Mobility among the Tai Peoples of South China**

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Abstract

Mobility up-river and down-river by boat has been the dominant pattern in movements of village populations among the Tai, with travel by land between river systems playing a supplementary role. Historically, mobility has been a characteristic of villages as well as individuals, traders and soldiers.

This paper will examine cultural constructions of territory and mobility as exemplified in the "Songs of Migration" current in the traditional societies of the Zhuang 壯, Bouyei 布依, Kam 侗, Sui 水, and other Tai-speaking peoples of Guangxi 廣西 and Guizhou 貴州. Such songs provide scholars with important evidence about prehistoric migrations, but for pre-modern communities they formed an indigenous non-Han counterpart to lineage or family registers as tokens of local identity and evidence of territorial claims. They also form part of a "map" of ancestral places, and as such can be correlated with evocations of ancestral spirits and funeral practices in which the dead are escorted back to the land of the ancestors.

This paper will focus on a number of actual song texts, and will evaluate the information they provide. Comparison will be made with evidence for mobility in pre-modern times provided in the Chinese-style lineage registers of prominent Zhuang families.

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> *Je crois quel'on n'a jamais fait d'étude comparative sur l'importance de la mobilité.*
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> ── Karl Gustav Izikowitz, "Propos sur les Thaïs" (1981)

My main aim in this paper is to elucidate, in a preliminary fashion, evidence for patterns of mobility among the Tai peoples of South and Southwest China.

By "Tai" I mean speakers of Tai-Kadai languages, such as Zhuang and Bouyei in Guangxi, Yunnan and Guizhou, Dai in Yunnan, Kam (Dong) and Sui (Shui) in Guizhou, Maonan, Yanghuang, Mojia and Mulam (Mulao) in Guangxi and Guizhou, Lingao, Cun and Li on Hainan, and Nùng and Thổ in the northern part of Vietnam. I will be concentrating here on the Zhuang, who are located mainly in Guangxi and eastern Yunnan, and on the Bouyei in Guizhou.[1]

In this paper I will be discussing two different kinds of text that have a bearing on the cultural aspects of Tai mobility: migration songs in the indigenous languages, written in a modified version of the Chinese character script and recited by vernacular priests at funerals and other rituals; and Chinese-style family registers (*jiapu* 家譜) of prominent families, written in Chinese and dating from the Ming period. My main interest is on the facts on the ground, so to speak ── on what these documents have to tell us about patterns of Tai mobility in history, and how the Tai thought about mobility.

My main focus is empirical, and I am interested only secondarily in theoretical matters. It is worth noting, however, that high levels of mobility are often said to be a characteristic of modern societies, and that pre-modern societies are imagined to be relatively static. The picture in our mind's eye of pre-modern rural communities, in particular, is still one of a largely self-

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1　The Zhuang are divided into speakers of two major dialects: Northern Zhuang, classified by Li Fang Kuei as a Northern Tai language, and Southern Zhuang, classified as a Central Tai language. Despite the difference in ethnonyms, the Bouyei and the Northern Zhuang speak closely related dialects; the linguistic and cultural continuum is obscured by official ethnic classifications. See D. Holm, *Killing a Buffalo for the Ancestors* (DeKalb: Southeast Asian Publications, 2003), pp. 7-8.

contained world in which people are attached to the land and enmired in "the idiocy of rural life" (Karl Marx). A wide range of western social sciences from their inception have taken this imagined stasis as a default assumption in framing their research methodologies and intellectual projects. The long dominance of village studies as a model in anthropology is well known, but in linguistics and dialectology, too, the usual premise has been that speakers of rural dialects live in static communities and represent homogenous local speech varieties. Even for the Tai, who are usually characterised as sedentary peoples devoted to wet-rice agriculture, these assumptions may be in need of revision.

In the case of the Tai or Zhuang, mobility took place within a particular geographical, historical and political context. Before the consolidation of Chinese rule in recent centuries, the typical Tai or Zhuang domain was a narrow flat-bottomed river valley (*dongh*), surrounded by wooded slopes (*ndoeng*) or karst peaks (*bya*). The river valley furnished the space for the establishment of wet-rice agriculture in wet-fields (*naz*), while the lower slopes could be cleared for the cultivation of dry-land crops such as beans and cucurbits in dry-fields (*reih*). The higher wooded slopes provided firewood and game, most notably muntjac.[2] Water transport upstream and downstream was relatively easy at most times of year. Thus domains frequently encompassed quite a number of natural villages, and were linked in wider alliances. Movement between one river system and another was much less easy, and land transport depended largely on pack-horses.

Zhuang society was highly stratified, with political leadership in the hands of influential families, who exercised patronage over a broader clientele. In recent centuries the absolute power of the chieftain, both vis-à-vis his own lineage and his client base, was consolidated by a pattern of imperial enfranchisement (the so-called *tusi* 土司 system). The status and mobility of "ordinary" villagers was defined by quite particularistic relations between villages and the chiefly lineage. Some villages were of quite servile status.

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2 The muntjac is a small forest-dwelling deer, formerly common in Guangxi. On the "valley kingdoms" see David Holm, *Recalling Lost Souls* (Bangkok: White Lotus Co. Ltd., 2004), p. 16.

Others were required to provide quite specific services or goods to the chiefly family on an annual or monthly basis.[3]

Varieties of Mobility

I will first very briefly provide an overview of the range of various kinds of mobility in late traditional Zhuang village society. First, there is communal mobility, involving the movement of whole villages or portions of villages. I will say much more about this in what follows. In fact, this paper concentrates primarily on this kind of mobility, but it is necessary to consider it against the background of a range of options or a repertoire of cultural possibilities. Secondly, there is the mobility of individuals or, quite commonly in the Tai context, groups of the same age-group and same gender. In the most immediate area around the village and on a daily basis, one may think of movement of men out to the fields, or further afield to collect firewood, or yet further away to go hunting or fishing or timber-getting. Annual tending of ancestral graves may entail journeys further away still. For women, and some men, visits to the market, either as buyers or sellers, involved mobility beyond the village in most cases, and also brought market-goers into contact with other villagers from further away and also with outside traders. Women also moved from their natal village when they take up residence in their husband's village; traditionally there was a strong preference for this to be within the space of two hours' walk. Depending on inheritance, the male children of a household might also leave the native village as young men and establish themselves elsewhere, sometimes some considerable distance away.

In order to earn extra income, village men might also commonly be involved in the transport of goods. This took place on a small scale, with carrying poles, or on some form of collective basis with riverine transport or pack-horse or pack-ox teams. Journeys varied in distance and duration from trips

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3　Jennifer Took, *A Native Chieftaincy in Southwest China: Franchising a Tai Chieftaincy under the Tusi System of Late Imperial China* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2005).

within the immediate locality or marketing area to longer journeys to major transport nodes or centres of commerce.[4]

An additional, very important mechanism for the mobility of males from Zhuang village society came from participation in raiding and warfare. Village males were recruited by local chieftains or headmen to go out on campaigns to raid the settlements in neighbouring valleys. Apart from "self-defense" or retribution, the objects of such raiding expeditions included slaves, women, and cattle.[5] The involuntary movement of slaves and war captives, then, also constituted an additional mechanism for mobility for both males and females. In addition, for at least the last thousand years of the imperial period, Zhuang soldiers from the Guangxi area were used as conscripts or mercenaries in the imperial armies, and were deployed as far afield as Jiangnan (the Ming campaigns against the Wo pirates) and Hainan island. In the Zhuang language the same term (*dwk caeg* "to engage in thievery") was used both for going out on military campaigns and going out raiding.

Zhuang native soldiers were also used by the imperial state to establish permanent garrisons, sometimes in places far from their home districts. Populations of men and their families were either recruited directly from their home villages, or Zhuang soldiers were settled permanently as garrisons in other areas and left to marry local women. Many of the Zhuang now living in the eastern part of Guangxi are descendants of the so-called *langbing* 狼兵, literally "wolf soldiers", who were recruited from regions much further to the west and north and settled in the areas surrounding the Yao strongholds in the eastern part of the province during the Ming.[6]

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4 Yang Yexing 楊業興 and Huang Xiongying 黃雄鷹, eds.-in-chief, *Youjiang liuyu Zhuangzu jingji shigao* 右江流域壯族經濟史稿 [Draft economic history of the Zhuang in the Youjiang River region] (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 1995).

5 D. Holm, *Recalling Lost Souls*, Text 1.

6 Huang Junqing 黃俊卿 and Lei Guangzheng 雷廣正, "Langren langmin langbing yanjiu" 狼人狼民狼兵研究, in Xie Qihuang 謝啓晃 et al., *Lingwai Zhuangzu huikao* 嶺外壯族匯考 [Collected Studies on the Zhuang Beyond the Passes] (Nanning: Guangxi minzu chubanshe, 1989), pp. 144-152.

Of all the kinds of mobility listed above, some are culturally and linguistically more important than others, and some are for all practical purposes irrelevant. Of particular interest are patterns of communal, village migration.

Migrations in History

One of the main difficulties in understanding the ethnohistory of the non-Han peoples of South China is trying to connect linguistic and archaeological evidence with the written records. There are also difficulties in understanding the migration history of the Han Chinese, but these are of a different order. For many non-Han peoples there are scattered references in Chinese historical sources, but since the people concerned were not tax-paying subjects, their movements were not tracked in an assiduous and systematic fashion by the Chinese authorities, or even noted except when they posed a threat to local law and order (as with the Gelao in Sichuan). In many cases even large-scale migrations went unremarked. It is thus notoriously difficult to assign dates, delineate migration routes, and confirm linguistic or ethnic affiliations for even quite large-scale movements of people. Likewise, it is difficult to understand the circumstances that motivated such movements, or the mechanisms involved.

An instance where rough dates and places can be assigned with at least reasonable plausibility on the basis of Chinese historical records is the migration of the Sui. The Sui are a Tai group currently concentrated mainly in Sandu 三都 county in southeastern Guizhou. Place-names in Tang geographic sources suggest that the Sui were already a recognisable grouping by that time. Historical records of Southern Song date mention a group of people of similar but not identical name as residing in the area of what is now known as Yishan 宜山 (Yizhou shi 宜州市) in present-day Guangxi. Modern scholars have extrapolated that the main body of this group moved upstream into the Guizhou highlands at some time in the following centuries, following the course of the Rongjiang 融江 first north, and then west along the Dujiang 都江 (further

upstream) into present-day Sandu.[7]

In some cases we are fortunate in having accounts of migrations in the indigenous languages, in addition to whatever scraps of information the Chinese historical records may provide. Most of these texts are highly mythologised, and the place names (toponyms) they contain are not necessarily the names of actual historical places.

A Bouyei Migration Text from Ceheng

An exception is a Bouyei text from Ceheng 册亨 county in southwestern Guizhou. This text of 131 lines was transcribed and translated into Chinese by local scholars Wei Peng 韋鵬 and Huang Mingchu 黄明初 in late 1981, and published in an internal publication by the Guizhou minzu yanjiusuo (Guizhou Nationalities Research Institute) in 1983. The published version is based on a manuscript copy made by a certain Wei Zhi'an 韋治安 in the 25th year of the Republic (1936).[8] The title Kaifang keyi 開方科儀 "Ritual for the Opening of the Domain" is likely to be the original title, and this indicates that it was a ritual text.[9] Unfortunately no background information is provided, so we know nothing at this point about its provenance or the circumstances in which it was recited. We do know, however, that similar texts were recited on the third day of the new year in ceremonies to welcome the ancestors to the New Year feast. Such rituals were called 請相 (*cingj cieng* "inviting the first-month") or 熱旁 (*yiet biengz* "welcoming the domain") in Bouyei, and specific place-names were

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7 Zeng Xiaoyu 曾曉渝, *Hanyu Shuiyu guanxi lun* 漢語水語關係論 [On the linguistic connections between Chinese and Sui] (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2004), p. 38.

8 "2, Qianxi shiji pianduan: Kaifang keyi" 遷徙史跡片段：開方科儀 [Portion on migration history: Ritual of Opening the Domain], in *Youguan Buyizu ziliao sipian lunwen er pian* 有關布依族資料四篇論文二篇 [Four sets of materials and two essays on the Bouyei], *Minzu yanjiu cankao ziliao* 民族研究參考資料 [Reference materials on Ethnohistory] 19(1983.11): 9-10 (ed. and pub. Guizhou sheng minzu yanjiusuo).

9 Ibid., p. 9. Titles and subtitles of Zhuang and Bouyei ritual texts were frequently in Chinese.

mentioned in the invocation.[10]

In Ceheng as elsewhere, such texts were held mainly in the possession of *mogong* 魔公 (Zhuang *bouxmo*, Bouyei *buxmol*), male vernacular priests who recited texts and performed exorcisms through the medium of the local language. The texts themselves were written in a modified version of the Chinese character script, read for the most part either phonetically or semantically.[11] Mogong or their equivalent are found in almost all Tai-speaking communities in China and in northern Vietnam.[12] In Ceheng, the main rituals performed were the "Opening the Road" rituals for the souls of the dead, and "Sending off Demons".[13]

In addition to providing a translation of the text (see next section), I reproduce the opening lines (lines 1-19) in Appendix 1. The first line in the four-line interlinear presentation is the original manuscript reading, as given by Wei and Huang; the fourth line is their Chinese verse translation, which I reproduce without alteration. The second and third lines represent a transliteration into Zhuangwen and English word glosses. I give the transliteration in Zhuangwen, the official romanised script for Zhuang, rather than Buyiwen, the official script for Bouyei, for ease of reference.[14] In cases where the relevant morpheme is a

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10　"Buyizu jianshi" bianxiezu 布依族簡史編寫組, ed., *Buyizu jianshi* 布依族簡史 [Brief history of the Bouyei] (Guiyang: Guizhou renmin chubanshe, n.d. [c. 1997]), p. 9, citing information supplied by Lu Shenbang 陸甚邦 from Zhenfeng 貞豐 county. Zhenfeng is immediately to the north of Ceheng.

11　For photographs of sample pages of the Ceheng manuscripts see Huang Fuchun 黃福春, "'Mogong' jing zhou ci" 魔公經咒詞 [Scriptures and spells of the "mogong"], in *Minzu yanjiu cankao ziliao* 民族參考研究資料 19(1983.11): 6-8. The reproduction is of poor quality, but at least the general features of the manuscripts and the script can be made out. The script is mainly *kaishu* 楷書, with elements from the clerical script *lishu* 隸書.

12　Holm, *Recalling Lost Souls*, pp. 15-17.

13　Huang Fuchun 黃福春, "'Mogong' jing zhou ci", p. 1.

14　This romanised transcription allows one to identify the Bouyei (or Zhuang) morphemes, the basic units of meaning. A guide to Buyiwen is not available in English. For Zhuangwen, including International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) equivalents of the sounds of Zhuang, see the Appendix "A Guide to Zhuangwen Transcription" in either my *Killing and Buffalo* (2003) or *Recalling Lost Souls* (2004).

local or Bouyei word not found in Zhuang, or where it was necessary to use Buyiwen, which has different spelling conventions for what is basically a very similar language, I have noted this by putting an asterisk(*) after the word in question.[15]

My presentation of this text is more than usually preliminary. Normally it is necessary to consult the original owners of the text, and confirm both the overall meaning of each line and the lexical field of each morpheme. Beyond this, it is necessary to gain information on the provenance of the text, its use in ritual, and any other pertinent matters. The editors' verse translation provides some minor challenges, since it does not always follow the original text all that closely. More intractable are the names of various landforms and some of the plant names, both being beyond the range of available dictionaries. Fieldwork will be necessary to elucidate these, and also confirm the meaning of some of the Bouyei toponyms and their exact location. Nevertheless, by using large-scale sheet maps of the relevant counties, together with an internally published provincial atlas of Guizhou,[16] it has been possible to make a preliminary identification of nearly all the place-names in the text. The locations are shown on the accompanying map (Map 1).

Translation

The following translation of the text follows the Chinese verse translation, except in a few places where a more literal rendering is chosen.

Where did our fathers stay of old?
Our fathers stayed at the top of the slope.
Where did our fathers' feet reside?
Our fathers' feet resided on top of the hill.

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15 Dictionaries of Bouyei will be found in the list of references at the end of this paper.

16 *Guizhou sheng dituji* 貴州省地圖集 [An atlas of Guizhou province], ed. and pub. Guizhou sheng cehuiju 貴州省測繪局 [Guizhou Provincial Ordinance Survey Department], 1987.

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Anshun 安順

Biandanshan 扁擔山
Zhenning 鎮寧

Sanchahe 三岔河

Huangguoshu 黃果樹
Guanling 關嶺

Dabanghe 打邦河

Pozhou 坡舟
Luoshao 落哨

Qinglong 晴龍

Ziyun 紫雲

Leyunhe 樂運河

Dahan 打罕

打罕河

Leyun 樂運
Boxi 播西
Jianjia 簡戛

Xingren 興仁

Zhenfeng 貞豐

Qingshuijiang 清水江

G U I Z H O U
貴州

Beipanjiang

Leyuan 樂元

Wangmo 望謨

Anlong 安龍

北盤江

Ceheng 冊亨

Province boundary
County boundary
County seat
Village

Nanpanjiang 南盤江

Longlin 隆林

0   20 km

G U A N G X I 廣西

Map 1   Bouyei Song of Migration 布依族移民歌示意圖

Residing in that place it was narrow,   5
Staying in that place it was confining.
One only got a bucket to feed the pigs,
One didn't get a bucket to feed the dogs.
One only got a wetfield for the older sibling,
One didn't get a wetfield for the younger sibling.   10
Our fathers lay down on their sleeping mat thinking,
Tired they lay down behind the mosquito net thinking.
Early the next day when it grew light,
Early the next day at dawn.
They asked the children to make breakfast,   15
They asked their daughters-in-law to make breakfast.
They put the cooked rice in a box for the children to carry,
They made parcels of food for the children to take,
They put shoes on the feet of the children.
They went as far as a large forest,   20
They went towards a bend in the forest.
They came across a large blood-scab tree,
They came across a huge camphor tree,
They came across a large yellowwood tree.
Three strikes with the axe to fell it in front,   25
Five strikes with the axe to fell it behind.
From the hour of noon until the hour *shen*,
The trees resounded to the sound of chopping.
The trees then toppled down flat,
The trees then fell at the bend.   30
Some men chopped and chopped,
Some men cried and cried.
Some chopped the trunk and some the outer branches,
Some trimmed the trunk and some the smaller branches.
Take this tree and make it into sections,   35

Chop this tree and make it into lengths.

With the axes of our fathers broad of blade,

They struck the wood and fashioned it into troughs.

With the brush-knives of our fathers sharp of blade,

Inside and out they struck and made it good.　　　　　　40

They fashioned a stove and placed it in the middle,

They fashioned a boat and made it pretty.

They finished the boat and left it here,

There wasn't anyone to send it to the big river.

From the white-branched tree they fashioned oars,　　　45

With the fir-wood boat they ferried along.

The ferry boat went along further and further,

They punted the bamboo raft further and further upstream.

They rowed the boat until the hour *mao*,

They came up in the boat until the hour *chen*.　　　　50

They rowed along the river and came upstream,

They crossed along the water and came up above.

To what place did our fathers come?

Our fathers came to Cavern Mouth,

They came to the Cavern with Three Mouths.　　　　55

They came to the place where the Eagle seizes people,

The crow seizes them and eats them there,

The eagle seizes them in that place.

Our fathers were very clever very wise,

Our fathers were very intelligent.　　　　　　60

They went as merchants to Guizhou,

They obtained three hundred ounces of wax.

They carved the wax and made a person,

They took it and placed it at the head of the boat.

The eagle thought that it was a person,　　　　　65

The eagle fiercely swooped down and seized it.

Our fathers had a sharp sword,

They struck the eagle until it died.

Our fathers had a good lance,

They struck the eagle until it collapsed.   70

After our fathers went and killed it,

The eagle then returned to the mountain peaks.

After our fathers killed it,

The crow then returned to the cavern.

The cavern returning was very dark,   75

The nest returning was deeper and deeper.

The wings of the eagle were even able to cover the corner of the house,

The feet of the eagle were even able to serve as a mortar.

The wings of the eagle could even cover a millstone,

The feet of the eagle could even serve as a brick.   80

Our fathers fled elsewhere and searched for food,

Our fathers fled elsewhere and tried to make a living.

From the white-branched tree they fashioned oars,

With the fir-wood boat they ferried along.

The ferry boat went along further and further,   85

They punted the bamboo raft further and further upstream.

They rowed the boat until the hour *mao*,

They came up in the boat until the hour *chen*.

They rowed along the river and came upstream,

They crossed along the water and came up above.   90

To what place did our fathers come?

Our fathers came to Dahan,

Dahan was a good place.

There was a pear tree to shield them from eagles,

Our fathers went to see the fields above,   95

They didn't see a place for the rice-seedlings.

Our fathers went to see the wetfields below,

They didn't see a place for the nurse-field.

A wetfield for the rice-seedlings they also looked for,

A nurse-field they also had to make.　　　　　　　　　　100

Our fathers went elsewhere and searched for food,

Our fathers went elsewhere and tried to make a living.

From the white-branched tree they fashioned oars,

With the pawlonia-wood boat they ferried along.

The ferry boat went along further and further,　　　　　　105

They punted the bamboo raft further and further upstream.

They rowed the boat until the hour *mao*,

They came up in the boat until the hour *chen*.

They rowed along the river and came upstream,

They crossed along the water and came up above.　　　　110

To what place did our fathers come?

Our fathers came to Cavern Mouth,

They arrived at the Mouth of the Shagang River.

They returned and went to Leyuan,

And came up again by Horse Trough,　　　　　　　　　115

There were grasses growing all over.

Our fathers came to Dahan,

Dahan is the domain of the Wei lineage.

Boxi is the domain of the Ye lineage,

Leyun is the domain of the Yang.　　　　　　　　　　120

The Li are deployed at Kaya,

The Luo are deployed at Luoshao.

The Lu have set up their villages at Pozhou,

The Wei have their prefecture at Dahan.

Large trees grow everywhere on the ridges,　　　　　　　125

These things too our old people created.

The trunks of trees grow everywhere,

These things too our old people created.

They created the netting to keep out mosquitoes,

They created the netting for fish-beds on high,   130
They created fishnets and fish-traps.

At this point the text seems to make a transition to a narrative about the origin of nets and fishtraps.[17]

Comment

There are many things in this short text which are worthy of comment and analysis. As a narrative, the text seems in places to have a relatively low level of narrative cohesion. This is in part an effect of canonical parallelism, the poetic mechanism whereby the grammatical form and semantic content of one line are echoed more or less word for word in the second line. That is to say, the first syllable in line 1 is echoed by the first syllable in line 2, the second syllable by the second syllable, and so on. As I have argued elsewhere, parallelism was an important feature of Tai verse that was either orally transmitted or recited from texts in ritual contexts, since it was an aid to memorisation and recitation.[18]

Some of the effects are seemingly contradictory. For example, it will be noticed that the text alternates between referring to the "eagle" (*langz*) and the "crow" (*a*), first in lines 56-57, and then several times thereafter. It is clear from context that only one kind of bird must be meant. In fact, both words refer to the same bird, a large, dark raptor. The same parallelistic alternation of *langz* and *a* is found in the ancient song of Hanvueng, a Zhuang and Bouyei epic current in northwestern Guangxi and southwestern Guizhou, where the crow/eagle is the chief intermediary and messenger between the earthly chieftain and the sky god Hanvueng.[19] The variation between "boat" (*ruz*) and "bamboo raft" (*sa*) may be

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17 For texts on this theme see Holm, *Recalling Lost Souls*, Text 10, "Scripture on the Creation of Gardens, Houses and Fishnets", pp. 241-250.

18 Holm, *Killing a Buffalo for the Ancestors*, "Introduction", pp. 34-37.

19 Wangmo xian minzu shiwu weiyuanhui 望謨縣民族事務委員會, ed., *Haansweangz riangz Xocweangz* 安王與祖王 [Hanvueng and Covueng] (Guiyang: Guizhou minzu chubanshe, 1994); Meng Yuanyao and D. Holm, *Hanvueng, The Goose King and the Ancestral King: an Epic from Guangxi in Southern China* (forthcoming).

another instance of parallel expressions for the same referent, though this is more doubtful, since boats and bamboo rafts had different uses: punted bamboo rafts being particularly useful for navigation in very shallow water.

Turning to more substantive matters, the text provides abundant evidence of a kind about whole-village migration. It is clear that water transport is the predominant means of transport, specifically oared canoes. Whether these were dugouts, as is implied by the word "trough" (*cauh*) or with hulls constructed from lengths (*gyaenh*) of board caulked together, is not clear from the form of expression, which allows both interpretations. Some specifics are given of the boats. We are told how the boats were made, from the felling of the trees down to the selection of timbers for oars. The scientific identification of some of the timber trees has yet to be confirmed, though vernacular names are given.

Secondly, many real place-names are mentioned, both of rivers, stretches of rivers, and staging posts. To take these names in the order of their appearance in the text, the first stopping-place is Sanchahe, also referred to in the next line as Sanchakou. Here the travellers are attacked by eagles. The next stopping place is Dahan (line 92), followed by Sanchahe (line 112) and Shagangkou (line 113). From there they returned (downstream) to Leyuan (line 114) via "the horse-trough" (line 115, probably the name for a stretch of river). Finally, the forefathers are said to have come back to Dahan (line 117), which is identified as the domain of the Wei 韋 lineage. Place-names that follow (Boxi and so on) are part of a list of places associated with other named surname groups, rather than stages in the migration.

The places mentioned can be identified as follows:[20]

1a.　　line 54: Sanchahe 三岔河 (lit. "three fork river"), a stretch of North-South flowing river forming the western border of Zhenning county just east of the present-day Guanling 關嶺 county seat. This river forms a

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20　Many of these places are mentioned more than once in the text, and in some cases more than one name or variant is given. The numbers at the left refer to discrete places. It will be seen that there are nine places mentioned altogether, and that Dahan is the place most frequently mentioned (a total of five times).

fork with the Wang'erhe 王二河 which flows in from the east at Shiwangzhai 石汪寨, not far from the well-known tourist spot of Huangguoshu 黃果樹, where there is a famous waterfall. Two kilometres south of the fork, the river flows underground for half a kilometre or so, hence the reference to caverns (*gamj*). Here the manuscript has 怕敢 Bakgamj "Cavern Mouth".

1b.   line 55: Sanchakou 三岔口 (lit. "three fork mouth"), which the manuscript reads Gamj sam'amq "Cavern of the Three Mouths". This probably is another name for the same place mentioned in the previous line.

2a.   line 92: Dahan 打罕, written here as 攝閣, a village in the southern part of Zhenning 鎮寧 county, 4 km east of Liuma 六馬. *she* 攝 in the Bouyei toponym is likely to be read as *ceh* "stockade, walled village" (Ch. 寨).

2b.   line 93: ditto, written here as 折闇, probably a variant of 攝閣 in line 92.

1c.   line 112: Sanchahe 三岔河 , written in the manuscript as 怕敢 Bakgamj "Cavern Mouth" (as in line 54).

3.   line 113: Shagangkou 沙剛口, a place as yet to be located. In the manuscript this is written as 敢達剛, where 敢 is to be read as *gamj* "cavern" and 達 as dah "river".

4.   line 114: Leyuan 樂元, written in the manuscript as 那場, where 那 is to be read, as so often in Zhuang and Bouyei village names, as *naz* "wetfield". Leyuan zhen 樂元鎮 is on the eastern bank of the Beipanjiang 北盤江 in Wangmo 望謨 county (almost directly west from the Wangmo county seat).

2c.   line 117: Dahan, written in the manuscript as 達罕, where 達 is *dah* "river". See lines 92-93.

2d.   line 118: as in previous line, but written 打罕.

5.   line 119: Boxi 播西, written in the manuscript as 坡西, a village in the southern part of Zhenning, 5 kilometres east of Jianga 簡戛, near the border with Wangmo county.

6.   line 120: Leyun 樂運, written in the manuscript as 那哈, where 那 is to be read as *naz* "wetfield". A village on a bend in the Leyun River 9-10

kilometres east of Liangtian 良田. The Leyun River, mainly in Zhenning county, is a river that forms the upper reaches of the Qingshuijiang 清水江, itself a tributary on the eastern side of the Beipanjiang 北盤江.

7.　　line 121: Kaya 卡亞, name of a village, written in the manuscript as 卡亞, where 卡 is to be read as *ga* "leg", a word frequently used in toponyms as a classifier for "stretches" of river, road, or hillslope.

8.　　line 122: Luoshao 落哨, name of a village, written in the manuscript as 那哨, where 那 is to be read as *naz* "wetfield".

9.　　line 123: Pozhou 坡舟, name of a village, written in the manuscript as 卡油.

2e.　　line 124: Dahan, see above (2a-d).

Most of these place names are to be found in present-day Zhenning and Guanling counties in the southwestern part of Guizhou, with the exception of Leyuan which is in Wangmo on the eastern bank of the Beipanjiang. In other words, they are all places located well to the north of Ceheng county, as can be seen on the accompanying map.

Overall, it is evident that the dominant direction of migration is upstream (*gwnz*) from south to north. This accords with other traditions and generally accepted theories about the prehistoric migrations of speakers of Northern Tai into the Guizhou highlands from points of origin further south and east.[21] Nevertheless, the "migration" described is far from being a unidirectional upstream movement. The northernmost point is Sanchahe in Zhenning county, where the party is attacked by eagles. They then return south to Dahan, which is near the western bank of the Leyun River (Leyunhe 樂運河) in the southern part of present-day Zhenning county. The Leyunhe is the name for the middle reaches of the Qingshuijiang 清水江. In order to arrive there by water from Sanchahe, the travelling party would have to travel southward down the Dabang River (Dabanghe 打幫河) well past the confluence with the Beipanjiang to a

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21　See e.g. Liang Min 梁敏 and Zhang Junru 張均如, *Zhuang Dong yuzu gailun* 壯侗語組概論 [A general account of the Zhuang-Dong languages] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1996), pp. 15-49.

junction only some twelve kilometers or so north of Leyuan in Wangmo, then, taking the Qingshuijiang, which is the eastern fork, go back upstream for some 45 kilometres or so through the bends of the Qingshuijiang and along the Leyun river. The journey southwards down to Leyuan would involve going downstream again from Dahan along the Leyun river and Qingshuijiang, and then southwards along the Beipanjiang; returning to Dahan would involve an upstream journey back along the same river system.

Our text, then, suggests a pattern of repeated movement up and down the same river system, even if the basic direction is said to be "upstream" (*gwnz*). Moreover, the listing of the locations in the same area said to be the ancestral strongholds of other surname groups suggests that the migration here pertains only to one group of people, and not to the Bouyei as a whole.

It is worth noting that the text gives brief reasons for migrating from place to place, and some hints of what the criteria underlying the selection of places for settlement. These have to do with finding places with adequate resources. Mountain-tops are too confining and do not provide sufficient food. What is needed is space for things like wet-fields, including nurse fields and beds for the rice-seedlings, abundant timber, and tree cover to provide shelter from eagles.

The episode of the eagles is mythologised, but serves to remind people that places chosen for settlement should be free of infestation by powerful and dangerous animals. This may in fact have been more of a serious practical consideration in prehistoric times than we can now imagine.[22] In the Ceheng text, the eagles block the progress of the migrating party and threaten to wipe them out, and have to be overcome by trickery or magic. Powerful and dangerous animals frequently feature in the migration songs of other non-Chinese people in the southwest of China, and in the funeral texts directing the souls of the dead on the journey back to the land of the ancestors. Among the "Guiding the Way" songs sung at the funerals of the Yi 彝 in Yunnan, Sichuan,

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22 On this point see D. Holm, "The Exemplar of Filial Piety and the End of the Ape-men: Dong Yong in Guangxi and Guizhou Ritual Performance", *T'oung Pao XC* (2004), pp. 32-64.

and northwestern Guizhou, wild animals block the way of dead souls on their way to the land of the ancestors, but in these songs the animals are tigers, leopards and wolves.[23]

Far from being confined to the Bouyei or other Tai-Kadai speaking groups, giant eagles also feature in the ceremonial songs of the Miao. In a cosmogonic song recorded in Zhouxi 舟溪 near Kaili 凱里 in 1954,[24] eagles in the sky and on the cliffs block the passage of the Miao across a river, and hundreds and thousands of people perish. The eagles are overcome by a ruse which resembles that of the Bouyei: the Miao refine ore from nine different kinds of rock, with which they make lances, and cut nine different kinds of tree, in order to produce pitch. They then smear the pitch on the branches of trees, and stab the eagles when they become entrapped. After that, they pluck the eagles and eat the flesh. As a further development, the grease from the eagle-meat drips on the ground, where it is transformed into rice seeds and cotton seeds.[25] Giant eagles are also found in other texts, too. In the orally transmitted songs about Mi Luotuo 密洛陀, the apical ancestress of the Bunu Yao 布努瑤, current in Du'an 都安 county in north-central Guangxi, a similar story is told of how a ferocious giant eagle barred the way when Mi Luotuo was searching for an appropriate place to create humankind.[26] The Bunu Yao, who inhabit areas in northern and northwestern Guangxi and are speakers of a language related to Miao, live in close association

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23　Guoji Ningha 果吉寧哈 and Ling Fuxiang 嶺福祥, eds.-in-chief, *Yiwen* "*Zhilujing*" *yiji* 彝文指路經譯集 [A collection of translations of "Guiding the Way Scriptures" in the Yi Script] (Beijing: Zhongyang minzu xueyuan chubanshe, 1993), Foreword, p. 3.

24　Wu Dekun 吳德坤 & Wu Dejie 吳德杰, ed. and trans., *Miaozu lici* 苗族理辭 *Jax Lil* [Ceremonial lyrics of the Miao] (Guiyang: Guizhou minzu chubanshe, 2002), postface. This text is called "Traversing the mountains and fording the rivers" (Nangx Eb Jit Bil), but this title may have been added by the editors. I am grateful to Ms. Ma Meng, a Ph.D. student at the University of Melbourne, for bringing this example to my attention. Zhouxi is roughly 10 kilometers southwest of Kaili in the Southeast Guizhou Autonomous Region.

25　Wu Dekun and Wu Dejie, pp. 258-260.

26　Meng Guanxiong 蒙冠雄, Meng Haiqing 蒙海清, and Meng Songyi 蒙松毅, eds., *Mi Luotuo* 密洛陀 (Nanning: Guangxi minzu chubanshe, 1998), pp. 162-185.

with the Zhuang and Bouyei. As in the Ceheng text, the size of the eagle is greatly exaggerated, and colourful descriptions are given of how big its wings and feet are.

In Guizhou the motif of giant eagles as obstacles to migration may well be particularly widespread. Further research on the mythology and song cycles of other non-Han peoples would probably show that such motifs are widely shared among many ethnic groups in the Guangxi-Guizhou area.

Parallels

An informant from Zhenfeng county, to the north of Ceheng, reports a migration text in which the following place-names are among those listed as ancestral places: "Dahan 打罕, Manluo 蠻洛, Lashao 拉少, Linshang 林上, Guanchuang 貫窗, Gegao 歌告, Shanshu 善書, and Mingu 珉谷".[27] Recital of these place-names serves to summon the souls of ancestors still located in those places to come to the place where people now live to partake in the New Year offerings.[28] Most of these places can be identified: Mingu is present-day Zhenfeng (the county seat), while Dahan, Manluo, Lashao and Linshang are all said to be near the Beipanjiang River. Dahan and Manluo are along the banks of the Baishuihe River 白水河 in Zhenning and Zhenfeng; while Lashao and Linshang are on the banks of the Qingshuijiang downstream from the Baishuihe.[29] Here, too, further investigation is needed.

Much more information is available from the Biandanshan 扁擔山 (Carrying-Pole Mountain) area in the northwestern corner of Zhenning county (see Map 1). This is an area in which Bouyei vernacular priests (*bouxmo*) conduct funerals. Among the funeral texts collected and edited from Biandanshan is found a migration text that closely parallels the Ceheng text,

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27 *Buyizu jianshi* loc. cit.

28 On the New Year buffalo sacrifices among the Bouyei see Holm, *Killing a Buffalo for the Ancestors*, pp. 24-28.

29 *Buyizu jianshi* loc. cit.

recounting ancestral migrations and ancestral places. This text is recited in the context of the ritual segment called "Circum-ambulating the Ritual Area" (called *zhuanchang* 轉場 or *zouchang* 走場 in Chinese). This is the high point of the funeral process, in which the priests lead all the male mourners, dressed in hempen mourning clothes, and all the women mourners, in full traditional costume, around the circumference of the ritual arena in the middle of which the soul pennant and the sacrificial stake for the sacrifice of the buffalo have been set up. The buffalo itself has already been tied to the stake. The priests, brandishing ritual sabres, lead the procession around the ritual arena, stopping after each turn to sing one in a series of nineteen ritual songs. The songs present a series of mythical narratives about the origins of funeral practices, the ritual implements used, and the sacrificial animals, but more significantly re-present the hardships of generations of ancestors who contributed to the creation of the present world and its wealth. The "Song of the Domain" is the eighth narrative in this series.[30]

This song is only 68 lines long.[31] While there are many surface features which are different, the underlying poetic framework of the piece is remarkably similar to that of the Ceheng text. This can be shown by examining the texts line by line (see Appendix 2 below for the opening lines of the Zhenning text). In the Zhenning text, however, place-names have been mythologised. Zinanshan 子南山 in line 3, for example, is described in a footnote as "the only tall mountain not to be inundated by the floodwaters in the flood myths of the Bouyei". In lines 4 and 5, the "house of Lenghan" 冷漢房 and the "fork of Zoumei" 走煤口 are described as "the places where the ancestors of the Bouyei first settled". Moreover, both Lenghan and Zoumei are glossed as "place-names".[32]

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30 Guizhou sheng Anshun diqu Minzu shiwu weiyuanhui 貴州省安順地區民族事務委員會 and Zhenning Buyizu Miaozu zizhixian Minzu shiwu weiyuanhui 鎮寧布依族苗族自治縣民族事務委員會, eds., *Buyizu guji Gu xie jing* 布依族古籍古謝經 [Ancient texts of the Bouyei: Funeral Scriptures] (Guiyang: Guizhou minzu chubanshe, 1992), p.189.

31 Ibid., pp. 227-233.

32 Ibid., p. 227.

Investigations confirm that Zinanshan is not the name of a real mountain: there is no such place listed in either the *Jiaqing yitongzhi* 嘉慶一統志 or in any other pre-modern geographic encyclopaedia. In other flood-myth texts, the name of the mountain that protruded above the flood waters is given as Aoshan 鰲山 (in a text from Bama county, Guangxi) or Bolangshan 播朗山 (in a text from Wangmo county, Guizhou). Variants of the names Lenghan and Zoumei are found in other texts recounting the Bouyei and Zhuang flood myths. In some areas, Lenghan (Langhan) and Zoumei are understood to be the names of mythical figures, rather than place-names.[33]

This at least provides us with additional ideas about the starting point of the migration journey in the Ceheng text. The narrow and confining space described in the opening lines of that text is probably meant to be understood as a description of a primordial homeland, on or near the top of a mountain — rather than down in a river valley. In the Ceheng text, the location is not specified, but culturally it could be readily understood as the homeland of the Bouyei immediately after the great flood. Of course, there is nothing implausible about the Bouyei having inhabited mountaintops at some point to avoid flooding, though this may have been episodic rather than confined to primordial time.

The Bouyei are not the only Tai-speaking people in Guizhou to possess migration narratives in verse. Among the Sui people, mentioned above, there is a segment of orally transmitted "ancient song" which relates the migration of the forebears of the Sui from a place called Suiya 睢雅 to Guangdong, then to Guangxi, and thence up the Red River and down the Clear River to Danzhou 丹州.[34] This song segment is very short (8 lines), and the place-names are either unidentifiable or relatively modern.[35] Still, reasons for migration (not getting

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33   For detailed discussion see Holm, *Recalling Lost Souls*, pp. 169-171.

34   Pan Chaolin 潘朝霖 and Wei Zonglin 韋宗林, eds.-in-chief, *Zhongguo Shuizu wenhua yanjiu* 中國水族文化研究 [Research on the culture of the Sui of China] (Guiyang: Guizhou renmin chubanshe, 2004), p. 18.

35   The place-names Guangdong and Guangxi only became current after the Southern Song partition of Guangnan into Guangnan donglu 廣南東路 and Guangnan xilu 廣南西路. Zeng Xiaoyu op.cit., which reproduces the same text, has Xiga 西嘎 instead of Suiya (pp. 297-298).

enough to eat in Guangdong, not earning enough money in Guangxi) are mentioned.

A more extensive migration song (120 lines) has been recorded in the Kam (Dong 侗) village of Zhuping 竹坪 in Liping 黎平 county, Guizhou. This song, called locally "Ongs bux qak nyal mags" (How our ancestors came up the big river), is regarded as the "root register" (*pux*) of the village ancestors, and was performed for the New Year and at major festivals. The itinerary listed in this song takes the ancestors up the Pearl River (Nyal jul) to Yanzhou 巖州 (Ngaix jul), where they spent "several myriad generations", over the Snowy Mountains, down to Hong Kong, where they lived in the middle of the river, up to Guangdong, thence up to Wuzhou 梧州; and finally upstream to Liuzhou 柳州 and points north.[36] Some of the places mentioned have been identified: Yanzhou has been identified as a place near present-day Guixian 貴縣 (Guigang shi 貴港市). Place-names mentioned after Liuzhou are mainly in the area inhabited by the present-day Kam: "Golden Dragon Shore" 黃金龍岸 (Huangx jinh longx nganl) has been identified as a place in present-day Luocheng 羅城 county in Guangxi; "Old Fort Mouth" 老堡口 (Laox pux koux) has been located in present-day Sanjiang 三江 in northernmost Guangxi.[37]

Some of the place-names are clearly modern, and may have been added later. Overall, the song describes a series of migrations that took the village ancestors upstream, downstream, and then upstream again, suffering many hardships and setbacks on the way.[38]

Something should be said about the historicity of such accounts, which by their nature are impossible to corroborate fully from written records. The intrusion of modern place-names and folkloric elements in these texts reminds

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36 Wu Hao 吳浩, ed.-in-chief, *Zhongguo Dongzu cunzhai wenhua* 中國侗族村寨文化 [Village culture of the Kam of China] (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2004), pp. 4-15.

37 Ibid., p. 12.

38 Ibid., p. 15. Wu Hao notes that the reasons for migration had mostly to do with conflicts with neighbours, notably Han Chinese of the Li lineage. On the basis of the *Tang huiyao* 唐會要, however, he suggests that the reason for abandoning Yanzhou may have had to do with the depradations of the Huang bandits.

us that we should not necessarily take them entirely at face value, but on the other hand should not make the mistake of ignoring them either. They should certainly be considered as hypotheses to guide future fieldwork. At the same time, in the present (or very recent past), these accounts operated within village society as cultural reflections of mobility, and served as reminders that migration was an option to be considered again if circumstances required. In other words, it is through these ritual songs that mobility remained part of the cultural repertoire of future possibilities. The Kam example also reminds us of the function of these songs in communicating with ancestral spirits, since the turn of the year was the time par excellence for doing this.

Topogeny

The recitation of the names of ancestral places fits into a much wider pattern. Indeed, it is a common feature of cultures in the South China area. Not just the Tai, but also the Yi and the Miao (Hmong) have elaborate recitations of place-names as a feature of invitations to the ancestors and a means of escorting the souls of the dead back to the ancestral homelands. This cultural mechanism is also particularly well-developed in maritime Southeast Asia. This is a phenomenon which James Fox calls "topogeny", which he defines as "the recitation of an ordered sequence of place names". He notes that topogenies are like genealogies in that they are a distinct means for the ordering and transmission of social knowledge, and a "projected externalization of memories that can be lived as well as thought about". Fox notes that topogenies take a variety of forms, depending on whether they recount the journeys of ancestors, the migration of social groups, or the transmission of things, such as rice and millet.[39] Fox's conference volume contains numerous chapters discussing

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39   James J. Fox, ed., *The Poetic Power of Place: Comparative Perspectives on Austronesian Ideas of Locality* (Canberra: The Department of Anthropology, Australian National University in association with The Comparative Austronesian Project, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, 1997), pp. 8-9.

examples of this phenomenon, taken from various parts of the Austronesian world. While these papers in this volume are confined to Austronesian societies, and for the most part still see topogenies as a cultural feature of settled rural communities rather than societies which are more or less mobile, they serve as a reminder that recitations of ancestral places are a wider areal feature, found not just among the Zhuang and Tai but more generally among the societies in the south of China and mainland and maritime Southeast Asia. Detailed comparisons of Austronesian topogenies and those among the Tai-Kadai and other mainland Southeast Asian and Southern Chinese groups has yet to be done.

Mechanisms for Migration

It might be supposed from the above discussion that large-scale migration is primarily pre-historic, confined to the mythical past. In fact, village-level mobility has been a feature — or a cultural possibility — in Tai societies even in the very recent past. One scholar who has paid particular attention to this phenomenon is Karl Izikowitz, who conducted research among the Lamet (Rmeet) in Laos during the late 1930s. Izikowitz's main focus was on the Lamet, but he conducted subsidiary fieldwork among the Tai in northern and western Laos, including the Lu, Thai Neua and the Tai Dam (Black Tai).[40]

Izikowitz noted very shallow time depth for the Tai villages he visited, and a great deal of mobility from place to place and from region to region. Villagers in the Lu village of Tafa, for example, in northwestern Laos, had migrated there from another village on the Thai side of the border. "The man who had been the leader of the migration movement was then the head of the village. He had first reconnoitred several places and then finally convinced those Lu who were interested that this was the best place for settling." (p. 62) Tafa was an old abandoned village site which lay "conveniently situated in the middle of the

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40 Karl Izikowitz, "Notes about the Thai" (1962), repr. in Göran Aijmer ed. *Compass for Fields Afar: Essays in Social Anthropology*, (Göteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1985), pp. 60-61. Page numbers in this section all refer to this book.

Lamet district on a caravan route linking Houeisai on the Mekong with Muong-Sing and other important villages in the north" (p. 62; see Map 2). The Lu reportedly arrived there in 1897, while inhabitants of the villages on the other side of the Mekong had not been there very long either, having come originally from the Ou-Neua district in the very far north of Laos; some families had come from even further north, in China; one man had been born in the Wa territories in western Yunnan (p. 63). Izikowitz comments: "The distance between Ou Neua and the Siamese villages on the other side of the Mekong might be something like 350 kilometers, whereas the distance from the Wa territory is considerably longer. Thus the distances concerned are considerable."[41]

Izikowitz was able to witness at least the first stages in a village migration:

> In February 1938, just as I was about to leave the village, it was divided into two camps, one of which expressed a desire to move and was looking for a new area to settle nearer the Mekong. The reasons for this are ...... complicated ...... The discussion was very heated. Unfortunately I never really gathered if any of them ever moved and formed a new village. In any case they were pulling down some buildings when I left. All this shows how frequently they moved and over how large a territory. This does not mean the removal of a village as a whole, but often only a few families or a somewhat larger section of the village.[42]

This intended migration was organised at the instigation of the village head, who was also the founder of the village. As Izikowitz observes, the role of the village leadership in such migrations is crucial. "While the founder is alive there is, of course, no cult around him, but it often springs up at a later date." (p. 64)

Izikowitz provides a more detailed account of this migration in a separate article "Expansion" (1963). He notes that the move from Ou-Neua on the Chinese border was triggered by frequent attacks by Chinese bandits. The villagers first went to Xieng-Khong on the Mekong river, where they were attacked by a Burmese Thai tribe, the Ngio. They returned to the Laotian side of

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41 Ibid. pp. 63-64.

42 Ibid., p. 63.

Map 2　Migration of Tai Lu Villagers from Ou Neua to Tafa
　　　台泐村民從烏怒鎮到大發村移民路線圖
　　　(after Izikowitz, p. 105)

the river after the French colonial authorities brought peace to the area. There they were joined by another group from Ou-Neua, which had come originally from Muong Lem in the Shan States. Once they settled down in Dafa, the Lu proceeded to engage in trade in mountain products, and one of their number was made chief of the Lamet canton.[43]

The motive for the move of which Izikowitz witnessed the beginning stages was not so much economic as desire for higher status on the part of the younger village leadership, who had heard that villages further south in the Thai areas had acquired motor canoes.

Of the actual move, Izikowitz reports:

> Tafá, which lies on the Nam-Ngao, a tributary to the Mekong, had very many rapids and was extremely difficult to navigate, especially in the dry season. They were certainly forced to take most of their possessions on pack-horses and with bearers, and to make several journeys. The move might be managed in five or six days, for they could not have had that much luggage. The harvest must have been their heaviest load. In any case they had the choice of a more roundabout route to another river, many kilometers away, down which they could then transport their luggage by canoe.[44]

Izikowitz's comments on the general strategy of Tai migration are also worth quoting:

> The Thai peoples are spread over an enormous area of Indo-China. ...... Through their feudal structure they have come to dominate large areas and to a large degree they have possessed the power to subordinate the primitive peoples in the surrounding areas. They have concentrated chiefly in the areas where they ahve been able to develop their irrigation farming. At the same time they have taken over strategical zones, controlling inland caravan paths, and especially, by rivers where they can use canoes. They are to a high degree attracted to water, to the river as a means of communication. Often the river plays the part of a village road,

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43 Karl Izikowitz, "Expansion" (1963), repr. in Izikowitz, *Compass for Fields Afar: Essays in Social Anthropology*, pp. 106-107.

44 Ibid., p. 110.

linking the villages along its banks and at the same time providing water for irrigation.

In North Laos, along the Mekong, they have settled at the points where the tributaries flow into the main river, these being strategical places for the control of the trade with the products of the mountain peoples.[45]

Of course, mainland Southeast Asia is a region that included many migrant groups that had fled political oppression and banditry in China, and the relative weakness of state authority until recent decades has meant that village heads probably had more authority and villagers had more scope for mobility than in China itself. Nevertheless, it would be well worth re-investigating the recent migration history of Tai settlements and the ethnohistory of southern China in light of Izikowitz's discussion. For us here, it is likely to have been some such process that led to the migration of the Bouyei into the upland river systems of the Guizhou plateau.

Family Registers

Chinese-style family or lineage registers (*jiapu* 家譜 or *zongpu* 宗譜) provide additional evidence about the historical incidence of mobility in Tai families. The Zhuang began to keep family registers during the Ming. At first it was only chiefly lineages and other prominent families in the immediate entourage of chiefly lineages that kept family registers; later, the custom became more widespread. These documents not only provide information about family members in each generation; they also provide information about which sons resettled in other districts.

We will take our examples from the family registers of various branches of the Qin 覃 surname group. The Qin are a prominent surname in much of northwestern and central Guangxi. In the northwest, the Qin claim their descent from the Ming figure Tan Sanyao 譚三耀, also known as Qin Huaiman 覃懷滿.

45　Ibid., pp. 103-104.

Qin Huaiman's grandson, Qin Datong 覃大通, had nine sons. A number of these early registers have been investigated by the local scholar Qin Chengqin, a senior editor at the Guangxi Nationalities Publishing House. According to Qin Chengqin's researches, the following information can be established:

> The eldest son of Qin Datong, Qin Zhi 覃智, accompanied his father from Donglanzhou 東蘭州 to Yanglao 楊老 village in Binzhou 賓州 (present-day Binyang 賓陽) in the 2nd year of the Jingtai 景泰 reign period (1451) of the Ming. His descendants reside in some seventy-odd villages in Binyang and Shanglin 上林 counties, with some also found further south in Yongning 邕寧 county.
>
> The second son Qin Qian 覃乾 moved to Modi 莫地 village in Baitusi 白土司 in Yishan 宜山 county.
>
> The third son Qin Li 覃李 took over his father's official position in Donglan after his father's return to Wuguan 武官 in Donglan in the 5th year of the Jingtai reign (1454), and remained in office there until the Zhengde 正德 reign period (1506-1521).
>
> The fourth son Qin Pao 覃炮 was appointed as local official 堡目 in the 6th borough of Zhongpingsi 中平司六里 in Hechi subprefecture 河池州. His great grandson Qin Kejiang 覃可將 moved to Banling 板嶺 village in Yongshunsi 永順司 in Yishan.
>
> The fifth son Qin Zhao 覃招 moved to Banling 板嶺 village in Huanjiang 環江.
>
> The sixth son Qin Zhao 覃兆 moved to Lahe 喇合 village in Guling 古零 in present-day Mashan 馬山.
>
> The seventh son Qin Mi 覃泌 moved to Longjiang 龍降 village in present-day Yishan county.
>
> The eighth son Qin Kun 覃坤 moved to Wudu 五都 village in Qianjiang 遷江 (present-day Laibin 來賓).
>
> The ninth son Qin Shou 覃壽 moved to Libo 荔波 county in present-day Guizhou, where he became the native chieftain.[46]

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46 Qin Chengqin 覃承勤, ed., *Zhongguo Qinshi tongshu* 中國覃氏通書 [Comprehensive Almanac of the Qin Surname Group in China] (Nanning: Guangxi minzu chubanshe, 1995), p. 266. This account is based primarily on the *Qinjia laozu zongtu* 覃家老祖總圖 [General Chart of the Oldest Ancestors of the Qin Family], a source which gives much concrete information, such as years of birth, day of burial, and age at death. While the accuracy of this source has yet to be

It can be readily seen (Map 3) that Qin Datong's sons spanned nearly half a province in their movements, settling in places very widely separated. Of course, it is not to be supposed that they moved as individuals. Being a well-connected with the local chiefly lineage, we can imagine that each of the Qin brothers would have travelled with a sizeable entourage, sufficient to deal with any obstacles they might have encountered. In the areas they moved to, the Qins would have formed linguistic and cultural isolates among the local population.

The lineage of the Qin in Nongchi 弄池 village, Gaoling 高嶺 parish, Du'an 都安 county shows a similar pattern of wide dispersal. This branch descended from Qin Bixiang 覃必相, the second son of Qin Li. Qin Bixiang's son Qin Kejiang 覃可江 had twelve sons, who migrated as follows:

> Qin Tao 覃濤 moved to Maonan 毛難 village in Si'en 思恩 county (present-day Huanjiang 環江).
>
> Qin Chao 覃朝 moved to Nandan 南丹.
>
> Qin Sheng 覃勝 moved to Duxu 度序 village in Donglan 東蘭.
>
> Qin Xiang 覃向 moved to Tangmeng 塘蒙 village in Si'en.
>
> Qin Jian 覃建 moved from Laocun 勞村 in Donglan to Huaji 華季 village in Du'an.
>
> Qin Chun 覃春, also known as Qin Langong 覃蘭公, moved from Liangtou 良投 village in Donglan to Nongchi village.
>
> Qin Zhuang 覃壯 moved to the northern parish of Sanwang 三旺北鄉 in Hechi 河池.

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confirmed by the sighting of original documents, the most highly mythologised portion of the account is likely to be the connection with Tan Sanyao and his more remote ancestors, rather than that of Qin Datong. Beginning in the Ming, many Zhuang families sought to connect their patrilines with those of well-known figures in Chinese history, thus identifying themselves as "patois-speaking Han Chinese". See Gong Yonghui 龔永輝, "'Tuhua Hanren' yu 'Hanyi' guannian — Zhuangzu ziwo yishi lishi xingtai chukui" 土話漢人與漢裔觀念 — 壯族自我意識歷史形態初窺 ["Patois-speaking Han Chinese" and the concept of "Han descendants" — a preliminary view on the historical state of self-consciousness among the Zhuang], in Fan Honggui 範宏貴 and Gu Youshi 顧有識, *Zhuangzu lungao* 壯族論稿 [Draft essays on the Zhuang] (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 1989), pp. 98-114.

Legend:
— Province boundary
— County boundary
⊙ Province capital
· County seat

Guizhou 貴州

Hunan 湖南

Yunnan 雲南

Guangxi 廣西

Guangdong 廣東

Viet Nam 越南

Gulf of Tongking

South China Sea

❶ Binyang 賓陽
1a Shanglin 上林
1b Yongning 邕寧
❷ Yishan 宜山
❸ Donglan 東蘭
❹ Hechi 河池
❺ Huanjiang 環江
❻ Mashan 馬山
❼ (Yishan)
❽ Laibin 來賓
❾ Libo 荔波

0   45 km
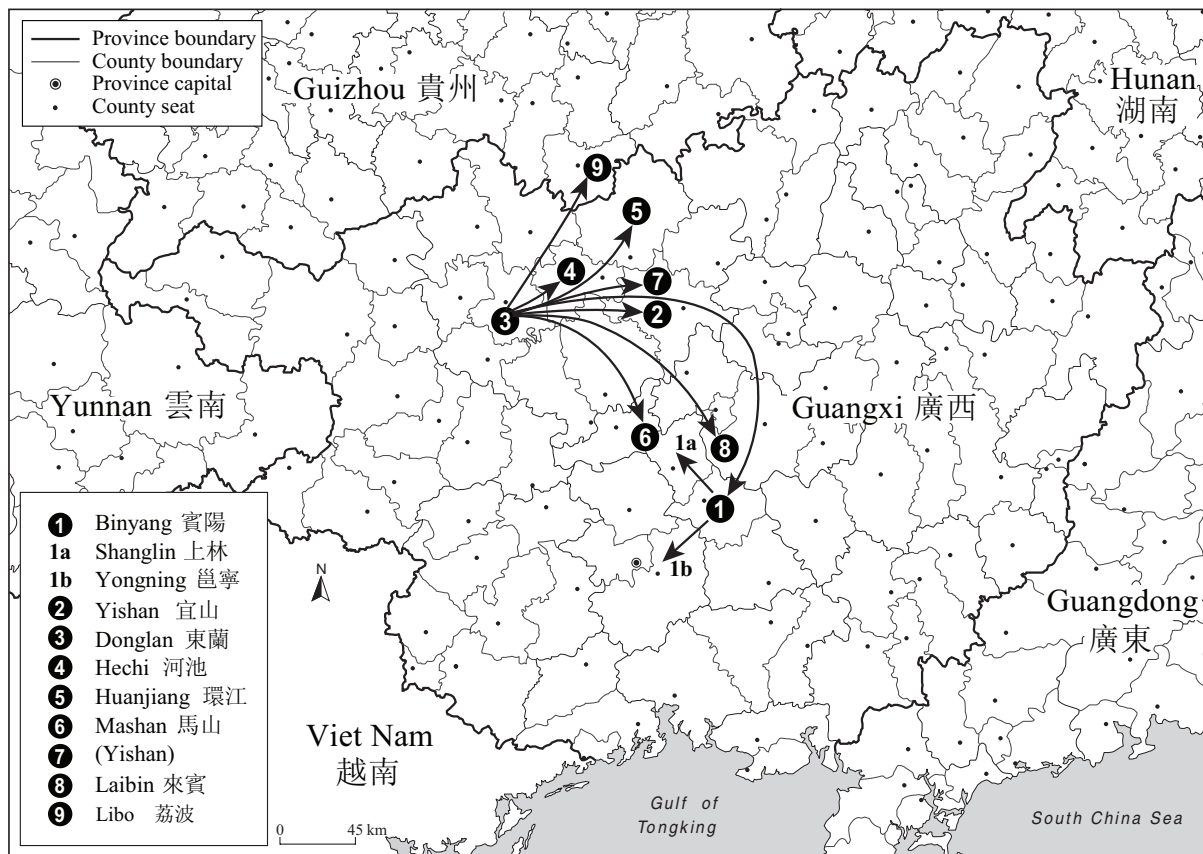
Map 3　Qin Datong's Sons 覃大通九子移民圖

Qin Peng 覃朋 moved to Yansang 岩桑 village in Donglan.

Qin Ju 覃舉 lived in Bagou 巴苟 village in Donglan.

Qin Ji 覃記 lived in Qiehe 切合 village in Donglan.

Qin Wan 覃晚 settled somewhere unknown.[47]

Such a high rate of mobility seems not to have been sustained in each succeeding generation. A fairly typical pattern is that a member of the lineage will found a village, and members of each succeeding generation will remain in the locality until the available land is fully utilized. Another pattern, visible in quite a number of places, is that sons will migrate out when a large number of children are born to a particular family. The Qin of Xihe 西河 in Donglan, for example, were a relatively small but well-connected lineage. The village founder (*shizu* 始祖) was Qin Quan'an 覃權案. The branch originated from Hechi, and from Hechi moved to Ganlai 甘來, and then to Nongshao 弄哨, and next to Nongnu 弄努 before finally settling down in Xihe. Three hundred years later there were 60-odd households and nearly 400 people in the village, most of whom changed their name back to Tan 譚 in the 1940s. Out-migration seems to have started in the seventh and eighth generations:

Qin Bo 覃波 (8th generation), Qin Jianying 覃建英 (8th generation) and Qin Dongyou 覃東尤 migrated to Nanning.

Qin Dingbang 覃定邦 (7th generation), Qin Mingfang 覃明芳 (7th generation), Qin Jiankang 覃建康 (8th generation), and Qin Shiwen 覃世文 (7th generation) moved to Nandan 南丹.

Qin Wen 覃文 (7th generation) moved to Chongzuo 崇左.

Qin Ji"e 覃繼峨 (7th generation) moved to Liucheng 柳城.

Qin Xianfeng 覃憲豐 (8th generation) settled in Tianyang 田陽.

Qin Liren 覃立仁 (8th generation) settled in Jinchengjiang 金城江, the present-day county seat of Hechi.

Qin Dongming 覃東明 (10th generation) settled in Dahua 大化.[48]


47　Ibid., p. 263.

48　Ibid., pp. 244-247, citing information given in Qin Rengui 覃仁貴, *Quan'an ersun* 權案兒孫 [Sons and Grandsons of Qin Quan'an].

Again, family members migrated far and wide, in fact over many hundreds of kilometers both east-west and north-south (see Map 4).

However, another common pattern that is evident from lineage registers is local expansion of lineage territory after initial consolidation. Such is the pattern, for example, with the Qin in Chongmeng 冲蒙 hamlet, Longyou 龍友 village, Dongjiang 東江 parish in present-day Hechi county. The village founder was Qin Ruliang 覃汝亮, who recognised Chongmeng as an "excellent place" (*jiadi* 佳地) and moved there with his family from the nearby hamlet of Xiaxiang 下香. The generation depth by the 1990s had reached fourteen generations, and the settlement had grown to 150-odd households and over 700 people. This village was mostly very stable, with male family members moving away only very occasionally, even from families with large numbers of children. The first recorded emigrant is Qin Ruizhi 覃瑞芝 in the 10th generation, who moved with his son Qin Changshou 覃長壽 to nearby Banmu 板慕 hamlet. In the same generation, Qin Qiyan 覃其嚴 and Qin Shoulu 覃受祿 moved to Wuxu 五墟 in Hechi, further away but still within one or two days' travelling time. In the next generation, though, quite a number of lineage members moved to Nanning, Wuhan in central China, and the parish seat of Dongjiang.[49]

While the evidence from lineage registers does not permit us any glimpse of the personalities behind historical mobility in Tai society in Guangxi, it does suggest that such mobility was at a fairly high level, and that it has been evident for as long as there have been historical records, certainly over the last five or six centuries. The evidence suggests that the circumstances prompting migration frequently had to do with overpopulation in home villages. Still, the idea of largely static and culturally and linguistically uniform populations inhabiting wide areas, with no admixture of incoming migrants from other places, cannot really be sustained.

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49   Ibid., pp. 249-254. The 10th generation was during the Republican period, since a number of that generation are recorded as having been recruited into the Guominjun.
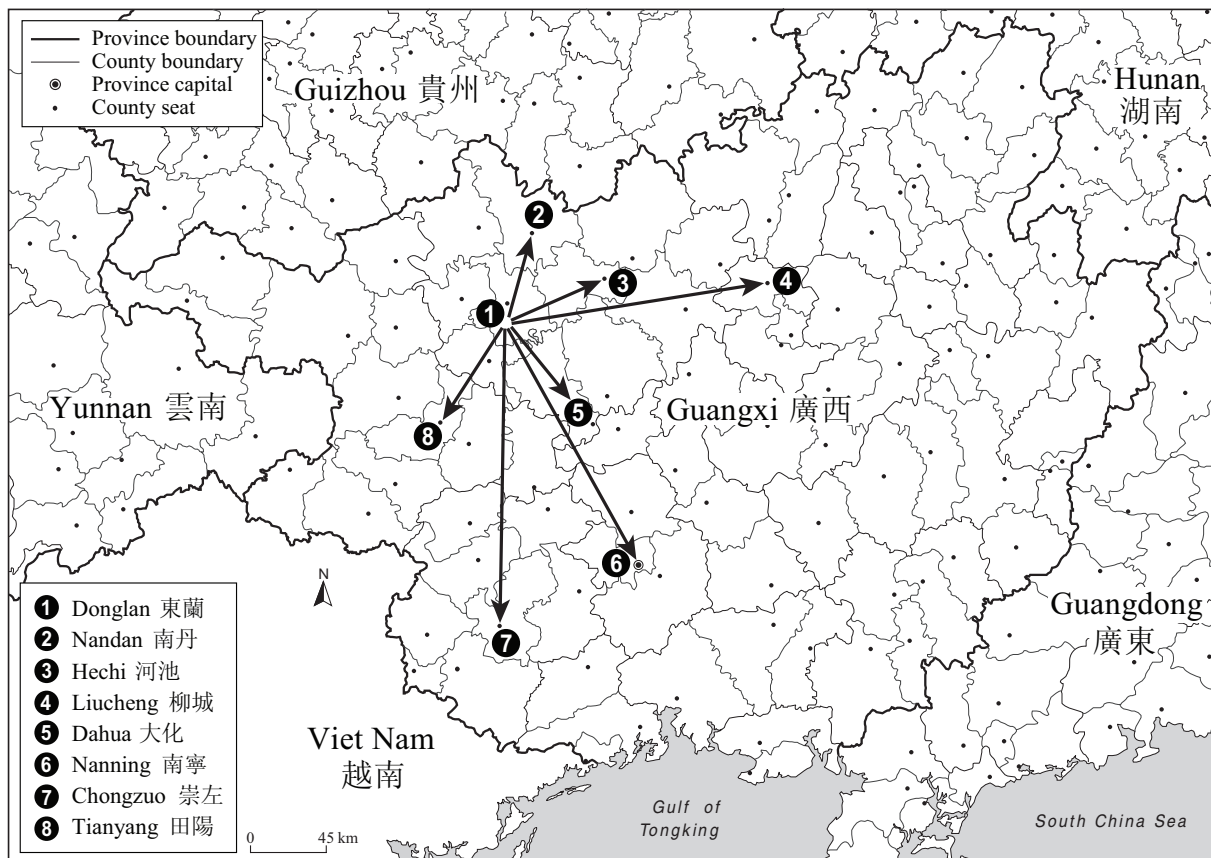
Map 4　The Qins of Xihe Village, Donglan 東蘭縣西河村覃家移民情況

Village Occupations

An additional source of mobility is participation in non-agricultural livelihoods. Izikowitz observed that some Tai villages in Laos specialised in particular handicraft or sideline (i.e. non-agricultural) activity. Typically, the whole village would be involved in the same activity or craft specialisation. The same pattern can be found in China.

Tiandeng is a mountainous county in the southwestern part of Guangxi. Formerly, the territory was divided among the Republican-period counties of Longming 龍茗, Xiangdu 向都 and Zhenjie 鎮結,[50] and before that, the native chieftaincies of Xiangwu 向武, Dukang 都康, Shangying 上映, Longying 龍英, Quanming 全茗, Mingying 茗盈, Xinlun 信倫, Zhenyuan 鎮遠, Jie'an 結安, and Dujie 都結.[51]

Tiandeng forms part of the karst highlands between the Youjiang and Zuojiang rivers. Limestone peaks are found throughout the county, with valleys running in a ENE-WSW direction. While wetfield and dryfield agriculture is found everywhere, with rice in wetfields and maize as the main dryfield crop, with soybeans, peanuts and sugarcane as economic crops, other specialisations are found, in spite of what were very difficult land communications in pre-modern times. In Jinjie 進結 parish, Longfeng 龍鳳 village has a concentration of iron-workers (*shengtiejiang* 生鐵匠), while silversmiths are concentrated in Minyuan 民元 village; the men in both these villages frequently travel in order to pursue these sidelines.[52] In Jinyuan township in the northeast of the county, most men travel outside their villages in order to pursue sideline trades; the

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50 See *Tiandeng xianzhi* 天等縣誌 [Tiandeng County Gazetteer], ed. Tiandeng xianzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui 天等縣誌編纂委員會 (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 1991), p. 26, for a map of former county boundaries.

51 Ibid., pp. 24-25. The smallest of these domains was quite small, comprising only 32 villages (Quanming).

52 *Tiandeng xianzhi*. p. 37.

formerly well-known stone masons of Zhenjie 鎮結石匠 were concentrated here, and Gengxun 更訓 hamlet produces many blacksmiths.[53] In Xiangdu 向都 township in the northwest of the county, gold is found in the "Ninety-nine Peaks" (九十九嶺), and in that area and in Pingyao 平堯 most of the inhabitants engage in panning for gold.[54] Panning for gold is also done by the inhabitants in some of the hamlets in Taili 台利 in Ninggan 寧干 parish to the north of the county seat.[55] In Dukang 都康 parish, the villages of Duoxin 多信, Bakong 把孔 and Jiaohui 教惠 specialised in plaiting finely-worked bamboo hats, straw mats and straw fans, while villagers in Jiangxiang 降祥 and Ankang 安康 used to specialise in the production of "southern rice-noodles" (*nanfen* 南粉) made out of a combination of rice and bean flour.[56] Villagers in Miaocun 苗村 in Fuxin 福新 parish specialised in forestry, with 5134 mu of Chinese anise trees (*bajiaoshu* 八角樹) producing some 5,500 kilograms of anise oil per year.[57] Anise oil production was also the specialisation of villagers in Peiguang 佩光 village in Shangying 上盈 parish.[58] Some of these activities involved villagers in travel outside their immediate area, others involved villagers in market transactions.

Such patterns of village-level economic specialisation are found also in the Han Chinese parts of the Chinese empire, and not just in the south, but in the north as well.[59] Among the Tai, however, such specialisations often involved sub-ethnic distinctions in culture and language, and restricted patterns of

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53 Ibid., This parish has a high population and relatively little arable land.

54 Ibid.,

55 Ibid., p. 36.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid., p. 37.

58 Ibid., p. 38.

59 See Holm "Art and Ideology in the Yenan Period" (unpublished D. Phil thesis, University of Oxford, 1980), for a detailed analysis of the local distribution of woodblock print production in the villages surrounding Yangliuqing 楊柳青 near Tianjin. Such handicraft specialisation by whole villages began to re-emerge very shortly after the beginning of the Reform Period in the early 1980s. There were reports, for example, of "garlic villages" in central Shaanxi during the early 1980s (*Shaanxi ribao* 陝西日報).

intermarriage with other groups. In some cases, economically specialised groups could be forcibly re-located to other districts by native chieftains or the Chinese authorities, or they could themselves choose to move in search of better access to needed resources. In some cases such migration might involve migration over vast distances. The Saek, a small Northern Tai-speaking group now resident near Nakhon Pathom in northeastern Thailand, are a small sub-ethnic group who reportedly specialised in gold-mining.[60] This may well be an important piece of information. While next to nothing is now known of the circumstances in which the Saek migrated to a location so far from other Northern Tai speakers, their economic specialisation may well have played some part in it.

Conclusion

Both kinds of text considered in this paper can most profitably be read in a wider context that includes not only Chinese evidence on mobility but also the scholarship on Mainland Southeast Asia.

The work of James Fox and others on "topogeny" provides clear parallels with the importance of place-name lists in the non-Han cultures of South and Southwest China. For many of these peoples, including the Bouyei, the recitation of the place-names during funerals is what allows the soul of the dead to be conducted back to the land of the ancestors. The point is that the recitation of place-names provides a mechanism for accessing the ancestral spirits, and thus serves many of the same functions as the list of personal names in a family register.

The outstanding virtue of Izikowitz's discussion on the Tai is that he outlines a dynamic view of Tai societies. Though he had no opportunity to undertake further fieldwork in Tai villages or to examine the host of Tai documents that would be relevant, he advances the view that the expansion of the Tai from their homeland in China over a very wide area of mainland

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60   James Chamberlain, personal communication, May 1998.

Southeast Asia can eventually be explained by social processes such as he witnessed and described for the late 1930s. Social structure and in particular the stratified hierarchical nature of Tai society is, he insists, the key to understanding this expansion. The expansion was every bit as geared to domination as the expansion of the Han Chinese, and while Tai feudalism shared some things in common with Chinese social organisation, as a result of a very long period of contact, it was all things considered likely to be an indigenously Tai phenomenon. It was through processes such as these that the Tai, with the support or the collusion of the Mongol armies, swept in and took over the strategic points along the main waterways of mainland Southeast Asia during the 13th century, and began consolidating their riverine domains.

Within China, the tendencies towards expansion and domination within Tai societies were necessarily muted or disguised by the need to arrive at an accommodation with the Chinese state. Still, Izikowitz's analysis allows us to generate fresh hypotheses. Are Zhuang and Bouyei societies really as homogenous as the ethnohistorians, cultural geographers and dialectologists would have us believe? The answer to this question, I expect, is no. We are likely to find that society at the local level is a patchwork of dialects and cultural particularities. Were such societies as thoroughly sinified as most Western and Chinese accounts would have it? Again, the answer is likely to be "no". Further fieldwork among the Tai societies both inside and outside China is now long overdue, but from a dynamic perspective that at least hypothesises a greater degree of mobility than we have previously imagined.

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Appendix 1
開方科儀
Song of Migration, Ceheng County, Cuizhou

可	泊	又	吉	来	1
goj	boh	youq	giz	lawz	
of.old	father	reside	place	where	

父原住哪裏

可	泊	又	蹐	令	2
goj	boh	youq	yonq	lingq	
of.old	father	reside	top	ridge	

父原住坡頂

丁	泊	又	吉	来	3
din	boh	youq	giz	lawz	
foot	father	reside	place	where	

落腳在哪裏

丁	泊	又	蹐	喜	4
din	boh	youq	yonq	rih	
foot	father	reside	top	dryfield	

落腳在山頂

又	吉	的	烈	软	5
youq	giz	de	le	caenz	
reside	place	there	PTL	narrow	

在坡頂也狹

见	吉	的	烈	残	6
raen	giz	de	le	can	
see	place	there	PTL	cramped	

在山頂也窄

但	乃	弄	居	猪	7
dan	ndaej	doengj	gwz	mou	
only	get	bucket	feed	pig	

只得桶喂豬

宓	乃	弄	居	妈	8
mij	ndaej	doengj	gwz	ma	
not	get	bucket	feed	dog	

不得盆喂狗

旦	乃	纳	海	彼	9
dan	ndaej	naz	hawj	beix	
only	get	wetfield	give	older.sibling	

要找田給哥

纳	海	陇		宓	又	10
naz	hawj	nuengx		miz	youq	
wetfield	give	younger.sibling		not	reside	

也没田給弟

泊	饶	奈	林	敏	奈	练	11
boh	raeuz	naiq	ninz	mbinj	naiq	niemh	
father	our	tired	sleep	mat	tired	think	

父睡蓆思考

奈	林	愿		奈	而	12
naiq	ninz	riep		naiq	naemj	
tired	sleep	mosquito.net		tired	think	

躺在幃帳裏尋思

汗	學	用	杀	居	13
haet	cog	romh	caz -	jil*	
early	tomorrow	bright	ONOM.		

明日天拂曉

汉	學	用	杀	皆	14
haet	cog	romh	caz -	jaail*	
early	tomorrow	light	ONOM.		

明日天剛亮

井	儿	谷	岩	绕	15
cingj	lwg	guh	ngaiz	caeux	
ask	child	make	breakfast	early	

囑兒做飯早

井	摆	谷	岩	用	16
cingj	baz	guh	ngaiz	romh	
ask	d.in.law	make	breakfast	light	

叫媳做早餐

好	住	命	儿	拜	17
haeux	coq	mbibt*	lwg	bae	
rice	put	small.box	child	go	

包飯給兒去

捧	练	买	儿	拜	18
bungz	lienz	mbaiq	lwg	bae	
put	with	parcel	child	go	

做菜給兒行

娃	杀		丁	儿	拜	19
haiz	cab		din	lwg	bae	
shoes	thread.into		foot	child	go	

給兒穿鞋去

Appendix 2

构盆

Song of Previous Generations, Zhenning County, Guizhou

贯	又	坦`	巴	并	巴	骈	1
kuon^{35}	ʔiu^{35}	taːn^{11}	pa^{33}	pin^{13}	pa^{33}	pian^{11}	
before	reside	stockade	cave	level.ground	cave	cliff	

從前住在高岩險峰，

鲁	又	登	巴	地	巴	止	2
ʔdeu^{53}	ʔiu^{35}	ten^{33}	pa^{33}	tei^{13}	pa^{33}	tci^{53}	
of.old	reside	foot	cliff	field	cave	above	

過去住在岩腳山洞，

贯	又	子	南	山			3
kuon^{35}	ʔiu^{35}	tsɯ^{53}	naːn^{11}	saːn^{33}			
before	reside	Zi -	nan	mountain			

從前住在子南山，

鲁	又	元	冷	汉			4
ʔdeu^{53}	ʔiu^{35}	zaːn^{11}	len^{53}	haːn^{35}			
of.old	reside	house	Leng -	han			

過去住在冷漢房，

鲁	又	站	走	煤			5
ʔdeu^{53}	ʔiu^{35}	tcian^{24}	ɬeu^{53}	mei^{11}			
of.old	reside	pass	Zou -	mei			

過去住在走煤丫口，

又	吉	的	散	惰			6
ʔiu^{35}	tci^{11}	ti^{33}	ɬaːn^{35}	to^{35}			
reside	place	that	do	construct.with.wood			

在那裏興土木，

又	吉	的	缵	缠			7
ʔiu^{35}	tci^{11}	ti^{33}	to^{35}	tsʰan^{53}			
reside	place	that	construct	furniture			

在那裏打家俱，

缵	谷	桶	居	厶			8
to^{35}	ku^{13}	tʰuoŋ^{53}	kɯ^{33}	meu^{33}			
construct	make	bucket	feed	pigs			

打做喂豬桶，

桶	居	妈	枚	又	9
tʰuoŋ⁵³	kɯ³³	ma³³	mei¹¹	ʔiu³⁵	
bucket	feed	dogs	not	have	

喂狗桶没有，

缵	谷	纳	豸	比	10
tsɔ⁵³	ku¹³	na¹¹	tsoi⁵³ -	pei⁵³	
create	make	wetfield	PREF	older.sibling	

来造弟兄田，

纳	豸	农	枚	又	11
na¹¹	tsoi⁵³ -	noŋ⁵³	mei¹¹	ʔiu³⁵	
wetfield	PREF	younger.sibling	not	have	

兄得弟没有，

老	尧	未	乃	班	
lɔ⁵³	zau¹¹	vei¹³	ʔdai⁵³	pan³³	
old.man	1.PL. INCL.	not	get	divide	

	盆	未	恒	妈	更	12
	peŋ¹¹	vei¹³	hen⁵³	ma³³	ken¹¹	
	domain	not	ascend	come	above	

我們祖先還未分地方，

未	乃	班	盆	呈	妈	廖	13
vei¹³	ʔdai⁵³	pan³³	peŋ¹¹	tsʰen¹¹	ma³³	ʔdiau³⁵	
not	get	divide	domain	pass.over	come	high	

未把地方分過来，

妈	堂	坏	蜡	坐		14
ma³³	taŋ¹¹	fie³³	la⁵³	ɬo³⁵		
come	arrive	dam	below	tread, landing		

来到跳蹬河壩下，

妈	堂	坐	蜡	约	15
ma³³	taŋ¹¹	ɬo³⁵	la⁵³	ɣuoŋ¹¹	
ask	arrive	landing	below	pond	

来到跳蹬河壩邊，

旦	吉	的	吉	比	16
taːŋ³⁵	tɕi¹¹	ti³³	tɕi¹¹	pei¹³	
field	place	that	place	good	

那裏壩子好，

止	吉	的	止	桑	17
tci⁵³	tci¹¹	ti³³	tci⁵³	ɬaːŋ³³	
tutelary.god	place	that	tutelary.god	high	

那裏山神靈，

王	吉	的	王	啞	18
vaːŋ¹¹	tci¹¹	ti³³	vaːŋ¹¹	ʔia³⁵	
ghost	place	that	ghost	bad	

那裏鬼很兇，

華南台族群的移動性

賀　大　衛*

摘　要

　　華南地區的壯侗語族各族群的移動性主要表現在河流上下通船，次要的移動方式在組織馬幫從一個河谷翻山到另一個河谷以運貨或移民。歷史上的移動性不但包括個體商販的來往和兵丁的出征，也包括集體的全村或一部分村民的移動。

　　本論文擬以貴州布依魔公所唱的「祖源歌」為例，討論廣西貴州兩省壯、布依、侗、水等台族群在傳統社會裏面對領土和移動性的文化建構。這些古歌一方面會給研究民族史的學者提供有關史前移民事實的信息，另一方面對族群本身能起到類似家譜的作用，做地域認同的象徵物和土地權的旁證。與此同時能做祖宗足跡的地圖，這樣與新年慶賀的請神儀式過程，喪事中給亡靈開路的途徑有很多相同之處。

　　本文以「祖源歌」具體內容為主要出發點，評價「祖源歌」所提供的訊息。之後，要跟廣西壯族早期的家譜互相對比，以便對台族傳統社會移動性達到稍微更全面的了解。

關鍵詞：移民、移動、台族、指路徑、家譜