A consideration of the economic and diplomatic relations of the early medieval Burmese kingdoms must, of necessity, begin with the problem of routes of communication. On the whole, it seems that more attention has been given to the maritime routes of trade and contact between China, India and Western Asia. Not only recent studies, but also medieval sources\(^1\) give much information on routes, ports, products, governments, laws, and naval conditions. The maritime route, or rather, routes, were of special significance for the development of the southern Burmese kingdoms. Of the land routes, those lying to the north of the Himalayan chain and descending into India from Tibet have been examined in some detail, but those crossing from south-west China into Burma, and from there to India south of the Himalayan chain, have received relatively little attention in modern

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