

# **The Transformation of Yunnan in Ming China**

From the Dali Kingdom to  
Imperial Province

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## **2 Local communities, village temples and the reconstruction of ethnic groups in western Yunnan, fourteenth to seventeenth centuries**

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## 2 Local communities, village temples and the reconstruction of ethnic groups in western Yunnan, fourteenth to seventeenth centuries

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### Introduction

This chapter investigates how shifts in Ming state administration, particularly household registration, taxation and systems for social control, shaped the transformation of local society in the three basins of Dengchuan 鄧川, Fengyu 鳳羽 and Langqiong 浪穹 near Dali between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. Lying directly north of Lake Erhai, the core area of the Nanzhao and the Dali kingdoms, these three basins fall under the jurisdiction of today's Eryuan county 洱源縣<sup>2</sup> and are watered by tributaries of the Miju River 彌苴河. Focusing on irrigation facilities, I trace the construction of different categories of local community through household registration and other administrative policies in the early Ming, their decline during the late Ming/early Qing, and their reconstruction as new communities during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries through the agency of the local elite. I argue that the increase in village-owned common property and the joint management of water resources for wet rice agriculture shaped social change in the village communities in the basins from the seventeenth century.

To orientate readers to this long chapter, I briefly elucidate the significance of the local elite. The local elite that promoted transformation in the societies of the three basins consisted of gentry (i.e., degree holders), literati and village leaders. During the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the gentry and literati advocated the reform of customs and practices to adjust local society to conform to empire-wide Ming norms. After the seventeenth century, they gained control of water management together with village leaders, which endowed them with the authority to re-interpret and reform culture, customs and ritual performance in their communities. The local elite orchestrated the establishment of common property to generate income to operate small-scale irrigation systems from the late Ming and gradually came to manage common resources in communities. I argue that it was the need to manage common property that provided this local elite the socio-political space and flexibility it required to respond effectively to changes in state policy and institutional shifts. The ability of the local elite to alter the cultural identity of local communities aided

the integration of diverse social categories defined by the Ming state into new communities centred on village temples. In this reconstruction process, the village temple system played an important role because it became a centre for devising strategies for the local communities to address changes in state policies. In the new communities, the principle of sharing resources became a characteristic feature. In fact, it was the sharing of resources that differentiated communities in the three basins of Eryuan county from those on the eastern littoral of South China, where villages were organised on the basis of lineage or same surnames.<sup>3</sup>

As background to the analysis of the long-term changes between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries, this chapter begins by explaining the reasons why wet rice cultivation required communities in the basins of western Yunnan to devise systems for the management of labour and water resources. Subsequently, the chapter offers a historical overview of the state administration of the three basins of Dengchuan, Fengyu and Langqiong.

### **Wet rice cultivation and basin societies**

Uplands occupy approximately 94 per cent of the Yun-Gui plateau of South-west China and the highlands of northern Shan State in Burma. Flatlands in valley basins only occupy approximately 6 per cent of this area.<sup>4</sup> In the basins of Eryuan county, flatlands occupy 335 square km, 11 per cent of the total area of the county.<sup>5</sup> The county has numerous lakes, springs, reservoirs and swamps as well as small and large rivers. Abundant land and water resources as well as a climate with a distinct division between rainy and dry months makes the basins of Eryuan county suitable for wet rice cultivation. All rivers run towards Erhai Lake, from which they flow into the Mekong River. The tributaries of the Miju River provide most of the water for wet rice irrigation in the three basins and serve as the main water source for the lake.<sup>6</sup> Basins at elevations ranging from 2,000 to 2,200 metres above sea level occupy 11 per cent of the land in Eryuan county.<sup>7</sup> Seventy-four per cent of the county's farming land lies in the irrigated basins of Dengchuan (shown in Figure 2.1), Fengyu and Langqiong, where 80 per cent of the county's population resides.<sup>8</sup> The present population density ratio between basins and uplands in Eryuan county is 10:1.<sup>9</sup> Wet rice cultivation is a feature that distinguishes basin communities from upland ones. Because wet rice cultivation required social co-operation and could support relatively large populations, basins became political and market centres and functioned as transportation networks between western Yunnan, the Tibetan Plateau and Burma.<sup>10</sup>

The success of wet rice cultivation depended on a combination of environmental and social factors. Climate in the Yunnan basins is characterised by a clear distinction between dry and wet seasons: the dry season lasts from November to April and the wet season from May to October. Rainfall from May to October accounts for more than 90 per cent of annual precipitation.<sup>11</sup> Because rice seedlings had to be transplanted between the Xiaoman 小滿 and Mangzhong 芒種



Figure 2.1 Villages in the Dengchuan basin located along the banks of the Miju River 瀾苴河 (the line of trees in the centre).

From this basin the river empties into Lake Erhai, a part of which is visible at the front left.

Aerial photograph: Li Shiyang 李仕陽, 2019.

solar terms (between approximately 21 May and 5 June), this climatic characteristic shaped the social mechanism for labour exchange and water sharing. If the monsoon rain began falling after approximately 6 June, subsequent water shortages would affect the harvest. After the rice harvest in the autumn, wheat, fava beans and rapeseed were planted in the dry season without irrigation. The securing of sufficient water to transplant rice seedlings before the monsoon rains arrived in May/June was essential for prolonging the growth period of rice at this high altitude. To safeguard their crops against the irregularities of monsoon rain and guarantee good harvests, all cultivators required irrigation to transplant their seedlings, and they had to share labour and distribute water to complete ploughing, add manure and transplant seedlings within this critical month. Therefore, community families had to co-operate to organise labour to ensure that all cultivators finished transplanting before early June. Thus, wet rice cultivation created a need for intra-community and inter-community co-operation, and this feature became characteristic of the basin societies of western Yunnan.

The management of large-scale irrigation systems on main rivers, such as the Miju and its tributaries, largely remained under the control of county magistrates. However, many irrigation systems in the three basins were small in scale, only collecting water from minor streams and distributing it to a limited number

of communities by canal. The small-scale irrigation systems in the Dengchuan, Fengyu and Langqiong basins were distinguished by management of labour and water at the community level. This chapter does not address the large-scale irrigation projects controlled by bureaucrats. Rather, it focuses on these small-scale projects. Particular attention is paid to the role of the local elite, particularly the gentry, in the management of issues related to water, agricultural resources and negotiating with the state. County magistrates issued regulations and orders that supported the local elite from the early Qing dynasty onward. Therefore, I utilise stele inscriptions, local gazetteers and official documents as well as notes from my own fieldwork as sources.

The increase in basin populations in western Yunnan due to the expansion of wet rice cultivation resulted in a seasonal shift in labour. Young males took advantage of the dry season after the rice harvest to work as traders in long-distance mule caravans or as craftsmen in upper Burma and Tai-speaking areas on the borderlands between Yunnan and Burma. Often travelling in groups, some of these young men worked as muleteers, other as miners in the uplands, as builders for native officials (*tuguan* 土官/*tusi* 土司), or as itinerant carpenters, masons and blacksmiths moving from one village to the next. Yet others found employment as short-term labourers.<sup>12</sup> Different ecological environments required diverse styles of labour co-operation and communal organisation in the basins and uplands of western Yunnan. The dry season in the cycle of wet rice cultivation provided villagers who possessed knowledge and skills an opportunity to earn income by working in communities of diverse ethnicity and culture spread across parts of southwestern Yunnan and northern mainland Southeast Asia. In this way, the movement of seasonal labour extended social connections from a single basin to a larger geographical area through transportation systems and the circulation of goods.<sup>13</sup>

### **Historical overview of irrigation in the three basins**

Historical sources reveal that Dengchuan, Fengyu and Langqiong came under the administration of the Nanzhao kingdom from the eighth century. Nanzhao placed them under Langqiong 浪穹州, which was established in 794. After the defeat of the Dali kingdom in 1253/54, the Mongol-Yuan divided Langqiong prefecture into two Battalions 千戶, which were subordinate to the Dali Circuit 路. With the founding of Dengchuan prefecture in 1274, the Mongol-Yuan renamed the two Battalions Fengyu county and Langqiong county. In 1383, after the Ming army finally suppressed the local resistance based at Foguang stockade 佛光寨, which lay between Langqiong and Heqing 鶴慶, the Ming appointed a Tai (Baiyi 擺夷) leader named A Zhe 阿這 hereditary Native Official in charge of Dengchuan. By this appointment, the Ming rewarded A Zhe for his meritorious service in leading troops from his native Weiyuan sub-prefecture in south Yunnan to aid the Ming army in the conquest of Dali. In its capacity as hereditary Native Officials, the A family subsequently played a crucial role for centuries in administrating the upland areas surrounding each of the three basins.

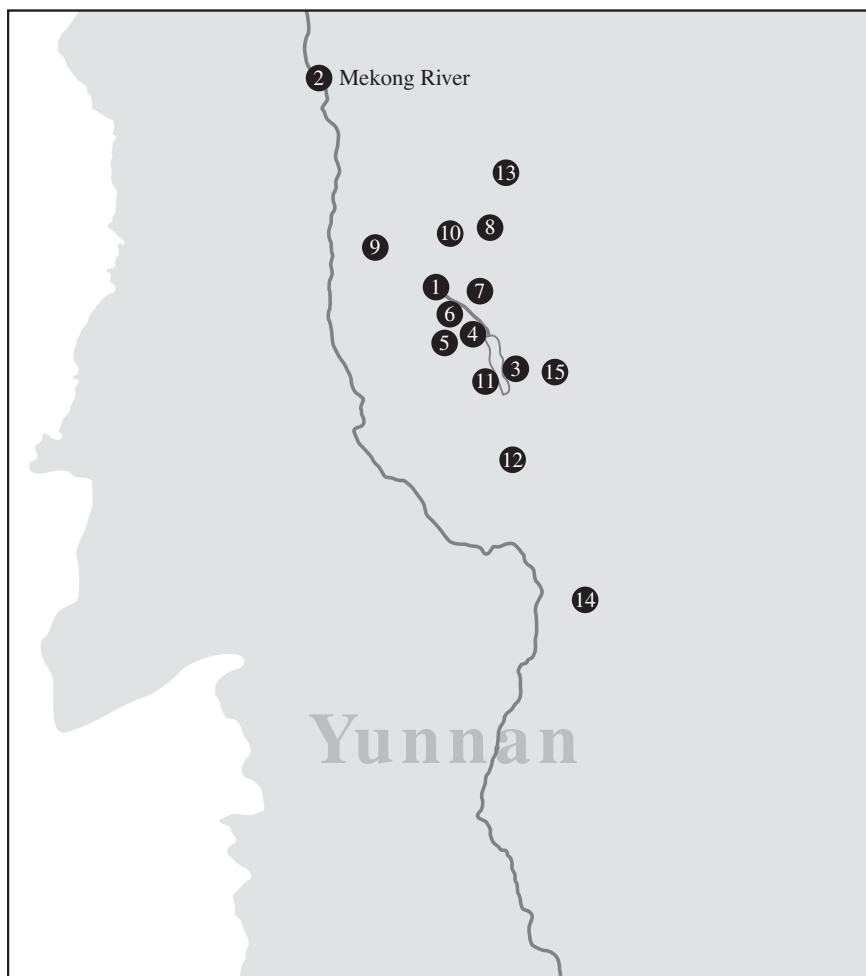
When the Ming established Dengchuan county in 1569, they retained the A family to help regular bureaucrats (*liuguan* 流官) govern under an arrangement known as “joint administration by native officials and regular bureaucrats” (*tuliu jianzhi* 土流兼治). The Ming apportioned part of western Langqiong county to neighbouring Yunnan county in 1620, decreasing the significance of Fengyu basin as a transportation link to the salt wells in Yunlong. After the 1911 Revolution, the Yunnan provincial government renamed Langqiong as Eryuan county. However, Dengchuan county remained until 1958, when the PRC merged the two counties into the new Eryuan county.<sup>14</sup>

The three basins and their surrounding uplands underwent social and political change between the ninth and thirteenth centuries, when the capital of Yunnan was located at Dali. Wet rice agriculture yielded rich harvests to support relatively dense populations in the villages and market towns in these basins. Two key factors shaped the social transition in Langqiong and Dengchuan Counties after the thirteenth century. The first was a change in state administrative institutions. The second was a shift in social and economic relations. The change in administrative institutions encompassed the establishment of counties, military Guards, the appointment of native officials during the early Ming, and the subsequent abolition of Guards and military households during the late Ming/early Qing. The accompanying shifts in administrative units and state policies caused alterations to household registration, identity reconstruction, and adjustments to agricultural landholdings and the management of water resources. Together, this set of changes resulted in the reconstruction of basin societies as communities structurally adapted to the ecology of basins and irrigated wet rice agriculture. Ethnic identities and social relationships were defined and redefined as new communities emerged.

By establishing Guards (*wei* 衛) and Battalions (*suo* 所), the Ming permanently settled Han military personnel and their families in the basins of Yunnan, requiring them to raise their own grain by cultivating land on state farms. Although originally designed for defence and to maintain social stability, military settlement played a crucial role in stimulating the reconstruction of basin communities. The Ming registered Guard troops as hereditary military households (*junhu* 軍戶),<sup>15</sup> thereby clearly distinguishing them from civilian households (*minhu* 民戶). In accordance with the requirements of *lijia* (里甲) household registration, Ming bureaucrats organised civilian families in Langqiong county into 25 *li* in the early period and added another 7 *li* when they extended *lijia* registration to the Fengyu basin during the Wanli reign period (1573–1620). Registration of civilians into *li* 里, or units of 110 households, functioned as an organisation for tax collection and as a system for controlling the rural population by creating a stable base for peasant reproduction.<sup>16</sup> In Dengchuan county, the Ming enumerated the population into 12 *li* but left the population of the northern upland area registered as Yangtang *Li* 羊塘里 under the control of the A Native Official family. Military personnel and their families were not organised into *li* and *jia* units during the early and mid-Ming. However, from the Wanli reign period, all military households in Dengchuan county were organised into *lijia* units for the

purpose of collecting taxes and assigning labour service in accordance with a policy known as “integrating Guards into [independent] sub-prefectures” (*caiwei guishou* 裁衛歸州). This reform expanded the total number of *li* in the county from 12 to 14.<sup>17</sup> Langqiong county underwent reforms similar to those in Dengchuan during the late Ming, and the organisation of all military households in Langqiong county into the *lijia* system and the re-measurement of agricultural land was completed by 1670.<sup>18</sup> Population growth resulted in deforestation in the uplands as mountain land was cleared for cultivation. These ecological changes caused the tributaries of the Miju River to flood increasingly larger areas of agricultural land in the basins. As a result, the effective operation of irrigation projects, particularly the construction, repair and maintenance of river dikes to protect villages and farming land, became a pressing issue in the Dengchuan basin.<sup>19</sup> Bureaucrats mobilised both civilian and military households to manage water resources along the Miju River in the Dengchuan basin near Erhai Lake from the early Ming. All civilian households registered in the 11 *li* had to provide one person for labour service on the river dikes in winter for every *dan* (石) of grain (approximately 60 kg) they paid to the state as taxation. Military households were divided into units of three households, with each unit being required to provide two individuals to work on the irrigation facilities. The workers, who could be male or female, gathered after the Spring Festival to reconstruct the river dikes and dredge the Miju River. The worker teams were led by village heads in the case of civilians and military officers in the case of the Battalions, and county bureaucrats oversaw all the projects.<sup>20</sup>

When the dikes of the Miju River collapsed in 1622 (Tianqi 2), bureaucrats fined all the villages that had neglected their maintenance duties. The Dengchuan County Magistrate bought 300 *mu* of farming land (approximately 20 acres) with the money from the fines and allocated the income earned from the rent of these lands to cover the expenses of repairing the dikes. County bureaucrats continued to enlarge funds for river maintenance by purchasing more income-earning land right up until 1949. Eventually, the acreage of agricultural land rented to provide funds for river repairs totalled approximately 1,500 *mu* (approximately 100 acres), yielding a total income of more than 10,000 silver dollars.<sup>21</sup> Apart from managing the Miju River, local gentry also implemented other hydraulic projects. Gao Shanggui, a native of Yinqiao village 銀橋村 in Dengchuan county, who had served as the Magistrate of Chaling 茶陵 in Hunan province, donated his salary to mobilise village gentry to dig a new canal on the western side of Dengchuan basin, known as the Yong’an River (永安江), in 1781 (Qianlong 46). The construction project required 26 months, 60,000 labourers and 3,600 *liang* silver (approximately 13.32 kg) to complete, and the new canal saved 11,200 *mu* (approximately 746 acres) of farmland from inundation.<sup>22</sup> As mentioned earlier, the management of large rivers, such as the Miju and its main tributaries, largely remained under the control of county magistrates. However, local gentry managed irrigation canals and small rivers on the basis of regulations issued by county magistrates from the early Qing dynasty onward.



- |                    |                        |               |
|--------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| ① Miju River 瀾苴河   | ⑦ Foguang Stockade 佛光寨 | ⑬ Lijiang 麗江  |
| ② Mekong River 瀾滄江 | ⑧ Heqing 鶴慶            | ⑭ Jingdong 景東 |
| ③ Lake Erhai       | ⑨ Lanzhou 蘭州           | ⑮ Binchuan 賓川 |
| ④ Dengchuan 鄧川     | ⑩ Jianchuan 劍川         |               |
| ⑤ Fengyu 鳳羽        | ⑪ Dali 大理              |               |
| ⑥ Langqiong 浪穹     | ⑫ Menghua 蒙化           |               |

Map 2.1 Dali region, c.1582.



### **Institutional changes and the differentiation of social identities**

The Mongol-Yuan administered local society in Yunnan through the magnate families of the fallen Dali kingdom after the conquest of 1253/54. By appointing the male head of the royal family the Duan Family General Administrator (*Duan shi zongguan* 段氏總管) after dethroning the King, the Mongol-Yuan perpetuated the authority of the Duan family and other powerful Dali kingdom families, such as the Gao 高 and the Dong 董, throughout the Mongol-Yuan period. The tomb inscription for Gao Laoguan 高老官 (Gao Guanyinlu 高觀音祿) from Eryuan county dated 1479 (Chenghua 15) characterises the pre-Ming as a period in which “the Gao served as leaders, and the Duan served as rulers” (“高家做酋，段家做詔”).<sup>23</sup> This inscription reveals that even in the latter half of the fifteenth century, nearly 100 years after the Ming had eliminated the Duan and all vestiges of the Dali kingdom, the local people still understood the socio-political framework of the Dali kingdom as continuing on throughout the Mongol-Yuan period. The inscription traces the pedigree of Gao Laoguan to a Prime Minister of the Dali kingdom named Gao Taiming 高泰明, who was the grandson of Gao Zhisheng 高智升, the latter having gained power after 1073 when the King Duan Silian 段思廉 relinquished power and became a monk, and the Dali kingdom court fell under the Prime Minister’s control.<sup>24</sup> Gao Taiming’s grandson, Gao Hai 高海, married a woman from the Zhao family of Fengyu, who gave birth to Gao Laoguan. According to the inscription, Gao Laoguan’s wife, Madame Li 李姓, observed the “three obediences and four virtues 三從四德, and her son Gao Xuan displayed filial piety in caring for his mother” and had “completely mastered the [philosophies of] the Various Masters and the Hundred Schools (*zhuzi baijia* 諸子百家)”.<sup>25</sup> Even though the Gao and Duan families no longer exercised political power, the Gao retained political influence in local communities during the fifteenth century through Buddhist monasteries; as devout Buddhists, the Gao had constructed many temples in the past. The attitude articulated by descendants of the Gao family in this inscription reveals consanguinity with Dali kingdom/Mongol-Yuan period society even as late as 1479.

Local society gradually changed during the new political environment of the early and mid-Ming. When the Ming established the Guard at Langqiong county (shown on Map 2.1), it settled military personnel in villages in the eastern part of the Langqiong basin. These military households 軍戶 shared the wet rice fields in the basin with the indigenous inhabitants, whom the Ming registered as civilian households.<sup>26</sup> Ai Zixiu 艾自修 (metropolitan degree 進士 holder of 1600), a scholar-official from Dengchuan, divided military households into two categories: *sheren* 舍人 and military people (*junren* 軍人). He wrote as follows:

*Sheren* are the family members and the kin relatives of commanders of the guard, the battalions and platoon commanders (*zongqi* 總旗). They provide conscript service (*chaiyi* 差役) to the guard and pay land tax to [regular bureaucrats]. All have been subordinate to the sub-prefectural magistrate since the Wanli reign period (1573–1619) because they live on Dengchuan

soil, and eat from [the harvests of] Dengchuan wet fields. Military people are divided into four battalions; thirty per cent of them remain on active service, seventy per cent of them pay land tax, and auxiliary males (餘丁 *yuding* [family members supporting regular servicemen]) pay their labour services in silver (*yinchai* 銀差 [i.e., their labour services have been commuted to silver]). Military people on service mostly shoulder the responsibility [for defence] with Native official armies (*tujun* 土軍); all reside at the borders of the sub-prefecture, and all are subordinate to the sub-prefecture magistrate. This also began during the Wanli reign period.<sup>27</sup>

In 1853, the County Magistrate Hou Yunqin 侯允欽 observed that the guard and battalion system of the Ming functioned on the premise of 70 per cent of the military households cultivating military state farm land and 30 per cent participating in training and defence. Dividing three military households into single working units, the Ming allocated each unit 20 *mu* of arable land (approximately 3.3 acres) and required them to deliver 50 *dan* (approximately 2,500 kg) of harvested grain to granaries at the Guard annually. However, after deducting their own grain rations, the actual amount delivered only totalled 22.8 *dan* (approximately 1,140 kg), a figure significantly lower than the target. Later, the Ming changed the regulations, requiring each working unit to deliver 9.12 *dan* (456 kg) of rice to the Guard granary. In addition to the military state farms, manors (*xunzhuang* 勳莊) directly controlled by the Mu family 沐氏, the Imperial Duke, were located in Langqiong and Dengchuan. The Mu family paid no taxes and provided no labour service for holding these manors due to their rank and position. The people on the manors were fierce and uncontrollable and antagonised local bureaucrats until 1685, when the early Qing state placed military households under the jurisdiction of the counties.<sup>28</sup>

Native officials constituted a separate institutional category from that of regular bureaucrats. As mentioned earlier, the Tai leader Dao Ai 刀哀 from Weiyuan sub-prefecture in southern Yunnan fought on the Ming side against the pro-Mongol-Yuan forces resisting at Foguang stockade 佛光寨. According to a tomb inscription of 1508 (Zhengde 3), the Ming appointed A Zhe 阿這, the son of Dao Ai, as the Native Magistrate of Dengchuan sub-prefecture sometime after defeating the resistance in 1383, and he established a seat of office, registered households and established schools. This Tai family changed its surname to A 阿氏 and intermarried with other native officials in western Yunnan. It intermarried with the Zuo 左氏 family of Menghua 蒙化, the Mu 木氏 family of Lijiang, the Tao 陶氏 family of Jingdong 景東, the Luo 羅氏 family of Lanzhou 蘭州 (today's 蘭坪), and established marriage ties with commanders of the Dali Guard 大理衛指揮使.<sup>29</sup> The A Family Native Official administered the ten Police Offices 巡檢司 established to manage upland communities and salt wells lying between Dengchuan sub-prefecture and valleys along the Mekong (Lancang) River to the west. Only the A family had the authority to command the troops of these hereditary Police Offices.<sup>30</sup> The Tai soldiers who came with Dao Ai from Weiyuan sub-prefecture settled in Luochuan 羅川, a small basin

northwest of Dengchuan, and their descendants served as troops for the A family. In 1573, Yuefeng 岳鳳, the adopted son of Duo Shining 多士寧, the Tai Native Official of Longchuan 隴川 on the Sino-Burmese border, murdered Duo, usurped power and proclaimed himself ruler of the domain. Yuefeng later swore loyalty to the Tounggoo dynasty and launched military attacks on native officials in Ming territory.<sup>31</sup> A Yu 阿鈺, the incumbent Native Official of Dengchuan, was married to the daughter of Duo Shining 多士寧 and therefore participated in the Ming campaign led by Liu Ting 劉綎 and Deng Zilong 鄧子龍 against the invading army of the Tounggoo King Nan-da bayin 莽應里 (reigned 1581 to 1591) in 1583.<sup>32</sup> Due to long-term intermarriage connections with Tai native officials on the Sino-Burmese border, the A family played a role in Sino-Burmese relations. Although it no longer held the title of Native Official in the eighteenth century, the A family aided the Qing during the war between the Qing and the Konbaung dynasty in the 1765–1769 period. This war resulted in another wave of Tai refugee immigrants from the Sino-Burmese border area, who settled as wet rice cultivators at Yangtang Li 羊塘里 in the Luochuan basin.

In Langqiong and Dengchuan, the three institutional categories of the military (Guards and Battalions), regular bureaucrats and native officials existed in parallel from the Ming to the early Qing. On the one hand, reforms of household registration and tax revenue along with the integration of military families into local society and the abolition of native official titles changed relationships among communities. On the other hand, the A family of Dengchuan played a role in frontier politics, particularly with respect to Burma, and in relations between native officials within Yunnan. These reforms and socio-political changes altered the environment that shaped the cultural and the social identities of literati. Literati strategies and interpretations of culture and identity were strongly influenced by political shifts from the late Ming to the early Qing. A good example can be found in the detailed description of the social categories of identities in late Ming Dengchuan recorded by the scholar-official Ai Zixiu 艾自修 and published in his compilation the 1646 *Gazetteer of Dengchuan Sub-prefecture* 遼川州志. Ai Zixiu, from a military family in Dengchuan, held the position of Sub-prefectural Magistrate of Chenzhou (辰州) in Hunan. After retirement, he returned to Dengchuan, where he educated many students. As a member of the local gentry, he was active as a leader of the local community. His prestige largely derived from his social activities and from the sale of 40 *mu* of his own wet field land to cover the printing costs of the 1646 gazetteer, an act the Neo-Confucian literati regarded as particularly praiseworthy. Members of the gentry with opinions similar to those of Ai Zixiu emerged during this period as the gentry were rising as a powerful group in local society.

Ai Zixiu classified local society into seven groups, each of which represented different identities: indigenous people 土人, Han people 漢人, guest migrant people 客人, *sheren* 舍人, military people 軍人, Cuan people 爨人 (here referring to the Luoluo 猓獯 or Yi 彝) and Bo people 夔人 (here referring to the Tai). Based on his study of past literature, Ai Zixiu explained the Han people as originating in the descendants of immigrants dating back to the time when Zhu Geliang 諸葛亮

(181–234), the renowned strategist of the Shu kingdom, led punitive expeditions from Sichuan to Yunnan during the Three Kingdoms period. Han people from the central plains continued to immigrate, and indigenous people named them Han people 漢人. The category of guest migrant people encompassed the descendants of non-military immigrants from the provinces of Zhejiang, Sichuan and Huguang, who came for the purpose of trade or to participate trans-locally in the civil examinations. Arriving relatively late, they were registered by the Ming as local households. “Military people” referred to the households of the Guards and the Battalions. All people in these categories cultivated wet rice in the basins. As an indigenous ethnic group living in the mountains, Cuan people came under the authority of the A Native Official as registered civilian households of *li* communities and had to pay tax and render *corvée* service to the A family. Meanwhile, the Bo people, the descendants of Tai immigrants from southern Yunnan who arrived with Dao Ai, now served as the military force of the A Native Official. Most significantly, Ai Zixiu elucidated that indigenous people (*turen* 土人) included several special categories and social identities. He explained the origin of the term *Bai erzi* 白兒子 (literally, “sons of the Bai”) as follows:

Ashoka, the Indian emperor, who came to Dali to feed monks with white rice during the Han dynasty, was known as the King of White Rice (Baifanwang 白飯王). Therefore, his offspring became known as “the sons of the Bai (the White)”. [This name] has remained unchanged for more than a thousand years.<sup>33</sup>

Ai Zixiu understood the crucial elements of the Bai identity to be rice, Ashoka and monks.

In his account of late Ming social identities, Ai Zixiu divided the indigenous inhabitants into three groups: the children of the Bai in the basin, the Cuan (Luoluo 猓獯) in the mountains, and the Bo, or Tai, immigrants from southern Yunnan. He identified these three indigenous groups using the criteria of spoken language and customs. However, he classified the three Han groups (i.e., Han people, *sheren* and military personnel) according to military rank and social status. The category of guest migrant people, who lived among local communities, consisted of traders, students studying to sit the examinations, and retired officials. The criteria applied by Ai Zixiu for distinguishing social identification and self-identity included factors as diverse as culture, local settlement history, types of household registration and social rank. However, certain Ming categories, such as *sheren* and military households, completely disappeared after the reform of the household registration system during the Ming/Qing transition. The invalidation of several previous criteria resulted in the creation of new social identities, such as the *minjia* 民家 (civilian families consisting of indigenous Bai) and the Han, in the early Qing. Ai Zixiu participated in the discourse on the history of the Bai people prior to the Ming. By claiming that the indigenous Bai people descended from the ancient Indian monarch Ashoka, named “the King of White Rice”, Ai Zixiu offered an alternative to other stories regarding the origin of the Bai

people. One version identified them as descending from civilians in the ancient kingdom of Bai, which was located under the White Cliff in the Midu 彌渡 basin during the late Ming and early Qing period.<sup>34</sup> Discourses on indigenous identity and history emphasised such factors as divergent as rice farming, Buddhism or ancient local kingdoms. However, for the non-indigenous “others”, such as military households and guest migrant people, it was their social ranking in connection with state institutions that mattered.

In the new 1853 edition of the Dengchuan gazetteer, Hou Yunqin and other editors simply classified the social identity of civilians as a “diverse” category that encompassed “the indigenous or the Bai” and “the Han”. Hou Yunqin added new sub-categories of Han that distinguished their origins, such as the descendants of military households on state farms and registered households of guest migrants. This gazetteer recorded the presence of many rich Hui Muslim merchants and new immigrants from Burma and identified the Luoluo as inhabitants of the uplands, drawing a distinction between their occupations on the western and eastern mountains surrounding the basins: Luoluo raised stock on the western sides of the basins and engaged in mining on the eastern sides.

Accounts and discussions of social categories and identities reveal that society had changed over the 200 years from the 1640s to the 1850s. Two editions of Dengchuan gazetteers indicate that the reconstruction of boundaries between social groups related to their settlement history, military rank, household registration and occupation did not result in the formation of fixed, stable ethnic identities. The social mechanism for communal organisations both in basins and uplands was not shaped by language and custom but, rather, largely influenced by agriculture and the activities of local literati working within the framework of state institutions. Interaction between communities played a significant role in the continual construction of social boundaries and identities shaped by the agency of the literati and the gentry through their management of funds in communal religious practices and their organisation of rice farming irrigation. All these elements contributed to the reconstruction of social identities and boundaries between communities, not only in the basins and uplands but also between communities of different social rank and status under the framework of state institutions.

### **Role of the gentry in the transformation of local society**

As a retired scholar-official deeply involved in community affairs, Ai Zixiu may be regarded as a representative of the gentry, a social stratum that gradually emerged during the early Ming. The gentry replaced the former elite, which declined with the transformation of Dali kingdom-style society and religion in accordance with new Ming norms that emerged in the context of new state institutions. The newly formed gentry strongly influenced the community organisations that emerged in tandem with shifts in religious practices.

Buddhism had been influential at the local level in the Dali area long before the Ming. The foundation of several famous Buddhist temples and chapels in

Langqiong, Fengyu and Dengchuan dated to Nanzhao and Dali kingdom times. Well-known examples include such temples as Longhua 龍華寺, Zhulin 竹林寺, Biaoleng 標楞寺, Lingjiu 靈鷲寺, Jishan 積善寺 and the Rangong Chapel 讓公庵. A stele inscription at Lingjiu Temple in Fengyu dated 1491 records the temple's reconstruction during the Yongle reign period (1402–1424) after it was burned by the Ming army. The faithful restored Buddha statues, including those of the Buddhas of the past, present and future (sanshi Fo 三世佛) and the statue of Mahākāla, the protector of the local territory 土主迦羅. The stele mentions the donation of agricultural land by many villagers to generate income for temple maintenance. The prospect of merit for their descendants motivated these donors in their acts of piety. The Three Pagoda Temple 三塔寺 controlled the Rangong Chapel 讓公庵, which the Gao family constructed during the Nanzhao kingdom period. Friends of the famous Neo-Confucian scholar Li Yuanyang 李元陽 (1497–1580) supported the chapel by donating funds to buy farm land for its maintenance as late as the Jiajing reign period (1522–1566). According to tradition, seven holy monks 聖僧 constructed Biaoleng Temple during the Nanzhao kingdom period.<sup>35</sup> A stele dated 1430 (Xuande 5) records that Zhao Yanzhen 趙彥貞 from a local family of officials renovated Longhua Temple (flourished during the Nanzhao to Dali kingdom periods) after its destruction by the Ming army. He donated agricultural land for its maintenance after he passed the civil service examination.<sup>36</sup> These cases reveal that Dali kingdom-style patronage of Buddhist religious practice continued well into the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Powerful families donated farmland to accumulate merit, and their sponsorship gave them influence over large Buddhist monasteries, which in turn enabled them to control sizeable areas of farmland. It became increasingly difficult for large monasteries to maintain their landholdings after the mid-Ming because of the rise of village temples controlled by local communities.

Before the late Ming, village temples remained insignificant, overshadowed by the large Buddhist monasteries. According to stele inscriptions, certain village temples in Langqiong played an important bonding role for the people residing in various villages in the basin. For instance, Xingci Temple 興慈廟 commemorated Fengshi 豐時, who ruled the area before the Nanzhao kingdom conquered the Langqiong basin. Luofu Temple 羅浮廟 venerated the ruler of Shilang zhao 施浪詔, a polity located in Langqiong prior to the foundation of the Nanzhao kingdom, while Huikang Temple 惠康廟 honoured Zhao Shanzheng 趙善政, the ruler of a short-lived regime between the Nanzhao and the Dali kingdoms. People at the grass-roots level celebrated the history of their local rulers through worship. Several small temples dedicated to gods performed functions closely associated with livelihoods. Lingying Temple 靈應廟 paid homage to the legendary figure Zhang Jing 張敬 for helping the Goddess of Mercy (Guanyin or Avalokiteśvara) overpower the raksha demons (*luocha* 羅刹) who had long plagued the people of Dali. Tradition holds that after his death, people worshipped Zhang Jing as the “god that drained the ditch” (*lougou zhi shen* 漏溝之神) and revered him as the deity responsible for the distribution of water resources. Another village temple memorialised an envoy from the Tang dynasty who served there as a local official.

In addition to those historically associated with the Nanzhao and the Dali kingdom, other temples, such as Dragon King 龍王廟, were closely connected with the management of village water resources for irrigation and for powering mills. Village temples differed markedly from large Buddhist monasteries, which were patronised and controlled by powerful magnate families, such as the Gaos and the Zhaos, and even by prominent members of the scholar-gentry, such as Li Yuanyang. Local people managed these temples, and they functioned in ways intricately connected with everyday life. Following the decline of large Buddhist monasteries, village temples assumed increasing prominence in community life, particularly in water resource management, festivals, and labour sharing during the rice planting season.

Gentry projects for the transformation of local society by re-interpreting religious history according to Neo-Confucian thought ended up enhancing the significance of village temples. Gentry involvement in the re-interpretation of the gods worshipped at Cishan Temple 慈善廟 illustrates this point. Citing various texts in recounting the history of this temple, Ai Zixiu stressed that the strong belief in Buddhism among the inhabitants of Dali derived from the temple's proximity to India (Tianzhu 天竺):

They go to Buddhist monasteries to worship the Buddha and to feed the monks twice a month. It is commonly said that families gain eternal harmony, and thus become wealthy by believing in the Three Gems.<sup>37</sup> Honorary officials (*yiguan* 義官) do not spare any expense in their construction of Buddhist monasteries, and even native officials and the wild and the intractable (*jieao* 桀驁) all bow and pay obeisance when they encounter Buddhist monks (*ziliu* 緇流). Old gazetteers record that what people commonly call the sons of the Bai are the descendants of the White Rice King, who was a Buddha.<sup>38</sup>

The case of the Holy Consort of White Purity (Baijie Shengfei 白潔聖妃) venerated at Cishan Temple in Dengchuan illustrates the extent to which the gentry's re-interpretation of local gods influenced the shift from Buddhist monasteries to village temples.

Prior to the formation of the Nanzhao kingdom, today's Dengchuan housed a polity known as Dengdan 鄧賅, with its capital at the walled city of Deyuan 德源城, literally "the city of the source of virtue". This polity was one of the four polities in the Dali area that were conquered and incorporated into the Nanzhao kingdom. In his review of the history of the unification of the polities, Ai Zixiu related the following tale:

During the Kaiyuan reign period (713–741), the ruler of Nanzhao, desired to annex the other four polities to create a kingdom, so he invited the four rulers to a banquet to celebrate the *xinghui* festival 星回節 on the sixteenth day of the twelfth lunar month. He set fire to the building, and then ordered the wives of the four rulers to search for their husband's bones and take

them home. At first, Cishan, the wife of the ruler of Dengdan, could not find the bones of her husband, but she located them by searching for the iron bracelet that [she] asked her husband wear on his arm. The ruler of Nanzhao marvelled at her intelligence and strongly desired to take her as his wife. Cishan replied saying, “I have not buried my deceased husband yet, so how could I dare think of marrying again so quickly?”, and then she shut tight her city gates. The Nanzhao army encircled the city, and all inside died of starvation after three months after completely exhausting their food supplies. [Before dying] Cishan declared, “I am going to report the injustice done to my husband to Heaven (Shangdi 上帝).” Horrified by this, the ruler of Nanzhao repented, and extolled her city as the “source of virtue”.<sup>39</sup>

Ai Zixiu highlighted the crucial point in the story: Madame Cishan chose to starve to death together with her people rather than re-marry her husband’s murderer. Ai hinted that the Nanzhao ruler conferred honours on the city of Dengdan by re-naming it the “city of the source of virtue” out of fear of revenge from “the hungry ghosts” (*egui* 餓鬼) of Madame Cishan and all who died in the city.

Earlier texts provide Buddhist moral interpretations of Madame Cishan rather than underscore Confucian concepts of a wife’s chastity and loyalty to her husband. One such interpretation appears in a stele inscription dated 1425 (Hongxi 1), in which local literati author Yang Ci 楊賜 recorded the history of Jinbang Temple 金鏘寺 near Erhai Lake. This history aids us in understanding how Madame Cishan was constructed as a goddess and how the literati represented her to local people. Yang Ci noted that in 1350 during the Mongol-Yuan period the Dali Route Commander, Duan Xinjuyi 段信苴義, constructed this temple to worship four types of deity: the Four Heavenly Kings 四天王, Mahākāla 大黑天神, the Holy Consort White Sister Mother Hāriti (Beijie shengfei Helidimu 白姐聖妃訶梨帝母), and the Bodhi Tree 菩提樹. Local communities regularly organised a parade for the deities on the eighth day of the second lunar month. Destroyed by the Ming army in the conquest of Dali in 1382, the temple was reconstructed in 1415 by the people of Changyu village 長育村, who donated farming land to generate income to support it.<sup>40</sup> Madame Cishan, known here as the Holy Consort of White Purity (Baijie Shengfei 白潔聖妃), was recorded in later local gazetteers as the White Sister (Baijie 白姐), Pure Cedar (Bojie 柏潔), and the wife of the Dengdan ruler 鄧睽詔夫人.<sup>41</sup> At the time of the reconstruction of Jinbang Temple in 1415 (Yongle 12), sixty-five years after its founding by Duan Xinjuyi, believers still worshipped the wife of the Dengdan ruler as the deity Mother Hāriti. Hāriti was a Buddhist goddess who protected children, aided in childrearing, parenting and family harmony, and facilitated pregnancies. She was also known as *yakkha* 母夜叉 or a demon. Buddhist texts record how the Buddha transformed Hāriti from a demon to a deity. Hāriti had numerous children of her own whom she loved and doted on, but she abducted and killed the children of others to feed them. To teach her a lesson, the Buddha hid her youngest son. In desperation after being unable to find him, Hāriti finally pleaded to the Buddha for help. The Buddha responded that her suffering over the loss of her son was



the same as that of the other parents whose children she had murdered and transformed Hārīti from a demon into a Buddhist deity responsible for the protection of children. The pedigree of this goddess from the Mongol-Yuan to the late Ming reveals that Madame Cishan began as a tragic heroine, the wife of the Dengdan ruler who starved herself to death to avoid re-marriage to her husband's murderer, before being transformed into the Holy Consort of White Purity, a goddess equated with the Buddhist deity Hārīti. Cishan, literally the goddess of "benevolent goodness", from early Ming times assumed the role of protector of women and children.

However, the image of Madame Cishan as Hārīti changed significantly after the Ming/Qing transition. Literati rewrote her story to conform with Confucian ideas, and in the new version, Cishan now came to be revered as a paragon of female virtue: a model of chastity and loyalty. Feng Su 馮甦, a native of Zhejiang who had served as the Prefectural Magistrate of Yongchang and Chuxiong, repositioned the tale of Cishan within the framework of Confucian moral standards of righteous loyal males and chaste female martyrs (*zhongyi jielie* 忠義節烈). He articulated this fresh interpretation in the 1671 (Kangxi 10) stele he wrote for the Cishan Fei Miao, which was unearthed from its original site within the walled city of Deyuan:

There have been numerous righteous and loyal ministers over the last thousand odd years from the Tianbao reign period (742–756) until the present. Alas, [the details of] many are lost and have not been passed down to us! The rise of the six zhao [polities] was an exceptionally tiny event as it merely concerned one among the various barbarians (*zhuman* 諸蠻). There are countless cases of barbarian brothers (*miaoman xiongdi* 苗蠻兄弟) murdering each other and seizing their wives. In the beginning, nobody knew the preciousness of chastity martyrdom (*jilie* 節烈), and furthermore the consort despite being intelligent ended up failing to protect the descent-line and territory (*zongshe* 宗社) [of her husband]. Due to the successive deaths of both husband and wife, [the significance of martyrdom for chastity] vanished into the barbarian miasmas and the pestilential rain over the passage of time. Why have [people] transmitted the tale and worshipped [Cishan] until today? The [account in] the historical records of Yunnan is fragmentary, and the *Bai Guji* 白古記<sup>42</sup> is not often seen in the houses of scholars. Moreover, no erudite gentleman has carved the event in stone inside [Cishan] Consort's Temple. Her death for fidelity (*sijie* 死節) has only been transmitted orally by the people of Dengchuan, so the details have not been lost throughout the Song, Yuan and Ming. The details have come down to us because it is impossible to eradicate the Bonds, Constant Virtues and the sense of Great Righteousness (*gangchang dayi* 綱常大義)<sup>43</sup> that naturally reside in the hearts of the people.<sup>44</sup>

Feng Su faced serious challenges to his official career when he wrote this account. Wu Sangui, the turncoat General who surrendered to the Manchus while still serving the Ming, controlled Yunnan at the time. Although he did not

openly rebel against the Qing until 1673, Wu Sangui had already indicated his intentions in 1671. However, Feng Su did not want to participate in his rebellion even though it was Wu Sangui who appointed him Magistrate after he arrived in Yunnan with the Qing army in 1661.<sup>45</sup> As a Confucian scholar living in tumultuous times of dynastic transition, Feng Su had already switched allegiance from the Ming to the Qing. However, now, his loyalty to the Qing faced a challenge from the Wu Sangui regime. It seems that when Feng Su wrote the 1671 stele, he was troubled regarding his political position. Madame Cishan became a medium through which Feng Su could express his pent-up feelings regarding loyalty. He praised the tale of Madame Cishan as a representation of the Three Bonds, the Five Constant Virtues and the sense of Great Righteousness. However, he also intended to educate the people in the land regarding “barbarian miasmas and pestilential rain” and the value of “chastity martyrdom”, including its historical value, from the standpoint of Confucian ideology. Re-interpretations by later local literati also re-positioned Madame Cishan within the framework of Confucian morality in accordance with state ideology. The new Confucian version of Madame Cishan as a chaste wife loyal to her husband replaced the former image of her representing the Buddhist deity Hāriti. Although the Confucian literati embraced this metaphor of gendered loyalty, at the local level, villagers continued to worship Madame Cishan as the protective goddess of women and children.

By re-writing texts and re-interpreting the layers of meanings embodied in old texts to accord with shifts in dynastic power, the local literati educated local communities in Confucian values and played a key role in re-constructing these communities to match institutional reforms. Change progressed at a slow pace. However, it deeply altered the practice of local religion and the organisation of local communities. The endless wars and social chaos of the Ming/Qing transition disrupted local life, and dislocation wrought by floods and epidemics reshaped community relations. The abolition of the Guards and the Battalions ultimately resulted in the integration of military households into the local *lijia* registration system in 1687. The Yongzheng-period tax reform combined the poll tax with the land tax (*diding yin* 地丁銀), and this reform shifted the tax base of state power from the individual household to the village. The shift to the village enabled community leaders to create a new platform for integrating older elements into the new local culture that they were in the process of constructing. In addition, local communities provided labour for transportation and water management through the *lijia* system. Religious worship continued to function as a means for local communities to respond to county bureaucrats. As a result, local political and social life became centred on temples managed by *li* communities, and the Confucian literati used their status as gentry to gradually penetrate the political and economic lives of villagers, which brought about a cultural transformation that weakened the influence of Buddhism. With the decline of Buddhist monasteries from the Ming to the Qing, village temples came to assume an even more important role in agro-economics and the maintenance of social order.

***Lijia* system, religious reform and the gentry**

The early and mid-Ming saw the transformation of several large Buddhist monasteries into village temples, and these new village temples eventually replaced the large monasteries in local religious life from the late Ming onward. The rise of local leaders and Confucian literati and their subsequent control of village temples occurred as an extension of the transformation of the local elite from Dali kingdom/Mongol-Yuan period-style Buddhist scholars and magnate families into new Confucian literati deeply involved in village affairs. The literati, who were mostly men with status in the examination system and retired officials, constituted gentry in the sense used by T'ung-tsu Ch'u.<sup>46</sup> The Wanli reign period (1573–1620) marked the beginning of administrative reforms that affected local society in Dengchuan county. The Ming made the county responsible for administering military households and essentially abolished state farms.<sup>47</sup> The Ming registered the Tai who in-migrated with the A Native Official as *lijia* households and settled them in forty-eight villages in Yangtang Li 羊塘里 during the early Ming.<sup>48</sup> However, as a result of agricultural growth and increased population density, the A Native Official lost his administrative power over the basin population, only maintaining authority over the uplands in Dengchuan. A regular bureaucrat serving as the county magistrate and the hereditary A Native Official had jointly administered Dengchuan from its establishment in the early Ming. However, in 1569, the Ming made the county magistrate solely responsible for governance. The A Native Official only retained control of his own military force (*tujun*), which consisted of men from upland communities, but he exercised no authority over the affairs of the *lijia* households in the basins.<sup>49</sup> These wide-ranging administrative reforms affected the military, native officials and state taxation policy and gradually homogenised the area in Dengchuan at the northern end of Erhai Lake between the early and late Ming. However, because the administrative reforms initiated the growth of new ethnic identities and created fresh cultural meanings, this tendency did not result in a simple process of “sinicisation” involving cultural unification or standardisation. These developments constitute the backdrop against which the gentry actively participated in the reconstruction of local society.

The following description by Ai Zixiu makes clear that the *lijia* system functioned as an institution for performing state-stipulated rituals and as a grass-roots level organisation for collecting tax and procuring *corvée* service in Dengchuan:

The Ritual system of the Hongwu [Emperor] stipulates: “An altar for worshipping the gods of the five soils and five grains should be established for every one-hundred households in the suburbs and villages 鄉村. The five soils should be worshipped at the Spring Sacrifice (*chunshè* 春社) on the fifth day after the Beginning of Spring. The god of the five grains should be worshipped at the Autumn Sacrifice (*qiushè* 秋社) on the fifth day after the Beginning of Autumn.” Each of the twelve *li* and four battalions in this

sub-prefecture have set up she 社 in the monasteries and temples for worship, and moreover have established elementary schools (*mengxunguan* 蒙訓館) inside them.<sup>50</sup>

It was because the twelve *li* represented communities as well as administrative units that the state established she 社 in the “monasteries and temples for worship” in Dengchuan. By harnessing the twelve *li*, the Ming ensured that communities performed rituals at the right time to reap good harvests. Every *li* had three *li* Elders (*lilao* 里老). The first, known as “the Wooden Bell Elder” (*muduo laoren* 木鐸老人), was responsible for patrolling the community and providing moral instruction. The second, known as “the Community Covenant Elder” (*xiangyue laoren* 鄉約老人), handled minor legal adjudications, mediated economic disputes, maintained peace and order, and helped local bureaucrats communicate with households in the *li* community. The third, known as the “Labour Management Elder” (*guangong laoren* 管工老人), organised manpower for labour service. This position became defunct with the reform of the tax system. Each elder received three *dou* 斗 of grain (approximately 45kg) per month as remuneration. In addition, there were *li* captains (*lishang* 里長), who together with the *jia* heads collected and shipped the grain tax of the *li* and bore responsibility for drawing up and implementing the labour service roster. After the commutation of the grain tax to payment in silver, *li* captains still had to ensure that payments were made in full. To maintain order in society, the bureaucrats introduced a system of collective responsibility known as the *baojia* 保甲 that encompassed all households. In theory, one *bao* consisted of ten *jia* (10 households per *jia*), and ten *bao* formed one *li* 里, or *xiang* 鄉. The bureaucrats assigned each household a house number (*menpai* 門牌) irrespective of status or wealth and recorded the number of household members, the amount of normal harvest and the types of weapons possessed. This security system aimed to make all households in the *jia* collectively responsible for crimes or misdemeanours. Ai Zixiu left the following description of the system’s operation in Dengchuan:

If fire breaks out in one family, the other nine families provide emergency assistance; if one family steals, the other nine families are responsible for stopping it; thus, the system could effectively be managed by the *jia* heads. Strangers and outlaws (*miansheng dairen* 面生歹人) cannot lodge at inns (*dian* 店) or go through mountain passes. Gambling, which is strictly prohibited, will not be tolerated on commercial premises, or in private retreats (*bieshi* 別室). Itinerant Buddhist monks and demonic Daoist priests will not be able to stay at Chapels 庵, Halls 堂, Buddhist monasteries and Daoist temples.<sup>51</sup>

The Single Whip (*yitiao bianfa* 一條鞭法) reforms of the second half of the sixteenth century converted certain regular *lijia* labour services and miscellaneous labour levies into a single payment in silver. These new measures shifted

the unit of tax assessment from the *li* to the counties and sub-prefectures and required individual taxpayers to deliver their commuted tax payments in person. The *lijia* no longer had to handle the delivery of grain tax and to organise labour service under this new arrangement.<sup>52</sup> The implementation of these new policies progressed slowly, only reaching completion during the Yongzheng reign period.

Because the *li* and *jia* units still handled certain regular labour services and additional labour services were assigned to these units, these reforms did not reduce the burden of registered households. The endless wars in the late Ming period and the change in the currencies circulating on local markets in Yunnan increased the burden of peasant households. Shell money and copper coins had circulated as local currency for a long time. However, with the introduction of the Single Whip reforms, the state only accepted tax payments in silver, and the greater demand caused an increase in the price of silver. For peasant households only holding shell money or copper coins, this increase caused a substantial increase in the amount of tax paid, and the bureaucrats profited from the difference in exchange rates.<sup>53</sup> In addition, the *li* and *jia* in the basins along the main thoroughfares in Yunnan still had to provide labour and horses for transportation (*fuma tanpai* 夫馬攤派) from the Ming until the late Qing.

The transportation route for officials travelling between Dengchuan sub-prefecture and Heqing prefecture was managed by two post stations from the early Ming. Dengchuan sub-prefecture was responsible for assigning labour service for transportation by mule caravan and receiving officials travelling from the lower station (*xiazhan* 下站) in Dali to the upper station (*shangzhan* 上站) in Heqing. The distance between Dali station at Erxiyi 洱西邑 village to Dengchuan station was 45 km, and the distance from Dengchuan to Guanyin mountain station in Heqing prefecture was approximately the same.<sup>54</sup> After General Wu Sangui rebelled against the Qing in 1673, the Wu regime assigned Heqing prefecture's responsibility for providing labour service for official travel and transportation to Langqiong sub-prefecture. Langqiong originally paid 72 *liang* silver (approximately 95 ounces) per year for the Guanyin Mountain section. However, now, it had to provide an additional twenty men for labour service. As a result, each *lijia* unit in Langqiong paid the silver required on a rotating basis and provided men for duty each day to serve the needs of travelling officials. The local gentry of Langqiong were highly dissatisfied with this arrangement, and brought a lawsuit against Heqing prefecture. To settle the issue, the *yamen* of the Yunnan-Gui Governor-general abolished Langqiong's service assignments for transportation but still required the communities of Dengchuan to pay 48 *liang* silver (approximately 63 ounces) annually for Heqing to handle transportation.<sup>55</sup> This lawsuit reveals that the local economy had undergone substantial changes with the integration of the Guards and Battalions into the *lijia*, the abolition of the Dengchuan Native Official, and the introduction of the Single Whip reform since the Wanli reign period. In addition, mines were opened in the uplands on the border between Dengchuan and Heqing prefecture during the late Ming. A silver mine known as the Yushi Mine 玉獅廠 flourished and attracted

many migrants from other provinces. Increased population density and the construction of irrigation facilities changed society in the three basins of Dengchuan, Langqiong and Fengyu. The villages that grew out of the *lijia* became increasingly powerful when the gentry assumed leadership of local communities. Complex social identities based on residential settlement shifted during the early Qing dynasty as a result of administrative reforms that eliminated social categories such as military households, which simplified local identities into the categories of Han households 漢家 and Minjia 民家 (Civilian households) for the indigenous Bai people. Along with the growth of new village communities, the gentry gained increasingly greater power over village affairs, and their influence was prominent in moral instruction and religious activities.

An example of moral instruction by Neo-Confucian scholars appeared in the writings of Yang Nanjin 楊南金, a metropolitan degree holder of 1499 who was born and bred in Dengchuan. He authored a treatise entitled the *Sanjiao Lun* 三教論 (Discussions on the Three Teachings) and maintained close associations with the renown Dali scholar Li Yuanyan 李元陽 and the exiled Sichuanese scholar Yang Shen 楊慎. Yang Nanjin hailed from an indigenous Bai civilian family and was not a member of a Han military household. After retiring from bureaucratic service, he took a deep interest in local affairs and enthusiastically wrote about the need to reform local customs and practices in his *Xixinquan Bei* 洗心泉碑 (Spring for Washing Hearts Stele), dated 1519 (Zhengde 14). This stele commemorates the completion of a project to divert running water from a spring for everyday use in the sub-prefectural city of Dengchuan. Yang Nanjin wanted the local people to “wash away” certain old and new practices that he regarded as detrimental to social order in the *li* and *jia*. He described the practices that he disliked in a five-word poem titled *Tuzhu Bian* 土著變 (Local Change). To better understand what he wanted to “wash away”, I translate the poem into prose below:

Grandchildren inherit fields watered by valley streams (*xitian* 溪田) measuring three to five *shuang* 雙 [approximately 15 to 20 acres]<sup>56</sup> from their grandfathers and fathers. They cultivate and herd wearing large conical bamboo hats and palm-bark raincoats, and they are content with coarse clothing and rough food. Marriages are arranged by divination, and illnesses are cured by earnestly praying to ghosts. In worshipping ancestors, they use two stone vases (*shiping* 石瓶), and offer meat known as “three-year pork”. They exert efforts to strengthen their doors and rely on each other for security against bandits. The older generation follows the Buddhist scriptures (*zhi foshu* 知佛書), and always regards extravagance as a disgrace. Ancestral graves have not been changed or moved without good reason for several generations. In recent years, mixing with the military and the merchant households, people now pursue trivial profit (*zhumo* 逐末) and have distanced themselves from agriculture (*leisi* 耒耜). Although some people study the Confucian classics, they fail to comprehend the rationale (*li* 理) behind [the teachings of] the sages and worthies. Cunning people deceitfully

use their skills at writing official documents (*daobi* 刀筆) to spoil the goodwill and honesty of past human relations within the *li* (*xirenli* 昔仁里). Now, people value rare food and gorgeous clothing and are not frugal in their use of money. Real estate (*hengchan* 恆產) disappears as quickly as boiling water melts snow and looking around I see people becoming hungry and cold everywhere. Chaos has arisen due to people taking no action, and they just cast side-long glances, as they cannot handle the situation. We cannot obtain good people by mollifying their will to conform 拊循.<sup>57</sup>

It is clear that Yang Nanjin wanted to “wash away” three things: the people’s esteem for Buddhism (“The older generation follows the Buddhist scriptures”), the new trend for pursuing commercial gain (“trivial profit”), and the penchant for an extravagant lifestyle. Juxtaposing these undesirable practices with the simple and rustic life in the *li* and the *jia*, he emphasised the incompatibility of old and new practices with state orthodoxy and Confucian ideals. In the stele of 1519, he invoked the idea of washing the heart to transform people’s soiled mind-sets. He requested Elders (*fulao* 父老) “to wash away the old dirt and cultivate new goodness”, proclaiming that henceforth “you cannot use cremation when burying [the dead]” and “you cannot become Buddhist monks and Daoist priests”. In addition, he exhorted people to “exert themselves at agricultural cultivation, diligently read the classics and the standard histories, take strict precautions against water and fire, and protect the safety of their families”.<sup>58</sup>

A number of high-ranking officials and members of the local scholar-gentry advocated the reform of customs and practices in western Yunnan from the 1490s to the 1570s. For instance, Provincial Surveillance Commissioner Lin Jun 林俊, a native of Putian county in Fujian, ordered the destruction of more than 360 temples in Heqing in 1488, and Li Yuanyang prohibited cremation in Zhaozhou 趙州 south of Erhai Lake during the 1570s. Li Yuanyang wrote, henceforth “it is not permitted to lightly cremate deceased blood relations”, and he enforced this order by making households in the *li* and *jia* mutually responsible for ensuring that everyone complied; all households in the group would be punished along with the offender.<sup>59</sup> Cremation had associations with Dali kingdom-style Buddhism. Thus, by prohibiting its practice, the scholar-gentry distanced local people further from pre-Ming practices. These examples demonstrate that efforts by the scholar-gentry and the literati to reform local customs aimed to transform the mind-sets of the local elite. The goal was to make the local elite identify with Ming social and political ideology. They encouraged the local elite to embrace the idea that success in the examination system would provide men access to bureaucratic office. Ultimately, this encouragement resulted in increasingly larger numbers of men studying for the examinations in Langqiong and Dengchuan.

Wang Mingke 王明珂 has observed that renowned Langqiong scholar Wang Song 王崧 (1752–1837) stands out as an archetypical traditional historian who contextualised local history within orthodox central-plains ideology.

In compiling and editing state-sponsored historical works, Wang Song positioned local polity leaders and hereditary magnate families of the Nanzhao and the Dali kingdom periods within the framework of the standard histories, thereby transforming local history into a sub-division of the larger category of central plains-based history.<sup>60</sup> Although not the first to attempt such contextualisation, in his writings, Wang Song emphasised the role of gentry and literati in the long-term reconstruction of local communities to accommodate administrative reforms from the sixteenth century. It was this social group that led the local communities in adjusting themselves to changes wrought by the dynastic state.

### Establishment of common property based on village temples

The elimination of the political power that sponsored Dali kingdom-style Buddhism in the early Ming initially resulted in state-orchestrated shifts in the ownership of the wet field landholdings of large Buddhist monasteries (*changzhu tian* 常住田). However, by the mid-Ming, certain of these landholdings had fallen into the hands of powerful landlord families. This change is evident in the case of Biaoleng Temple 標楞寺, located near Cibi Lake 茈碧湖 in Langqiong. Tradition holds that this temple originally founded by an Indian Monk (*Shengseng* 聖僧) constituted one of the “outer eight altars (*wai ba tanchang* 外八壇場)” sponsored by the Dali kingdom. According to a stele of 1573 (Wanli 1), Zhang Dan 張統, Left Commissioner in the Yunnan Provincial Administration, transferred control of the wet fields belonging to Biaoleng Temple to the Dali monk Wuji 無極 when the Ming appointed the latter Superior of the Prefectural Buddhist Registry (*senggang si dugang* 僧綱司都綱) and assigned all Mongol-Yuan period temple lands to him during the Hongwu era. However, influential families (*haoyou* 豪右) had gained control of most of the Biaoleng Temple wet fields by the Zhengde reign period (1506–1521).<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, in 1684, monks reconstructed the monasteries and shifted the ownership of the wet fields to influential families.<sup>62</sup> The general trend was for the ownership of temple land to shift into private hands as the landholdings of large Buddhist monasteries decreased in size.

As large Buddhist monasteries declined, several settlements known as “villages” turned into units for managing affairs related to irrigation, and residents donated wet fields to generate income for use by their village communities. This development marked the emergence of a new management system based on income from common property. A recent stele inscription of 2004 records that this change occurred during the late Ming, when three villages (Yongxing 永興, Yongfeng 永豐 and Changle 長樂) near Cibi Lake located at the margins of the Langqiong basin collectively dug an irrigation ditch along a mountainside named the Upper Ditch of the Changle Village God. The ditch linked streams to irrigate more than 1,200 *mu* (approximately 200 acres) of rice land. This joint project was not managed by a large Buddhist monastery but by a village temple.<sup>63</sup> From the late Ming, the village became the unit for performing



hydrological construction projects in the basins of Langqiong, Fengyu and Dengchuan. However, because the distribution of villages reflected the ecological requirements of rice farming, villages did not always neatly fit the administrative units of *li* and *jia*. Therefore, when organising civilian households into the *li* and *jia*, bureaucrats had to adapt administrative units to accord with the size of villages to ensure that the distribution of water and the construction of irrigation channels could be conducted jointly.

The relatively small size of the Langqiong and Dengchuan basins made co-operation and alliances between villages essential for the construction and the maintenance of irrigation facilities. In the case of the 4 kilometre-long Upper Ditch of the Changle Village God, labour was required from the three villages to complete the project. Villages in the basins of western Yunnan often jointly undertook small-scale hydraulic projects that involved digging ditches to link streams and springs on mountainsides with pools and small reservoirs, from which water could be distributed to rice fields at lower elevations through gravity. These irrigation systems were primarily used in the spring before the arrival of the monsoon rains, and the ditches could be used to channel excess water into larger rivers to avoid flooding during the wet summer months. These small-scale irrigation systems distributed water from the slopes at the margins of basins towards the centres, particularly towards lakes and rivers located in the middle of the basins. They were smaller in scale than the large hydraulic system on the Miju River and to highlight this difference, I refer to them as a “basin irrigation” system. Irrigation systems jointly managed by multiple village communities gradually increased in the Langqiong and the Dengchuan basins after the late Ming. Village temples generated income from common property for their construction, repair and maintenance. Thus, the temples gradually assumed the role of centres for water management and ritual practices for all societies in the basins, irrespective of ethnic identity, household registration category or social class of the villagers. In this way, jointly operated small-scale irrigation systems contributed to the formation of new local communities, each dependent on the sharing of water resources for wet rice cultivation and collective religious practices.

As previously mentioned, the large Buddhist monasteries lost control over their land and tenants during the late Ming/early Qing period. This process progressed in tandem with the Neo-Confucian literati ceasing to support the monasteries and the rise of gentry involvement in local affairs. This trend is evident in an incident that occurred at Lanruo Temple 蘭若寺 in Dengchuan, whose founding dates to the Mongol-Yuan period. This monastery controlled 93 *mu* (approximately 15.5 acres) of irrigated farming land and relied on the income from the rents to feed the monks and pay tax. During the Wanli reign period (1573–1620), the gentry of three neighbouring villages mobilised the tenants of Lanruo Temple and the *li* captains to block water from flowing into the temple’s wet fields before the arrival of the rains, just when water was sorely needed to irrigate transplanted rice seedlings. The monks filed a court case against the gentry. However, the County Magistrate only granted the monks one-fourteenth

of the water, giving the villages the largest share. In 1706, the villagers completely blocked the water source for irrigation.<sup>64</sup> The Lanruo Temple example highlights the increasing trend for the control of resources, such as agricultural land and irrigation water, to gradually shift to villages as large Buddhist monasteries lost support from county bureaucrats and believers during the Ming/Qing transition period. By gaining complete control over water sources during the early Qing, the gentry and their village followers severely undermined the ability of the large monasteries to maintain themselves because the lack of irrigation made their wet fields untillable and therefore worthless.

A guaranteed supply of water for transplanting rice seedlings before the rainy season was crucial for wet rice cultivators. As representatives of village communities, the gentry drew up agreements concerning water distribution and mediated conflicts to make the irrigation system viable. Several cases reveal that as late as the 1790s, most villages in Langqiong had drawn up agreements for water distribution during the two-month rice transplantation period, and these agreements had the endorsement of county magistrates. These agreements for distributing water on a rotating basis emerged when the village gentry gained control of irrigation water.

To illustrate this point, I cite three relevant episodes from the Langqiong basin. Four villages in the basin used to send their men to fight for water to irrigate their fields when transplanting rice seedlings before the Mangzhong 芒種 solar term, normally around 6 June. Because of the prolonged nature of the conflicts, the gentry intervened and finally struck an agreement that teams of young men from the villages would jointly distribute the water on a rotating basis.<sup>65</sup> Five villages in another part of the Langqiong basin irrigated their fields by sharing water channelled from two mountain streams. The five villages jointly established Huikang Temple 惠康廟, a Benzhu temple 本主廟, for the worship of a god known as the Emperor Zhao Shanzheng 天子趙善政. The temple also venerated a god known as Woodcutter Blue (Qiaoqingshen 樵青神), who possessed the ability to distribute water. Since Woodcutter Blue and the gods of the two mountain streams obeyed the instructions of the Emperor Zhao Shanzheng, all five villages jointly established common wet fields (*gongtian* 公田) and worshipped them collectively. The founding of this temple signified the eligibility of all five villages to receive shares of water and emphasised that only the deity Zhao Shanzheng possessed the ability to distribute the water fairly. The early Qing saw the introduction of a new festival in which villagers carried the images of the deity and his family members on sedan chairs around all five villages between the eighteenth and twenty-first days of the first lunar month. Expressing the god's capacity to protect the territory of the five villages, the images of the deity visited villages in the same rotational order in which water was distributed.<sup>66</sup> Water flowing down slopes in mountain streams or from upland springs provided gravity-fed irrigation. However, the nature of the terrain limited the size of such irrigation systems. Therefore, as previously mentioned, communities sharing a common source of water normally only encompassed three to five villages.

A relatively large alliance of eleven villages in the Dengchuan basin shared a common water source. The common property of the alliance was managed by a committee at Dongchuan Great Temple 東川大廟 (where the Dragon God 龍神 was worshipped), which was also responsible for maintaining a small river and the irrigation channels branching from it. The temple committee, which consisted of gentry from all eleven villages, had written regulations for management and constructed a water-driven mill (*duimo* 碓磨) on the river. The managers used the income from renting out the mill to cover expenses for running the common property. People from the eleven villages worked in two shifts to operate the mill. The managers divided the small river into eleven sections, and each village repaired and performed maintenance on its own section during the second and eighth lunar months each year. The gentry of each village organised labour to work on their own sections. Originally established for religious purposes, the gentry used Dongchuan Great Temple as a venue for the Dongjing Assemblies 洞經會, which were held twice yearly, first on the deity's birthday on the fifth day of the first lunar month and second for the assembly celebration (*huiqingzhu* 會慶祝) on the twenty-third day of the seventh lunar month. The gentry of each village hosted the assemblies in rotation in the same way as with water distribution. The 1884 (Guangxu 10) stele for Dongchuan Great Temple emphasised that each village had to take turns:

The assembly for “speaking about the sutras (*tanjing* 談經 [Dongjing Assembly])” at the time of ritual ceremonies in spring and autumn must be hosted by each group according to the order of rotation in the past.

The stele lists the names of the villages in order from one to eleven.<sup>67</sup> Certain names indicate an origin as villages of military households, such as, for instance, Liu Family Official Camp 劉官營, Chen Family Official Camp 陳官營 and Official Manor 官莊. However, by the 1790s, the past history of villagers as military households and Bai civilian households no longer mattered because village temples had become centres for inter-village religious practices and community festivals, for the management of common property, and for village assemblies for elderly male and female members. Many features that we now associate with local Bai culture emerged and gained popularity from c. 1820.<sup>68</sup>

Another example that illustrates the agency of the gentry in the construction of new communities and the management of common property after the early Qing is the case of a sulphur spring known as the Jiuqitai hot spring 九氣台溫泉 managed by a village of the same name. Characteristic features of the hot spring included two large stone slabs shaped like a snake and a turtle, which represented male and female power. Villagers constructed a temple dedicated to the god Zhenwu 真武 the True Warrior above the stone slabs near the spring pools.<sup>69</sup> Local people bathed at the hot spring pools to heal skin diseases. However, from 1856 to 1873 during the Du Wenxiu Rebellion, the Muslim army used the sulphur for making gunpowder. After the return of the hot springs to the village in 1873, the village temple committee continued to produce sulphur

and following past custom paid the income derived from its sale into the account of the village temple Xuandi Ge 玄帝閣 for collective use by the village. The county government also issued the village a licence, thus legalising its sulphur production.

The establishment and maintenance of common property is an important focus for understanding the formation of local history and culture from the early Qing. Establishing common property was much more than a village response to the state's lack of support for constructing hydrological infrastructure, such as ditches and channels. It also aided the formation of new village communities after the demise of state-imposed categories of household registration and the termination of social control through the *lijia* system. The new communities integrated indigenous and migrant households of the Ming and created new local identities. In this way, the common-property management system served as a mechanism for re-constructing basin societies in western Yunnan. Common property constituted a public institution because it was shared by all village members, held under the name of village temples, and managed by the gentry and village leaders. This new social environment gave rise to intermarriage between families with diverse histories of household registration and even between different ethnic groups. However, such intermarriage did not result in the adoption of patrilineal lineages or family and kinship principles as important criteria for community organisation. The agency of the local gentry played an important role in the reconstruction of common property-based local communities under the changed social circumstances of the early Qing dynasty. This agency contributed to the holding of common property by villages becoming a social norm bound up with religious practices shared by community members. Cohesiveness between village communities was extremely strong in the latter half of the nineteenth century during the turmoil of the Du Wenxiu Rebellion and its aftermath, when local society was thrown into chaos and state power weakened.<sup>70</sup>

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, we have noted how factors such as state policy and land property rights deeply influenced shifts in local society. The three Ming institutions of native officials, the military and regular administrative units changed the economic bases of large Buddhist monasteries dating to the Mongol-Yuan period. The introduction of different household registration categories and the use of the *lijia* system to collect grain taxes, assign labour services and to control local society created multiple individual communities in the Dengchuan, Fengyu and Langqiong basins. These state-imposed social categories can be regarded as the institutional origin of the ethnic identities of indigenous inhabitants in the Ming as well as a method of distinguishing them from diverse groups of immigrants. However, the *lijia* system did not re-shape social relations based on the need for stability in access to water resources. Co-operation for water distribution was achieved after long-term conflicts and through the religious activities of village

temples. It was because village temple systems for the joint management of labour and water resources replaced state institutional authority at the local level that local elites, such as the gentry and village leaders, gained the leeway required to innovatively reconstruct communal ties by binding them to religious practices and family organisation and forging inter-community links.

From the late Ming to the early Qing, the *li* and *jia* community became less constrained by the state because of changes in policies regarding taxation and labour services. However, at the same time, the Neo-Confucian literati became increasingly involved in moral instruction. The gentry in rural villages played significant roles in public education, religious practice and irrigation facility construction as well as in the management of common property for constructing larger social alliances beyond the boundaries of family, kinship, and *li* and *jia* units. In this way, the social agency of the gentry became increasingly important for integrating the diverse state-imposed categories into new communities from the early Qing. Meanwhile, because the gentry now had more flexibility than before, they were able to reconstruct village temples into hubs for organising local society. Villagers also regarded these temples as public spaces for the purpose of co-operative negotiation and for negotiating with state power. Therefore, village temples came to assume a role that extended well beyond simple religious activities. Villages organised committees to manage common property, and these committees replaced the influential large Buddhist temples of the past. This shift was accompanied by a transfer of agricultural land under the control of magnate families and monasteries to the hands of village gentry. The fall of the Ming witnessed the disappearance of the diverse identities created by the Ming state household registration. Three new ethnic identities emerged to replace past categories. Now, there were only the Minjia and the Han in the basins and the Luoluo (the Yi) in the uplands under the jurisdiction of native officials. That is, the Qing did not in fact “sinicise” ethnic peoples in the Dali area. What occurred was that the diverse local identities of the Ming classification system were transformed into a new style of ethnic relations and identities. Thus, this transformation did not constitute a “sinicisation” process as claimed by certain scholars<sup>71</sup> but, rather, a re-definition of non-Han ethnic groups.

Co-operation between the state and the local elite shaped the reconstruction of social life and cultural practices. It facilitated social reforms, including a high level of elite involvement in local society, particularly in irrigation management, labour sharing, and the promotion of goods circulation through long-distance trade. The gentry provided leadership for villagers in their extension of local public space and social ties. Members of local communities themselves became the interpreters of religious rituals, festivals, and the moral instruction of the gentry endorsed by the state. Ethnic identities formed in relation to villages and the alliances between villages centred on Benzhu temples. In the process of creating new identities, village identity became a means of interpreting ethnic differences, and in fact, the Bai nationality adapted village identity as an ethnic marker after 1949. In sum, ethnic culture and ethnic identity has formed slowly over a long time. It has emerged in response to shifts in state institutions and

embodies the historical experience of local people continually adjusting their orientations to reconstruct social ties in the face of change. When village temples became a hub for worshipping common ancestors of villagers and the management of common property, they also provided venues for evaluating family fame and resolving disputes between families.

Village temple inscriptions and local gazetteers mostly record the activities of the local elite, particularly the gentry, as leaders of village organisations, seldom mentioning *li* and *jia* units. The local elite dominated the committees that managed temple property and handled assignments from the state throughout the Qing period. They also organised festivals, Taoist assemblies, repairs of irrigation facilities and other affairs at the local level. The common property of village temples was used for the benefit of all constituent members. It was not privately owned by anyone but founded on the notion of shared ownership; the temples were constructed for the “public” or “common (*gong* 公)” good.

This chapter demonstrates that although shifts in state policies established an institutional framework for the transformation of local society from the early Ming to the Qing, it was the change of local elites that led to the reconstruction of local communities in the basins of western Yunnan. These basins cannot be simply regarded as a frontier area devoid of specific regional and local agency for social transformation. It was through the agency of local elites and village leaders that new social structures and ethnic identities were created during the long historical process of change from the Dali kingdom period to the Qing period.

## Notes

- 1 This research was supported by the Hong Kong Research Grants Council (RGC) General Research Fund Project (No. 16655916).
- 2 Eryuan county covers an area of approximately 2,600 square kilometres; see [www.ey.yn.gov.cn/eygov/1585548543811125248/20141022/29782.html](http://www.ey.yn.gov.cn/eygov/1585548543811125248/20141022/29782.html), homepage of Eryuan county government, last accessed on 16 October 2016. (洱源县人民政府门户网站, 2016.10.16.)
- 3 James L. Watson, “Chinese Kinship Reconsidered: Anthropological Perspectives on Historical Research”, *China Quarterly*, Vol. 92 (1982), pp. 589–622.
- 4 Zhao Min and Tik-Sang Liew, Eds., *Yun-Gui Gaoyuan De “Baisi Shehui”*, p. 1.
- 5 Eryuan Xianzhi Bianweihui, Ed., *Eryuan Xianzhi*, p. 45.
- 6 Mark Elvin, Darren Crook, Shen Ji, Richard Jones and John Dearing (2002), pp. 1–60.
- 7 Eryuan Xianzhi Bianweihui, Ed., *Eryuan Xianzhi*, p. 1.
- 8 Eryuan Xianzhi Bianweihui, Ed., *Eryuan Xianzhi*, p. 49.
- 9 Eryuan Xianzhi Bianweihui, Ed., *Eryuan Xianzhi*, p. 79.
- 10 Ma Jianxiong (2014). There are ninety-three *Bazi* basins in Yunnan larger than fifty square kilometres in area. However, in total, the *Bazi* basins only occupy approximately 6.52 per cent of the total area of the province.
- 11 Eryuan Xianzhi Bianweihui, Ed., *Eryuan Xianzhi*, p. 55.
- 12 “Hou Zhonglu Xiansheng Zhi Xingji Bei 侯鐘麓先生之形迹碑 (Stele on the Achievement of Mr. Hou Zhonglu)”, in Zhao Min and Wang Wei, Eds., *Dali Eryuan Xian Beike Jilu*, pp. 180–182.
- 13 For the circulation of goods see chapters in Eric Tagliacozzo and Wen-Chin Chang, Eds., *Chinese Circulations and Networks in Southeast Asia*.

14 Eryuan Xianzhi Bianweihui, Ed., *Eryuan Xianzhi*, p. 1, p. 31.

15 See Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*, p. 79.

The basic garrison unit was a Guard (衛), headed by a Guard Commander (指揮使). Each Guard was normally named after the prefecture or sub-prefecture where it was based and in theory consisted of 5,600 hereditary soldiers. A Guard theoretically had five Battalions (千戶所) of 1,120 men, each divided into ten Companies (百戶所). Companies, and even Battalions, were often garrisoned apart from the Guards to which they belonged, and there were some Independent (守御) Battalions that were controlled directly by Regional Military Commissions (都督府) and were not parts of Guards.

16 In theory, 110 neighbouring households constituted one *li* or a community. One *li* consisted of ten *jia* 甲 (ten households per *jia*), one *li* captain 里長 and nine *jia* heads 甲首, for a total of 110 households; see Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*, p. 78. The *lijia* system aimed to share out taxes and labour services equitably among all the households in the *li*. For an account in English of how the system functioned as an instrument of local control, see Tsurumi Naohiro “Rural Control in the Ming Dynasty”, in Linda Grove and Christian Daniels, Eds., *State and Society in China: Japanese Perspective on Ming-Qing Social and Economic History*, pp. 245–277.

17 Ai Zixiu, Compiler, *Chongzhen Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, p. 8; Hou Yunqin 侯允欽, *Xianfeng Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan* 3, p. 5.

18 Zhao Gongxiu, *Kangxi Langqiong Zhou Zhi*, *juan* 7, p. 4.

19 Mark Elvin, Darren Crook, Shen Ji, Richard Jones and John Dearing (2002), pp. 23–51.

20 Ai Zixiu, Compiler, *Chongzhen Chongxiu Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, p. 8; Hou Yunqin, *Xianfeng Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan* 2, p. 13.

21 Eryuan Xianzhi Bianweihui, Ed., *Eryuan Xianzhi*, p. 9; Hou Yunqin, *Xianfeng Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan* 9, p. 18.

22 Eryuan Xianzhi Bianweihui, Ed., *Eryuan Xianzhi*, p. 10.

23 “Gaogong Muzhi Bei 高公墓志碑 (The Tomb Inscription of Duke Gao)”, in Zhao Min and Wang Wei, Eds., *Dali Eryuan Xian Beike Jilu*, p. 14.

24 Ni Tui, *Dianyun Linian Zhuan*, p. 175.

25 “Gaogong Muzhi Bei”, in Zhao Min and Wang Wei, Eds., *Dali Eryuan Xian Beike Jilu*, p. 14.

26 Zhou Hang, *Guangxu Langqiong Xian Zhilue*, *juan* 13, p. 3.

27 Ai Zixiu, Compiler, *Chongzhen Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan* 1, p. 9.

28 Hou Yunqin, Compiler, *Xianfeng Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan mo*, p. 54.

29 “A Shi Wushi Mubiao Be i 阿氏五世墓表碑 (The Tomb Inscription of Five Generations of the A Family)”, in Zhao Min and Wang Wei, Eds., *Dali Eryuan Beike Jilu*, pp. 18–19.

30 The ten Police Offices were also administered by hereditary families, such as those of native officials. These hereditary families included the Zi 字氏 and the Li 李氏 families, who controlled the transportation routes to the salt wells in the Yunlong area; the Yang 楊氏 family at the Upper Five Salt Wells 上五井; the Li family 李氏 at the Shundang Salt Wells 順蕩井; and the Yang family 楊氏 at the Shijing Salt Wells 師井 in the Yunlong area. In addition, the routes from Dengchuan to Heqing were controlled by the Yang 楊氏 family of Shangjiangzui 上江嘴, the He 何氏 family of Xiajiangzui 下江嘴, the Yang 楊氏 family of Qingsuobi 青索鼻 and others. See Hou Yunqin, Compiler, *Xianfeng Dengchuan Zhouzhi*, *juan* 10, p. 30.

31 Christian Daniels “Historical Memories of a Chinese Adventurer in a Tay Chronicle”, pp. 33–34.

32 Hou Yunqin, Compiler, *Xianfeng Dengchuan Zhouzhi*, *juan* 12, p. 15.

33 Ai Zixiu, Compiler, *Chongzhen Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan* 1 *zulei* 族類, p. 9.

- 34 Zhuang Cheng, *Wanli Zhaozhou Zhi*, “Preface”.
- 35 Zhou Hang, *Guangxu Langqiong Zhilue*, *juan 6*, p. 6.
- 36 “Chongxiu Longhuasi Jibei 重修龍華寺記碑 (Inscription on the Renovation of the Longhua Temple)”, in Zhao Min and Wang Wei, Eds., *Dali Eryuan Beike Jilu*, p. 10.
- 37 The Three Gems 三寶, *triratna* [S] consist of the three components of Buddhism: the Buddha, Buddhist law [Dharma], and the monastic community [Sangha].
- 38 Ai Zixiu, Compiler, *Chongzhen Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan 1 zulei* 族類, p. 15.
- 39 Ai Zixiu, Compiler, *Chongzhen Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan 1 zulei* 族類, pp. 15–16.
- 40 “Chongxiu Jinbangshan Ji Bei 重修金鏘山記碑 (Stele Record of the Renovation of Jinbang Mountain Temple)”, in Zhao Min and Wang Wei, Eds., *Dali Eryuan Beike Jilu*, p. 8.
- 41 Zhao Gongxiu, *Kangxi Langqiong Zhou Zhi*, Vol. 7, p. 6; Zhou Hang, Ed., *Guangxu Langqiong Xian Zhilue* 浪穹縣志略, *juan 6*, p. 6.
- 42 This name refers to the *Bo Gu Tongji* 夔古通記.
- 43 Gangchang 綱常 refers to the Three Bonds and the Five Constant Virtues (*sangang wuchang* 三綱五常). The Three Bonds are the superordinate and subordinate ties between prince and minister, father and son, and husband and wife. The Five Constant Virtues are benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and fidelity.
- 44 “Cishan Fei Miao Jibei 慈善妃廟記碑 (Stele of the Record of the Cishan Consort Temple)”, in Zhao Min and Wang Wei, Eds., *Dali Eryuan Beike Jilu*, p. 57.
- 45 Li Xiaoyou 李孝友 and Xu Wende 徐文德, *Diankao Jiaozhu* 滇考校注 (Annotated Version of the *Diankao*) (Kunming: Yunnan Minzu Chubanshe, 2002).
- 46 See Ch’u T’ung-tsu, *Local Government in China under the Ching*.
- 47 Ai Zixiu, Compiler, *Chongzhen Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan 1 zulei* 族類, p. 9.
- 48 Ai Zixiu, Compiler, *Chongzhen Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan 3 fengjing zhi* 風景志, p. 16.
- 49 Ai Zixiu, Compiler, *Chongzhen Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan 5 guanshi* 官師, p. 36.
- 50 Ai Zixiu, Compiler, *Chongzhen Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan 12 cisi zhi* 祠祀志, p. 101.
- 51 Ai Zixiu, Compiler, *Chongzhen Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan 5 guanshi* 官師, p. 39.
- 52 Tsurumi Naohiro “Rural Control in the Ming Dynasty”, in Linda Grove and Christian Daniels, Eds. (1984), pp. 266–273.
- 53 Ai Zixiu, Compiler, *Chongzhen Dengchuan Zhou Zhi*, *juan 6 xianfa zhi* 憲法志, p. 42.
- 54 “Xiazhan Kangxi Wuyin Bei 下站康熙戊寅碑 (The Inscription on the Lower Station in 1722)”, in Zhao Min and Wang Wei, Eds., *Dali Eryuan Beike Jilu*, p. 76.
- 55 Zhao Gongxiu, Ed., *Kangxi Langqiong Zhou Zhi*, *juan 7*, p. 21.
- 56 The term *shuang* 雙 is a unit of land area measurement used from the Nanzhao period. One *shuang* is equivalent to four *mu*. See Pan Chuo 攀綽’s *Manshu* 蠻書 *juan 2* in Wang Song 王崧, Ed., *Yunnan Beizhengzhi*, p. 111.
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- 61 “Biaoleng Si tian Ji 標楞寺田記 (A Record of Wet-fields Belonging to the Biaoleng Temple)”, in Zhao Min and Wang Wei, Eds., *Dali Eryuan Beike Jilu*, p. 40.
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- 69 Eryuan Xianzhi Bianweihui, Ed., *Eryuan Xianzhi*, p. 55.
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- 71 John E. Herman, *Amid the Clouds and Mist*.

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