The history of the East Asian regions, called China and Indo-China, is a history of vast movements of population from the north to the south from the pre-historic times and in this the Tai were one of the latest and the most important of the historical races that had migrated from their original homeland probably in the Hwang-Ho valley. Among the various causes that compelled the Tai finally to emigrate from Central China and concentrate in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula the direct one was the political pressure of the growing Chinese Empire since the middle of the third century B.C. Among other causes that drove them to the south the less hospitable natural environment of the north was undoubtedly one. This economic cause, more than anything else, had compelled the earlier hordes to expand southwards for better conditions of living. There is yet a third cause, namely, an indomitable passion for power over mankind on the part of ambitious chieftains of fighting clans. Thus in the later centuries there came from the north like avalanche, vast sweeps of conquering hordes driving huge masses of humanity before them. The powerful impacts of these races, coming one after another, forced the earlier races of Central and Southern China to move still further to the south. It appears that there was almost a ceaseless struggle among these races for the possession of the fertile river valleys of the sub-continent of China and Indo-China and those of...
them that could hold these valleys for long generations got ample leisure to develop their characteristic cultures. Thus the Mon, the Khuyen, the Karen, the Tai, the Chinese and the Mongols came in successive streams and, at times, in formidable waves as raiders and conquerors, driving their predecessors southward and absorbing those that would not leave their hearths and homes.

It must be remembered that the Tai are the descendants of the early imperial dynasty of Hwang-Ti and constituted the highest aristocracy in ancient China enjoying special and exclusive hereditary rights and privileges more than sixteen hundred years before the birth of the Ch'in State in Kan-su and more than two thousand three hundred years before the first appearance of the "Chinese" with imperial dignity in 249 B.C. At this later date the Tai had already formed themselves into a distinct race south of the Yang-tse-Kiang with their characteristic racial culture and tradition. Though the events of history had brought them into a long conflict with the Chinese yet from physical resemblance and linguistic affinities these two peoples appear to be cognate races. The Tai, who had been in power in China for long before the appearance of the "Chinese" on the scene, crossed the Yang-tse-Kiang at a very early time as governors of their southern dominions. In evidence of early Tai dominions in south China Nai Iikhit Hoentrakul has recently brought to our notice the existence of two imperial mausoleums, now in ruins, on the south of the Yang-tse-Kiang, one of Emperor Shan (2255 - 2206 B.C.) erected on the Kien-Yi-Shan mountain on the 'extreme southern Hu-nan province' and the other of Emperor
Yu (circa 2208 - 2193 B.C.) erected on the Hsi-Wei-Shan mountain on the south of Shao-Hsing city in the province of Chekiang. These two Emperors were respectively the great grandson and a descendant of Tian-Yok, Yu was shun's associate and later the founder of the Hia dynasty. Moreover, the grave of the two Emperors of Emperor Shun, whose names are given as Ngo-Wang and Wu-Ying is still standing at Tang-Ting Lake in Hu-nan. The bodies of these great Emperors and Emperors were certainly not buried in the land of the "Southern barbarians" had they better been other than the Tai. In fact, the ancestors of the modern Tai had their feudal states south of the Yang-tse-Kiang ruled by the princes of the Imperial House. The ruined monuments also indirectly bear testimony to the fact that the ancient Tai were a cultured and civilized people and not a barbarian race as believed by many modern writers.  

It was Shih-Wang-Ti (249 - 210 B.C.), the Napoleon

1 Noontarkul: op.cit., pp. 7-8 of the Preface; also pp. 18, 20-21 for the pictures of the mausoleums.

2 Prof. Letourette, who prefers to write Shih-Miang Ti like many other European writers, interprets that 'Shih meaning first, and Huang and Ti being titles customarily ascribed to mythical or semi-mythical rulers of antiquity - the three Huang and Five Ti. He thus gave fresh prestige to his reign and distinguished his office from that of the inept Chou. Had he been content with Wang, the designation of the Chou monarchs, he might properly have been expected to reproduce their form of government, with its disastrous decentralization.' - The Chinese: Their History and Culture, 1946, p. 90. The first explanation given elsewhere above appears to be correct as the Emperor must have adopted the titles Wang of San Wang and Ti of the later Co-Ti and the Wang of the Chou does not come in at all.
of China and founder of the Chinese Empire, that initiated the real pressure on the Tai of Ifepeh and Manan and destroyed their strength, solidarity and culture with the result that from that time onwards the Tai looked upon the Chinese as their hereditary enemy. Long centuries of struggle, in which the Tai were engaged against the Chinese with varying success, were marked by the rise of a number of powerful Tai States in South China. These States were the result of Tai consolidation in the new positions against the advancing Chinese. The Tai offered stubborn resistance to every one of the aggressions by the Empire, often themselves playing the aggressive part and making powerful inroads into the Chinese territory as opportunities occurred. Even as late as A.D. 566 Emperor Wu-Ti of the Northern Chao dynasty had to protect the passages of the Yangtse-Kiang, west of I-Chang, by erecting strong ramparts against the raids of the barbarians, who were apparently Tai, the regnant race throughout that region. 4

The first series of struggles of the Tai against the Chinese came to a close in the last quarter of the third century B.C., with the destruction of the great kingdom of Ch'u (Ts'U) in Central China in which the Tai were strong rivals of the Chinese. The fall of the Ch'u kingdom was followed by the rise of a number of Tai kingdoms in the region of Sze-ch'uan and Yun-nan.

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3 This Chao dynasty belonged to the Hsiung Nu (Hsiung Nu), a non-Chinese race that destroyed the Western Chin and established their rule in Pei (Northern) Han which it founded. But this Chao dynasty was different from the Chao, a Tai people already mentioned. - Latourette : cit., p. 192-51.
4 GUESS.1,1, p. 192; Milne and Cochrane : cit., p. 5.
Towards the end of the fourth century B.C., the Ch'ü kingdom became an extensive empire threatening the security of north China then under the hegemony of the Ch'in State. Ch'ü annexed a number of States in the north including one called Lo, created originally by Chong-kang, the fourth Emperor of the Hia (Heia) dynasty. Two ministers of the Emperor (2158-2146 B.C.) Li and Ho rose in revolt against him, but a general named Mi-Yen, a descendant of Emperor T'zu Yok and of Tai-Tai hereditary family, was asked by the Emperor to lead an expedition against the rebels. Mi-Yen succeeded in putting down the revolt after heavy fighting. The ancient historical work, Yen the Conqueror, contains an account of this great civil war. As a reward the Emperor conferred upon the victorious General the hereditary title of "Marquis of Lo" and made him a feudatory ruler of the State of Lo in Hu-peh. The Lo people were descended from Tai-Tai ancestors and were probably vested with the right to levy duties on the waterways of the Yang-tse-Kiang during the period of the Hia dynasty.

The Lo State was at first in the district of Yi-chen in northern Hu-peh, but was later transferred to Ki-Kiang district of southern Hu-peh on the north bank of the Yang-tse-Kiang. It appears that the province of Hu-peh was reorganized in the meantime.

- It is said that Lo character is composed of two letters, viz., "Sh" is the upper one and means Four; "Wei" is the lower one and means Factors. "Shu-Wei" means, in Chinese, "the four factors of national maintenance": (1) Prosperity, (2) Rightness, (3) Frugality and (4) Shame. The factors are greatly valued in the heart of the Lo people (who are indentified as Tai people) up to the present day. Vide Moonttrakul: op.cit., p. 25.
She State was ruled by Tai princes and was able to maintain its continued existence for many centuries without much harm to its territorial integrity from outside enemies. But in 689 B.C., which was also the twentieth year of the reign of the Eastern Chou Emperor, Huan-Wang, the king of the powerful State of Ch’u invaded Lo. But the invading army was badly defeated by the Lo forces. In 698 B.C., Tsc-Yen-Wang, the son of Tsc-Uu-Wang, made a second invasion of the Lo State and compelled the Tai Marquis of Lo to submit to and accept the suzerainty of Ch’u. Lo was probably wrested by Ch’u from the Chou. The Marquis was then ordered to leave Ki-kieng and settle at Ping Kiang in Hu-nan on the south of the Yang-tse-Kiang. The Tai people, who had their original home in Hubei and Honan, also migrated in great numbers to the south.

The greatest calamity that overtook the Tai people of Central and Southern China was when Shih-Wang-Ti raised an army of 600,000 men under the command of General Wang-Chien and invaded the State of Ch’u in 224 B.C. Shih-Wang-Ti had built his capital at Hsien-Yang in Shen-si from where all these gigantic war preparations were directed. Ch’u was then a large State comprising the southern part of Hubei, Honan, Kiang-si, Kwei-chow and the northern parts of Kwang-si and Kwang-tung. The war that took place ended with disastrous results for Ch’u. Being heavily defeated the Prince of Ch’u had to sue for peace. Shih-Wang-Ti banished him to Sew-chun in An-hui. The Marquis of Lo, the vassal prince of Ch’u, was also transferred to the newly conquered district of Shu in western Sze-chuan as its sub-prefect. The Lo State in Hu-nan thus came to an end.
As a sequel to all these revolutionary changes in the political set-up of these conquered territories with their tremendous social consequences, those Tai or Lo people, who clung to their native homeland, had to break up in the years that followed and distribute themselves in various localities of the southern Provinces of China. These localities with Lo-Tai populations grow up into cities which were named after them as Lo-Shan in Hsien, Lo-Yuen in Fu-Kian, Lo-Tao and Lo-Huo in Kwei-chow, Lo-Chang in Kwang-chi, and Lo-Ting in Kwang-tung. Even to this day Tai communities are found in these areas who speak a mixed Tai language. That the Lo people were so scattered might well be also an act of policy on the part of the Chinese government to weaken them and effect their merger with the Chinese.

Those Tai people of the Lo State, who found it impossible to continue as a subject race under the Chinese and refused to accept the humiliating status of being called 'the people of Ch'in', preferred to quit their homes for even the wilds of Chang-sha and Hsiang comprising the modern Provinces of Hsien, Kwang-chi and Kwang-tung. They formed their settlements in the hill tracts of those provinces and were referred to as Hill Tribes by the local plains peoples though they called themselves Tai of the ancient Tai-Tai families. Later on they migrated to the north-western part of Indo-China, most probably by the Black River valley, and set up along the south-western side of that river a State called Kaip-Hsawng-Chin-Tai. This.

branch of the Tai also constitutes the population of the Laos
kingdom founded by a powerful Tai chieftain, Fa Ngoum the
Middle Conqueror, in the Upper Mekong valley in 1353. This Laos king-
dom, then called the kingdom of Lan Chang (later Luang Prabang
or more properly Luang Phra Bang) was the result of the union
of a number of Laos or Tai States under the leadership of Fa
Ngoum and it extended from Haiy-Nam-Pama to the northern
borders of Cambodia. It later formed one of the three Associated
States within the French Union. 7 Both the Pai-Yi and Ngai-Lao
legends agree that the Lao people are of the same group as the
Pai-Yi of South China. 8 Probably towards the close of the
thirteenth century A.D. or early in the fourteenth these people
moved down the Nam-Lou (Nam U) from their earlier home around
Dien-Bien-phu, in Haiy-Nam-Chai-Tai in what is now Tungking,
into the Mekong valley. They not only occupied the middle
Mekong, but, as pointed out by Briggs, they seem to have spread
like a layer over the other Tai of neighbouring regions. 9

A large section of the Tai population of the State of
Lo also followed the Marquis of Lo to Shu when the latter was
transferred to that district. But these Tai people in Shu were
not allowed to have peace by the Chinese government. All
able-bodied men were forced to leave their homes to construct
roads and bridges throughout the Empire and to build up the
Great Wall of about 2,500 miles in length. It is said that every

7 Montrekal: op.cit., p.62; Hall : op.cit., p.207.
8 JASS, vol. 69, 1949, pp. 64-6.
9 Ibid., p. 70.
third man in the Empire was summoned to work upon the Great Wall which was completed in five years under the supervision of General Meng-Tien. Most of the Tai conscript labour perished under the rigorous conditions of the works and those that survived fled into the wilds of Sze-chuan, Yun-nan and Kwei-chow, then called Shu, Chien-chung and Min-lin respectively, in order to escape the oppressions of the Chinese task-masters.

Shih-Wang-Ti reorganized his administrative system and divided the territory of his Empire into thirty-six Provinces each of which was governed by a Prefect. He abolished the old feudal system which was originally introduced by Emperor Yu (Circ. 2208-2198 B.C.) of Hia and prohibited the study of Confucius. In 214 B.C., he issued orders to seize and destroy all classical books, particularly those of Confucius, except the books on agriculture, medicine and the divining art. He did not spare the books containing ideas in support of feudalism. Huge stacks of books so seized were burnt away. To avert the penalty of death the book-sellers throughout the whole empire closed their shops and burnt their books. The Emperor also caused four hundred and sixty men of letters to be buried alive probably because they had remonstrated with him on his mad act of destruction of the valuable ancient writings. He even punished his own son Huang-Su with imprisonment for expressing disapproval of his measures. The Tai, who had been a cultured people being of the princely rank in early time, were in possession of a rich heritage of art and literature at the time of Shih-Wang-Ti, but the men of letters among the Tai and their literary works were so completely des-
troyed in this wild act of persecution that from that time the Tai in the Empire became almost an illiterate race through lack of books and teachers. In a few decades following this tragic event these descendants of the once highest class of nobility degenerated into being Hill Tribes,\textsuperscript{10} or rather many of them got merged with the Hill Tribes living in the inaccessible mountainous regions. Those who took shelter in the highlands of Sze-chuan, Yun-nan and Kwei-chow call themselves Tai or Chai to this day. As men of the wild country they became known as 'barbarians'.\textsuperscript{11}

There were also a number of hill tribes in the southern provinces of Hu-nan, Kwang-si and Kwang-tung including some of the Laïs who were the descendants of early feudal rulers or Marquises created by Emperor Seow-Nao in the third millennium B.C. and who had come and settled in those areas long before the rise of the Chinese Empire. They were later discovered by the Chinese in the period of the Han, whose dominions extended far to the south. These hill tribes, who were mostly Tai, still contemptuously refer to the Chinese by the nickname of "Ping-Ti-Ken", meaning Plateau Traitors. These Tai used to migrate

\textsuperscript{10} Twelve such tribes are mentioned, nine Laïs and three Miao. The Laïs are found also among the southern China tribes of the Chin Hills between Assam and Burma. The Miao, so called by the Shans, are really Heng or Hmeng. They are called Hmotsu by the Chinese. They are supposed to be of the Hm race. "The Hmns would thus stand in the same relation to the Hmeng that the Siamese do to the Tai Long of the Shweli neighbourhoods". This race comprises nearly one half of the population of the province of Kwei-chow and is also very numerous in Kiang-si and neighbouring provinces. - Hbontrakul : \textit{op.cit.}, p. 65. : \textit{HUBSS}, I., pp. 484, 597-601.

\textsuperscript{11} Hbontrakul : \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 58-63.
in small groups to the southern countries as peaceful settlers of the plains regions, but they would also move in large masses in the event of a war or large-scale repression by the Chinese within the Empire. The routes these migrants usually followed, particularly in descending from the hills, were the river valleys which open out in the lower courses into wide tracts of fertile plains. Thus these people entered Upper Burma through the valleys of the Shweli, Nam-ting and Taiping; Siam through the He-nam and He-ping valleys; and French Indo-China through the Mekong, the Black and the Red Rivers and settled down in the rich rice-growing areas of these countries.

There was also a great concentration of the Tai and other non-Chinese 'barbarians', such as the Lolo, the Hiao and the Ninhia in the south-western part of Yun-nan from the continual flow of populations from the north and north-east owing to Chinese pressure. Two instances of this early pressure on the Tai are mentioned in the records of the Chinese - one on the Ai-Lao (Ngai-Lao), locally called Pa, in Szce-chuan in 338 B.C., by the State of Ch'in and another on Chu in 224 B.C., by imperial China which seriously affected the Ai-Lao in the Lao-Shan - Kitlung range, both causing the local tribes to move on mass to the south. It was this vast agglomeration of tribes with the Tai (Ngai-Lao) as the central ruling group that constituted the strength of a rival empire called Han-Chao by the Chinese. The early history of Han-Chao is thus the history of the branch of the Tai called Ai-Lao or Ngai-Lao, who had already established a
small kingdom in Yung-Chang in Yunnan. The appearance of the Ngai-Lao in Yunnan as a ruling race in the first century of the Christian era was preceded by a dark period of over two centuries. These Ngai-Lao entered and settled in that area as the result of a vast wave of migration of population to western Yunnan from their earlier home and shelter in the Lao shan and Kiu-lung mountains when the Chin army, in the war against Ch'u, swept across these ranges in 224 B.C., from east to west annexing Sze-chuan (Shu). This great drive by the Chinese imperial army in the southern country led to a large-scale dispersal of the populations of Sze-chuan, the Ngai-Lao race being broken up and driven away farther to the south and south-west. But in the subsequent decades these peoples regrouped themselves in various localities amid the hills and plains of Yunnan and set up a number of small principalities, six of which are well-known in the history of Yunnan. One of these principalities was that of the Ngai-Lao founded by one Prince Chiu-lung. This principality is historically important as the original foundation of Nan-Chao.

It would be of interest to digress here for a moment to refer to a Chinese work of the sixteenth century A.D., called

12 Major Davies tells us that "Yung-Ch'ang is merely a corruption of Wan-S'ang, the name by which this place is still known to the Shans" - Yunnan, p. 379.

13 T. de Lacouperie: op. cit., p. lii; Dodds: op. cit., Chap. I.
A History of the Southern Princes, by an author, named Yang-Tai, of Chen-T'ch'u-fu in the province of Sze-chuan which traces the descent of Prince Chiu-lung from King Asoka of Magadha (264-223 B.C.), in the direct line. This legend of Asoka showing relationship between the ruling dynasties of Yun-nan and Magadha is also current in the local Buddhist tradition in Yun-nan. It is said that Avelokitesvra came from India and converted the country to Buddhism. Early cultural relations between India and these Far-Eastern countries are well-known. They were established and maintained mostly by Buddhist missionaries, who travelled by overland routes from India to those countries.

Pelliot argues with much reason that Nan-Chao received Buddhist influences from India via the F'iso of Burma. The routes lay through Eastern Bengal, Manipur and Arakan and probably it was by this route that the Sakya princes, Abhi Raja in 923 B.C.

14 This work was collected at Tali-fu in Yun-nan by an English missionary named G.W. Clark and was translated into English by him with the assistance of a local Chinese scholar. The manuscript was written in A.D. 1537 by Yang-tai of Chen-t'ch'u-fu in Sze-chuan and reedited by Yu-Yu of Wuchang-fu in Hu-peh in 1776. Clark published the English translation of the manuscript in a small book printed at the Shanghai Mercury Press in 1894 in a very limited number of copies for distribution among his friends. This book is unknown in the libraries of Europe and America. Only four copies were there with the translator of which one was borrowed by M. Carthew, M.D. (Maya Ayurved Vichakshana), who has, from his notes taken from the book, contributed an article under the heading "The History of the Thai in Yun-nan", 2205 B.C. - A.D. 1283 to JSS, vol. XL, Part I, July, 1922, pp. 1-33. The present introduction is from the information given by M. Carthew. This work gives a connected account of the Tai rule in Yun-nan from the earliest times down to the fall of Nan-Chao in 1554.


16 Deux Itineraires, pp. 154-83.
and Dhaja Eaja in 523 B.C. (or 519 B.C.) reached Buma. There is no mention of any journey by sea at that early period.\textsuperscript{17}

The northern part of the Kaho valley, which was on the direct route from Manipur to Buma, is still called Mauriya or Mairia, said to be the name of the tribe to which king Asoka belonged.\textsuperscript{18}

The Kaho valley, especially its northern part, was inhabited by Tai people from before the sixth century A.D. We know from Francis Buchanan's investigations that the Tai-long or the great Tai were called Maitray Kaho (Kaho) by the people of Cussey (Manipur). This Tai community settled in the upper part of the river Chindwin.\textsuperscript{19}

Further, being the grandson of Candragupta, who was probably of Saura or Kirta (i.e., Sudra) and hence Mongoloid stock,\textsuperscript{20} as indicated in the drama

\textsuperscript{17} Phayre, History of Burma, London, 1883, pp. 217-18.

\textsuperscript{18} Phayre : History of Burma, London, 1883, pp. 6-7, 15.


\textsuperscript{20} Candragupta's father Maurya was son of king Sarvarthasiddhi of Pataliputra (Pataliputra, Kuushagura or Pusapura) by his Sudra wife Lara the daughter of a charioteer, Suta. He was a half-brother of the "Nine Nandas", all again his sons by his elder wife Sunanda, born of a Kshatriya family. Mars probably belonged to the Maurya clan of the Sakyas from which Candragupta was called Maurya or Maurya-putra. He was also called Vrsala (Sudra) by Canakya - See the historical drama Indraharasana by Vishakhadatta, Act I ; also The Indrakasana-natakakatha of Mahadeva, ed. by Dr. V. Raghavan, The Sarasvati Mahal Series I, 1946, pp. 23-4. The land of the Moriyas was Pipphalivana. Candragupta is said to have got his name from a bull named Canda, who guarded him during infancy. The Greeks, unable to pronounce properly, called him by various names, all variants of Candragupta. Thus he was called Xandromes by Diodorus, Androkottos by Plutarch and Sondrocottus by Justin. Derivation Maurya from Lara is rejected by historians, according to whom that derivation would be Maureya. The Jain versions speak of Nanda as base-born and Candragupta as born in a family of peasant-farmers (Nagaraparaka) and Buddhistic versions assign Candragupta to a Kshatriya tribe called Moriyas related to the Sakyas and living generally near Nepal i.e., Pipphalivana. - Raghavan : OP. cit., (Ed.) Notos, pp. V-VI.
Mudrarakshasa, Code of Nau and the Mahabharata, Aoka may be assumed to be a non-Aryan ruler of Magadha. Hence the possibility of his racial affinity with the Mongoloid peoples of Yun-nan or Burma is not to be brushed aside on sentimental grounds. Even Gansiya calls Chandragupta (Candra-gutta) by the name of Vrasa-Maurya. Vrasala being a denomination which means a class of wild tribes in which the Kiratas and Sabaras are included. It was perhaps after his great military success against the Nandas that Chandragupta was given the Ksatriya status, an instance not uncommon in India even to recent times. In this context it is quite possible to show some sort of a legendary connection of Aoka with the contemporary Yun-nan dynasty. But it was perhaps the Buddhist missionary enterprise more than anything else that was responsible for the glorification of Aoka's name everywhere in the Buddhist world and the Aoka legend in Yun-nan is but an instance of it rather than any direct

21 See also The Wild Tribes in Indian History by Dr. B.A. Salatore, Lahore, Motilal Benarji Das, 1935, pp. 49-50.
blood relation with the reigning family of Yunnan. 22 Asoka’s actual visit to Yunnan is not known from the records available in India, nor in Asoka’s life fully known from those records. Apart from his religious missions, his political relations with the Far East, if any, constitute a subject of immense value which has not yet been investigated with a view to establish new facts.

Now, to go back to the history of the Lao-Lao kingdom, we have to recall the history of the earlier kingdom of Ch’u.

22 It is even stated in the History of the Southern Princes that "King Asoka of Magadha lived for a time at Tali-fu, then ruled over by an Indian prince, and that he there married a princess from Tali-fu called Ch’ien-meng-kul. By her he had three sons, the eldest being called Ti-meng-ch’ien-fu-ling. The latter’s eldest son was called Heng-ou-fu and he became the ancestor of the ‘sixteen kingdoms’. One of his descendants in the direct line, Prince Jen-lue, became King of Tien (Yunnan), 129-117 B.C., and from the latter was descended the long line of the kings of Han-Chao". C.W. Clark further draws our attention to the fact that "the country around Tali-fu to this day (1890) is full of legends of King Asoka and his three sons and there are still many annual ceremonies carried out by the local Thai in memory of his sons". - R. Cartley: "The History of the Thai in Yunnan" in JES, vol. XIII., Part I., 1952, pp. 3-4. Monetrakul also refers to this legend, which G. Cordier obtained from a Chinese book the title of which is translated as The Private History of Han-Chao. In this book there is mention of Asoka’s queen and his nine sons instead of three. The names of the queen and of the eldest son are the same as those mentioned above with slight phonetic variation, Asoka is called A-Yu-Yang and king of Mahagada (Pali) or Magadha in India and his nine sons are said to be the ancestors respectively of the tribes of Yunnan, the Tibetans, the Chinese, the Kamb tribes in the east, the ruling Heng family of Han-Chao, the Ceylonese, the Annamites, the Yin-Kua tribe who reigned in Tai-Se kingdom near Tali and the Tai-yl tribe, the Tai of southern Yunnan and the Lao. - Monetrakul: op. cit., pp. 129-30, also La Province du Yunnan by Cordier, "Legendary period", pp. 533-54.
which became essentially Tai in later periods. Towards the close of the fourth century B.C., Ch'u commanded a vast territory extending from the sea in the east to Sze-chuan in the west covering its eastern part and from the middle of Honan in the north to the Nan-ling mountains in the south. The border States of Ngü (Wu) and Yeh in the east, the whole of Kwai-chow and northern Yün-nan were brought under its sway. But after its conquest by Ch'in in 224 B.C., it was not much known for several centuries. In the third century A.D., Ch'u again came into the picture with a territory greatly reduced. It then possessed only parts of Sze-chuan and Yün-nan, and later still its authority was confined to Yün-nan only. It seems the Chinese extended their suzerainty over the principalities of Yün-nan and Sze-chuan as early as the first century A.D., but that suzerainty was more or less nominal and unstable. By the third century A.D., there already came into existence a powerful kingdom in western Yün-nan under the Ngai-Lao. In the middle of the seventh century A.D., the Ngai-Lao defeated the Chinese and extended their power over Lower Sze-chuan and the neighbouring territories. Chinese records mention that Tali-fu was the kingdom of the Ngai-Lao in the first century A.D., when for the first time the Chinese came into clash with them. In the subsequent period they were probably ousted from that area by the Chinese, whereupon they consolidated their position further south-west and began to grow and expand and forced the Chinese to give up a large part of their southern domains. To the Chinese these Tai of South China were known as Al-Lao or simply Lao. 

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About the early history of the Ngai-Lao or Ai-Lao (old pron. ai-ien) our only source of information is the Chinese Annals. It was E.E. Parker who did the pioneering work of translating a mass of such Annals collected in the border States of Burma and China. Mr. Parker says referring chiefly to the Annals of the T'ang dynasty, which are more than a thousand years old: "The Chinese had clearly defined relations with the Shan or Al-Lao Empire of (modern) Yai-fu in the first century of our era, and in A.D. 90 (elsewhere the date A.D. 97 is given) one Yung Mu, King of T'au, sent tribute to China through the good offices of the Al-Lao, receiving an official seal from China. The Chinese seem to take it for granted that Yung Mu of T'au was of the same race as a later Pyu (Burmese) King named Yung Kiang.  

The legendary origin of the Ngai-Lao is narrated in the Chinese records in the form of a story thus:

"According to them, there was originally a woman called Sha-i (or Sha-yih, or Che-yi, wife of Te-mou), who dwelt on Mt. Lao and used to catch fish. While she was in the

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24 GUESS, I.1, p. 280.
Yung K'iang may be simply the Chinese transformation of Burmese Aung K'iang so as to fit in with their conception of 'Hsing' or clan names; for the Chinese annalists had the habit of presenting things in such a manner as to conform to Chinese ways. Even as late as the eighteenth century the Chinese referred to Alaungpaya, who assumed the title of Aung Zeya (the Victorious), as of the Yung family. - Sir J. George Scott: Burma and Beyond, 1932, p. 215.
25 Hou Hau Shi, Ch.116, f5, recto. "Ngai-Lao Barbarians".
26 T. de La Touche : op.cit., p. lll. Shan word is Hsai, meaning sand, for Sha-i. Te-mou is probably Ti Mong-tsen of the Ngai-Lao legend as described below.
water she struck against a sunken log, as if in the act of kind, and as a result she conceived and in the tenth month gave birth to ten sons. After this the sunken log transformed itself into a dragon and came out on the surface of the water. Shā-i suddenly heard the dragon speaking. It said: Thou hast borne me sons. Where are they now? Nine of the sons, on seeing the dragon, were startled and fled. Only the youngest son, who was unable to go, sat down with his back to the dragon, and the dragon licked him; therefore his mother called her son Chiu-lung (or Kiu-lung), Chiu or Kiu meaning 'back' and lung meaning 'to sit'. And afterwards when he grew up, his elder brothers, considering that Chiu-lung had been licked by his father, and that he was shrewd, all joined in electing him king. After this, below Mt. Lao, there were husband and wife to whom in due course there were born ten daughters. Chiu-lung and his brothers all took these daughters to wife, and after a time they gradually multiplied plentifully. The tribesmen all tattooed their bodies with figures of elephants and dragons and their clothes showed tails.

27 The legend behind this sunken log is that king Asoka's fifth son Meng-su-Tok, who was the ancestor of the famous ruling Heng family of Nan-Chao, while fishing in the lake Yi-Lo, situated on the south of the present Pao-Shan in Yun-nan, was drowned and his remains were transformed into a trunk of tree. Cordier, *ibid.* pp. 532-34, referred to by Nootrekal in his book *The Historical Records etc.*, p. 130. 28 Chiu or Kiu, pronounced Chiu. 29 T. de Lacouperie seems to believe that they were of the Man stock, *op. cit.*, p. lxi. It may be noted that the Chinese call the barbarians of Southern China 'Man', *JASS*, vol. 69, 1949, p. 64.
This account is the priestly invention of a race of people among whom the dragon worship was the dominant cult, the Indian counterpart of which is the Naga cult. Pelliot points out that the Chinese have *hsiang lung*; "elephant - dragon", both of which were used to translate the Sanskrit word *naga*. The *lung*, or "dragon", is the most familiar mythological creature which has a large place not only in the popular mind but also in Chinese literature. The Dragon is regarded as benevolent and is associated with divine forces and with rain, clouds and water. Its Indian equivalent is undoubtedly the Naga.

31 H.L. Minot has grouped together a certain number of epigraphic and literary data referring to this legend. His collections show that the tale of the Naga was very ancient in Indo-China and it already appeared in the Chinese Texts of the sixth century relating to Funan (Cambodia) - Note D: - "The Legends of the Naga and the Apsaras" by Victor Goloubew, translated from *Bulletin de l'Ecole Francaise d'Extreme-Orient*, vol. 24, 1924, p. 501 ff., Reproduced in *Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas* by Dr. C. Minakshi, pp. 25-54. The name *Kambuja* (Cambodia) owes its origin to Kambu Svayambhuva, the king of Aryadeca, who married the Naga king's daughter and became king of that country. M.G. Gods called attention to the existence in South India of two inscriptions dating from the Pallavas. The epigraphical texts belong to the eleventh century A.D., the date being disputed, however, by Dr. Minakshi and others. The first of these documents, a charter of Skanda Silaya, assigns a Naga as wife of king Avarathama, the son of Drona, whom the Pallavas venerated as one of their ancestors. As to the second, a charter of Bandivaran III, there is mentioned among the Pallava kings a legendary Vikarukra who married a Princess of Ophidian Stock and obtained from her "the insignia of royalty". It may be that the Naga Princess, who reigned in the Deccan and Central India, believed themselves to be of Naga origin. - Note D: - *op. cit.*. Whether the Naga or the Dragon cult originally migrated from India to China or from China to India is not definitely known, but that there was in the past a long period when the Dragon worship was popular among the tribes of East Asia is a historical fact.
But the Ngai-Lao (Man-Chao) legend itself says that Ti Long-tsoi had nine sons, who became the ancestors, respectively of (1) the Tai-Yai (Shans), (2) Tibetans, (3) Chinese, (4) Hmong, (5) the Ngai-Lao dynasty of Man-Chao, (6) Ceylonese, (7) Annamites, (8) the Pai-tsoi kingdom of Yunnan and (9) the Pai-Yi of lower Yunnan and Upper Laos. Of these groups only four are Tai, namely, the Tai-Yai (Shans), the Ngai-Lao, the Pai-tsoi and the Pai-Yi, and the rest are obviously non-Tai. But the striking fact is that all these peoples, Tai or non-Tai, are Buddhists and the legend does not antedate their conversion to Buddhism, particularly of the Sinhalese creed (Theravada). Again the Pai-Yi legend asserts that the Leotians proper, Ru-Tians and the Tai of Tongking belong to the Pai-Yi family. If these legends are true then the Ngai-Lao and the Lao (Leotians) are two different branches of the same original stock.

According to some authorities the name of the race, called Ngai-Lao, has originated from the name of a place of that name. Regarding the place name Ngai-Lao Sainson has identified it with Mt. Tien-ching in the prefecture of Yung-Ch'ang. It is from here that the Ngai-Lao kingdom is said to have developed. Sainson says Mt. Chiu-lung is south of Yung-Ch'ang Mt., and the Chiu-lung river is also frequently found as another name for the river Mekong in the Haip-Hsiang-Panna. The

32 Man-Chao ye-tche 24-5.
33 JAOS, vol. 69, 1949, p. 64.
34 HSK-0, 1908, p. 152. n.6.
home of the Ngai-Lao thus appears to have been on, or west of, the Mekong, not far from Yung-ch'ang. Chavannes alludes to a note of Hsi-lin according to which "Tsang-ko was the name of a tribe situated in the extreme south west of China and it is also the name of the territory where they dwelt." The old name for this country was Ngai-Lao, from which we get the name Laos. But Professor T. de Lacouperie says that the Lao Shan (i.e., Lao mountain) is situated, according to the tradition of the Ngai-Lao race, at the intersection of the modern provinces of Honan, Hupeh and An-hui in the eastern part of Central China. Dr. Dodds, who, probably not knowing that another mountain of the same name also exists in Yunnan, accepts the location of the Lao mountain as described by T. de Lacouperie and tells us that the Lao mountains are said, by tradition, to be named for the Lao race. He further points out that "the cognate forms of the name Lao, such as Leao, Chao, Ngai-Lao, Shen-Lao etc., were common all along the whole range from An-hui to Szechuan. The Ai-Lao, also called Ngai-Lao, extended well westward along this Lao-Shan and its continuation, the Kiu-lung range. Westward of this chief center of the Ngai-Lao, but still hugging the foot of the Kiu-lung, were the Lemo, as their name was locally pronounced. But when the Tain advanced over this range further west, into Ssu-chuan, in the third century B.C., they found the

36 Ibid., p. 139.
37 T. de Lacouperie : op.cit., p. lxi.
race, locally known there as Ai-Lao, although the tribal names were still in vogue, Mung, Lung, Pa, etc., as is evidenced by their persistence down to the present time. The above geographical descriptions point to two areas called Lao Shan in which the Ngai-Lao had their abode, one in the north and the other in the south-west part of Yun-nan, both being important perhaps in two different periods of history. Mt. Lao or Ngai-Lao in the prefecture of Yung-Ch'ang was probably named after the new racial appellation Lao, acquired by the Tai, as the inhabitants of Lao-Shan in the north. These Ngai-Lao, after being driven from their northern seat by the Chinese, crossed the Yang-tse-Kiang and extended their sway over western Yun-nan with Tali-fu as their capital. They must have concentrated themselves in Yung-Ch'ang, after the surrender of the rulers of Tali-fu, making it their second seat of power.

After the third century B.C., the Chinese next heard of the Ngai-Lao in A.D. 47 during the reign of the Later or Eastern Han (A.D. 25-221), or even much earlier as some Annals indicate. In that year the Ngai-Lao king Hsien-li (or Hien-lib), who flourished many generations after their progenitor Chiu-lung, sent warriors to the south down the Chiang (or Kiang)-Han on rafts made of bamboo and wood to attack the In-to barbarians on the frontier. Here a difficult geographical question arises. If we accept the position of the Lao-Shan to be at the intersection of the provinces of Honan, Hupeh and Ngen-hui (Ngen-hai) as pointed out by Prof. T. de Lacouperie then it is quite possible that the troops of Hsien-
11 descended on rafts by the Chiang-Han, a great tributary of the Yang-tse-Kiang, which flows from the north-west to south-east down the adjoining valley on the west and south of the Loa-Shan, the State of the Ngai-Lao. But this northern seat of Ngai-Lao power, if there was one at all, could not have existed in the first century A.D., after the conquest of that area by the Chinese in the first quarter of the third century B.C., for the invasion drove most of the local tribes to the south of the Yang-tse-Kiang. If, on the other hand, Tali-fu, as mentioned by Pachon, be the seat of the Ngai-Lao kingdom at that time, then it is not easy to see how any river of the name of Chiang-Han, flowing south from Yang-Ch’ang, could lead to the Chinese frontier. The only possible river of that name is one that flows through Kiang-tang, but it is to the farther east. The reference may be to the Black or the Red River, or one of their tributaries, flowing south-east to Chiao-Chih (Touking) as one commentator suggests. But in this connection it should be remembered that in the first century of the Christian era the Ngai-Lao had already lost their political hold on northern Loa-Shan and had concentrated themselves in the western part of Han-nam (Tali-fu), from where they led a number of expeditions down the river-ways to the Chinese border territories in Touking inhabited by the unruly In-to.

The result of the Ngai-Lao campaign against the In-to men was that the latter were subjugated and many taken.

as captives by the Ngai-Lao generals. But on way back Hsien-li's army was overwhelmed by a sudden stormy wind blowing upstream from the south accompanied with thunder-quake and rain. The violence of the wind sank most of the located crafts and several thousand Ngai-Lao troops with their captives were drowned. This disaster virtually undid the effect of the victory and Hsien-li had to send a second expedition of ten thousand men under six generals to attack the tribe. But to the utter surprise of the Ngai-Lao Chief all his six generals were killed by the tribesmen and the expeditionary force badly defeated. Being unnerved at this unexpected disaster Hsien-li called the Elders and said to them: "We have entered the frontier from of old, and now we are attacking the Lu-to. Immediately we are punished by heaven. Have they got in the Middle Kingdom a holy Emperor? Otherwise, how can heaven so manifestly help and protect them?"

It appears that either the Lu-to tribesmen were under the Empire receiving protection from it or in attacking them the Ngai-Lao forces crossed the frontier and violated the Chinese territory, in consequence whereof they met with defeat at the hands of the Chinese. Probably prior to this event the Chinese dominions had not extended so far; or even if they had, the Chinese control over this part of the country.

40 GUESS, 1,1, p. 261.
had been nominal and incapable of preventing the raids of the Ngai-Lao. The words addressed to the Elders by Hsien-li, however, indicate that the Ngai-Lao king already knew that the Lu-to people were under the protection of the Middle Kingdom.

Hence as a sequel to his defeat Hsien-li in A.D. 51, with other subordinate chiefs and 2,770 families of tribesmen in alliance with him consisting of 17,669 persons, went and submitted to Cheng Hsing, the Prefect of Yueh-sui for admission to the Empire. Kuang-Wu, the first Emperor of the Later Han, was then pleased to appoint Hsien-li and the headmen, who accompanied him, as Chieftains tributary to China. 41


The position of the prefecture of Yueh-sui, as mentioned above, is of importance as a part of the Chinese Empire in the south. Mr. Parker places Yueh-sui between the Ya-lung and Yang-tse rivers in south-west Sze-chuan. But according to Saithson, "Yueh-sui-ting is north of Hsing-Yuan Fu in south Sze-chuan, north of the Yang-tse". (see Hantchen, Yu-tso-ho, p. 11, n. 3, and map.)

Yueh-sui and I-chou prefectures were first established by Han Wu Ti (140-87 B.C.) in 111 B.C. and 109 B.C. respectively. It is further said that Cheng-tu (Cheng-tu), which was to the north of Tien, was organized into Yueh-sui prefecture in the aforesaid year. (Ref. Shih chi, 116, f2 verso : Chien hsen shu, ch. 28A, f11 verso ; Hou hsen shi, ch. 33, f1 verso - 2 recto). But Chavannes, on the authority of Tung chien kung mu (under year A.D. 272), says that I-chou "corresponds to the prefecture of Cheng-tu in Ssu-chuan". (HEFE-0, 1905, p. 232, n 5). According to Shih chi I-chou prefecture was formed out of the old kingdom of Tien (Yun-nan-fu). Nai Likhit Hoentrakul points out that in 105 B.C. I-chou was the present city of Yun-Ming (Yun-nan-fu) in Yun-nan. In that year I-chou was involved in trouble for which a royal expedition was sent from the Chinese capital to restore tranquillity in the city. - Hoentrakul : op. cit., p. 68. It may be that the pressure and expansion of the Ngai-Lao had caused such a shrinkage of the prefecture of I-chou that it was probably placed under the prefecture of Yueh-sui so that the Ngai-Lao had to submit to the Prefect of the latter province instead of that of I-chou which had no separate existence.
Ma Touan-lin, who says that in the Chien-ku period (A.D. 25-55) the king of the Ngai-Lao, a barbarous people of what is now northwestern Yun-nan, asked to become a vassal of the Chinese empire, undoubtedly refers to this event. Briggs points out that E.H. Parker paid a great deal of attention to this legendary kingdom, which he calls Ai-Lao. It may be noted that the name Ngai-Lao, or Ai-Lao, is found all over the map of northeastern Indo-China, even to Central Annam; but whether the Ngai-Lao who founded Nan-Chao had any special relationship with the Lao or Laotians, of the Nam Hou, who founded the Laotian principalities on the Mekong, is not definitely known. These two groups came from opposite corners of the kingdom of Nan-Chao and according to the Ngai-Lao legend they are two different branches of the same stock.

After eighteen years from the date of their first submission to China the Ngai-Lao king Liu-nao sent his son in A.D. 69 at the head of his tribesmen to make his submission again to the Chinese Emperor, Hsien Yung, who is famous in history as Ming Ti (A.D. 57-75) and who first introduced Buddhism in China. The total population represented by

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44 JAOS, vol. 69, 1949, p. 83.
45 According to Latourette and many other modern writers Buddhism had already entered China before Ming-Ti. - Latourette: op. cit., p. 129.
the Ngai-Lao Delegation that went to submit to the Emperor, is put at 553,761 in 61,390 families with 77 headmen called Princes. According to Chinese records they lived at a distance of 700 li south-west of Lu-Yang, the imperial capital of China near modern Honan-Fu under the Later or Eastern Han Dynasty (25-221), called in Chinese Tung Han or Hou Han.

These submissions must have affected only a section of the Tai without any great harm to the compact area of the Tai and the Tai kingdoms farther south over which the Chinese could scarcely have imposed their suzerainty. Yet the above submissions of the Ngai-Lao meant a great extension of the Chinese dominions to the south-west of the Empire. Following upon their victory, the Chinese made a further advance which brought their frontier beyond the Len-tsang (Mekong) river and opened up communications with Burma and the West. This acquisition of new territory necessitated the creation of the Yung-Ch'ang prefecture (Chun) in western Yunnan. This prefecture included only two new districts viz., the small kingdom of Ngai-Lao and P'o-nan, to which were added six districts that had formed the western part of I-chou and had been governed by the Ti-Wei of that division appointed in A.D. 67 with his residence at Su-i-t'ang. As mentioned in the Hau hang chih ("supplement to the Han chih") the names of the six districts were Pu-wei, Su-i-t'ang, Fi-su, Yeh-yu, Yeh-lung and Yun-nan (Yun-nan-fu ?). Seinson's map shows a Yun-nan hsien (district) south-east of Ta-li Lake. The district Ngai-Lao, it is believed, was given that name by the Ngai-Lao. It was
originally a kingdom under the Lao kings.\textsuperscript{46}

Since the prefecture of Yung-ch'ang extended westwards beyond the Mekong, and Po-nan is said to be east of it, the district of Ngai-Lao was, in all probability, situated on the west of that river in the neighbourhood of Yung-Ch'ang-fu.

Ngai-Lao was one of the SIX CHAO or kingdoms of western Yun-nan and was called by the Chinese Jung-Chow (Yun-chao ?) or Shen-to-kuo. Jung-Chow was probably Jen Kue already mentioned in connection with Asoka's line of rulers in Yun-nan. Ngai-Lao was the name given to the kingdom by the 'barbarians' who ruled it. Five of these kingdoms including Ngai-Lao were Tai and the sixth one, called Na-khi with its capital at Li Chiang, was Tibeto-Burman. It is stated in Chinese records that in A.D. 649 Chang-le-chin, king of Ngai-Lao, abdicated the throne in favour of a Tai Prince named Meng-Hsi-nu-lo, a member of the Meng family of the Ngai-Lao (Tai) race. Hsi-nu-lo's kingdom was south of the other five kingdoms and extended from Yung-Ch'ang-fu to Yao-chew.\textsuperscript{47}

Thus the general position and extent of the Ngai-Lao kingdom is clear from the above accounts. Nan-Chao empire developed from this originally small Chao or kingdom of Ngai-Lao and the Meng family ruled over it for 170 years.\textsuperscript{48} Po-nan is said to have "the western mountains 30 li high. Having crossed them you get to the Lan-tsang Shui" (Me-kong).\textsuperscript{49}

\textsuperscript{46} Bbu han shu, ch. 33, f. 2 recto.
\textsuperscript{48} L. Hoontakul: op. cit., p. 95.
\textsuperscript{49} The Hua Yang Kuo Chih, vide JGRS, vol. xiv.
Cheng Shun was possibly the first prefect of Yung-Ch'ang to whom must be ascribed the progress and China's popularity in the prefecture. By a treaty with the Ngai-Lao community he levied on all male persons a nominal per capita tribute consisting of "a measure of salt and two cloth garments, with a hole for the head to go through". Rev. Cochrane draws our notice to such garments being worn to this day by the wild Karen tribes of Burma. It was the constructive genius of this Chinese officer that brought peace and political stability to this border territory of the farflung empire of China.

But in A.D. 76, after his death, the Ngai-Lao, led by their General King Lei-Lao, rebelled and attacked the neighbouring districts of Sui-t'ang and Po-nan. The Chinese authorities were, however, quick enough to put down the rebellion the very next year, the Ngai-Lao king being killed in the battle. This defeat caused a mass migration of the Ngai-Lao to the Northern Shan States of Burma. A section of them, being oppressed by the Chinese, went towards Tongking. But the Ngai-Lao did not take long to recover from this blow and re-unite, in face of constant threats from the Empire, to work up and bring into being the powerful empire of Nan-Chao. In the mean time, for about a century, after the defeat of the Ngai-Lao rebels, the southern frontier remained undisturbed facilitating visits of foreign embassies to China.

50 A.D. 78 according T. de Lacouperie : op.cit., p.liii.
across it. Thus the Tun-jen-i (A.D. 94), the Tan (A.D. 97), the
Lu-lei pigmies (A.D. 107) and the Tan once more (A.D. 121) sent
their embassies, who passed through this Ngai-Leo country to
the Chinese court. The road for communication with distant
countries was thus opened for the first time via Mt. Po-nan
and across the Lam-tsang (Me-kong) river. A song, that was
current, describes this outlet to the world abroad from China
thus: "The power of the Han is broad. It opens the door to
those who are not yet guests. We cross Po-nan; pass the Lan-
ford: cross the Lam-tsang: for the benefit of others." The
Hua Yang Kuo Chih says that west of Po-nan district is a
mountain 30 li high, and after passing it one has to cross the
Lam-tsang river.

Except for a gap in the early period a long line of
Ngai-Leo rulers is now available. The Ngai-Leo Chun (i.e.
"Record of the Ngai-Leo") says that the names of Chiu-lung's
successors, generation by generation, can not be numbered up
to the time of one called Chin-Kao, but thenceforth they are
recorded. Thus "on the death of Chin-Kao, his son Hai succeeded
the death of Chien-fei, his son Ngai-Leo succeeded him. On the
death of Ngai-Leo, his son Sang-ngou succeeded him. On the
death of Sang-ngou, his son Liu-chang succeeded him. On the
death of Liu-chang, his son Liu-mao succeeded him. On the
death of Liu-mao, his son Hu-li succeeded him." Still there
is a lacuna between Hu-li and Hsien-li of the first century

53 Ibid., p. 115.
A.D. But that the race, with its various sections under various tribal names, had been existing from very early times is beyond dispute. They had spread all over that part of the country and formed settlements under their chiefs or 'kings' in localities, separated by mountain gorges and gullies, and also in secluded areas and barren tracts beyond the frontier, cut off by deep mountain streams. Though more or less isolated yet they grew powerful in Yuen-nan and Lower Sze-Chuan. But the formidable impact of the expanding Chinese Empire caused these peoples to migrate to northern Burma, French Indo-China and Siam and those that remained behind in subjection to the Empire were restless looking out for opportunities to assert their independence and strive to regain their lost territories. Hsien-li's action and Lei-Lao's organized revolt against the Chinese rule are probably only two out of many such historical instances in point as yet known to us. In fact, the whole area comprising Yuen-nan and a large part of Sze-chuan was in a state of unrest resulting in intervals of local independence for the Tai and other peoples. Such independence enabled them to consolidate their power to meet fresh dangers from the Empire.

There were also troubles in the south-eastern frontier of the Empire. The peoples of the coastal provinces and Annam, which had been annexed by Shih-Wang-Ti and placed under the administrative system of the Chin, took advantage of the weaknesses of the Empire after the death of Shih-Wang-Ti and succeeded in overthrowing the Chinese Yoke and restoring the independence of their own territories. It has been mentioned how cruelly the Tai had been dislodged by the Chinese from
Central and Southern China - from Ch'iu, Lo, Shu and even Yunnan. A considerable section of these Tai migrated, in desperation, to the south-eastern wilds and hills. These Tai must have played a significant part in this drive for liberation from the Chinese yoke on the death of the first Emperor Shih-Wang-Ti. Their freedom, however, did not last long. Being divided under local rival chiefs, they became weak and passed into the hands of China once again under Han Wu-Ti (140-86 B.C.) about 108 B.C. when Nan Yueh, the largest of these kingdoms in the south, was conquered and annexed by the Han.

Weaknesses of the imperial authority soon after Shih-Wang-Ti's death became manifest when ruthless measures were taken against the most trusted advisers and generals by Ur-Sze-Wang-Ti, "the Second Generation Emperor" (209-207 B.C.), at the instigation of an influential eunuch, named Chao Sao. The Emperor's action gave rise to widespread rebellion which brought about rapid downfall of the Ch'in dynasty. It afforded an opportunity to the discontented 'southern barbarians' to overthrow the Ch'in suzerainty which Shih-Wang-Ti had imposed from Annam to the Burmese border. The Tai, who were the most numerous and dominant element in Yunnan, Szechuan and Kwang-chow, had always cherished the ambition to restore their ancestral sovereignty over as much of Central China as could be wrested from the Chinese. As such, whenever any opportunity arose for striking

54 Shih-Wang-Ti wished that his own descendants should rule the Empire for thousands of years and that his successors should be named as Second Generation (Skt. Purusa), Third Generation Emperors etc. - Hoontakul, op. cit., p. 56
a blow against the Chinese overlordship, the Tai vassal chiefs
did never fail to avail themselves of it. Thus most of the Tai
States of the south asserted their independence at the decline
of Shih-Wang-Ti's dynasty. These had to be reconquered by the
Han rulers towards the last decades of the second century B.C.,
one of the objects being to open and control the trade routes
to India via Burma.

In 100 B.C., Han-Wu-Ti sent an expedition to Tien (Yun-nan-fu), a Tai kingdom. The outcome of the expedition was
that the king of Tien became an ally of China and helped her
to suppress the K'un-ming tribe. In about 103 B.C., Han-Wu-Ti
reannexed the south-eastern part of the former Ch'in Empire.
Under him the Empire extended far and wide in the south and
comprised the Tai provinces of Kwang-tung, Kwang-si, Yun-nan,
Kwei-chow, Tongking, Hainan and the north-eastern part of French
Indo-China. Such extension was possible due to the superiority
of the Han army, which had been organized on a new plan with
such major changes as the replacement of the old cumbersome
war chariot by a mobile cavalry supported by infantry. But
internally the country was so heavily drained of its wealth
and the people so mercilessly taxed by Han-Wu-Ti for his

55 Mr. E.H. Parker notes that Tien is a name still
applied to Yun-nan in the literary style. In the last part of
the Chou period a Chou general named Chuan Chao created this
erlier kingdom in eastern Yun-nan calling it Tien Kuo. Sir
George Scott says that during Wu-Ti's reign the king of Tien
was a Shan (Tai). His capital was at Peh-ngai and this place
remained an important Shan centre till after eight-hundred
years.

56 The name K'un-ming is still applied to a lake
ambitious yearnings of conquest that at length the whole country bristled up with rebellions which were only suppressed by appalling slaughter. 67

When after about two hundred years the Later Han finally collapsed, the Empire broke up into three kingdoms (San Kuo: A.D. 221-265) in A.D. 221. In Sze-chu-nan one Liu-Pei, a descendant of the Han, declared himself Emperor, whose dynasty thenceforth became known as the Minor or Shih Han, Shu being the name of the state over which he had ruled.

Liu-Pei was the uncle of Emperor Hien-Ti and, as such, proclaimed himself as the lawful heir to the throne of the Han. He called himself Chao-Lieh-Ti and ruled over the south-western division comprising Sze-chu-nan, Yunnan and Kwai-chow, predominantly a Tai area, with his capital established at Cheng-tu. He appointed as his minister Chiu-Ko-Liang or Kun-Ming, a great statesman and General who came from Shantung. Chiu-Ko-Liang served him faithfully and did much to improve the country.

The three kingdoms — Wei in the north, Woo in the east and Shu in the west — contended for the Imperial crown, as none of their rulers was recognized by the others as superior.

Chiu-Ko-Liang (A.D. 181-234) was a great historical figure of the third century A.D. whose name has become memorable to this day among the south-west 'barbarians' and whose life has gathered round it a whole cycle of legends. It was

Chu-Ko-Liang, who helped Liu Pei to become King of Shu (Szechuan) and also restored order in the barbarian south by subduing the border tribes. In this campaign he is said to have entered Burma and invaded her. This is mentioned in a passage contained in a reference to Pagan in the Chiu-fan chih which says: "There is in this country a temple dedicated to the marquis Chu-Ko-Liang who is said to have led an expedition to the heart of Burma somewhere about A.D. 225. Further many frontier towns and ramparts in modern Burma are to this day called after Chu-Ko-Liang. In the Museum at Yunnan-fu there is a drum attributed to him, with the following note by Georges Cordier: "Chu-Ko-Liang ... was appointed Governor of I-Chou ... plants native to China ... According to tradition, bronze-drums ... approach".

Liu Pei died in A.D. 225 and was succeeded by his son Hou-Ti (or Hou-Cha). In A.D. 225 Hou-Ti attacked Yun-nan. He stopped at Pei-nga (Pai-nga) in the neighbourhood of Tien (Yunnan-fu) and found waiting there Prince Lu-yu-na of the Tai (Shan) royal family and descendant of Prince Jen-Huo (122-117 B.C.) in the eighteenth generation. It was the first Chinese invasion of the hilly country of Yun-nan during the reign of the Han dynasty. Yunnan-fu, the provincial capital of Yun-nan, was given the new name of Yun-ming by Young China after the name of the leader of the Chinese army that invaded Yun-nan in that year.

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61 Greener, op cit.
In the third year of Hou-Ti's reign Meng-Huo, a Tai Prince of the Marn country invaded southern Yun-nan. This invasion was the part of a great rebellion against China in which Yang-Kai, the Prefect of Ch'ien-sing (present Kun-ming). Intendant Chu-pae and officer Kao-tang joined hands with Meng-huo and all acted in concert. Prefects of Yueh-sui in southern Sze-chuan and Yang-Ko (present Kwei-yang) in western Kwei-chow also made common cause with the rebels. But the Prefect of Yang-ch'iang remained loyal to the Chinese Emperor and used all his strength to defend his province. The city of Ta-li was occupied by the rebel leader Meng-huo. On receipt of information from the Resident at Ta-li about this widespread rebellion against China, Emperor Hou-Ti sent Chu-Ko-Liang, his minister for the western Empire, from Cheng-Tu with a powerful force of 500,000 soldiers for quelling the rebellion. Against this imperial force the rebel leaders brought together four divisions, each of 50,000 men.

General Chu-Ko-Liang marched down to Chi-sing-kuan, an important strategic point in north-west Kwei-Chow and used it as the main base of operations for his army. Starting from there he proceeded to cut off the lines of communication from

62 Marn means Burman.
63 According to L. Hoentrakul's researches Chien-Ning or I-chou district, the present Kun-ming in the centre of Yun-nan, op.cit., p. 82.
64 Yang-ch'iang, present Pao-Shan in south-western Yun-nan which was formerly called Ai-Lao country.
the three provinces in control of the rebels and threatened them with dire consequences unless their Prefects surrendered. At the same time he succeeded in winning over to his side the Prefect of Yueh-sui. He then launched his attack on the rebel leaders, defeated their armies and killed Yang-kai. After this defeat of his allied forces Prince Meng Huo (also Meng Kuo) who had already taken Ta-li and installed himself as its ruler, was left alone to face the formidable imperial army led by the military genius and foremost strategist Chiu-Ko-Liang. Yet he was determined to resist the Chinese. The clever Chiu-Ko-Liang, instead of making a direct attack on Ta-li, used a few bronze drums to scare away Meng Huo from within the fortifications of the city without a battle. The plan succeeded and Meng Huo, being alarmed, left the city for the Lu-Sui (the river Salween). On the banks of the Lu-Sui both the armies met and fought a number of epic battles, a narrative of which is found in Chinese literature.

It is said that during this historic campaign Chiu-Ko-Liang captured Meng Huo for six times, not by defeating him in the battle-field but by stratagem, and every time released him magnanimously hoping to see him voluntarily submit to the imperial authority; but all such gestures were of no effect. In the first phase of the war, captures were on the left (east) bank of the Lu-Sui to the north-west of Yung-Ch'ang-fu, where most of the engagements took place. On being released from captivity for the sixth time, Meng Huo found his attempts to resist the Chinese general from this side of the river futile.
He therefore retreated to the opposite bank and used the river as his defence against any further advance of the Marquis.

But the Marquis managed, with great difficulty, to cross the river with his troops by means of an iron-chained bridge constructed by him. At this place many of his troops died of malaria as the Salween is one of the worst mosquito-breeding rivers in South-east Asia. Chu-Ko-Liang then entered Upper Burma in pursuit of Meng-huo and succeeded in capturing him for the seventh time. It is said that Chu-Ko-Liang could penetrate deep into the Mian or Burmese country with the help of a map presented to him during this campaign by the Sub-Prefect of Yang-Ch'ang. He returned to the head quarters at Yang-Ch'ang with the captive prince by the same route and reached the Lu-Sui in the ninth month while the river was in flood. This time he had to decide finally whether he should allow the same generosity as before to this obstinate prince and let him off or treat him as an enemy and take action accordingly. In handling this most difficult but, at the same time, most delicate question of Chinese frontier policy, he was, on this occasion, guided by General Mah-tse, who had just arrived from the Imperial Court with despatches and presents. Mah-tse gave his wise advice to Chu-Ko-Liang in these words:

"Though I may be prejudiced in my opinion, nevertheless, think over my words. These Tai are a self-confident and lawless race; the distant position of their country from ours, the high mountains, the dangerous roads, only encourage their rebellious ideas. If you crush them to-day, then tomorrow they will rally and rebel again. Doubtless, your army will
be able to crush them again, but to keep them in permanent subjection and preserve order you would have to keep a large standing army in the country; and then, as soon as you removed it rebellion would at once recur. I strongly advise you to contend with their minds rather than with their bodies or their cities. First govern their hearts and then you will without trouble be able to govern their bodies and their cities. Conquest of their reason is all important and their loyalty will follow after it.

Marquis Chu-Ho-Liang then replied: "You see through my body (literally, into my most intimate thoughts). I agree with you." Chinese classical scholars affirm that Marquis Chu-Ho-Liang was one of the finest statesmen and military strategists ever produced in China, whose opinion about the Tai was based upon intimate personal knowledge of the characteristics of the race.

While in detention, Prince Heng Hao was once sitting in a despondent mood for his defeat. Seeing this his wife Chu-Yong remonstrated with him for his mental breakdown and asked him to give her the command of the army. Prince Heng-Hao reluctantly granted it. The Princess at once prepared herself for the fight and assumed the command of a force of one hundred of his bravest officers and five thousand of his best troops and sallied forth on horseback to meet the enemy.

67 Ibid., p.9.
She was an expert in throwing knives and carried to the battle-field five sharp knives strapped in a case on her back and a long lance in her right hand. The Chinese General Chang-in was surprised to see a woman leading the Tai troops. In the battle that took place between the two armies the Chinese were worsted and Chu-Yong overpowered and captured the two Chinese generals, Chang-in and Ma-chong, who had been sent against her. The marvellous martial qualities and faultless fighting tactics of the Tai Princess evoked profound admiration even from the enemy camp. She was, however, trapped by General Wei in a subsequent battle and presented to the Marquis. The Marquis was so charmed and moved to see the handsome and gallant lady that he immediately released her from captivity and, after dispelling her fears, entertained the royal couple with a sumptuous feast. Next day the Prince was formally set free by the Marquis. 

Overwhelmed with gratitude Meng-huo burst into tears and said: "Seven times now have I been mercifully released by my captor. Surely the like of this has never been known in history. I should be a most wicked and ungrateful man if I ever rebel again." On his submission, he was reinstated by the Marquis as a hereditary ruler of his former kingdom after a peace agreement, apparently under Chinese suzerainty.

It may be particularly noted that in this campaign there is mention of the use of gun-powder and cannon by the
Chinese. The account of the war also describes the use of a small cannon which fired many balls simultaneously. It is this superiority in arms that gave Chu-Ko-Liang a great technical advantage over the Tai rebels.69

Meng-huo is also mentioned as prince of Tien.70 This and the other geographical descriptions in the narrative of the war, which was fought for five months,71 indicate that the principality of Tien comprised a part of the present Yunnan, particularly the south-western part of it, and a part of north-eastern Burma with the Salween at the China-Burma frontier. That frontier appears to have remained so till Kublai Khan's conquest of Yunnan, for the frontier battle of Nga-saunggyan (1277) between the armies of the king of Mien (Burma) at Pagan and Kublai Khan was fought near Vochang (Yung-ch'ang-fu) in the neighbourhood of the Salween river.72 Chu-Ko-Liang's invasion of Burma is connected with the early irruption of

69 There was a great destruction of Meng-huo's forces, led by his General Prince Wu, in a ravine. The Chinese at this place threw flaming torches from the sides of the ravine when General Wu's troops reached it. The oiled rush armour of Prince Wu's troops soon caught fire and the flames spread rapidly. The lighted torches set fire to trains of gunpowder laid in bamboo poles; and these exploding, ignited buried cannon which fired in all directions. Soon the whole ravine was full of flames and smoke and that day Prince Wu and his whole army perished. Further, 'the cannon were each composed of nine small ones, bound together with strips of brass and were fired by trains of gunpowder'. Marquis Chu-Ko-Liang watched the carnage and wept with sorrow at the enormous sacrifice of life. - JSS, vol. XL, Pt.1, 1952, p.14.

Tarops and Taret3, from the north-east of Burma, who left their mark at old Pagan. Chu-Ko-Liang also erected an iron pillar in Mitu, 30 li from Heng-ai in commemoration of his victories. This pillar was destroyed in A.D. 870, but later one Prince Shi-long caused a copy of it to be cast. This later column is still preserved in the Tien-en-mai village of Heng-ai. Chu-Ko-Liang is not only noted for his wonderful ideas of strategy, but also for the inventions of military machines.

In spite of personal bravery and great statesmanship of Chu-Ko-Liang, Shu was the first of the three kingdoms to disappear. Then there followed a period of unstable government till at last the Eastern Chin came into power. The Chinese suzerainty over the territories of the turbulent south during this period was no better than a mere formality. Not being contented with this state of affairs, the ambitious Tai princes, with all their pride and traditions of a great ruling race in China, sought to unite and reconstruct the separate petty States into a powerful consolidated kingdom capable of challenging their northern colossus. The Tai or Lo or Lao people, who made southwestern Yun-nan their last stronghold and home, suffered terribly from the ravages of the war with the Shu Han. As a result, large numbers of these people left for the southern countries - Burma, Laos and Siam - as refugees. But a considerable section grimly stuck to their native land and faced all the horrors of the war with silent resistance to the Imperialists. It was these people, who in their uncompromising attitude towards the Chinese, organized the Nan-Chao kingdom during a period of China's own disintegration and misfortune.