

# CHINA'S EARLY IMPACT ON EASTERN YUNNAN: INCORPORATION, ACCULTURATION, AND THE CONVERGENCE OF EVIDENCE

Francis Allard

Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA 15705.  
Email: allard@iup.edu

## ABSTRACT

*In 109 BC, armies dispatched by the Han dynasty ruler Wudi reached present-day eastern Yunnan, defeating the kingdom of Dian and establishing the prefecture of Yizhou. Historical sources and archaeological data –mainly objects recovered from Dian burials– highlight China's impact on the region both before and after the conquest. This paper reviews the evidence for such impact through a consideration of the relevant texts and a further analysis of available information on Chinese style artifacts (CSA's) in pre- and post-conquest Dian graves. For the first century of Han occupation, the texts and grave assemblages –whose elaborate CSA's make up only a small percentage of elite burial goods– point to the native inhabitants' limited acculturation and incorporation into the Han administration. In contrast, textual entries and the widespread appearance of Han style tombs and burial assemblages during the first century AD provide clearer evidence of acculturation and incorporation. However, divergent interpretations emerge in light of additional information, which includes textual evidence for continuing local uprisings against the Han presence, as well as evidence from later historical periods of China's uneven and incomplete control of eastern Yunnan.*

## INTRODUCTION

According to Chinese sources, the expansionist pursuits of Han Wudi 汉武帝, one time ruler of the Han dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD), included the conquest of southwest China. Reaching present-day eastern Yunnan 云南 province in 109 BC, the Han armies defeated the “king of Dian 滇”, whose kingdom was centered on Dian lake, the largest of three lakes in the ‘Central Lakes’ region –the other two being the lakes of Fuxian 抚仙 and Xingyun 星云. The Han Chinese victory was followed by the establishment of the Yizhou 益州 prefecture (jun 郡, also known as ‘commandery’) in the area of the Dian political center, with the Dian king “presented with the seals of the king of Dian and restored to the position of leader of the people” (Shiji 史记; translation in Watson 1971:258). Over the course of the three centuries from the time of the conquest to the end of the Han dynasty, the Chinese es-

tablished a number of prefectures west of the Central Lakes region, with the south-western border of the Han Empire extending as far as the present-day border with Myanmar by the end of the dynasty.

Archaeological research in eastern Yunnan over the past six decades has revealed the presence of the so-called Dian Culture, also sometimes known as the Shizhaishan 石寨山 Culture or Shizhaishan Culture Complex. Dated by local archaeologists from the seventh century BC to the first century AD, this archaeological phenomenon is known primarily from its more than 2000 graves (at 15 or so cemeteries), which together have yielded tens of thousands of artifacts. It is in fact only recently that archaeologists have begun paying close attention to the issues of Dian settlement patterns and production (for example, see Yao and Jiang 2012). Dian material culture comprises a number of highly distinctive objects, including plaques (some decorated with precious stones or ‘animal combat’ scenes in the round), large drums and cowrie shell containers. The latter acted as shell receptacles and sometimes featured complex and realistic scenes on the lid. The majority of wealthy Dian burials are concentrated at burial grounds in the Central Lakes region, with many such rich graves excavated at the well-known cemeteries of Shizhaishan and Lijiashan 李家山, both located in this area.

Importantly, a number of points of correspondence exist between archaeological findings and those passages which refer to the Dian and the region's geopolitical landscape at the time of the 109 BC conquest. These include the discovery –in tomb number 6 at Shizhaishan– of a seal whose inscription reads “The king of Dian”, along with artifactual, iconographic and other archaeological indications of the prevalence of warfare, the ethnic diversity of the region, settled life based on agriculture and animal domestication, as well as the absence of palaces and defensive works. For overviews of Dian archaeology and history, as well as references to original research articles, see Allard (1998, 1999, 2006), Chiang (2008, 2012), Guojia Wenwu Ju (2009:491-497), Lee (2003), Murowchick (1989), Sun and Xiong (1983), and Yao (2005).

This paper focuses on the impact of Han China on the Dian, both before and after the conquest. In this regard, archaeologists have for some time noted the presence, in

both pre- and post-conquest Dian burials, of a number of ‘Chinese style artifacts’ (CSA’s), understood to have originated in Han China or to have been produced locally as copies of such objects. Significantly, the number of such Chinese style artifacts increased following the conquest, a trend which culminated –by the mid-first century AD– in the popularity of Han-style brick tombs whose grave assemblages consisted almost exclusively of CSA’s: mirrors, coins, characteristic vessel types, censers, lamps, as well as ceramic models depicting humans and scenes of domestic and productive activities (Allard 2006:248-49). Chinese archaeologists refer to this important first century AD transition as the ‘end’ of Dian culture.

Perhaps not surprisingly, many archaeologists and historians regard the increasing visibility of Chinese style artifacts and funerary behaviors during this period of contact with Han China as clear evidence of the latter’s military and cultural superiority vis a vis Yunnan’s native cultures. According to one Chinese author, “It is evident that of all the peoples in the Southwest in ancient times, the Dian people enjoyed the closest relationship with the Han. That their culture should surpass those of their neighbors is therefore quite natural” (Xiong 1983:14). Culture change in this case is viewed as ‘acculturation’ – more specifically ‘sinicization’. In the same vein, one archaeologist proposes that Yunnan had begun “absorbing” elements of Chinese culture even before the conquest, a process that culminated –after 109 BC– with Dian culture “fusing” into the culture of China (Xiao 2008:47). Another author is no less explicit when stating that Han culture had begun “replacing” Dian culture by the end of the western Han dynasty (i.e., the end of the first century BC) (Xie 2009:33). Counterbalancing such types of interpretation, work carried out in other parts of the world has revealed the inadequacy of models of unidirectional acculturation. Western archaeologists and historians point to a range of complex processes operating at imperial peripheries, including resistance, agency, the shifting of allegiances, reverse acculturation, and hybridity. Of more specific relevance here, western historians whose work focuses on southwest China have identified some of these very same processes at work in a number of regions (including Yunnan) (e.g., Giersch 2006; Herman 2007).

In order to investigate the complexities of culture change as these apply to the Dian in Yunnan, it is essential that we first familiarize ourselves with the available relevant data, along with whatever spatial, temporal, and social trends that such data reveal. In fact, a number of such trends have already been identified by archaeologists. Some time ago, I noted –based on a superficial analysis of grave contents and structure– that burials remained essentially ‘Dian’ for about 150 years following the conquest, with relatively few Chinese style objects recovered from Dian burials during this period (Allard 2006). More recently, Chiang Po-yi (Jiang Boyi) undertook a systematic review of the contents of all known Dian Culture burials, identifying in the process those artifacts which he refers to (in his most recent publica-

tion) as *huaxia shi qi* 华夏式器, here translated as ‘Chinese style artifacts’ (CSA’s) (Chiang 2008, 2012). In Chiang’s view, CSA’s include all those objects that have clear parallels in central or metropolitan China and for which no indigenous prototypes are known in Yunnan itself, regardless of whether the objects are imports or local copies. Importantly, typological analyses and radio-carbon dating have allowed archaeologists to date quite a few Dian Culture burials. Chiang relies on this chronology to distinguish between the contents of pre- and post-conquest CSA-yielding graves, with some cemeteries spanning the pre- and post-109 BC period.

This paper aims to add greater resolution to existing interpretations of culture change in eastern Yunnan during the period in question. It accomplishes this through the tabulation of available data, the calculation of various proportions among variables, and the identification of trends along spatial, temporal, and social dimensions. Rather than challenging previous interpretations, such as those put forward by myself and Chiang Po-yi, this paper strengthens these interpretations, while also identifying a number of additional patterns and trends.

#### METHODOLOGY: APPROACH AND LIMITATIONS

This analysis of China’s early impact on eastern Yunnan relies on a review of relevant entries in post-conquest Chinese texts, as well as on Chiang’s careful tabulation of CSA’s in pre- and post-conquest Dian graves. I include below a list of the categories of CSA’s identified and recorded by Chiang. Note, however, that this list is only meant to serve as a guide, since in some cases only one or a few of the subcategories of a listed artifact type is/are considered to be a CSA.

Weapons: *nuji* 弩机 (crossbow trigger mechanism); *jian* 剑 (sword); *ji* 戟 (halberd); *qiao* 鞘 (scabbard)

Tools: *xiao* 削 (paring knife); *dao* 刀 (knife); *cha* 钎 (spade); *ju* 锯 (saw); *ben* 铲 (adze)

Vessels: *fu* 釜; *xi* 洗; *pan* 盘; *mou* 罍; *guan* 罐; *bei* 杯; *he* 盃; *hu* 壶; *zhi* 卮; *dou* 豆; *gui* 簋; *zeng* 甗; *jiaodou* 鍬斗; *zhong* 钟; *penglu* 烹炉; *zun* 尊

Others: *jing* 镜 (mirror); *qian* 钱 (coin); *xunlu* 熏炉 (incense burner); *he* 盒 (box, case); *yin* 印 (seal); *lu* 炉 (stove); *daigou* 带钩 (belt hook); *zhen* 镇 (weight); *lian* 奩 (toiletory case); *yi* 匱 (ladle); *kou* 扣 (button); *deng* 灯 (lamp); *an* 案 (table); *xianhuan* 衔环 (ring handle)

It is worth noting some of the limitations which this analysis faces in attempting to further understand China’s early impact on eastern Yunnan. To begin, interpretations remain tied to sources of data that themselves present a range of challenges. First, the textual entries used in this paper display the same types of limitations encountered in other early Chinese sources, including the presence of significant temporal gaps, a focus on important events and

people, and the potential for bias and falsification. Second, the archaeological evidence consists almost entirely of burial data, which is itself marked by its own set of limitations, including: a) The likely erroneous dating of some individual burials; b) The exclusion from the analysis of those many burials that remain undated or whose uncertain dating sometimes spans the pre- and post-conquest periods; c) Occasional disagreement among different sources regarding the detailed contents and chronology of individual burials; and d) The determination of grave assemblage size based on a count of all individual objects, even when such objects may have been part of composite artifacts (e.g., the beads of a single necklace). As challenging as these issues may be methodologically, it is suggested here that they have only a limited impact on the overall –and often very clear– patterns revealed by the data.

A more serious limitation, in my opinion, emerges from the challenge of understanding how different objects of non-local origin or inspiration were perceived by local inhabitants, and what their impact on native culture was. Undoubtedly, some objects were highly desirable because of their aesthetic appeal, rarity and/or value in the ideological or religious realm, thus elevating the standing of their owners and driving competition for access to such objects. In contrast, some locally produced objects –such as tools– that owed their initial appearance to contact with China may not have been perceived as being ‘foreign’, even when their local impact –for example on the organization of production, and thus culture itself– was significant. Space does not allow for a thorough discussion of this complex issue, except to state that understanding culture change from the perspective of material culture requires a fuller consideration of the complex roles that different types of artifacts play in guiding such change. With such limitations in mind, the CSA’s tabulated and discussed in this paper include not only highly distinctive objects such as Chinese style vessels, but also less ‘exotic’ objects of Chinese origin (such as tools), in the hope that distinguishing between these types of artifacts can reveal additional trends and patterns. Having said this, this study leaves aside the dagger-axes known as *ge* 戈 and which Chiang includes in his analysis, since their entry into Yunnan may have been indirect and may have included prior alterations in Sichuan 四川.

## BEFORE THE CONQUEST

### *The Historical Record*

The earliest relevant references are to one Zhuang Qiao 莊騫, a Chu general who, in the late fourth or early third century BC, is said to have reached Dian lake. With his return home blocked by the Qin 秦, Zhuang decided to stay in Yunnan, making himself ruler of Dian and adopting local customs. Not only is the historicity of Zhuang Qiao debatable, the texts tell us little about Yunnan for the following century and a half, during which time references pertain mostly to regions located to the north and east of Yunnan. These references inform us of: a) The

advance of the Qin into Sichuan (located to the immediate north of Yunnan) by the end of the fourth century BC; b) The building of a road that likely linked Sichuan and north-eastern Yunnan by the mid-third century BC; c) The existence of an on-going trade in horses, servants and yaks between merchants in Sichuan and Yunnan at the end of the third century BC; d) Alliances between the Han and the kingdom of Yelang 夜郎 (possibly centered in present-day Guizhou 贵州 province); and e) The extension of the Han prefecture system to north-eastern Yunnan by 135 BC. The Dian reappear on the historical scene in 122 BC, when the texts inform us that Han envoys sent to the southwest in search of a commercial route to present-day India and Afghanistan were detained for over one year by the Dian king, who was apparently uninformed about China. Importantly, the envoys’ failed mission to the southwest culminated some 12 years later in the Han’s military push into the Dian lake area (Shiji, Huayang Guo Zhi 华阳国志, Gua Di Zhi 括地志, Han Shu 汉书; translations and commentaries in Sun and Xiong 1983:243-46; Watson 1971:253-58).

### *Burial Evidence*

Table 1 reveals that at those cemeteries where pre-conquest CSA-yielding burials have been excavated, such burials represent only five percent of the total number of graves at the cemeteries –the percentage would be even smaller if the table and calculation included those cemeteries with no pre-conquest CSA-yielding burials. A total of 140 CSA’s have been recovered from 27 burials at six cemetery sites, the earliest of these burials dated to the end of the Warring States period (475 – 221 BC). Significantly, these CSA’s represent less than one percent of the total number of artifacts recovered from burials with CSA’s. It is possible to distinguish between two groups of cemeteries based on the number and types of CSA’s found in their respective burials.

Group A cemeteries (Tianzímiao 天子庙, Yangfutou 羊甫头, Fenghuangwo 凤凰窝, and Pingpo 平坡): A total of 21 CSA’s have been recovered from 17 burials at these four cemeteries. These 17 burials represent four percent of the pre-conquest burials at these cemeteries. Aside from one bronze vessel and one iron sword, the CSA’s in these graves –mostly knives and cups– tend to be small. Although the grave assemblages of these 17 burials average no more than five artifacts per burial, together the CSA’s represent a substantial percentage (26 percent) of the combined assemblages. It is worth noting that all four cemeteries are situated some distance from the core of wealthy Dian cemeteries in the Central Lakes region, with the furthest (Pingpo) located in north-eastern Yunnan.

Group B cemeteries (Shizhaishan and Lijiashan): Both cemeteries are located at the center of the Central Lakes region. A total of 119 CSA’s have been recovered from 10 burials (representing 13 percent of the total number of pre-conquest burials at these two cemeteries). Along with the large number (39) of iron knives, the CSA’s include a

**Table 1. Pre-Conquest: Late Warring States period – 109 BC Dian Burials with Chinese Style Artifacts (CSA's)**

<b>Cemetery</b> <b>Total number of pre-conquest Dian burials</b>	<b>Number of Dian burials with CSA's</b> <b>(% of total)</b>	<b>a. Total number (and average) of artifacts in burials with CSA's</b> <b>b. Earliest date of Dian burials with CSA's</b>	<b>Total number of CSA's</b> <b>(percent of total number of artifacts in burials with CSA's)</b>	<b>Chinese Style Artifacts (CSA's)</b> <b>(b: bronze; i: iron; l: lacquer; w: wood)</b>
Tianzímiao 天子庙 46 burials	1 burial (2%)	a. 12 artifacts (12 per burial) b. End of Warring States period	1 CSA (8%)	Vessels (1): 1 <i>xi</i> (b)
Yangfútou 羊甫头 219 burials	1 burial (<1%)	a. 12 artifacts (12 per burial) b. Shortly before 109 BC	1 CSA (8%)	Weapons (1): 1 <i>jian</i> (i)
Fenghuángwō 凤凰窝 130 burials	6 burials (5%)	a. 26 artifacts (4 per burial) b. End of Warring States period	8 CSA's (31%)	Tools (8): 8 <i>xiao</i> (i)
Píngpō 平坡 77 burials	9 burials (12%)	a. 30 artifacts (3 per burial) b. End of Warring States period	11 CSA's (37%)	Vessels (11): 11 <i>bei</i> (lw)
Shìzhāishān 石寨山 17 burials	6 burials (35%)	a. >6000 artifacts (>1000 per burial) b. Early Western Han	51 CSA's (<1%)	Weapons (33): 19 <i>nuji</i> (b); 14 <i>jian</i> (i) Tools (9): 9 <i>dao</i> (i) Vessels (1): 1 <i>he</i> (b) Others (8): 3 <i>qian</i> (b); 4 <i>jing</i> (b); 1 <i>yin</i> (b)
Lǐjiāshān 李家山 60 burials	4 burials (7%)	a. >20000 artifacts (>5000 per burial) b. Early Western Han	68 CSA's (<1%)	Weapons (22): 12 <i>jian</i> (i); 9 <i>nuji</i> (b); 1 <i>ji</i> (i) Tools (30): 30 <i>dao</i> (i) Vessels (10): 5 <i>fu</i> (b); 2 <i>pan</i> (b); 1 <i>guan</i> (b); 1 <i>mou</i> (b); 1 <i>bei</i> (b) Others (6): 3 <i>jing</i> (b); 2 <i>daigou</i> (b); 1 <i>lu</i> (b)
<b>Total</b> 549 burials	<b>Total</b> 27 burials (5%)	<b>Total</b> a. >26000 artifacts (~1000 per burial) b. End of Warring States period	<b>Total</b> 140 CSA's (<1%)	

wide range of weapons, vessels and other types of artifacts. Some of these stand out as highly distinctive objects inspired by (or obtained from) China, including a number of crossbow mechanisms, mirrors, vessels, as well as a few belt hooks, coins, and one small bronze stove. Importantly, the 10 burials with CSA's are generally very wealthy, with some containing many thousands of artifacts. In keeping with the overall richness of these tombs, however, the CSA's together make up less than one percent of their combined assemblages.

### *Discussion*

Although sparse and for the most part silent about Yunnan and the Dian kingdom –at least until 122 BC–, the pre-109 BC references to regional trade and communication, and to China's early expansion of its prefecture system toward the southwest, together point to the fact that eastern Yunnan had been partly surrounded by China by the middle of the second century BC. It should therefore come as no surprise that ideas and objects of Chinese origin or inspiration would have reached the Central Lakes region of eastern Yunnan prior to the conquest. One often discussed result of such contact was the adoption –by no later than the third century BC– of iron technology (Chiang 2008:120-28).

The presence of CSA's in pre-conquest Dian burials leads us to consider a number of possible scenarios regarding the manner of their transmission. To begin, some of the CSA's may have reached Yunnan through a process of successive exchange transactions among small communities located along the route between Han China and Dian. As recorded in other archaeological cases, an exponential decrease in artifact frequency with increasing distance from its source points to what archaeologists call 'down-the-line' trade, with nodes of higher artifact frequency along the fall-off distribution curve indicating the possibility of intensified trade at regional central places (Renfrew and Bahn 2012:364-69). Although fall-off analyses of CSA's found in Dian contexts have not yet been carried out, the 'down-the-line' trade model does offer the possibility that some of the CSA's could have reached Yunnan in the absence of direct contact between the Dian and Han China, or of knowledge of the object's original function and meaning. Furthermore, the desirability of some CSA's stemming from their rarity, aesthetic appeal and/or perceived mystical properties could help explain their concentration in pre-conquest elite contexts.

A second scenario sees CSA's moving through exchange systems centered on regional elites that maintained contact with one another (i.e., elite interaction spheres), with the Dian elite in this case aware of the object's origin in Han China (and possibly its original function as well). Finally, a specific CSA may have been transferred directly from Han China to the Dian elite, for example as a targeted gift.

In regard to the less elaborate CSA's found in the first group (A) of (generally poor) burials located to the north and northeast of the Central Lakes region (i.e., at Tianzimiao, Yangfutou, Fenghuangwo, and Pingpo), it may

very well be that these moved through indirect exchange systems (if not in fact locally produced), possibly along the aforementioned early routes linking Sichuan to north-east Yunnan. This interpretation agrees with the idea that many of the influences originating in China were first channeled through Sichuan. As for those more numerous and elaborate CSA's found in pre-conquest graves at Shizhaishan and Lijiashan, Chiang Po-yi favors the third scenario discussed above, suggesting that these were gifts given by the Han to local Dian leaders in exchange for the latter's allegiance, a common practice at this time (Chiang 2012:185). Although the presence of an inscribed seal in (pre-conquest) tomb no. 20 at Shizhaishan supports such an interpretation, the absence of textual evidence for such type of pre-conquest contact between the Dian and China –except perhaps after 122 BC– calls the suggestion of sustained direct contact into question. Regardless of how the seal and the other elaborate CSA's made their way into wealthy Dian burials, we note again that their numbers in relation to the entire grave assemblages point to Han China's limited impact on Dian elite culture prior to the conquest. The impact on non-elite culture –as witnessed at the four poorer cemeteries– may have been no more significant, since although one quarter of the objects in graves (with CSA's) are identified as CSA's, less than four percent of the total number of Dian graves at these cemeteries were found to contain such artifacts, which in any case consisted mostly of utilitarian objects.

### AFTER THE CONQUEST

#### *The Historical Record*

Although still hampered by intermittent and potentially biased references, the historical record of eastern Yunnan offers a more comprehensive view of the region after 109 BC than it does for the pre-conquest period. Of note are the early entries, some of which point to the apparent success of the Han conquerors along a number of fronts. Alongside the previously mentioned reference to the Dian king being permitted to rule over his people –an indication of indirect rule–, the texts also mention the subdivision of the newly established Yizhou prefecture into 24 (named) counties, as well as a census which recorded a total of 81,946 households and 580,463 inhabitants (Han Shu; translation in Sun and Xiong 1983:247). While one may question the striking precision of these figures, the data at least points to the effort made by the Han to establish a stable political and administrative structure possibly supported in part through taxation.

References to the following three centuries of Han rule indicate some important changes to the nature of indigenous involvement in the administrative structure. For example, the absence of references to the Dian king from early on in the first century BC, combined with passages that speak of the later elimination of royal titles by Wang Mang 王莽 (45 BC – 23 AD), suggest that indirect rule was increasingly exercised through native leaders with 'non-royal' honorary titles (e.g., *marquis*). By the second century AD, we read of *yishuai* 夷帅, native chief-

tains who had voluntarily adopted Chinese customs and been given high level posts in the Han administration (Yang 2009:107). Interestingly, this reference to ‘acculturated’ native chiefs more than two centuries following the Han conquest is in keeping with one passage dated to 84-87 AD, which informs us that “When Wang Fu of Shu prefecture was Governor of Yizhou, his civilizing rule was particularly outstanding. Four divine horses emerged from a river in the area of Lake Dian. Wet dew fell, white birds appeared. Only now did literary studies prosper and gradually the barbarian customs were changed” (Huayang Guo Zhi; translation in Sun and Xiong 1983:251). Beyond such indications of acculturation, the second century AD also witnessed greater biocultural ‘hybridization’ between the Han Chinese and Yunnan’s native inhabitants, as evident from the emergence of *daxing* 大姓, powerful clans of Chinese descent who had adopted local customs and intermarried with Yunnan’s indigenous families (Yang 2009:107).

Taken together, the above references –although limited– appear to indicate that both the acculturation of the indigenous population and its incorporation into the Han administration proceeded slowly, with success reached only centuries following the conquest, by which time there is even evidence of cross-cultural exchange between the two populations. Having said this, this image of a gradually expanding system of indirect rule, concomitant change in native customs, and cultural hybridization, must be viewed in relation to other passages that reveal the region’s highly charged political, military and cultural landscape. Most dramatically, the texts mention a total of seven major revolts in Yizhou between 105 BC (i.e., four years after the conquest) and 176 AD (Han Shu, Huayang Guo Zhi, Hou Han Shu 后汉书; translations in Sun and Xiong 1983:247-52). One such revolt, dated to 83-82 BC, is said to have resulted in the death of the Han governor of Yizhou and to have involved “beheading or taking prisoner more than 50,000 and capturing more than 100,000 head of cattle” (Han Shu; translation in Sun and Xiong 1983:247). Further evidence of persistent native resistance to the Han presence is provided by references to the unwillingness –or inability– of Chinese officials to spend time at their assigned posts within the Yizhou prefecture and county system. Referring to the last of the major rebellions of the Han dynasty, one entry dated to 176 AD forcefully points to the persistent challenges faced by the Chinese in Yunnan: “... the Southern Barbarians once again rose in rebellion. They surrounded and cut off the Governor of Yizhou ... In court there were critics who argued that it was impossible to conduct this campaign; they urged that the area be abandoned ...” (Huayang Guo Zhi; translation in Sun and Xiong 1983:252).

#### Burial Evidence

The Dian burials dated from the time of the conquest to the first century AD present a clear contrast with the pre-conquest burials discussed earlier. Most evident is the expanded availability and distribution of Chinese style

artifacts in Dian funerary contexts. As shown in Table 2, increases are noted for the following:

1. The number of cemeteries from which CSA’s have been recovered (7 vs. 6). Every known cemetery dating to this period –except for Hengdaluo 横大路 in northeast Yunnan– has yielded CSA’s.
2. The total number of burials with CSA’s (93 vs. 27).
3. The proportion of burials found to contain CSA’s (28% vs. 5%). Leaving the Yangfutou cemetery –an anomaly, as discussed below– out of the calculation, 53% (91) of the 172 post-conquest Dian burials at the six remaining cemeteries contained CSA’s.
4. The total number of CSA’s (1571 vs. 140). Importantly, a significant proportion (81% = 1269) of the 1571 CSA’s were coins, which were recovered from 49% (47) of the 95 post-conquest Dian burials with CSA’s (information on coins in post-conquest Dian burials is provided in the fourth and fifth columns of Table 2). The impact that coins have on calculations can be minimized by assigning a value of one to each set of coins recovered from a single burial, a not unreasonable approach in light of the possibility that coins were deposited as sets. Doing so results in the total number of CSA’s increasing from 138 (vs. 140) in pre-conquest graves to 349 (vs. 1571) in post-conquest Dian graves, a less dramatic but still substantial increase than when individual coins are counted as single artifacts. For the post-conquest period, this approach also lowers the proportion of CSA’s (to the total number of artifacts) from 10-11 percent to 2 percent.
5. The number of types of CSA’s.

A closer look at the data presented in Table 2 allows us to distinguish between different groups of cemeteries and identify a number of additional patterns and trends. The first group of burial sites includes the generally poorer cemeteries at Tianzimiao, Shibeicun 石碑村, Batatai 八塔台, and Pingpo, where the average number of artifacts per burial ranges from 8 to 17. CSA’s at these four sites make up 63 percent of the combined grave assemblages –or 19 percent if we assign a value of one to each set of coins recovered from a single burial. The second group of burial sites consists of the wealthy cemeteries at Lijiashan and Shizhaishan, whose post-conquest burials contain hundreds of artifacts on average. In contrast to the first group of cemeteries, the CSA’s at these two sites make up only four percent of their combined grave assemblages –or less than two percent if sets of coins are assigned values of one.

The presence of significant wealth differences at the sites of Lijiashan and Shizhaishan permits the identification of other significant patterns in the numbers and types of CSA’s. Focusing for the moment on the seven wealthiest burials at the two cemeteries (average number of artifacts = 1459), we find that their combined CSA count of 56 represents only 0.5 percent of the seven burials’ combined grave assemblages.

**Table 2. Post-Conquest: 109 BC – 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD Dian Burials with Chinese Style Artifacts (CSA's)**

<b>Cemetery</b> <b>Total number of post-conquest Dian burials</b>	<b>Number of Dian burials with CSA's (% of total)</b>	<b>a. Total number of artifacts (in all burials)</b> <b>b. Latest date of Dian burials with CSA's</b>	<b>a. Total number of CSA's (percent of total number of artifacts in all burials)</b> <b>b. Number of coins (percentage of CSA's)</b>	<b>Chinese Style Artifacts (CSA's)</b> <b>(b: bronze; c: ceramic; g: gold; i: iron; j: jade; l: lacquer; s: silver; w: wood)</b>
Tianzিমiao 天子庙 2 burials	1 burial (50%)	a. 16 artifacts b. Early Eastern Han	a. 1 CSA (6%) b. 1 coin (100%)	Coins <i>qian</i> (b): 1 (in 1 of 1 burial with CSA's)
Shibeicun 石碑村 51 burials	13 burials (25%)	a. 417 artifacts b. End of Western Han	a. 212 CSA's (51%) b. 201 coins (95%)	Tools (11): 11 <i>dao</i> (i) Coins <i>qian</i> (b): 201 (in 5 of 13 burials with CSA's)
Batatai 八塔台 53 burials	36 burials (68%)	a. 898 artifacts b. End of Western Han	a. 519 CSA's (58%) b. 444 coins (86%)	Weapons (5): 2 <i>jian</i> (i); 2 <i>nuji</i> (b); 1 <i>qiao</i> (b) Tools (30): 30 <i>dao</i> (i) Vessels (17): 6 <i>mou</i> (b); 5 <i>fu</i> (b); 1 <i>fu</i> (i); 1 <i>gui</i> (b); 1 <i>hu</i> (b); 1 <i>pan</i> (bgl); 1 <i>bei</i> (bgl); 1 <i>dou</i> (c) Coins <i>qian</i> (b): 444 (in 22 of 36 burials with CSA's) Others (23): 17 <i>daigou</i> (b); 1 <i>jing</i> (b); 1 <i>yin</i> (b); 4 <i>zhen</i> (b)
Pingpo 平坡 25 burials	16 burials (64%)	a. 417 artifacts b. End of Western Han	a. 376 CSA's (90%) b. 353 coins (94%)	Tools (7): 7 <i>dao</i> (i) Vessels (9) : 3 <i>mou</i> (b); 1 <i>fu</i> (b); 5 <i>bei</i> (lw) Coins <i>qian</i> (b): 353 (in 9 of 16 burials with CSA's) Others (7): 6 <i>daigou</i> (b); 1 <i>unknown</i> (lw)
Lijashan 李家山 21 burials	11 burials (52%)	a. >8000 artifacts b. Early Eastern Han	a. 111 CSA's (1%) b. 42 coins (38%)	Weapons (9): 7 <i>jian</i> (i); 2 <i>nuji</i> (b) Tools (27): 24 <i>dao</i> (i); 2 <i>cha</i> (i); 1 <i>ju</i> (i) Vessels (17): 1 <i>guan</i> (b); 3 <i>zeng</i> (b); 5 <i>fu</i> (b); 2 <i>jiaodou</i> (b); 1 <i>pan</i> (b); 2 <i>hu</i> (b); 2 <i>zhi</i> (b); 1 <i>xi</i> (b) Coins <i>qian</i> (b): 42 (in 1 of 11 burials with CSA's) Others (16): 6 <i>jing</i> (b); 3 <i>daigou</i> (b); 1 <i>xunlu</i> (b); 1 <i>lian</i> (lsw); 1 <i>lu</i> (b); 1 <i>he</i> (b); 1 <i>he</i> (lw); 2 <i>yi</i> (b)
Shizhaishan 石寨山 20 burials	14 burials (70%)	a. >3000 artifacts b. Early Eastern Han	a. 348 CSA's (10-12%) b. 227 coins (65%)	Weapons (11): 8 <i>jian</i> (i); 1 <i>nuji</i> (i); 2 <i>ji</i> (i) Tools (3): 2 <i>dao</i> (i); 1 <i>ben</i> (i) Vessels (67): 3 <i>xi</i> (b); 2 <i>fu</i> (b); 1 <i>pan</i> (b); 3 <i>he</i> (b); 1 <i>mou</i> (b); 13 <i>guan</i> (c); 1 <i>hu</i> (b); 2 <i>dou</i> (c); 2 <i>zhong</i> (b); 1 <i>penglu</i> (b); 2 <i>zun</i> (b); 30 <i>bei</i> (l); 6 <i>pan</i> (bgl) Coins <i>qian</i> (b): 227 (in 8 of 16 burials with CSA's) Others (40): 9 <i>jing</i> (b); 2 <i>xunlu</i> (b); 1 <i>xunlu</i> (c); 1 <i>yin</i> (g); 2 <i>he</i> (b); 2 <i>he</i> (c); 1 <i>daigou</i> (j); 1 <i>daigou</i> (bg); 1 <i>lu</i> (c); 1 <i>lian</i> (b); 1 <i>lian</i> (ls); 5 <i>kou</i> (b); 1 <i>kou</i> (bg); 2 <i>deng</i> (b); 3 <i>an</i> (blg); 7 <i>xianhuan</i> (b)
Yangfutou 羊甫头 161 burials	2 burials (1%)	a. 1611 artifacts b. End of Western Han	a. 4 CSA's (<1%) b. 1 coin (25%)	Weapons (2): 2 <i>jian</i> (i) Tools (1): 1 <i>dao</i> (i) Coins <i>qian</i> (b): 1 (in 1 of 2 burials with CSA's)
<b>Total</b> 333 burials	<b>Total</b> 93 burials (28%)	<b>Total</b> a. >14,000 artifacts b. Early Eastern Han	<b>Total</b> a. 1571 CSA's (10-11%) b. 1269 coins (81%)	

No less significant, no coins were found in these wealthy burials. Instead, the wealthiest graves at Lijiashan and Shizhaishan tend to contain larger numbers of all other types of CSA's, including weapons, tools, as well as distinctive vessel types and other objects, including mirrors, belt hooks, incense burners, different types of cases/boxes, and stoves. The rich burial number 6 at Shizhaishan perhaps best illustrates these trends. Of the 600 or so artifacts found in the grave, only 15 (or 3 percent) were CSA's, which included the well-known jade suit and "King of Dian" gold seal (but no coins).

To summarize, we note that the post-conquest increase in the availability and distribution of CSA's conceals a number of other significant findings and patterns. Thus, we find that coins—which make up a significant proportion of the total number of CSA's at some sites—tend to be concentrated in poorer burials. For this reason, minimizing the coins' impact on calculations at the poorer cemeteries results in a significant reduction (63% vs. 19%) in the proportion of CSA's to total assemblages. In contrast, the relative proportion of CSA's at the cemeteries of Lijiashan and Shizhaishan—both marked by wealthy burials and relatively few coins—is little affected by the minimization of the coins' impact on calculations (4% vs. 2%). Having said this, the relatively small proportion of CSA's at Lijiashan and Shizhaishan should not conceal the fact that these CSA's include a number of elaborate and desirable objects.

Notable exceptions to the patterns discussed above include the Hengdalu cemetery in northeast Yunnan (near Batatai), whose burials contained no CSA's, as well as Yangfutou, where only four CSA's were recovered from its 161 post-conquest burials. One explanation put forward to account for the results at Yangfutou proposes that the center of power had shifted to the south—closer to Lijiashan and Shizhaishan—following the conquest (Chiang 2012:186). In this view, the now disadvantaged elite at Yangfutou would have had only restricted access to objects from China. However, such an explanation does not in fact account for the presence of large numbers of CSA's at other cemeteries located some distance from the Central Lakes region.

### *Discussion*

The most significant finding of the analysis presented above is the limited contribution that CSA's make to the grave assemblages of post-conquest burials, with Dian-type objects continuing to dominate the artifact sets until the first century AD transition to Han style funerary behavior and assemblages. Reliance on CSA's as proxies of acculturation—an admittedly simplistic approach, although the most effective one within the context of the available data—allows us to in turn underscore the resilience of native customs for over one century following the conquest, a finding that is in keeping with those historical passages which point to the limited acculturation of Yunnan's indigenous population prior to the first century AD.

The interpretation offered above further supports ideas put forward in earlier works on the topic (Allard 2005;

Chiang 2008, 2012). The tabulation of the data and additional statistics provided in this paper do present, however, an opportunity to identify further patterns in the data. Thus, although they make up only a very small proportion of the assemblages, the CSA's in the wealthiest burials at Shizhaishan and Lijiashan reveal the obvious appeal of elaborate objects of Chinese origin, some of which undoubtedly reflected changes in the personal behavior of tomb occupants and the way they were viewed by their followers. For this reason, it would of course be unwise to suggest that the Dian elite were not impacted at all by the culture of the Han conquerors. In contrast, the large quantities of coins recovered from poorer Dian burials seem at first—if we rely on CSA's as indicators of acculturation—to suggest greater willingness at adopting the ways of the conquerors. However, this is only conjecture, as we really do not understand the economic and ideological context within which the coins operated, or the extent to which they were in fact closely identified with the culture of the Han Chinese. Nevertheless, the increased resolution provided by this analysis does point to a crucial aspect of culture change, namely that acculturation undoubtedly touched different sectors of society in different ways.

### PERSPECTIVES FROM LATER PERIODS AND THE CONVERGENCE OF EVIDENCE

Scholars interested in a region's early history must typically deal with the reality that the historical and archaeological records available to them do not always 'converge' to produce a coherent depiction of that region's past. This lack of convergence often itself results from the low level of resolution, or incompleteness, of each dataset. For early Yunnan, interpretations rely on limited and biased textual references (in the case of history), along with an archaeological record that consists mostly of burial evidence. Even as studies such as the present analysis attempt to improve resolution by focusing more closely on the available data, resulting interpretations remain subject to significant modifications once more data, or different categories of data (such as information about settlements and production), are incorporated into the analysis.

With such limitations in mind, we may recapitulate what the historical and archaeological data tell us about eastern Yunnan prior to, and following, the conquest. For the pre-conquest period, there is no evidence of any significant level of acculturation or—in the absence of any formal Chinese presence in the Central Lakes region—of the participation of local elites in a Han-controlled administration. Having said this, the presence of elaborate CSA's in elite Dian graves may represent early efforts by the Chinese court to gain the support and allegiance of Dian leaders living just beyond China's borders, or alternatively the ability of such leaders to concentrate into their hands CSA's reaching Yunnan through other channels.

The decades following the 109 BC conquest appear to have witnessed a change from indirect rule through native kings to Chinese attempts at more direct control through



local leaders. Over the course of this approximately 150 year-long period, increasing numbers of CSA's in elite burials in the Central Lakes region, as well as in nearby areas, point to attempts at broadening control and ensuring allegiance. However, textual evidence of frequent native uprisings against the Han –along with the reluctance of Han officials to serve at the local level– reveal the instability of the administrative system, with possible problems ranging from resistance to the Han by both the native elite and inhabitants, to the intermittent refusal of the local population to support its own leaders. Significantly, the CSA's complement what continue to be essentially Dian grave assemblages, suggesting here also the limited acculturation of native populations to Chinese customs. From the first century AD to the end of the Han dynasty in 220 AD, portions of the historical and archaeological record converge to paint a picture of significant culture change involving the more widespread acculturation of the indigenous population, along with its fuller incorporation into the Han administrative structure. However, continued references to native uprisings –along with debates at the Han court regarding the soundness of a Chinese presence in Yunnan– call into question the extent to which acculturation and administrative incorporation extended to all sectors of society.

Admittedly, the scenarios presented above remain models to be tested as further burial and non-funerary data become available. In the meantime, we may ask whether knowledge of later periods can help resolve the issue of conflicting interpretations generated by different portions of the historical and archaeological records regarding the extent of the acculturation of Yunnan's native population and its incorporation into the Chinese system. We turn for this purpose to *Between Winds and Clouds* (Yang 2009), a work which details the history of Yunnan over the past two thousand years and which reviews the region's changing relationship with metropolitan China. For approximately one thousand years following the fall of the Han dynasty, China's control of Yunnan alternated between none and highly constrained, with some periods even witnessing the emergence of independent regional polities (e.g., the kingdoms of Nanzhao 南诏 and Dali 大理), and others marked by indirect rule and a reliance on native chiefs able to maintain their political and territorial independence, as with the *jimi* 羁縻 ('bridle and halberd' or 'loosely reigned') system of the Sui dynasty (581 – 618 AD).

The Yuan dynasty (1271 – 1368 AD) marks the beginning of trends leading to China's true consolidation of control and power over Yunnan. Over the following six centuries, as the native chieftain *tusi* 土司 system of indirect rule established by the Yuan was gradually replaced by one of direct rule known as *gaitu guiliu* 改土归流, China imposed increasingly stricter rules on the behavior of native chiefs. These included the requirements that native heirs show, at regular intervals, their genealogical charts to Chinese authorities, and that the male relatives of native chiefs attend the imperial university in Beijing (or local institutions in Yunnan). Alongside these admin-

istrative changes came the first widespread efforts at converting Yunnan's native inhabitants to ways that conformed to Confucian norms. One Yuan scholar is said to have encouraged native people to adopt a number of such behaviors, including kneeling, marriage customs (match-making and the ceremony itself), funerary customs, and ancestral worship. He also urged native chieftains to give up their native clothes, presenting them with Chinese style hats, socks, and shoes. Most importantly, native families were encouraged to send their children to Confucian schools, a popular choice among the elite, who understood that a Confucian education could bolster the family's status among both the Chinese and their own followers. By the Ming dynasty (1368 – 1644 AD), the expanded school system had begun producing degree holders, including some who were awarded the *jinshi* 进士 degree (the highest level degree in China). Even more so than during the Yuan period, Yunnan's native elite during the Ming recognized the benefits of a Confucian education for their children, including facilitated entry into China's civil administration.

This brief account of historical developments in Yunnan underscores the fact that the acculturation and incorporation of its native inhabitants into China's cultural and political sphere remained woefully incomplete for well over one thousand years following the fall of the Han dynasty, a not so surprising finding when one considers that the Han Chinese remained a demographic minority in Yunnan until relatively recently. Pointing out that China's impact on Yunnan over the past six centuries was first felt by elite groups in political centers –with some groups in outlying regions maintaining their cultural and political independence until the nineteenth century–, further reinforces the idea that China's control of eastern Yunnan during the Han dynasty could not have been more than superficial. Such a viewpoint therefore encourages caution, so that portions of the historical and archaeological records of early Yunnan are not given undue importance as support for interpretations of unidirectional acculturation. At the very least, an understanding of later historical periods provides a context within which earlier events can be examined, while also serving as an additional strand of evidence to be used as we seek the convergence of multiple sources of information toward a coherent view of Yunnan's past.

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