

École Pratique des Hautes Études



The Southwestern Frontier in Tang China: Ethnography and Bureaucracy in the *Manshu*

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From one object to another + Questions

- Representing the Southern Man people
- From the Middle Yangzi to the Southwest
- From Early Medieval times to the Tang

- What can the *Manshu* tell us about the representations that circulated among administrators, military men and literati?
- Doesn't it say as much about the act of ethnography and the ethnographer as it supposedly does about the people it describes?
- Ethnography as a proxy for performing administrative practices?



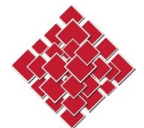
One author and various book titles

- Fan Chuo 樊綽, *fl.* 9th c.
- A geographical approach combining:
 - empirical data
 - available sources: Yuan Zi's 袁滋 (*fl.* end 8th c.) *Yunnan ji* 雲南記; *Hou Han shu* 後漢書
- *Manshu* 蠻書
- *Yunnan zhi* 雲南志
- *Yunnan shiji* 雲南史記



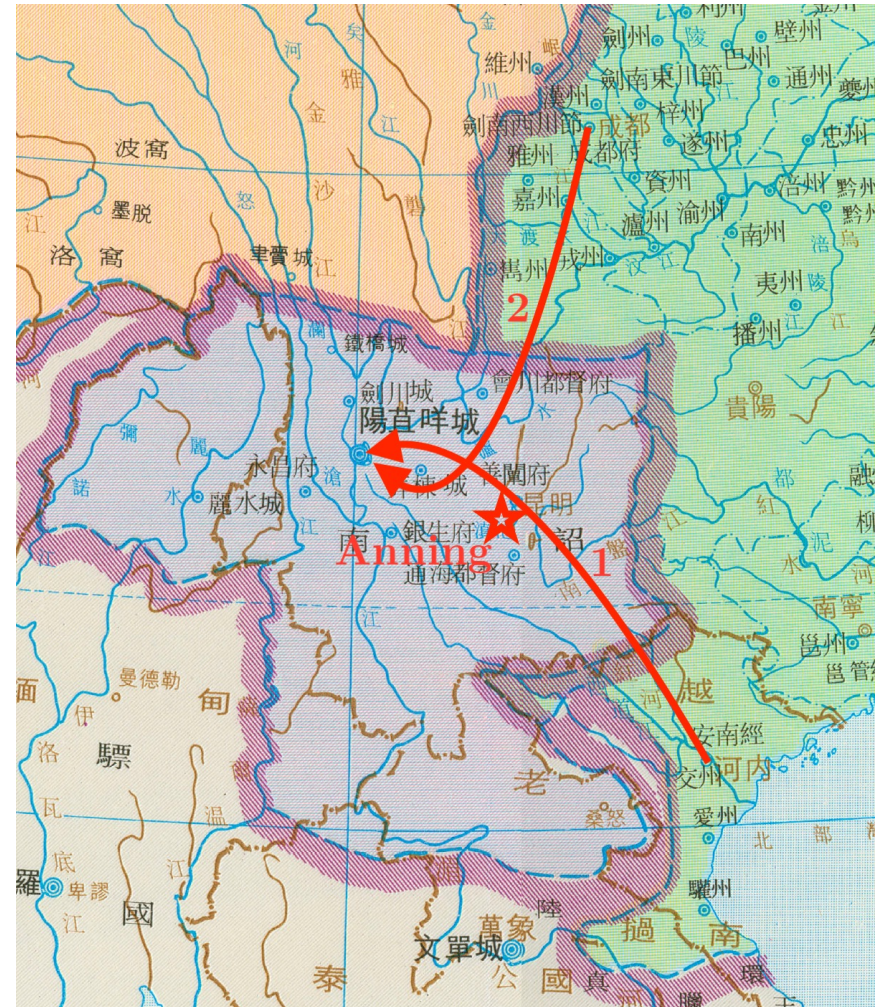
How reliable? A short textual history

- A *leishu* 類書 (encyclopaedic anthology) / *congshu* 叢書 (collection of works) problem
- **Transmission:** *Yongle dadian* 永樂大典 > *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 > Xiang Da 向達 (1900-1966), pictured on the right with his wife (Wikimedia commons)
- **Translations:** Gordon Luce (1961), Walter Stanish (2015—), Bu Shaoxian 卜紹先 (2018)



External and internal routes to Yunnan

- Chap. 1, “Journeys within the borders of Yunnan” (雲南界內途程第一): two itineraries to Dali (right, modified after Tan Qixiang ed. 1982, vol. 5, p. 36-37)
- “The city of Anning is where, in Yuanding 2 of the Later Han, wave-quelling general Ma Yuan erected bronze pillars to demarcate the borders. (...) Han-times city walls still remain, so do stelae inscriptions.” 安寧城，後漢元鼎二年伏波將軍馬援立銅柱定疆界之所。(…)漢時城壁尚存，碑銘並在。(Manshu, 1.1)



Two itineraries to Yunnan: logistics and practical knowledge

- 1st itinerary: from Annan to Nanzhao (Red River riverine route + land route)
- 2nd itinerary: from Chengdu to Nanzhao (land route)
- 至雲南驛一日，至波大驛一日。至白巖驛一日，至龍尾城一日。 (...) 至陽苴咩城一日 (*Manshu*, 1.6-10)
- 又四百八十里至雲南城，又八十里至白崖城，又七十里至蒙舍城，又八十里至龍尾城， (...) 又二十五里至羊苴咩城 (*Xin Tang shu*, 43.1152)
- Days 日 vs. *li* 里, inns 館 and relays 驛 vs. cities 城: official knowledge and authority (Jia Dan 賈耽, 730-805) vs. personal experience and doubt (Fan Chuo)?



The Man people beyond the roads

- Clear-cut itinerary vs. hazy human geography
- Using the Man: recognition of their political importance + their ability to control and defend areas
- Historical overview to explain why the region was lost: usual cocktail of bad local/imperial management followed by Man rebellions



Conclusion

- Itineraries (dots and lines) that shape surrounding Man-populated zones (surfaces)?
- Scattered markers of imperial control in remote areas
- Limits and advantages of a personal testimony

