

A Virtual City: The “Record of the Lands of Yue” and the Founding of Shaoxing

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Introduction

The city of Shaoxing 紹興, in what is now northern Zhejiang province, is one of China’s oldest recorded planned cities.¹ At the time of its foundation in 490 BCE, the city was intended to function as the capital city of the independent and culturally distinct kingdom of Yue 越, at that time on the southern edge of the Chinese world. It was laid out by order of King Goujian of Yue 越王勾踐 (r. 496–465 BCE), the most famous monarch of that kingdom, who played a crucial role in the political life at the very end of the Spring and Autumn period (771–475 BCE). Shaoxing was founded at a time when a great construction boom was taking place in the Jiangnan 江南 region (south of the Yangtze River), and this was one of many cities and walled settlements built at this time.

The earliest known account of the landscape of the city of Shaoxing and its surrounding landscape is found in the “*Jidi zhuan*” 記地傳 or “Record of the Lands [of Yue]” chapter of the *Yuejue shu* 越絕書 (Histories of the Kingdom of Yue), a text compiled during the Eastern Han dynasty.² This book is a collection of short essays, mainly concerned with the wars that defined political life at the end of the Spring and Autumn period: the struggle between the southern kingdoms of Chu 楚, Wu 吳 and Yue. The book concentrates particularly on the towering figure of King Goujian of Yue, who led his people first into a crushing defeat and then to a stunning victory against the kingdom of Wu, which ultimately culminated in complete conquest in the year 473 BCE. However, rather than focussing on political history, the “Record of the Lands of Yue” emphasises the impact King Goujian had on the landscape of this region: virtually every building mentioned is said to have been erected either for his personal use or as part of the war effort he initiated to defeat the kingdom of Wu. The authors repeatedly link landscape features of this part of northern Zhejiang province to events from the life of the greatest king of Yue. This paper contains the first translation into English of the “Record of the Lands of Yue.”

1 The name of the city of Shaoxing commemorates a turn in the fortunes of the Southern Song dynasty. In 1126, the capital of the Northern Song dynasty Bianliang 汴梁 (now known as Kaifeng 開封) fell to the Jurchen Jin dynasty. The new emperor, Song Gaozong 宋高宗 (r. 1127–1162), moved south to evade capture, and established his capital at a series of southern cities, including Lin’an 臨安 (now known as Hangzhou 杭州), Pingjiang 平江 (modern Suzhou 蘇州) and Yuezhou 越州 (Shaoxing). At this last city, he declared the beginning of a new reign era, Shaoxing (1131–1162), to symbolize a new start for the Southern Song regime. This was successful, and the city authorities petitioned the emperor that in future the city might be known as Shaoxing, the designation that has been used to the present day. See Peng Yun (2004), 396.

2 See Axel Schlusser and Michael Loewe, “Yüeh chüeh shu” in Loewe (1993), 490–493.

In the title to this paper, Shaoxing is referred to as a virtual city. There are two reasons for this. Although the authors of this text went to considerable lengths to connect landscape features and physical structures in this region of China with the important historical figure of King Goujian of Yue, these attributions (in the absence of further evidence) must remain largely speculative. Numerous geographical features and ancient buildings south of the Yangtze River have been linked to famous figures from the conflict between Wu, Yue and Chu, and sometimes these attributions have been conclusively disproved.³ There is also another factor involved in making this ancient account a description of a virtual or imaginary city. In 1223, during the Southern Song dynasty, the whole city was demolished and completely reconfigured under the direction of the Prefect Wang Gang 汪綱. The original city with its two connected walled enclosures was completely razed and a new city built on almost the same site (with significant expansions both to north and south), in an irregular rectangle, divided into five wards for ease of administration. The Song dynasty remodelling continued to define the shape of the city centre until these walls were pulled down during the Republican era.⁴ Although references were frequently made after this remodelling to landscape features that had survived the work, the old city was gone. The “Record of the Lands of Yue” is therefore of great importance, as it is the earliest surviving account of the original layout of this ancient city.

Much of the information contained within the “Record of the Lands of Yue” is unique. The paucity of sources about the history of the kingdom of Yue is notorious, and even less is known about the architectural and design history of King Goujian’s capital.⁵ There are fundamental problems with understanding any Yue text, in that many aspects of the cultural and linguistic background are unknown, and completely different from those recorded in other ancient Chinese texts. This however merely enhances the importance of the *Yuejue shu* as a source for understanding the culture of this major pre-unification kingdom, and of the “Record of the Lands of Yue” as a description of its capital.

The Yue People in Ancient China

It was only towards the end of the Spring and Autumn period that the people of the Zhou confederacy began to become aware of the Yue peoples in the south. The Yue peoples, related culturally and linguistically but not politically (and indeed often at war with each other) stretched along the coast from what is now southern Jiangsu province down the coast to northern Vietnam. Although there are some references in ancient texts to contact between the early Zhou kings and a people called the Yuyue 於越, any link between this ancient people and the Yue kingdom of Zhejiang some five centuries later remains highly controversial.⁶

3 For example, there is a waterway known as the Wu canal which runs from the Yangtze in Anhui province into Lake Tai in Jiangsu province, which was traditionally said to have been dug by order of the Wu minister Wu Zixu 伍子胥 to facilitate his attack on the capital of Chu in 506 BCE. However, modern scholars have demonstrated that this is in fact not a canal at all but a natural river. See Wei Songshan (1982), 56.

4 See Zhang Yu’an (2001), 8–9.

5 See Su Tie (1990), 374.

6 According to *Zhusu jinian* B:3a, the Yuyue 於越 presented tribute to King Cheng of Zhou 周成王 in 1040 BCE. For a critical account of the interpretation that this is an indication of early links between the Yue and the Zhou, see Huang Weicheng (1985), 58.

Every reference in ancient Chinese texts to the people of the south, particularly to the kingdom of Yue, spoke of their unusual appearance and strange customs. The people of Yue were regarded as alien by the inhabitants of the Central States since they wore their hair cut short and they were tattooed.⁷ In addition to that they were a riverine and coastal people, travelling by boat rather than by horse and cart. They were highly bellicose, with a reputation for great bravery. This was enhanced by the widespread use in Yue culture of swords, generally admitted to be of unparalleled quality.⁸ To the people of the Central States (whose records provide virtually everything that is known of the Yue people prior to the archaeological discoveries of the last half century), the Yue were exotic and dangerous.

The recorded history of the kingdom of Yue runs from some two centuries, beginning with an attack by Yue on Wu in 537 BCE and ending with the conquest of Yue by the kingdom of Chu in around 333 BCE. Of this two hundred and four year history, the reign of one monarch, King Goujian of Yue, is recorded in by far the greatest detail. The date of his birth is not known, but he came to the throne in 496 BCE on the death of his father King Yunchang of Yue 越王允常, the first historically recorded monarch of the kingdom of Yue. While still in mourning for his father, Yue was attacked by their powerful neighbour to the north, the kingdom of Wu, led by their monarch King Helü of Wu 吳王闔閭 (r. 514–496 BCE). Meeting in battle at Zuili 槁李 (modern day Jiaying 嘉興 in Zhejiang province), Yue comprehensively defeated the forces of Wu, and King Helü, wounded in the foot, died of his injuries during the retreat. However some three years later, King Helü's son and heir, King Fuchai of Wu 吳王夫差 (r. 495–473 BCE) attacked the Yue army and defeated it. His kingdom conquered, King Goujian retreated to the fortress at Kuaijishan 會稽山. From there he negotiated his surrender to the victorious forces of Wu.⁹

Having been forced to a humiliating surrender, King Goujian went as a hostage to Wu. According to some ancient accounts he even took part in the triumphal procession through the Wu capital.¹⁰ On his return to Yue, King Goujian began the long process of reconstructing his kingdom and preparing to take revenge on Wu. During this time he built up a formidable reputation for austerity, as well as working hard to regain the trust of his people. It was in the seventh year of his reign, possibly to celebrate his return from exile in Wu that he laid out a new capital city as described in the *Yuejue shu*.¹¹ His campaign of vengeance ended in 473 BCE with the conquest of Wu and the suicide of its last ruler, King Fuchai. After this, King Goujian went on to establish undisputed dominance in the south. He was recognised as a hegemon by the Zhou king, and moved his capital to Langye 琅琊, in what is now Shandong province.¹²

7 For example, *Mozzi* 12.453 [48: “Gongmeng” 公孟] describes King Goujian of Yue as having “cut hair and a tattooed body.”

8 See Zhong Shaoyi (1998), 46. There are many references in ancient Chinese texts to the quality of Yue swords; see for example *Zhanguo ce* 20.1002 [“Zhao ce” 趙策 3.1]; see also *Zhuangzi* 6A.544 [15: “Keyi” 刻意].

9 See *Zuoqibuan*, 1605–1606 [“Aigong” 哀公 1.2].

10 See *Han Feizi* 7.403 [21: “Yulao” 喻老].

11 The theory that his new capital was built to celebrate his release is elaborated in Chen Qiaoyi (1999), 355.

12 The title of hegemon (*ba* 霸) was an extraordinary title granted to feudal lords who had performed great services to the Zhou kings. The inclusion of King Goujian of Yue on the list of the hegemons of the Spring and Autumn period is striking, since his state was not part of the Zhou confederacy. The decision by the Zhou king to recognise King Goujian of Yue as a hegemon is described in *Shiji* 41.1746.

No account of the conflict between Wu and Yue would be complete without reference being made to the great ministers who advised their monarchs. On the Wu side there was Prime Minister Bo Pi 伯嚭 (?–473 BCE), who was said to have taken bribes from the Yue monarch, and Wu Zixu 伍子胥 (?–484 BCE), who argued implacably for the conquest of Yue and who was in the end forced to commit suicide by King Fuchai. On the Yue side, the most important of King Goujian's advisors were the diplomat Wen Zhong 文種 (usually known by his title of Grandee Zhong) and the strategist Fan Li 范蠡 (fl. 496–473 BCE). As with so many of the major figures in the conflict between Wu and Yue, Grandee Zhong and Fan Li were both said to have come from Chu.¹³ According to the “Record of the Lands of Yue” both of these men left their mark on the landscape of the kingdom.

The “Record of the Lands of Yue”

The “Record of the Lands of Yue” is the eighth *juan* 卷 (fascicle) of the *Yuejue shu*. The *Yuejue shu* is frequently described as the first gazetteer ever to have been written in China, on the basis of two fascicles, the “Ji Wudi zhuan” 記吳地傳 or “Record of the Lands of Wu” and the “Record of the Lands of Yue.”¹⁴ The other *juan* in *Yuejue shu* cover a wide variety of subjects, from economic thought in the “Ji Ni neizhuan” 計倪內傳 (Inner Traditions of the Young Master of Accountancy) to local legends in the “Ji baojian” 記寶劍 (Record of Precious Swords). The presence of this extraneous material in the *Yuejue shu* should not be perceived as invalidating the description of these two chapters, the “Record of the Lands of Yue” and “Record of the Lands of Wu,” as the earliest surviving gazetteers, since the original composition of this material predates the compilation of the text into its present form at the end of the Eastern Han dynasty. Indeed, from the Sui dynasty onwards, there are numerous references to the “Records of the Lands of Yue” under the title of *Yuedi zhuan* 越地傳 (Traditions of the Lands of Yue), which may be evidence of independent transmission of this text.¹⁵

Between them, these two chapters contain considerable information about the architectural and cultural history of the two kingdoms of Wu and Yue. This has proved a great boon for historians and archaeologists, attempting to understand excavation sites from these under-documented kingdoms. However, there are important differences between the two chapters. The “Record of the Lands of Wu” concentrates largely on the laying-out of the capital, modern-day Suzhou, a city designed to rival in grandeur and size anything to be found in the Central States, which was built some twenty years before the founding of Shaoxing.¹⁶ Considerable detail is given, including descriptions of many structures which stood within the walls of the city, including palaces, gates, the market, roads and canals. The “Record of the Lands of Yue,” on the other hand, describes the kingdom of Yue as a whole, with the description of the architecture of the capital forming a comparatively minor element. However, the construction of

13 See Wang Suijin (2005), 12.

14 See Huang Wei (1983), 118. The role of these two chapters in establishing the reputation of the *Yuejue shu* as the first gazetteer is also considered in Hargett (1996), 406.

15 See Li Bujia (2003), 37–38. See also Qian Peiming (1957), 23.

16 See *Yuejue shu* 2.9–19 [3: “Ji Wudi zhuan”]. The most detailed study of the history of the city of Suzhou is Xu (2000).

King Goujian’s capital should probably be viewed as at least in part an effort to rival this earlier Wu planned city.

The “Record of the Lands of Wu” and the “Record of the Lands of Yue” are unique in ancient Chinese literature on urban history. There are earlier texts, such as the “Luogao” 洛誥 (Announcement at Luo) in the *Shujing* 書經 (Book of Documents) and the song “Wenwang you sheng” 文王有聲 (Famous is King Wen) in the *Shijing* 詩經 (Book of Odes), which focus on the important ceremonies to be carried out when a new city was laid out.¹⁷ These very ancient accounts provide but little information on what was built, the ritual significance of the occasion was predominant. The earliest surviving text on Chinese town planning, the “Kaogong ji” 考工記 (Record of Crafts), describes the principles for laying out a city.¹⁸ This text sets out the proportions for a harmonious city, listing the key religious and administrative buildings to be contained within its walls. While this text was no doubt important for establishing the ideal way to lay out a proper Chinese city, and proved enormously influential in later urban design, it was apparently not related in any way to the urban planning described in the “Record of the Lands of Yue.”¹⁹ This text describes an actual urban landscape rather than an ideal one, and the lop-sided design of the Yue capital bears no relation to the symmetrical ideal city described in the “Kaogong ji”. It is not surprising that this should be the case, given that at the time Yue stood outside the Zhou sphere of influence.

While the “Record of the Lands of Yue” shows little influence from earlier texts on Chinese city design and urban planning, it is also not closely related to contemporary Han dynasty literature on historical geography. There are a number of other surviving Han dynasty geographical texts, such as the “Heju shu” 河渠書 (Treatise on Waterways) in the *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Grand Historian), “Dili zhi” 地理志 (Treatise on Geography) from the *Hanshu* 漢書 (History of the Han Dynasty), and “Junguo zhi” 郡國志 (Treatise on Commanderies and Kingdoms) in the *Houhan shu* 後漢書 (History of the Later Han Dynasty), but texts of this kind are primarily concerned with contemporary problems of bureaucratic administration and differ markedly from the two chapters of the *Yuejue shu* in both content and structure.²⁰ Although mention is occasionally made of the historical significance of a particular site, this is not the primary purpose of the geographical treatises found in the dynastic histories. The “Record of the Lands of Yue” is a text in which the history of the place is related to its architecture and design. The factors shaping the development of this city were not religious or symbolic, but practical: the city wall was left incomplete because Wu wished to neutralise the threat of resistance, Yue developed outlying regions of the kingdom because they hoped to conceal the work from Wu.

17 “Luogao”, see *Shangshu* 33 (15.221–229); “Wenwang you sheng”, see *Maoshi* 244 (Vol. 2, 116–119). The *Shijing* also contains another song, the “Mian” 騶 (Entwining), which provides a vivid description of the process of building the Western Zhou capital; see *Maoshi* 237 (Vol. 2, 87–94). These ancient texts are considered in detail in Steinhardt (1990), 29–33.

18 “Kaogong ji”, “Jiangren” 匠人, see *Zhouli* 6 (41.641–644). This text and its influence on urban planning in China has been the subject of numerous studies, including Wu (1985) and He Yeju (1985).

19 While admitting the significance of the “Kaogong ji” text is a manual for city design, there were a number of other models for urban planning; see Steinhardt (1986) and Xiong (1993).

20 See *Shiji* 29.1405–1415, *Hanshu* 28.1523–1674; *Houhan shu* 19–23.3385–3554. See also Mansvelt Beck (1990), 175–195.

The “Record of the Lands of Yue” is composed from at least two different ancient source texts. These texts can be distinguished in both content and grammar. The core text describes the geography and landscape of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States period kingdom of Yue. Almost every entry in this section of the text begins with a title, the name of a place or building. In some cases this clause is grammatically related to the next sentence, but in other cases it is simply functioning as a title. In each case the clause ends with the suffix *-zhe* 者.²¹ Therefore in translation the title to each section is given in bold, as can be seen in the following example:

若耶大冢者，句踐所徙葬先君夫鐔冢也，去縣二十五里。

The Great Tomb at Ruoye was the tomb where Goujian reburied our former ruler Futan. It is located twenty-five *li* from town.²²

This entry is typical in that the text following the title gives information about the landscape feature or building, relating it to important events in the history of the kingdom of Yue, and describing dimensions and distance from the capital. The focus of this section of the text is overwhelmingly on the history and culture of Yue during the reign of its greatest monarch, King Goujian.

From internal evidence, this core text must have been written or at least updated during the Eastern Han dynasty, as there is a reference to the destruction of a city wall built by Fan Li during the reign of Wang Mang 王莽 (r. 9–24 CE). The related core text of the “Record of the Lands of Wu” was apparently written during the Western Han dynasty, since there is a reference to Liu Pi 劉濞, King of Wu (r. 195–154 BCE).²³ The compilation of the *Yuejue shu* into its present form is generally dated to the Eastern Han dynasty, some time after 52 CE, since that is the most recent date in the whole book.²⁴ There is also a *terminus ante quem*, for this chapter in particular must have been compiled before 219 CE, for Shaoxing is referred to as Shanyin 山陰, an appellation changed at the end of the Han dynasty.²⁵

The material not from this core text, mainly found at the beginning and end of the chapter, has a very different focus. This extraneous material can be divided into three main groups, though it is not clear if that also reflects three different source texts. One group of material is concerned with linking the ruling house of the kingdom of Yue with the legendary figure of Yu 禹, the tamer of the floods and founder of the mythical Xia dynasty. By stressing the link between Yu and the ruling house of Yue, this southern kingdom is integrated into the Chinese world-view. This preoccupation is also found in other Han dynasty texts dealing with the history of the kingdom of Yue such as the *Shiji*.²⁶ The second type of material focuses on the figure of King Goujian of Yue. This material both serves to minimise his culpability at the appalling defeat

21 This grammatical construction is also seen in the “Record of the Lands of Wu” chapter, suggesting that these two texts were closely related before they were compiled into the same book.

22 *Yuejue shu* 8.61 [10: “Jidi zhuan” 記地傳].

23 See *Yuejue shu* 2.18 [3: “Ji Wudi zhuan”].

24 See Axel Schussler and Michael Loewe, “Yue jüeh shu,” 491.

25 The most recent comprehensive study of the dating of various sections of the *Yuejue shu* argues that the “Record of the Lands of Yue” was mainly composed in the late Qin and early Western Han dynasties, but that a certain amount of interpolation and revision occurred at the very end of the Eastern Han dynasty; see Zhou Shengchun (1992), 128–129.

26 See *Shiji*, 41.1739. Han dynasty attempts to integrate the Yue into the Chinese world are discussed in Jiang Bingjian (et al., 1988), 18–32.

suffered by Yue in 494 BCE, when the kingdom was virtually wiped out by Wu, and to stress his importance as a great king, whose authority was recognised by his peers and transmitted to his descendents. The third group of material is concerned with the history of Yue immediately after the unification of China, and in particular with the progress made to the region by the First Emperor of Qin in 210 BCE.²⁷ It is likely that this material dates to the beginning of the Western Han dynasty. The difference in structure between the core text and this other material can be appreciated by comparing the example cited above with this piece, concerning the disastrous appointment of the general Shi Mai 石買 by King Goujian of Yue, which begins:

句踐與吳戰於浙江之上，石買為將。耆老、壯長進諫曰：「夫石買，人與為怨，家與為仇，貪而好利，細人也，無長策。王而用之，國必不遂。」王不聽。

When Goujian fought the kingdom of Wu in battle on the Zhe river, Shi Mai was made a general. Both young and old came forward and remonstrated: “Shi Mai is a man who has both personal enemies and is involved in family vendettas. He is also greedy and small minded, and does not plan ahead. Even if your majesty employs him the country will certainly not follow him.” The king did not listen and made the appointment.²⁸

In this paper I have translated as many of the historical place names as possible. This was done to allow non-specialist readers to gain an insight into the information conveyed by these place names. It seemed important to include such a translation, since in many cases the details that follow about the uses of a particular site or its historical significance are linked to the name that is given. However it should be noted that the people of Yue, at the time of King Goujian, did not speak Chinese,²⁹ and there are numerous problems associated with the transliteration of Yue names and place-names into Chinese.³⁰ It is therefore quite possible that terms which I have translated in fact represent the transliteration of the Yue name, but the characters used for this purpose appear to have a significant meaning. In a number of cases, such as Ruoye 若耶 river and Guzhong 姑中 Mountain, I am sure that the characters are used in transliteration of a Yue name, and it has proved impossible to provide a translation. Mention is also frequently made in the “Record of the Lands of Yue” to dimensions and distances. Given that the core text would seem to date from the Eastern Han dynasty, I have used those measurements as standard when converting to Western measures.³¹

27 According to *Huainanzǐ* 18.1289 [“Renjian xun” 人間訓], the First Emperor of China was deeply interested in the luxury products arriving from the Yue region, including rhinoceros horn, elephant ivory, and pearls.

28 *Yuejue shu* 8.60 [10: “Jidi zhuan”].

29 See *Shuoyuan* 11.278 [“Shanshuo” 善說].

30 See Zhou Zhenhe (et al., 1982), 61–63.

31 The conversion of measurements was made using Wu Chengluo (1957).

Translation³²

昔者，越之先君無餘，乃禹之世，別封於越，以守禹冢。問天地之道，萬物之紀，莫失其本。神農嘗百草、水土甘苦，黃帝造衣裳，后稷產穡，制器械，人事備矣。疇糞桑麻，播種五穀，必以手足。大越海濱之民，獨以鳥田，小大有差，進退有行，莫將自使，其故何也？曰：禹始也，憂民救水，到大越，上茅山，大會計，爵有德，封有功，更名茅山曰會稽。及其王也，巡狩大越，見耆老，納詩書，審銓衡，平斗斛。因病亡死，葬會稽。葦榔桐棺，穿壙七尺，上無漏泄，下無即水。壇高三尺，土階三等，延袤一畝。尚以為居之者樂，為之者苦，無以報民功，教民鳥田，一盛一衰。當禹之時，舜死蒼梧，象為民田也。禹至此者，亦有困矣，亦覆釜也。覆釜者，州土也，填德也。禹美而告至焉。禹知時晏歲暮，年加申酉，求書其下，祠白馬禹井。井者，法也。以為禹葬以法度，不煩人眾。

Long ago, Wuyu, the former lord of Yue who was a descendant of Yu, was separately enfeoffed in Yue, in order that he might guard Yu's tomb.³³ [Yu] had enquired into the Way of heaven and earth, and the guiding principles of the myriad things, he never lost sight of the fundamentals. Shennong (the Divine Husbandman) tasted the hundred herbs, and investigated whether the waters and the earth were sweet or bitter. Huangdi created clothing and Hou Ji (God of Millet) developed agriculture and created tools, so that people had what they needed [for farming]. When applying compost and manure on their mulberry trees and hemp plants, and sowing the seeds of the five grains, they had to use their hands and feet. The coastal people of Dayue (the Shaoxing region) are unique in their development of 'bird fields'.³⁴ Distinctions were maintained between small and large [fields], and there were rules about planting in rotation. Without anyone directing them, people went [to develop the area]. What is the reason for this? It is said: When Yu began his labours, he felt great pity for the common people and rescued them from the flood. When he arrived in Dayue, he climbed Maoshan (Reed Mountain) and held a great meeting there, at which he gave noble titles to those who had been virtuous, and enfeoffed those who had merit. Then he changed the name of Maoshan to Kuaiji (Meeting [Mountain]). When Yu became king he went on a royal progress through Dayue, during which he met with elders, collected poetry and documents, checked steelyards and scales, and standardised the *dou* and the *hu* measures.³⁵ Then he became ill and died, and was buried at Kuaiji. The outer coffin was made of woven reeds and the inner coffin of paulownia wood, and they excavated a pit seven *chi* (1.66 m) deep. There were no leaks [in the tomb vault] above, nor was there any chance for water to seep in from below. The altar of pounded earth was three *chi* (71 cm) high, and there were three steps leading up to it, and measuring from north to south it covered a *mu* of ground. However [Yu] thought that people who lived there were happy, while those who built [the tomb] suffered. Since he did not have a way to repay the people for their hard work, he taught the people to use bird fields. Thus his one failure was cancelled out by this success. In the time of Yu, Shun died in

32 This translation of the "Record of the Lands of Yue" is based on Yue Zumou's edition of *Yuejue shu* 8.57–68 [10: "Jidi zhuan"]. The main commentary used was that by Yu Jidong in *Yuejue shu quanyi*, 161–197.

33 Wuyu 無餘 was said to have founded the first city in the region, known as Yuecheng 越城; for a discussion of early urbanisation in the region see Dong Chuping (1988), 131.

34 This refers to a legend that in Yue the birds dropped seeds from their beaks in spring to plant the fields, and later returned to weed the plots; see Zhang Yu'an, 13. In the *Lunheng* (Discourses Weighed), Wang Chong (27 – c. 100 CE) provided a rational explanation for this term; the people of Yue waited until the birds had been past to eat the insects before they planted their fields. See *Lunheng*, 243–244 [*Shuxu pian* 書虛篇].

35 Both the *dou* 斗 and the *hu* 斛 were dry measures for grain.

Cangwu, where the elephants plough the fields for people.³⁶ There was a reason why Yu came to this region: because of the polders. These polders are made of soil taken from that region, and have the virtue of Saturn.³⁷ Yu thought that this was beautiful and reported it [to the gods]. Yu realised that time was running out, and that he was growing old, so he begged for a writ to be sent below. A white horse was sacrificed at the well of Yu.³⁸ Well (*jing*) means ‘rule.’ Since Yu was buried according to the proper rules and principles, [his burial] did not cause trouble for the ordinary people.³⁹

無餘初封大越，都秦餘望南，千有餘歲而至句踐。句踐徙治山北，引屬東海，內、外越別封削焉。句踐伐吳，霸關東，徙瑯琊，起觀臺，臺周七里，以望東海。死士八千人，戈船三百艘。居無幾，躬求賢聖。孔子從弟子七十人，奉先王雅琴，治禮往奏。句踐乃身被賜夷之甲，帶步光之劍，杖物盧之矛，出死士三百人，為陣關下。孔子有頃姚稽到越。越王曰：「唯唯。夫子何以教之？」孔子對曰：「丘能述五帝三王之道，故奉雅琴至大王所。」句踐喟然嘆曰：「夫越性脆而愚，水行而山處，以船為車，以楫為馬，往若飄風，去則難從，銳兵任死，越之常性也。夫子異則不可。」於是孔子辭，弟子莫能從乎。

Wuyu was first enfeoffed in Dayue, and had his capital south of Qinyuwang, and after more than one thousand years Goujian arrived.⁴⁰ Goujian moved the seat of government north of [Kuajij] mountain, from where he opened communications with the Eastern Sea, and from then on the Inner and Outer Yue granted and revoked lands separately.⁴¹ Goujian attacked Wu, and was hegemon over the lands east of the pass.⁴² He went to Langye and built the Guantai (Observation Platform).⁴³ The tower was seven *li* (3 km) in circumference, and from it you could look out over the Eastern Sea. He had eight thousand death-defying warriors and three hundred warships. A short time later, he per-

36 For an important compilation of records of the use of elephants by the Yue people, for warfare, farming, and as beasts of burden; see *Chucue ji* 29.698–699.

37 *Tian* 填 here seems to stand for Saturn or Tianxing 填星, also known as Tuxing 土星 (Earth Star).

38 The most comprehensive account of the worship of Yu in the Yue region is found in Eberhard (1942), 365–381.

39 The ruling houses of both Wu and Yue were regularly praised in ancient texts for the simple burials that they held, in particular the funeral for the son of Prince Jizha of Wu, which was commended by Confucius. See *Li Ji* 9.193–194 [4: “Tangong, xia” 檀弓下]. The reference here to Yu’s funerary rites would seem to be part of an ongoing Confucian concern with expensive and over-elaborate rituals.

40 According to the *Zhengyi* 正義 (Rectified Interpretations) commentary on the *Shiji*, Wuyu’s capital was founded south of Kuajij mountain. This was based on a quotation from the *Yuejue shu*, but this section is missing from the present transmitted text. See *Shiji* 41.1739, footnote 1. Qinyuwang 秦餘望 has been identified as Qinwangshan 秦望山 (Qin Viewing Mountain) which the First Emperor of China was said to have climbed during his southern progress. See Fan Daquan (1984), 127.

41 The term Waiyue 外越 is generally interpreted as referring to the inhabitants of the islands off the coast of Zhejiang, possibly even including the aboriginal population of Taiwan. Neiyue 內越 or Inner Yue was the term used to describe the people of present day mainland Zhejiang province. See Che Yueqiao (et al., 2001), 6.

42 This is interpreted as a reference to the Hangu 函谷 pass; see Yu Jidong, 164. This would have made King Goujian of Yue hegemon over virtually every state of the Zhou confederacy with the exception of Qin. King Goujian’s hegemony is mentioned in a number of ancient Chinese texts, such as for example *Shiji* 41.1746, which records that the Zhou king gave him a mandate and a gift of meat, but there are no references to the extent of his dominance.

43 According to the *Zhushu jinian* B:19a, the move of the capital to Langye in fact only took place in 468 BCE, during the reign of King Goujian’s son. For a discussion of various theories about the movements of the Yue capital in the late Spring and Autumn and early Warring States (475–221 BCE); see Dào Duy Anh (1976), 78–79.

sonally invited wise men and sages to come to his court.⁴⁴ Confucius brought his seventy disciples, and carried an elegant lute. He rectified the rituals, and then went to offer his advice. Goujian then put on the armour of Ciyi, he buckled on the sword Buguang, and grasped the lance Wulu.⁴⁵ He sent out three hundred death-defying warriors, and made them line up in battle formation below the pass. Confucius then arrived in Yue in state. The king of Yue said: “Good, good, what are you going to teach me?” Confucius replied: “I can explain the Way of the Five Emperors and the Three Kings, therefore I packed up my fine lute, and came to your majesty’s home.” Goujian sighed deeply and said: “The people of Yue are weak and stupid; they live on dry land but travel by water. Boats are their chariots and oars are their horses: when they travel it is as if they are drifting on the wind, once they set off they are hard to stop. Besides which, it is the nature of the Yue people to keep their weapons ready, and they have no fear of death. Do you think you can change this?” Confucius then said goodbye, and none of his disciples were able to stop him.⁴⁶

越王夫鐔以上至無餘，久遠，世不可紀也。夫鐔子允常。允常子句踐，大霸稱王，徙瑯琊，都也。句踐子與夷，時霸。與夷子子翁，時霸。子翁子不揚，時霸。不揚子無疆，時霸，伐楚，威王滅無疆。無疆子之侯，竊自立為君長。之侯子尊，時君長。尊子親，失眾，楚伐之，走南山。親以上至句踐，凡八君，都瑯琊二百二十四歲。無疆以上，霸，稱王。之侯以下微弱，稱君長。

It was a very long time from the reign of King Futan of Yue back to Wuyu, and the line of succession was not recorded.⁴⁷ Yunchang was the son of Futan. Yunchang’s son was Goujian, the great hegemon who was entitled king,⁴⁸ and who moved to Langye and had his capital there.⁴⁹ Goujian’s son Yuyi was recognized by his contemporaries as hegemon. Yuyi’s son Ziwen was acknowledged by his peers to be the hegemon. Ziwen’s son Buyang had his hegemony accepted during his lifetime. Buyang’s son Wujiang was agreed to be hegemon by his contemporaries. He attacked Chu, but King Wei [of Chu] (r. 339–329 BCE) killed Wujiang. Wujiang’s son Zhihou secretly established him-

44 This is mentioned in *Guoyu* 20.635 [“Yueyu, shang” 越語上].

45 The “Wudu fu” 吳都賦 (Wu Capital Rhapsody) by Zuo Si 左思 (c. 250 – c. 305 CE), refers to “Yangyi 陽夷 armour and Bolu 勃盧 lances;” see *Wen xuan* 5.72. In the commentary on this phrase, Li Shan quotes this section of the *Yuejue shu*, but with slightly different wording: “The king of Yue then put on the Yangyi armour, and grasped the Bolu lance.” In this case the two names are most likely to refer to two tribal peoples: the Yangyi and the Bulu 卜盧; see Knechtges (1982), 408.

46 This section seems to be related to a story found in the *Shiji* chapter on the disciples of Confucius, recording the diplomatic efforts of Zigong. According to this King Goujian presented the sword Buguang and the lance Qulu 屈盧 to the king of Wu as a diplomatic gift. See *Shiji* 67.2199–2200. These fine weapons (unlike many other named Yue blades) are not otherwise mentioned in ancient Chinese texts.

47 The kings of both Wu and Yue used a distinctive form of address for their monarchs, whereby the name of the state and the title were pre-posed (Wu wang Fuchai 吳王夫差), rather than the custom in the Central States where the name of the state was placed before the name and the title placed last (Chu Ling wang 楚靈王). However this kind of southern nomenclature eventually came to be used interchangeably with that of the north. See Dong Chuping (et al., 1998), 44. It is striking that in this chapter of the *Yuejue shu*, names are given throughout in the Yue style.

48 The importance of this double title is discussed in Gu Derong (et al., 2001), 160.

49 The references in Eastern Han dynasty texts to King Goujian of Yue moving his capital to Langye in Shandong remain highly problematic. For Yue to have moved its capital so far north would have completely altered the balance of power in the Central States in the late Spring and Autumn period. It is also important that there are no references in any earlier text, such as the *Zuo zhuan*, *Guoyu* or *Shiji* to such a move. For an analysis of the evidence see Gu Jiegang (1987), 31–32.

self as a chief. Zhihou’s son Zun was recognized by his contemporaries as their chief.⁵⁰ Zun’s son Qin lost his people, and when Chu attacked him, he fled to Nanshan (South Mountain).⁵¹ From the reign of Qin back to Goujian was eight rulers in all, and they had their capital at Langye for two hundred and twenty-four years.⁵² Before the reign of Wujiang, the rulers of Yue were hegemon and were entitled kings.⁵³ From the reign of Zhihou onwards they were weak, and were called chiefs.⁵⁴

句踐小城，山陰城也。周二里二百二十三步，陸門四，水門一。今倉庫是其宮臺處也。周六百二十步，柱長三丈五尺三寸，雷高丈六尺。宮有百戶，高丈二尺五寸。大城周二十里七十二步，不築北面。而滅吳，徙治姑胥臺。

King Goujian’s Citadel, the Walled City at Shanyin (North side of the Mountain).⁵⁵ It is two *li* two hundred and twenty-three *bu* in circumference (1.15 km), with four land gates and one water gate. The present day granaries and arsenals are where the palaces and platforms used to be. [The palace] was six hundred and twenty *bu* (880 m) in circumference, the pillars were three *zhang*, five *chi* and three *cun* high (8.38 m), the eaves were one *zhang* and six *chi* long (3.8 m). The palace had one hundred doors, each [one] *zhang*, two *chi* and five *cun* high (2.97 m). The main city wall is twenty *li* seventy-two *bu* in circumference (8.4 km), but there is no wall on the north side. After the conquest of Wu, they moved the seat of government to Guxutai (Guxu Platform).⁵⁶

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- 50 In the Han dynasty numerous southern kings and chiefs would claim descent from King Goujian of Yue; see for example *Hanshu*, 64.2787. During the early years of the Han dynasty, these chiefs often given fiefs by the emperor, but their powers and independence was increasingly circumscribed; see Zhu Weigan (1984), 28–30.
- 51 The paucity of evidence makes it difficult to interpret how successful the Chu conquest of Yue actually was. This point is discussed in Ni Shiyi (1987), 27, where it is argued that the conquest, usually dated to 323 BCE, was not actually accomplished until 306 BCE.
- 52 The *Shiji* gives a different version of the Yue king-list, with some changes in the order, for example Zhihou is named as Wujiang’s father, rather than the other way round. See *Shiji* 41.1747. It would seem likely that the *Shiji* king-list is more accurate than that found here, since the names given on excavated bronze inscriptions (such as for example King Bushou of Yue 越王不壽, the grandson of King Goujian) are identical; see Dong Chuping (1992), 152–247.
- 53 This echoes information given in the *Shiji*, which suggests that after the death of King Wujiang of Yue at the hands of the people of Chu, Yue power in the ancient south was effectively at an end. *Shiji* 41.1751, however does not record any Yue monarchs after Wujiang.
- 54 Although it might seem a demotion for the descendants of King Goujian to have become chiefs, in fact it is probably more accurate to view this as a return to the traditional more consensual government practices of Yue; see Wang Kewang (et al., 1985), 166.
- 55 The name Shanyin, as described later on in the chapter was chosen personally by the First Emperor of China at the time of his progress to Kuaiji Mountain in 210 BCE. The name was in use until 219 CE, at which point the city was renamed Kuaiji.
- 56 Guxutai 姑胥臺, also known as Gusutai 姑蘇臺 (Gusu Platform), was built by order of the kings of Wu at the spiritual heartland of the Gouwu 勾吳 people, the original inhabitants of the lands which later became the kingdom of Wu. After King Fuchai of Wu defeated King Goujian in battle in 494 BCE, the king of Yue supposedly sent fine timbers from the southern forests as tribute to Wu. The king of Wu ordered that these timbers be used in the construction of the tower, as a symbol of Yue submission; see *Yuejue shu* 2.12 [3: “Ji Wudi zhuan”]. Guxutai is said to have been destroyed by fire at the time of the conquest of Wu in 473 BCE, but according to some accounts the timbers were salvaged for use in a temple dedicated to the memory of the last king of Wu; see *Wujun zhi*, 113.

山陰大城者，范蠡所築治也，今傳謂之蠡城。陸門三，水門三，決西北，亦有事。到始建國時，蠡城盡。

The Large Walled City at Shanyin was built under the auspices of Fan Li. Now it is commonly known as [Fan] Li's city wall.⁵⁷ There are three land gates and three water gates, with an opening to the north-west, in order to show their loyalty [to Wu]. During the Shijianguo reign era (9–13 CE), Li's wall was destroyed.⁵⁸

稷山者，句踐齋戒臺也。

Jishan (Altar of Grain Mountain) was the site of Goujian's Zhaijietai (Ritual Purification Platform).⁵⁹

龜山者，句踐起怪游臺也。東南司馬門，因以炤龜。又仰望天氣，觀天怪也。高四十六丈五尺二寸，周五百三十二步，今東武里。一曰怪山。怪山者，往古一夜自來，民怪之，故謂怪山。

Guishan (Turtle Mountain) was the place where Goujian built Guaiyoutai (Investigating Anomalies Platform).⁶⁰ This mountain is located to the south-east of Simamen (Marshal's Gate), and received its name because it was there that turtle shells were cracked for divinations.⁶¹ It was also there that [Goujian] looked up to observe heavenly omens, and where he watched natural phenomena in the skies. This mountain is forty-six *zhang*, five *chi* and two *cun* high (11,048.5 m), and five hundred and thirty-two *bu* round (755 m). Now it is the site of Dongwu Village. It has the alternative name of Guashan (Phenomenal Mountain). This phenomenal mountain appeared long ago during the course of one night all by itself, and the local people thought this strange so they named it Guashan.⁶²

駕臺，周六百步，今安城里。

Jiatai (Carriage Platform) has a base six hundred *bu* around (852 m). It is now the site of Ancheng Village.

57 Although it is not mentioned here in the *Yuejue shu*, there are numerous stories suggesting that Fan Li laid out the city according to the patterns of constellations. See Wheatley (1971), 442.

58 There is considerable argument over whether this kind of “double city” with conjoined walled areas was a Zhou dynasty design feature, or if it represents the sideways expansion of the original city. The “Record of the Lands of Yue” would seem to suggest that in this kingdom the capital was designed to be such a double city. Yang Kuan (1993), 66–67, 88–91. Excavation reports from a number of other roughly contemporary Chinese “double cities” are considered in Steinhardt (1990), 48–50. In the case of Xiadu 下都, the capital of the state of Yan, the eastern part of the city was clearly built long before the western; see “Hebei Yixian Yan Xiadu gucheng kancha he shijue;” see also Ou Yan (1988).

59 References of this kind to the altars of soil and grain, one of the cornerstones of Zhou religion, have led scholars to speculate that ancient Yue religion had incorporated elements of Central States religious practice with their own traditional shamanic worship of snakes, crocodiles and birds. However this kind of interpretation of the evidence found in this chapter remains highly speculative. Fu Zhenzhao (2002), 278. Zhaijie or ritual purification involved restricting the diet prior to worship, and was certainly a crucial part of religious practice in both the Central States and the kingdom of Chu. See Cook (2006), 75. *Tai* 臺, wooden structures built on platforms of pounded earth, were a major architectural development in the Spring and Autumn period, at a point when royal and noble houses increasingly wished to build tall palaces, rather than imposingly large but low buildings. See Wu (1999), 665–675.

60 This mountain is now known as Feilaishan 飛來山 (Flying Mountain) and is the site of an ancient temple, the Baolinsi 寶林寺 (Precious Forest Temple) founded in 473 CE. See Zhou Youtao (2004), 21.

61 This gate is also mentioned in *Wu Yue chunqiu* 8.131 [“Goujian guiguo waizhuan” 勾踐歸國外傳], where it is called the Tongma men 同馬門 (Same Horse Gate).

62 A different version of this story is recorded in the *Wu Yue chunqiu*, which records that Goujian fortified Langye, and when the walls were completed, this mountain rose up of its own accord; see *Wu Yue chunqiu* 8.131 [“Goujian guiguo waizhuan”]. However the *Yuejue shu* account makes it clear that this mountain stood in near Shaoxing.

離臺，周五百六十步，今淮陽里丘。

Litai (Separate Platform) has a base five hundred and sixty *bu* in circumference (795 m). It is now the hill at Huaiyang Village.⁶³

美人宮，周五百九十步，陸門二，水門一，今北壇利里丘土城，句踐所習教美女西施、鄭旦宮臺也。女出於苧蘿山，欲獻於吳，自謂東垂僻陋，恐女樸鄙，故近大道居。去縣五里。

Meirengong (Palace of Beautiful Women) is five hundred and ninety *bu* in circumference (838 m), with two land gates and one water gate.⁶⁴ Today it forms the hill and pounded earth walls of Beitianli Village. This palace and platform is where Goujian trained the beautiful women Xi Shi and Zheng Dan.⁶⁵ These women came from Zhuluoshan (Kudzu Vine Mountain),⁶⁶ and they were going to be presented to the Wu court. They themselves said that they were from a backward and poor place, and so [King Goujian] was afraid that they would be thought simple and rustic. Therefore he sent them to live here, near a great highway. This place is five *li* from town (2.07 km).

樂野者，越之弋獵處，大樂，故謂樂野。其山上石室，句踐所休謀也。去縣七里。

Leye (Happy Hunting Grounds). This was where [the king of] Yue hunted wild animals with bow and arrow. He really enjoyed this, so he called this place the Leye. On top of the mountain there is a stone house, this was where Goujian retired to consider his plans. It is located seven *li* from town (2.9 km).

中指臺馬丘，周六百步，今高平里丘。

Maqiu (Horse Hill) and **Zhongzhitai** (Repose Platform) have a circumference of six hundred *bu* (852 m).⁶⁷ Today this is the hill at Gaoping Village.

東郭外南小城者，句踐冰室，去縣三里。

The Southern Walled Area Outside the Eastern Outer City Wall was Goujian’s ice-house.⁶⁸ This stands three *li* from town (1.25 km).

句踐之出入也，齊於稷山，往從田里，去從北郭門。炤龜龜山，更駕臺，馳於離丘，遊於美人宮，興樂中宿，過歷馬丘。射於樂野之衢，走犬若耶，休謀石室，食於冰廚。領功鉏土，已作昌土臺。藏其形，隱其情。一曰：冰室者，所以備膳羞也。

When Goujian entered or left the city, he performed a ritual purification at Jishan. When he travelled through Tian Village, or left the city through the gate in the northern outer city wall, he would perform a divination by cracking a turtle-shell at Guishan.⁶⁹ He would then travel past Jiatai, racing his

63 A Ligong 離宮 (Separate Palace) is mentioned in the *Wu Yue chunqiu*, but it is not clear if this refers to the same structure. See *Wu Yue chunqiu* 8.131 [“Goujian guiguo waizhuan”].

64 Excavations carried out at this site in 1959, and 1973–1974 have revealed a large number of Yue bronzes and pottery artefacts; see Zhou Yuebao (et al., 2004), 3–4.

65 The earliest explicit references to Xi Shi 西施 as a protagonist in the conflict between Wu and Yue are found in texts of the Eastern Han dynasty, such as this and the *Wu Yue chunqiu* 9.147 [“Goujian yinmou waizhuan” 句踐陰謀外傳].

66 For the identification of 苧 苧 as the kudzu plant (*luo* 蘿 meaning vine); see Knechtges (1982), 320.

67 Zhongzhitai 中指臺 is usually identified as the same place as Zhongsutai 中宿臺 (Rest Platform), mentioned in the entry below, and in the *Wu Yue chunqiu* 8.131 [“Goujian guiguo waizhuan”].

68 *Bingshi* 冰室 literally means ice house, but the use of ice in Yue cuisine was debated until the recent publication of the discoveries at the major Yue cemetery at Hongshan outside Wuxi; see *Hongshan Yuernu chutu liqi*, 54, plates 45–46. For the use of icehouses in ancient China see *Zuozhuan*, 1248–1250 [“Zhaogong” 昭公 4.1], and Sterckx (2005), 36.

69 An elaborate series of rituals were built up around entering and exiting any walled city. For an account of the importance of these rituals in Chu culture see Cook (2006), 5–6.

horses at Liqiu, visiting the Meirengong, having fun at Zhongsu. He would pass by Maqiu, go shooting along the roads running through Leye, and race his dogs at Ruoye. Then he would retire to consider his plans in the stone house, eating at the larder. He led the work digging out the earth to build the Changtutai (Glorious Earthen Platform). He concealed his true identity and hid his real feelings. According to one account the ice-house was the place where delicacies were prepared.

浦陽者，句踐軍敗失眾，懣於此。去縣五十里。

Puyang.⁷⁰ When Goujian's army was defeated and his people were lost, this was where he endured his depression. It stands fifty *li* from town (20.75 km).

夫山者，句踐絕糧，困也。其山上大冢，句踐庶子冢也。去縣十五里。

Fushan (Master Mountain).⁷¹ When Goujian ran out of grain, this was where he suffered.⁷² There are important tombs on top of this mountain, since Goujian's commoner sons were buried here.⁷³ It stands fifteen *li* out of town (6.23 km).

句踐與吳戰於浙江之上，石買為將。耆老、壯長進諫曰：「夫石買，人與為怨，家與為仇，貪而好利，細人也，無長策。王而用之，國必不遂。」王不聽，遂遣之。石買發，行至浙江上，斬殺無罪，欲專威服軍中，動搖將率，獨專其權。士眾恐懼，人不自聊。兵法曰：「視民如嬰兒，故可與赴深溪。」士眾魚爛而買不知，尚猶峻法隆刑。子胥獨見可奪之證，變為奇謀，或北或南，夜舉火擊鼓，畫陳詐兵，越師潰墜，政令不行，背叛乖離。還報其王，王殺買，謝其師，號聲聞吳。吳王恐懼，子胥私喜：「越軍敗矣。胥聞之，狐之將殺，嚼脣吸齒。今越句踐其已敗矣，君王安意，越易兼也。」使人入問之，越師請降，子胥不聽。越棲於會稽之山，吳退而圍之。句踐喟然用種、蠡計，轉死為霸。一人之身，吉凶更至。盛衰存亡，在於用臣。治道萬端，要在得賢。越棲於會稽日，行成於吳，吳引兵而去。句踐將降，西至浙江，待詔入吳，故有雞鳴墟。其入辭曰：「亡臣孤句踐，故將士眾，入為臣虜。民可得使，地可得有。」吳王許之。子胥大怒，目若夜光，聲若哮虎：「此越未戰而服，天以賜吳，其逆天乎？臣唯君王急制之。」吳不聽，遂許之浙江是也。

When Goujian fought the kingdom of Wu in battle on the Zhe river, Shi Mai was made a general.⁷⁴ Both young and old came forward and remonstrated: "Shi Mai is a man who has both personal enemies and is involved in family vendettas. He is also greedy and small minded, and does not plan ahead. Even if your majesty employs him the country will certainly not follow him." The king did not listen and made the appointment. Shi Mai then set off along the Zhe river, cutting off the heads of

70 The Puyang 浦陽 River runs just west of the city of Shaoxing; see Chen Qiaoyi (1999), 356.

71 Zhang Zongxiang (1956) notes in *Yuejue shu jiaozhu* 8.4b, that this mountain name is not mentioned in any other text or subsequent local history. Therefore he suggests that this section of the text is corrupt.

72 This would seem to be a reference to the famine in Yue in 481 BCE which was relieved by gifts of grain from Wu. When Wu in its turn suffered famine, King Goujian refused to send grain to the starving. See *Shiji* 41.1743.

73 Yue society is frequently said to have been monogamous, but occasionally reference is made to sons of different status (as was the case in contemporary Central States society, which divided children into *dizǐ* 敵子 (legitimate children) and *shūzǐ* 庶子 (commoner children). This division affected not just social status, but also inheritance and property rights). There are references in ancient texts to the idea that Yue people distinguished between two kinds of children; see for example *Guoyu* 20.635 ["Yueyu, shang?"]. However it is still not clear if the distinctions observed in ancient texts dealing with Yue are the same as the well-recorded discrimination in the Central States, or if they were merely a projection of northern Chinese attitudes on an unfamiliar cultural situation.

74 This story seems to be related to the account found in the *Guoyu* that King Goujian provoked the attack by Wu in 494 BCE, which ended with his army being crushed and himself taken hostage; see *Guoyu* 20.641 ["Yueyu, xia" 越語下]. However the figure of Shi Mai 石買 is not mentioned in any other ancient text.

the innocent [as he went]. He wanted to monopolise power within the army, taking charge of the army and exercising his authority unilaterally. Both officers and men were terrified of him, and did not know where to turn. The *Bingfa* (Arts of War) says: ‘Treat the people like children, for then you can lead them into deep waters.’⁷⁵ The officers and men were in dire straits, but Mai was not aware of this, so he still used the harshest laws and the severest punishments. [Wu] Zixu was the only one to see an opportunity that ought to be seized, so he changed his plans: sending some people north and some people south. Then one night he lit the beacons and banged the drums, and in the morning he lined up troops [in such a way as] to deceive [Shi Mai]. The Yue army collapsed, and they did not obey orders, they just turned tail and fled. When this was reported to the king, he killed Mai, and apologised to his army. News of this development reached Wu, and the king of Wu became frightened, but [Wu] Zixu was secretly delighted. He said: “The Yue army has been defeated! I have heard it said that when the fox is about to be killed it bites its lips and bares its teeth. Now Goujian of Yue has already been defeated, your majesty can relax, for Yue will easily be conquered.” He sent a man to go and make inquiries, and the Yue army asked to be allowed to surrender but Zixu would not hear of it. The [king of] Yue made his stand at [the fortress] at Kuaiji Mountain, and the Wu army pursued and besieged him there.⁷⁶ Goujian sighed deeply and made use of the plans laid out by [Grandee] Zhong and [Fan] Li, and they turned this terrible defeat into a hegemony. In the life of an individual, good and bad luck succeed each other, [but for a country] flourishing and decline, success and failure rest in the quality of ministers that it employs. There are ten thousand ways to rule, the important thing lies in obtaining the services of wise men. At the time when [King Goujian of] Yue made his stand at Kuaiji, he made peace with Wu, and Wu then led their troops away. Goujian was about to surrender, and he travelled west to the Zhe river, where he waited for permission to enter Wu. [The place where he waited] was called Jimingxu (Cock-crow Wastes). When he entered [the borders of Wu] he said: “Your humble vassal Goujian [king of a] vanished [kingdom] now leads his officers and men to enter [Wu] as subject peoples and prisoners of war. My people are here to be used by you, my lands are now in your possession.” The king of Wu agreed to this. Zixu was furious, his eyes flashed like lightning and his voice was like the roaring of a tiger: “You have surrendered to Yue without a battle. Heaven has given [Yue] to Wu, are you going to go against the will of Heaven? I think your majesty should kill him now!” Wu did not listen and agreed to [King Goujian] going to live by the Zhe river.

陽城里者，范蠡城也。西至水路，水門一，陸門二。

Yangchengli (Yang Walled Settlement was Fan Li’s walled city. There is a canal to the west, and it has one water gate and two land gates.

北陽里城，大夫種城也，取土西山以濟之。經百九十四步。或為南安。

Beiyanglicheng (Northern Yang Walled City) was Grandee Zhong’s walled city. The earth built up for the walls here came from Xishan (West Mountain), and it was one hundred and ninety-four *bu* in diameter (276 m). Some people call this the Nan’an (Southern Fortress).

富陽里者，外越賜義也。處里門，美以練塘田。

Fuyangli (Rich Yang Village) was land bestowed on the Outer Yue. The area around the village gate was considered beautiful because the fields were protected by the Liantang (Smelting Embankment).⁷⁷

75 This is a slight misquotation of a line in *Sunzi bingfa* 孫子兵法 10.261 [“Dixing pian” 地形篇], the original referring to soldiers rather than people.

76 Zhang Zongxiang (1956), 8.5a argues that the character *tui* 退 (to withdraw) in the original text is a mistake for *zhu* 追 (to pursue).

77 Although the *Yuejue shu* uses the word *lian* 練 (to train or practice) this is almost certainly a mistake for *lian* 煉 (to smelt), and it is clear from context that this place was developed for the metalworking industry.

安城里高庫者，句踐伐吳，禽夫差，以為勝兵，築庫高閣之。周二百三十步，今安城里。

The Great Armoury at Ancheng Village. When Goujian attacked Wu and took King Fuchai prisoner, he greatly prized the weapons used in this victory and so he built a great armoury to store them in. It has a circumference of two hundred and thirty *bu* (327 m). Now it is known as Ancheng Village.

故禹宗廟，在小城南門外大城內。禹稷在廟西，今南里。

The Old Ancestral Temple to Yu was outside the south gate to the citadel, but inside the main city wall. Yu's altar of grain was to the west of the temple, at present day Nan (South) Village.⁷⁸

獨山大冢者，句踐自治以為冢。徙瑯琊，冢不成。去縣九里。

The Great Tomb at Dushan (Solitary Mountain) was the tomb that Goujian built for himself.⁷⁹ When he moved [the capital] to Langye, the tomb was not completed. It stands nine *li* from the town (3.7 km).

麻林山，一名多山。句踐欲伐吳，種麻以為弓弦，使齊人守之，越謂齊人「多」，故曰麻林多，以防吳。以山下田封功臣。去縣一十二里。

Malinshan 麻林山 (Hemp Plantation Mountain) was also named Duoshan (Duo Mountain). When Goujian wanted to attack Wu, he planted hemp in order to make bowstrings, and employed people from Qi to guard the plants. In the Yue language people from Qi are called "Duo" (reconstructed pronunciation: *tá), and therefore they were called Malin Duo (the Qi people from the Hemp Plantation), because they were participating in the preparations for the war against Wu.⁸⁰ The fields below this mountain were given as fiefs to meritorious ministers. This place is twelve *li* from town (4.98 km).

會稽山上城者，句踐與吳戰，大敗，棲其中。因以下為目魚池，其利不租。

The Fortress on Top of Kuaijishan. When Goujian did battle with the kingdom of Wu, he was comprehensively defeated, and he made his last stand at this fort.⁸¹ Below this fort is Muyuchi (Mu Fish Pond), whose profits were never taxed.⁸²

會稽山北城者，子胥浮兵以守城是也。

The north fortress at Kuaijishan was occupied by naval troops under the command of [Wu] Zixu.

若耶大冢者，句踐所徙葬先君夫鐔冢也，去縣二十五里。

The Great Tomb at Ruoye was the tomb where Goujian reburied our former ruler Futan.⁸³ It is located twenty-five *li* from town (10.36 km).

78 This would suggest that the capital of Yue was laid out with a mixture of urban areas and agricultural land within the city walls. This was certainly the custom in Wu, indeed the area within the old city walls at Suzhou was only finally built up in the 1970s, so vast was the scale on which King Helü of Wu laid out his capital. This can be seen by comparison between the maps included in the recently published collection *Suzhou guocheng dituji*, which records the development of the city from 1229–1949.

79 This site is identified with the modern Dushan at Keqiaozhen 柯橋鎮. This mountain has been extensively researched, but no signs of ancient diggings have ever been found. See *Shaohang wenwu zhibi*, 25.

80 The reconstructed pronunciation of the word *duo* comes from Coblin (1983), 244.

81 King Goujian's retreat to the fortress at Kuaiji is mentioned in a number of ancient texts; see for example *Guoyu* 20.63 ["Yueyu, shang"] and *Shiji* 41.1740–1742. These accounts are discussed in Yang Shanqun (1988), 49.

82 The kingdom of Yue is thought to have been the first place in China to have worked out the techniques of farming fish, a skill traditionally attributed to Fan Li. Fan Li was also said to have been the author of the world's first known book on fish farming, the *Yangyu jing* 養魚經 (Classic on Raising Fish), as a result of which he was sometimes known by the epithet Yufu 魚父 (Fish Elder). See Zhang Fengyou (et al., 1998), 256.

葛山者，句踐罷吳，種葛，使越女織治葛布，獻於吳王夫差。去縣七里。

Geshan (Banana Cloth Mountain) is where bananas were planted after Goujian was defeated by Wu.⁸⁴ He employed Yue women to weave banana cloth, and presented it to King Fuchai of Wu.⁸⁵ It is located seven *li* from town (2.9 km).

姑中山者，越銅官之山也，越人謂之銅姑瀆。長二百五十步，去縣二十五里。

Guzhongshan (Guzhong Mountain) is the mountain under the control of the officials in charge of bronze manufacture in the kingdom of Yue. The people of Yue call this place Tonggudu (Copper Canal).⁸⁶ It is two hundred and fifty *bu* across (355 m), and stands twenty-five *li* from town (10.36 km).

富中大塘者，句踐治以為義田，為肥饒，謂之富中。去縣二十里二十二步。

Fuzhongdatang (Riches Great Embankment) was built by Goujian in order to create fields dedicated to famine-relief, they were highly fertile, and so they were called ‘riches.’⁸⁷ It is found twenty *li* and twenty-two *bu* from town (8.33 km).

犬山者，句踐罷吳，畜犬獵南山白鹿，欲得獻吳，神不可得，故曰犬山。其高為犬亭。去縣二十五里。

Quanshan (Dog Mountain). When Goujian was defeated by Wu, he raised dogs to hunt white deer at Nanshan, because he wanted to present them to Wu. Strangely they did not catch a single one, therefore it was named Quanshan. Quanting (Dog Neighbourhood) stands on top of it. It is twenty-five *li* from town (10.36 km).

白鹿山，在犬山之南，去縣二十九里。

Bailushan (White Deer Mountain) stands south of Quanshan, twenty-nine *li* from town (12 km).

雞山、豕山者，句踐以畜雞豕，將伐吳，以食士也。雞山在錫山南，去縣五十里。豕山在民山西，去縣六十三里。涇江以來屬越。疑豕山在餘暨界中。

Jishan (Chicken Mountain) and **Shishan** (Pig Mountain) were where Goujian raised chickens and pigs when he was about to attack Wu, in order to feed the soldiers with them.⁸⁸ Jishan stands south of Xishan (Tin Mountain), fifty *li* from town (20.75 km), while Shishan stands west of Minshan (People Mountain), sixty-three *li* from town (26.15 km). When the border of Yue was set at the Huanjiang (Broad River), I suspect that Shishan was then within the borders of Yuji.⁸⁹

83 This place is more commonly associated with the Yue metalworking tradition; see *Yuejue shu* 11.79 [13: “Ji baojian” 記寶劍]. The decision by King Goujian of Yue remains extremely mysterious, for many monarchs in ancient China moved their capitals without feeling any need to disturb ancestral tombs. See Dong Chuping (et al, 1998), 51.

84 Subsequent gazetteers for Shaoxing would record further plantations associated with King Goujian of Yue; see for example the Ming dynasty gazetteer *Kuaiji xianzhi* 5.131, 5.168, 22.600–601.

85 Banana cloth was a speciality of this region. See *Qimin yaoshu* 10.770–771.

86 This place remained an important local centre for metalworking well into the Han dynasty. See Wang Shilun (1987), 4.

87 This, together with the polders mentioned earlier, seem to be evidence of ancient attempts to control the notoriously difficult and flood-prone plains of Northern Zhejiang. The works carried out there in Imperial times are discussed in detail in Elvin (2004), 141–161.

88 In the commentary by Qian Peiming (1957), 27, it is suggested that the soldiers referred to here were specifically the suicide troops for which Yue was so famous.

89 The Huanjiang 涇江 is understood as a reference to the Qiantang River; see Zhang Zongxiang (1956), 8.7a. Yuji 餘暨 is almost certainly a mistake for Zhuji 諸暨, which was at the southern border of Yue during the reign of King Goujian. See Chen Yuanzhao (1985), 89.

練塘者，句踐時采錫山為炭，稱「炭聚」，載從炭瀆至練塘，各因事名之。去縣五十里。

Liantang. During the reign of King Goujian, [the trees] on Xishan were cut down to make charcoal, which was called 'ash lumps.' This was then transported along Tandu (Charcoal Canal) to Liantang, and these places derived their names from this fact. It is located fifty *li* from town (20.75 km).

木客大冢者，句踐父允常冢也。初徙瑯琊，使樓船卒二千八百人伐松柏以為桴，故曰木客。去縣十五里。一曰句踐伐善材，文刻獻於吳，故曰木客。

The great tomb of Muke (Woodcutters' [Place]). This is the tomb of Goujian's father Yunchang.⁹⁰ In the past, when [Goujian] moved the capital to Langye, he sent two thousand eight hundred men from his navy to chop down pine and cypress trees to make canoes, therefore this place was called Muke.⁹¹ It stands fifteen *li* from town (6.23 km). According to one account, Goujian cut down the finest timbers, painted and carved them and then presented them to Wu, and that is why it is called Muke.⁹²

官瀆者，句踐工官也。去縣十四里。

Guandu (Official's Canal), is where the officials who supervised Goujian's artisans and craftsmen lived, and it is located fourteen *li* out of town (5.8 km).

苦竹城者，句踐伐吳還，封范蠡子也。其僻居，徑六十步。因為民治田，塘長千五百三十三步。其冢名土山。范蠡苦勤功篤，故封其子於是，去縣十八里。

Kuzhucheng (Bitter Bamboo Walled City).⁹³ When Goujian returned from attacking Wu, he gave this settlement to Fan Li's son. This is an out-of-the-way place, with a diameter of sixty *bu* (85.2 m). In order to allow people to work the fields here, they had to build an embankment one thousand five hundred and thirty-three *bu* long (2.2 km). His tomb is known as Tushan (Earth Mountain). Fan Li worked very hard and was both diligent and honest, therefore his son was given a fief here. It stands eighteen *li* from town (7.4 km).

90 The site of King Yunchang of Yue's tomb is now known as Yinshan 印山 (Seal Mountain), and excavations have revealed an enormous mausoleum complex, which sadly yielded few remains, for the tomb had been robbed in antiquity, as well as in 1996 (the robbery that provoked the excavation). See "Zhejiang Shaoxing Yinshan damu fajue jianbao." According to *Wu Yue chunqiu* 10.177 ["Goujian fa Wu wai-zhuan" 句踐伐吳外傳], King Goujian originally intended to move his father's tomb to the new capital at Langye, but when the tomb was opened, it blew sand and rocks at his workmen until they gave up. This story is discussed in Zuo Buqing (1998), 153.

91 References such as this suggest that the kings of Yue were able to command a truly formidable navy. It has been estimated that in 481 BCE the kingdom of Yue had a population of at least two hundred thousand people and possibly much more; see Chen Guoshan (et al., 2003), 36.

92 According to a number of ancient texts, including the *Zuo-zhuan*, 1608–1609 ["Aigong" 1.7], King Fuchai of Wu had a mania for building. King Goujian supposedly took advantage of this, sending him fine trees which were used in the building of Guxutai, a major prestige project undertaken by the king of Wu to celebrate his victory over Yue. This is also mentioned in the *Wu Yue chunqiu*, which records how woodcutters were sent to cut down trees to be presented to King Fuchai of Wu. "The king of Yue then sent out more than three thousand wood-workers, to go into the mountains and cut down trees. For one whole year they found nothing suitable. The wood-workers thought of returning home, they were all resentful and homesick, and so they sang the 'Woodcutters' Plaint' (*Muke zhi yin* 木客之吟)." See *Wu Yue chunqiu* 9.143 ["Goujian yinmou wai-zhuan"]. The site, Mukeshan, where the Yue king obtained these fine timbers has been identified as Muzecun 木柵村, near Lanting 蘭亭 south of Shaoxing. See Fu Zhenzhao (2002), 146.

93 Bitter bamboo is identified as *Pleioblastus amarus*; see *Zhongguo zhiwuzhi*, 9(1): 598–599.

北郭外路南溪北城者，句踐築鼓鍾宮也，去縣七里。其邑為龔錢。

The Northern Walled City, outside the Northern Outer City Wall, by Lu'nan River. This is where Goujian built his bell and drum palace. It stands seven *li* from town (2.9 km). This place is also known as Gongqian.

舟室者，句踐船宮也，去縣五十里。

Zhoushi (Boat House) was Goujian's covered shipyard. It stands fifty *li* from town (20.75 km).

民西大家者，句踐客秦伊善炤龜者冢也，因名冢為秦伊山。

The Great Tomb West of Min[shan] was the grave of Goujian's client Qin Yi, who was good at making divinations by cracking turtle shells. Therefore they named the tomb Qinyishan (Qin Yi Mountain).

射浦者，句踐教習兵處也。今射浦去縣五里。射卒陳音死，葬民西，故曰陳音山。

Shepu (Riverside Archery Ground) was the place where Goujian trained his soldiers. Today Shepu stands five *li* from town (2.075 km). When the archer Chen Yin died, he was buried west of Min[shan], and therefore it is called Chenyinshan (Chen Yin Mountain).⁹⁴

種山者，句踐所葬大夫種也。樓船卒二千人，鈞足羨，葬之三蓬下。種將死，自策：「後有賢者，百年而至，置我三蓬，自章後世。」句踐葬之，食傳三賢。

Zhongshan (Zhong Mountain) is the place where Goujian buried Grandee Zhong.⁹⁵ Two thousand sailors from Yue warships were employed to build a suitable tomb, and he was buried below Sanpeng[shan] (Three Thorn Mountain). When Zhong was about to die, he wrote down his last words: “In one hundred years time a wise man will be born. Bury me at Sanpeng, that I may inspire future generations.” Goujian buried him here, to show his appreciation for [one of] the three wise men.⁹⁶

巫里，句踐所徙巫為一里，去縣二十五里。其亭祠今為和公群社稷墟。

Wuli (Shaman Village) was the single village that Goujian moved the shamans to.⁹⁷ It was twenty-five *li* from town (10.38 km). Their buildings and shrines have now become the foundations of the altars of soil and grain for Hegong commandery.⁹⁸

94 The great archer Chen Yin 陳音 is also mentioned in the *Wu Yue chunqiu* 9.152–154 [“Goujian yinmou waizhuan”], where it says that he originally came from the kingdom of Chu.

95 The mountain where Grandee Zhong was buried was later also known as Fushan 府山 (Government Office Mountain) and Wolongshan 臥龍山 (Sleeping Dragon Mountain). In the Qing dynasty, the name was briefly changed to Xinglongshan 興龍山 (Soaring Dragon Mountain) following a visit by the Kangxi emperor. See Fan Daquan (1984), 47.

96 This would seem to be a reference to the three men who were crucial for the reconstruction of Yue after the disastrous war with Wu: Grandee Zhong, Fan Li, and Ji Nizi. This account seems somewhat at variance with the story of Grandee Zhong's death found in other ancient texts, which state that he was forced to commit suicide at the behest of King Goujian of Yue; see for example *Wu Yue chunqiu* 10.176 [“Goujian fa Wu waizhuan”].

97 On the role of *wu* 巫 (shamans or spirit mediums) in Zhou society see Falkenhausen (1995).

98 The original text here reads *hegong qun* 和公群. Qian Peiming (1957), 27, argues that the character *qun* is a mistake for *jun* 郡. The only problem with this is that there does not seem to have been an administrative unit called Hegong commandery in the Han dynasty mentioned in any standard source, such as the “Dili zhi” chapter of the *Hanshu*. This is not an absolutely insuperable problem, since a number of geographical divisions were not recorded in texts like this, but are known to have existed from other sources.

巫山者，越[鬼+扁]，神巫之官也，死葬其上，去縣十三里許。

Wushan (Shaman Mountain). This was the site of the palace where shamans and spirit mediums lived.⁹⁹ When they died they were buried on top of the mountain. It is located about thirteen *li* from town (5.4 km).

六山者，句踐鑄銅，鑄銅不爍，埋之東坂，其上馬箠。句踐遣使者取於南社，徙種六山，飾治為馬箠，獻之吳。去縣三十五里。

Liushan (Six Mountains) is the site where Goujian forged his bronzes.¹⁰⁰ When the bronze did not smelt properly in the forge, the results were buried on the eastern slopes. [A variety of bamboo called] Masheng (Horse whip) grows on top of this mountain. Goujian sent messengers to collect it from the Nanshe (Southern Altar of Soil) and plant it instead at Liushan. They carved these bamboos into horse whips and presented them to Wu. These mountains stand thirty-five *li* from town (14.5 km).

江東中巫葬者，越神巫無杜子孫也。死，句踐於中江而葬之。巫神，欲使覆禍吳人船。去縣三十里。

Shamans' Eastern River Cemetery. This belongs to the descendants of Wu Du, a spirit medium from Yue. When he died, Goujian buried him by the Zhongjiang. He employed a spirit medium because he wanted to bring disaster on the Wu navy. This place is thirty *li* from town (12.45 km).

石塘者，越所害軍船也。塘廣六十五步，長三百五十三步。去縣四十里。

Shitang (Stone Embankment) was where the Yue forces destroyed the Wu navy. The embankment is sixty-five *bu* wide (92.3 m) and three hundred and fifty-three *bu* long (501 m). It is located forty *li* out of town (16.6 km).

防塢者，越所以遏吳軍也。去縣四十里。

Fangwu (Defensive Harbour) was built by Yue to resist the forces of Wu. It stands forty *li* from town (16.6 km).

杭塢者，句踐杭也。二百石長買卒七士人，度之會夷。去縣四十里。

Hangwu (Boat Harbour) was where Goujian anchored his boats. The man in charge was paid two hundred *shi* of grain, and he employed seventy guards.¹⁰¹ There was convenient access to Kuaiyi from here.¹⁰² It stands forty *li* from town (16.6 km).

塗山者，禹所取妻之山也，去縣五十里。

Tushan is the mountain where Yu married his wife.¹⁰³ It stands fifty *li* from town (20.75 km).

99 The character here is so obscure that it is not to be found in any dictionary. I assume from context that it is a title, referring to someone who can communicate with ghosts, and hence have translated it as 'spirit medium.' The original text reads *shemvu zhi guan ye* 神巫之官也. In accordance with the commentary by Qian Peiming (1957), 27, the character *guan* has been amended to *gong* 宮 (palace).

100 This site has been identified as Liufengshan 六峰山 (Six Peak Mountain) which stands south west of the city of Shaoxing; see Chen Qiaoyi (1999), 67.

101 The original text says that the man in charge of the harbour only employed seven men: *qi shi ren* 七士人. In accordance with the commentary by Qian Peiming (1957), 27, this has been amended to seventy men: *qishi ren* 七十人.

102 At several points in the *Yuejue shu*, Kuaiji Mountain, the most important site in the kingdom, is known as Kuaiyi 會夷. The reasons for this are not known.

103 Before the Han dynasty, this mountain was usually identified as that of the same name which stands in modern Fengbu county 蜂埠縣 in Anhui province. There is also a mountain of the same name in Song county 嵩縣 Henan province which claims to be the one mentioned in the legends of Yu. For an account of the conflicting evidence, see Huang Weicheng (1985).

朱餘者，越鹽官也。越人謂鹽曰「餘」。去縣三十五里。

Zhuyu (Red Salt) was where the Yue Salt Bureau [was located]. Yue people call salt *yū* (reconstructed pronunciation: **jiwuo*).¹⁰⁴ This place is thirty-five *li* from town (14.5 km).

句踐已滅吳，使吳人築吳塘，東西千步，名辟首。後因以為名曰塘。

After Goujian had destroyed Wu, he made the Wu people build the Wutang 吳塘 (Wu embankment), which is a thousand *bu* long (1.42 km) from east to west. At that time it was called Pishou, but later on its name was changed to Tang (Embankment).

獨婦山者，句踐將伐吳，徙寡婦致獨山上，以為死士示，得專一也。去縣四十里。後說之者，蓋句踐所以遊軍士也。

Dufushan (Widows' Mountain). When Goujian was about to attack Wu, he moved widows to live on top of this mountain [where they would be safe]. This was proclaimed among his troops, so that they would be able to concentrate on the task ahead. It stands forty *li* out of town (16.6 km). Later on when people spoke about this place, they said that Goujian had taught his armies to swim here.

馬噪者，吳伐越，道逢大風，車敗馬失，騎士墮死，正馬啼噪，事見吳史。

Mahao (Horses' Scream). When Wu attacked Yue, they ran into a storm on the way in which chariots were overturned and horses stumbled. The cavalry were killed falling to the ground. The horses screamed [in pain and fear]. This matter is recorded in the history of the kingdom of Wu.¹⁰⁵

浙江南路西城者，范蠡敦兵城也。其陵固可守，故謂之固陵。所以然者，以其大船軍所置也。

Xicheng (West Fortress) on the Southern Road leading from the Zhe River is the fort where Fan Li mustered his troops. This hill could always be defended, so it was [also] called Guling (Certainty Hill).¹⁰⁶ Because of this fact, it was where the largest ships in the navy were based.

山陰古故陸道，出東郭，隨直瀆陽春亭。山陰故水道，出東郭，從郡陽春亭。去縣五十里。

The old road from Shanyin runs out of the city through the eastern city wall. It follows the route of Zhidu (Straight Canal) to Yangchunting (Yang Spring Neighbourhood).¹⁰⁷ The old waterway from Shanyin also leaves the city by the eastern city wall, and it makes its way to Yangchunting inside the commandery. It is fifty *li* from town (20.75 km).

語兒鄉，故越界，名曰就李。吳疆越地以為戰地，至於柴辟亭。

Yu'erxiang (Child's Township) is the old border of Yue, and it is also called Jiuli.¹⁰⁸ When Wu invaded Yue territory it was a battleground, right up to Chaipiting (Firewood Neighbourhood).¹⁰⁹

104 The word *yū* 餘 was commonly used in ancient texts to transliterate Yue pronunciation. See Zhou Zhenhe (et al., 1982), 61. The reconstructed pronunciation comes from Coblin (1983), 186.

105 This is a rare reference to historical records being kept in the kingdom of Wu, and is frequently cited as evidence that texts such as this are based on contemporary local documents; see Yu Yue (1956), 57.

106 This place has been identified as Xixingzhen 西興鎮, near Hangzhou; see Chen Guoshan (et al., 2003), 38.

107 In the Qin and Han dynasties, a *ting* or neighbourhood was a unit of administration, comprising a theoretical one thousand households. Several *ting* would then be grouped together to form a *xiang* or township. These translations are derived from Hucker (1985), 511. The use of such terms to describe the kingdom of Yue is anachronistic.

108 There is a story that the name of this place came from the fact that Xi Shi gave birth to Fan Li's child here, a baby who could speak at the age of one year, and hence the name should be translated as Speaking Child Township. See *Wudi ji*, 79.

女陽亭者，句踐入官於吳，夫人從，道產女此亭，養於李鄉，句踐勝吳，更名女陽，更就李為語兒鄉。

Nüyangting (Girl's Neighbourhood). When Goujian went as a hostage to Wu, his wife followed him, and on the road she gave birth to a daughter in this neighbourhood. The girl was brought up at Li Township. When Goujian conquered Wu he changed the name of this place to Nüyang, and changed the name of Jiuli to Yuer Township.

吳王夫差伐越，有其邦，句踐服為臣。三年，吳王復還封句踐於越，東西百里，北鄉臣事吳，東為右，西為左。大越故界，浙江至就李，南姑末、寫干。

King Fuchai of Wu attacked Yue and captured their lands, Goujian surrendered and became his vassal. Three years later, the king of Wu again enfeoffed Goujian in Yue, and his lands stretched one hundred *li* from east to west (41.5 km). [King Goujian] served Wu to the north as a vassal, and so east was referred to as the right-hand side, and west was referred to as the left-hand side. The old borders of Yue stretched to Li on the Zhe river, and to the south [their lands reached to] Gumo and Xiegan.

覬鄉北有武原。武原，今海鹽。姑末，今大末。寫干，今屬豫章。

Wuyuan is located north of Jin Township. Wuyuan is now known as Haiyan.¹¹⁰ Gumo is now known as Damo, while Xiegan is now administered by Yuzhang.¹¹¹

自無餘初封於越以來，傳聞越王子孫，在丹陽皋鄉，更姓梅，梅里是也。

From the time that Wuyu was first enfeoffed in Yue there has been a tradition that princes and royal grandsons of the Yue royal house lived at the marshes of Danyang. They changed their surname to Mei, hence the name of Meili (Mei Village).¹¹²

自秦以來，至秦元王不絕年。元王立二十年，平王立二十三年，惠文王立二十七年，武王立四年，昭襄王亦立五十六年，而滅周赧王，周絕於此。孝文王立一年，莊襄王更號太上皇帝，立三年，秦始皇帝立三十七年，號曰趙政，政，趙外孫，胡亥立二年，子嬰立六月。秦元王至子嬰，凡十王，百七十歲。漢高帝滅之，治咸陽，壹天下。

As for the Qin, until the reign of King Yuan of Qin (usually known as Lord Xian of Qin) there were no annual records. King Yuan ruled for twenty years (actually twenty-three, 384–362 BCE), King Ping (usually known as Lord Xiao of Qin) ruled for twenty-three years (actually twenty-four, 361–336 BCE), King Huiwen ruled for twenty-seven years (337–311 BCE), King Wu ruled for four years (310–307 BCE), and King Zhaoxiang ruled for fifty-six years (306–251 BCE). He killed King Nan of Zhou (r. 314–255 BCE) and this marked the end of the Zhou dynasty.¹¹³ King Xiaowen ruled for a

109 This refers to the events of 496 BCE, when King Helü invaded Yue, and fought what turned out to be his last battle at Zuili 柵李, here called Jiuli 就李; see *Zuoqizhuan*, 1595–1596 [“Dingong” 定公 14.5]. Yu'er 語兒 was traditionally said to mark the northernmost point in the Yue kingdom during the early part of the reign of King Goujian; see *Guoyu* 20.635 [“Yueyu, shang”]. This place is now the site of the Guojieqiao 國界橋 (Border Bridge) which was built in the Northern Song dynasty. On the northern side there is a sculpture of King Fuchai of Wu, on the southern side stands King Goujian of Yue. See Zhu Huiyong (2000), 287.

110 To this day, there is a county in northern Zhejiang named Haiyan 海鹽; see Chen Qiaoyi (1999), 22.

111 Yuzhang 豫章 is probably a mistake for Gouzhang 勾章, the Yue name for the Ningbo region; see Xu Jizi (et al., 1986), 5.

112 Some members of the Mei 梅 family, who claimed descent from King Goujian of Yue, went on to do extremely well during the Han dynasty. Among the most successful was Mei Xuan, who was enfeoffed as Marquis of Tai at the beginning of the Han dynasty, for his loyal service to the founding emperor; see Zhu Weigan (1984), 24, and Fan Duan'ang (1988), 154.

113 The reign of King Nan of Zhou 周赧王 marked the partition of the Royal Domain into two separate states: Eastern and Western Zhou, with King Nan becoming Lord Wu of Western Zhou 西周武公. *Shiji* 4.169 states that King Nan was not in fact killed by Qin, but was under their control.

year (250 BCE), and King Zhuangxiang, who is also known by the title of Supreme Emperor, ruled for three years (249–247 BCE).¹¹⁴ The First Emperor of the Qin dynasty ruled for thirty-seven years (246–210 BCE), and was known as Zhao Zheng, because [Ying] Zheng (the personal name of the First Emperor of China) was a relative of the Zhao royal house on his mother’s side. Huhai ruled for two years (209–207 BCE), and Ziying ruled for six months (207 BCE). From the reign of King Yuan of Qin to that of Ziying there were in all ten kings, ruling for one hundred and seventy years. Emperor Gao of the Han dynasty (r. 206–195 BCE) destroyed [the Qin empire]. He had his seat of government at Xianyang, and united the world.

政使將魏舍、內史教攻韓，得韓王安。政使將王賁攻魏，得魏王歇。政使將王涉攻趙，得趙王尚。政使將王賁攻楚，得楚王成。政使將史敖攻燕，得燕王喜。政使將王涉攻齊，得齊王建。政更號為秦始皇帝，以其三十七年，東遊之會稽，道度牛渚，奏東安，東安，今富春。丹陽，溧陽，鄣故，餘杭軻亭南。東奏槿頭，道度諸暨、大越。以正月甲戌到大越，留舍都亭。取錢塘浙江「岑石」。石長丈四尺，南北面廣六尺，東面廣四尺，西面廣尺六寸，刻文立於越東山上，其道九曲，去縣二十一里。是時，徙大越民置餘杭伊攻□故鄣。因徙天下有罪適吏民，置海南故大越處，以備東海外越。乃更名大越曰山陰。已去，奏諸暨、錢塘，因奏吳。上姑蘇臺，則治射防於宅亭、賈亭北。年至靈，不射，去，奏曲阿、句容，度牛渚，西到咸陽，崩。

[The future First Emperor of China] sent General Wei She and Palace Scribe Jiao to attack Han, and they captured King An of Han (r. 238–230 BCE).¹¹⁵ He sent General Wang Ben to attack Wei, and he captured King Xie of Wei (r. 227–225 BCE).¹¹⁶ He sent General Wang She to attack Zhao, and he captured King Shang of Zhao (r. 235–228 BCE).¹¹⁷ [After that, the future First Emperor of China] sent General Wang Ben to attack Chu, where he captured King Cheng of Chu (r. 227–224 BCE).¹¹⁸ He sent General Shi Ao to attack Yan, where he captured King Xi of Yan (r. 254–222 BCE).¹¹⁹ He sent General Wang She to attack Qi, where he captured King Jian of Qi (r. 264–221 BCE).¹²⁰ He then in the thirty-seventh year of his reign changed his title to First Emperor of the Qin dynasty, and went on an eastern progress to Kuaiji. He crossed Niuzhu (Cattle Ford) and travelled to Dong’an. Dong’an is present day Fuchun. [He also travelled to] Danyang, Liyang and Zhanggu, he also visited [the area] south of Yuhangke neighbourhood. He continued going east, visiting Jintou, and his road took him through Zhuiji and Dayue. On Jiayu day of the first month he arrived in Dayue, and stayed at the Shedu neighbourhood. He took a great boulder from the Zhe river at Qiantang. The stone was [one] *zhang* four *chi* high (3.32 m), the north and south sides were six *chi* wide (1.42 m), while the western side was [one] *chi* six *can* wide (38 cm). Once it had been carved the boulder was set up on Dongshan (East mountain, a refer-

114 This title was bestowed on the First Emperor’s father in 221 BCE; see *Shiji* 6.235.

115 According to *Shiji* 6.232 it was the Palace Scribe Teng 騰 who led the campaign in 229 BCE that deposed King An of Han 韓王安.

116 *Shiji* 6.234 states that it was Wang Ben who led the campaign against Wei 魏. in 224 BCE, though the last king of Wei’s posthumous title is given as Jia 假; see *Shiji* 44.1863–1864.

117 *Shiji* 6.233 gives the names of two generals responsible for the Qin conquest of Zhao 趙: Wang Jian 王翳 and Qiang Lei 羌羸. Also in the account of the Hereditary House of Zhao, the name of the last monarch is given as Youmu 幽繆; see *Shiji* 43.1831.

118 Comparatively little information is given in the *Shiji* about the fall of Chu 楚 to the forces of Qin, though it is mentioned that the generals responsible for the final victory were Wang Jian and Meng Wu 蒙武, and the name of the last king of Chu is given as Fuchu 負芻; see *Shiji* 40.1736–1737.

119 According to *Shiji* 6.234 the general responsible for the final victory over Yan 燕. was Wang Ben 王賁.

120 *Shiji* 6.235 states that it was Wang Ben again who was responsible for the victory over Qi 齊.

ence to Kuaiji) in the lands of Yue.¹²¹ The road [up the mountain to the boulder] had nine bends, and it is located twenty-one *li* out of town (8.7 km). At this time he moved the people of Yue to Yuhang, Yingong and [one character missing] Guzhang.¹²² Then he moved criminals and exiled officials from all over the Chinese world to the lands that had once been Dayue, in order that they could resist the Outer Yue from the Eastern Sea. Then he changed the name of Dayue to Shanyin. When he left he went to visit Zhuji and Qiantang, and then travelled on to Wu. While he was there he climbed Gusutai and then established an archery barracks north of Zhaiting (Home Neighbourhood) and Jiating (Trading Neighbourhood). That was the year [the First Emperor of China] died, so no archery ever took place there. In fact he left and travelled through Qu'a and Jurong. He crossed Niudu travelling west to Xianyang and then he died.¹²³

Interpreting the “Record of the Lands of Yue”

The “Record of the Lands of Yue” records an ancient city that no longer exists, but which was once the capital of an important non-Chinese kingdom in south-eastern China. Much of what we know about the development of Yue and the early urbanisation of the region is derived from this text, which also provides a framework which has been used to understand recent archaeological discoveries, such as the tomb of King Yunchang of Yue excavated in the 1990s. The text in its current state reflects the preoccupations of its Han dynasty authors: relating the landscape of the region to important events in the history of Yue, recording the building works undertaken during the reign of King Goujian, and giving written authority to the claims that this region did not lie beyond the pale of the Chinese world but was instead a crucial part of it. These conflicting aims, making the lands of the ancient kingdom of Yue part of the Chinese world, while at the same time asserting the glory of the past when this region was independent, can be seen as reflecting contemporary Eastern Han dynasty concerns. During the Eastern Han dynasty there seems to have been a considerable resurgence of interest in the history of Wu and Yue, which can be seen both in literature and in the arts.¹²⁴ This text may well have been produced as part of this movement.

121 The stone at Kuaiji was erected in 210 BCE, and the full text is given in *Shiji* 6.261–262. This inscription later disappeared, only for a replica to be cut during the Yuan dynasty in 1341, by order of the Supervisor in Chief, Shentu Jiong 申屠翽, using rubbings as a reference. This stone was rubbed flat by the reign of the Kangxi emperor. In 1792, during the reign of the Qianlong emperor, a new replica was carved; see *Qin Kuaiji keshi*, 1.

122 Different editions of the *Yuejue shu* record different levels of textual corruption in the “Record of the Lands of Yue.” This version of the text has only one character missing, while other editions have three characters lacking from this *juan*; see for example the Sibū beiyao edition, which has three characters missing; *Yuejue shu* 8:1a–6b.

123 The details given of the First Emperor’s southern progress are slightly different from those found in *Shiji* 6.260–264, and more detailed in terms of the dates given and the points of the itinerary indicated. This suggests that the authors of this section of the text may have had access to a local account of the event.

124 See He Xilin (2001), 171 for a discussion of the spread of the depiction of figures from southern history, such as Wu Zixu, Yao Li and Prince Qingji of Wu during the Han dynasty. The incorporation of these major figures from conflict between the kingdoms of Wu and Yue into the history of China as a whole can be seen from the enormous geographical spread of representations of these individuals. For example, in 1971 the painted tomb of an Eastern Han dynasty official was discovered in Inner Mongolia, with more than eighty historical figures painted on the walls of the main chamber, including Wu Zixu. This tomb has tentatively been dated to 140–170 CE. See *Helini geer Hanmu bibua*, 24.

In much the same way as the “Record of the Lands of Wu” had a lasting impact on imperial era accounts of the architecture of Suzhou, the “Record of the Lands of Yue” would have an enormous influence on later writings about the city of Shaoxing.¹²⁵ This earliest record linking landscape features and buildings to the glorious history of the kingdom of Yue was imitated and referred to frequently in both official and unofficial local histories. During the imperial period, many writers went much further in linking the architectural, cultural and botanical heritage of the city with King Goujian, to the point where virtually every house and tree could claim some connection with the greatest of the kings of Yue. This can be seen in the earliest surviving Song dynasty gazetteer for the region, where the first entry quoted below is an imperial era addition of a royal association, while the second quotes directly from the *Yuejue shu*.

Xishan 錫山 (Tin Mountain) stands fifty *li* to the east of town. An old text says: The king of Yue collected tin here.

Bailushan stands twenty-nine *li* to the south-east of town. The *Yuejue* says: It stands south of Quanshan.¹²⁶

The “Record of the Lands of Yue” clearly informed texts such as this both directly and indirectly. The major difference in presentation between the Han dynasty text and the Song dynasty one is that the latter includes information about directions. This has proved to be a cause of considerable difficulties in interpreting the information given in the “Record of the Lands of Yue.” This account seems to provide information about the Yue capital itself, and the surrounding area up to forty kilometres away, but without any more precise information about location, it is hard to determine the relationship of these distant sites with the centre and with each other. However, it would seem likely that Yue was deliberately pursuing a policy of decentralised development, at a time when they were preparing for war against the kingdom of Wu.¹²⁷

The “Record of the Lands of Yue” records a period of enormous and diverse construction in what is now northern Zhejiang province. This was part of a general trend at the time, in both Wu and Yue, towards the building of massive prestige projects, ranging from platforms and towers to embankments, and from palaces to whole cities. Many of these projects were built on a truly enormous scale, and within a very short space of time (even allowing for the tendency to attribute all such works to the most famous monarchs of each kingdom). However, while the history of other cities built at this time, including Suzhou, the capital of the kingdom of Wu, have been extensively researched, Shaoxing has generally been ignored. One reason for this is likely to be a combination of the factors that the capital is not described in much detail in the “Record of the Lands of Yue,” and that the entire city was razed to the ground and built to a new design in the Southern Song dynasty. After such a major redevelopment of the site, even the most dedicated antiquarian must have been troubled at the prospect of relating landscape features within the walls to the history of the illustrious King Goujian of Yue.

125 The ongoing influence of the “Record of the Lands of Wu” on imperial era accounts of the development of the city of Suzhou can be clearly seen in texts such as the Tang dynasty gazetteer *Wudi ji*, the Song dynasty gazetteer *Wujun zhi*, and so on. Not only do these texts make frequent reference to the “Record of the Lands of Wu,” they also follow the same pattern in trying to link landscape features with events in the history of this kingdom.

126 See *Jiatai Kuajiji zhi* 9.12a. For another example of the ongoing influence of the “Record of the Lands of Yue,” see the Qing dynasty unofficial local history, *Yuezhong zashi*.

127 See Chen Qiaoyi (1999), 21.

Conclusion

When the city of Shaoxing was built, with its surrounding towers and palaces, it was intended to function as both the capital city of the kingdom of Yue and as the headquarters of the war-effort launched by King Goujian, who wished to expunge the shame of the humiliating peace treaty he was forced to agree with Wu in 494 BCE. This double purpose was built into the very design of the city, which lacked a wall to the north so that it would always be vulnerable to attack by Wu and hence would quieten suspicion. At the same time, many of the most important offices for building up and provisioning King Goujian's navy were located at some distance from the city centre. The exigencies of the long campaign to conquer the kingdom of Wu defined this region throughout its history. Many sites around Shaoxing still retain at least a vestigial connection with the towering figure of King Goujian of Yue, either in name or in popular stories, even two thousand five hundred years after the event.

The "Record of the Lands of Yue" provides but little detail about the design principles that determined the layout of this ancient city. However, the account given in this text of the development of the region which took place under the auspices of King Goujian of Yue is crucial for understanding the process of urbanisation which took place in and around Shaoxing during the late Spring and Autumn period. It is an early landmark in the literature about historical geography in China, and a major resource for understanding one of the most important non-Chinese independent kingdoms of the Spring and Autumn period. In 221 BCE, with the unification under the First Emperor of Qin, Yue became part of China and the history of this region became part of Chinese history. This text is vital for understanding the context in which the city of Shaoxing was originally built.

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