centuries:

Besides the records which depended on state archives and official sponsorship, the collection of Pei Songzhi reflects also the energy and activity of local and individual

47 *SGZ* 48/Wu 3, 1178 PC note 3.

48 The biography of Hu Zong is in *SGZ* 62/Wu 17, 1413-18; Hu Chong is referred to at 1418. Hu Chong was also the author of a work entitled *Dawen*, "Answers to Questions:" *SGZ* 59/Wu 14, 1370 PC note 2.

49 See note 1 to Chapter 2.

50 See Chapter 3.

51 See Chapter 4.

52 *Jiu Tang shu* 46, 1996, *Xin Tang shu* 58, 1464.

historians and biographers. Already in Later Han there was established a genre of *biezhuan* "Unofficial Biographies," giving details of the life of any significant person, and at the end of Later Han and the beginning of the Three Kingdoms period, there was a wide variety of similar compositions.[53] Among them were unofficial biographies of the eccentric scholar Ni Heng, and of the later Wang Bi and Ji Kang of Wei, of Chen Yun the soldier of Shu-Han, and of Yu Fan in Wu, of the dominant but short-lived minister Zhuge Ke, and of the sons Lu Ji and Lu Yun of the great Lu Xun. *Cao Man zhuan*, the marginal biography of Cao Cao written by a subject of Wu, though hostile to its subject, was a work in similar vein.[54]

There were also collections of biographies, often arranged by categories such as the *Wenshi zhuan*, "Biographies of Literary Gentlemen," probably compiled by Zhang Zhi,[55] and the series by Huangfu Mi: *Gaoshi zhuan*, "Biographies of Eminent Gentlemen;" *Yishi zhuan*, "Biographies of Gentlemen in Retirement;" and a *Lienü zhuan*, "Biographies of Exemplary Women."[56] And the talented scholar Wang Can, who died in 217 at the age of forty, and who had personal contact with many of the men that he described, wrote *Hanmo yingxiong ji* "Records of the Heroes and Champions at the End of Han."[57]

It was also common to publish the collected works of leading political and literary figures. The *Collected Works* of Zhuge Liang were edited by Chen Shou in twenty-four chapters, and presented to the court of Jin in 274.[58] There was naturally a collection of Cao Cao's writings, and the *Wei mingchen zou* was a general compilation of memorials by leading ministers of Wei. In more scholarly fields, there are collected works recorded for Kong Rong and Wang Lang, and a number of officials in Wu were similarly honoured.[59] Such collections are frequently of only minor importance for the history of the time, but it is not insignificant that these works were identifiable and available to Pei Songzhi more than a hundred years later.

Alongside the individual biographies and collections of writings, there was continuing interest in clan and family records, already attested from the Han period. Great families such as the Kong of Lu, who claimed descent from Confucius, and the Xun of Yingchuan, who produced the philosophers Xun Shuang and Xun Yue and the great assistants to Cao Cao Xun Yu and his cousin Xun You, compiled genealogies, records and eulogies of

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53 See, for example, *HHS* 103, 13, 3270, the Treatise on the Five Powers, commentary of Liu Zhao quoting the *Liang Ji biezhuan*, dealing with the leader of the clan of the imperial relatives by marriage, who dominated the government of Han for twenty years until his overthrow by Emperor Huan in 159; and for the popularity of this genre, whose compilers are often anonymous, see the list in Yao Zhenzong, *Hou Han yiwen zhi*, 2370/2-2374/1, and his *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3237/3-3241/2.

54 See *SGZJJ* 1/Wei 1, 7b-8a: it was said that Cao Cao's childhood name was A-man: *SGZ* 1, 1 PC note 1.

55 See *SGZJJ* 9/Wei 9, 23a, discussing the contradictory evidence on the personal name of the author of this work.

56 See the biography of Huangfu Mi in *JS* 51, 1409-18 at 1418. Huangfu Mi also compiled a chronicle work *Diwang shiji*, "Annals by Generations of the Emperors and Kings."

57 See *SGZJJ* 1/Wei 1, 18a. The work, commonly referred to by the shorter title of *Yingxiong ji*, is listed in *Sui shu* 33, 960, as the work of Wang Can. See also Yao Zhenzong, *Hou Han yiwen zhi*, 2354/1. The biography of Wang Can is in *SGZ* 21/Wei 21, 597-99.

58 Chen Shou includes the list of chapters in his biography of Zhuge Liang, *SGZ* 35/Shu 5, 929. For his work as an editor, see *Huayang guo zhi* 11, 9b, and *JS* 82, 2137 [*SGZ* 1475 and 1477], also Yao Zhenzong, *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3283/2-3283/1.

59 On the collected works of scholars and writers of Wu, see Yao Zhenzong, *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3284/3-3286/3.

their ancestors and relatives; and their activity was matched by families of more provincial status such as the Lu of Wu commandery, the He of Lujiang and the Shao of Kuaiji, with many others.[60] The concept of family, always important in China, had developed to a very high level during the last years of Han, when kinship was first a means of seeking power and later a manner of searching for survival, and the tradition was only encouraged by the turmoil of the centuries which followed.[61]

Apart from family relationship, one may also note the style of local history which flourished in this period, works with titles including some such phrase as *qijiu zhuan* "accounts of venerable men and ancient affairs" or *xianxian zhuan* "accounts of worthy men of the past." According to one account, the genre was initiated by the scholar official Yuan Tang when he was Grand Administrator of Chenliu during the second century.[62]. Later, there were collections of biographies for such places as Runan commandery, the region of Chu, and Lingling in the further south,[63] while Chen Shou himself took part in the recension of the *Yibu qijiu zhuan*, the collection which related to the region of Yi

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60 For the *Kongshi pu*, "Register of the Kong Clan," see *SGZ* 16/Wei 16, 514 PC (*JJ* 36b). For the *Xunshi jiazhuan*, "Account of the Xun Family," see *SGZ* 10/Wei 10, 316 PC note 1 (*JJ* 17b); the author of that work, Xun Bozi, has biographies in *Song shu* 60, 1627-29, and *Nan shi* 33, 856-57. For the *Lushi shisong*, "Praises for the Generations of the Lu Clan," and the *Lushi zitang xiang zan*, "Eulogies for the Portraits in the Ancestral Temple of the Lu Clan," see *SGZ* 58/Wu 13, 1343 (*JJ* 1b-2a). For the *Lujiang Heshi jiazhuan*, "Account of the He Family of Lujiang," see *SGZ* 21/Wei 21, 622 PC note 5 (*JJ* 53b). For the *Kuaiji Shaoshi jiazhuan*, "Account of the Shao Family of Kuaiji," see *SGZ* 48/Wu 3, 1170 PC note 1 (*JJ* 35a).

61 On this development, see in particular Ebrey, *Aristocratic Families*.

62 The *Hou Han ji* of Yuan Hong, 21, 8b, says that Yuan Tang became Grand Administrator of Chenliu commandery under Later Han in 153, and he commissioned the *Chenliu qijiu zhuan*. *Sui shu* 33, 974, lists two books of that title, one ascribed to Quan Cheng of Han and the other to Su Lin of Wei, and the Tang bibliographies are similar. It appears that the work inaugurated by Yuan Tang was continued by later scholars.

Another early work in this genre was *Sanfu juelu*, "Evaluative Record of the Three Adjuncts," a collection of biographies of gentlemen from the three commanderies about the Former Han capital, Chang'an, compiled by Zhao Qi, who died in 201. The work is now lost, but it is quoted by Pei Songzhi and in notes to the *Hou Han shu* of Fan Ye compiled by Li Xian and his colleagues of Tang. See *Cambridge Han*, 645 [Ebrey, "Economic and Social History of Later Han"].

63 On the *Runan xianxian zhuan*, ascribed to Zhou Fei of the third century, see *SGZ* 23/Wei 23, 658 (*JJ* 5a), and *Sui shu* 33, 974.

On the *Chuguo xianxian zhuan*, by Zhang Fang of the Jin period, see *SGZ* 4/Wei 4, 141 (*JJ* 50b), and *Sui shu* 33, 974. Under the Wei, from 232 to 252, Chu was the fief of Cao Biao, son of Cao Cao (see his biography in *SGZ* 20/Wei 20, 586-87); that territory was in the region of Later Han Huainan commandery, in present-day Anhui. The men described in extracts from *Chuguo xianxian zhuan* cited by Pei Songzhi, however, are associated with the commanderies of Nanyang and Xiangyang, about present-day Henan. It seems that the appellation Chu was used by Zhang Fang as a literary reference to that region, and possibly to Jing province in general, as the heartland of the pre-Qin state of Chu (*cf*. *HS* 28B, 1665-66, and note 9 to Chapter 1).

On the *Lingling xianxian zhuan*, see *SGZ* 6/Wei 6, 216 (*JJ* 90a). There is no good early evidence for the identity of the author, but some modern editions ascribe the work to the historian Sima Biao, author of *Xu Han shu*.

On the genre of local biographies, see the list in Yao Zhenzong, *Hou Han yiwen zhi*, 2369/1-2370/1, and in his *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3236/1-3237/3. We may note, however, that there were a number of works which included the phrase *qijiu zhuan* or *xianxian zhuan* as part of their title, but which were not associated with any particular region of the empire: thus Pei Songzhi quotes from works entitled *Xianxian xingzhuang*, "Conduct and Character of Worthy Men of the Past" (*e.g. SGZJJ* 1, 69b and note 75 to Chapter 3), while *Sui shu* 33, 974, and the Tang bibliographies list a *Hainei xianxian zhuan*, "Accounts of Worthy Men of the Past Within the Seas." Such works, of course, should be classified as general collections.

province, heart-land of Shu-Han.[64] Two notable compilations were the *Kuaiji xianxian zhuan* of Xie Cheng, brother of Sun Quan's concubine the Lady Xie, who also wrote a *Hou Han shu* in 130 chapters, and the *Wu xianxian zhuan* of Lu Kai, a cousin of Lu Xun who became Chancellor on the Left during the reign of Sun Hao.[65]

This tradition of local history was cautiously maintained after the unification by Jin in 280. There was no fourth century work on south China comparable in scope and style to the *Huayang guo zhi*, "Record of the Countries to the South of Mount Hua," in which Chang Qu traced the history of the independent states of the Sichuan region from the time before Qin to the empire of Shu-Han and into the fourth century. *Jiangbiao zhuan* however, was compiled by the northerner Yu Pu, and another Jin official, Wang Fan, who held office in the far south, compiled a *Jiao-Guang erzhou chunqiu*, "Chronicle of the Two Provinces Jiao and Guang," and presented it to the imperial court in 287.[66] Some time later, after the displacement of the Jin government to the south, Yu Yu, a man from Kuaiji, compiled his *Kuaiji dianlu*, "Authoritative Record of Kuaiji," in twenty chapters, as well as a history of the dynasty, *Jin shu*.[67]

Amongst the scholarship of the Jin period, moreover, there was a considerable body of historical analysis and criticism, direct and explicit, and generally more hostile than the indirect Confucianist tradition of praise and blame through the selection of facts. Sun Sheng of the fourth century was the author of several books cited by Pei Songzhi, including *Weishi chunqiu* "Chronicle of the House of Wei," and *Jin yangqiu*, "Chronicle of Jin," and his *Zaji*, "Miscellany," presents a number of critical comments on character and conduct,[68] while Sun Sheng's direct contemporary Xi Zuochi, author of *Han-Jin*

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64 *Huayang guo zhi* 11, 10a, says that a certain Chen Shu and others wrote a *Ba-Shu qijiu zhuan*, relating to Ba and Shu commanderies, and that Chen Shou used this work as a basis for his own work dealing with the broader region of Yi province, *Yibu qijiu zhuan*. The biography of Chen Shou in *JS* 82 records him as the compiler of an *Yidu qijiu zhuan*. *Sui shu* 33, 974, lists an *Yibu qijiu zhuan* in 14 chapters by Chen Changshou, while *Jiu Tang shu* 58, 1479, and *Xin Tang shu* 46, 2001, both list a book with the same title and number of chapters by Chen Shou. It seems likely that the additional character *chang* in the *Sui shu* citation is a miswriting.

65 Neither of these works are cited by Pei Songzhi, but they are attested by *Sui shu* 33, 975 and by the Tang bibliographies. See Yao Zhenzong, *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3236/1 and 3237/1.

On Xie Cheng, see *SGZ* 50/Wu 5, 1196-97. Fragments comprising eight chapters of his *Hou Han shu* are preserved in the collection *Qijia Hou Han shu*.

The biography of Lu Ji is in *SGZ* 61/Wu 16, 1399-1409.

66 *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1110 PC (*JJ* 33a). *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1385 (*JJ* 13a), refers also to a *Jiao-Guang ji* "Records of Jiao and Guang [Provinces]" by Wang Yin. Wang Yin, whose biography is in *JS* 82, 2142-43, was the author of a number of works including a *Jin shu* "History of Jin" and a *Shu ji* "Records of Shu," both of which are quoted by Pei Songzhi. It seems likely, however, that the *Jiao-Guang ji* ascribed to him is actually a miswriting for the *Jiao-Guang erzhou chunqiu* of Wang Fan.

67 See *SGZ* 21/Wei 21, 605 (*JJ* 23b-24a), and *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1100 (*JJ* 14b). The biography of Yu Yu is in *JS* 82, 1143-47. He was also the author of *Zhu Yu zhuan*, "An Account of All the Yu [Clan]."

68 The biography of Sun Sheng is in *JS* 82, 2147-49. He had an active and eventful official career as well as a scholarly one, and he appears to have died about 375 at the age of seventy-two *sui*. We are told that his *Jin yangqiu* was particularly praised for its direct moral comments. [The character *yang* was substituted for the normal and expected *chun* to avoid tabu: the Lady Zheng Achun (d.326), posthumously honoured as an empress, was the favoured concubine of Emperor Yuan of Jin and the mother of Emperor Jianwen: *JS* 32, 979, and Mather, *Tales of the World*, 503. Other works also made the change, but most returned later to their original titles.]

Besides *Zaji*, Pei Songzhi also cites *Zayu*, "Miscellaneous Comments," *Yitong zayu*, "Comparisons and Comments," *Yitong ping*, "Comparisons and Criticisms," and sometimes simply *Ping*, "Criticisms," all of which he ascribes to Sun Sheng. It seems likely that these different citations in fact refer to the same

chunqiu, "Chronicle of Han and Jin," and the local history *Xiangyang ji*, "Records of Xiangyang," made specific judgements in his historical writings.[69]

So far we have been dealing with works which are primarily concerned to describe the real and practical history of their chosen time and place. There may be anecdotes which exaggerate or embellish reality, but they are generally based upon, and can be tested against, other critical sources. The collection of Pei Songzhi, however, gives ample evidence of a romantic and mystical streak in the writings of this time. In their review of the imperial edition of *Sanguo zhi*, the eighteenth-century editors of *Siku quanshu* complained that Pei Songzhi was sometimes inconsistent and erratic, and also that he was excessively fond of strange stories. And there is no question that several of the items in his commentary may better be regarded as fantastic fiction than as serious history. We have examined in some detail the account of the death of Sun Ce after his wounding by the clients of his late enemy Xu Gong, and one must conclude that the whole series of incidents involving the master Gan Ji, culminating in his ghostly appearance to Sun Ce as he lay upon his sick-bed, must be discounted from any description of reality.[70]

That story comes from *Soushen ji*, "Records of Enquiry about the Spirits," compiled by Gan Bao of the early fourth century. Gan Bao was a recognised scholar, author of a *Jin ji*, "Annals of Jin," and of studies on *Zuo zhuan* and on the offices and rituals of the Zhou dynasty. He was also interested in the *Book of Changes*, and particularly in the interpretations of the mystical school of Jing Fang.[71] Such a variety of scholarly interest was by no means unusual: from the period of Later Han, trends of thought had encouraged men to combine the supernal with the real, and during the third and fourth centuries one may find a variety of approaches which sought a synthesis of traditional Confucianism, popular and philosophical Taoism and the new imported faith of Buddhism.[72]

One aspect of this development was an interest and concern with tales of the marvellous and the unusual. Among the works cited by Pei Songzhi is the *Lieyi zhuan*, "Accounts of Strange Things," which appears to have been first compiled by Cao Pi,

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collection of essays. As examples of Sun Sheng's comments, which are frequently hostile to the men of Wu, one may cite his indignation at the surrender of Hua Xin to Sun Ce at the instigation of Yu Fan, in Chapter 3 at note 68, and also his discussion of the transfer of warlord power in Wu from Sun Ce to his brother Sun Quan, *SGZ* 46/Wu 1, 1113 PC note 1.

69 The biography of Xi Zuochi is in *JS* 82, 2152-58. Much of the biography, 2154-58, consists of the text of a memorial arguing that the Shu-Han dynasty should be regarded as the legitimate successor, through blood relationship, to the Later Han, and thus the basis for the continuing chronology by reign title. He was the first scholar of the Jin state to do so, and his *Han-Jin chunqiu* was composed to cover the period from the time of Emperor Guangwu of Later Han to the reign of Emperor Xiao-Min, last ruler of Western Jin in the early fourth century, in order to emphasise the continuity from Later Han to the surrender of Shu-Han to Jin, rather than the succession by abdication through the Wei. See also note 74 to Chapter 7.

As an example of Xi Zuochi's commentary, see the remarks taken from his "Discussion" (*lun*) on the death of Zhuge Liang, *SGZ* 40/Shu 10, 1001 PC note 3, quoted again by Sima Guang, *ZZTJ* 72, 2300; Fang, *Chronicle* I, 440.

70 See the end of Chapter 2.

71 The biography of Gan Bao is in *JS* 82, 2149-51. On the school of Jing Fang, which developed during the first century BC, see, for example, Tjan Tjoe Som, *White Tiger Discussions* I, Table I, and pages 94, 95, 146. The biography tells us that Gan Bao was particularly drawn to the study of the supernatural because of various incidents in his own family; notably the experience of a concubine of his father, who was shut into his tomb by the jealous former wife, but was found in a coma and then revived ten years later.

72 See, for example, the chapters "Confucian, Legalist and Taoist Thought in Later Han" by Ch'en, and "Philosophy and Religion from Han to Sui," by Demiéville, in *Cambridge Han*, 766-807 and 808-846.

Emperor Wen of Wei, and completed by the minister of Jin, Zhang Hua, towards the end of the third century,[73] and similar collections were popular throughout the centuries of division. We have noted earlier the *Yiyuan*, "Garden of Marvels," compiled by the fifth century scholar Liu Jingshu, as a very doubtful source for the given name of the father of Sun Jian, included in a story on the supernatural origins of the fortunes of the family.[74]

Pei Songzhi did not refer to that story of Sun Zhong and the melons, but he did include other items of magic or prophecy, such as the dreams which promised greatness to Sun Jian, Sun Ce and Sun Quan,[75] and besides Gan Bao he made particular use of the Taoist encyclopaedist Ge Hong of the fourth century, not only his basic work *Baopu zi*, "The Master Who Embraces Simplicity," but also his *Shenxian zhuan*, "Accounts of Spirits and Immortals."[76]

So the commentary contains several anecdotes which fit ill with a rationalist taste, but Pei Songzhi well reflected the patterns of his time and the traditions of Chinese history. And such open eclecticism is quite appropriate, for the ultimate purpose of history in the Chinese tradition is not only to record the events of the past, but also to express moral judgement and, further, to display models of behaviour, good and bad. A historian should tell the truth, but real truth is more than a list of temporal facts.

Story cycles: exaggeration and allegory:

This brings us to contemplate a basic inspiration for all the recording and recounting of the events of the Three Kingdoms period which Pei Songzhi preserved for our attention. To men of that time, and of the years which followed, the fall of Han and the long-drawn civil war between north, south and west was not only a period of historical importance, but was also an age of romantic deeds and high moral conduct. There had been brave ministers and critics in the centuries of Han, and members of the Proscribed Party during the reigns of Huan and Ling suffered courageously for their sense of what was right. Nevertheless, the immediacy of civil war, with an empire in ruins, with everything to gain or to lose for those who took part in the contest, gave high profile to the individual's sense of personal conduct and honour, which found fewer opportunities for expression against the background of an established state.

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73 *SGZ* 13/Wei 13, 405 (*JJ* 22b-23a), and Yao Zhenzong, *Sanguo yiwen zhi*, 3266/1. *Sui shu* 33, 980, ascribes the compilation to Cao Pi, but *Jiu Tang shu* 46, 2005, and *Xin Tang shu* 59, 1539, both have Zhang Hua as the writer. Some passages in the surviving portions of the work describe events after the death of Cao Pi, so although the collection may have been begun by him, it was completed by a later hand.

Zhang Hua (232-300), statesman and scholar of Western Jin, was the author of another collection, *Bowu zhi*, "Records of Many Things." See Greatrex, *The Bowu Zhi*, particularly 25 and 169-170 note 111.

74 See note 4 to Chapter 2.

75 On the omens which accompanied the birth of Sun Jian, see Chapter 2 at note 5. *SGZ* 50/Wu 5, 1195 PC quoting *Soushen ji*, tells how when the Lady Wu, wife of Sun Jian, was pregnant with Sun Ce she had a dream that the moon entered her womb; when she was pregnant with Sun Quan she dreamt in similar fashion of the sun.

76 On Ge Hong (283-343) and his work, see Sailey, *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*. The biography of Ge Hong is in *JS* 72, 1911-13, and is translated by Sailey at 521-532.

SGZ 49/Wu 4, 1192 PC note 1 quotes a story from *Shenxian zhuan* which tells how Shi Xie was taken ill and died, but was revived three days later by the immortal Dong Feng of Houguan - the anecdote may be of some value as evidence for contact by sea along the south-eastern coast of China: see Chapter 1.

Given the possibilities for exemplary exaggeration, therefore, and given the intensity and excitement of the period, it is hardly surprising that anecdotes and even whole cycles of stories should have added an air of romance to the already dramatic facts of history. Though the degree to which this embellishment took place is often impossible to assess, and one cannot always be sure which anecdote is based upon reality and which is splendid imagination, one can discern, among the many incidents recounted by Chen Shou and Pei Songzhi, a pattern of romantic historical fiction.

We have referred to the manner in which the story of the Taoist Gan Ji is interwoven with that of Sun Ce, and one may imagine how the activities of that young warlord must have attracted such tales. In similar fashion, the biography of He Qi, conqueror of the Yue people of the south on behalf of Sun Ce and Sun Quan, may also contain remnants of a popular cycle of stories. The main text of Chen Shou, among a series of incidents which demonstrate He Qi's courage, ruthlessness and determination, tells how he stormed a camp of his enemies on the top of a precipice, by ordering his soldiers to use their arrows as pitons in the cracks of the rock to gain foothold for the climb. Immediately afterwards, Pei Songzhi quotes a supplementary tale from *Baopu zi*, which relates the occasion He Qi was faced by a master of preventive magic who used his spells to blunt the swords and arrows of his men. He Qi solved the problem by ordering his troops to arm themselves with cudgels so they might beat the enemy rather than piercing them; the technique was fully successful and another victory was recorded.[77]

It is not difficult to comprehend how a commander such as He Qi would have attracted such tales, and it is not surprising that similar tales gathered about other notable individuals of the time. Many incidents from such story-cycles can be found in the commentary of Pei Songzhi, and in some instances we can actually observe the process of accretion:[78]

> According to the biography of Cao Cao as written by Chen Shou, Cao Cao abandoned Dong Zhuo after his usurpation of power at Luoyang in 189, and sought to escape under a false name to join the rebel forces in the east. On the road, he was arrested on suspicion, but someone spoke for him and he was able to continue on his way.

The commentary of Pei Songzhi to this passage quotes a series of texts with elaborations of the incident:

> Firstly, *Wei shu*, the official history of the dynasty, tells how Cao Cao and a small escort called upon the house of an old friend, Lü Boshe, in Chenggao. Lü Boshe was not at home, but his son led a party of retainers to attack the apparent intruders, and seized some horses and goods. In the fighting, Cao Cao himself killed a number of men. This tale may be true, or it may represent an apologia against those which follow.
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> Second, there is *Wei-Jin shiyu*, "Tales of the Generations of Wei and Jin," by Guo Song of the latter part of the third century. A first extract tells how Cao Cao went to call upon Lü Boshe, and Lü Boshe with his five sons came out to welcome him with appropriate ceremony. Cao Cao, however, became suspicious that there might be a plan to take him, and during the night he fled away, killing eight people in the course of his escape.
>
> A further extract from *Wei-Jin shiyu* tells how when Cao Cao later came to Zhongmou, a short distance east of Chenggao and thus further along his way of escape, he was arrested as a fugitive. A junior official of the county, however, who recognised

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77 *SGZ* 60/Wu 15, 1378-79 and PC note 1. The "Magic of Yue" is also discussed In Chapter 1.

78 *SGZ* 1/Wei 1, 5 and PC notes 2 and 3.

Cao Cao and admired him as a man of great potential in the troubled times to come, concealed Cao Cao's true identity and argued successfully for his release.

Thirdly, there is a note from the *Zaji*, "Miscellany," of Sun Sheng, who says that Cao Cao mistook the sounds of food being prepared as indication that he was about to be attacked, and it was for that reason he made his murderous escape. It is Sun Sheng who ascribes to him the devastating explanation, "I would rather betray others than have another man betray me!"

After all this, one can see the development which culminates in the incident in *Romance*; the story of how Cao Cao is rescued at Chenggao and joined by the honest Chen Gong, how the two men then visit the home of Lü Boshe, how they misinterpret the conversation overheard from the kitchen about slaughtering pigs, how Cao Cao consummates his treachery by slaying their host as he returns with wine for their banquet, and how Chen Gong leaves him in horror and disgust, later to become his bitter enemy.[79]

This story of Cao Cao, with its critical delineation of his cruelty, craft and selfishness, is a notable example of the progressive development of a single incident, and also shows the degree to which *Romance* has adapted and extended the historical record for its own artistic purposes.

We shall consider *Romance* further below, but even without such later embellishments, it is obvious that some of the material extant quite close to the time of the historical events, and which has been accepted for preservation by Pei Songzhi, already represents the exaggeration of fact into fiction, or even a complete work of imagination, applied for one reason or another to a central figure or incident.[80]

Cao Cao, of course, a dominant figure in his time, became the centre of a host of stories. Let us take another example, this time not recorded by Pei Songzhi, but preserved in the contemporary collection *Shishuo xinyu.* There we find a tale of Cao Cao and his later rival Yuan Shao at a time when they were both young men about the imperial Han capital of Luoyang. It is said that one evening they broke into a wedding party, kidnapped the bride, and Cao Cao raped her. Then they were pursued, and Yuan Shao became caught in a thorn hedge. Cao Cao called out, "Here is the villain!" Yuan Shao, in panic, forced his way out, and both men were able to escape.[81]

It is, of course, possible to regard this story as the account of a real incident, typical of the behaviour of young men of rank during the last years of Han. I suspect, however, that no serious credit should be given to the details of the incident. On the one hand, it is a good story about a celebrated historical figure; but at the same time it is an allegory for later political events. If we consider the situation in the years after 196, when Cao Cao had taken Emperor Xian into his protection and also his custody, then Cao Cao may be seen as a successful kidnapper. Yuan Shao would have been only too pleased to share in the spoils, but Cao Cao pre-empted him and later, in his propaganda at the time of the

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79 *Romance*, chapter 4. The incident is also the theme of a celebrated traditional drama, commonly called *Zhuofang Cao*, "Capture and Release of Cao Cao" (Arlington and Acton, *Famous Chinese Plays*, 132-151, *Peking Opera Texts*, 46, and *Jingju jumu chutan*, 69).

80 Plaks, *Four Masterworks*, 373, similarly refers to "such largely pseudo-historical sources" as *Yingxiong ji* and *Cao Man zhuan*. *Cao Man zhuan* is certainly a piece of hostile propaganda, and in many respects must be considered unreliable, but I would give Wang Can's *Yingxiong ji* more credit than a number of other works.

81 *Shishuo xinyu* C (27), 538; Mather, *Tales of the World* (Guile and Chicanery), 441. Mather interprets the character *jie* simply as "made off with," but in the context of the story the alternative, more vicious, reading, seems appropriate.

campaign about Guandu in 200, accused Yuan Shao of seeking to seize the Emperor. So he cast blame upon his rival for what he had actually done himself.[82]

If the story is interpreted in this way, there is no need to grant it any reality in fact: it is a purely allegorical fiction.

While this is an extreme case, and the truth of the story is hardly important, there are other anecdotes, recorded by Pei Songzhi, which are likewise based only in abstract form upon any historical reality. In discussing the drama about the death of Sun Ce and the magic of Gan Ji, I have questioned most seriously whether Sun Ce, in the situation of the year 200, had any plan to make an attack to the north against Cao Cao, let alone whether he actually embarked upon such a foolhardy venture.[83] Similarly, the *Xiandi chunqiu* of Yuan Ye, quoted by Pei Songzhi, has a detailed account of how, in the period after the Red Cliffs, Sun Quan sent his cousin Sun Yu to lead an invasion of Shu province in present-day Sichuan, but this plan was halted because of the objections and the military activity of Liu Bei. I have argued, however, that the plan may have been discussed, but no such expedition was ever actually launched. Once Liu Bei had made his opposition known, the project became impossible and dangerous - and the circumstantial description by Yuan Ye may better be regarded as the account of a war game than of a real campaign.[84]

Dealing with this early history of the Three Kingdoms, therefore, we are faced with a wide range of material, ranging from reasonably well-established and reliable fact to accounts of incidents which have either been grossly exaggerated or are completely fictitious, even though they are based upon known historical individuals or situations.

In the Introduction to his admirable translation of *Shishuo xinyu*, Mather has observed that the vast majority of the characters appearing in that collection are known to history from other reliable sources, and the background information is likewise consistent with attested facts. As he observes, and we may agree, some embellishment, exaggeration, local colour and fictionalisation was more or less expected even in the standard histories. On the other hand, the fact that a historical novel in the West gives, for example, the correct date of the battle of Bosworth in 1485 does not mean that any other statement in the book, as for example the true fate of the princes in the Tower at the hands of their uncle Richard III, is necessarily correct.

Mather himself observes that "the writing of history does not seem to have been the intention of the author" of *Shishuo xinyu.*[85] And certainly in the Tang period, the compilers of the standard history *Jin shu* were criticised for using anecdotes from *Shishuo xinyu* in their own work of history.[86] Nienhauser has remarked that "The T'ang dynasty ... marks the era in which scholars first came to distinguish fiction from history,"[87] but the historical achievement of Tang was the culmination of development over several centuries. There are a number of occasions that commentators of the sixth

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82 See, for example, de Crespigny, *Establish Peace*, 252, translating the passage in *Zizhi tongjian* 65, 2015, based upon *HHS* 74A/64A, 2390, recording a debate in Yuan Shao's council in 200.

83 See Chapter 3 at note 95.

84 See note 29 to Chapter 5, and on the fictional development of this theme, see below.

85 *Tales of the World*, xiv.

86 Liu Zhiji, *Shitong* 5, 2b-3a, cited and translated in Lee, "Historical Value," 121-122.

87 Nienhauser, "Some Preliminary Remarks on Fiction," 1.4.

century criticise *Shishuo xinyu* on matters of fact,[88] and the memorial of Pei Songzhi, writing in the early fifth century, taken with a number of items in his commentary, suggests that he was interested in the comparison of texts with a view to judging which was correct.

So I consider *Shishuo xinyu* and similar collections primarily as works of anecdotal fiction. It may be possible to view the incidents they recount as examples or reconstructions of the mores and customs of the time they describe, and they certainly echo the tales which were told about those men and their time, but they were not designed, nor do they serve, as history. It is not that all the stories are false, but for the most part it is simply not possible to determine which of them are true and to make meaningful use of them in terms of modern history-writing. And I believe that the Chinese distinguished quite early between stories of pure entertainment and those which sought seriously to provide factual information.[89]

The problem becomes more difficult, however, when we consider the material preserved in the work of Chen Shou and of Pei Songzhi, not to mention the numerous works which were composed during the third and fourth centuries, which are not specifically cited in the text or commentary of *Sanguo zhi*, but which sometimes survive in whole or in part through other means. As we have seen, there are occasions when formal statements in these early histories must be discounted in the context of other material, or even by contrast with likely reality. And such judgement must often be uncertain, for we are seeking to apply modern standards of proof to a complex body of history, anecdote and fiction. In a very special way, we are dealing not with simple categories of truth and falsehood, but with an even-spread spectrum from one to the other.

Perhaps the most important point is that the commentary of Pei Songzhi, with the original text of Chen Shou, has preserved a great quantity of literature, compiled close to the time which it purports to describe, and reflecting the interests and emphases of that period and the years which immediately followed. As such, the whole of *Sanguo zhi* represents a remarkable literary compilation, with the authority of the standard history tradition on one side, and the vitality of the great collections on the other. This is an impressive achievement, and it is quite appropriate that Pei Songzhi, Fan Ye of *Hou Han shu*, and Liu Yiqing of *Shishuo xinyu* should have been such direct contemporaries.

The distortions of Romance:

Hitherto, I have paid small attention to the information provided by *Sanguo* [*zhi*] *yanyi*, the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, for the compilation of that work is well separated in time from the events which it purports to recount, and the material which it contains has no independent authority. Disconcertingly, however, Chinese tradition for much of the last thousand years has viewed the history of the Three Kingdoms period through the distorting glass of *Romance.* In modern times, the novel has been too often described as

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88 See, for example, Mather, *Tales of the World* (10: Admonitions and Warnings), 286 and 287, recording a note from the *Wenzhang zhi* sponsored by Emperor Ming of the Liu Song dynasty in the later fifth century which casts doubt upon incident 18, and the Commentary of Liu Jun of the early sixth century, which remarks baldly of incident 21 that "This account...is badly mistaken."

89 See also the discussion in note 12 above.

"seven parts history, three parts fiction,"[90] and there is some suggestion that it has value as a means to interpret the history of that time. In fact, *Romance* must be regarded as a special piece of literary composition, strongly influenced by the period of its development and completion during the Song and Ming dynasties.

Curiously, in the light of their later popularity, there is minimal evidence for the existence or the content of tales about the Three Kingdoms among surviving literary material from the latter part of the first millennium. Though many items of fiction have been preserved from the Tang dynasty, none deal directly with any aspect of the Three Kingdoms period, and it is only through passing references that we can confirm the existence of some popular tradition associated with the heroes of the end of Han.[91]

By the latter part of the Northern Song dynasty however, the eleventh and early twelfth centuries AD, we have evidence of the popularity of tales about the Three Kingdoms, and the poet and writer Su Shi records that children were entertained by stories about Liu Bei and Cao Cao, and that they supported the former against the latter.[92] So Liu Bei was already popular, and Cao Cao was seen as the powerful villain. In his own works, moreover, the two *fu* rhapsodies on the Red Cliff, and one *ci* poem "Meditations on the Red Cliff," Su Shi indicates that the site of that battle had already acquired a patina of heroism and splendour. In particular, in the first of the rhapsodies and in the lines from the poem:

I think of Zhou Yu in those days,
Newly married to the young Qiao girl -
His heroic looks, majestic and spirited,
Holding a feather fan and wearing a silk kerchief,
Amidst talk and laughter,
He reduced his enemy to flying ashes and smouldering smoke;

he gives an important position to that commander, while the later celebrated Zhuge Liang has no such dominant role.[93]

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90 This celebrated judgement is commonly credited to the modern writer and critic Lu Hsün in his *Brief History of Chinese Fiction*. As Yang, "Literary Transformation," 81-82, points out, similar comment had been made by the eighteenth-century scholar Zhang Xuecheng.

91 The article on Three Kingdoms stories during the Tang period by the pseudonymous Yisu presents evidence for the circulation of such tales, and in the poem *Jiaoer shi*, "The Arrogant Child," Li Shangyin (813-858) describes how his young son laughs at his father's guests for being "barbarous like Zhang Fei" or "stammering like Deng Ai." Both Zhang Fei and Deng Ai are characters of the Three Kingdoms period, and stories concerning them must have been well-known for a young child to have been aware of them. See, for example, Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, 9-10 and 327-328 note 26. *Cf.*, however, Ma, "Professional Story-Telling," 233.

Plaks, *Four Masterworks*, 368, summarises the discussion on the evidence for this early tradition, and concludes "that from an early period on the hero cycles that grew up around the exploits of the San-kuo figures became a major subject of oral story-telling, and this tradition has continued right down into the twentieth century."

92 *Dongpo zhilin* 1, 7; but again *cf*. Ma, "Professional Story-Telling," 233, and Plaks, *Four Masterworks*, 368 and note. Su Shi in fact ascribes the observation to a friend.

93 *Chibi huaigu* and *Chibi fu*. The lines quoted come from the translation of the *ci* by Liu Wu-chi, *Introduction to Chinese Literature*, 110. Translations of the two rhapsodies by A C Graham appear in the *Anthology* edited by Birch, 385-388. See also note 78 to Chapter 4 above.

On the comparative importance of Zhou Yu and Zhuge Liang at the Red Cliffs, see also Chapter 4 at notes 82 to 88. We may note, incidentally, that Zhou Yu had taken the Lady Qiao as his wife in 199, so they had been married almost ten years.

On the other hand, although we know that some story-tellers specialised in tales concerning the Three Kingdoms,[94] there are no extant *huaben* texts of vernacular tales which might provide information on their content. The earliest significant written source on popular fiction concerning the Three Kingdoms is *Sanguo zhi pinghua*, dating from the Yuan dynasty in the early fourteenth century. That work, though apparently clumsy in style, and concerned rather with the sensationalist and supernatural than with serious history, confirms the popular regard of Cao Cao and his state of Wei as the forces of evil, and emphasises the achievements of Zhuge Liang and the legitimacy of Shu-Han.[95]

In more scholarly terms, the view of Shu-Han as true successor to Later Han had been confirmed by the arguments and arrangements of the great philosopher Zhu Xi in his *Zizhi tongjian gangmu*.[96] For the men of Southern Song, maintaining a state in the south and west, but exiled from the Chinese heart-land about the Yellow River, the succession of the Liu house of Shu-Han appeared more valuable and attractive than the great but morally flawed power of Wei, and from that time of Southern Song, ideal scholarship and popular opinion were quite agreed on the true values of the Three Kingdoms.

To some extent parallel with the vernacular tradition, plays about the heroes and events of the Three Kingdoms appear to have flourished from the time of Northern Song, in early "shadow plays" *piying xi*, popular during the eleventh century, on the regular stage during Southern Song, and in the *yuanben* style of the contemporary Jin dynasty in the north. During the Yuan period of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century, several *zaju* dramas were concerned with the Three Kingdoms, and some of them have survived to this day. Like the popular stories, theatrical tradition generally sympathises with Shu-Han and the heroes of that state.[97]

It is, however, the novel *Sanguo yanyi*, here cited as *Romance*, which represents the major and most influential version of later tradition concerning the Three Kingdoms. The essential composition is commonly ascribed to Luo Guanzhong of the late fourteenth century, but Luo Guanzhong's work, which appears to have been commonly titled *Sanguo zhizhuan*, became the basis for a number of different publications of varying quality. Most notably, a more literary and sophisticated version of the novel, *Sanguo zhi*

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94 *Dongjing meng Hua lu*, "A Record of the Dreaming of Hua [Xu] in the Eastern Capital," by Meng Yuanlao of the early twelfth century, records that during the last years of Northern Song there was a story-teller in Kaifeng named Huo Sijiu, who specialised in tales of the Three Kingdoms.

95 On the evolution of *Romance*, see Liu Ts'un-yan, "Authenticity of the Historical Romances," 221, and "Lo Kuan-chung and His Historical Romances," 93, also Yang, "Use of the 'San-kuo chih'," 50-61.

96 As we have observed elsewhere, Zhu Xi chose to follow the calendrical arrangements of Shu-Han in preference to those of Wei, formerly accepted by the *Zizhi tongjian* of Sima Guang. See Chapter 7 at note 74, also note 69 above.

97 For a general discussion of the development of the dramatic tradition in China, see, for example, Liu Wu-chi, *An Introduction to Chinese Literature*, 159-184 .

Plaks, *Four Masterworks*, has discussed the early dramatic tradition of the Yuan and Ming. At 371 he notes that:

> when one reviews the extant plays, one finds very little in the way of textual overlap that might indicate direct reliance on any of these dramatic works as sources, and even the basic story elements often depart very radically from the narratives of the *Yen-i.*

On occasions during the discussion of the history, I have referred to plays in the Yuan and Ming drama, and in the traditional repertoire of the Beijing opera and of modern China, as recorded or summarised in *Guben Yuan-Ming zaju*, in Arlington and Acton, *Famous Chinese Plays*, in *Peking Opera Texts*, and in *Jingju jumu chutan*. Apart from those of the Yuan and Ming periods, however, the plays which may be performed at the present day commonly owe a great deal to the novel, and they no longer represent a truly independent tradition.

tongsu yanyi, appeared in 1522, and more than a hundred years later, at the beginning of the Qing dynasty in the mid-seventeenth century, a revised version was published by the scholar Mao Zonggang. The Mao Zonggang edition forms the basis for the present-day text of *Romance*.[98]

In his discussion of the development of the novel, however, Plaks has argued that the 1522 edition is based upon interpretations of that time, not upon the earlier work ascribed to Luo Guanzhong:

> the *San-kuo chih yen-yi*, as we know it from the 1522 text and later editions, [is] an example of the sixteenth century literati novel, one that was either newly created during the second Ming century or was substantially altered by that time.[99]

Through detailed reading of the treatment of various incidents and characters, Plaks has demonstrated the skill with which the author of the novel has taken the popular and historical tradition well-known in his time and created a work "which pointedly transforms the earlier material as it casts it into a new generic mold."[100] In particular, as Plaks points out with repeated examples, a central theme of the novel is the "Limitations of Valor," with an ironic reinterpretation of such popular heroes as Liu Bei, Guan Yu, Zhang Fei and Zhuge Liang. The novel accepts the heroic and romantic tradition, but then demonstrates the manner in which the qualities of the heroes are flawed, and their ambitions destroyed, by these very weaknesses. Thus Guan Yu's emphasis on personal honour leads him to an arrogance which brings repeated failures and ultimate destruction,[101] while Zhuge Liang's cleverness is corrupted into a "self-destructive egotism."[102]

I shall return again to Plaks' approach and interpretation of the novel in its present form. At this stage, however, we may observe that, by the end of the fourteenth century, the essential pattern of what may be referred to as the romantic tradition was well established and confirmed in popular imagination, in early story cycles, and in works for the stage. And it is with that pattern, the culmination of several centuries' development of story cycles, that we should deal here.

In his comparison of the history told by *Sanguo zhi* and the version of *Romance*, Winston Yang has discussed the manner in which the historical characters of Cao Cao, Liu Bei, Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu were re-interpreted by later tradition. In particular, he has pointed out the degree to which the authority and prestige of Zhuge Liang has been emphasised at the particular expense of Zhou Yu, his some-time colleague and long-term rival from the state of Wu. Yang, however, is inclined to accept the picture presented by *Romance* as an appropriate development, and indeed an improvement, from the material presented by Chen Shou and the other early historians. Where *Sanguo zhi*, for example, is "Nothing more than a collection of historical facts put together with little historical imagination," Luo Guanzhong presents a "more dramatic and interesting account"[103] - though Yang does not often put the case so bluntly, he and other readers show a tendency

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98 Liu Ts'un-yan, "Authenticity of the Historical Romances," 221-229, describes and analyses the relationship between the *Sanguo zhizhuan* of Luo Guanzhong, the edition dated to the first year of Jiajing (1522), and the revised form of the novel prepared by Mao Zonggang, and he presents a table comparing the work as revised by Mao with an earlier edition of *Sanguo zhizhuan*.

99 Plaks, *Four Masterworks*, 363-364.

100 Plaks, *Four Masterworks*, 369.

101 Plaks, *Four Masterworks*, 410-413.

102 Plaks, *Four Masterworks*, 443.

103 Yang, "Literary Transformation," 48.

to regard *Romance* as an alternative, equally valid and perhaps superior version of the history of the late second and third centuries AD. And indeed, as Yang observes, far more people have gained their knowledge of the Three Kingdoms period from the novel than from the official history.[104]

Nevertheless, despite the importance and the influence of the work, to regard *Romance* as "the retelling of history in a plainer language," and Luo Guanzhong as a "popular historian" demonstrates a strange sense of what any historian is trying to do.[105] Yang has suggested that the genre of *yanyi* "popular elaboration" can find no parallel in Western language; it can readily be argued, however, that the "History" plays of Shakespeare, giving an impressive, lively, imaginative and heroic, but frequently inaccurate, view of English history for a hundred years from the time of Richard II to that of Richard III, are very close in style.[106] And just as the emphasis upon Shu-Han and Zhuge Liang may be seen as reflections of the problems and needs of Song society, so it has been observed that the plays of Shakespeare reflect the opinions and interests of his own time, and may totally ignore the real concerns of the period they purport to describe.[107] Though all writers are bound by their own cultural and intellectual background, the playwright and the novelist may be allowed a freer rein than the historian.

If we view the whole matter from the beginning, *Romance* may be regarded as one particular development of a story cycle tradition which had already begun in the third century, during the Three Kingdoms period itself. I have demonstrated the manner in which tales gathered about Cao Cao's encounter with Lü Boshe and how the affair reached its ultimate description in *Romance*. We have noted also the possibility of a cycle of stories told about the conquests of He Qi in the service of Wu against the hills people south of the mouth of the Yangzi, and it may well be that the several chapters of *Romance* which describe the seven campaigns of Zhuge Liang against the non-Chinese peoples of the southwest under their unlucky chieftain Meng Huo represents an achieved story cycle in similar vein to that of He Qi.[108] And perhaps most insidious of all, there are a number of incidents, tricks and stratagems, which were originally attributed to other men but which *Romance* has transferred to Zhuge Liang. Two which I have noted elsewhere are the stratagem of the Empty City, which the history records as being played by Wen Ping against Sun Quan in Jiangxia in the autumn of 226, not by Zhuge Liang against Sima Yi;[109] and the incident at Ruxu in 213, when Sun Quan was compelled to turn his boat about lest the arrows sticking in one side should cause it to capsize. It is very possible that

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104 Yang, "Literary Transformation," 81.

105 Yang, "Literary Transformation," 81.

106 Yang, "Literary Transformation," 81-84. The same parallel with Shakespeare has been advanced by Ma, "The Chinese Historical Novel," 292.

107 See, for example, Campbell, *Shakespeare's "Histories"* at 141-142 where in a detailed discussion of "The Troublesome Reign of King John," she observes how Shakespeare reflected the contemporary concerns of Elizabeth with her Roman Catholic cousin and rival Mary Queen of Scots, so that his play *King John* placed great emphasis upon John's conflict with the Pope and his dealings with his cousin Arthur. On the other hand, the earlier work of *King Johan*, by John Bale, written in the time of Henry VIII, places great emphasis on the role of Sedition supported by Religion, but makes no mention of the unfortunate Arthur: Henry did not have the same problems as Elizabeth, and the different concerns of the two plays reflect the different concerns of their audiences. Professor Campbell applies similar analysis to the later history plays.

108 See *Romance* chapters 87-91.

109 See Chapter 7 at note 52.

the latter story was later developed into Zhou Yu's and then Zhuge Liang's celebrated feat of acquiring one hundred thousand arrows, also from Cao Cao, at the time of the Red Cliffs.[110]

As an example of uncertain history developed deliberately for dramatic effect, we may also consider the matter of Zhou Yu's proposed attack against Liu Zhang in the west, soon after the victory at the Red Cliffs, which provides a notable incident in the novel:

> In the biography of Zhou Yu in *Sanguo zhi*, we are told only that he was planning an attack up the Gorges of the Yangzi, but that he was taken ill and died before the preparations were complete.[111]
>
> In the *Xiandi chunqiu* of Yuan Ye it is said that Sun Quan later proposed a similar expedition under the command of Sun Yu, but that this was opposed by Liu Bei and the plan was abandoned; I have argued that the expedition probably never even got under way.[112]
>
> In *Romance*, however, this putative attack is developed into the final, fatal triumph of Zhuge Liang over his rival Zhou Yu: as the unfortunate general of Wu struggles against the stream in a futile attempt to break through to the west, he looks up and see Zhuge Liang, comfortable on a hill-top, laughing at his discomfiture. This proves to be the culminating humiliation, and Zhou Yu dies of grief and rage.[113]

It is the account in the novel of this last incident which moved Plaks to comment upon the arrogance and egotism of Zhuge Liang, and the hypocrisy of his ostentatious sympathy for Zhou Yu's sad end, but one may also observe the manner in which a story has developed from the early records into a notable scene in the romantic tradition.

And finally, there is the matter of the Red Cliffs campaign itself, central item of *Romance* and a major theme of the dramatic tradition. In *Sanguo zhi*, the confrontation of Cao Cao by the allied armies of Zhou Yu and Liu Bei, and the defeat and retreat of Cao Cao, are referred to in a number of different passages, for the most part in the section dealing with the history of Wu. Even allowing for bias between the rival powers, it seems clear that it was the action of Sun Quan's forces that was decisive, first in holding Cao Cao's advance, and then, through the fire-ship attack led by Huang Gai, inflicting the tactical defeat which compelled Cao Cao to withdraw.[114] There is no justification for *Romance* so to enlarge the role of Liu Bei's men, and in particular that of Zhuge Liang.

Moreover, as I have suggested elsewhere, while the campaign of the Red Cliffs, viewed in retrospect, was an important and even decisive event in the civil war, it was not necessarily a major military engagement. Despite the success of the allied forces in the preliminary skirmishes and in the fire attack, it may indeed have been the case, as Cao Cao claimed, that retreat was forced upon him through sickness among his troops rather than through the devastation wrought by his opponents.[115]

For the purposes of literature and drama, of course, it is quite appropriate that the battle of the Red Cliffs should have a central position in the novel, and that the events of that time and place should be painted with a broad brush upon a splendid canvas. Such artistic embellishment, however, has no historical authority, and tells us nothing about

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110 See Chapter 4 at note 86.

111 *SGZ* 54/Wu 9, 1264.

112 See note 29 to Chapter 5, and above.

113 *Romance* chapters 56-57, and see also Plaks, *Four Masterworks*, 443, cited in note 102 above.

114 See Chapter 4 at note 79.

115 See note 83 to Chapter 4.

the real events of that time. *Romance*, indeed, and the whole tradition which it represents, is no form of history as a modern historian would understand it.

One would hardly believe it necessary to make this point, for no serious scholar of the West would regard a traditional work of fiction, compiled under different auspices more than one thousand years later, without any new or independent evidence, as a source of authority for analysis of the original events which it purports to describe. Those statements in *Romance* which appear to be true obtain that status for no other reason than that they are based upon material from *Sanguo zhi* or some comparable historical evidence. And true statements in *Romance* are accompanied by others for which there is no good authority, while some episodes have a foundation in earlier records but are re-interpreted and applied in a manner based upon the requirements of literary artifice and propaganda and not at all upon the original record or facts.

In any such discussion as this, however, where one must deal with both the "historical tradition," based upon *Sanguo zhi* and other early works, and the "romantic tradition," developed in later centuries and culminating in the present-day novel, one is faced with this constant dichotomy and contradiction. In his "Literary Transformation," Yang does not claim specifically that Luo Guanzhong was writing as a historian or that *Romance* is a full alternative source for the history of the Three Kingdoms, but he does get very close to such a position. In many respects, the difficulty is that Yang begins his study of the Three Kingdoms period from the point of view of *Romance*, and he then seeks some factual basis for the interpretations of the novel.

In contrast, the approach of Plaks' *Four Masterpieces*, which considers *Romance* essentially as a work of fiction, and analyses its treatment of the traditional material in terms of literary style and philosophical approach, is markedly more satisfactory. By such means, one may observe the occasional contact of the novel with historical fact, but give chief and proper attention to the manner in which the compiler has formulated and presented his message.

The real problem is that we are operating at many different levels of knowledge and interpretation: in studying the history of the Three Kingdoms, we must not only deal with the fragmentary and often distorted records of the past, but we are also viewing those events through the interpretations of a literary and artistic tradition which has attracted the interest, enthusiasm and emotions of people for hundreds of years, and which has been responsible for a multitude of popular tales and sayings, for numbers of dramatic works, and for one of the greatest compilations of fiction in any language. It is a striking tribute to the quality of the novel, and to the romantic tradition founded on the Three Kingdoms, that our view of that time is so largely gained from the perspective of Luo Guanzhong, his colleagues and successors. If it is hard to find the true figure of Richard III behind the magnificent distortions of Shakespeare, the reality of Wei, Shu and Wu is yet further away.[116]

And at a higher level than simple matters of misapplied anecdotes, or even the misplaced emphasis upon a military engagement, there is one more disservice which the *Romance* has done to history. In all the concern about the potential might of Cao Cao in

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116 One may well compare the influence of *Romance* with that of Shakespeare's libel against King Richard III. Despite the efforts of modern revisionist scholars, and even the propaganda of amateur societies which favour Richard III, no historian dealing with the history of England in the late fifteenth century can avoid taking account of the villainous image of the king, first presented by the protagonists of his successful rival Henry VII, but maintained throughout the Tudor period and brilliantly supported by the play one hundred years later.

the north or the putative right of Liu Bei in the west, the role of Wu in the south and east has often been neglected or distorted. With its concern for fictionalised characters rather than with the pattern of events, the romantic tradition has neglected the real development which took place at that time. For the centuries which followed, the success of the Sun family in establishing an independent government south of the Yangzi was of far greater importance than the local conflicts between warlords in the west. And so the present work has given chief attention to the "third kingdom," Wu, in an attempt to redress the balance and to discover both the romance and the achievement of the generals in the south.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Bibliography is presented in four parts: Part I contains Early Chinese Works before 1800, Part II contains Modern Chinese and Japanese Works, Part III contains Works in Western Languages, and Part IV, which was a section of the Index in the 1990 edition, lists Literary and Historical Works discussed in the text and the notes, and the chapters in which they appear.

For the most part, the Bibliography is the same as that which appeared in the 1990 edition. I have, however, included a few more recent publications which have been cited in the notes during the course of revision for the Internet edition of 2004.

Part I: Early Chinese Works before 1800

Abbreviations:

CSJC *Congshu jicheng*
HHS *Hou Han shu* by Fan Ye, *q.v.*
HS *Han shu* by Ban Gu, *q.v.*
JS *Jin shu* by Fang Xuanling, *q.v.*
QJHHS *Qijia Hou Han shu*, Taipei 1974
PC Commentary by Pei Songzhi to the *Sanguo zhi* of Chen Shou, *q.v.*
SBBY *Sibu peiyao* collection, Commercial Press
SBCK *Sibu congkan* collection, Commercial Press
SGZ *Sanguo zhi* by Chen Shou, *q.v.*
SJ *Shi ji* by Sima Qian, *q.v.*
SJZS *Shuijing zhu su*, *q.v.*
ZZTJ: *Zizhi tongjian* by Sima Guang, *q.v.*

Note: Several works, identified below as being quoted in the commentary of Pei Songzhi [PC], may also be found in part or in fragments within some other edition. Such other editions, however, are frequently no more than collections of extracts from PC and quotations from other early sources. Unless there is particular reason, I do not go into further details.

Again, where a work is discussed in the text or the notes, rather than used simply as a source of some information, it may be listed in Part II of the index, dealing with literary works and other texts, as well as, or instead of, in this Bibliography.

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annals 10 chapters and *liezhuan* 80 chapters by Fan Ye (396-446)
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Part II: Modern Works in Chinese and Japanese:

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The names of scholars writing in Chinese are normally given in pinyin, and Japanese names follow the Hepburn system. However, where a person has published work under a differently transcribed name, as notably in Taiwan and Hong Kong, I have followed that system. In similar fashion, where a journal has established its title in a particular romanised form or translation, I refer to it in that form.

In this Internet edition, Chinese characters are not provided. Readers must refer to the original hard-copy or to a library catalogue; the bibliographic details, even in transcription, should be sufficient.

Abbreviations:

BCA	*Bulletin of the College of Arts, National Taiwan University*
BIHP	*Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica*, Republic of China
CPAM	Commission for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments [local authority]
ESWSBB	*Ershiwu shi bubian*, Shanghai 1936-37/1957
FSZ	*Fudan xuebao* (*shehui kexue*) *zengkan*, Shanghai
HYHP	*New Asia Journal*, Hong Kong
KGXB	*Kaogu xuebao*, Beijing
LSJX	*Lishi jiaoxue*, Tianjin
LSYJ	*Lishi yanjiu*, Beijing
RGK	*Rekishigaku kenkyū*, Tokyo
SE	*Shien*, Fukuoka
SH	*Shih-huo*, Peiping
SHM	*Shih-huo Monthly*, Taipei
SK	*Shikan*, Tokyo
SKZ	*Shehui kexue zhanxian*, Changchun
SR	*Shirin*, Kyoto
SXCS	*Shixue congshu*, Shanghai 1899
THG	*Tohogaku*

TLTC *The Continent Magazine*, Taipei
TYSK *Tōyōshi kenkyū*, Kyoto
WWCKZL *Wenwu cankao ziliao*, Beijing
YK *Yü kung*, Peiping
ZNZL *Zhongguo nongmin zhangzheng luncong*, Taiyuan

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Part III: Works in Western Languages

Abbreviations:

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BEFEO	*Bulletin de l'Ecôle Française d'Extrême-Orient*
Cambridge Han	*The Cambridge History of China*: *Volume 1*, *The Ch'in and Han Empires 221 BC - AD 220*, edited by Denis Twitchett and Michael Loewe, Cambridge UP 1986
CLEAR	*Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews*
HJAS	*Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*
JOSA	*Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia*
PFEH	*Papers on Far Eastern History*, The Australian National University, Canberra
TP	*T'oung Pao*, Leiden

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Part IV: List of Literary and Historical Works Discussed

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Analects of Confucius, Chapter 8
Art of War of Master Sun, *The* [book], Chapters 2, 4, 6, 8
"At the Sweet Dew Temple" [drama], Chapter5
Ba-Shu qijiu zhuan "Accounts of Venerable Men and Ancient Affairs of Ba and Shu" [book], Chapter
"Banquet with a Multitude of Ministers" [drama], Chapter 3
Baopu zi "The Master Who Embraces Simplicity" [book], Chapter 9
"Battle at the Chang Slope" [drama], Chapter 4
"Battle of the Red Cliffs" [drama], Chapter 4
"Battle with the Tongue against a Multitude of Scholars" [drama], Chapter 4
"Beating a Drum and Abusing Cao Cao" [drama], Chapter 3
"Beating Huang Gai" [drama], Chapter 4
biezhuan "Unofficial Biographies," Chapter 9
"Borrowing Arrows with Straw Boats" [drama], Chapter 4
Bowu zhi "Records of Many Things" [book], Chapter 9
"Burning the Armada" [drama], Chapter 4
Cao Man zhuan [book], Chapter 9
"Capture and Release of Cao Cao" [drama], Chapter 9
Chenliu qijiu zhuan "Accounts of Venerable Men and Ancient Affairs of Chenliu" [book], Chapter 9
Chibi huaigu "Meditations on the Red Cliff" [poem], Chapter 9
Chu ci anthology, Chapter 1
Chu sanzang ji ji "Collection of Notes concerning the Translation of the Tripitika" [book], Chapter 9

Chuguo xianxian zhuan "Accounts of Worthy Men of the Past of the Country of Chu" [book], Chapter 9
Classic of Changes, Chapters 4, 6, 8, 9
Classic of History, Chapters 1, 4, 6
Classic of Poetry, Chapters 4, 6
Collected Works of Cao Cao [book], Chapter 9
Collected Works of Kong Rong [book], Chapter 9
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Da zhao "Great Summons" [poem], Chapter 1
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Fuzi [book], Chapter 3
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Guo yu [book], Chapter 8 and see *Tales of the States*
Hainei xianxian zhuan "Accounts of Worthy Men of the Past Within the Seas," [book], Chapter 9
Handi zhuan "Account of the Emperors of Han" [book], Chapter 9
Han ji "Annals of Han" by Xun Yue [book], Chapter 9
Han ji "Annals of Han" by Zheng Fan [book], Chapter 2
Han Ling-Xian erdi ji "Annals of the Two Emperors Ling and Xian of Han" [book], Chapter 9
Han shu "History of the Former Han Dynasty" by Ban Gu [book], Chapters 1, 6, 9
Treatise of Geography, Chapter 1
Han yi "Rituals of Han" [book], Chapter 9
Han-Jin chunqiu "Chronicle of Han and Jin" [book], Chapter 9
Handi zhuan "Account of the Emperor[s] of Han" [book], Chapter 9
Hanguan yishe xuanyong "Selection and Appointment in the Official System of Han" [book], Chapter 9
Hanmo yingxiong ji "Records of the Heroes and Champions at the End of Han" [book], Chapters 2, 9
"Happy Auguries of the Dragon and the Phoenix" [drama], Chapter 5
Hou Han ji "Records of Later Han" by Yuan Hong [book], Chapters 2, 9
Hou Han ji "Records of Later Han" by Xie Ying [book], Chapter 9
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Hou Han shu "History of Later Han" by Fan Ye [book], Chapters 1, 9
Chapter on Diviners and Magicians, Chapters 1, 9
Chapter on the Lenient Officials, Chapter 1
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Hou han shu "History of Later Han" by Xie Cheng [book], Chapter 9
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Huayang guo zhi "Record of the Countries to the South of Mount Hua" [book], Chapter 9
"Incident on the Huarong Road" [drama], Chapter 4
Intrigues of the Warring States [book], Chapter 9
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"Jiang Gan Steals a Letter" [drama], Chapter 4
Jiangbiao zhuan "Account of the Lands Beyond the Yangzi" [book], Chapters 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9
Jiao-Guang erzhou chunqiu "Chronicle of the Two Provinces Jiao and Guang" [book], Chapter 9
Jiao-Guang ji "Records of Jiao and Guang [Provinces]" [book], Chapter 9
Jiaoer shi "The Arrogant Child" [poem] Chapter 9
Jin ji "Annals of Jin" [book], Chapter 9
Jin shu "History of Jin" by Fang Xuanling [book], Chapters 2, 8, 9
Treatise of Geography of *Jin shu*, Chapter 8
Jin shu "History of Jin" by Yu Yu [book], Chapters 1, 9
Jin shu "History of Jin" by Wang Yin [book], Chapter 9
Jin yangqiu "Chronicle of Jin" [book] Chapter 9
Jiu ke "Nine Songs" [poems], Chapter 1
Jiuzhou chunqiu "Spring and Autumn Annals of the Nine Provinces" [book], Chapter 3
Kongshi pu "Register of the Kong Clan" [book], Chapter 9
Kuaiji dianlu "Authoritative Record of Kuaiji" [book], Chapter 2 9
Kuaiji Shao shi jiazhuan "Account of the Shao Family of Kuaiji," Chapter 9
Kuaiji xianxian zhuan "Accounts of Worthy Men of the Past from Kuaiji" [book], Chapter 9
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Laozi bianhua jing "Sutra of the Transformation of Laozi" [book], Chapter 6
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Liang Ji biezhuan "Unofficial Biography of Liang Ji" [book], Chapter 9
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Lingdi ji "Annals of Emperor Ling" [book], Chapter 9
Lingling xianxian zhuan "Accounts of Worthy Men of the Past of Lingling" [book], Chapter 9
Lujiang Heshi jiazhuan "Account of the He Family of Lujiang," Chapter 9
Lushi shisong "Commemoration of the Generations of the Lu Clan," Chapters 2, 5, 9
Lushi zitang xiangzan "Eulogies for the Portraits in the Ancestral Temple of the Lu Clan," Chapters 5, 9
"Meeting of Many Heroes" [drama], Chapter 4
Mo ji "Private Records" [book], Chapter 9
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"Nineteen Old Poems" anthology, Chapter 1
"Obtaining an East Wind" [drama], Chapter 4
"Pang Tong Proposes Chaining Ships Together" [drama], Chapter 4
Ping "Criticisms," Chapter 9
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"Presenting the Map of Xichuan" [drama], Chapter 5
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Shanyang gong zaiji "Parallel Annals of the Duke of Shanyang" [book], Chapter 2
Shenxian zhuan "Biographies of Spirits and Immortals" [book], Chapters 3, 9
Shi ji "Records of the Historian" by Sima Qian [book], Chapter 1, 6, 9
Shu jing see *Classic of Poetry*
Shishuo xinyu "A New Account of Tales of the World" [book], Chapter 9
Shu ji "Records of Shu" [book], Chapter 9
Shu jing see *Classic of History* and *Yu gong*
Shu shu "History of Shu" [book], Chapter 9
Simin yueling "Ordinances for the Months for the Four Peoples" [book], Chapter 1
"Sir Fantasy Rhapsody," Chapter 1
Six Stratagems [book], Chapter 6
Soushen ji "Records of Enquiry about the Spirits" [book], Chapters 3, 9
"Southern Capital Rhapsody," Chapter 1
Spring and Autumn Annals [book], Chapters 4,5, 9
"Stratagem of the Beauty" [drama], Chapter 5
Sui shu "History of the Sui Dynasty" [book], Chapter 9
Taiping jing "The Classic of Great Peace" [book], Chapters 1, 3
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Tales of the States [book], Chapter 6 and see *Guo yu*
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Treatises: see under *Han shu*, *Xu Han shu* and *Jin shu*
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"With a Single Sword, Lord Guan Goes to the Feast" [drama], Chapter 6
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Wu lu "Record of Wu" [book], Chapters 2, 3, 7, 9
Wu shu "History of Wu," Chapters 2, 4, 5, 9
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Xiandi ji "Annals of Emperor Xian" [book], Chapter 9
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Treatise of Administrative Geography, Chapter 1, 8
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