

Reconceptualizing Southern Vietnamese History from the 15th to 18th Centuries:  
Competition along the Coasts from Guangdong to Cambodia

by

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Bản Kỷ Tục Biên</i>	<i>Đại Việt Sử Ký Bản Kỷ Tục Biên</i>
<i>BAVH</i>	<i>Bulletin des Amis de Vieux Hué</i>
<i>BCAI</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Commission Archéologique de l'Indochine</i>
<i>BEFEO</i>	<i>Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient</i>
<i>BIPPA</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association</i>
<i>Cạn Lục</i>	<i>Ô Châu Cạn Lục</i>
<i>Cương Mục</i>	<i>Khâm Định Việt Sử Thông Giám Cương Mục</i>
<i>Diễn Chí</i>	<i>Nam Triều Công Nghiệp Diễn Chí</i>
<i>JSEAS</i>	<i>Journal of Southeast Asian Studies</i>
<i>Liệt Truyện</i>	<i>[Đại Nam] Liệt Truyện Tiền Biên</i>
<i>Liệt Truyện Chính Biên</i>	<i>[Đại Nam] Liệt Truyện Chính Biên Sơ Tập</i>
<i>Tạp Lục</i>	<i>Phủ Biên Tạp Lục</i>
<i>Thông Chí</i>	<i>Gia Định Thành Thông Chí</i>
<i>Thông Sử</i>	<i>Đại Việt Thông Sử</i>
<i>Thực Lục</i>	<i>[Đại Nam] Liệt Thánh Thực Lục Tiền Biên</i>
<i>Thực Lục Chính Biên</i>	<i>[Đại Nam] Thực Lục Chính Biên Sơ Tập</i>
<i>Toàn Thư</i>	<i>Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư</i>
<i>Tục Biên</i>	<i>Đại Việt Sử Ký Tục Biên</i>

## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction: Vietnam's "Push to the South"

#### The *Nam Tiến* or "Push to the South"

The concept of a steadily expanding Vietnamese empire first took a rough shape in the narrative choices made by the 19th century Nguyen Dynasty Historical Office. After 1802, early scholar-officials of the Nguyễn Dynasty constructed formal claims to the territory of Tonkin, relying in part on European texts familiar to their French supporters in Saigon such as Alexandre de Rhodes' popular history of Tonkin, which described, in vague terms, a link between the rulers of Tonkin and Cochinchina. Nguyễn officials claimed that an ancestor of the dynastic founder, Nguyễn Ánh, had played a key role in upholding the Lê Dynasty, implying that the Nguyễn Dynasty held an ancient claim to rule in Thăng Long.

Tonkin and Cochinchina were unified by rulers from the south, first the *Tây Sơn* from Quy Nhon, then a Nguyễn ruler from Saigon. These regimes arrived in Tonkin seeking to connect their rulers' personal legacy with the Tonkin populations they sought to control. Both attempted to enlist the support of Tonkin elites, and adapted the historical literature produced under the Lê Dynasty to justify the new regimes in the language of the local literati. The Nguyễn attempted to destroy most *Tây Sơn* literature, however, and along with their French supporters sought to combine elements of existing histories of Tonkin and China, while incorporating elements from other sources from abroad, including venerable, widely disseminated, Rhodes account.

The Lê and Nguyễn dynasties produced dynastic histories, written by scholar-officials who staffed each court's Historical Office (*quốc sử quán*), which form the backbone of virtually every narrative of Vietnam before colonial rule. Over several centuries, scholars at successive Lê (and, for a time, Mạc) courts compiled and revised the *Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư*, or *Complete History of the Great Việt*, referred to here as the *Toàn Thư*. The classical Chinese style of chronicle the Lê scholars sought to emulate depicts history as a seamless narrative. It tells a story beginning in the times of early legends and myths, continuing unbroken to describe the current events of the day. Thus, the *Toàn Thư* begins with a dragon, tells of tribes magically hatched from eggs, and proceeds to chronicle the rise and fall of successive historical dynasties. The final volume ends up listing the minutiae of chaotic edicts and battle orders in the tumult that engulfed Thăng Long around the time of the Ming-Qing transition. The southernmost territories of Đại Việt lay on the periphery of the Lê world, where it was particularly difficult to separate fact from fiction.<sup>1</sup>

The Nguyễn scholars made a dramatic departure from the Lê court tradition, if they considered themselves to be heirs of a Lê tradition at all. Nguyễn court officials based their own history, beginning with the *Liệt Thánh Thực Lục Tiền Biên*, or *Preceding Book of the Veritable Records of Great Men*, referred to here as the *Thực Lục*, on the model of the *Shi-lu*, or *Veritable Records*, beginning with events during the reign of a dynastic founder. But with some exceptions, Ming and Qing Veritable Records were each created shortly after the end of each emperor's reign and described events within living memory of the editors, who drew on a vast archive of court documents. Thus, this style of dynastic chronicle was, at least implicitly, purported to be compiled directly from “veritable” – archived – court documents originating from and held by the ruling regime. Unlike the Ming scholars, however, the first head of the Historical Office in Huế, Trương Đăng Quế, and his co-editors, did not begin their story with a recently deceased emperor.

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<sup>1</sup> Ngô Sĩ Liên, et al., *Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư*. “*Nội Các Quan*” manuscript, published in Vietnamese translation as Hà Văn Tấn, ed., trans. Hoàng Văn Lâu and Ngô Thế Long, *Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư, Bản In Nội Các Quan Bản, Mộc Bản Khắc Năm Chính Hòa Thứ 18 (1697)*, [Complete History of the Great Việt, Nội Các Quan Edition, Printed in the 18th year of the Chính Hòa Reign (1697)], Vols. I-III (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Khoa Học Xã Hội, 2004).

Instead, they chose to tell the story of a legendary figure thought to have lived three centuries in the past.<sup>2</sup>

Due to distance and discontinuity between 16th and 19th century regimes, the narrative of the early Nguyễn rulers was not based on primary court documents in a state archive. Instead, the Huế court editors appear to have relied heavily on an 18th century work of literature that, at least in its only surviving form, is clearly and explicitly fictional. The scholars Leopold Cadière and Henri Maspero, Phan Khoảng and Hoàng Xuân Hãn all relied heavily on the extant version of this text, which is written in the style of a historical novel. Even though no author is named in the text, it is commonly assumed that this novel is identical to a text said to have been written by Nguyễn Khoa Chiêm, one of the highest officers in the southern court hierarchy in 1719.

This belief that a historical novel is the only surviving work produced by the 18th century court helps explain why a work of fiction has been treated with great reverence by scholars for over two centuries. The manuscript survives today in a few closely related copies, often called the *Nam Triều Công Nghiệp Diển Chí*, or History of the Southern Dynasty, and referred to in this study as the *Diển Chí*. These texts show signs of editing and copying errors, with significant portions removed.<sup>3</sup>

Scholars have continued to rely heavily on the dynastic annals, sometimes without much introspection, up to the present day. The Nguyễn Historical Office editors, on the other hand, were aware that the problems posed by conflicting versions of history required difficult editorial decisions and, in some cases, the destruction or revision of competing histories. Before the first official Nguyễn history was released, the *Ming Mạng* Emperor had ordered the destruction of Lê texts describing the 16th and 17th centuries.

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<sup>2</sup> Trương Đăng Quế, et al., *Đại Nam Thực Lục Tiền Biên* [Preceding Veritable Records of Đại Nam], Quốc Sử Quán Triều Nguyễn, 1844, VHv. 1320/1-4, Hán Nôm Institute; *Thực Lục Chính Biên Sơ Tập*. [Early Volume of the Primary Record], Ms. A. 2687/1-4, Hán Nôm Institute; Vietnamese translation published in Đào Duy Anh, ed. *Đại Nam Thực Lục* [Veritable Records of Đại Nam], 2nd ed. (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Giáo Dục, 2002); *Đại Nam Liệt Truyện Tiền Biên* (Quốc Sử Quán Triều Nguyễn, 1852), Vietnamese translation published as Cao Tự Thanh, trans. *Đại Nam Liệt Truyện Tiền Biên*. (Ho Chi Minh City: Nhà Xuất Bản Khoa Học Xã Hội, 1995); Nguyễn Trọng Hợp, et al. *Đại Nam Chính Biên Liệt Truyện Sơ Tập*. Ms. Vh. 1677-1678 (1889), Hán Nôm Institute, Vietnamese translation published as Mộng Khương Đổ, trans., *Đại Nam Liệt Truyện Tiền Biên*, vol. 2 (Huế: Thuận Hóa, 1993); *Ming Shi-lu* [Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty], Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

<sup>3</sup> A team led by Ngô Đức Thọ has made a comprehensive comparison of several manuscripts derived from a single source text, and produced a modern Vietnamese translation. Nguyễn Khoa Chiêm, *Nam Triều Công Nghiệp Diển Chí*, trans. Ngô Đức Thọ and Nguyễn Thúy Nha (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Hội Văn Hóa, 2003). G. Rivière, "Une Lignée de Loyaux Serviteurs: Les Nguyen-Khoa," *BAVH* (1915), 287-304.

In addition to this attempt to revise northern history, the 19th century Huế court wiped out knowledge of the southern regions in earlier periods, particularly prior to 1558, a date chosen to be commemorated as the Nguyễn Dynasty's founding year.

Acceptance of the Huế Historical Office description of the Nguyễn territories as the expanding southern frontier of a Vietnamese state divided by clan rivalry has contributed to the adoption of the vaguely defined concept of the *nam tiến*, or push to the south. The idea of the *nam tiến* was summarized in 2002 as follows:

The Vietnamese, after gaining independence from the Chinese empire in the eleventh century, instituted their own version of the frontier policies of the Chinese empire. The Vietnamese "push to the south" (*nam tien*) from the Red River Delta into what became central and southern Vietnam from the 15th century on brought under their rule diverse peoples-notably the Cham and Khmer-many of whom adopted (although not always voluntarily) Vietnamese civilization. The Nguyen dynasty, founded in 1802, extended the Chinese imperial model to yet other non-Vietnamese peoples within its empire... Vietnamese efforts to "civilize" the Khmer ended only in 1863 when the French established a protectorate over Cambodia.

Alexander Woodside observes that applying the "hierarchical categories of the vast Chinese tributary system ... to a much smaller world" led to a "magnification of the Vietnamese court's tendency to isolate minority peoples," while at the same time providing impetus for their sinicization... Many upland-dwelling peoples, however, were considered to be "savages" (*moi*) ..., much like the "raw" barbarians in the Chinese system, or those who had not yet begun to be civilized.<sup>4</sup>

The term *nam tiến* is a modern one, however, that appears in no Nguyễn text. As recently as the late 19th century, European visitors and residents describing the region's history considered Tonkin, Cochinchina and Champa separate countries, although they sometimes had tributary status, and territorial encroachment occurred between them.

At the turn of the 20th century, a group styling themselves *Amis de Vieux Hué*, many of them missionaries and colonial administrators in Indochina with a passion for the local culture, quickly endorsed Nguyễn political fables and introduced to a French-speaking audience the story of a Nguyễn kingdom founded in 1558. They relied primarily on mid-19th century sources, though gradually incorporating some older material like the *Diễn Chí* manuscript. Leopold Cadière, resident in Huế since 1892, consulted then-new

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<sup>4</sup> Charles Keyes, "Presidential address: 'The peoples of Asia'--science and politics in the classification of ethnic groups in Thailand, China, and Vietnam", *Journal of Asian Studies* 61:4 (2002): 1163-1203.

French military base maps to identify what he thought were the most likely locations of a series of citadels near a stretch of coastline in Quảng Trị and Huế; following the contemporary Nguyễn histories of that time, he believed that a Nguyễn royal center was built, abandoned and rebuilt at least nine times in various locations up and down the coast over about 200 years. Cadière never found clear physical evidence of these former capitals and residences, yet paradoxically, no former Nguyễn royal capitals were ever recorded being destroyed or dismantled. Early European visitors, moreover, had reported seeing features such as defensive walls nearly half a kilometer on each side, with each wall lined with scores of Dutch and Portuguese cannon, a structure unlikely to disappear without a trace. Unlike the many clearly evident Cham citadels and sanctuaries, which the friends of Huế considered relics of a vanished ancient civilization, no unambiguous trace of the successive capitals said to have been built by Nguyễn kings has ever been found. Despite these and similar warning signs, Cadière and others consistently accepted statements by European eyewitnesses only in cases when they did not conflict with Nguyễn assertions.<sup>5</sup>

The term *nam tiến* gained popularity in Vietnamese language scholarship after 1945, when postwar scholars, highly sympathetic to nationalist movements, relied heavily on the concept of a steadily expanding Vietnam as they adapted for their own purposes the romanticized colonial image of Vietnam as a “smaller dragon” with a cultural identity forged by early Chinese domination. An explicit connection was made in Việt Minh propaganda between the “*nam tiến* armies” of historical dynasties, which were imagined to have been composed of patriotic ethnic Vietnamese forces resisting foreign aggression while advancing southward, and the Việt Minh themselves. The *nam tiến* has since become ingrained in the Vietnamese popular imagination as a symbol of their country’s historic achievements.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> According to Cadière’s reading of the Historical Office texts, the residence of the king moved first to Ai Tử in 1558, then to Phước Yên in 1601, to Kim Long in 1636, to Phú Xuân in 1685, possibly moving in 1691, then moving to Bắc Vọng in 1712 and back to Phú Xuân in 1725, replaced by a new palace next to the previous one in 1739, and further palaces built in 1744. In fact, until today, we have no clear archaeological or epigraphal evidence for a royal residence on any of these sites before 1802. Cadière, “Les Residences des Rois de Cochinchine (Annam) avant Gia-Long,” 103-185.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Vickery has commented on the *nam tiến*, with reference to the tenth to 15th centuries: “This is not an impression which comes forth directly from an objective reading of the primary sources, and it no doubt developed to serve the needs of colonialists searching for a benevolent impulse in the conquest of a Vietnam constantly menacing its neighbors. Even Paul Mus was mesmerized by this view of a malignant

## Recent Scholarship on Nguyễn Cochinchina

By the 1990s, scholars working in the Vietnamese language produced new histories highlighting the local dynamics of many regions of Vietnam, including Huế, Quảng Nam, and Gia Định (Saigon). Nguyễn Đắc Xuân, Huỳnh Đình Kết, Trần Đại Vinh, Đỗ Bang, Phan Thuận An, Phan Thanh Hải and many others have carried out a reassessment of the Nguyễn Dynasty, redressing the negative stereotypes of the Nguyễn prevalent in the scholarship of earlier decades. Overall, most Vietnamese scholars tend to treat dynastic chronicles as statements of fact, however, without emphasizing how their narratives informed by contemporary political considerations.<sup>7</sup>

The interpretation of dynastic texts as factually accurate records of past events has remained a consistent feature of Vietnamese scholarship up to the present day. However, one scholar of northern history, Bùi Thiết, suggests that the Lê chronicle edition dated to 1697 (the “*Nội Các Quan*” edition) may be an expurgated Nguyễn Dynasty copy from the 19th century. This viewpoint is vigorously rejected by others who defend it as an authentic Lê court text. An unattributed, book-length rebuttal was published in Hanoi a decade ago, with little scholarly debate since that time. The questions surrounding the

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Vietnam... Then Vietnamese nationalist writers adopted it as evidence for the greatness of their country in the past.” Key texts include: Viện lịch sử quân sự Việt Nam, *Phong Trào Nam Tiến, 1945-1946: kỷ yếu hội thảo khoa học* [Viet Nam Institute of Military History. The Southern Push Movement, 1945-1946: conference proceedings] (Hanoi: Quân đội nhân dân, 1997); Dương Ngọc, *Cuộc Nam-tiến của Dân-tộc Việt-Nam* [The Southern Push of the Vietnamese People] (Hanoi, 1946 ?); Phạm Văn Sơn, *Quân lực Việt-Nam, Tập 2: Quân lực Việt Nam chống Bắc xâm và Nam tiến* [Vietnam’s Military Vol. 2: Vietnam’s Military Opposing Northern Aggression and the Southern Push] (Saigon: Trung-tâm Ấn-loát ấn-phẩm Quân-đội, 1968); Anonymous, *Nam tiến của dân tộc Việt Nam* [The Southern March of the Vietnamese People] (Hanoi: Sử địa, 1970); Khoang Phan, *Việt sử xứ Đàng Trong, 1558-1777: cuộc Nam tiến của dân tộc Việt Nam* [History of the Inner Region 1558-1777: the Southern Push of the Vietnamese People] (Saigon: Khai Trí, 1970); *Nghiên Cứu Lịch Sử*, “Di Dân Của Người Việt Từ Thế Kỷ X Đến Giữa Thế Kỷ XIX” [The Migration of the Vietnamese from the Tenth to Mid-Nineteenth Century] (Special Issue, 1994); Michael Vickery, Champa Revised, Asia Research Institute Working Paper Series Number 37, National University of Singapore (2005), 79.

<sup>7</sup> Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680, Volume Two: Expansion and crisis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 314. Important scholarship on the Nguyễn Dynasty by the scholars listed here and many others has recently been collected in anthologies; a key volume is Hội Khoa Học Lịch Sử Thừa Thiên – Huế, ed., *Cố Đô Huế Xưa Và Nay* [The Huế Royal Citadel Past and Present] (Huế: Nhà Xuất Bản Thuận Hóa, 2005). An important review by a single author incorporating much recent scholarship is Nguyễn Đắc Xuân, *700 Năm Thuận Hóa Phú Xuân Huế* [700 Years of Thuận Hóa, Phú Xuân and Huế] (Ho Chi Minh City: Nhà Xuất Bản Trẻ, 2009); Bruce Lockhart, “Reassessing the Nguyễn Dynasty,” *Crossroads* 15:1 (2001):9-53.



habit of literal interpretation of dynastic texts remain a significant obstacle in any discussion of early Cochinchina, particularly it is primarily the Lê chronicle which provides an apparently independent confirmation of some elements of the Nguyễn narrative.<sup>8</sup>

K.W. Taylor, Yang Baoyun, Nola Cooke, and Li Tana led a recent reassessment of Cochinchina in international scholarship, generally referring to the region by a local term, *Đàng Trong* or Inner Region (the earliest usage of this phrase is in a 17th century text from Tonkin describing a Lê claim on the south, though it is less clear when this name was used by southern peoples to refer to their own land). Yang Baoyun's 1992 survey of Nguyễn history from 1600 to 1775 explores political events from the perspective of the Nguyễn chronicles. Taylor concludes that the "founder" Nguyễn Hoàng thought to have traveled south in 1558 was viewed from the Thăng Long court as disloyal, whereas to the later Huế court he represented openness and new possibilities. Nola Cooke contrasts the institutional cultures of a Confucian Lê Dynasty with what she sees as a more flexible "Southeast Asian" pattern in Nguyễn Cochinchina; she highlights the colonial nature of the Nguyễn royalty and allied migrants as an occupying force, ruling native peoples. Li Tana lends support to Taylor's view that the southern culture was "a new way of being Vietnamese" and observes that the Nguyễn move south to Đàng Trong transformed both rulers and subjects, creating a new cultural pattern that she envisions as multicultural, mercantile, and less rigid than Vietnamese society in the north. These authors agree that a new and unique society emerged in the south during the 16th century, as the Nguyễn clan became marginalized in the north by the Trịnh family's ascent.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> For one perspective, arguing that the *Nội Các Quan* edition cannot be dated to 1697, see Bùi Thiết, ed., *Đối Thoại Sử Học* [Historical Conversation] (Hanoi: Nhà xuất bản Thanh niên, 2000). For a response repudiating the arguments of Bùi Thiết and others, see Anonymous ("Nhiều tác giả"), *Thực Chất của "Đối Thoại Sử Học"* [The True Nature of "Historical Dialogues"], (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Thế giới, 2000). Regardless of the provenance of the text claimed to date to 1697, the work has been revised over the centuries. It is generally accepted that the *Đại Việt Sử Ký*, no longer extant, was written by Trần court scholar Lê Văn Hưu, and sanctioned by the king in 1272; Phan Phu Tiên, a court scholar of Nghệ An descent, reportedly continued the annals up to the time of Lê Thái Tổ in the *Đại Việt Sử Ký Tục Biên* in 1455, and Ngô Sĩ Liên revised both these works in preparing the *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư* in 1479. E. Gaspardone, "Bibliographie Annamite," *BEFEO* 34 (1934):76-77.

<sup>9</sup> Taylor, in his earliest works, had described a strong Vietnamese cultural identity that was forged in the crucible of Chinese occupation, yet became more open and flexible as the Vietnamese invaded the south; "when [the Vietnamese] turned south, it was possible to relax somewhat and to indulge the senses.... The

That Nguyễn Hoàng was embarking on a radical new social experiment remains an integral component of the southern expansion narrative. However, the idea that Đàng Trong offered “a new way of being Vietnamese” for 16th century migrants – one that was less Confucian, less dogmatic, and more flexible and open – is problematic. A dichotomy between north and south, tradition and innovation, or inward-looking agrarian life and outward-looking mercantilism, is an oversimplification of more complex realities in both regions. This paradigm does not acknowledge the mercantile and multicultural aspects of Đàng Ngoài society, ruled during this period by the outward looking Mạc Dynasty, a regime with a coastal political base tied into international trade networks. Attributing societal changes to the actions of a legendary northern general, with non-Vietnamese locals playing a passive role, is overly grounded in the perspective of the Nguyễn annals. In a 1998 essay, Keith Taylor repudiates the *nam tiến* entirely, writing that he does not believe such a thing exists, and that in his essay he would “speak no further of it.” Instead, he examines a series of localized, episodic stories occurring at different times and places from the 15th to 19th centuries, without any overarching dynamic linking them or causing a sustained expansion southward. However, Taylor does not explicitly deny that there was an expansion of a Vietnamese state from the north to the south; rather, he argues that there was not a sustained or inevitable process of expansion.

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south stretched out before them, theirs for the taking. The two poles of Vietnamese national character in modern times grew out of the experience of two national frontiers.” Keith Taylor, *The Birth of Vietnam*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 297. Li Tana writes, “By creating a new state, the Nguyen put themselves into a rebellious position....The formation of Đàng Trong was a dramatic and fundamental change in Vietnamese history, comparable in significance to Vietnam's securing independence from China.” Keith Taylor, “Nguyễn Hoàng and the Beginning of Vietnam’s Southern Expansion,” in Anthony Reid, ed., *Southeast Asia in the early modern era: trade, power, and belief* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 42-64; Li Tana, *Nguyễn Cochinchina: Southern Vietnam in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1998); idem, “An Alternative Vietnam? The Nguyễn Kingdom in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries”, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 29:1 (March 1998); Nola Cooke, “Nineteenth-Century Vietnamese Confucianism in Historical Perspective: Evidence from the Palace Examinations (1463-1883),” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 25:2 (September 1994):270-312; idem, “The Myth of the Restoration: Đàng Trong Influences in the Spiritual Life of the Early Nguyễn Dynasty (1802-47), in Anthony Reid, ed., *The Last Stand of the Asian Autonomies: Responses to Modernity in the Diverse States of Southeast Asia and Korea, 1750-1900*, (St. Martins Press, N.Y., 1997), 269-298; idem, “Regionalism and the Nature of Nguyễn Rule in Seventeenth Century Đàng Trong (Cochinchina),” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 29:1 (March 1998).

and places from the 15th to 19th centuries, but, he suggests, without any overarching dynamic linking them or causing a sustained expansion southward. Since this important essay appeared, scholars have proposed modifications to the way we commonly think about the *nam tiến*, such as considering whether it may have involved the integration of different ethnicities occupying different regions into a national identity rather than simple ethnic displacement, or whether commerce or religion was an important force in the southward movement and integration of new areas. However, the idea of a *nam tiến* has proved difficult to eliminate, and most scholars do continue to speak of it. Even Taylor does not deny that there was an expansion of a Vietnamese state from the north to the south; rather, he argues that there was not a sustained or inevitable process of expansion taking place over centuries.<sup>10</sup>

Victor Lieberman and John Whitmore have pushed back to an extent against these themes of discontinuity and change, arguing that Sinicized or Confucian elements were vital to the political and cultural integration in both regions. Lieberman suggests several explanations for why Vietnamese speakers may have been ultimately more successful than the Cham or Khmer. Drawing on the work of Momoki Shiro and Richard O'Connor, Lieberman suggests that the Red River, Thanh Hóa and Nghệ An deltas might have had superior conditions for agriculture; either the larger population supported by superior agriculture gradually overwhelmed and displaced indigenous populations in the south, or else the irrigation and cropping techniques used by Vietnamese gave them an advantage over Cham and Khmer who farmed rice less intensively. However, O'Connor's "agro-cultural" model describing ethnic assimilation is relatively weak for Champa compared to examples drawn from other parts of Southeast Asia, particularly before the emergence of 19th century global rice markets, since, as O'Connor notes, Champa was likely multi-ethnic, with versatility in farming. ("Champa" is often described, without clear evidence, as having a single dominant ethnic group, the "Cham," although the former peoples of Amaravati and Panduranga may well have had distinct cultural identities; different Vietnamese words, "Chàm" and "Chăm," respectively, are used to distinguish the two groups.) Early 17th century visitors describe northern migrants who were sailors, not

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<sup>10</sup> Keith Taylor, "Surface Orientations in Vietnam: Beyond Histories of the Region and Nation." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 15: 4 (November 1998): 949-978.

farmers. Lieberman's analytical framework of a north-south corridor is more appropriate to the Irrawaddy and Chaophraya basins, not the meandering Mekong and the short east-west rivers that connect it across the Annamite Cordillera to coastal ports.<sup>11</sup>

Lieberman also suggests that a neo-Confucian cultural focus on lineage groups might have led to a more successful family structure, which out-produced "Cham" (and, later, Khmer) families. In addition, effective administrative techniques and social structures borrowed from China might have helped Vietnamese migrants displace their southern neighbors. The reforms of the *Minh Mạng* Emperor in the 1830s (and subsequently) were clearly drivers of cultural integration, particularly in the Mekong Delta, yet Li Tana argues that earlier hypothesized migrants to Cochinchina felt free to "discard or downgrade" those aspects of northern culture, while "embracing a degree of syncretism." Recent studies of the Trần Dynasty emphasize the cultural diversity of the Red River delta; in the 16th century, differences between Tonkin and Cochinchina, which already witnessed centuries of cultural exchange, may have been less dramatic than commonly understood. Another serious problem with the underlying assumption that indigenous peoples were displaced by a uniform Vietnamese migrant group is that for many times and places, migrant populations originated in South China, not Đông Kinh. The political unification of diverse immigrant populations under centralized rule was a late development and may not have been achieved before the 19th century. For example, despite their close proximity, the dialects of people from Huế and Quảng Nam provinces are practically unintelligible to each other.

Less attention to date has been given to studies of Quảng Nam, which retains a more visible legacy of Cham society and culture, than to Huế. Nguyễn Hữu Thông and Nguyễn Chi Trung highlight the importance of regional trade bringing Chinese and Vietnamese to Quảng Nam, and Trần Quốc Vượng, among others, notes Cham traces in

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<sup>11</sup> Victor Lieberman, "An Age of Commerce in Southeast Asia? Problems of Regional Coherence - A Review Article," *Journal of Asian Studies* 54:3 (August 1995), 796-807; idem, *Strange parallels: Southeast Asia in global context, c 800-1830, Vol. 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 358-456. John K. Whitmore, "Literati Culture and Integration in Dai Viet, c. 1430-c. 1840," in Victor Lieberman, ed., *Beyond Binary Histories: Re-imagining Eurasia to c.1830* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 221-244; Taylor K. W., "The Literati Revival in Seventeenth-Century Vietnam," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 18:1 (March 1987), 1-23; Richard O'Connor, "Agricultural Exchange and Ethnic Succession in Southeast Asian States: A Case for Regional Anthropology" *JSEAS* 54:4 (November 1995):968-996.

Central Vietnamese culture, particularly in Quảng Nam. Charles Wheeler argues that Cochinchina's society was formed by Vietnamese and Chinese immigrants assimilating, rather than simply displacing, the indigenous Cham, also noting that Chinese merchants arriving sometimes ahead of or together with Vietnamese settlers in Cochinchina. However, Wheeler, like Li Tana and Richard Von Glahn, considers 16th and early 17th century Chinese merchants an essentially non-political driving force for the *nam tiến*, arriving independently of Vietnamese rulers and drawing trade to a free port in Hội An. Chinese did, for Wheeler, have a significant impact on the Nguyễn state at the end of the 17th and in early 18th centuries, due to the reverence given to religious leaders accompanying Ming loyalist migrants, as described in the Nguyễn chronicles. Wheeler postulates that *Chan* Buddhism spread quickly among the Vietnamese migrants who by then had migrated to the far south. This theory of *Chan* Buddhism as an integrative factor spurring the *nam tiến* relies, in its description of society in the far south, largely on texts authored or issued by the Nguyễn Historical Office (notable for its animosity toward Christians).<sup>12</sup>

In the past decade, scholars including multiple contributors to a volume called *Water Frontier*, Wheeler, and Vietnamese scholars such as Nguyễn Cẩm Thúy and Phan An have described the influence of Chinese migrants in Saigon and the lower Mekong. These authors, building on earlier work by Ch'en Ching-ho and Sơn Nam, emphasize the

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<sup>12</sup> National Committee for the International Symposium on the Ancient Town of Hoi An, *Ancient Town of Hoi An*. (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Thế Giới, 1993); Nguyễn Hữu Thông, *Huế: Nghề và Làng Nghề Thủ Công Truyền Thống*. [Hue: Traditional Crafts and Craft Villages], (Huế: Nhà Xuất Bản Thuận Hóa, 1994); idem, "Several Cultural Features of the Central Region of Vietnam." *Social Sciences* 6 (2004): 99-106; Nguyễn Thế Anh, "The Vietnamization of the Cham Deity Po Nagar," in K.W. Taylor and John K. Whitmore, eds., *Essays into Vietnamese Pasts* (Ithaca: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1995), 42-50; Trần Quốc Vượng, *Miền Trung Việt Nam và Văn Hóa Chămpa* [Central Vietnam and Champa Culture] (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Văn hóa Dân tộc, Hà Nội, 1998); Charles Wheeler, "Cross-Cultural Trade and Trans-Regional Networks in the Port of Hoi An: Maritime Vietnam in the Early Modern Era" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2001), 131-165; idem, "One Region, Two Histories: Cham Precedents in the History of the Hội An Region," in Nhung Tuyet Tran and Anthony Reid, eds., *Việt Nam: borderless histories* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 163-193; idem, "Re-thinking the Sea in Vietnamese History: Littoral Society in the Integration of Thuận-Quảng in the Seventeenth-Eighteenth Centuries," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 37:1 (2006):123-153; Nguyễn Quốc Hùng, *Phố Cổ Hội An và Việc Giao Lưu Văn Hóa ở Việt Nam* [Hoi An Ancient Town and Cultural Exchange in Vietnam] (Danang: Nhà Xuất Bản Đà Nẵng, 2003); Nguyễn Chí Trung, *Cư Dân Faifo – Hội An Trong Lịch Sử* [People of Hội An and Faifo in History] (Hội An: Trung Tâm Quản Lý Bảo Tồn Di Tích Hội An, 2005); Trần Văn An, Nguyễn Chí Trung and Trần Anh, *Xã Minh Hương Với Thương Cảng Hội An Thế Kỷ XVII-XIX* [The Ming Loyalist Village and Hội An Port from the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries] (Tam Kỳ: Trung Tâm Bảo Tồn Di Sản – Di Tích Quảng Nam, 2005).

role of Chinese migrants in the regional trading system in the Gulf of Siam in the 18th century. Less attention has been given to the political activities of Chinese migrants, despite the prominence of “Ming Loyalists” and their descendants in the Nguyễn court. Initial groundwork has been laid by Yumio Sakurai and Trương Minh Đạt, who examine Mạc Thiên Tứ, ruler of a polity centered at Hà Tiên near the modern Cambodian border. However, these reassessments of the Hà Tiên Mạc mirror the texts attributed to Lê Quý Đôn and released by the Historical Office which describe Tứ as the son of a Guangdong “Ming Loyalist” who left China during the Wars of the Three Feudatories.<sup>1314</sup>

This description of the Mạc in Hà Tiên however, is contradicted by 18th century European visitors describing both Hà Tiên and Saigon as ruled by a *metizo* merchant, apparently of mixed Chinese and Portuguese descent. In addition, these scholars accept as historically accurate the disavowal, made in extant texts authored or edited for publication by the Nguyễn Dynasty (which includes on text attributed to a Lê scholar, Lê Quý Đôn), of a familial relationship between Hà Tiên Mạc and the royal Mạc Dynasty. Official texts produced in the 19th century use an unusual variant spelling of a surname pronounced Mạc to refer to the Hà Tiên clan, as if to distinguish it from Mạc royalty. However, the Nguyễn court censored the names of Mạc royalty in the south in many instances, and the stele at the earliest tombs of the Mạc in Hà Tiên use the royal Mạc surname, not the variant character. Thus, this disavowal may have been rooted in 19th

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<sup>13</sup> In particular, Ch'en Ching-ho, "Qing-chu Zheng Cheng-gong Can-bu zhi yizhi Nanqi" [Migration of the Chen Partisans to South Vietnam], Hsin-ya Hsuehpao 8:2 (1968); "Mac Thien Tu and Phraya Taksin: A Survey of their Political Stand, Conflicts and Background," in *Proceedings of the seventh IAHA Conference* (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 1979), 1534-1575; Sơn Nam, *Lịch Sử Khẩn Hoang Miền Nam*. (Saigon: Đông Phố, 1973); Nguyễn Cẩm Thúy, ed. *Định Cư của Người Hoa Trên Đất Nam Bộ (Từ Thế Kỷ XVII Đến Năm 1945)* [Chinese Migration to the South (From the Seventeenth Century to 1945).] (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Khoa Học Xã Hội, 2000); Puangthong Rungswasdisab, "War and Trade: Siamese Interventions in Cambodia: 1767-1851," Ph.D dissertation, University of Wollongong, 1995; idem, "Siam and the Contest for Control of the Trans-Mekong Trading Networks from the Late Eighteenth to the Mid-Nineteenth Centuries," in Nola Cooke and Li Tana, eds., *Water Frontier: Commerce and the Chinese in the Lower Mekong Region, 1750-1880* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), 101-118; Phan An, *Người Hoa ở Nam Bộ [The Chinese in the South] (Ho Chi Minh City: Nhà Xuất Bản Khoa Học Xã Hội, 2005.*

<sup>14</sup> In an earlier paper, I describe the influence of Ming loyalist migrants from south China on the formation of state institutions in Cochinchina, but I rely heavily on the problematic Nguyễn Historical Office sources. Sakurai, Yumio. "Eighteenth-Century Chinese Pioneers." In Nola Cooke and Li Tana, eds., *Water Frontier: Commerce and the Chinese in the Lower Mekong Region, 1750-1880* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004). 35-52. Zottoli, Brian "Roots of Nineteenth Century Vietnamese Confucianism: Scholarship and Statesmanship under the Gia Long Emperor." Paper presented at the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs, Michigan, 1999.

century political considerations. It is clear that there was a connection between the Mạc royalty and the region of South China where the Hà Tiên Mạc are said to originate: Mạc princes fled Tonkin in the early 17th century to a life of exile in nearby Qinzhou (then in Guangdong, now part of Guangxi), where they were given support by the Ming and remained an influential force. The fate of the Mạc royalty in China during the chaotic Ming-Qing transition is unknown. There has been little effort to explore the implications of the presence of the Mạc royalty in Cochinchina at all; Leopold Cadière, in 1943, described a Mạc *gia phả* (family book) found in Quảng Trị, near the Huế capital, but its implications went largely unexplored. More than a half-century later, Huỳnh Công Bá published a brief report on family records of the many Mạc descendants in Trà Kiệu; his paper also received little attention.<sup>15</sup>

The implications of the *Tây Sơn* wars for Cochinchina have only begun to be explored. Li Tana and George Dutton have shown that the *Tây Sơn* conflict arose in part from a monetary crisis which led to the southern court imposing high taxes on the merchants of Quy Nhơn. The focus on economic aspects of the revolt has deflected attention from the concurrent persecution of Christians there after 1750. Given the high population of Christians in Quy Nhơn and other southern provinces, a serious military challenge to the state would have depended in large part on the support of Christians; eyewitness reports by Franciscan missionaries describe the *Tây Sơn* having Christian roots. Dutton's study is focused primarily on *Tây Sơn* imperial rule, and he notes, but does not attempt to reconcile, these contradictions between the highly politicized, 19th century descriptions and the missionary reports regarding the *Tây Sơn* origins. A few recent studies also make oblique reference to connections between the *Tây Sơn*, Chinese merchants who occupied the regions' towns, and highland merchants of the Kontum Plateau.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Leopold Cadière, "Généalogie de la Princesse Giai Épouse de Sai-Vuong," *BAVH* (1943):379-406  
Đình Khắc Thuần, *Lịch Sử Triều Mạc Qua Thư Tịch Và Văn Bia* [The History of the Mạc Dynasty through Writings and Steles] (Hanoi: Viện Hán Nôm, 2001); Huỳnh Công Bá, "Về Quyển gia phả Của Hậu Duệ Nhà Mạc ở Trà Kiệu (Duy Xuyên – Quảng Nam)," [A Later Mạc Genealogy in Trà Kiệu (Duy Xuyên – Quảng Nam)] *Thông báo Hán Nôm học* (1997):22-30.

<sup>16</sup> Đỗ Bang, *Những Khám Phá Về Hoàng Đế Quang Trung* [Discoveries about the Quang Trung Emperor] (Huế: Thuận Hóa, 1998); Hồ Văn Quang, *Tri thức Việt Nam cuối thế kỷ XVIII: sự phân hóa Đại Đế Quang Trung (sự nghiệp and tình yêu)* [Knowledge of Vietnam in the Late Eighteenth Century: Emperor Quang Trung], (Ho Chi Minh City: Nhà Xuất Bản Tự Lực, 1998); Quách Tấn and Quách Giao, *Nhà Tây Sơn* [The Tây Sơn Dynasty] (Ho Chi Minh City: Nhà Xuất Bản Trẻ, 2000); Li Tana, *Nguyễn Cochinchina*, 78-98,

The role played by “Ming Loyalists” in building the early Nguyễn polity c. 1788-1801 in Saigon was explored in greatest depth by Cao Tự Thanh. In an early paper, I pointed to the Saigon roots of 19th century Vietnamese Confucianism, though I relied on the problematic Historical Office sources. In a more recent paper, I began to explore the connections between the Mạc Dynasty, Qinzhou in South China, Quảng Nam and Hà Tiên. Byung Wook Choi, in his analysis of southern Vietnam under the *Ming Mạng* Emperor, describes this Gia Định regime as founded by ethnic Vietnamese; Nguyễn texts describe Huế officers at a garrison Saigon at the end of the 17th century registering 40,000 households, which for Choi are evidence of a large scale migration of ethnic Vietnamese. European reports, while vague, seem to suggest some Cochinchinese migration to a new center being established in Đồng Nai in the early 18th century, as well as the existence of Cochinchinese merchants along with Chinese and Khmer residents. However, they also note that control of the far south gave the Cochinchinese king the ability to control large new populations and mobilize even more massive armies for warfare.<sup>17</sup>

The Sino-Vietnamese term *Hán*, normally used in reference to Chinese people, appears frequently in early Nguyễn records, Choi and Tana suggest that *Hán* actually refers to ethnic Vietnamese, who decided by the early 19th century to adopt that term for to distinguish themselves from the other ethnic groups they encountered in their migration to the Water Frontier. It is unclear, though, that “Vietnamese” migrants would adopt the term *Hán* to distinguish themselves from Chinese migrants and traders already

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139-154; Dutton, George, “The Hoang Le Nhat Thong Chi and Historiography of Late Eighteenth-Century Dai Viet,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 36:2(Jun 2005): 171-190; George Dutton, *The Tây Sơn Uprising* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006); Dutton, George, “Reassessing Confucianism in the Tây Sơn regime (1788–1802).” *South East Asia Research*, 13:2 (July 2005):157-183.

<sup>17</sup> Trần Văn Giàu and Trần Bạch Đằng, eds., *Địa Chỉ Văn Hóa Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh, Tập I: Lịch Sử* [A Cultural Atlas of Ho Chi Minh City, Vol. 1: History] (Ho Chi Minh City: Nhà Xuất Bản Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh, 1985); Cao Tự Thanh, *Nho Giáo ở Gia Định* [Confucianism in Gia Định] (Saigon: Nhà Xuất Bản Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh, 1996); idem, *Nghiên Bút Mười Năm* [Collected Writings] (HCMC: Nhà xuất bản Văn học, 1999); Byung Wook Choi, *Southern Vietnam under the Reign of Minh Mạng (1820-1841)* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004); idem, “The Nguyen Dynasty’s Policy toward Chinese on the Water Frontier in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century,” in Nola Cooke and Li Tana, eds., *Water Frontier: Commerce and the Chinese in the Lower Mekong Region, 1750-1880* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), 85-100; Li Tana, “‘Trần Tây phong thổ ký’: The Customs of Cambodia.” *Chinese Southern Diaspora Studies* 1 (2007): 148-156; Brian Zottoli, “Roots of 19th Century Vietnamese Confucianism,” paper presented at the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs, Michigan, 1999; idem, “The Minh Hương in Nguyễn Vietnam: The Longmen Guard,” paper presented at the Third International Conference on Vietnamese Studies, Hanoi, December 2008.



settled there. Wynn Wilcox, in emphasizing the sheer diversity of the Asian and European officials under the command of Nguyễn Ánh, suggests the far south this was a hybrid cultural zone that was not wholly Vietnamese; this provides a possible starting point for interpreting the classification *Hán* might outside a nationalist paradigm. Thus, it remains difficult to demarcate the roles played “Vietnamese,” vis-à-vis migrants from South China. Indeed, the 20th century term in common usage to refer to ethnic Vietnamese literally means “the people of the capital” – *người kinh*. The use of this term to refer to an ethnic group has no earlier precedent. At most, in early usage, the word *kinh* might have been used to distinguish people in coastal regions and towns from upland groups, yet there was significant cultural diversity on the coasts as well as the highlands.<sup>18</sup>

After almost two decades of renewed attention to social and economic aspects of the history of southern Vietnam, we now have a refined and modified concept of the *nam tiến*, but we have not made the conceptual fresh start proposed by Taylor. We see that diverse communities co-existed, fought, and became integrated as they participated in a dynamic trade network, yet the *nam tiến* has not disappeared, and continues to be carelessly invoked to explain more complex events and processes. Recent studies such as those described above have filled in many of the gaps in the literature on this period, particularly with respect to economic history, but many questions still remain unanswered. There has been relatively little new work on Cochinchina’s political history, meaning that it has been too easy to project the story of the southern push onto a fairly blank screen. Most scholars have adopted uncritically the story told by the chronicles of a

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<sup>18</sup> Trung Vu Nguyen also describes the extent that the uniqueness of Chinese identity as opposed to “Annamese” was in part a byproduct of colonial policies: “... the Chinese [before 1954] occupied a cultural space that differentiated them from the Vietnamese community, a space that prior to French colonialism was not prominent enough to juxtapose the Chinese apart from Vietnamese society... discourse about the Chinese that accompanied (colonial economic) policies produced deep and lasting socio-cultural divisions...” See the dictionary of Professor Hoàng Khê, first president of the Vietnam Association of Linguists, which does not include any definition of *kinh* or *người kinh* as an ethnic group. Trần Văn Kiệm, in his handbook on the *Nôm* writing system, suggests the word *kinh* had an early meaning of distinguishing people of the deltas from highlanders. Wynn William Wilcox, *Allegories of Vietnam: Transculturation and the Origin Myths of Franco-Vietnamese Relations* Ph.D. Diss., Cornell University, 2002; Trung Vu Nguyen, “Marginalizing Practices: Bureaucracy, Ethnography and Becoming Chinese in Colonial Vietnam,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 2009, 4-5; Alexander Woodside, *Vietnam and the Chinese Model: A Comparative Study of Vietnamese and Chinese Government in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988); Hoàng Khê, ed., *Từ Điển Tiếng Việt*, (Hanoi: Trung tâm Từ Điển học, 1988); Trần Văn Kiệm, *Giúp Đọc Nôm và Hán Việt*, (Cary, North Carolina: Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation, 1989).

realm divided by the rivalry between two great families. This political fable has made it difficult to understand the interactions among many diverse populations over time and to dispel the lingering conceit of a unified, ethnic Vietnamese population, moving gradually but steadily southward over centuries.<sup>19</sup>

### Alternative Readings

The narrative discontinuity surrounding “1558” has persisted despite evidence that the political and economic hub at Trà Kiệu, a former Cham capital remained a powerful center, and was allied with Mạc Dynasty in the 16th century. The lack of a definitive decline in Champa was masked by the Lê Dynasty’s aggrandizement of their ancestors’ military campaigns, which lent bias to the histories compiled in the northern territories, and the Nguyễn claim of discontinuity, which entailed the destruction or censorship of histories referring to the Mạc Dynasty and their presence in Quảng Nam. That historical texts written on paper were destroyed is obvious, since the *Ming Mạng* Emperor famously burned and rewrote books by northern literati; the destruction of inscriptions is of course equally likely to have occurred as regimes sought to promote their own historical narratives at the expense of the claims made by earlier residents.

It is still commonly understood that Champa was pushed south as a result of Đại Việt military aggression and migration. However, Amaravati, centered in today’s Quảng Nam province, derived its status as a regional hub from factors relatively unaffected by classical Southeast Asian warfare, such as its convenience for long distance shipping and access to products from the hinterlands. Although studies of Champa suggest the growth of a new center to the south, the decline of the center in Quảng Nam has been overstated. By revisiting this Nguyễn Dynasty origin myth, we can dispense with the facile assumption, recently questioned by several scholars, yet still present in much historical

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<sup>19</sup> See, for example, Nguyễn Đình Đầu’s contribution to a collection of writing on Champa and Mỹ Sơn, which described the fall of Champa and “tracks the progress of this March to the South (*Nam Tiến*) under the Nguyễn Lords” by repeating verbatim a few passages from the *Thực Lục*. Nguyễn Đình Đầu, “The Vietnamese Southern Expansion, as Viewed through the Histories”, in Hardy, Andrew, Mauro Cucarzi and Patrizia Zolese ed., *Champa and the archaeology of Mỹ Sơn (Vietnam)* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2009), 61-77.

writing today, that agency rested with a monolithic “Vietnamese” people who engaged in a “Southern March,” without considering how southern peoples took initiative in the face of a changing environment. If we move past the nineteenth and early twentieth-century fixation on continuous Vietnamese expansion, we can begin to how multiple groups, in Champa and along the middle and lower Mekong basins, profited from and took advantage of alliances with some groups from Đại Việt, while opposing others.

In this study, I review the standard narrative of Nguyễn supremacy in Cochinchina beginning in 1558. I try to identify specific claims made in the Nguyễn texts and ask whether these claims are consistent within and across those sources, and whether they are supported by other evidence. The story of the southern push has obscured a complex history of interactions among diverse groups throughout the region. There is indirect evidence from these records that parts of Cochinchina were controlled by the Mạc royal family for a significant period even after the Lê Restoration, but the nature of the relationship between the Mạc and the ancestors of the Nguyễn emperors of Phú Xuân remains uncertain. Whether Nguyễn Hoàng’s journey was real or fictional, 1558 was not a defining moment in the establishment of Cochinchina. There was continuity in rule from a political center in Quảng Nam during the 16th century.

I try to integrate, in this treatment, discussion of elements that are usually kept separate, including the coastal peoples of Quảng Nam, Hải Dương and Qinzhou (now in Guangxi), the Mạc and Nguyễn clans and their allies, and their relationship with both Cambodia and southern Laos. I examine some problems created by relatively uncritical use of the dynastic texts. I reconsider the role of the *Minh Hương*, a group of immigrants from southern China whose name is usually translated as Ming Loyalists, their relations with Cochinchina’s rulers, and the development of Sinicized state institutions. I suggest that insights by several recent scholars that we should view Cochinchina from the perspective of the sea, and study the peoples of the water frontier, should be balanced by an investigation of the fluid and dynamic developments in the hinterlands.

One obstacle that must still be overcome is our poor knowledge of polities in Cambodia, Champa and Southern Laos in this period, since their dynastic chronicles tend not to match very closely events as described in the Nguyễn histories. Another challenge is that we have no clear picture of the role of Islamic communities and political leaders,

despite evidence they were a powerful force on the mainland, particularly in the early 17th century. Since the dynastic records do not give a clear picture of the role of Islam on the mainland, I have not attempted a systematic assessment of Islam's role in developments in Cambodia and Champa, though I try to point out some areas in which further study is needed.

The vast time period covered in this study is the product of the Nguyễn records themselves. In the space of a few decades in the mid-1800s, the Nguyễn reshaped the previous half a millennium in terms which supported their political claims. In order to examine the assumptions behind the Nguyễn texts, I begin with a brief review of Lý, Trần, Hồ and early Lê Dynasty interactions with Champa. This review sets the stage for a more detailed discussion of events of the 16th century. In Chapter Two, I ask whether the Champa center in Quảng Nam disappeared before a state called Cochinchina emerged, primarily by reviewing Lê and Ming texts. I consider the evidence for the standard narrative of a state based in Quảng Nam, frequently called Chiêm Thành (Zhan Cheng), being pushed southward along the coast due to a gradually expanding Đại Việt, and conclude that this is not the only possible interpretation of these texts. I also explore some of the upland aspects of Đại Việt's early conflicts with its neighbors.

In Chapter Three, I compare descriptions of Cochinchina's 16th century rulers, including travel accounts by early European visitors, reports by visitors in later periods about early Cochinchina, and the stories found in Lê and Nguyễn texts. I consider the evidence for the presence of members of the Mạc royal family in Quảng Nam and possible interpretations of their relationship to the court of Cochinchina. I note the presence of alternate local histories describing Quảng Nam prior to 1558.

In Chapter Four, I review the inconsistencies in stories about Nguyễn Hoàng's journey to Thuận Hóa. I present a novel interpretation of these records suggesting there was a sustained Mạc presence in Quảng Nam throughout the 16th century. I also consider evidence that the Mạc regime controlled highland regions and had activities in areas of Laos or Cambodia.

Although the Mạc Dynasty is known to have weakened in the north by 1596, the year in which the Ming court describes granting recognition to a new Lê ruler, some Mạc royalty may have settled in Ming territory in Qinzhou, while others remained active in

Quảng Nam. In Chapter Five, I demonstrate that Lê dynastic accounts of battles against the Mạc after 1592 are incompatible with other sources. I also consider the implications of a Mạc family record describing a prince intervening in a Cambodian succession crisis, which is recorded taking place in the 17th century, but resembles much more closely the events of the late 16th.

In Chapter Six, I examine aspects of the 17th century conflicts between Tonkin and the south outside the standard narrative of clan rivalry between the Trịnh and the Nguyễn. I reconsider the marriage alliances between Cochinchina and its neighbors in the context of the Mạc presence there. I explore the arrival of new northern coastal forces, their reported roles in the wars with Tonkin, and what appear to be abrupt political changes in Quảng Nam and Thuận Hóa.

Cochinchina's relationship with Southern Ming forces in the years after the Manchu conquest remains poorly understood. In Chapter Seven, I demonstrate that as the Tonkin rulers entered into conflict with Cochinchina in southern Nghệ An province, new migrants assumed control over the southern court, and a queen with links to Cochinchina took power in the lower Mekong. I examine the origins of a Cochinese settlement in Đồng Nai (near Saigon), which appeared soon after a Cambodian prince took power with military support from Cochinchina. I note the ambiguous conclusion of the wars with Tonkin, and question whether Cochinchina maintained control of contested territories in Laos.

In Chapter Eight, I note the reported rise of the Tống Phúc clan as a political force in the court of Cochinchina, and concurrent struggles over access to the Cambodia trade in the final decades of the 17th century. In place of the standard Nguyễn account of the 1698 establishment of administrative control over Saigon, I show that as a *Chan* Buddhist faction strengthened their control of the court, other factions remained active in southern provinces on the Cambodian border.

In the early and mid-18th century, regional warfare intensified as multiple regional forces battled along the coast and in Cambodia and the highlands. In Chapter Nine, I suggest that the struggle for Cambodia was part of a wider conflict over access to trade and production centers in both the middle and lower Mekong regions. I consider the impact of wide reaching reforms that seem to have accompanied the establishment of a

new government. This was followed by internal disputes and battles against other regional powers as new leaders in Cochinchina, Siam and Cambodia forged and broke alliances.

In Chapter Ten, I briefly examine the struggle for the lower Mekong in the early years of the Tây Sơn wars and the emergence of the ruler who would become the first emperor of the Nguyễn Dynasty. I compare the Nguyễn Dynasty origin stories with other sources such as the Hà Tiên Mạc family chronicle and the reports of some European visitors.

### Early Historical Sources on Cochinchina

Surprisingly few archaeological or epigraphic studies have been carried out on Cochinchina. Most scholarly attention in these fields has been devoted to the earlier period of Champa. This makes historical assertions contained in manuscripts and publications such as those of the 19th century Nguyễn court particularly difficult to verify. However, due to the scope of such a project, I have not attempted a broad survey of the archaeological and epigraphic work on Cochinchina for this study. I do consider a few well-known inscriptions, including a lacquered plaque in Hội An referencing a date in 1650, a bronze bell in Huế engraved with a date in 1710, and writings on steles thought to be associated with 18th century political and religious leaders such as the *Chan* monk Nguyễn Thiều and the Mạc rulers of Hà Tiên. There are hints, however, that some of the extant inscriptions appearing to date to the 16th to 18th centuries, particularly in the south but also in the north, may have been created, restored, or modified at a later date. Like other texts, they must be read with caution.

Early Đại Việt – Champa interactions are described in 14th century sources including an early 20th century rescension of the *Việt Điện U Linh* or Spirits of the Việt Realm, a Trần text dated 1329 (*ms. A751*, is found in the Hán Nôm Insitute), and the *Việt Sử Lược*, or History of Việt. The latter is a copy, found in the 18th century *Siku Quanshu*, of what seems to be a history of the Lý Dynasty produced in the late 14th century; it might predate the *Việt Điện U Linh*.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Since my main goal here is to provide background for a more detailed discussion of the 16th century, I omit some texts on Lý and Trần Đại Việt including Ngô Thì Sĩ's 1775 *Việt Sử Tiểu Án*. Lý Tế Xuyên, *Việt*

The Ming *Veritable Records*, as noted above, were usually created by the Ming court shortly after the death of each emperor, based on archived records. There were exceptions to this pattern, in which the Ming falsified records and introduced fictional elements. These include the *Tai-zu Shi-lu*, describing the period of rule of the *Hong-wu* Emperor and his son, compiled in 1418 and omitting the son's reign; and the *Si-zong Shi-lu*, describing the reign of the *Chong-zhen* Emperor from 1628 to 1644, which was compiled in the late 17th century under the Qing. Descriptions of Ming relations with Tonkin and Cochinchina in those periods may be incomplete or inaccurate, so comparing the *Ming Shi-lu* with texts produced by the Lê and Nguyễn regimes may be less useful for the period after 1628. Thus, Ming history does not shed much light on the complex relations Ming forces had with various factions in Cochinchina and Tonkin before and after 1644.<sup>21</sup>

Despite the efforts of the 19th century Huế court to promote a standardized history of the regime, censoring competing narratives, even some Tonkin texts that were published under the imprimatur of the Nguyễn Historical Office contain elements that are difficult to reconcile with the Nguyễn expansion story. Whether or not the *Toàn Thư* was revised in the 19th century, it is not a contemporary record from the era of the Lê Restoration. One text that claims to be such record is the *Ô Châu Cận Lục* or *Recent Record of Ô Châu (Cận Lục)*, the only surviving text bearing an attribution to a Mạc Dynasty author, which exists in an edition printed by the Nguyễn Dynasty. I have followed a commonly referenced manuscript, often considered “complete,” A.263, in the Hán Nôm Institute. This genre of gazetteer begins with a brief political history of past

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*Điện U Linh* [Spirits of the Việt Realm], Ms. A751, Hán Nôm Institute, Hanoi, Vietnamese translation published as: Đinh Gia Khánh, trans., *Việt Điện U Linh* (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Học, 1979); *Việt Sử Lược* [History of Việt], in *Siku Quanshu*, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, reproduced with Vietnamese translation as Trần Quốc Vượng, trans., *Việt Sử Lược* (Huế: Nhà Xuất Bản Thuận Hóa, 2005).

<sup>21</sup> Geoff Wade, “The Ming Shi-Lu (Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty) as a Source for Southeast Asian History – Fourteenth to Seventeenth Centuries,” Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Hong Kong, 1994. Lynn Struve writes, “Chinese official historians had never considered governmental archives or official records, such as the “veritable records,” “diaries of activity and repose” (*ch'i-chu-chu*), or “treasured instructions” (*pao-hsun*), to be sufficient in themselves as sources for the complete history of a dynasty. But the *Shun-chih* officials in charge of the Ming History soon found that even these basic materials were lacking, incomplete, or unreliable for the *Wan-li* (1573-1619), *T'ai-ch'ang*, (1620), *T'ien-ch'i* (1621-27), and *Ch'ung-chen*; (1628-44) reigns. Similar problems later arose in regard to the earliest Ming reigns... Most grievous was the absence of *shih-lu* entries for *T'ien-ch'i* (1624) and the sixth month of *T'ien-ch'i* (1627), or any sort of basic record for the entire *Ch'ung-chen* reign.” Lynn Struve, “The Hsü Brothers and Semiofficial Patronage of Scholars in the K'ang-hsi Period,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 42:1 (June 1982): 231-266.

events in the region being described, so the absence of any political background in the text is a glaring omission. (A description of Mạc political activities would have been unacceptable to the Nguyễn court.) The text retains a preface attributed to a Mạc official named Dương Văn An, dated in the sixth month of *Cảnh Lịch*. This date is corrupted and unusable, since *Cảnh Lịch* is not a calendric year but rather a reign period ascribed to a Mạc ruler, typically understood to be 1548-1553. This fact would have been obvious to the Huế editors, suggesting that the date may have been replaced by an allusion to the reign period immediately before Nguyễn Hoàng allegedly took control of Thuận Hóa. Dating the body of the text itself is further complicated by the author's citation, in the preface, of the works of two anonymous local scholars who provided source material. This suggests that the society described in the text, with a mix of Sino-Vietnamese and Cham traditions, existed for some generations before the time of writing.<sup>22</sup>

Iberian archival sources on Cochinchina have not been consulted extensively in French and English language scholarship, and have frequently been either discounted or interpreted creatively when they contradict the 19th century Historical Office narrative. My knowledge of Spanish and Portuguese texts is rudimentary, but I have made use of some texts here, and others are available in translation. Tomé Pires wrote that he visited Cochinchina circa 1512-1515, yet scholars since Arousseau have assumed that he actually must have visited Tonkin, due to the Historical Office assertion that Cochinchina was unimportant until Nguyễn Hoàng travelled there until 1558. However, the king described by Pires as personally owning 30 or 40 junks and smaller ships does not seem to be Tonkin's Lê Trường Dực, who in the Lê text came from the foothills in Thanh Hóa to seize the Tonkin throne in 1509, yet was never able to control the coast, and lost the north completely during the Hải Dương Trần Cao rebellion circa 1516.

European travelers followed existing trading routes which stopped over in Quảng Nam before crossing the gulf to reach Hainan Island and then Canton, circumventing the natural hazards and pirates of the Tonkin coast and Quảng Ninh. Thus, they may have travelled to China without stopping in Tonkin. Fernão Medes Pinto reports meeting the

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<sup>22</sup> Dương Văn An, *Ô Châu Cận Lục*, Trần Đại Vĩnh and Hoàng Văn Phúc, trans. (Huế, Nhà xuất bản Thuận Hóa, 2001); John Guy, "Artistic Exchange and Regional Dialogue in the Cham Territories," in Andrew Hardy, Mauro Cucarzi and Patrizia Zolese ed., *Champa and the archaeology of Mỹ Sơn (Vietnam)* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2009), 151-196.



Cochinchinese (or sometimes “Cochinese”) king in 1544 in a wealthy highland court filled with giant brass and silver statues of gods, reminiscent of Champassak, on a river that from his description must be the Mekong. Pinto observed this highland king returning from a great battle, although Gaspar da Cruz passed through the coast of “Cauchy China” a few years later without noting any disruptions; Cruz refers to the kingdom’s fertility, abundance and prosperity.<sup>23</sup>

The *Phủ Tập Quảng Nam Ký Sự*, or *Records of Quảng Nam*, held locally in Quảng Ngãi province, purports to be copied from a mid-16th century text about Quảng Ngãi governor Bùi Tá Hán. Although the present text includes obvious changes and additions down to the early 20th century, it is noteworthy in that its descriptions of Quảng Nam are inconsistent with the Historical Office records. I note a series of diplomas in which Bùi Tá Hán was honored by successive regimes from the mid-18th century onwards.<sup>24</sup>

Dominicans missionaries accompanied even the earliest traders to Tonkin and Cochinchina, and a Dominican priest went to Cambodia in 1580, reportedly at the request of its king. The earliest Franciscan account of Cochinchina, from 1582, is described in letters by early 18th century Franciscans. There are several Spanish and Portuguese accounts of expeditions to Cochinchina, Cambodia and Laos in the mid-1590s, the most

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<sup>23</sup> Pinto’s account of Cochinchina is generally ignored completely, apparently because it cannot be fit within the *nam tiến* framework. It makes sense, to me at least, to view to Pinto’s work, written shortly after spending much of his Asian fortune to gain lay membership in the Society of Jesus, then losing that affiliation under murky circumstances, as a valuable resource to be read alongside more cautious Jesuits who stuck to predictable territory. Michael Vickery notes that Pinto’s *lingua franca* of Mon is often quite accurate for local names. For Rebecca Catz, “if Pinto – to take the question of the discovery of Japan as an example – was not actually present on that historic occasion, he was certainly among the earliest group of travelers to arrive on the scene. As such he was close enough to events to have been in a position to pass on a fairly accurate description of the discovery, which cannot be easily dismissed by the historian as unreliable, or as any less reliable than hearsay European accounts, written long after the facts.... [Maurice] Collins believes that Pinto had an instinct for picking out the essentials of the Asian scene and that he had the genius to throw it all together in the most dramatic form.” Michael Vickery goes further, asserting that Mon place names used by Pinto were not nonsensical, and would have represented the *lingua franca* of his time. Armando Cortesão, *The Suma oriental of Tome Pires* (London, The Hakluyt Society, 1944); Fernão Mendes Pinto, *The Travels of Mendes Pinto*, ed. and trans. Rebecca D. Catz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Rebecca Catz, “Fernão Mendes Pinto and His *Peregrinação*,” *Hispania* 74:3 (1991); idem, trans., *The Travels of Mendes Pinto* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Michael Vickery, “*The Travels of Mendes Pinto*, edited and translated by Rebecca D. Catz,” in *Asian Studies Review* (Australia), Volume 14, Number 3 (April 1991), 251-253; C.R. Boxer, *South China in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century*, 73.

<sup>24</sup> Mai Thị, *Phủ tập Quảng Nam ký sự* [Records of Quảng Nam], manuscript held by the Lê family in Mộ Đức, Quảng Ngãi, reproduced in Lê Hồng Long and Vũ Sông Trà, eds. *Tư Liệu Thư Tịch Và Di Tích Về Nhân Vật Lịch Sử Bùi Tá Hán (1496 - 1568)* (Quảng Ngãi: Sở Văn Hóa Thông Tin Quảng Ngãi, 1996).

well-known appearing in Manila Governor Antonio de Morga's history published in English as *The Philippine Islands*. Morga cites reports by adventurers Diego Velloso and Blas Ruiz who claim to have travelled overland to Laos with the assistance of the king of Cochinchina. There is a firsthand account of an expedition to Cambodia and Cochinchina by a Dominican priest, Diego Aduarte, a more controversial account attributed to another member of the expedition, and a secondhand report by Dominican Gabriel Quiroga de San Antonio. I revisit some of the secondary literature on the Iberian intervention in Cambodia and Cochinchina, introducing comparisons with similar information about Cambodia found in Sino-Vietnamese sources such as an early *Mạc gia phả*, described below, which suggests that Mạc interactions with Cambodia may have provided context for a royal marriage alliance circa 1618.<sup>25</sup>

### **Texts on Cochinchina since Alexandre de Rhodes**

Descriptions of Cochinchina become more detailed with the arrival of Jesuits in the mid-1610s; missionary letters are incorporated in a 1621 report by Gaspar Luis. Cristorofo Borri gained firsthand knowledge of Cochinchina's elites, cultivating warm relations with province governors during his stay in Quy Nhon and Faifo from 1618 to 1624. Borri's *Relatione della Nuova Missione delli PP. della Compagnia di Giesu, al regno della Cocinchina* includes a historical description, but no element similar to the Rhodes story; he states that a local governor in Cochinchina (Quảng Nam) had declared himself king there, and then allied with the ruler of a small state on the Chinese border in order to fight against Tonkin. A few details about Cambodia, Laos and Cochinchina are also mentioned in reports by merchants visiting Siam, notably Peter Floris (1612-13) and Jeremias Van Vliet (1629-1634).<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Emmanuel Ferreyra, *Noticias summarias das perseguições da missam de Cochinchina, pricipdiada, et continuada pelos Padres da Companhia de Jesu* (Lisbon: Oficina de Miguel Manescal, 1700); Lorenzo Pérez, "Los Españoles en el Imperio de Annam," *Archivo ibero-americano* (1922):293-340; Antonio de Morga, *The Philippine Islands, Moluccas, Siam, Cambodia, Japan and China at the Close of the Sixteenth Century*, Henry E. J. Stanley, trans (London: Hakluyt Society, 1867).

<sup>26</sup> Leopold Cadière, "Lettre du Père Gaspar Luis sur la Concincina," *BAVH* (1931): 409-432; Olga Dror, and Keith Taylor, *Views of Seventeenth-century Vietnam: Christoforo Borri on Cochinchina and Samuel Baron on Tonkin* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University SEAP Publications, 2006); Jeremias Van Vliet, "Description of Siam," *Journal of the Siam Society, Vol, VII* (1910):1-108.

Guiliano Baldinotti published the short *La Relation sur le Tonkin* in Macao in 1626, before Rhodes' arrival. He describes a culturally and religiously diverse Tonkin, with a widespread cult worshipping the severed head of a hero in a city four days journey from the court, where that hero's nephew and family lived. If this report is taken at face value, the delta population, particularly the coastal peoples where missionaries were most active, may have continued to support the Mạc clan. Jean-Baptiste Tavernier reached Tonkin in 1649, and even though the account published by his brother 30 years later (after his own travels in the region) provides a detailed history of Tonkin, it again makes no mention of the story reported by Rhodes.<sup>27</sup>

Alexandre de Rhodes published in several volumes, incorporating various stories and legends about the history of both Tonkin and Cochinchina that he acquired during his time spent in Macao and traveling in the region. A more systematic analysis of all of Rhodes' output is needed to better assess the potential validity his historical claims, but I provide a suggestion here of how he may have misinterpreted Tonkin's history. After a few years in Tonkin, Rhodes spent a decade in Macao. As Jean-Pierre Duteil points out, he never mastered the Chinese language, and would almost certainly have been unable to read texts written in Sino-Vietnamese classical script describing Tonkin and Cochinchina, even if such texts were provided to him, and there is no evidence that they were. Nonetheless, during his decade in Macao, he produced a history of Tonkin.<sup>28</sup>

Rhodes would have consulted Macao Jesuits who were subject experts in Ming Dynasty history in creating his summary of Tonkin's history. Being illiterate in the language of Tonkin literati, Rhodes would have had little success in penetrating these circles, but other Jesuits in China read the histories describing China's neighbors and provided detailed reports to superiors in Macao and Rome on this subject. We have two Jesuit histories based on Ming sources which indicate what Jesuits knew about Tonkin and Cochinchina during Rhodes' decade of residence in Macao. I consult them as they appear in a compilation of early source texts published by *MEP* after the suppression of the Jesuit order, in 1781, as *Notice Historique Sur la Cochinchine*, and *Mémoire*

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<sup>27</sup> G. Baldinotti, "La Relation sur le Tonkin du P. Baldinotti," *BEFEO* 3 (1903):71-78 ; Jean Baptiste Tavernier, *Recueil de Plusieurs Relations et Traitez Singuliers et Curieux* (Paris, 1679).

<sup>28</sup> Peter Phan, *Mission and catechesis: Alexandre de Rhodes and inculturation in seventeenth-century Vietnam*, (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books , 1998); Alexandre de Rhodes, *Histoire du Royaume de Tonkin*, Jean-Pierre Duteil, intr. (Paris: Éditions Kimé, 1999).

*Historique Sur le Tong-king*. (These texts call the former region Cochinchina throughout its history, without using the name Champa.) The former history ends at the point Ming histories stop referencing an independent Cochinchina, not long after the Lê attacks of the late 15th century. The latter history refers to Ming descriptions of Tonkin's history. The version published in 1781 was updated with some Qing era information, and so the description of Tonkin concludes in about 1725. Its narrative of 16th century, however, is based on Ming information available during Rhodes' Macao residence.<sup>29</sup>

The *Mémoire Historique* describes an early 16th century Tonkin rebel who assassinated the king and usurped the Lê throne. The general Mạc Đăng Dung put down this rebellion and installed a young nephew of a former Lê king on the throne. The general then assumed authority in the young king's place in 1522, roughly a century before Rhodes' arrival in Tonkin, plotting to seize absolute power by killing the boy king. Fearing for her son's life, the king's mother helped her son flee to the Western Court in Thanh Hóa (Tsing-Hiao Fou). This *Mémoire Historique* does not describe events in Cochinchina after the Mạc victory.

Rhodes returned to Rome in 1649, publishing the Tonkin history authored in Macao in the 1630s in Italian, Latin and French over three years. He was successful in raising wide public interest in these missions. Without naming the kings involved, he repeats dramatic elements that appear in the Macao Jesuit history: the restoration by a great general assuming absolute authority and a young boy's flight to the south. He places the initial rebellion two centuries in the past (the *Mémoire Historique* indicates it occurred after 1497, or about 150 years before his publication.) Rhodes does not describe the king as a boy fleeing with his mother. Instead, he claims the king exiled from Tonkin invaded a border province of Champa, calling his new country Cochinchina. Rhodes' episode has no equivalent in any Ming or local history. The Macao Jesuits specify the king went to Thanh Hóa; Rhodes calls the province the king seized from Champa Thin Hoa. From there, the king's general drove the rebel out of Tonkin and restored the throne, while assuming full hereditary authority.

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<sup>29</sup> *Lettres Édifiantes et Curieuses, Écrites des Missions Étrangères: Mémoires de la Chine*, vol. 16. (Paris: Chez J.G. Merigot le Jeune, 1781), 245-334.

Rhodes places the second element, a boy's flight, one hundred years in the past. One of a line of the hereditary Tonkin generals arranged for his daughter to marry a soldier, who usurped the general's position on his death, when his rightful heir was still a young boy. The daughter, fearing for her brother's life, sent him to Cochinchina, where he became Governor and declared war on Tonkin. Rhodes seems to confuse the Lê Western Court in Thanh Hóa, Tsing-Hioa in the Jesuit transliteration, where the king fled during a Tonkin rebellion, with the court of Cochinchina, here calling it Thin Hoa, although that court's location is more commonly transcribed as Sinoa. Similarities in pronunciation of three place names, Thanh (青) Hoa or Qing-hua, Thuận (順) Hóa or Shun-Hua (referring to Huế), and the name of the Cochinchina court (Sin-hoa or Sinoa), led to confusion.

Antonio Francisco Cardim, who visited Macao in the 1630s during the period of Rhodes' stay, states that the former governor of Cochinchina was a relative of the king of Tonkin, who went to war with, yet failed to occupy, his Tonkin homeland. That governor's son became Cochinchina's king and refused to pay tribute to Tonkin. His *Relation de la Province du Japon* reached the presses in Europe in 1645, four years before Rhodes' book did, and Cardim claims he obtained information from missionaries in Tonkin. Cardim was not particularly concerned with historical accuracy, introducing obvious errors such as a claim that the names Tonkin and Annam both mean "Western Country."<sup>30</sup>

European confusion about Cochinchina may have stemmed in part from the lack of reports on the highland regions after the visit by Blas Ruiz; some early visitors note that the highlands were an important part of the Cochinchinese kingdom. A VOC merchant, Geraerd Wuysthoff, and companions, visited Cambodia in 1635-42, embarking on a prolonged expedition to Laos in 1641, and VOC reports on this period were edited for general publication 25 years later when public interest was aroused by a massacre of Dutch there. However, efforts to establish trade missions in Laos ceased by the mid-17th

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<sup>30</sup> Antonio Francisco Cardim, *Relation de la province du Japon* (Belgium: Ghent University, 1645).

century. Jesuit Martino Martini produced the 1655 *Novus Atlas Sinesis*, which makes only vague reference to countries on China's southern border.<sup>31</sup>

More systematic study of the VOC archival material on Cochinchina in the mid-17th century is needed. One early Dutch source is a letter from a local merchant on life in Hội An in 1602, describing the royal family's involvement in commerce. Cadière notes that a letter from the Cochinchinese king to the Dutch did not include a Lê reign year (a required element if the local ruler really did recognize Tonkin's "emperor" at that time). Hoàng Anh Tuấn provides an analysis of the VOC alliance with Tonkin, leading to aborted attempts at a coordinated military strike against Cochinchina in the 1640s. Alfons Van Der Kraan writes about Anthony Van Dieman's 1644 expedition to Cambodia, and VOC reports demonstrate that Cochinchina had economic and political involvement in Cambodia in that era. However, after the Dutch withdrawal and Van Dieman's death in 1645, VOC archives apparently contain less useful information about Cochinchina. Diplomatic correspondence held in Nagasaki dating back to the early 17th century seems to describe shipping carried out under Cochinchina seals, emphasizing state involvement in trading activities in Quảng Nam.<sup>32</sup>

Tellingly, Rhodes himself ignores his earlier story in his follow-up 1653 work, *Divers Voyages et Missions*, including an account of travels in Cochinchina from 1640 up to his abrupt 1644 expulsion from Quảng Nam.<sup>33</sup>

The *An Nam Cung Dịch Ký Sử*, or *Record of Travel to Annam*, is said to be authored by a powerful Ming Loyalist general, Shu Shunsui. A preface attributed to him states he is describing events during travels to Cochinchina in 1657. A version of this text was included in *Shu Shunsui Zhenshu*, published in Tokyo in 1912. Shu Shunsui's text

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<sup>31</sup> Carool Kersten, trans., *Strange Events in the Kingdoms of Cambodia and Laos (1653-1644)* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 2003); Martino Martini, *Novus Atlas Sinensis* (Amsterdam: J. Blaeu, 1655).

<sup>32</sup> Li Tana and Anthony Reid, eds., *Southern Vietnam under the Nguyễn: Documents on the Economic History of Cochinchina (Đàng Trong), 1602-1777* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1993); Alphons Van Der Kran, *Murder and Mayhem in Seventeenth-Century Cambodia* (Bangkok: Silk Worm Books, 2009); Phan Thanh Hải, "Về Những Văn Thư Đổi Giữa Chúa Nguyễn và Nhật Bản (Thế Kỷ XVI-XVII)," [On Letters Between the Nguyễn Lords and Japan] *Nghiên Cứu Lịch Sử* (July 2007): 59-68.

<sup>33</sup> A revised version of the Rhodes map was apparently produced for incorporation in *Divers Voyages et Missions*, and other Jesuit maps of Cochinchina published c. 1650 have significant variations in their toponyms and political boundaries. Metello Saccano and Carlo della Rocca replaced Rhodes in Cochinchina a year later, and Saccano's 1653 *Relation de progres de la Foy au Royaume de la Cochinchine* seems to suggest relations with the court improved after Rhodes was expelled, but unfortunately I have not been able to consult it here.

provides a unique window into the Ming Loyalist presence in Cochinchina, describing a political environment difficult to reconcile with the accounts of the Lê and Nguyễn dynastic chronicles. The *Relation* of Joseph Tissanier, who visited Tonkin in 1658, 1659, and 1660, describes Tonkin at a time when Lê histories become less reliable. Tissanier does not discuss Cochinchina in any depth, but describes it as a tributary that previously rebelled against Tonkin, and mentions Cochinchina's military intervention in Cambodia. He names the *Chúa* as Tring (Trịnh), claiming the great-grandfather of the then-reigning *Chúa* had been a commoner who married the daughter of a noble and fought against the Mạc.<sup>34</sup>

A *quốc ngữ* history of Tonkin, held in the Vatican, was written or presented by a Tonkin Christian convert, Benedict (Bento) Thiện, to his superior in Tonkin, Giovanni Filippo de Marini, dated 1659, or more than 60 years after the Lê were recognized by the Ming. Thiện provides a summary in Tonkin vernacular of the version of the royal chronicles available to him, beginning with early legends and ending with the defeat of the Mạc Dynasty. Thiện refers to Lê commanders as *Chúa* and describes them in sympathetic terms as champions of the Restored Lê Dynasty. Following Đỗ Quang Chính, I refer to the manuscript as Thiện's *Lịch Sử Annam* (History of Annam). Thiện provides a summary in Tonkin vernacular of a version of the royal chronicles available to him, beginning with early legends and ending with the defeat of the Mạc Dynasty. Thiện refers to Lê commanders as *Chúa* and describes them in sympathetic terms as champions of the restored Lê Dynasty. A Thanh Hóa general with the surname Nguyễn rebelled against the Mạc; the first *Chúa* is this general's a son-in-law, but there is no reference to competition with a legitimate heir. After the death of the Nguyễn general, another *Chúa* led a series of spectacular battles to drive out the Mạc Dynasty. The ruler of Cochinchina is described as a Mạc rebel who refused to submit to the Lê king following the *Chúa*'s conquest of Đông Kinh. Formulaic phrasing in the Lê history might be interpreted as a signal to Marini that the author was unable to commit *lèse-majesté* by speaking of the Lê-Trịnh regime's failings.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Tissanier, 96-98.

<sup>35</sup> Đỗ Quang Chính, *Lịch Sử Quốc Ngữ 1620-1659* (Saigon: Tủ Sách Ra Khai, 1972).

Other letters from both local and European Christians written between the 1620s and 1650s are held by the Vatican. Vatican knowledge of Tonkin history was compiled in the *Delle Missioni de' Padri Della Compagnia di Giesu Nella Provincia del Giappone*, published in Rome in 1663 by Marini after his visit to Tonkin c. 1646-49. Marini also describes the travels of another Jesuit, Giovanni Maria Leria, to Laos in the 1640s, and draws on reports from Tonkin in the years since he travelled there including the history of Đại Việt sent to him by Benedict Thiện in 1659. His text incorporates both knowledge from Macao and historical narratives available in Tonkin under the Lê.<sup>36</sup>

Perhaps because Christianity in Tonkin took hold in coastal regions where sympathy for the ousted Mạc was strongest, Marini also provides reports from informants who, unlike the author of the *Lịch Sử Annam*, were able to risk speaking ill of the regime in power at that time. The Vatican was more inclined to trust reports by Christian Mạc sympathizers of the former king's assassination through trickery, and less sympathetic to a transparently hyperbolic state history claiming that the Lê Dynasty was restored through martial prowess. Despite incorporating elements from Thiện's manuscript describing Tonkin's legendary origins and the history of past centuries in his 1663 narrative, Marini omitted entirely Thiện's description of a *Chúa*'s heroic victories over the Mạc. In place of a spectacular war of restoration carried out by a *Chúa*, he describes a strong Lê Dynasty ruling until 1536, when a Trịnh officer of the Mạc regime carried out a palace coup. Thus, Marini attributes the Lê Restoration to the subterfuge of a member of the Trịnh clan who ruled in Tonkin at the time of Marini's visit. This Trịnh officer married a daughter of the Mạc king, and then poisoned his father-in-law. He had accumulated enough power that he was able to seize the capital and execute members of the Mạc royal family who did not retreat to Cao Bằng in 1596. To better maintain the pretext that he was committed to defending the realm, this Trịnh official identified a purported descendent of Lê royalty and crowned him king, proclaiming himself to the lesser office of *Chúa*, or Governor.

Marini adds a story similar to that told by Rhodes, but applies it to the son of the Mạc king. The first Trịnh *Chúa* intended to kill the Mạc king's young son, but his wife,

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<sup>36</sup> Giovanni Filippo de Marini, *Delle missioni de' padri della Compagnia di Giesu nella prouincia del Giappone, e particolarmente di quella di Tumkino* (Rome: Nicolo Angelo Tinassi, 1663).



the boy's sister, stayed his hand, and a few years later the boy was made governor of Cochinchina. His descendants expanded their territories to include the wealthy country of Ciampa. The current *Chúa*, aware that the kings of Cao Bằng and Cochinchina held ancient claims to Tonkin, knew that if he amassed armies to attack one region, the other would seize his capital.

Texts on early Cochinchina are found in the archive of the *Missions Etrangères de Paris*, part of Rome's *Congregation de Propaganda Fide* charged with controlling missionary activities in much of Asia. *MEP* knowledge of Cochinchina's early history, however, was fragmentary at best. A three volume survey of *MEP* records spanning three centuries was compiled by archivist Adrien Launay in the 1920s, two decades after he produced a history of Đại Việt. The archive begins with the 1658 appointment of its first apostolic vicar, Lambert de la Motte. Motte spent much of his career striving to expand his influence in Siam (though rival Jesuits claimed he lacked papal authorization to do so), and he died in Siam in 1679, having visited Cochinchina only twice. Records produced under subsequent apostolic vicars, often from Bangkok, provide glimpses of Cochinchina's court, but no clear narrative of its early history; *MEP* reports from Cochinchina between 1684 and 1698 do not provide a definitive historical review.<sup>37</sup>

The story of a Tonkin ruler sent to Cochinchina evolved with each retelling. Bénigne Vachet, writing from Cochinchina between 1671 and 1685, describes a military conflict between Tonkin and China approximately 100 earlier. Tonkin invaded a small state lying between it and China, driving the prince who controlled that state to seek Chinese protection. In pursuit, Tonkin forces encroached on Chinese territory and were beaten back. Ongoing but sporadic fighting between China and Tonkin ended only after many years, when China grew tired of battling "pirates" led by Tonkin's chief general and made peace, again granting Tonkin tributary status. The general who led these battles became the first *Chúa*, whose daughter married a powerful officer; when the *Chúa* died,

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<sup>37</sup> Adrian Launay, *Histoire Ancienne et Moderne de L'Annam* (Paris: Librairie Coloniale, 1885); idem, *Histoire de la Mission de Cochinchine 1658-1683*, vols. I-III (Paris: Anciennes Maisons Charles Douniol et Retaux, 1925); Nola Cooke, "Strange brew: Global, regional and local factors behind the 1690 prohibition of Christian practice in Nguyễn Cochinchina," *JSEAS* 39:3 (2008):383–409. Additional material is found in the third volume of Daniello Bertoli's *Dell'istoria della Compagnia di Giesu*, published in 1663 with a section on the court of Cochinchina which I have not included here. A letter from the king of Cochinchina sent to Macao in 1666, held in the Real Academia de la Historia de Madrid, has received little attention; it might be compared with the roughly contemporary VOC correspondence.

that officer became regent, trying to kill young heir, who the daughter had sent to Cochinchina. Vachet's story resembles that of Rhodes, yet his description of conflicts with China suggest that the *Chúa* whose boy was sent to Cochinchina may have been part of the Mạc regime, not a Lê general.<sup>38</sup>

Following the French failure in 1688 to establish a military presence in Bangkok, *MEP* receded again, with Jesuits again advocating a stronger presence in Cochinchina. Manuel Ferreira addressed his *Noticias summarias das perseguições da missam de Cochinchina*, to the king of Portugal in 1694, and was appointed to oversee a Tonkin mission. Ferreira claims that Tonkin's king conquered Cochinchina, which he calls Quang (Quảng Nam). A Tonkin rebellion was suppressed by the *Chúa*, who supplanted the king as the principle ruler. A *Chúa* held power peacefully for centuries over both Tonkin and Quang, until one *Chúa* died with a young heir "at the end of the last century" and the *chua's* daughter, married to a usurping general, helped the boy escape to Cochinchina. The *Noticias* gives the title *Chúa Tiên* to a southern king, unlike Thiệu, for whom *Chúa Tiên* had restored the Lê to Thăng Long.<sup>39</sup>

The Qing era text on Cochinchina studied most extensively to date is the *Hải Ngoại Ký Sự* or *Record of the Outer Sea*, attributed to Dashan (Thích Đại Sán), a *Chan* religious leader who is said to have visited Phú Xuân and Hội An. The first of two slightly different editions (in the Toyo Bunko and Taiwan National Archives) contains a preface dated 1696 (there are also two prefaces by Chinese monks, one dated 1699), attributed to "King of Đại Việt (*Đại Việt Quốc Vương*) Nguyễn Phúc Chu;" that king, who certainly did not sign any document with his given name, allegedly lavishes praise on the book and its author. The name Phúc Chu (without a surname) appears once in the text along with a second reference to the title *Đại Việt Quốc Vương*. A new court had emerged, dominated by the relatives of an influential Buddhist queen mother, in a location different than the heavily fortified capital visited by Europeans from the 1620s to

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<sup>38</sup> Launay, *Histoire*, vol 1, 78-95.

<sup>39</sup> Emmanuel Ferreyra, *Noticias summarias das perseguições da missam de Cochinchina, principdiada, et continuada pelos Padres da Companhia de Jesu* (Lisbon: Officina de Miguel Manescal, 1700).

1670s; a bronze bell cast in a Guangdong monastery in the same period appears to be dedicated to this queen, refers to her as the Đại Việt king's Royal Nursemaid.<sup>40</sup>

British merchant Thomas Bowyear spent half a year in Faifo in 1695-96, visiting the court at the behest of the British East India Company, and reported on his dealings there. His brief historical narrative is seemingly a combination of information from other sources. He reports a version of the Rhodes story: a usurping Tonkin *Chúa* attempted to kill his young brother-in-law, and his sister helped him flee to Cochinchina; he names the boy *Chúa Tiên*. Also in 1696, Gemelli Careri published a compilation drawn from Tonkin reports to Rome. Careri states that the king of Cochinchina was descended from a *Chúa (Kiva)*, who died “a little more than one century ago,” around the time the Lê were recognized by the Ming in 1596. This *Kiva* had left his young son in the care of his son-in-law, who is referred to both as a regent and, as in Borri's text, a tutor. Like Vachet, Careri states that the regent tried to kill the heir, but his wife had him brought to Cochinchina with a group of his father's supporters, who in this story helped him kill the governor there and claim Champa as a tributary state.<sup>41</sup>

Commentary on Cochinchina's political affairs in the 17th and 18th centuries is found in the archive of reports by Chinese ship captains, some residents of Cochinchina or Cambodia, visiting Nagasaki. These reports contain many of the earliest descriptions of the interventions in Cambodia by Cochinchinese and the Ming Loyalists in diaspora, undermine several elements of the Historical Office narrative about the Ming Loyalists, particularly the claim that a Chinese navy arrived in the south under a unified command, and was immediately directed by a king in Huế to settle border territories on the lower Mekong.<sup>42</sup>

### **Texts Produced during the Nguyễn Dynasty Era**

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<sup>40</sup> Chu Thuán Thủy, *An Nam Dung Dịch Ký Sự* [Record of Travel to Annam], trans. Vĩnh Sinh (Hanoi: Hội Khoa Học Lịch Sử Việt Nam, 1999); Thích Đại Sán, trans. Nguyễn Phương and Nguyễn Duy Bột, *Hải Ngoại Ký Sự* [Record of the Outer Sea] (Huế: Viện Đại Học Huế, 1963).

<sup>41</sup> Careri uses the terms *chúa* and *búa* only in discussion of Tonkin. Darlymple, *Oriental Repertory*, vol. 1 (London: George Bigg, 1793), 75-91; Leopold Cadière, “Les Européens qui ont Vu le Vieux Huế : Gemelli Carari,” *BAVH* 17:3 (1930): 287-319.

<sup>42</sup> Yoneo Ishii, *The Junk Trade from Southeast Asia: Translations from the Tōsen Fusetsu-gaki, 1674-1723* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1998).

A passage which appears to bear a slight similarity to the narrative in the first book by Alexandre de Rhodes appears in the *Lê Toản Thư*. In that text, Nguyễn Hoàng is sent to Thuận Hóa to aid another local official. Even the *Toản Thư* itself simply describes an adult officer, Nguyễn Hoàng, ordered by the Lê king to go to govern Thuận Hóa; a later passage references his father and sister, but no succession crisis of any sort. Unlike Rhodes, there is no suggestion of the *Chúa* wishing to kill the young boy. Hoàng later defeats the Mạc Dynasty in Đông Kinh, before returning to the south.

The debate over the authenticity of the *Nội Các Quan* edition of the *Toản Thư* dated 1697 has been noted above. If the Lê text was revised at a later time, these descriptions of the Nguyễn founder might have been among the passages revised. One possible measure of the text's accuracy during various historical periods is its record of solar and lunar eclipses. Cosmological events were culturally and politically important to the court, and as a result were observed and recorded carefully. Ho Peng Yoke demonstrates that eclipses during the earliest periods in the *Toản Thư* were faithful copies from Chinese sources. During the 16th century, however, the Thăng Long court itself is described (in the *Toản Thư*) observing and marking the occasion of eclipses, a practice confirmed by 17th century visitors. Our knowledge of the state of the Lê court in the 1690s is limited, but if the *Nội Các Quan* chronicle text is an authentic 1697 text authored by Lê officials, its eclipse reports, particularly for the period of the Lê Restoration in Thăng Long c. 1596-1697, should be accurate. However, the *Toản Thư* has some inaccurate solar eclipse reports in all historical periods. From 1300 until 1467, there are ten accurate solar eclipse reports, whereas false eclipse reports occur in 1349, 1351, 1358, 1360, 1505 and 1511. From 1300 until 1587, 22 eclipses that obscured at least half the sun's area go unreported. There are eight accurate eclipse reports in 1587, 1590, 1594, 1596, 1603, 1615, 1634, 1637, 1666 and 1669. From 1587 to the final year of the text, 1675, 10 eclipses that obscured at least half the sun's area go unreported. Eclipses that obscured less than five percent of the sun's area in Beijing in 1631 and 1671, and were not visible at all in Thăng Long, are nevertheless reported in the *Toản Thư*. A lunar eclipse in 1632 is reported as a solar eclipse in a copying error. As Ho Peng Yoke notes, there is a false report in the *Toản Thư* of a solar eclipse in 1638 when none occurred. A 1669 eclipse, on the other hand, is described correctly as a total eclipse in Thăng Long.

During the years of the Lê Restoration in Thăng Long, when the court officers are known to have carefully recorded solar eclipses, the majority of the solar eclipse reports are correct, but a few are in error, and about half of eclipses which obscured more than half of the sun go unreported.<sup>43</sup>

Several *gia phả* (genealogies or family books) of the royal Mạc clan have been identified in the south. One, studied by Cadière in the early 1940s, bears the name Cỗ Trai village, a Mạc ancestral village in Hải Dương, but was found in Quảng Trị. It describes the lineage of a daughter of the Mạc prince and regent Mạc Kính Điển, named Giai. (Cadière never mentions any knowledge of the many Mạc *gia phả* not far to his south, in Quảng Nam.) This text was created by descendants of Mạc royalty in 1725, with substantive revisions dated to 1765; both versions were produced immediately following the death of a king. It provides a genealogy of descendants of Mạc royalty in the south down to the 18th century, and describes a southern king leading rituals honoring the Mạc ancestors in a village named Trà, which must be Trà Kiệu. Another *gia phả* exists in the Trà Kiệu Mạc family temple restored by the Nguyễn Dynasty in the early 19th century order to honor Giai as a Nguyễn royal ancestor. This *gia phả* describes the lineage of the Mạc prince Cảnh Huống (a brother of Mạc Kính Điển, who appears as a regent in Lê histories). It is dated to 1680, but a major revision of the text took place in 1832, so the extent version should be considered a product of the *Ming Mạng* reign that incorporates some earlier elements. The Mạc lineage is also described in other Quảng Nam family books.<sup>44</sup>

For writers outside the Nguyễn court, *lèse-majesté* was a serious concern, and allegiance to local and family tradition was balanced with adherence to the norms of the regime. The *Hoan Châu Ký*, or *Record of Hoan Châu* (Nghệ An), is a family history written in a long narrative form, held by the Nghệ An Nguyễn Cảnh clan, which was probably originally produced between 1680 and 1705, with additions and revisions to the text since then. Trần Nghĩa has compared two copies from Nghệ An families (now in the Hán Nôm Institute, *Vhv.4199* and *Vhv.4200*), and determined they were copied during the

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<sup>43</sup> Ho Peng Yoke, "Natural Phenomena Recorded in the Đại-Việt Su'-ky Toan-Thu', an Early Annamese Historical Source." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 84:2 (1964):127-149.

<sup>44</sup> Cadière, L., "Généalogie de la Princesse Giai Épouse de Sai-Vuong." *BAVH* (1943):379-406; Huỳnh Công Bá, "Về Quyển Gia Phả Của Hậu Duệ Nhà Mạc ở Trà Kiệu (Duy Xuyên – Quảng Nam)" [A Later Mạc Genealogy in Trà Kiệu (Duy Xuyên – Quảng Nam)] *Thông báo Hán Nôm học*, 1997:22-30.

Nguyễn Dynasty *Gia Long* and *Thành Thái* reigns. This family book is concerned with the descendants of a different Nguyễn general with Hải Dương roots in Nghệ An, said to have served Lê Ninh. The general's second son, Nguyễn Hoan, is a high officer in the Lê rebel force who plays a key role in defeating the Mạc. The text claims an origin between 1680 and 1705, but exists only in 19th century copies, and later copyists add information from other sources. For example, following a description of Trịnh Kiểm's death and succession of a son, Trịnh Cối, attended by one of the Nguyễn Cảnh clan, a copyist asserts that he did not find this episode in the old Nguyễn Cảnh family book, and could not understand how it could have been left out. One hint that the *Hoan Châu Ký* and Benedict Thiện's manuscript in the Vatican relied on a common source is a battle occurring in both texts at Vân Sàng and a place written as Bái Tròi or Bái Trời in Thiện's text, called Bãi Tròi in the *Hoan Châu Ký*. However, in Thiện's text this battle occurs after the Mạc *Quang Bảo* reign ended, against the Mạc ruler *Hồng Ninh*, and the outcome is reversed: the Lê retreat after their betrayal by the *Xuân* Duke Tử Nha. No other Lê text describes any battle in Vân Sàng and Bãi Tròi, or this Duke.<sup>45</sup>

The *Nam Triều Công Nghiệp Diễn Chí*, here *Diễn Chí*, the historical novel described in the first section above, plays a pivotal role in development of Nguyễn Dynasty narratives. I follow convention in using this title (given in the mid-19th century *Liệt Truyện* to a work authored by Nguyễn Khoa Chiêm) to refer to this historical novel, even though early copies of the novel are undated and do not name an author. I have followed a study of five manuscripts by a team led by Ngô Đức Thọ, based on *A.24*, held by the Hán Nôm Institute, and incorporating elements from other closely related rescensions. There are three obvious sequences of missing pages in all extant copies, in each case the final pages of a chapter.<sup>46</sup>

In the *Diễn Chí*, a king, not said to be a boy, fled from Đông Kinh to Thanh Hóa because he was too weak to oppose Mạc Đăng Dung, and then is captured in Thanh Hóa and killed. Like the Macao Jesuit text, a woman then helps a young boy escape murder by

<sup>45</sup> Nguyễn Cảnh Thị. *Hoan Châu Ký*. Ms. *Vhv.4199* and *Vhv.4200*, Hán Nôm Institute, Hanoi. Reproduced with Vietnamese translation as Nguyễn Cảnh Thị, *Hoan Châu Ký (1697)* [Record of Hoan Châu], trans. Nguyễn Thị Thảo (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Thế Giới, 2004).

<sup>46</sup> According to Hoàng Xuân Hãn, the first copy of the novel to be explicitly titled *Nam Triều Công Nghiệp Diễn Chí* and attributed to Nguyễn Khoa Chiêm seems to be one consulted by Phan Khoảng in the mid-20th century. Hoàng Xuân Hãn, “Đúng ba trăm năm trước [Three Hundred Years Ago],” *Tập san Sử Địa* (26, 27 and 28), 1969.

a usurper. After the king was killed, the dead king's wife feared for their young and helpless son, and she escaped with him to Laos. The *Diễn Chí* also states that a general with the surname Nguyễn (here Nguyễn Kim, or Cam) fought the Mạc in Thanh Hóa. He died leaving his infant son Nguyễn Hoàng in the care of his son-in-law, Trịnh Kiểm. Kiểm does not plot to kill the boy (the element of a general plotting to kill a young boy and a female helping him escape were already used to describe the Lê heir going to Laos with his mother). However, Kiểm decides to send the young man, when he was already an adult, to be governor of Thuận Hóa. In an echo of the Rhodes story, the novel includes an observation that Kiểm sent the Hoàng south in the hope that the Mạc might kill him there. The novel's plot foreshadows the Nguyễn dynastic narrative, but in this novel, unlike Lê and Nguyễn texts, Hoàng plays no role in driving the Mạc from Tonkin.

Several aspects of the historical novel suggest it was not written by an early 18th century high court official in Phú Xuân. Setting aside the question of whether an official closest to the throne would choose to write a work of fiction about his king's father (and other ancestors), the literary style of the text is inappropriate. The novel's characterizations of those kings are less respectful than could be reasonably expected from a high official; for example, the author mocks an early southern king for his lack of refinement and poor knowledge of classical literati culture. Naming taboos may not have been applied in Cochinchina in a consistent fashion, but manner in which the text shifts back and forth from various honorific titles to kings' names is conceivable in a work of fiction written by an outsider, but not in the writings of a senior court official describing fairly recent events. Although the royal surname Nguyễn appears throughout, no persons with the Mạc surname appear in the south in this story.

The narrative shifts freely between events at the southern court and other battles and intrigues in Thăng Long and the north. The text begins with an introduction by an official (who is either copying it or passing it on) called Giản, whose surname does not appear, and a district official in Phù Ninh, a district in the hills west of Thăng Long. Hoàng Xuân Hãn suggests that this is the historical figure Nguyễn Giản, an early 19th century official from Thái Bình province. Since there is no record that Nguyễn Giản was posted to Phù Ninh district, this is simply a guess. Hãn also suggests the manuscript was produced early in the *Gia Long* reign. However, if this text were produced by a *Gia Long*

era official, there is no obvious reason why the reign year and Giản's surname would be absent.

In the introduction, Giản disavows responsibility for the contents of the novel, claiming that he visited an official (*tham hiệp*) in Tây Khôn, who happened to be reading it. Since the text contains statements about royal ancestors, this would be a sensible precaution in any period. Giản insists that having been raised by the sea, he was not well educated, which does not fit with Hãn's suggestion that he is Nguyễn Giản, an examination graduate. Fortunately, Giản writes, the official was in the process of approving (*thân duyệt*) old books, and was reading this particular work of historical fiction. He told Giản: "This book was written by the Minister of Civil Service of the previous dynasty."

This statement might refer to a *Tây Sơn* Minister of Civil Service, Phan Huy Ích, a Nghệ An native who remained in Hanoi from Nguyễn victory until his death in 1822. A *Tây Sơn* supporter might plausibly describe other regimes in a negative light in this novel, so it might be reasonable for a Nguyễn official to think that this novel was written by a *Tây Sơn* era scholar; if a copy was found during the early *Gia Long* era, this author's name might not actually appear.

Extant copies contain a second preface, which also dated, attributed to a *Phong Sơn Dương Thận Tề*, a name with no clear relation to any historical figure. Hoàng Xuân Hãn suggests Tây Khôn is Sơn Tây province; noting that an early *tham hiệp* official in Sơn Tây province was Dương Công Tông, he concludes this preface must have been authored by the first *tham hiệp* in Sơn Tây after the Nguyễn conquest, Dương Công Tông, who is also the person referred to in Giản's introduction. However, this argument depends on the appearance of the character *Dương*, and the second preface being written at the same time as the first.

The second preface begins with a striking assertion that happily, the present king (*Thánh Hoàng*) is a descendent of the *Tiên Vương*, meaning *Tiên* Prince or first king. This is a title given to Nguyễn Hoàng in the novel. Since the preface is not dated, it is unclear which king is meant, yet this statement implies that the historical novel describing a line of rulers descended from Nguyễn Hoàng is being presented in support of the assertion that the present king a member of that line. It continues by noting that



rebellions by people in the north and west had been put down, and the ruler of the unified country was recognized by the Qing Dynasty. Whether this might be consistent with a statement written by a Tây Sơn official is unclear; certainly, Tây Sơn rulers are understood to have taken the royal surname Nguyễn. This might also be a logical statement for a supporter of Nguyễn Ánh. The second preface acknowledges that no state history was produced in the sixteenth century, but points out that state affairs became stronger and more transparent under the *Hiếu Nghĩa* reign (from 1687 to 1691). At that time, the Minister of Civil Service Nguyễn Bàng Trung wrote a book. Although that book omits certain topics (according to the author of the second preface) it nevertheless is valuable. From the *Hiếu Minh* reign (1691 to 1725) until the present day, however, records were again lacking. Either Tây Sơn or Nguyễn official, since either one could have used those reign names.

The preface uses a southern reign period to indicate the date Nguyễn Bàng Trung completed his book. This does not necessarily mean that Nguyễn Bàng Trung served in a Phú Xuân court. According to standard Nguyễn accounts, the Six Boards did not exist in Phú Xuân until 1744, a half century after the *Hiếu Nghĩa* reign period ended. It is clear, however, that a history was produced in Đông Kinh at this time, since we have the Lê Dynasty *Toàn Thư* incorporating information from those years. The Minister of Civil Service in Tonkin at that time is not clear; one of the final events in the *Toàn Thư* is the death of Minister of Civil Service Phạm Công Trứ in that 1675. The preface does not claim that the text written by Nguyễn Bàng Trung's itself was a historical novel; rather, it simply states that information is available about that period of history, whereas fewer details are known about subsequent periods. In any case, the version attached to this preface, which appears to have been read by the Nguyễn Historical Office and used in the creation of 19th century dynastic histories, is a work of fiction.<sup>47</sup>

The title *Nam Triều Công Nghiệp Diển Chí* appears first on a 20th century copy commissioned by Maspero. The copy made for Maspero begins each chapter with a restatement of information combined from several sources: “Written at the behest of a higher authority by the Minister of Civil Service, *cai bạ* and *phó đoán sự*, Nguyễn Bàng

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<sup>47</sup> One highly problematic passage in a Nguyễn history, which I discuss in a later chapter, paradoxically refers to a Board of Civil Service in 1709, well before the Six Boards were allegedly created, and after the end of the *Hiếu Nghĩa* reign.

Trung.” A *gia phả* held by the Nguyễn Khoa clan, a prominent Huế family, records that a text called *Nam Triều Công Nghiệp Diễn Chí* was written by Phú Xuân official Nguyễn Khoa Chiêm in 1719. This would logically be different than Nguyễn Bàng Trung’s book written circa 1687 to 1691, however. This seems to be a statement of the 19th century family’s beliefs about their ancestor; Chiêm’s Historical Office biography describes him as one of the highest ranking officials in the early decades of the 18th century, and author of a work with this title, promoted to *cai bạ* and later *phó đoán sự*, and dying at an advanced age in 1732. However, the Historical Office does not mention Chiêm connected to a Board of Civil Service, and states the Six Boards were not created until 1744. An annotation to the biography notes that Chiêm held the title *Bàng Trung* Marquis; the date this annotation was added is again unclear.

Given the ambiguous language in the two undated *Diễn Chí* prefaces, speculation that Nguyễn Khoa Chiêm is its author cannot be supported based on this evidence. While sympathizing with the hopes of scholars from Cadière to Hoàng Xuân Hãn of finding an authentic 18th century text from a Nguyễn court, we should approach this text with the understanding that it was probably it was written at an unknown date, and was evidently copied during the late 18th or early 19th century, at which point it was probably subject to further revision.<sup>48</sup>

Another manuscript containing information about Cambodian rulers very similar to a description of Cambodia found in the *Diễn Chí* is cited in a text by Trịnh Hoài Đức, an early 19th century Nguyễn official in Saigon, using the title *Nam Việt Chí* or History of Nam Việt. Although Đức history was edited and published by the court after the creation of the Historical Office, at no time did the Historical Office cite the *Nam Việt Chí*, which suggests that the *Nam Việt Chí* cited by Đức did not survive into the 1840s.

French missionary relations with Cochinchina’s court became strained again in the first decades of the 18th century, with persecutions rising between 1698 and 1714; the Tonkin court also grew more hostile to missionaries. Franciscans became more active as the French faltered, with an Iberian apostolic vicar appointed in Cochinchina c. 1720, and new missions established in the Cambodian border province of Saigon (Đồng Nai) c.

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<sup>48</sup> Signs that some of the substantive omissions and copying errors in the *Diễn Chí* may date to the 19th century include the absence of Mạc princes active in the south; it is known that activities of the Mạc in the south were censored by the early 19th century Nguyễn court.

1722. Franciscan Valerius Rist helped extend the mission in Cambodia in 1724. I have not conducted a complete survey of the Franciscan materials here, but I take note of several issues on which they supplement or contradict French records. By 1734, Saigon was dominated by a “chief mandarin” named Martin Diez, who was backed by Cochinchinese Christians. In the aftermath of conflicts between French, Portuguese and Spanish missionaries in the mid-18th century, Franciscans remained active in territory formerly considered part of Cambodia.<sup>49</sup>

Alexander Hamilton visited Cochinchina circa 1720, publishing *A New Account of the East Indies* in 1744. He mentions a time three or four centuries past, when a single king ruled Tonkin and Cochinchina, on his death dividing the two countries between a brother and sister; the sister’s husband then usurped the rule of Tonkin and the two went to war.<sup>50</sup>

Two Tonkin texts attributed to Lê Quý Đôn describe the Le-Mạc wars and founding of Cochinchina, but extant editions appear to have been revised in the 19th century. The *Đại Việt Thông Sử* or *Common History of Great Viet (Thông Sử)* carries a 1749 preface attributed to Lê Quý Đôn, quite early in his career, discussing classical history writing in general terms without reference to the specific content of the history that follows. A second preface states the history begins with the founder Lê Lợi and stops with the reign of Lê *Chiêu Tông*, before Mạc Đăng Dung seized power, yet only a few dozen pages of text pertaining to this period survive intact; the remainder of the text devoted to the Mạc period may have been appended at an unknown date by an unknown author.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Arnulf Camps, *Studies in Asian mission history, 1956-1998* ( Leiden: Brill, 2000), 332-334; Lorenzo Pérez, “Los Españoles en el Imperio de Annam;” ídem, “Relación del P. Francisco de la Concepción Misionero de Cochinchina,” 175-184.

<sup>50</sup> Alexander Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies*, vol.1-2 (London: The Argonau Press, 1930), 105.

<sup>51</sup> The most blatant revision is a short biographical section describing Mạc Kính Điển, with a list of his children similar to a list in the *Toàn Thư*, which is unrelated to a sensational account of the defeated of Mạc Mậu Hợp found in the previous pages. (Mậu Hợp’s nonsensical ramblings about Buddhism foiled his disguise, and as he was captured he cried out for a drink of alcohol.) There are different versions of this text, which I refer to as the *Thông Sử*; here I follow the one given most attention by scholars, the *VS-15* manuscript held in the Ho Chi Minh City Social Sciences Library, of uncertain origin. The *Thông Sử* Lê Quý Đôn, *Đại Việt Thông Sử*, Ms. *VS-15*, Thư Viện Khoa Học Xã Hội, Ho Chi Minh City. Reproduced with Vietnamese translation in Lê Quý Đôn, *Lê Quý Đôn Tuyển Tập, Vol 1, Đại Việt Thông Sử*, trans. Nguyễn Khắc Thuần (Ho Chi Minh City: Nhà Xuất Bản Giáo Dục, 1996).

Multiple partial copies of the *Phủ Biên Tạp Lục*, or *Frontier Chronicle (Tạp Lục)*, which carries a preface attributed to Lê Quý Đôn dated mid-1776, were edited and reissued by the Nguyễn Historical Office. The preface claims local people in Quảng Nam told Đôn their history during his stay, yet much of the historical description in the *Tạp Lục* is identical to the *Diễn Chí*, a historical novel, discussed below. The *Tạp Lục* frequently deviates from the *Toàn Thư* narrative, which would have presented problems for its Lê loyalist author. As noted above, the *Tạp Lục* substitutes the surname of the Hà Tiên Mạc rulers with an alternate character; biographical information about the Mạc ruler is drawn verbatim from Lê Quý Đôn's *Kiến Văn Tiểu Lục*, or *Notes of Things Seen and Heard*, written before he claims to have visited the south.<sup>52</sup>

One unique set of documents from the middle of the 18th century is the Quý Hợp archive of correspondence between coastal governors of Nghệ An under the Trịnh regime and *Mường Lạc Hoàn*, a significant portion of which escaped destruction at the border post itself. These texts reveal the Trịnh beginning to exert tenuous control over highland regions previously more closely connected to the southern court.<sup>53</sup>

A few Jesuits changed tactics in the face of a growing anti-Jesuit sentiment at the court, and among other missionaries, seeking residence as simple court physicians and mathematicians. Joao de Loureiro was employed at the court in 1742, until the Jesuit's final 1777 dissolution, with only a brief absence during the persecution of 1750; unfortunately, he seems to have left few records beyond a treatise on the local flora. Jean Koffler arrived in 1747, and was able to remain at the court despite the expulsion, yet became estranged from the king and departed by 1755; his 1766 *Historica Cochinchina Descriptico*, a brief survey of Cochinchina's political institutions, was written in a Portuguese prison. Two Augustinian texts from Tonkin, the *Opusculum de sectis apud Sinenses et Tunkinenses* written by Adriano a Sancta Thecla in 1750, recently analyzed by Olga Dror, and a similar *quốc ngữ* text, the *Tam Giáo Chư Vọng*, delve into Tonkin's

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<sup>52</sup> Lê Quý Đôn, *Đại Việt Thông Sử*, Ms. VS-15, Thư Viện Khoa Học Xã Hội, Ho Chi Minh City. Reproduced with Vietnamese translation in Lê Quý Đôn, *Lê Quý Đôn Tuyển Tập, Vol 1, Đại Việt Thông Sử*, trans. Nguyễn Khắc Thuần (Ho Chi Minh City: Nhà Xuất Bản Giáo Dục, 1996).

<sup>53</sup> Trần Văn Quý, *Historic relationship between Laos and Viet Nam through the Quy Hop documents (XVII-XIX centuries)* (Sathāban Khōnkhwā Vatthanatham Lāo, 2000).

religious traditions. They do not, however, narrate or comment on the political and military conflicts spreading across the region at the time they were written.<sup>54</sup>

Another problematic text is the *Phủ Biên Tạp Lục*, or *Frontier Chronicle*, here called the *Tạp Lục*. It carries a preface attributed to Lê Quý Đôn, dated mid-1776. The first page of each subsequent section repeats the same attribution, without a date. A variety of partial copies were collected, edited, and reissued by the Nguyễn Historical Office under *Gia Long*, *Minh Mạng* and *Tự Đức*, the standard new edition missing a key chapter on taxation. From this Historical Office edition, a reference version was derived with the missing chapter restored from a privately held copy. Many scholars work with this “complete” *PQ-H.23* manuscript, held in the Social Sciences Library in Ho Chi Minh City. I follow that convention here. There are differences among these copies; an exhaustive list of local place names is omitted from *PQ-H.23*, but appears in a manuscript held by the Institute of History in Hanoi. The circumstances under which Đôn is said to have composed the *Tạp Lục* in 1776 are dubious; the *Đại Việt Sử Ký Tục Biên* (itself highly suspect), claims that he was sent to join the occupying Trịnh forces in early 1776, staying for only six months. He supposedly returned north abruptly due to an illness, yet remained active in government in the north and wrote prolifically in the following year. (One passage of the *Tạp Lục*, which provides biographical information about Mạc Thiên Tứ and quotes verses attributed to him, is repeated in a different form in the *Kiến Văn Tiểu Lục*, or *Notes of Things Seen and Heard*, which includes a preface attributed to Đôn dated in mid-1777.) The preface attributed to Đôn claims local people in Quảng Nam told him their history during his stay, but this seems disingenuous, since many passages of the *Tạp Lục* are identical to the *Diễn Chí*. The *Tạp Lục* may have borrowed from a hypothetical predecessor on which the extent historical novel is based, or may have borrowed verbatim from the novel itself. It deviates frequently from the standard Lê history, of which its author must have been well aware. Famously, the *Tạp Lục* text substitutes the surname of the Hà Tiên Mạc (莫) rulers with an unusual character also read as Mạc. Although some 19th century tombs of reported Mạc descendents in Hà Tiên

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<sup>54</sup> Jean Koffler, “Description historique de la Cochinchine [1766],” Traduit du latin par V. Barbier, *Revue Indochinoise* XV, 1911 :448-462, 566-575; XVI, 1911:273-285, 582-607. Olga Dror, *Opusculum de sectis apud sinesis et tunkineses (A Small Treatise on Sects Among the Chinese and Tonkinese)* (Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Publications, 2002).

display this unusual character, inscriptions on what seem to be the earliest known tombs, equivalent to figures thought to be Mo Jiu (Mạc Cửu) and his wife, bear the original royal Mạc (莫) surname. This change in surname is difficult to interpret, but suggests at least the possibility of a connection between Mạc dynasty princes, some of whom resided in China since Ming times, and the Mạc in Hà Tiên. Further study is needed, but for the moment, the *Tạp Lục* should be read as a collection of information about Cochinchina of unknown origin, censored or revised in the 19th century.<sup>55</sup>

Franciscans remained active in the south until the late eighteenth century. Manila was reticent to gamble on supporting the future Nguyễn emperor against the Tây Sơn. As a result, French missionaries allied with Nguyễn Ánh were able to exert more influence on the historical narrative shaped by the ultimate victors. Early in the 20th century, Lorenzo Pérez completed a review, in Spanish, of Franciscan letters from c. 1720 to the Tây Sơn wars, held today in Franciscan archives in Madrid. Only one of his articles has received significant attention in the English or French literature. George Dutton notes that Spanish missionaries describe the Tây Sơn ruler as originating from a Christian family in Quy Nhơn. Dutton, suggests, however, that missionaries may not have understood the events they were witnessing. Since few undisputed texts originate during the Tây Sơn rule, Dutton relies extensively on texts produced in Hanoi and Huế in the 19th century, in which the Tây Sơn family is no longer described as Christian. Dutton's work could be extended by reference to Franciscan archives, surveyed by Lorenzo Pérez, which describe reactions against the late 18th century Nguyễn court in terms of a Quy Nhơn population which was almost entirely Christian, as well as Christians in Saigon and elsewhere in the south. These archives were not used extensively by the French scholars who produced early histories of the *Tây Sơn*, and remain largely unexplored today in English and French scholarship.

A supplement to the *Toàn Thư*, covering events from 1620 to 1643, is found in a partial copy of a printed text titled the *Đại Việt Sử Ký Bản Kỳ Tục Biên*, or *Later Period of the History of Great Việt*, called the *Bản Kỳ Tục Biên* below. Ngô Thế Long argues

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<sup>55</sup> A survey of the extant copies is found in Vu Hường Đông, "Phù Biên Tạp Lục: Quá Trình Biên Soạn, Thê Lệ Và Các Truyền Bản," *Tạp Chí Hán Nôm*, 4:1994. Lê Quý Đôn, *Phù Biên Tạp Lục*, Ms. PQ-H.23, Thư Viện Khoa Học Xã Hội, Ho Chi Minh City, reproduced with Vietnamese translation in Lê Quý Đôn, *Lê Quý Đôn Tuyển Tập*, Vols. 2-3, trans. Nguyễn Khắc Thuần (Ho Chi Minh City: Nhà Xuất Bản Giáo Dục, 1996).

this is a portion of a text describing the period from 1600 to 1656 that was prepared and used in preparation for the 1697 edition. It omits some elements of the *Toàn Thư*, and includes other details found the Nguyễn history, such as the naming of a southern official Đào Duy Từ and some aspects of battles at the Quảng Bình border. It introduces a false report of a 1613 solar eclipse which in the *Toàn Thư* appears as a false report of a lunar eclipse; the 1632 eclipse that is incorrectly called a solar eclipse in the *Toàn Thư* is correctly called a lunar eclipse in the *Tục Biên*. Some scholars have relied on another text, also of uncertain origin, called the *Đại Việt Sử Ký Tục Biên*, or *Later History of Đại Việt*, called *Tục Biên* below, describing events pertaining to the Lê Dynasty in the period from 1676 to 1789; copies include *A1415*, held by the Social Sciences Library in Hanoi, and *HV.119*, held by the Institute of History in Hanoi. Nguyễn Kim Hung suggests that it was prepared for printing under the *Tây Sơn*, but published at a later date; I have minimized use of it here.<sup>56</sup>

One text that has received little attention is the *Lê Triều Dã Sử*, or *History of the Lê Dynasty*, held in the Social Sciences library in Hanoi. It is divided into several sections. The first, which appears to be a copy of an early 18th century work copied in the 19th century, carries the heading *Lê Triều Trung Hưng* or *Restored Lê Dynasty*. It is a narrative of the origins and early rule of the Trịnh clan, from the second half of the 16th century to the end of the 17th. The second section, written in the 19th century, with the heading *Lê Triều Dã Sử*, repeats that early narrative with many discrepancies, then carries it up to the end of the 18th century. A final section describes the *Tây Sơn* wars. Thus, the text appears to be a collection of old texts about the Trịnh, updated and supplemented in the 19th century at a distance from the purview of the Huế court and its censors. It suggests the diversity of 18th century political narratives; for example, its first section includes the marriage of a Trịnh *chúa* to Nguyễn Kim's daughter, but claims Kim then betrayed the Lê king (a treasonous statement in the time of the Nguyễn Dynasty),

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<sup>56</sup> Ngô Thế Long suggests the *Bản Kỳ Tục Biên* fragment was part of a version of the text edited by Phạm Công Trứ and released in 1665. *Đại Việt Sử Ký Bản Kỳ Tục Biên* [Later Period of the History of Great Việt], published in Vietnamese translation in *Toàn Thư* Vol. 3, 302-351. Ngô Thế Long and Nguyễn Kim Hung, trans., *Đại Việt Sử Ký Tục Biên* [Later History of Great Việt] (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Khoa Học xã Hội, 1991); Go Zhen Feng, “Bước Đầu Tìm Hiểu Đại Việt Sử Ký Tục Biên” [First Steps to Understanding the *Later History of Đại Việt*], *Tạp chí Đông Nam Á* (Yunnan), 1 (1989):59-61, appears in *Tập Chí Hán Nôm* (2) 1990.

and gives Nguyễn Hoàng no role in defeating the Mạc in Đông Kinh; the name Trịnh Kiểm does not appear in this text.<sup>57</sup>

The *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ*, a collection of diverse maps and itineraries ranging from copies of the eponymous Lê atlas of circa 1490 to at least one map of the late 18th century, appears to have been recompiled at some point in the early 19th century (I refer to the EFEO microfilm A.2499, published with commentary in Saigon). One problematic map is the itinerary of routes to Cambodia attributed to the *Đoan* Duke, dated to a *giáp* *ngọ* year. *Đoan* is the ruler of Cochinchina in Benedict Thiện's 1659 *Lịch Sử Annam*, and Nguyễn Hoàng is called *Đoan* Duke in multiple texts. However, the map includes features associated with 1594 in some texts and the *giáp dần* year of 1674 in others.<sup>58</sup>

One of the first texts authored by a Nguyễn Dynasty official is the *Hoàng Việt Nhất Thống Dư Địa Chí* [*Geography of the Unified Việt Realm*], a comprehensive military atlas dated 1806 and bearing a preface attributed to the *Gia Long* Emperor's Minister of War, the Ming loyalist Lê Quang Định, is one of the earliest texts produced by a high official of the Nguyễn Dynasty. Another important manuscript that was presented to the first Nguyễn emperor is a kind of family history of the Mạc clan in Hà Tiên, commonly known by the title *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* [*Genealogy of the Mạc Family*] which describes events of the 17th and 18th centuries from the perspective of a man claiming to be an adopted son of Mạc Thiên Tứ, although his position in that clan is never specified; I rely on a Vietnamese translation by Nguyễn Khắc Viện, who states he has viewed several manuscripts with significant variations, and selected one that he believes is the most complete; other copies are held in the Hán Nôm Institute and elsewhere.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> *Lê Triều Dã Sử* [History of the Lê Dynasty], ms., Thư Viện Khoa Học xã Hội. Nguyễn Huy Thúc, Lê Văn Bảy, trans. *Lê Triều Dã Sử* (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Hóa Thông Tin, 2006).

<sup>58</sup> *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ*, EFEO microfilm A.2499, annotated edition published as Bửu Cầm, et al., *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ* (Saigon: Bộ Quốc Gia Giáo Dục, 1962)

<sup>59</sup> Nguyễn Khắc Thuần noted in his introduction to his translation of the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* that there are significant differences in several versions of the text that he has viewed, and he has opted to follow the version which in his view is the most complete. Lê Quang Định, *Hoàng Việt Nhất Thống Dư Địa Chí* [*Geography of the Unified Việt Realm*], reproduction with Vietnamese translation by Phan Đăng (Huế: Nhà Xuất Bản Thuận Hóa, 2002); Vũ Thế Dinh, *Hà Tiên Trần Hiệp Trần Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, ms., published in Vietnamese translation as Nguyễn Khắc Thuần, trans., *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* [*Genealogy of the Mạc Family*] (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Hóa – Thông Tin, 2002);



The *Gia Định Thành Thông Chí*, or *History of Gia Định*, called the *Thông Chí* below, is said to have been written c. 1819 by a “Ming loyalist” Nguyễn Dynasty official, Trịnh Hoài Đức; it provides a detailed narrative of the early history of the southernmost provinces of Cochinchina. The text was released under the *Minh Mạng* Emperor, and there may have been revisions at that time. I have followed the manuscript *HV.151* in the Institute of History, Hanoi.<sup>60</sup>

The *Nghệ An Ký*, or *Record of Nghệ An*, is a local gazetteer compiled by a *Gia Long* era official, Bùi Dương Lịch, likely between 1809 and his death in 1828; copies held by the Hán Nôm Institute are undated. In describing the participation of Nghệ An figures in events that appear in Lê and Nguyễn histories, the text, like the *Diễn Chí*, omits any role for Nguyễn Hoàng in fighting the Mạc.<sup>61</sup>

Philiphê Bình, or Filippo de Rosario, a Tonkin Jesuit, left when the Tây Sơn seized power, finally settling in Portugal in the 19th century. There, he produced the *Truyện Nước Annam (Story of Annam)*, which includes histories of the both kingdoms; I make limited use of it here. Bình describes Đàng Trong historically controlled by the Nguyễn, who were initially loyal to a Lê king, but then unified the country in 1802. Bình was uncensored by the Nguyễn Dynasty, since he was writing outside the Nguyễn imperial sphere, yet seems to write in support of an ancient lineage for Nguyễn Ánh and his Christian-leaning son Prince Cảnh. He asserts that Trịnh Bân (not Kiêm) was allowed by “the Nguyễn Dynasty” to rule until a young heir was grown, but the Trịnh seized power instead. The rightful heir, *Chúa Tiên*, went to Đàng Trong, leading to a division until the 1802 unification.<sup>62</sup>

Karl Gutzlaff, a protestant missionary in Guangdong in the early 19th century, wrote a short “Geography of the Cochin-Chinese Empire,” which was not published until 1849. Like the Macao Jesuits, Gutzlaff calls the state of “Champa” centered in

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<sup>60</sup> Trịnh Hòa Đức, *Gia Định Thành Thông Chí* [History of Gia Định], Thư Viện Sử Học, Hanoi, HV 151 (1-6), reproduced with Vietnamese translation as Trịnh Hòa Đức, *Gia Định Thành Thông Chí*, ed. Đào Duy Anh, trans. Đỗ Mộng Khương, Nguyễn Ngọc Tinh (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Giáo Dục, 1998).

<sup>61</sup> Bùi Dương Lịch, *Nghệ An Ký*, trans. Nguyễn Thị Thảo (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Khoa Học Xã Hội, 1993).

<sup>62</sup> Philiphê Bình, *Truyện Nước Annam, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Borg. Tonch. 2*. Among Bình’s works are descriptions of early Christian activities. A review of Philiphê Bình’s writing is found in Georg Schruhammer, *Missionswissenschaftliche Studien* (Aachen: Aix-la-Chapelle, 1951), 300-314; George Dutton, “Crossing Oceans, Crossing Boundaries; the Remarkable Life of Philiphê Bình,” in Nhung Tuyet Tran and Anthony Reid, eds, *Việt Nam: Borderless Histories* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 219-255.

Quảng Nam by the name Cochinchina throughout its history, describing it as a kingdom which became a tributary state of Tonkin in 1471. After the Lê conquest, Gutzlaff extends his narrative Cochinchina was forced to pay tribute to Tonkin, but pursuing its own wars with Cambodia and occasionally regained its independence; he describes no discontinuity between a pre-1471 “Champa” and a period of “Nguyễn rule” after 1558.<sup>63</sup>

The earliest Nguyễn literati, in the years following Nguyễn Ánh and his “Ming loyalist” supporters’ 1802 conquest of Tonkin, were hard pressed to create a dynastic history that did justice to their leaders’ ambition and the massive scope of his victory. These early officials, some allied with Prince Cảnh, who was highly sympathetic to the Christian cause, did pay close attention to early European reports, preferring texts familiar to *MEP* supporters in Saigon such as the Bishop of Adran) over those by Spanish missionaries or those kept in distant archives. In the Ming and Qing style, work on this dynastic history was originally commissioned immediately after the death of Nguyễn Ánh – and his predecessor established a Historical Office for that purpose. However, the first Nguyễn record, the *Thực Lục Tiền Biên*, was not published more than two decades, and the resulting volume covered a span of several centuries, not the life of the previous emperor. Although histories were written by Trương Minh Giảng, a head of an occupation force in Cambodia and associate of *Minh Hương* (“Ming loyalist”) scholars who filled many top posts of the *Gia Long* regime, the *Thực Lục* was edited and published after Giảng’s 1841 death, in 1844, by which time Quảng Ngãi native Trương Đăng Quế had been appointed to the Historical Office by the new *Thiệu Trị* Emperor, a son of the *Ming Mạng* Emperor.

As with the *Toàn Thư*, eclipse reports are a useful indicator of the extent to which the *Thực Lục* might be a faithful copy of court records of earlier periods. Unlike the *Toàn Thư*, which provided a significant number of accurate lunar eclipse reports, editors of the 1844 *Thực Lục* choose to report no lunar eclipses at all. Beginning its narrative in 1558, the *Thực Lục* includes accurate reports eclipses 1587, 1590, 1603 and 1615, all of which also appear accurately in the *Toàn Thư*. It then reports no eclipses at all for five decades, and then provides 16 consecutive false eclipse reports in 1664, 1667, 1671,

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<sup>63</sup> Karl Gutzlaff, “Geography of the Cochin-Chinese Empire,” *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, vol. 19 (1849):85-143.

1672, 1674, 1677, 1678, 1690, 1692, 1694, 1695 (twice), 1696, 1702, 1703, and 1706. The *Thực Lục* then accurately reports a solar eclipse in 1708, as well as 1730, 1731, 1735 and 1774. There are three more false reports in 1711, 1713 and 1715, and from 1688 to 1775; in this period, eight additional eclipses which obscured at least half the sun in Huế are not reported. All the accurate eclipses in the *Thực Lục* were also visible in Thăng Long, and all but one in Beijing, whereas three of those obscured five percent or less of the sun's area in Huế. Since the Cochinchinese court in the 17th century made careful observations of eclipses, and nearly all eclipses that were visible in Huế are also reported in Chinese records, the 1844 *Thực Lục* editors did not attempt to maintain a convincing degree of verisimilitude in their version of this chronicle narrative.

The *Thực Lục* repeats verbatim many passages from the *Diễn Chí* and the *Tạp Lục*, beginning with Nguyễn Hoàng's journey south, and ending with the death of an exiled king under unexplained circumstances in 1775. At that time, Nguyễn Ánh was a young prince; no information is presented in the text about his personal background. The only acknowledgment by the Historical Office of a source text for dynastic histories comes in the 1847 *Liệt Truyện* biography of Nguyễn Khoa Chiêm, which references a 1719 text called the *Nam Triều Công Nghiệp Diễn Chí*. Trịnh Hoài Đức's *Thông Chí* makes a passing reference to a historical chronicle narrative called *Nam Việt Chí*, but no text by that name is referenced by the Historical Office.

Trương Đăng Quế and others continued revision of pre-1775 biographies, the *Liệt Truyện Tiền Biên* or Preceding Biographies (here, the *Liệt Truyện*), which were released in 1852, under Quế's protégé, the *Tự Đức* Emperor. In the 1852 volume, for the first time, Nguyễn royalty are first said to be descended from the Mạc queen in Quảng Nam, and were supported by a great Mạc general; the *Diễn Chí* and *Thực Lục* had both ignored Mạc royalty in the south.

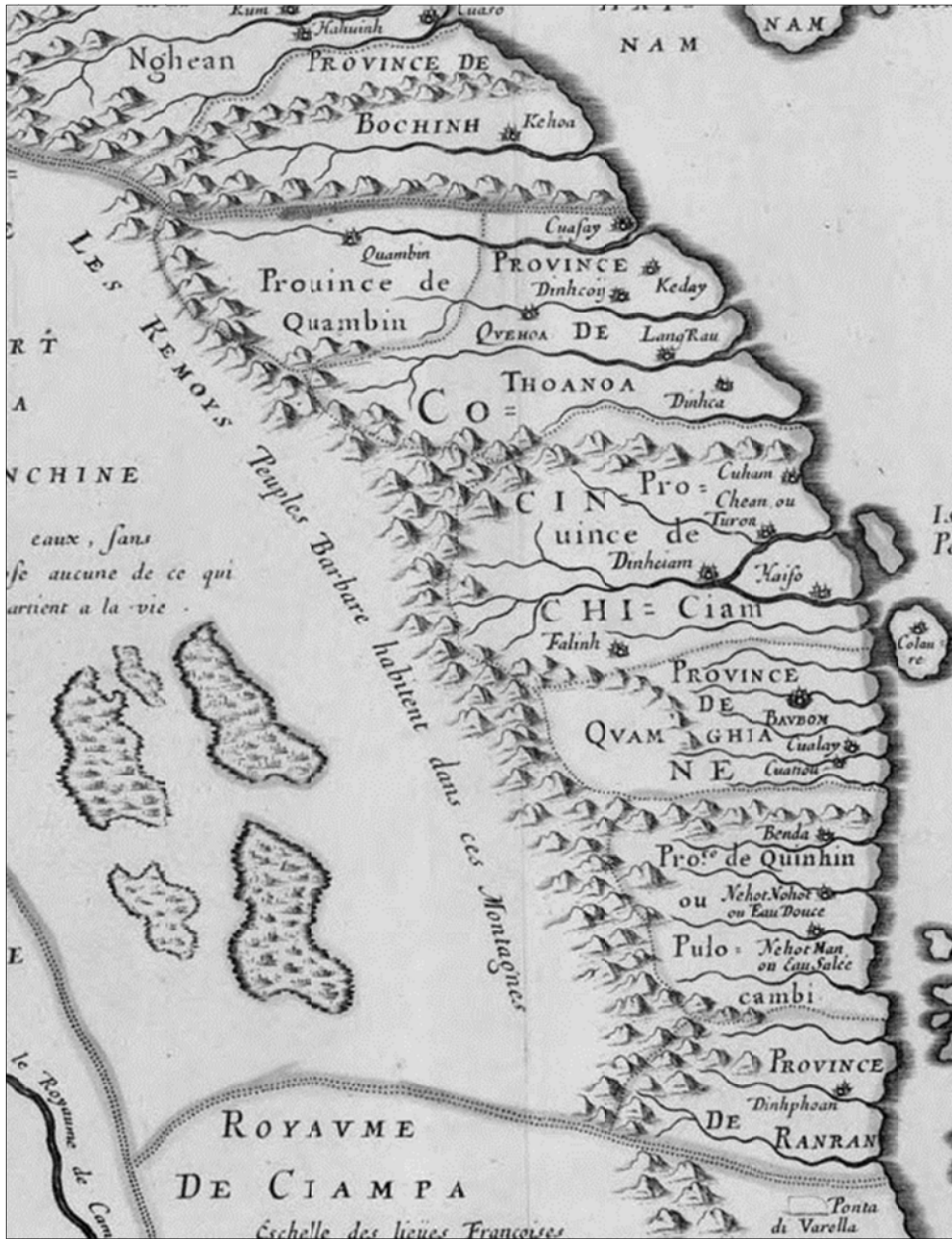
The first discussion of Ánh's family background, and biographies of many of his supporters before 1802, can be found in the *Liệt Truyện Chính Biên Sơ Tập* or *First Book of the Primary Biographies* (here, the *Liệt Truyện Chính Biên*). The history of his period as *Gia Long* Emperor after 1802 appears in the *Chính Biên Sơ Tập*, or *Early Volume of the Primary Record* (here, *Thực Lục Chính Biên*). These were not published immediately, for unspecified reasons. Additional texts were produced under a *Minh Hương* Historical

Office head, Phan Thanh Giản, in the mid-19th century, but revised and published much later. The *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí* or *Gazetteer of the Unified Great South* relies in part on information gathered from local documents pertaining to specific regions; it probably appeared in the 1860s or 1870s, when the Historical Office was staffed by another *Minh Hương* from Huế, since its border demarcations are most accurate for describing that period, but underwent later revisions. It exists in several manuscript versions, notably *HV.140* and *A69* at the Hanoi Institute of History and Library of Social Sciences, respectively. The *Khâm Định Việt Sử Thông Giám Cương Mục*, called the *Cương Mục* below, is a compilation of information from both Cochinchina and Tonkin released circa 1881. Unlike the early Nguyễn histories, it was revised under the direction of northern literati. The late date of this compendium makes it a problematic source, but it is useful as a window into perspectives of the late nineteenth century.<sup>64</sup>

Additional texts such as family histories, diplomas conferred by kings and emperors, tax and cadastral records, and other documents created by village notables and local officials or institutions provide additional perspectives on Cochinchina's history outside the Historical Office narrative. I discuss some of these in the following chapters, though a systematic examination of so many diverse materials is beyond the scope of this study. I am also not able to make a systematic examination of documents produced by other courts in the region that came into frequent contact with Cochinchina, such as those in Champassak, Xiengkhuang, Vientiane, Ayutthaya, Bangkok, and Cambodia. I draw on the work of other scholars who have examined or translated some of those texts, notably Michael Vickery, Mak Phoeun, and Charles Archambault. My only hope is to take preliminary steps toward integrating information from these very disparate sources.

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<sup>64</sup> Phan Thanh Giản, et al., *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, Ms. *HV.140*, Institute of History, Hanoi, Ms. *A69*, Library of Social Sciences, Hanoi, reproduced with Vietnamese translation as *Quốc sử quán Triều Nguyễn, Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*. Vols 1-5., trans. Phạm Trọng Điềm (Hanoi: Viện Sử học, 1971); Phan Thanh Giản, et al., *Khâm Định Việt Sử Thông Giám Cương Mục* (Huế: Quốc Sử Quán Triều Nguyễn, 1881), Vietnamese translation published as: *Khâm Định Việt Sử Thông Giám Cương Mục*, vol. 1-2., trans. Hoa Bằng, Phạm Trọng Điềm, Trần Văn Giáp, revised edition (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Giáo Dục, 1998).



Map 1 Detail from a Jesuit map c.1653 printed in Paris by Chez Pierre Mariette.

## CHAPTER 2

### Coastal and Highland Links from South China to Cambodia, c. 1401-1520

Early missionary sources such as those produced by the 17th century Jesuits in Macao report on historical warfare between Tonkin and Cochinchina going back centuries before the first European contacts. They assume some degree of continuity in the region that is now central Vietnam before and after a fifteenth century defeat at the hands of Tonkin, and call this state Cochinchina in both periods. Colonial era histories, however, tend to give the southern kingdom the name Champa (Ciampa) in the period before their defeat by the Lê Dynasty, and only call it Cochinchina from the 16th century, making a key contribution to the emerging narrative of a Cham kingdom being pushed to the south.

This study is focused on the 16th to 18th centuries, and cannot solve the difficult questions surrounding the early development of Đại Việt and Champa (commonly called Chiêm Thành or Zhan Cheng in Sino-Vietnamese texts). However, in order to provide context needed to understand early descriptions of Cochinchina and Mạc Dynasty activities there in the first decades of the 16th century, I will review early interactions between Đại Việt and Champa/Chiêm Thành. Scholars typically describe a Champa pushed southward along the coast as a result of Vietnamese encroachment, yet it is not clear that a political center at Amaravati disappeared completely before the Mạc appeared there. Thus, this review of early developments is intended as background to better examine how Champa transitioned to become “Cochinchina,” and to counter dynastic histories in which Champa passively fades from the map.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gutzlaff, “Geography of the Cochin-Chinese Empire,” 85-143; Adrien Launay, *Histoire Ancienne et Moderne de L’Annam* (Paris: Librairie Coloniale, 1885), 48-49.

## Early Wars in Đại Việt, Champa and Cambodia

Champa, for much of its history centered in Trà Kiệu on the Thu Bồn River in Quảng Nam, derived its status as an economic hub from two factors relatively unaffected by classical Southeast Asian warfare: its convenience for long distance shipping, and efficient access to products in the hinterlands. (Although there is no space here for discussion of the first millennium, Vickery speculates that Quảng Bình may have been the site of a former capital, contested in the 990s.) In my view, these factors suggest that Quảng Nam likely remained the most important center for trade with South China throughout the 15th century; even the Lê histories, which claim a decisive victory over Champa, admit that it continued to control Quảng Nam during the Ming occupation c.1407-1428. By c. 1480, however, a ruler in a different, southern part of Champa, probably including both coastal and highland territory, claimed descent from Champa kings, and was recognized as their heir by the Ming Dynasty. As a result, the toponym Chiêm Thành, as used by the Ming court, shifted to this smaller, southern region. The new Chiêm Thành/Champa conducted trade with China through ports south of Cam Ranh, and corresponds roughly with the geographic extent of the Ciampa described by early European visitors. Rather than disappear, however, Trà Kiệu remained an important center even after the Lê took control of the north c. 1596.<sup>2</sup>

John Whitmore notes that despite the image of a coastal Champa, access upstream through the mountains was an integral part of this polity. Geoff Wade argues there was sustained commercial growth from the tenth to thirteenth centuries, and this growth would logically have been accompanied by struggles for access to ports, rivers, and highland production centers; this is described in the Lê texts. The *Toàn Thư* and (to a lesser extent) the *Tạp Lục* describe wars among Đại Việt, Champa and Cambodia (often called Chân Lạp, but in many 18th and some early 19th century texts called Cao Miên).

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<sup>2</sup> In a few cases, I will refer to Champa by its Sino-Vietnamese name, Chiêm Thành, in discussing Ming, Lê and Nguyễn texts.

For the most part, these military conflicts occurred in areas that are now the provinces of Nghệ An and Quảng Bình, with both fighting in both upland and coastal areas.<sup>3</sup>

Vijaya is not mentioned by that name in the Lê and Nguyễn texts, but appears in inscriptions as an object of twelfth century wars between Champa and Cambodia. Vijaya is usually understood, within the *nam tiến* framework, to be near Quy Nhơn. While it is possible that Vijaya was a coastal center, it might also have been a contested highland region. Chamic speakers spread at an early date to the highlands, where Champa, Cambodia and Đại Việt fought for control of strategic regions connecting the Mekong basin with ports on the eastern coast. Đại Việt rulers are described in Lê texts as more concerned with highland control than a sustained southward expansion. The fact that increasingly opulent temple-towers appeared near Quy Nhơn in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries attests to the wealth generated from highland products among populations on the coast, but this alone does not support the *nam tiến* narrative of “Champa” being pushed south to a new capital in Quy Nhơn.

In the *Toàn Thư* and *Việt Sử Lược*, the ruler Lê Hoàn led an attack through Thanh Hóa mountains to defeat Champa in 982. Despite this, in the *Toàn Thư*, Thanh Hóa and Nghệ An submitted briefly to Champa in the 989, and a 992 raiding party brought hostages from Địa Lý (south of Nghệ An) back to Ô Lý (later Thuận Hóa). While Ngô Sĩ Liên praised this victory in his later commentary, no territorial expansion is described at that time.<sup>4</sup>

The *Lịch Sử Nước Annam* does not describe interactions with Champa before the Lý Dynasty, and notes that Champa offered tribute to the first Lý king. The *Việt Sử Lược* and *Toàn Thư* describe Lý Thái Tổ sending his crown prince to again attack Champa in about 1020. The *Tạp Lục*, ostensibly a complete history of the southern regions, first describes contact with Champa in an attack in 1069.<sup>5</sup>

Stories of Lý campaigns against Champa circa 1044 and 1069 appear in two 14th century texts that include mythical and religious elements. The *Việt Điện U Linh*

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<sup>3</sup> John Whitmore, “The Last Great King of Classical Southeast Asia: ‘Che Bong Nga’ and Fourteenth Century Champa,” ms.; Geoff Wade, “An Early Age of Commerce in Southeast Asia, 900–1300 CE,” *JSEAS* (2009), 40: 221-265.

<sup>4</sup> *Toàn Thư*, I:16a-b, 19a-b; *Việt Sử Lược*, 29.

<sup>5</sup> Although in the *Việt Sử Lược* and *Toàn Thư*, Lý Thái Tổ reigned until his death at 50 or 55 in 1028, after which his son Thái Tông took the throne, the *Lịch Sử Nước Annam* claims Thái Tổ stepped down to enter the monkhood at the age of 70, ceding the throne to Thái Tổ.



describes deities worshiped as part of an official Trần cult, including the Champa king's wife, My Ê, a Lý prince named Hoảng, and many others; Hoảng built a Nghệ An fort to attack Champa between 1039 and 1054. The Champa king Sạ Đầu was killed on the Bồ Chính River in Quảng Bình. His wives and concubines were brought back by the Lý *Thái Tông*, but My Ê drowned herself, and the king later returned to build a temple for her worship. (Lý *Thánh Tông* is also described receiving assistance from a female spirit in Nghệ An while he was en route to attack Champa in an unspecified year.)<sup>6</sup>

Some toponyms associated with the 1044 campaign in the *Việt Sử Lược* and *Toàn Thư* are found in today's Hà Tĩnh and Quảng Bình provinces, while others are obscure. In the *Việt Sử Lược*, the royal navy sailed past Tư Minh. In the *Toàn Thư*, the navy instead sailed past Tư Khách, a 16th century Mạc Dynasty name for an estuary near Huế. The Champa king, Nhân Đầu in the *Việt Sử Lược* and Sạ Đầu in the *Toàn Thư*, was killed by Quách Gia Ý/Di. In the *Toàn Thư*, this took place on the unknown Ngũ Bò River; the king never went south of Quảng Bình in the *Việt Điện U Linh*.<sup>7</sup>

In both texts, the Lý raided the Phật Thệ Citadel, which, as Michael Vickery points out for the 1069 campaigns, cannot be Quy Nhơn. (Whitmore concurs that Trà Kiệu remained the Champa capital at this time.) The *Việt Sử Lược* mentions the capture of the Champa king's concubines; the *Toàn Thư* mentions My Ê by name. The Lý king built a palace for Champa wives or concubines in 1046. The *Tap Lục* omits the 1044 campaign entirely. In the *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, the Nguyễn Historical Office editors choose to repeat the *Toàn Thư* version of events, yet they change without comment the

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<sup>6</sup> I will refer to the chief ruler of Đại Việt as king for clarity in many cases, but they are called emperors in dynastic histories. By the 17th century, a titular ruler in Đông Kinh was called *vua*, usually translated as king, and his military chief, who held real authority, was called *chúa*, usually translated as lord. The actual usage of the titles for sovereigns in early periods is not well understood. Lý Tế Xuyên, *Việt Điện U Linh* [Spirits of the Việt Realm], Ms. A751, Hán Nôm Institute, Hanoi. Vietnamese translation published as: Đinh Gia Khánh, trans., *Việt Điện U Linh* (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Học, 1979); *Toàn Thư*, *Kỷ Nhà Lý*: 36b.

<sup>7</sup> The *Việt Sử Lược* describes rampant killing of Champa troops, leading the Lý king to threaten to kill anyone who killed Chiêm soldiers. The late 19th century Historical Office claims that Quảng Bình Prefecture was first renamed thus in the 47th year of Nguyễn Hoàng's reign, a *giáp Thìn* year, suggesting the year 1604. Tư Khách is also used in the extant version of a 1490 Lê atlas, found in the *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ* compilation; in both the *Việt Sử Lược* and *Toàn Thư*, a white fish leapt auspiciously onto the king's ship at Tư Minh/Tư Khách. (In the *Toàn Thư*, Tư Minh refers to a different place, on the Đại Việt-Guangzhi border.) *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, vol. 2, 7.

1044 king's name from Sạ Đầu to Chế Củ (a name associated in the *Toàn Thư* and *Tạp Lục* with 1069).<sup>8</sup>

The *Việt Sử Lược* states that the Lý king attacked Champa in 1069, reaching Thị Lợi Bi Nai, then Tu Mao River. Lý forces pursued the fleeing king Đê Củ along the river, and the Phật Thệ citadel fell but the king escaped. Lý Thường Kiệt captured this king a month later on the Cambodian border, and the Lý king spent a month at Phật Thệ. Vickery argues that this Phật Thệ was not Quy Nhơn.<sup>9</sup>

Both the *Toàn Thư* and the *Tạp Lục* describe the Lý *Thánh Tông*'s capture of a Champa king, here called Chế Củ, in 1069. The Lý then seized the same areas in Quảng Bình mentioned in connection with the 1044 battle.<sup>10</sup>

Launay introduces the state Ciampa raiding the coast of Đại Việt during internal upheavals under Lý *Thái Tông*. The king retaliated, invading Champa's capital and resettling prisoners in northern villages named after their homes, then turned his attention to battles with Ai Lao. For Launay, *Thánh Tông* forced Champa to cede to Đại Việt not only the provinces Minh Linh and Bồ Chính in Quảng Bình, but also Quảng Nam.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> For the problematic standard interpretation of 1044, see Maspero, Georges, *Le Royaume de Champa* (Paris : G. van Oest, 1928), 128-140. Emmanuel Guillon, however, writes that as a result of the discovery of a Cham temple at My Khan in Huế, which he believes dates to the late eighth or early ninth century due to its similarities to the Hoa Lai temple, "we have to reconsider the dates and understanding of successive boundaries between Champa and Vietnam." John Whitmore cites Song commentary that where the king resides is called Champa, and believes that for lack of any other information, the capital of Champa remained in Amaravati, at least into the middle of the twelfth century, when Vijaya appears in inscriptions. Nguyễn Đình Đầu states that Phật Thệ was at Nguyệt Biều in Huế, presumably following the assertion that this was a capital of Lin-Yi. Upland Chamic speakers, today largely restricted to the Gia Lai plateau, are thought to have arrived in highland regions by the end of the first millennium. Emmanuel Guillon, "The Archaeology of Champa North of Huế," in Elizabeth A. Baucus, Ian Glover and Peter D. Sharrock, ed., *Interpreting Southeast Asia's Past: Monument, Image, Text*, Selected papers from the tenth International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists, Vol. 2, (Singapore : NUS Press, 2008), 76; Whitmore, John. "The Last Great King;" Nguyễn Đình Đầu, "The Vietnamese Southern Expansion," 65; Rolf Stein, 'Le Lin-yi: sa localization, sa contribution à la formation du Champa et ses liens avec la Chine', Han-Hiue: *Bulletin du Centre d'études sinologiques de Peking* vol. II, fasc. 1-3 (1947): 1-335 ; Vickery, "Champa Revised," 52-53; Lý Tế Xuyên, *Việt Điện U Linh; Việt Sử Lược*, 43-50. Note that yet another contradictory version of the Lý battles with Champa and Cambodia appears in the *Việt Sử Tiểu Án*; for reasons of space, I do not consider it here.

<sup>9</sup> *Việt Sử Lược*, 50-51.

<sup>10</sup> The *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí* describes ancient defenses of the state of Lin-yi on the Gianh River, and an ancient tomb of a Lin-yi king. A conservative reading of the *Toàn Thư* simply suggests that Lý Thường Kiệt struggled against a Cham challenge to Lý control of Quảng Bình itself. An annotation to the *Toàn Thư* states that one of the regions seized, Địa Lý/Li, is in Quảng Nam province; this is an error. *Toàn Thư* III:4b; *Tạp Lục* I:8a-8b; *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, vol. 2, 45-49.

<sup>11</sup> This statement is apparently based on the *Toàn Thư* annotation's error. Launay, *Histoire Ancienne*, 51.

Quảng Bình (Quambin) province also appears on the earliest maps European maps depicting features in Cochinchina's interior, produced by the mid-17th century Jesuit mission. The province and citadel of the same name do not seem to be near the coast in some Jesuit maps, which places the citadel and toponym near the western edge of the territory on the upper reaches of the main river, while that river's mouth is part of Thuận Hóa (Thoanoa) province instead.<sup>12</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, the Song took advantage of Cham attacks to launch an attack on Đại Việt in 1075; general Lý Thường Kiệt massacred border populations in Guangdong and Guangxi, bringing the survivors to Đại Việt; he failed to defeat Champa. The *Việt Sử Lược* claims that Champa offered tribute in 1075.<sup>13</sup>

These texts suggest that Nghệ An and Quảng Bình remained contested territory through the twelfth century, with Cambodian, Champa and Đại Việt rulers competing for control of their rivers, ports and mountains. The *Việt Sử Lược* mentions a subsequent Cambodian attack on Nghệ An; the *Toàn Thư* claims Nghệ An was attacked overland by Cambodian infantry and ships which joined with troops from Champa. In the *Toàn Thư* only, the *Anh Tông* sent a Thanh Hóa/Nghệ An army to aid a Champa rebel prince; in the ensuing battle a Lý general was killed along with the allied prince, and yet the Lý king married the Champa king's daughter. None of this appears in the *Tạp Lục*.<sup>14</sup>

Michael Vickery summarizes our fragmentary knowledge of the wars at the end of the twelfth century described in some inscriptions (including two at Mỹ Sơn and two

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<sup>12</sup> A rough sketch of a Jesuit map included in the first edition of Rhodes' 1651 work differs in some details from a full sized version of the same map that also published in Paris. Possibly, in simplifying this map for printing, some details were altered.

<sup>13</sup> In 1075, the *Việt Sử Lược* and *Toàn Thư*, *Thánh Tông* died, then his oldest son, *Nhân Tông*, ruled 56 years until his death at 62 or 63 in 1127; *Nhân Tông*'s successor is called a grandson of *Thánh Tông* fathered by another son. In *Lịch Sử Nước Annam*, *Nhân Tông* was an adopted son, and ruled 60 years; his successor is not described explicitly as anything other than *Nhân Tông*'s son. (Interestingly, the *Ngự Chế Việt Sử Tông Vịnh*, attributed to Historical Office head Trương Đăng Quế's student the *Tự Đức* Emperor, states *Thánh Tông* originally had no sons, but later took a concubine who gave birth to *Nhân Tông*). *Toàn Thư*, III:8a; *Tạp Lục* I:8b; *Việt Sử Lược*, 56.

<sup>14</sup> Champa merchants were by then well-established throughout the region; the wealthiest family in thirteenth century Guangzhou was said to be from Champa. James Kong Chin, "The Junk Trade between South China and Nguyen Vietnam in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries," in Nola Cooke and Li Tana, eds., *Water Frontier: Commerce and the Chinese in the Lower Mekong Region, 1750-1880* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), 56. The king is reported ignoring a Nghệ An officer's petitions to address the Cambodian threat. After the king's young grandson took the throne, Cambodia resumed tribute, yet there were more raids on Nghệ An. A Cham person reportedly escaped Đại Việt and fled to Nhật Lệ in Quảng Bình, but was captured and returned by the local people after he arrived. *Toàn Thư*, III:28b-32a; *Việt Sử Lược*, 68-69.

farther south) and hinted at in battle scenes on Angkor reliefs. These inscriptions have a king Jaya Harivarman taking control over a wide area by 1160, including Vijaya, defeating a rival king supported by the *Yavana* (apparently, the Lý). The *Toàn Thư* account does not match the narrative suggested by inscriptions. It does describe raids on Nghệ An in 1137 and 1150; Ung Minh Ta Đệp received Lý recognition as king of Champa, but was defeated, and his rival's daughter married the Lý king.<sup>15</sup>

There is reference to a conflict in 1166 involving Cambodia in some, not all, these texts, yet none of them refers to war between Angkor and Champa. In the *Toàn Thư*, a Cham (Chiêm) sorcerer in Quảng Bình raided across the Hoành Range in 1166, and the Lý launched a punitive mission, but raids continued even after tributary relations were supposedly restored. Champa king Bồ Trì brought his family to Hà Tĩnh seeking aid and first claimed to have been driven out by his uncle, but then attacked Lý officials; none of this is described in the *Việt Sử Lược* or *Tạp Lục*. There are hints in the *Toàn Thư* of Champa influence on the Lý court – the Lý adopted Champa music. None of these texts reference the 1177 Champa invasion of Angkor, or hint that Champa was a vassal of Jayavarman VII. The *Việt Sử Lược* describes Champa encroaching on the eastern border of Nghệ An in 1177, but otherwise having tributary status, and ignores Cambodia beyond an offer of tribute in 1191. In the *Toàn Thư*, Cambodia also offered tribute in 1191, then raided Nghệ An in 1216. The *Tạp Lục* describes no contact at all between Đại Việt and either Champa or Cambodia for nearly two centuries.<sup>16</sup>

The 1781 Jesuit history of Cochinchina (Champa) seeking trade with China; in 1166 and 1170, this king sent Cochinchinese to the Flaynan (Hainan) island, where they became pirates and were forced to return the territory to China. In 1179, the king of Cochinchina led an army against Cambodia, but was unable to conquer it, and in 1197 a Cambodian king retaliated, defeating Cochinchina and placing a Cambodian on its throne. Karl Gutzlaff, reading Chinese texts in early 19th century Canton, believed a great king in Cochinchina in 1166 developed commercial relations with Hainan, but

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<sup>15</sup> Vickery, "Champa Revised," 59-63.

<sup>16</sup> *Toàn Thư* IV:14b-21b; *Việt Sử Lược* 77-84.

entered into conflict with Đại Việt, where his merchants were accused of piracy. The king decided to attack Cambodia “by water and land,” and won after heavy losses.<sup>17</sup>

### Champa in the Trần Dynasty Era

As Vickery notes, the last inscriptions by Champa rulers before 1263 are all found at Mỹ Sơn. It is commonly understood that Trà Kiệu then declined or was abandoned. However, no study has specifically examined Trà Kiệu’s longevity. One recent archaeological report describes a layer in which local and Chinese ceramics were found, dating from roughly the twelfth to 15th centuries; another report describes a layer in which Northern and Southern Song, and 17th century Japanese, imports were discovered, together with ceramics from the 18th century or later. Disturbances in the upper layers are attributed to treasure hunters, but Trà Kiệu was probably also looted in the course of the 18th century wars. The lack of pristine stratigraphic evidence makes firm conclusions difficult. However, the advantages of Quảng Nam’s geography and position in the regional trade network suggest that Trà Kiệu may have remained an important economic center either continuously or with only brief interruptions.<sup>18</sup>

The Lý-Trần transition is not yet well studied, and sources disagree on the circumstances of the Trần usurpation. In the *Lịch Sử Nước Annam*, the final Lý king enters the monkhood, leaving the throne to his unmarried daughter, who married a Trần and made him king; however the realm was in disarray for five more years, until he ordered an attack on Champa, capturing and bringing back its king. The king then took the name *Nhân Tông*. The capture of a Champa king by the Trần only five years after their

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<sup>17</sup> The Jesuits called the Cochinchinese king Tseouyana. Karl Gutzlaff, “Geography of the Cochin-Chinese Empire,” 115. Vickery, “Champa Revised,” 59.

<sup>18</sup> Singhapura, or Trà Kiệu, was first studied seriously in 1927 by French archaeologists hoping to uncover the ancient state of Lin-yi, and subsequent studies have remained focused on earlier periods of occupation. Vickery, *Champa Revised*, 8; Glover, Yamagata and Nguyễn Kim Dung, “Excavations at Tra Kieu and Go Cam, Quang Nam Province, Central Viet Nam,” in Elisabeth A. Bacus, Ian Glover, Vincent C. Pigott, ed., *Uncovering Southeast Asia's past: selected papers from the tenth International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists* (Singapore, NUS Press, 2006), 217; Ian Glover, Mariko Yamagata and William Southworth, “The Cham, Sa Huynh and Han in Early Vietnam,” *BIPPA* 14: 166-176, 169.

dynasty began does not appear in various accounts of the *Toàn Thư*, *Việt Sử Lược*, or *Tap Lục*.<sup>19</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, however, a rebellion supported by coastal forces included some Cham (Chiêm) participation. As the Lý weakened, Champa demanded the return of “old land.” A Cham king was defeated in 1252, and the Mongol wars also drew Cham participation. The Jesuit history also describes the Mongol attack on “Linyi.” Like all battles involving Champa between 1132 and 1306, these episodes are omitted in the *Tap Lục*.<sup>20</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* mentions the Trần *Thượng Hoàng* going to Champa for unexplained reasons in 1301, while general Phạm Ngũ Lão fought off Lao forces. Following a religious embassy from and commercial disputes with Champa, a Trần princess married Champa king Chế Mân in 1306, a marriage said to have been promised during the earlier royal visit. The *Toàn Thư* here claims that Ô Lý (Quảng Bình, Quảng Trị and Huế) was given to Trần viceroy Đoàn Nhữ Hài to govern, without incident.<sup>21</sup>

When Chế Mân died suddenly, his heir Chế Đa Đa sent tribute to the Trần court, but an official named Trần Khắc Chung was sent to bring back both the daughter and the Champa king. Chung appeared there in a single small ship, and allegedly captured her, yet did not return her to the court. In 1311, Trần *Anh Tông* attacked the head of a Cham (Chiêm) camp, said in different texts to be named Chế Chí or Phan Trắc, with no specified relation to the Champa king Chế Đa Đa. The location of the camp was called Câu Chiêm, and a different place than the capital raided by Trần Khắc Chung. The head of this camp submitted to the king, who provided titles as tributary rulers to both Chế Chí (or Phan Trắc) and his young brother, and subdued resistance from local tribes. On his return to the capital, the king built a temple in Nghệ An for the worship of a female deity that appeared in a dream while he was on his way to attack Champa (although Trần Khắc Chung went to Champa, whereas the king went to a camp called Câu Chiêm).<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *Việt Sử Lược*, 90-92; *Toàn Thư* V:1a-5b.

<sup>20</sup> Champa officials reportedly sent tribute up to the Mongol wars, sometimes asking to join the Trần court. Later, some Cham in Đại Việt were accused of giving aid to the Mongols and were sent back to their country. *Toàn Thư*, V:27b-63a, VI:1a-16b.

<sup>21</sup> *Toàn Thư*, VI:22b; Vickery, “Champa Revised,” 79.

<sup>22</sup> To reach Câu Chiêm camp, the Trần troops went to Quảng Bình where they divided their forces to approach by land, by sea and over the mountains, which offers little clue where it was except that it was near Quảng Bình. *Toàn Thư*, VI: 22b -28b.

The story of the deity is similar to that of Lý Thái Tông and My Ê in the *Việt Điện U Linh*. Unlike the woman in that text (wife of Sạ Đầu), the *Toàn Thư* spirit claimed to be a captured concubine of a defeated Song emperor; her body floated to Nghệ An, where she became a sea goddess. A similar deity appears (with no Lý or Trần connection) in the *Ô Châu Cận Lục*, in which a religious site in Huế became a site for worship of the wife of one of the last Southern Song emperors, who drowned herself after being defiled in Guangdong, then miraculously floated to Nghệ An. Only at this point in the *Toàn Thư* is the Đồ Bàn (闍槃) citadel mentioned in passing, as a demonstration of this deity's beneficence: she ensured that the seas were calm, and the king quickly sailed to conquer Đồ Bàn citadel. A Trần viceroy was sent to Nghệ An and Quảng Bình in order to provide Champa with military aid, which again suggests a reference to battles over highland territories.<sup>23</sup>

The Lý-Trần transition demands a separate study, but this brief review suggests a complex relationship between Champa and the Trần kings based on the Hải Dương coast. The attack on the Đồ Bàn citadel appears in the *Toàn Thư* out of context, as one of many variations on a common legend, so this passage alone cannot be considered evidence of a definitive Trần attack on the distant Quy Nhơn, and there is no specific evidence that the center at Trà Kiệu was abandoned.

### A Champa Resurgence

In this period, there are major disparities between the Lê annals and contemporary Ming court records. There is evidence that in the late 14th century, and again in the early 15th century, decades of weakened monsoons, alternating with shorter heavy rains, disrupted Angkor's irrigation system and contributed to its collapse. (Gauging the impact of environmental changes on Trần Đại Việt, which lay in a different climate zone, and lacked Angkor's sophisticated hydraulic engineering, will require additional study.) The impact of a weakened Angkor on its historic rival Champa has not yet been examined. It

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<sup>23</sup> *Cận Lục*, 95-97.

is possible that Angkor's decline actually aided Champa in extending influence over the Red River.<sup>24</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, attacks by the Trần on Champa forces in Nghệ An and Quảng Bình continued sporadically. The *Thượng Hoàng* launched an attack on a highland king of a state called Chiêm Chiêu, leading Nghệ An forces west to battle to drive Ai Lao forces out of Chiêm Chiêu between 1332 and 1336. He defeated a Lao camp on the Tiét La River in Nam Nhung, then allegedly continued down this river, along the way receiving tribute from Cambodia and other border states. A new Champa king, Chế A Nan, was succeeded by his son-in-law Trà Hòa Bồ Đề, who paid tribute to the Trần in 1346; in the same year, Ai Lao launched a new raid against the Trần.<sup>25</sup>

Chế Mỗ, described in an annotation as a rival son-in-law of the deceased Champa king, asked for aid to seize the throne in 1352. An invasion force allegedly marched to Cồ Lũy (Quảng Ngãi), but returned when provision ships were unable to follow. The failed campaign is referenced obliquely in a parable about Hóa Châu, a name later associated with the Huế region (or the highlands to its west), also mentioned for the first time; the Trần are reported to have recaptured this area from Champa. An annotation notes that during successive raids, the Cham captured local youth who gathered at the mountain source, suggesting highland raids. After attacking Quảng Bình, Champa demanded the return of Hóa Châu in 1368; the Trần were defeated in Chiêm Động.

The Ming court was unaware of a non-Trần figure usurping the throne; the *Ming Shi-lu* reports that the king Trần Nhật Khuê (日燿) died in 1370 before he could be formally recognized, and the Ming recognized his heir Trần Nhật Kiên (日燿) instead. Champa's invasion and utter defeat of Đại Việt is reported in the *Ming Shi-lu*, but with few details. The Ming court became suspicious when a new king Trần Thúc Minh (叔明) suddenly took Nhật Kiên's place. They initially refused tribute, but later recognized this

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<sup>24</sup> Brendan M. Buckley, Kevin J. Anchukaitis, Daniel Penny, Roland Fletcher, Edward R. Cook, Masaki Sano, Le Canh Nam, Aroonrut Wichienkeo, Ton That Minh, and Truong Mai Hong, "Climate as a contributing factor in the demise of Angkor, Cambodia," *PNAS* 107:15 (April 13, 2010), 6748-6752

<sup>25</sup> The *Thượng Hoàng*'s advisers convinced him in 1332 to attack Champa instead of moving against tribes on the Đà River leading to Yunnan. *Toàn Thư*, VII:5b-29a; *Cạn Lục*, 105.



new ruler and approved his ceding the throne to his young brother Trần Đoan (煇) in 1374.<sup>26</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, a new, short-lived king, Dương Nhật Lễ had Cham support. Son of a performer called Queen Mother (*Vương Mẫu*) after a stage role, he was adopted by a Trần prince who married his mother. The *Toàn Thư* states that on the *Dụ Tông*'s death, a senior queen awarded Lễ the throne; he then poisoned her and inaugurated the Dương Dynasty. The future *Nghệ Tông*, a son of the murdered queen with the former *Thượng Hoàng* and *Ming Tông*, was forced out of the capital, but then abruptly induced Lễ to give up the throne, and killed him. Champa was persuaded by Lễ's supporters to avenge him in 1371, seizing the Trần capital and forcing the king to retreat to Hải Dương.<sup>27</sup>

The Ming, Lê and Jesuit texts concur that a Trần king died in Champa (or Cochinchina) in 1377. For the Ming, when Trần Đoan died during an unsuccessful campaign there in early 1377, his young brother Vĩ (偉) took power. Vĩ and the older brother Thúc Minh, also handling affairs of state, sent separate tribute. The Ming emperor sent instructions to both in 1380 to end their dispute with Champa, and threatened Vĩ in 1381 for attacks on disputed Ming border territories, yet continued to send him gifts; Vĩ helped provision Ming troops fighting in Yunnan. The Jesuit history describes a Cochinchinese king presenting the Ming with tribute after defeating a pirate fleet in 1373; it agrees that in a 1377 battle with Tonkin, Cochinchinese king Itataha killed the Trần king, called Tchín Touan (Trần Đoan), incurring Ming displeasure.<sup>28</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, following a provocation in Hóa Châu by a Champa king Chế Bồng Nga, who is not described as the ruler who invaded in 1371, Trần *Duyệt Tông* and Hồ Quý Ly attacked Champa in 1376 with support from Nghệ An, Quảng Bình and Thuận Hóa (the same passage also mentions Hóa Châu as a distinct place). The king spent a

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<sup>26</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Tai-zu*, 51:8b-9a.

<sup>27</sup> The *Toàn Thư* and *Cận Lục* both name a local person, Hồ Long, as Hóa Châu governor (*Đại Tri Châu*); the *Cận Lục* states he governed during the reign of *Nghệ Tông*, whereas the *Toàn Thư* places his appointment in 1372. The *Toàn Thư* states that in 1374, soldiers and the populace were ordered to stop dressing in the northern (Chinese) style, and speaking the languages of the Chiêm and Lao. *Toàn Thư*, VII:31a-41b.

<sup>28</sup> Champa king A Đáp A Giả (阿荅阿者) sent the Ming tribute repeatedly at this time, as did other states including Cambodia. *Ming Shi-lu, Tai-zu*, 111:3b, 115:2a-2b, 128:5a-b; Geoff Wade, "The Ming Shi Account of Champa," *Asia Research Institute Working Paper Series*, Number 3, National University of Singapore (June 2003), 3-4.

month in Quảng Bình; Quảng Bình and Thuận Hóa people submitted Champa prisoners who had fled there.<sup>29</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư* description of a campaign against Champa in 1377, the Trần forces arrived at the Thi Nại harbor in Champa; the army travelled up to Thạch Kiều, and garrisoned in a mountain region. In the ensuing battle outside the Đồ Bàn citadel, the king was killed, and the Champa captured a Trần prince called the *Ngự Câu* King, allegedly bringing a woman to marry to him, but then Hồ Quý Ly learned of the king's death and the army retreated.<sup>30</sup>

The status of the Đồ Bàn (or Chà Bàn) found near Quy Nhơn as a Cham capital is open to interpretation. It appears in the *Thiên Nam Tứ Chí Lộ Đồ*, a cartographic itinerary added to the *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ* at some point between the 16th and 18th centuries. This itinerary describes Chà Bàn having a brick wall one league square, with gates on each side, in the Phú Đa village, west of the Nước Mặn (Quy Nhơn) harbor; the Phú Đa River extends into the western mountains. It was called a religious sanctuary, filled with shrines and towers, of which only twelve towers remained at the (unknown) time of writing; their local name was *tháp con gái* (women's temple-towers). The itinerary does not state that Chà Bàn capital of Champa/Chiêm Thành. Another itinerary in the collection, *Giáp Ngọ Bình Nam Đồ*, simply shows an area with a great number of temples, without the label Chà Bàn. There are several temple-towers along the Côn River west of Quy Nhơn.<sup>31</sup>

The 19th century Historical Office, in the *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, places the old citadel of Chà Bàn, which it does call an old Champa/Chiêm Thành capital, in the northeast of Tuy Viễn district, not far from the coast. The *Tây Sơn* ruler Nguyễn Nhạc reportedly rebuilt Chà Bàn, which was then used as the Bình Định province seat for a number of years after 1802, when a new citadel was constructed. There were one or more religious sites, possibly walled, west of Quy Nhơn, but whether and at what point this was a Champa capital is not firmly established in the sources.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> *Toàn Thư*, VII:41b-43b.

<sup>30</sup> *Toàn Thư*, VI:43a-46b.

<sup>31</sup> Chapter 6 notes a Jesuit report of a city that appears to be three days travel west of Quy Nhơn, and early French reports of built structures on the Kontum plateau, many of which disappeared in the early twentieth century. *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ*, 97.

<sup>32</sup> *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, vol. 3, 37-38.

According to the *Toàn Thư*, the *Thượng Hoàng* placed the dead king's oldest son on the throne as *Giản Hoàng*, but a Trần embassy to the Ming court failed to obtain recognition for the new king. (This is at odds with the Ming description of accepting frequent tribute from both the former king Thúc Minh and the new king, his young brother Vĩ.) Champa raided the capital again; this time, the king did not retreat. Hồ Quý Ly allied with the son of a religious teacher to fight Chế Bồng Nga's Nghệ An and Quảng Bình allies for control of Thanh Hóa. Champa sent a defected Trần prince to control Nghệ An in 1378, where he found popular support.<sup>33</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* claims the Ming Dynasty attacked Champa in 1386, sending general Lý Anh to demand local elephants and support for supply lines to Yunnan. The *Ming Shi-lu*, however, makes no mention of any attack in 1386 and in fact describes tribute being received from A Đắp A Giã that year. The Jesuit history claims the Ming emperor grew irate when the Cochinchinese king Itataha (A Đắp A Giã) took some of the tribute elephants sent by Cambodia as a gift to the Ming.<sup>34</sup>

In 1389, according to a later Ming report, the reigning king Trần Vĩ was removed from the throne by Lý Nhất Nguyên (一元), who reportedly changed his name to Quý Ly (the surname Hồ would come later). Quý Ly then killed the former king, Trần Nhật Minh, and placed Minh's son Trần Nhật Hồn (陳日焄) on the throne, although the Ming court would not become aware of this until 1396.<sup>35</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, Champa allied forces attacked Thanh Hóa in 1389; Hồ Quý Ly allegedly resigned from command over the *Thượng Hoàng*'s refusal to supply needed ships. The *Ming Shi-lu*, in contrast, reports that Quý Ly either killed or imprisoned the younger of two rulers, Trần Vĩ. In the *Toàn Thư*, Chế Bồng Nga and Nguyên Diêu secretly brought a hundred warships to the Đại Việt navy in 1390, but were betrayed by their own men, and Chế Bồng Nga was killed by Nguyên Diêu, who also was killed. Champa general La Ngai, retreated to the mountains and declared himself king. Although two of Chế Bồng Nga's sons defected to the Trần and were given noble titles, the Quảng

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<sup>33</sup> The Ming only once refused tribute from Trần Vĩ, in 1381, after what the court saw as an unprovoked attack by Vĩ on a border region in Guangxi. *Tai-zu*: juan 137.5b-6a

<sup>34</sup> The *Toàn Thư* reports Champa forces in the highlands driving the *Thượng Hoàng* to retreat to the coast before withdrawing in 1378. Ming instructions to A Đắp A Giã in 1388 note that he lived on an island in the ocean, possibly a metaphor. *ToànThư*, VIII:1a-9b; *Ming Shi-lu*, *Tai-zu*, 190:1b-2a.

<sup>35</sup> *Tai-zu*: juan 194.6b-7a

Bình populace still supported Champa. The *Ô Châu Cận Lục* describes Phan Mãnh as a chieftain appointed as a Trần military commander in Quảng Bình in the 1390s.<sup>36</sup>

In the Jesuit history, the unpopular and incompetent Itataha (A Đắp A Giã) was assassinated in 1390, but a new king's request for recognition from the Ming was refused. The *Toàn Thư* claims Hóa Châu generals plotted revolt in 1391, but Hồ Quý Ly killed them, appointing local persons Đặng Tất and Hoàng Hối Khanh in their place. The *Tạp Lục* has a Champa general named Bô Đông being captured by Trần Thuận Tông while patrolling Hóa Châu together with Hồ Quý Ly; he was later given command at a strategically important citadel at Đa Bang. The *Toàn Thư and Tạp Lục* later note that Khanh was the general stationed at Đa Bang; the *Cận Lục* omits Hoàng Hối Khanh.

The *Ming Shi-lu* describes a shift in relations with the Trần. After several years of trying to restrain and limit the number of tribute missions from Đại Việt, as well as other countries, and barring private citizens from engaging in trade with or traveling to southern border countries, tribute from Đại Việt was banned outright in 1393 on the grounds that the ruler had been killed and replaced with another. For several years, the Ming court refused tribute from both Champa and Đại Việt, arguing that Champa and Trần factions had each killed their rightful kings. Products from both countries were briefly banned in a bid to control rampant piracy.

In 1395, the Ming court reported that due to the young age of the new reigning king, Đại Việt was entirely in the hands of Hồ Quý Ly (Lý Nhật Nguyên) and his son Thành (晟). Only in 1396 did the Ming report learning of former king Trần Thúc Minh's death (at which point he was refused posthumous honors because he had long ago allegedly seized the throne by killing Trần Nhật Kiên). Trần Nhật Hổn, on the throne since 1389, was promptly ordered to return border territories seized at the end of the Yuan Dynasty. The Ming court soon began accepting tribute again from both Đại Việt and Champa, while demanding return of a disputed area at the imperial border near Fangcheng harbor; Ming soldiers and officials who had become pirates were soon pardoned and encouraged to return.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *Toàn Thư*, VIII:14a-19b; *Ming Shi-lu, Tai-zu*, 194:6b-7a; *Cận Lục*, 105.

<sup>37</sup> The *Toàn Thư* and *Ming Shi-lu* reports of Trần succession diverge in these years, which should be the focus of another study. *Ming Shi-lu, Tai-zu*, 214:1a, 227:2b, 231:2a-b, 238:4a, 242:3b-4a, 249:2b-3a, 250:3b-7a, 12A:9a-b; *Toàn Thư*, 19b-47a; *Tạp Lục* I:10b-12b.

The Hồ regime seized power at the height of the severe droughts that may have contributed to the decline of Angkor (and previously aided the Cham resurgence). In fact, the *Toàn Thư* claims that a Chiêm general Chế Đa Biệt and his brother abruptly surrendered to Hồ Quý Ly in 1398, then took command of Hóa Châu, where they took the Sinicized surname of Đinh. An alternative to a Hồ conquest of Hóa Châu might be that a strengthened Hóa Châu broke away, and there was no regime change. In the *Toàn Thư*, Quý Ly (i.e., the Chiêm brothers in Hóa Châu) brought a force of 15,000 troops against Champa (presumably Trà Kiệu) in 1400, with an unstated outcome, but the *Tap Lục* omits this event entirely, raising questions about whether this battle occurred in the versions of the Lê chronicle available to the 18th century *Tap Lục*'s author.

In the *Toàn Thư*, after self-proclaimed Champa king La Ngai was succeeded by son Ba Đích Lai, one of the Hồ regime's generals attacked Champa through the mountains, but was forced to turn back due to floods. A road was built from Tây Đô (Thanh Hóa) to the Hóa Châu citadel in 1402, and *Hán Thương* and former Cham generals in Hóa Châu attacked Champa, gaining a concession of the territory Chiêm Động, probably highlands west of Quảng Nam, in exchange for their withdrawal. Hồ Quý Ly, this text adds, insisted on taking *động Cổ Lũy*, a name suggesting the mountainous region of Quảng Ngãi. The conquered land became the regions Thăng, Hoa, Tư, and Nghĩa, while the highlands to the west became Tân Ninh Garrison. In a variant of this episode in the *Tap Lục*, Quý Ly attacked Champa from Thuận Hóa and was offered Chiêm Động and Cổ Lũy, as above, then began preparing a second assault on both Champa and Cambodia. However, when a Champa king petitioned the Ming for redress due to territory lost in a 1404 attack, he does not describe any loss of territory in earlier years. Basic inconsistencies in these texts suggest that the standard narrative of the seizure of Quảng Nam for Đại Việt soon after 1400 is highly questionable.<sup>38</sup>

In the *Ming Shi-lu*, a new king of Đại Việt sent an envoy in 1403, hiding his identity as son of Hồ Quý Ly. He introduced himself a son of a Trần woman who took the throne on in 1399, when there were no Trần heirs to the throne of Trần Nhật Khuê. (The description of this memorial omits mention of any of the Trần kings in power since

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<sup>38</sup> The *Toàn Thư* states that Quý Ly took the throne, and ceded it to *Hán Thương*, his son with a Trần queen, though the Ming court received no word of this until the death of the Trần king. *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Tap Lục*, *ibid*; *Ming Shi-lu*, *Tai-zong*, 33:4b-5a.

1370.) The new Ming emperor demanded he cease raiding Champa before he could receive recognition, then demanded an investigation into these claims.

In the *Toàn Thư*, a Chiêm general under *Hán Thương* prepared the Chiêm people of Tur and Nghĩa for war in 1403, building small ships in order to attack Champa and conquer all the land “south to the border of Siam.” In a highly exaggerated passage, 200,000 troops surrounded the Chà Bàn (Đồ Bàn) citadel, yet supposedly returned after nine months due to lack of supplies, meeting en route nine ships sent by the Ming to Champa’s aid. The *Tạp Lục* also states Quý Ly attacked Champa in 1403 in order to capture all Cambodia and extend his realm to the border with Siam, and that his troops surrounded the Đồ Bàn citadel, then returned. These claims are inconsistent with the *Ming Shi-lu*, which just describes Champa offering the usual tribute in 1403.<sup>39</sup>

A 1405 memorial from the Champa king, referred to as Chiêm Ba Đích Lại, in the *Ming Shi-lu*, claimed *Hán Thương* raided his territory only in the middle of 1404, occupying a place called Sa Ly Nha (沙離牙) and seizing the king’s (Ming) ceremonial costume; the Ming demanded that Đại Việt desist. Several years later, a Ming officer enumerated the crimes of the Hồ regime, claiming they had also attacked the “old district” of Jiuzhou and other locations, before launching additional raids on regions including Ban-da-lang (Panduranga?). They were accused of capturing 100 elephants in Champa, which were used in attacks on Zhan-sha and Li-ya, apparently other states bordering Champa. The Hồ were again accused of forcing the Champa king to wear a new costume.<sup>40</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* and *Tạp Lục*, however, ignore the victories reported by the Ming, and only mention an inconclusive and aborted attack in 1403. The *Toàn Thư* states that in 1404 Ming emissaries threatened *Hán Thương* over disputed land along the northern border, but does not mention the Ming orders to cease raiding Champa. It simply notes that the Trần-loyalist Hóa Châu official Hồ Tùng was killed after plotting with surrendered Chiêm general Chế Sơn Nô to join with Champa. The Jesuit history describes Cochinchina’s king Tchenpatilay (Chiêm Ba Đích Lại) seeking diplomatic support from the Ming emperor in an attempt to halt Tonkin’s ongoing attacks. Likily

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<sup>39</sup> *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Tạp Lục*, *ibid*; *Ming Shi-lu*, *Tai-zong*, 23:3a-3b.

<sup>40</sup> *Ming Shi-lu*, *Tai-zong*, 33:4b-5a, 60:1a-4a.

(Hồ Quý Ly) was described by the Jesuits as revolting against the Trần. Ly's son then moved to a country bordering Cochinchina called Chalyya (Sa Ly Nha?).<sup>41</sup>

When *Hán Thương* complied with Ming instructions to cease hostilities, the Ming extended him formal recognition, but later learned of his identity from a prince who claimed to be a nephew of Trần Nhật Khuê. In 1405 and 1406, in the *Toàn Thư*, the Hồ regime reportedly began preparations to go to war against the Ming over northern border disputes. The *Minh Shi-lu*, however, describes them accepting a deal in which they would recognize the exiled Trần claimant as the legitimate heir to the Đại Việt throne, in return for complete authority over Thuận Hóa. The significance of Hồ Quý Ly's desire to rule Thuận Hóa is not explained. On the Trần prince's return to Đông Đô (Hanoi), however, he was allegedly ambushed and killed, which for the Ming court was justification for the subsequent occupation of Đại Việt in 1407.<sup>42</sup>

The Hồ regime's seizure of territories claimed by Champa might well have been for strategic economic reasons, to control trade from the highlands into the southern coastal territories, rather than purely for territorial expansion. This would potentially help explain the Hồ connection with Thuận Hóa that is hinted at in Ming court records. Rather than representing a new chapter in the southern advance by Đại Việt, the underlying causes of these upheavals might be a continuation of the factors contributing to the Champa resurgence in the previous half century.

### Qinzhou, Hải Dương and Champa under the Ming Occupation

The Red River's lower delta and coast, called Hải Dương, had close ties with the pearl-rich trading center of Qinzhou, at that time a contested area of Guangdong adjacent to Đại Việt. Qinzhou's economic and cultural ties with Đại Việt had been a source of constant frustration for Ming-appointed officials long before the Ming occupation of Đại Việt began. The Ming were never able to exercise firm control over the native peoples of

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<sup>41</sup> Both the *Toàn Thư* and *Tạp Lục* describe *Hán Thương* in 1404 clearing Liên Cảng, described as an infertile land from Quảng Bình to Thuận Hóa; Nguyễn Khắc Viện notes this is likely a reference to construction of the *Kênh Sen* which is in Quảng Bình only. Hải Yên estuary, called Cửa Eo in the *Toàn Thư*, was also repaired by *Hán Thương*'s troops. *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Tạp Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>42</sup> Tai-zong: juan 50.2a-b; Tai-zong: juan 52.6a-7a.

Guangdong and Guangxi; the *Ming Shi-lu* reports that Guangdong military commissioners and their troops actually refused to participate in first the expedition against Đại Việt, returning through Qinzhou in order to escape the Ming occupation force traveling along another route.

Despite their poor control over the Đại Việt border region, the Ming occupation army included troops and commanders from Hải Dương, Mạc Đăng Dung's great-grandfather Mạc Thúy prominent among them. (Following the invasion, Thúy was chosen to help eliminate the remaining anti-Ming forces.) Prior to the Ming invasion of Đại Việt, Trần Cao had also sought Ming backing in his revolt against Hồ Quý Ly.<sup>43</sup>

Lê texts suggest that even prior to the Ming occupation, some Hải Dương clans had already begun to exert influence in Quảng Nam and the highlands to its west. The *Toàn Thư* and *Tạp Lục* agree that in 1406, the defected general Hoàng Hối Khanh built Đa Bang citadel, then took command of Tân Ninh in addition to Thăng Hoa, suggesting the Đa Bang citadel might be to the west of Quảng Nam. A Phạm clan genealogy held in Hương Quế village, not far from Trà Kiệu, claims that Hải Dương native Phạm Nhữ Dực, a son or grandson of the Trần general Phạm Ngũ Lão who led campaigns in Thuận Hóa and against Lao states, was made governor in Thăng Hoa during the Hồ Dynasty; this clan is in possession of diplomas conferring royal titles on their early ancestors.<sup>44</sup>

The Ming occupation, however, never claimed Thăng Hoa among their Đại Việt possessions. Ostensibly at Trần Cao's behest, the Ming commander in Yunnan occupied Đại Việt, then captured Hồ Quý Ly and his son in Ri-nan, which is an early Chinese name for a province further south to the south of Thanh Hóa. Native officials in the southernmost regions of Đại Việt quickly recognized new Trần pretenders. According to the *Cạn Lục*, the native Hóa Châu governor Đặng Tất supported Trần *Giản Định* in the mountains of Nghệ An, while a Hóa Châu man named Hồ Hưng married to the king's

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<sup>43</sup> Trần Cao also reportedly called his country Giao Nam, and the Ming referred to it as a *hải ngoại chi bang* (海外之邦), which Geoff Wade translates as a foreign state. It may be noteworthy that the Ming court later refer Quảng Nam and apparently, at some points in the 16th century, seeing Đại Việt as a whole, as Giao Nam. Lê texts do not use the term Giao Nam to refer to either Quảng Nam or Đại Việt as a whole. *Ming Shi-lu*, *Xuan-zong*, 32:9b-10b, *Tai-zong*: 67:1b-2a, 71:1b-3b.

<sup>44</sup> As a sign of growing commercial tensions, a Fujian military official was exiled to Annam in 1407 for corrupt handling of trade with southern border countries. *Tạp Lục*, Book I:11a-b; *Ming Shi-lu*, *Tai-zong*, 37:3a-3b, 67:4b; Phạm *gia phả* held by Phạm Điện Hồng in Điện Biên, and Phạm Trú in Quế Sơn, Quảng Nam.



older sister held Thanh Hóa. Tất was killed due to intrigues with a rival official, and his son Đặng Dung and Quảng Bình commander Phan Mãn recognized a second rival Trần pretender, *Trùng Quang*, in Nghệ An. In the *Toàn Thư*, Hoàng Hối Khanh (who does not appear in the *Cạn Lục* at all) had remained in power in Thăng Hoa and Tân Ninh during the Ming invasion, allied with Tất and Phạm Thế Căng, said to be enemies of Hồ ally Nguyễn Rỗ. The Hồ fled west to escape the Ming (contradicting the *Ming Shi-lu*) and ordered Khanh to place his soldiers under Rỗ's command and give a Chiêm general command of Thăng Hoa and Champa. Instead, Khanh abandoned that general to be killed by Champa forces, and killed Rỗ's mother and family; Rỗ, driven to Champa, became a high official there. The Ming occupied Nghệ An and Quảng Bình, while Champa reportedly again seized Thăng Hoa and Hóa Châu. Champa, in this context, includes the highlands Bồ Đông/Hoàng Hối Khanh earlier governed as Tân Ninh Garrison. Đặng Tất became a Ming governor in Hóa Châu, but Hồ Bối was said to be chosen to rule Hóa Châu by a Trần royal woman. The captured Khanh's head was displayed in Đông Đô, and the Hồ Quý Ly was killed by the Ming after a battle with Trần *Quang Đé*.<sup>45</sup>

The Ming records do not provide any evidence at all of the 1412 wars described in the Lê texts, in which Ming troops fought *Trùng Quang*'s forces in Nghệ An, and then prepared to attack Hóa Châu. The *Toàn Thư* claims that although the Ming appointed officials in Thăng Hoa, they ruled in name only, and the territories surrounding Trà Kiệu were still in reality controlled by Champa. The *Tạp Lục* claims that Champa took advantage of the Ming invasion to reoccupy Tư Nghĩ and killed the Chiêm official appointed by the Hồ there. Officers of the Ming occupation are then reported taking control of Thăng Hoa in 1412 with the submission of its Champa rulers. The sequence of events in the highlands is even less clear.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> *Toàn Thư*, VIII:53a-53b, IX:1a-15a; *Ming Shi-lu*, *Ying-zong* 53:9a-b, *Tai-zong* 22:2b, 84:4a-b; *Cạn Lục*, 105-106

<sup>46</sup> The *Ming Shi-lu* merely claims Champa offered elephants in the 1410 and 1412 and reports a defeat of rebels led by Trần Nguyên Huệ (原携) at an unspecified place in 1413. In a confusing *Toàn Thư* passage, *Trùng Quang* either fled to Lão Qua or drowned himself after being captured along with Đặng Dung. There has been much discussion regarding Ayutthayan aggression in Cambodia during the early 15th century, a period in which chronicle sources are unreliable, but little attention to the question of whether Cham rulers maintained control over Cambodia following their repeated invasions. Vickery and Whitmore note the tentative dating of this inscription needs to be reconsidered (Maspero's 1421 is widely accepted). *Ming Shi-lu*, *Tai-zong*, 108:1b, 131:2a-b; *Toàn Thư*, IX:15a-24a.

The Jesuit history describes Tchenpatilay continuing to rule Cochinchina, allying with a Tonkin rebel named Tching Ki Kouang (*Trùng Quang?*) and providing him with funds and elephants to fight the Ming; the Tonkin rebel, in return, gave the Cochinchinese king the city of Chinghoafou (Thanh Hóa), and under it four secondary cities and thirteen tertiary cities. The Ming emperor learned of this secret treaty in 1415, but nevertheless Cochinchina was able to continue to maintain tributary relations. The *Ming Shi* includes a statement that by 1419, Cambodia had already been repeatedly attacked by Champa; there is no record of tribute from Cambodia, or news of any developments there, after that date. That the geographical extent of Champa extended to Biên Hòa, near Saigon, is suggested by a Cham language inscription, dated by Maspero to 1421, indicating a king's presence there.<sup>47</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, there is an interval in which Champa generals who had defected to the short-lived Hồ regime controlled the coast south of the Hải Vân Pass and areas in the highlands to the west. In 1420, in the *Toàn Thư*, a Hải Dương former slave Lê Ngã returned from Lão Qua with a highland army, claiming descent from Trần Duệ Tông. An army from Ai Lao pretended to come to Lê Ngã's aid, then switched sides to support the Ming, and in 1422, the Ming forced the Trần loyalists to retreat. The *Tạp Lục* specifies that following the Lam Sơn rebellion, Lê Restoration forces first seized the Nghệ An citadel, then moved south to attack the citadels of Quảng Bình and Thuận Hóa, suggesting this region might have been their initial objective. After capturing Đông Đô (Hanoi) in 1427, Lê Thái Tổ, in this account, sent the Ming soldiers captured in these campaigns back to Thuận Hóa and Quảng Bình to settle permanently. The *Tạp Lục* states that the captured Ming forces were resettled in Thuận Hóa; if so, it would follow that Hải Dương forces and their Mạc leaders were among them.<sup>48</sup>

As Leo K. Shin demonstrates, Guangdong and Guangxi native peoples at the edges of the Ming Dynasty's territory were sometimes encouraged or forced to adopt Ming language and customs. In the *Ming Shi-lu*, there are instances in which subjects considered civilized Chinese changed their allegiance and became barbarian *yi* in the eyes

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<sup>47</sup> By 1419 a man named Lý Bân reportedly controlled Nghệ An, driving a native official Phan Liâu, who supported the Ming, to Ai Lao. *Toàn Thư*, X:1a-9b; Vickery, "Cambodia and its Neighbors in the Fifteenth Century," Asia Research Institute Working Paper Series Number 27, National University of Singapore (2004), 41-42.

<sup>48</sup> *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Tạp Lục*, 12b-14b.

of the Ming. These tensions were evident in Qinzhou, despite its strategic importance as a transit and supply center for the occupation. After the Ming withdrew in 1428, the *Shi-lu* includes reports that people from the Đại Việt coast immediately began launching raids on Qinzhou. Ming officials complained that local Qinzhou chieftains were complicit in some of these raids. The court ordered Guangdong officials and patrols to capture southern raiders and prevent all contact between Đại Việt and the Qinzhou and Lianzhou merchants who might lead them to the pearl beds. This pattern suggests that the Mạc clan in Hải Dương, even after their parts in the occupation regime were finished, remained powerful local leaders, maintained military capabilities independent of both the Lê and Ming courts that manifested in this “banditry,” and retained influence on both sides of the border.<sup>49</sup>

The fate of Trà Kiệu following the Ming occupation is not described clearly in these sources. It may have remained a political center of Champa/Chiêm Thành even after it lost some of its northernmost territories to Trần Đại Việt and Hồ Quý Ly’s Đại Ngu. A Champa king petitioning the Ming Dyansty for the return of northern territories may well have laid a claim to regions further north, such as Quảng Bình or Huế, so in my view this passage in the *Shi-lu* does not necessarily prove that Trà Kiệu became an integral part of Đại Việt territory. Thus, although attacks on Trà Kiệu or even locations to its south might have taken place, there is no compelling evidence that a capital at Trà Kiệu was completely abandoned by this time. Instead, the political upheavals of the late 14th and early 15th centuries were accompanied by waves of shifting allegiances on both Đại Việt’s northern and southern borders. In addition to occupied populations or prisoners of war, even senior commanders and royalty frequently switched sides. At the time they withdrew from Đại Việt, Ming descriptions of their effort to integrate the populations of its own southern border provinces was characterized by similar shifting allegiances.

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<sup>49</sup> Leo K. Shin, *The Making of the Chinese State: Ethnicity and Expansion in the Ming Borderlands* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1-13; idem, “Ming China and Its Border with Annam,” in D. Lary, ed., *The Chinese State at the Borders* (Vancouver, B.C.: University of British Columbia Press, 2007), 93-95; *Ming Shi-lu*, *Shen-zong*, 149:5a, *Ying-zong*, 72:5a-b, *Tai-zong*, 89:1a, 96:5a-b, 250:6b; *Xuan-zong*, 41:6a, 46:7b-8a.

## Lê Expansion in Qinzhou, Laos and Champa

The Lê regime's greatest concern after the Ming troops withdrew seems to have been consolidating control of highland groups in preparation to attack Ai Lao, not revisiting Hồ Dynasty campaigns in Champa. The *Toàn Thư* reports gifts exchanged with a Champa king, though a Champa king named BỐ ĐỀ did raid Hóa Châu on Thái Tổ's death and sent a ship to take hostages in Nghệ An; other Chiêm chieftains are described visiting the Lê peacefully. The commander of Nghệ An, Quảng Bình and Thuận Hóa attacked Champa forces that raided his borders, and two Chiêm elephant handlers surrendered. Generals from Nghệ An, who may have commanded resettled Ming forces in Quảng Bình and Thuận Hóa, helped Hóa Châu native chiefs defend against Champa raids.<sup>50</sup>

Lê dynastic records claim polities across the region sent tribute in the next following decades. The records focus on the move into the highlands; the Lê seized a mountain district or *mường* west of Thanh Hóa, claimed by Ai Lao since the 1430s. A Lao *Bàn Nhà*, or king, named Côn Cô was deposed by his own supporters when Lê assistance failed to reach him, but a new king there also sent tribute, and Lê officials were given command in many parts of Ai Lao. There is a reference to Quang Châu people of Quảng Nam offering horses. A clan using the name or title Cầm raided border areas, while the Lao king (believing that 30,000 of the Cầm forces had been sent to join the Lê army) attacked the Lê and were repelled.<sup>51</sup>

There are several inconsistencies in the accounts of the first Lê conquest of a Champa capital, in which one of two rival rulers received Lê support. The *Toàn Thư* describes retaliations against raids on Hóa Châu by a Champa king named Bí Cai from 1444 to 1446, and suggests the king led 60,000 troops from the south of Nghệ An by both highland and sea routes to Thị Nai harbor, quickly entering the Chà Bàn citadel, and captured Bí Cai and his wives, men, and property, before returning. An adopted relative

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<sup>50</sup> I sometimes use “native,” or “local,” in situations where an official seems to be described as having local origins, reflecting Sino-Vietnamese texts which sometimes comment on leaders in regions far from a central court who are subsequently accepted as officials by that court; this is not necessarily an assertion about ethnicity. A commentator claims Champa and Chà Bàn offered tribute, as if Champa and Chà Bàn were ruled by different regimes. *Toàn Thư*, 10:74a-76b, 11:1a-26b.

<sup>51</sup> *Toàn Thư*, *ibid.*

of the old king said to be loyal to the Lê was placed on the throne, while Bí Cai and three of his wives were taken to the Lê capital. Around the same time, the strategic mountain region of Quỳ Hợp in Nghệ An, part of the highland state of Bôn on the river route to Xiengkhuang, allied with the Lê. In the *Tap Lục*, two defeats of a Champa king's navy in Hóa Châu are described in consecutive years by a different general than in the *Toàn Thư*, but there were no retaliations; in the second year, 1445, the king Bí Cai was defeated. A general controlling Nghệ An, Quảng Bình and Thuận Hóa then brought local troops against the Chiêm in adjacent Thăng Hoa and Tư Nghĩa, and a relative of the king named Tả Bí Lai brought troops by road to Đồ Bàn citadel, forcing Bí Cai to surrender it to him.<sup>52</sup>

The 18th century Jesuit *Notice Historique* has a new Cochinchinese king replacing his grandfather Tchenpatilay on his death in 1441, and attacking Tonkin, which complained to the Ming in 1446. This king was taken hostage in battle, and Tchenpatilay's nephew took the throne in 1447, followed by a brother and two other heirs in short succession. In the Ming Shi-lu, a king Lê Lân (麟) is mentioned in 1442.<sup>53</sup>

The early Lê regime also showed little interest in giving ground on the northern borders. After the Lê court refused to turn over Qinzhou native officials in 1449, a Guangdong official notes: "Qinzhou is very close to Giao Chỉ [Jiaozhi]. The clothes and language of the inhabitants are very similar to those of Giao Chỉ, and it is difficult to differentiate these people." He proposes setting up schools to force people to change their language and dress. The Lê court, for its part, was suspicious of the Chinese, or "Wu" (*Ngô*) people within the Lê borders, in the same year reportedly instructing households with "Wu" slaves to forbid them from having contact with Ming court emissaries. The Ming began commuting the death sentences of Guangdong officials that were accused of wrongdoing in the wake of the crisis of the failed occupation and ongoing struggle to

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<sup>52</sup> The *Toàn Thư*, with its concern for bolstering the Lê regime, may exaggerate the involvement of the king in this conflict, which is described as fought between local generals. The *Tap Lục* quotes extensively from a stele at the temple of Lê Khôi in Đông Đô, praising Khôi for governing Hóa Châu for one year in 1430, then Nghệ An after 1443, and repelling a 1445 Cham raid in Hóa Châu. He attacked by sea from Nghệ An in 1446, and the Chiêm allegedly surrendered without fighting. The text cites another source, called the *Biệt Lục*, describing the *Nhân Tông*'s reward for Hóa Châu people who fought against a Champa king and an unknown man Nguyễn Đặc Đạt sent to govern there. *Toàn Thư*, 60a-60b; *Tap Lục* I:15b-17a.

<sup>53</sup> The kings were named by the Jesuits Mahopenkai, Mohokoueylay, Molokoueyyeou, Molopanloyve and finally Panlotchatsuen; Ming Shi-lu, Ying-zong, 91:3b-4a

pacify Guangdong. The condemned men were instead sent to join the Qinzhou and Lianzhou guards.

The distinctions between the people of Đại Việt and Champa (with king Bí Cái reportedly awarded a ceremonial costume as a Lê tributary ruler in 1448), seem as ambiguous as those at its northern border. In 1448, a Champa man with a Phan surname, Mỗ, surrendered with a group of men and women that were given residences; the next year another Chiêm man, Quý Do, escaped from prison and proclaimed himself king, but his tribute was refused by the Lê. Two Champa ambassadors, one with a Cham name (Bô Sa Phá Tham Tốt) and the other with the Sinicized name Nguyễn Hữu Quang, arrived to convince the court of Quý Do's legitimacy. On the instructions of the emperor, Champa reportedly returned 70 persons from Đại Việt who had been living there.<sup>54</sup>

As in earlier generations, forces guarding the border regions north of Đại Việt were neither effective nor loyal to the Ming. In 1457, Guangdong reported that 150 three-masted ships from Giao Chỉ had sailed there to obtain pearls. The Lê court blamed raids on Guangdong pearl beds on people from the coastal region and claimed to have punished them, but the raids continued. Guangdong officials reported that the Đại Việt coastal people fished and harvested pearls in Qinzhou and Lianzhou in collaboration with local merchants. Raids went in both directions. Following a Lê complaint that a Qinzhou party had crossed the border into Đại Việt, the Ming executed other Guangdong natives caught raiding the Đại Việt coast and displayed their heads in Qinzhou.<sup>55</sup>

In one shift of allegiance described in the *Ming Shi-lu*, a significant portion of Qinzhou's western territory was submitted to Đại Việt by local chieftain Hoang Kuan and others. The submitted part of Qinzhou was said to stretch over 300 *li* on the Chinese side of the Fen-mao Range and over 200 *li* on the Chinese side of the bronze pillars. The location of Ma Yuan's famed bronze pillars, erected in Han times, varies widely in different accounts. The 1659 *Lịch Sử Nước Annam* describes the victorious Trung Sisters placing a bronze pillar (*lập nên đồng trụ*) in Guangxi. Some Ming and Qing sources

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<sup>54</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Ying-zong*, 177:6b-7a, 317:4b-5a; *Toàn Thư* XI:74a-86b, XII:9b.

<sup>55</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Ying-zong*, 279:7b-8a, 317:4b-5a, *Xian-zong*, 71:5a-b; *Toàn Thư*, XII:9a.

locate the bronze pillars in or adjacent to Qinzhou. (For this reason, the *Ming Shi-lu* used this classical reference of bronze pillars in its description of the Qinzhou border region.)<sup>56</sup>

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact area of Qinzhou that declared allegiance to Đại Việt; the *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí* echoes the Ming text in suggesting that it stretched for 200 or more *li*. If this is accurate, court officials would have been unable to control coastal trade in some areas, particularly the smuggling center at Fangcheng harbor. The Ming guard struggled to hold the remaining portion of Qinzhou and the adjacent peninsula of Lianzhou, along the narrow strait formed by Hainan Island, and to block pirates and foreign traders. Even long after this area was returned to Ming control, and the southern coast had been opened to foreign trade, officials would debate whether to keep the trade between “the *Han* and *Yi* people” at Fangcheng open, or close the port entirely due to repeated raids by persons from the Đại Việt coast. The Ming believed that keeping the port open was the only option to avoid outright rebellion.<sup>57</sup>

Cambodia disappears in the *Ming Shi-lu* after 1452, the last year a tribute mission is reported. A Champa ruler claims to the Ming court that its own king's younger brother Pan-luo Cha-yue fled a 1461 attack by Đại Việt (here called Giao Chỉ), and moved to reside in a mountainous area. The Ming sent a warning over this reported aggression, yet such attack is reported in the *Toàn Thư* or *Tạp Lục*, however; according to the *Toàn Thư*, in 1467 the Lê used native troops from An Tây Prefecture to attack Ai Lao at a place called Khâu Lão and demanded the Ming merchants in the small state of Tô Vấn Đáp Lạt be sent back to their country. An Tây, or Pacified West, is a name later associated with the Bolaven Plateau. Ai Lao leader Cầm Đồng, his family and his treasure were taken to the Lê capital, and surrendered Chiêm were inspected; there was another punitive attack on Ai Lao in 1469.<sup>58</sup>

The *Ming Shi-lu* describes an emissary from a Champa king named Cổ Lai (古來) who claimed that in 1461, Giao Chỉ launched an invasion, sacked Champa cities, seizing territory and capturing their king, who is not named. The Cham emissary is cited

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<sup>56</sup> This raises vital questions about the historiography of the first millennium which are beyond the scope of the current discussion. *Ming Shi-lu, Ying-zong*, 72:5a-b; Liam C. Kelley, *Beyond the Bronze Pillars: Envoy Poetry and the Sino-Vietnamese Relationship* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 192-197.

<sup>57</sup> *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, vol. 4, 7-9. *Ming Shi-lu, Ying-zong*, 177:6b-7a, *Shen-zong*, 472:8b-10a; Martino Martini, *Novus Atlas Sinensis*. Amsterdam: J. Blaeu, 1655.

<sup>58</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Ying-zong*, 220:3a, *Xian-zong*, 219:6a-7b; *Toàn Thư*, XII:26a-52a.

accusing Giao Chi, not Annam. The king's younger brother, called *Bàn La Trà Duyệt* (槃羅茶悅) fled to the highlands, where he resided at Phó Linh Mountain, reported the attack ten years later to the Ming court and requested recognition as king there in a memorial dated 1470. The Ming sent documents recognizing Duyệt as the legitimate king of Champa, apparently while he was still at Phó Linh Mountain, but before they arrived, Duyệt was also abducted by Đại Việt (Giao Chi) forces, and Cố Lai and his older brother Chay A Ma Vật Am (齋亞麻勿庵) escaped to another highland region. Thus, two Champa kings were captured by Giao Chi, Trà Duyệt circa 1471 and his unnamed older brother in 1461. The *Ming Shi* states that the death of the first king, called *Ma Ha Bàn La Duyệt* (摩訶槃羅悅), was unrelated to the Đại Việt aggression reported by Champa emissaries in 1460. His young brother *Bàn La Trà Toàn* (全) was recognized in the same year. In 1471, Đại Việt invaded and captured Toàn along with 50 family members; a second younger brother, called *Bàn La Trà Duyệt* (悅), escaped into the highlands.<sup>59</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, prior to 1470, *Bàn La Trà Duyệt*, called a household servant from Thi Nại, had killed Champa king Bí Điền, then given the throne to his own young brother Trà Toàn, who tricked the Ming into sending Champa military assistance. In 1470, the Lê attacked Hóa Châu with 100,000 troops, overwhelming the border official Phạm Văn Hiến. From Hóa Châu, the Lê king is said to have personally led an attack on Champa. The *Tạp Lục* also refers to Trà Toàn's attack on Phạm Văn Hiến, but states the king reached Thuận Hóa citadel early in 1471, at the time the *Toàn Thư* claims he arrived in Champa.<sup>60</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, the king ordered the Thuận Hóa navy to prepare for battle, guided by a local native chieftain; the Chiêm official at Cự Đê (possibly Cu Đê, a river in Danang) named Bồng Nga Sa was captured. Border chiefs in Sa Bôi and Thuận Bình and

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<sup>59</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Xian-zong*, 104:8a-8b, 181:2a-2b, 219:6a-7b, 220:4a-b; Wade, "Ming Shi Account," 12-15.

<sup>60</sup> The *Toàn Thư* and *Tạp Lục* contain discrepancies regarding the administrative units of Đại Việt before and after the reported attack. In the *Toàn Thư*, there were only twelve Lê provinces until 1471, when Quảng Nam was added after Lê Thánh Tông seized Chà Bàn. In the *Tạp Lục*, of thirteen Lê provinces (*thìra tuyên*) in 1467, and the thirteenth is Ninh Sóc, normally understood to be an alternate name of Thái Nguyên. Nguyễn Khắc Viện suggests this is a mistake, but it is a significant departure from the *Toàn Thư*. A Hóa Châu official named Đặng Chiêm, who does not appear in the *Toàn Thư*, memorialized on securing the estuaries in Hóa Châu, digging (or restoring) the Liên Cừ, probably the Kênh Sen, canal in Quảng Bình, and gathering people to cultivate the abandoned fields of Quảng Bình. Maps were redrawn in 1469, according to the *Tạp Lục*, and the text here states at this point that there were twelve provinces, yet five of the thirteen from 1467 are omitted. *Toàn Thư*, XII:52b-60b; *Tạp Lục*, I:18b-20b.



an Ai Lao chieftain in Quan Bình all brought the king tribute. The commanders translated the king's battle plans for the troops and released paddy from the Thuận Hóa storehouse for battle. Trà Toàn sent 5,000 troops against the Lê under his young brother, who had the given name of Thi Nại; the confusion of a personal and place name (Thi Nại is generally understood to be Quy Nhơn) suggests the text may be corrupted here. The Lê forces departed from the rivers on the Quảng Nam coast and secretly sent advance forces to fortify a harbor in the Champa territory of Quảng Ngãi, doing so without the enemy's knowledge. The king departed with 1,000 ships and 700 thousand men, a number obviously chosen in order to celebrate this victory, rather than to report actual troop strength; Nguyễn Đức Trung's infantry also secretly approached along a mountain road. The Champa troops fled back to Chà Bàn, and Trà Toàn and the king began negotiating the terms of surrender. Despite Toàn's surrender, however, the king destroyed Thi Nại citadel, then surrounded and destroyed the Chà Bàn citadel, capturing 30 thousand troops, executing 40 thousand others, and capturing Trà Toàn alive. The king summoned Trà Toàn's maternal uncle Bô Sãn Ha Ma, then Trà Toàn himself, whom he sent back to Thanh Hóa with two of his wives.<sup>61</sup>

The *Tạp Lục*, however, simply states that various chiefs brought tribute to the Lê, and then, with provisions from the Thuận Thành granary, the troops of Thuận Hóa attacked Đồ Bàn and captured Trà Toàn. The Lê king is not said to be present, and toponym (or personal name) Thi Nại is not mentioned. Neither text describes any troops from Đông Kinh involved in the attack; the *Tạp Lục* states explicitly that it was carried out by Thuận Hóa forces. (It does not comment on whether those forces were related to the Ming occupation forces settled in Thuận Hóa 50 years before.)<sup>62</sup>

The *Notice Historique* describes Lyhao (*Thánh Tông*) winning an absolute victory in 1471, with Panlotchatsuen taken prisoner; the Ming emperor refused to provide any aid to Panlotchatsuen due to Tchenpatilay's assistance to the Tonkin rebel Tching Ki Kouang 50 years earlier. In the *Ming Shi-lu*, Cổ Lai claimed he and Chay A Ma Vật Am remained in the highlands seven years, until Giao Chỉ, fearing Ming retribution, placed Chay A Ma Vật Am on the throne in a southern portion of the former Champa territory, the region

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<sup>61</sup> The text notes that Trà Toàn's wife was a daughter of the former king Bí Cai, and along with her own daughter was also wife of Toàn's brother Bàn La Trà Duyệt. *Toàn Thư*, *ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> *Tạp Lục*, *ibid.*

from Bang-du-lang (possibly Panduranga) to Cambodia. Wade suggests this king's name is a transliteration of Jayavarman; if correct, this would imply Cambodian involvement, though no Jayavarman is recorded in this era in any Cambodian text or inscription.

In the *Ming Shi*, Ming officials bringing the king's credentials claim to have been blocked on arrival at Xinzhou, learning that this country had been renamed Giao Nam châu by Đại Việt. Momoki Shiro, who accepts that Xinzhou is Vijaya/Quy Nhon, cites the *Zhufanzhi* to note that Champa's capital was called Xinzhou in the early thirteenth century. However, inscriptions at Mỹ Sơn continue for nearly 50 years after the publication of the *Zhufanzhi*. This issue requires a more comprehensive study.

The Lê were said to place Cổ Lai's older brother, here called grandson of the former king, in power in a region stretching from Bang Đô Lang to Cambodia. When Chay A Ma Vật Am died around 1480, according to the Ming, Cổ Lai took the throne and asked the Ming court to demand Giao Chỉ return the remaining portions of the country, to the sea in the east, south to Cambodia, west to Lý Nhân Mountain, and north to A Mộc Lạt Bỗ (阿木喇補). (In 1515, an emissary claimed Cổ Lai was an imposter that killed the king Chay A Ma Vật Am, who was survived by legitimate sons, suggesting Cổ Lai's report should be read with caution.)<sup>63</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, after the king was captured, his general Bô Trì Trì fled and proclaimed himself king at Phan Lung. A surrendered Champa man named Ba Thái was name *Đồng Trì Châu* of Thái Chiêm, and Ba Thủy made *Thiêm Trì Châu*. Two other kings were noted in what appear to be western highland states called Nam Bàn and Hoa Anh and in the *Toàn Thư*. (The *Cương Mục* suggests that Phan Lung was a small tributary state of Champa, later called Thái Khang, Bình Khang, Bình Hòa and finally Khánh Hòa, and that Nam Bàn was fourteen days travel to the west of Thạc Bì mountain, on the border between Khánh Hòa and Phú Yên, suggesting a location on the Kontum Plateau.) The invasion force seized Thái Chiêm and Cổ Lũy (Quảng Ngãi); the king declared that Thái Chiêm and Cổ Lũy formerly belonged to Đại Việt but were only recently lost to Champa; this would not make any sense unless Thái Chiêm is Thăng Hoa, which had been claimed briefly by the Hồ. The story of Bô Trì Trì is repeated in the *Tap*

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<sup>63</sup> *Ming Shi-lu*, *ibid*; Wade, “*Ming Shi* Account,” *ibid*; Momoki Shiro, ““Mandala Champa’ Seen from Chinese Documents,” *ms*.

*Lục*, which calls him king. The official Ba Thái is called Thái Chiêm's *Đông Tri Phủ*, an office suggesting he governed jointly with another local ruler.<sup>64</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* has Nguyễn Đức Trung (maternal grandfather of a future Lê king), leading the initial occupation of Quảng Nam; in 1472, however, Trung abruptly returned to Thanh Hóa, leaving Phạm Nhữ Tăng in command of Quảng Nam. Phạm clan records suggest this clan was already residing near Trà Kiệu for over six decades at that time. Other lineage groups along the Thu Bồn, such as the Phan clan in Bảo An village, also near Trà Kiệu, have family records and Lê-conferred diplomas indicating they settled there in the late 15th century from the mouth of the Cả River in Nghệ An.<sup>65</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* describes the ruler Chăm Công in Trấn Ninh Prefecture, Đại Việt's name for the Lao province of Xiengkhuang, sending tribute to the Lê king as he was returning to Thuận Hóa; when he passed Thuận Hóa, the native rulers there also gave tribute. In this text, Trà Toàn died of illness in Thanh Hóa, where his head was displayed in the capital. The *Tạp Lục* states that Champa's land was declared to be the province of Quảng Nam. In the *Toàn Thư*, it becomes Quảng Nam and the *vệ* Thăng Hoa, and the office of *Án Sát Sứ* is then established in the twelve Lê provinces (*thừa tuyên*). Three *ty*, the term used for administrative offices, were then established in Quảng Nam. (The term *vệ* appears to be used here to describe the region of Thăng Hoa under military administration; the boundaries of the region described as Quảng Nam are not clear).<sup>66</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư* only, the Lê attacked Champa for a second time at the end of 1471, despite Chà Bàn having been already reported destroyed earlier in the year. In this second attack, Đại Việt forces again captured its king, this time a person named Trà Toại (rather than Trà Toàn), and again bringing this second king back to the capital. The *Tạp*

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<sup>64</sup> In the *Tạp Lục*, Thúy Anh is replaced by Hoa Anh. *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Tạp Lục*, I:15a-20b, II:85b; *Cương Mục*, 525.

<sup>65</sup> *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; Phạm *Gia Phả* held by Phạm Điện Hồng in Điện Biên, and Phạm Trú in Quế Sơn, Quảng Nam. Huỳnh Công Bá, "Bắc địa đầu từ - Lời cầu về đất Bắc của những người đi khai khẩn đất Điện Bàn (Quảng Nam - Đà Nẵng) dưới thời Lê sơ," [Petition on Northern Land of a Migrant to Điện Bàn under the Early Lê] *Tạp Chí Hán Nôm*, 4 (1996); Phan Bá Lương, *Góp Phần Vào Hành Trình Tìm Về Dòng Tộc* [In Search of Our Ancestors], published by the Tộc Phan Bảo An, Điện Quảng Village, Điện Bàn District, Quang Nam; Phan Nam, Lương Ngọc Châu, Phan Văn Hương, and Phan On, *Bảo An: Đất và Người* [Bảo An and its People] (Danang: Nhà Xuất Bản Đà Nẵng, 1999), 17.

<sup>66</sup> *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Tạp Lục*, *ibid*.

*Lục*, however, does not describe a second campaign at the end of the year to capture a second king.<sup>67</sup>

After 1471, the Lê appear to have been concentrating their resources on conquering Lao kingdoms. Ming border officials reported several Lê attacks on Laos in 1479, one led by the king, who advanced with 90,000 troops, but retreated with heavy casualties. In the *Toàn Thư*, a Xiengkhuang ruler sent tribute in 1471; in 1478, the king attacked the state of Lão Qua and the next year announced a campaign against Bồn Man (Sun Laichen notes this is Muong Phuan), accusing Chăm Công of border incursions. In 1479, Lão Qua forces advanced down the Mã and Cả rivers to Thanh Hóa and Nghệ An, so Lê generals seized Xiengkhuang and sent another force along the An Tây or “Pacified West” road, apparently on the Bolaven Plateau. The Lê generals carried a royal ordinance to the Mekong, pillaged the Lão Qua citadel, and reached the border with Miến Điện. (Sun Laichen suggests this means they invaded Lan Sang and Nan, then under Lan Na’s control, and then threatened Sipsong Panna.). They awarded an official post there to a Lao prince named as Chăm Đông, who later rebelled. The next year the king attacked Bồn Man, burning its citadel and storehouse, and Bồn Man surrendered, reportedly reduced from 90,000 households to only 2,000 after years of war and hunger. Chăm Công died, and another figure, also called Chăm, was given command, though it is noted that he too later rebelled. The *Toàn Thư* makes no further mention of Trấn Ninh after this point, which suggests the Lê lost control of Xiengkhuang not long after these battles. In 1480, the Ming accused the Lê of planning an attack on a Yunnan border state.<sup>68</sup>

Whatever the location of the Champa capital, there was no permanent political decline there after the Lê attack. The Champa royal family reportedly remained in the Lê capital for 30 years, a period in which Chiêm became influential in court politics. The *Toàn Thư* and *Thông Sử* state that Tây Đô and Đông Đô were called Tây Kinh and Đông Kinh after 1430, but at the time Trà Toàn and his maternal relatives were taken to the Lê capital, the capital is inexplicably called Trung Đô or Central Capital, without any evident shift in location. We do not know for certain to what extent the economy of the

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<sup>67</sup> *Toàn Thư*, *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Xian-zong* 210:7b-8a The Lê annals described tribute from multiple border regions and states, including Malacca. *Toàn Thư*, XIII:44b-76b; Sun Laichen, “Military Technology Transfers from Ming China and the Emergence of Northern Mainland Southeast Asia (c. 1390–1527),” *JSEAS* 34:3 (October 2003):495–517.

region from Danang to Quy Nhon was affected by these wars, but it possible that, as John Whitmore suggests, following Roxanna Brown, the Lê destroyed Champa kilns and brought captured artisans back to production sites in the Red River delta.<sup>69</sup>

The Đại Việt king's death was reported to the Ming in 1498 by heir Lê Huy. In the final years of *Thánh Tông's* rule, one *Toàn Thư* commentator claims, the king became ill due to excess and debauchery, and was poisoned by his wife so her son could become Lê *Hiển Tông*.<sup>70</sup>

The *Tạp Lục* description of Quảng Nam in these years is confusing. From 1481, Quảng Nam was not required to pay taxes directly to the Lê court. The explanation is lacking in substance: since Quảng Nam had no ships on its rivers, there was no one to pay the river tolls, and for this reason instead of paying taxes, Quảng Nam would be allowed to send its taxes to the neighboring Thuận Hóa, which would submit it to the court. In 1488, a Phạm clan official was instructed to prepare talented Quảng Nam men for examinations, and in 1498 three regional armies were established under the authority of the Quảng Nam *đô ty* office, called *vệ Thăng Long* (presumably an error for Thăng Hoa), *Tư Nghĩa* (later Quảng Ngãi), and *Hoài Nhơn* (later Quy Nhon). The *đô ty* system of administration of the provinces would be used by the Mạc regime after 1527, so it may be significant that its first occurrence is in Quảng Nam. The *Tạp Lục* reports that a new map was drawn in 1490, a reference to the Lê *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ*, yet some provinces are different than those described in extant versions of the *Toàn Thư* and *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ*. Between 1497 and 1504, a land and civil authority was established in Thuận Hóa.<sup>71</sup>

According to the *Toàn Thư*, Trà Phục, son of the second king said to have been captured in the second campaign of 1471, brought his father's remains back home to Champa a few decades later, leaving a maternal sister behind in the Trung Đô capital. The new Lê king prohibited marriage to Cham (Chiêm) women in 1499. Around the same time, the three *ty* in Quảng Nam expanded efforts to capture elephants with the help of the local people, possibly in preparation for the next campaign in Laos. Ultimately, however, the rapid expansion to the west in the first decades of the 15th century, if it took

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<sup>69</sup> John Whitmore, "Van-Don and the 'Mac Gap': Trade and State in Dai Viet, c.1450-1550," forthcoming.

<sup>70</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Xiao-zong*, 144:4a-b.

<sup>71</sup> *Tạp Lục* I:19a-22a.

place as described in these texts, appears to have overextended Lê forces, allowing coastal forces to seize control of Đông Kinh and Quảng Nam.<sup>72</sup>

### The Rise of a Mạc Regime

The *Ming Shi-lu* knew little of the kings who preceded Mạc Đăng Dung's rise, but they believed that a king ruling in 1512 named Lê Chu 暉 was killed by a rebel from their southern coast, Trần Cảo, whose son Trần Thảng then occupied Lạng Sơn before his capture by Dung. Dung married a former queen and forced the previous king's brother to cede the throne to another brother, Quang 憲 (perhaps, the Ming suspected, Dung's son). One of the deposed king's supporters, Trịnh Tuy, brought the exiled older brother to Thanh Hóa; a later memorial claims neither was a legitimate heir.<sup>73</sup> The Macao Jesuit text depart slightly from this narrative, and describe Dung installing the king's nephew on the throne, yet plotting to seize power by killing the boy; the king's mother helped her son flee to Thanh Hóa (Tsing-Hiao Fou).

The Mạc clan, from their base on the northern Đại Việt coast, came to power during a series of upheavals in which a Trần pretender, rival Lê princes, and finally Mạc Đăng Dung claimed the throne with support from various coastal factions. Mạc Đăng Dung is described in the *Thông Sử* as part of the personal palace guard, or *Túc Vệ*, of Lê Uy Mục, a ruler who took power in unusual circumstances after the death of his younger brother. Dung is said to be descended from Ming occupation commander Mạc Thúy (the identity of his mother, of a Đặng clan, is not clear). The *Toàn Thư* and *Thông Sử* both name Dung's two young brothers as Đốc Tín and Quyết. Under this king, in 1508 according to the *Toàn Thư*, he became the regional military administrator, or *Đô Chỉ Huy Sử*, which under the Mạc Dynasty referred to the head of the standing army of a province. In this case, he was commander of *Thiên Vũ* (天武), Army of Heaven, one of two forces supporting the faction of Lê Tương Dực. The *Thông Sử* later associates the same army with a leader named Cờ (or Cù) Khắc Xương, who Mạc Đăng Dung disingenuously or

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<sup>72</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XIV:11a, 44a-55b.

<sup>73</sup> *Ming Shi-lu*, *Wu-zong* 89:3a, *Shi-zong*, 24:10b, 46.9a-10a.

falsely accused of heterodoxy in his religious practices (the same text claims Dung as a devout Buddhist). Much later, as discussed in later chapters, the *Thiên Vũ* army was associated with the Phú Yên general Lương Văn Chính in the *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*.<sup>74</sup>

By 1509, in the *Toàn Thư*, most Cham (Chiêm) slaves had fled home, and the Lê sent a viceroy, Vũ Cảnh, to subdue them, but he failed to capture a rebel leader named Chế Mạn. As Champa regained some of its strength under Trà Phục, the Lê killed all remaining Champa prisoners. The *Tap Lục* notes that most Champa military prisoners were said to have fled back to their own country, and a general was sent to Quảng Nam to kill all the Cham who remained at their old capital. In the *Toàn Thư*, the king sent princes and courtiers away from the court to Thanh Hóa and killed Champa women described as palace women of letters (*nữ sử nội thân*) to quell dissent, but chaos still spread. A Champa pirate named Ma Mạc was captured and imprisoned, but another man named Ma La, called Trà Phục's son, sent an emissary to the Ming for support while Champa continued building and provisioning warships. The *Ming Shi* records a court debate over the legitimacy of a Champa king at this time and notes tribute missions ceased for good around 1515.<sup>75</sup>

The *Tap Lục* claims that in 1508, the people of Hắc La La, a region in Yunnan, invaded a highland possession of Thuận Hóa called Chu Quan; the Lê court sent a general to reclaim Chu Quan and establish a border marker there. However, the term Chu Quan is generally understood to be on the Lao Cai border with Yunnan; this passage is difficult to interpret (unless Thuận Hóa is understood as a gateway through the highlands

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<sup>74</sup> Li Tana identifies a Qing text in which Mạc Kính Thụy, apparently of a lineage that claimed descent from Mạc Đăng Dung, reportedly stated that his ancestors were from Dongguang district in Guangdong; she interprets this as meaning that the Mạc were members of an ethnic minority group that she calls the *Dan* people. She takes the term *Dan* from the *Jiaozhi Dan* appearing in a Sung text, a group of seafaring barbarians who lived mostly on water and came to trade fish for rice and cloth in Qinzhou. Mạc clan ancestors might also have been another cultural group in Guangdong. In general, claims about the Mạc Kính lineage are problematic. (The ruler Mạc Kính Cung in Cao Bằng, who appeared suddenly in Wenzhou and was claimed by Mạc Ngọc Liên as the Mạc heir under unusual circumstances, may have been a pretender. Some Mạc *gia phả* claim their clan resided in Hải Dương by the tenth century, and ancestors took high positions in the court of Lý Nhân Tông.) The Chinese surname Cờ (Cù) occurs extremely rarely in Đại Việt histories; the only other obvious instance of this surname is found in 1405, when a scholar of unknown origin named Cù Xương Triều joined the Hồ regime. Li, "View from the Sea", 100; Phan Xuân Thúy, Phan Đăng Diêu, Phan Đăng Ngạn, eds., *Họ Mạc ở Nghệ Tĩnh: Tộc Phả* [The Mạc Clan in Nghệ Tĩnh: Genealogy], undated, 4. *Thông Sử, Mạc Đăng Dung*:2a-25; *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Tap Lục*, I:21b; *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, vol 3, 81.

<sup>75</sup> *Toàn Thư*, *ibid.*; Wade, "Ming Shi Account," 17-18.

to mountainous regions stretching to Yunnan). At that time, most Champa prisoners of war had escaped and returned to their country, and in this text a viceroy named Lê Từ Vân was also reported to kill most of the Cham in their former center.<sup>76</sup>

The *Ming Shi-lu* describes a new king of Đại Việt from roughly 1506 to 1509, who vanishes without comment. It mentions Lê Chu (暉) being king in 1512, without stating his background. He had no heirs, and was killed by Trần Cảo; Lê Quýnh and others supported Lê Huy, son of Chu's deceased older brother, as a rival to Trần Cảo (Trịnh Duy Sản, who kills the king in the *Toàn Thư*, is not known to the Ming). Mạc Đăng Dung then defeated Trần Cảo, who died in exile, and married the former king's widow. Dung forced Lê Huy to cede the throne to his younger brother (perhaps Dung's son) Lê Quang, while others supported Lê Huy in Thanh Hóa; a later memorial claims neither was a legitimate heir.<sup>77</sup>

Trần Cảo (called Trần Cao) appears in Benedict Thiện's 17th century history, which describes a Lê *Quang Thiệu* fleeing Trần Cao's rebellion first to Bồ Đề, then to San Lâm. Lê texts mention the toponym Bồ Đề in the Lê-Mạc wars, and Bồ Đề is usually thought to be a place across the river close to Thăng Long, but it is not logical that a Lê king would flee a Hải Dương rebellion by moving to a place just outside his capital. However, the toponym Bồ Đề is also associated with locations in Quảng Ngãi, and a Bồ Đề in Bình Định provinces, according to the *Diễn Chí*, was a place of wealth and importance by the sixteenth century.<sup>78</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, Lê *Tường Dục* ruled since 1509; he was a grandson of Lê *Thánh Tông*. In 1510, the young *Tường Dục* refused tribute from an Ai Lao ruler, and in 1511 tried again to send officials to enforce the submission of elephants by Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam, which suggests preparation for war. He began building ships for another attack, and in 1515 the Lê forces marched again to attack Ai Lao.<sup>79</sup>

In 1516, in the *Toàn Thư*, Trần Cảo rebelled in Hải Dương, claiming paternal descent from Trần *Thái Tông* and maternal descent from the *Quang Thục* Queen. Along with his son Cung, Phan Át, and others, he seized Thủy Đường and Đông Triều districts

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<sup>76</sup> *Tạp Lục*, *ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ming Shi-lu*, *Wu-zong* 89:3a, *Shi-zong*, 24:10b, 46.9a-10a.

<sup>78</sup> Đỗ Quang Chính, *Lịch Sử Chữ Quốc Ngữ*, 117.

<sup>79</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XV:18a-26b.



in Hải Dương, reportedly declaring himself an incarnated deity (*Đế Thích giáng sinh*). An annotation to the text notes that Phan Át was a Cham (Chiêm) slave; this is the final reference to Champa (to the term Chiêm or Chiêm Thành) in the *Toàn Thư*. Trịnh Duy Sản killed *Trương Dục*, crowning the oldest son of the *Cầm Giang* King, named Y as Lê *Chiêu Tông*, and retreating to Thanh Hóa. Duy Sản was killed fighting Trần Cảo (who was replaced by his son Cung in the north).<sup>80</sup>

The *Thông Sử* makes only passing reference to Trần Cảo, then states Mạc Đăng Dung controlled Sơn Nam during the *Quang Thiệu* reign, between 1516 and 1522, a period when Cờ Khắc Xương and Trần Công Vụ controlled the *Thiên Vũ* and *Thiên Bồng* armies, before they were killed by Lê *Chiêu Tông*. Mạc Đăng Dung had held command of the *Thiên Vũ* army in 1511, but after that secretly allied with a Hải Dương general and is later described supporting Nguyễn Hoàng Dụ against other factions related to Trịnh Duy Sản. By 1518, Dung took supreme command of the Lê forces.<sup>81</sup>

Since it is generally assumed that the political center in Quảng Nam had been destroyed long before the early 16th century, the Mạc rise is understood as a shift of the political center from the middle Red River delta to the lower delta and coast (Hải Dương), without regard to Quảng Nam's possible role. However, European reports become available for the first time in these decades, and can be compared against dynastic chronicles. Contradictions between these sources have resulted in some unusual contortions in the literature, as scholars have tried with limited success to reconcile the two bodies of information.

Descriptions of a state called Cochinchina appear with regularity in the earliest Portuguese and Spanish reports. A Portuguese map from 1503, apparently incorporating information obtained from Arab traders, indicates a place called Chinacochim a decade before the first report of a European visitor. Tomé Pires suggests the country was called Cauchy, named Cauchy China by the Portuguese in order to distinguish it from Cauchy Coulam. (Gaspar da Cruz states that the name of China itself is borrowed from the second part of Cochinchina.) The Jesuits, established in Quảng Nam in 1615 and living among the Japanese merchants there, believed the name derived from the Japanese name for that

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<sup>80</sup> Trần Cảo allegedly took the throne citing a prophecy that a king would arise in the east. Lê Quýnh plays a minor role in this transition in the *Toàn Thư*. *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*.

<sup>81</sup> *Thông Sử, Mạc Đăng Dung*:5a-7a.

state, Cochi (Koshi). If the name Cochinchina is borrowed from Asian or Arab traders (who used the term to refer to Quảng Nam), then the place first identified by the 16th century Europeans as Cochinchina would logically also be Quảng Nam, not Đông Kinh. In an influential essay, however, Léonard Auroseau dismissed this possibility, certain that a kingdom called Cochinchina in Quảng Nam could not have existed before 1558, because that is when Nguyễn Hoàng established it.<sup>82</sup>

Successive scholars have therefore argued that the Cochinchinese capital observed by Pires must actually be the Lê capital in Tonkin, implying that the practice of calling Tonkin by the name Cochinchina must have changed without any explanation or comment sometime in the middle of the century. Pires describes Cochinchina as lying between Champa and China. It had large, navigable rivers, and extended far into the interior, but was heavily populated only along the coast. This is a somewhat accurate description of Quảng Nam and its mountainous hinterland, whereas although the Red River is navigable, it had a densely populated interior. The king described by Pires as ruling circa 1512-1515, who owned 30 or 40 junks and smaller ships, is clearly not Lê *Tường Dục*. In the Lê text, that ruler was practically a highlander; a grandson of Lê *Thánh Tông*, he came from the foothills near Tây Đô to seize the throne in 1509, was never able to control the coast, and lost the north completely when Trần Cảo was declared king in Hải Dương in 1516.

Pires, observing the bustling junk trade with Canton, believed that Cochincina's king had diplomatic ties with China through marriage. It is conceivable that Pires travelled directly from Quảng Nam to China along established commercial routes, bypassing Tonkin and its reported civil wars. Pires also comments on Cochinchina's many horses, demand for gunpowder for both war and entertainment, and export of fine ceramics and high quality silk.

Evidence from other travelers also points to an early center in Quảng Nam. Fernão Mendes Pinto describes following what would have been a standard trading route to China in 1555, along the coast past Champa to the island Pulo Champeiló, today called Cù Lao Chàm, in the Strait or Gulf of Cochinchina (showing that Quảng Nam was

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<sup>82</sup> Pires, *Suma Oriental*, 113-115; Léonard Auroseau, "Sur le Nom de Cochinchine," *BEFEO* 24:1 (1924): 563-579.

associated with the name Cochinchina), then directly to Hainan Island across the open sea. Long distance traders have a strong incentive to travel directly from Quảng Nam and bypass the Gulf of Tonkin, partly due to risks from uncharted rocks and islands and the pirates which frequented them, crossing to Hainan and Canton. Giacomo Gastaldi's 1548 map does not portray any features around Đông Kinh, but does show a coastal city near the border with China. Gastaldi also places two cities further south along the coast, above the Ponta di Varella, a landmark used by navigators to mark the division between Champa and Cochinchina, and a third slightly inland at the Capela (Champello) River, which must be the Thu Bồn River in Quảng Nam. A 1554 map from G.B. Ramusio places a town marked Cochinchina above the Capo Pulocanpola, on a river running inland from two islands which resemble Cù Lao Chàm (Pulo Champello) and Cù Lao Rê. One clue that this river is the Thu Bồn is the island formed on the coast where two river branches split. A stylized drawing of this feature of the Thu Bồn appears on European maps into the 18th century; today, the river branch running from Hội An to Danang has become partly dry, probably in the early 19th century, following the construction upstream of a new channel, after which Hội An was no longer an island.<sup>83</sup>

Since navigators located the transition between Champa and Cochinchina by relying on established geographic landmarks, it is plausible that the location called Cochinchina may not actually have changed between the early and mid-16th century, which means there was at this point a king in Quảng Nam. If Cochinchina were in fact Quảng Nam throughout, then Champa, for Pires, might refer to a kingdom centered to the south of Cam Ranh, an area that seems to be one of three regions described in the Lê and Ming texts as governed by a local ruler after the 1471 defeat of Champa.<sup>84</sup>

Gaspar da Cruz writes in 1569 of journeys in the same period, describing Cauchy China as running about 100 leagues along the coast, and subject to the king of China. Notably, he does not mention any civil wars between two provinces. To reach China, one made a 50 league crossing of the gulf of Tonkin to reach Hainan Island, which is

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<sup>83</sup> Above Cochinchina, Ramusio places a chain of mountains extending from the Annamite Cordillera and meeting the sea; this might be a representation of the Hải Vân Pass or Hoành Sơn Range. Between those mountains and Canton, another long river appears, running down from the mountains through a large delta, but without any cities or place names marked. Mendes Pinto, *Travels*, 507; Thomas Suarez, *Early Mapping of Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Periplus editions, 1999), 124-157.

<sup>84</sup> Pires, *Suma Oriental*, 113-115; Whitmore, "Van-don."

consistent with following the standard trade routes from Quảng Nam directly to Canton, without passing through Tonkin. Hugging the coast to reach Canton, which required navigating life-threatening and uncharted rocks to pass through a pirate-filled strait, would not have been considered a safe option, so it may not be surprising if these travellers learned little about the Red River delta. He makes no reference at all to any civil wars, and does not describe a country divided between Lê and Mạc.<sup>85</sup>

For Gutzlaff, Tonkin finally gained a complete victory over Cochinchina (he does not use the term Champa) in 1471, which from that moment became a tributary state, and the Cochinchinese kings then turned to internal affairs, along with their wars against Cambodia. After this date, Cochinchina would sometimes briefly gain independence, but always lose it again; Gutzlaff believed the Cochinchinese population supported the Lê rebellion against Ming rule. He describes an attack by king *Le-haou* on a “peaceful Laos,” leaving “the capital ravaged and the country rendered a desert.” A prince of the defeated Lao ruling family was able to drive out the Lê ruler, who concentrated instead on holding Cochinchina. Cochinchina was then attacked by China. The Lê, according to Gutzlaff, drove the Chinese out with support from an allied Malay fleet:

On this occasion a large fleet from Malacca in the heydays of Malayan influence came to the assistance of [the king] and forced the sons of Han from the shores of Annam [Đại Việt]. We know nothing of the foreign intercourse during this time but the very fact that a fleet of Malay prows sufficient in number to cope with the Imperial navy lay in the harbours proves some connection with the Archipelago. There was no doubt all along a regular trade to the straits, but the Tunkinese do not appear to have themselves gone to sea; leaving this to the more enterprising nations of Asia, they were satisfied to sell their goods to their countrymen in which their women took an active part.

The *Toàn Thư* and *Ming Shi-lu* admit to no such Chinese attack following the Ming withdrawal from Đại Việt, but describe Lê preparations to attack Laos in 1515 being aborted, apparently due to Trần Cảo’s 1516 coastal rebellion. The highland Lê partisans were not a seagoing people; the Trần, on the other hand, were said to be from Fujian, and the *Toàn Thư* notes Cảo’s supporters dressed in a northern fashion. There is no force corresponding to Gutzlaff’s Malay navy in the Lê annals.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> C. R. Boxer, *South China in the Sixteenth Century*, 75.

<sup>86</sup> Gutzlaff, “Geography,” 113-116; *Toàn Thư*, XV:35a-55b.

Whitmore suggests that the 1516 Hải Dương revolt was encouraged by political disruptions associated with the king's maternal relatives, interfering with ceramics production centers in Kinh Bắc and Hải Dương. It is clear from both Lê and Ming sources that there was a split between coastal and inland forces, each of which claimed to have a legitimate (initially, Lê) ruler. With the Mạc rise to power coinciding with the disappearance of Champa from these records, the geographical extent of the territories contested, and the possible role of Quảng Nam, is less clear.<sup>87</sup>

### Highland Tributary Polities

The political organization of the highland production centers reached via rivers on the coast from Thanh Hóa to Quảng Nam is even less well understood than Cochinchina. Xiengkhuang chronicles, translated by Charles Archaimbault, describe variations on the Xiengkhuang royal lineage. These texts agree that Xiengkhuang king Cau Kam Phong married Ba Ko or Ba Nang Ko, who was daughter of a Lê king. She and her brother Ong Dia Ten Ruong Mat arrived after their older brother had seized the Lê throne, and Ruong Mat persuaded the king to join an unsuccessful war against him. Xiengkhuang became a tributary state, but a chronicle text states that the next king, Cau Kam No, assured the continuity of the lineage of Đại Việt kings in Xiengkhuang, through the line of descent of his Lê mother. The Lê queen's grandson promulgated the Buddhist "Code of Lam Kan Kong." In some chronicle texts, this Đại Việt lineage continued uninterrupted, through succession to sons or young brothers, until the 19th century, and Ruong Mat was worshipped at a Xiengkhuang temple that the chronicle text claims was still standing.<sup>88</sup>

Archaimbault, following Pélacot, considers Ruong Mat to be the Lê pretender known as Lê Duy Mật. However, Mật's revolt occurred in 1753, whereas, although their dating is imprecise and inconsistent, most Xiengkhuang chronicle texts describe up to twenty kings after Ruong Mat's arrival, suggesting Ruong Mat lived centuries earlier. (It is striking that Lê Duy Ninh, the Lê claimant Nguyễn Kim was later said to have

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<sup>87</sup> John Whitmore, "Van-Don and the 'Mac Gap': Trade and State in Dai Viet, c.1450-1550."

<sup>88</sup> Charles Archaimbault, "Les Annales de l'ancien Royaume de S'ien Khwang," *BEFEO* 53:2 (1967), 567-570, 617.

discovered in Houaphan, claimed descent from Lê Lợi's brother Lê Trứ, according to one late passage in the *Toàn Thư*. The early *Toàn Thư* sections attributed to Ngô Sĩ Liên do not mention Lê Trứ, and he is first mentioned in a short passage describing Lê Duy Ninh.)<sup>89</sup>

Lanxang chronicles minimize Xiengkhuang's relationship with Đại Việt. The Lê chronicles claim Xiengkhuang (Trấn Ninh) was re-conquered in 1479, then do not mention it again. On the other hand, southern texts from the *Diễn Chí* to the *Thực Lục* frequently mention Trấn Ninh, suggesting Xiengkhuang was controlled by or allied with Cochinchina by the 16th century.<sup>90</sup>

John Guy documents artistic links between Champassak and Quảng Nam during the construction of the later Mỹ Sơn towers, which he interprets as a sign of a close economic relationship. Since Trà Kiệu continued to import Chinese and Japanese ceramics, economic exchange with Champassak undoubtedly continued to be an important factor, and the *Cạn Lục* describes the Thu Bồn region as the wealthiest in Thuận Hóa. The *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí* identifies nine tributary rulers in the middle Mekong region in the early 19th century who all were claimed to be descended from a common ancestor.<sup>91</sup>

The *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí* contains information about the tributary states claimed by the Nguyễn; the information appears to have initially been collected circa 1827, at the height of the wars with Bangkok. At that time, the estimated population (under Nguyễn control) was only about 11,000, and those persons were further dispersed by the conflicts. French travelers also describe depopulation (and Siam's dominance) in the highlands from Quảng Trị to Savannakhet. These tributary states are identified in the Nguyễn gazetteer by a formulaic statement of their rough distance from the provincial town of Cam Lộ, now in Quảng Trị province, and the names of bordering states. Closest to the imperial center were states on the Banhiang River. Travellers from Huế would follow the Banhiang through today's Sepone district, called Na Bôn, at the western edge

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<sup>89</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVI:13a. Archaimbault, *ibid*.

<sup>90</sup> Bruce Lockhart, "The Historical Lao-Vietnamese Relationship Seen from the Lao PDR," *Yves Goudineau and Michel Lorrillard, eds., New Research on Laos* (Vietnam and Paris: EFEO, 2008), 259-282.

<sup>91</sup> John Guy, "Artistic Exchange and Regional Dialogue in the Cham Territories," in Andrew Hardy, Mauro Cucarzi and Patrizia Zolèse ed., *Champa and the archaeology of Mỹ Sơn (Vietnam)* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2009), 151-196.

of the Annamite Cordillera. Na Bôn is described as 5 days west of the provincial town, and north of Làng Thìn, bordering Ai Lao (Vientiane) as well as Xương Thịnh, Thượng Kế, and *Mường Vang*.<sup>92</sup>

*Mường Vang*, also accessed via Sepone, is likely the western edge of today's Savannakhet province and is described as about 59 kilometers west of the provincial town, considered to be a single day's travel by a road rising to an elevation of several hundred meters. The description of *Mường Vang* suggests it included a vast section of the Annamite Cordillera and bordered six of the eight other states. It was praised for its rice and glutinous rice varieties, and mulberry. The state Thượng Kế was seven days travel southwest of Cam Lộ, south of *Mường Vang*, bordering Na Bôn and areas called Làng Thuận and *Mường Mãn*. Some smaller statelets include Làng Thìn, declared a separate tributary only early in the *Minh Mạng* reign. It was eight days west of Cam Lộ town, east of Thượng Kế. Another state, Tá Bang, was six days west of Cam Lộ and to the west of Na Bôn, bordering *Mường Vang*, Xương Thịnh, and areas called Làng Liên and Ô Giang. Xương Thịnh lay seven days southwest of the provincial town, in an infertile region west of Tá Bang, also bordering *Mường Vang*, Na Bôn, and Làng Liên.

The most economically important tributary states were on the Mekong River. Ba Lan, fifteen days southwest of Cam Lộ, is described as bordering Siam, as well as the tributaries Tầm Bồn, *Mường Bồng*, Na Bôn, and *Mường Vang*. Tầm Bồn was said to border Bassac, apparently Champassak; it was north of Ba Lan on the Mekong, ten days northwest of the provincial town. It is described as a flat plain as wide as the immense mountains terrain of *Mường Vang* to its east. The wide plain in the south of Tầm Bồn became a separate state, *Mường Bồng*, due to rivalry among contenders for the throne. These three Mekong "states" were praised for their abundant trade goods, including salt, areca nut, glutinous rice, cows and buffalo, elephants, horses, crocodiles and mullet. Further study is needed, but some of these states appear to be areas now part of Champassak and Stung Treng provinces.

The Nguyễn Historical Office assertions of unity and continuity in these states were probably intended to support their allies in the conflicts with Siam. The common ancestor of the rulers of these nine states was Nam Nội Ôi Nô, who originated in Ai Lao

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<sup>92</sup> *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, 103-109.

about fifteen generations, seemingly more than 300 years, removed from the 1827 survey. On his death, an aunt's husband seized power while Ôi Nô's sons were carrying out funeral rites elsewhere, and the brothers were forced to take their followers to the western edge of the Annamite Cordillera, driving out local chieftains. A younger brother ruled there, and the oldest and returned to rule a second region bordering on Ai Lao. Two of the Mekong states, Tầm Bồn and Mưòng Bồng, were said to be taken over by a son of Ôi Nô's daughter named Sa Khẩu, who with his own sons claimed additional territories. In 1827, the nine chieftains said to be descended from Nam Nội Ôi Nô were given *Ming Mạng* regime posts as district officials, and were awarded Sinicized clan names.

Vickery comments that the concept of a Vietnamese southern push is in no way accurate before the early 15th century, given the 14th century Champa military victories. This cursory review of dynastic records supports arguments by Vickery, Taylor and others, that the *nam tiến* was not a thousand-year process involving a steady displacement of southern peoples. The texts examined in this chapter do not support the accepted narrative of a gradual expansion of Đại Việt in a southern direction at the expense of a steadily diminishing Champa.

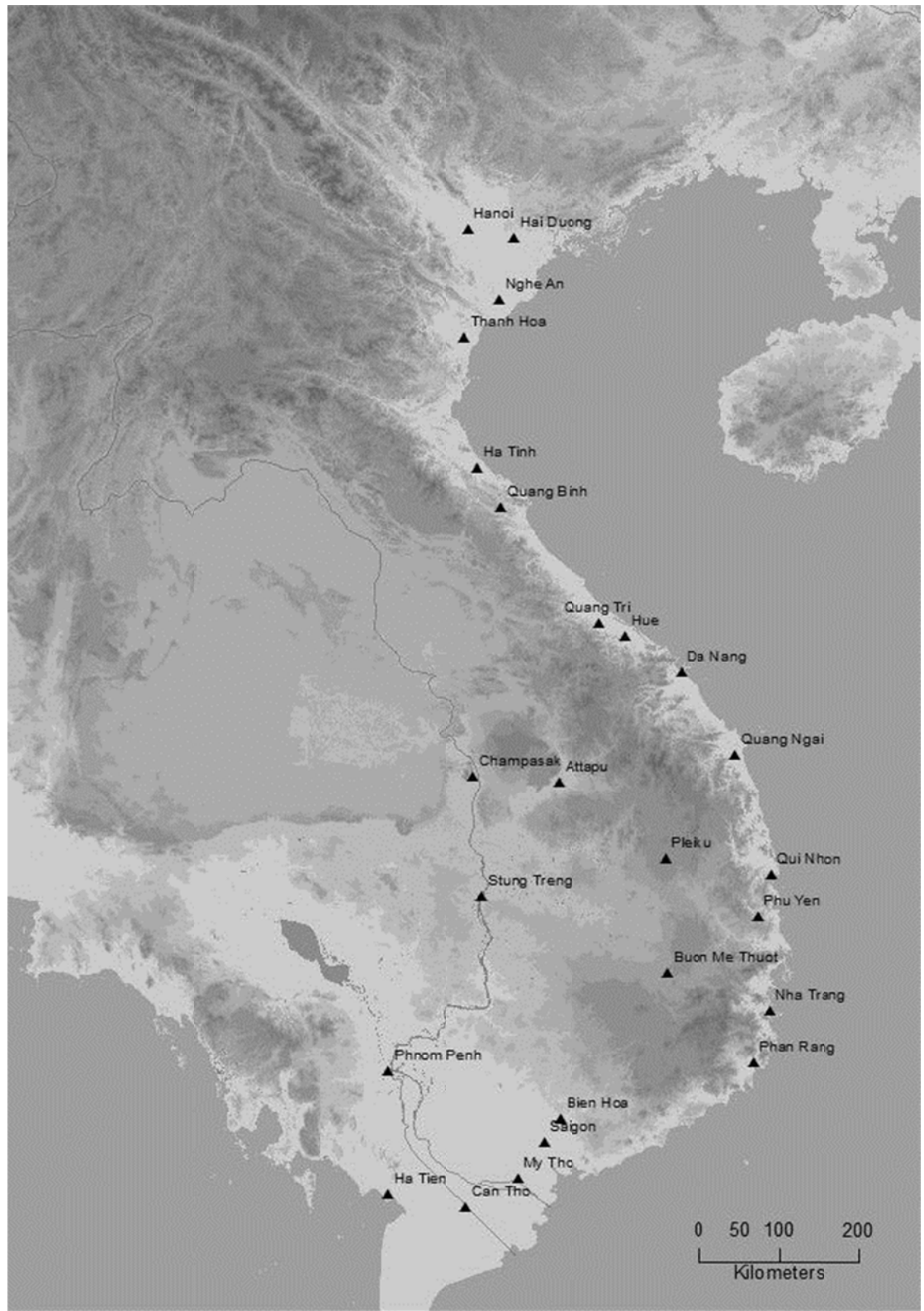
The upland aspects of Champa noted by Whitmore, and conflicts in the highlands, suggest that both western and southern territories may have been at stake, which requires us to modify the standard description of a push to the south. Climatic changes contributed to Angkor's decline; a collapse of intensive irrigation may have contributed to a resurgence of Champa, perhaps spurring a shift away from reliance on agrarian resources toward contests for the control of multiple upland and riverine trade networks. Whatever their goal, territorial contests did not pivot entirely on a north-south trajectory, since control of east-west rivers connecting the coast and the middle Mekong was no less important than control of the coast itself.

Before the advent of European reports, we are overly reliant on the biased perspectives of the Ming and Lê chronicles. The Ming were understandably concerned, given chaotic changes and their own military defeat in Annam, with demonstrating that ancient tributary states were brought into proper and just alignment with Ming rule. The Lê Restoration, in presenting the history of earlier Lê rulers, sought to glorify victories



over ancient competitors. Neither perspective sheds much light on developments in Cochinchina.

A loss of some territory on the Champa border was sufficient to warrant a complaint to the Ming court, but what specific areas were contested remains subject to debate. Lê depictions of Trần Dynasty relations with Champa are highly incomplete and should be questioned. The Hồ Dynasty, which has been discussed only briefly here and requires a separate study, may have occupied Amaravati's former center at Trà Kiệu. However, Trà Kiệu broke away during the Ming occupation, and it is unclear to what extent it could have been controlled by the early Lê. Lê alliances with forces controlling regions both to the south and to the west of Thanh Hóa seem to have aided them in defeating the Ming, but by the turn of the 16th century, Quảng Nam may also have played a significant part, obscured in the Lê histories, in supporting the rise of new rulers based in coastal areas. The 1471 Lê attack on Champa is firmly established, as is the loss of some Cham territory. However, even the Lê text recognizes that Lê control of Champa was not sustained. At the time of the appearance of Mạc Đăng Dung, both the Ming's southern border provinces, and Tonkin's southern border provinces, were culturally and politically dynamic. Trade networks beyond the control of either the Lê or Ming regimes connected both populations to continue at the coast in Qingzhou (then part of Guangdong) and the Mạc homeland in Hải Dương, and Quảng Nam. In the 17th century, these regional connections would give the Mạc a strategic advantage in their wars with the Lê.



**Map 2** A topographic map showing the Mekong River and the eastern littoral.

## CHAPTER 3

### Cochinchina under Mạc Rule, c.1520-1570

Lê and Nguyễn histories provide contradictory and incomplete descriptions of the trading state in Quảng Nam, where several rivers connected the coast with several upland production centers important for the regional trade network. Although the omissions in these texts have led to speculation that economic development in the chief Quảng Nam port must have occurred unhindered by state regulation, other evidence suggests that state control did exist, and has been ignored or glossed over in the dynastic histories. Despite there being roughly similar stories Nguyễn Hoàng's journey south in 1558 in the Lê and Nguyễn histories, there are too many inconsistencies in these texts for the narrative of Nguyễn expansion to be taken at face value. The Mạc were able to maintain control of both ports and highlands to both the north and south of Lê-controlled territories.

#### Early Mạc Rule

Mendes Pinto's journey to Cochinchina could have been at least partially invented, or have repeated information gained secondhand, a common charge against the *Peregrinação*. Even if Pinto did not personally make all the journeys described, some scholars note, a travel narrative based on secondhand descriptions may still contain useful information; in any case, the veracity of various parts of this text remains controversial. In 1544, Pinto claims to have accompanied an embassy from Beijing to the court of the king of Cochinchina, who resided in a highland capital. Travelling through what must, from his description, be southern Laos, Pinto passed wealthy towns distant from the court that accepted the king's authority, including one near a silver mine owned by the king where ceramics were produced, and others along a great river producing wheat, rice,

pulses and sugarcane. Avoiding pirates on the river Vientenau, he reached a town controlled by the king's aunt. His party crossed mountain passes on foot to meet the king, returning from his war with the Tincouhós. (His court contained 83 statues of gods seized from the Tincouhós in battle.) This king was 35, accompanied by an uncle in his 80s. Mendes Pinto spent a month at the capital Uzamguee, described as a place with giant brass and silver statues of gods reminiscent of Champassak, then departed by ship along a river which broadened to more than a league wide (only the Mekong could fit this description), passing many spires covered in gold. They reached a "magnificent city" called Quangeparuu, with a population of 15-20,000, protected by a thin brick wall and with no artillery, where silver was exchanged for pearls. He travelled to the coast, and then sailed to China, arriving thirteen days later.<sup>1</sup>

Antonio de Faria had earlier attempted to reach Quangeparuu; he was told the "*prechau*, emperor of the Cochinese" lived there, and controlled major silver mines. Warned away from Hainan due to pirates, he sailed to a coastal port "where many wealthy merchants, both native and foreign, came by caravan, heavily laden with silver" from Laos and highland states. A likely source of silver is Sepon province, west of Quảng Trị. That Cochinchinese king's inland/upland orientation was confirmed by Hainan villagers, who explained that wars against the *prechau* were fought with infantry and oared boats on a shallow river. In addition to the seeming southern location of this center (inconsistent with a Lê court in remote northwestern Laos), no mention is made of a dynasty ruling from either Hải Dương or Đông Kinh.<sup>2</sup>

Gaspar da Cruz describes Cauchim China in the 1550s in terms similar to Mendes Pinto. He relates his travel through the Straits of Cochinchina to China in 1555, in which he crossed the gulf between Quảng Nam and Hainan. It is often assumed that Cruz' Cauchim China must have been Tonkin, simply because there was supposedly no state in Quảng Nam. However, Cruz could well be describing Tourane (where ships could take water before crossing the gulf to Hainan and Canton), which would better fit

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<sup>1</sup> The element Quang is reported occurring in toponyms at both Quảng Bình, which has an upland aspect, and Quảng Ngãi by 17th century visitors. Pinto later describes Tincouhós and three allies against Ayutthaya, called Chiang Mai, the Laotians and the Gueos, as "four nations in the northeast, dominating most of the hinterlands above Kamp'eng'et and P'itsanulok, ruled by very rich and powerful kings who are absolute lords in their domains, owing allegiance to none." Pinto, *Travels*, 265-272, 399-400.

<sup>2</sup> Pinto describes an apparently Sinicized administrative system in Tanauquir, using terms Catz compares to Boxer's transliterations from South China, yet refers to a *prechau* as emperor. Pinto, *Travels*, 88-89.

his description. If so, he does not appear to have been aware of any capital at Đông Kinh, which he would not have needed to visit to reach China across the sea:

...the first kingdom that doth confine with [China] on the sea-side of India, is one that is called Cauchim China, which hath about an hundred leagues little more or less along the sea-coast. The sea maketh a great gulf between it and the isle of Ainão, which is of 50 leagues in length [roughly the distance from Danang to Hainan Island], and is already of the Chinas. As the end of this gulf is this kingdom abutteth with the kingdom of China, and is subject to the king of China.<sup>3</sup>

Lê texts suggest that visitors to Tourane or Faifo in the mid-16th century would not have encountered a Lê governor there. The *Tap Lục* states that by 1517, the Lê court could no longer control Thuận Hóa. The handful of Lê officials posted there fled in 1520, after the young brother of local Thuận Hóa chieftain Hồ Bá Quang seized the Thuận Hóa citadel occupied by his brother's killer, Lê commander Phạm Văn Huân (none of these men appear in other sources). When Thuận Hóa chieftains learned of the Mạc Dynasty, they began fighting among themselves, and a young brother of Mạc Đăng Dung named Mạc Quyết became the new governor of Thuận Hóa. The *Tap Lục* completely avoids describing who was in control of Quảng Nam at this time, or how they responded to the Mạc victory. The other Lê texts do not mention Dung's brother taking control of Thuận Hóa, although the *Toàn Thư* does describe Mạc Quyết, with a different noble title, defending Đông Kinh when it was occupied by an enemy in 1522, and, later, twice leading Mạc forces against the Trịnh in the mountains of Thanh Hóa. The *Thông Sử*, ostensibly the most detailed history of these wars, mentions only one attack led by Quyết in Thanh Hóa.<sup>4</sup>

The Ming and Lê sources do not agree on the precise means by which the Mạc claimed the Đại Việt throne. In the *Ming Shi-lu*, Trần Cảo's son Trần Thăng occupied Lạng Sơn, but was captured by Đăng Dung, and this is echoed in the *Toàn Thư*, which

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<sup>3</sup> Martin de Rada wrote in 1575: "Beginning at the extremity of the province of Canton, which we said lies in latitude 20°, from thence nearly 40 leagues to seaward, they say lies the great and populous island of Cauchi which is tributary to China." C. R. Boxer suggests he must have meant Hainan, but that island was well known, and only a short distance from Guangdong across a narrow straight. It seems more likely that Rada equated the country Cauchi with an island. (Seventeenth century maps exaggerate island formed by land between Danang and Hội An.) C.R. Boxer, *South China in the Sixteenth Century* (Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2004), 73-75, 264.

<sup>4</sup> In the *Tap Lục*, after pillaging the citadel, locals invited the Lê officials return to their posts. *Tap Lục*, I:22a-22b; *Toàn Thư*, 54a-60b; *Thông Sử*, Mạc Đăng Dung: 1a-18b.

calls him Trần Cung and places the capture in 1521. The Ming court also states that Dung married the *Chiêu Tông* ruler's mother. An officer named Trịnh Tuy took the Lê claimant to Thanh Đô prefecture, while Dung placed the same king's young brother Quang (麴) on the throne in Hải Đông and Trường Khánh (長慶); the location of this rival court is not specified. In the *Toàn Thư* and *Thông Sử*, Dung and his wife's relatives killed all the king's supporters in 1522, then forced the king to marry a woman Dung pretended was his daughter. Dung's young brother Mạc Quyết commanded the king's personal guard (*Túc vệ*) in the capital, while his son, Mạc Đăng Doanh, guarded Kim Quang palace. Dung then allegedly replaced the king with his young brother Xuân, bringing him to Hải Dương. Although Lê *Chiêu Tông* briefly returned to Đông Kinh, supporter Trịnh Tuy took him to Thanh Hóa, and the Lê capital was empty. (General Nguyễn Kính is first mentioned as a *Chiêu Tông* supporter in failed campaigns against Dung.)<sup>5</sup>

The location of the Mạc capital shifts frequently and without clear explanation. Mạc Đăng Dung brought *Cung*, apparently a reference to his alleged brother Xuân, to a place called Bồ Đề. Mạc Quyết then drove *Chiêu Tông* supporters out of Tây Đô into the highlands, where Trịnh Tuy died of illness. Dung killed the former king. As noted above, one historic Bồ Đề lies outside the Đông Kinh citadel, but Benedict Thiện and the *Diễn Chí* refer to at least one other. Taken together with the statement from the *Ming Shi-lu* that Dung occupied Hải Đông (Quảng Ninh) and Trường Khánh (which is less clear), it not clear that this Bồ Đề was the one adjacent to Đông Kinh.<sup>6</sup>

In the *Thông Sử*, Mạc Đăng Dung claimed the throne in 1527, establishing a court at Dương Kinh, but later rules from Kim Thành. (A claim that Dung moved the capital is found in *Toàn Thư* commentary by Đăng Bính, but does not appear in the original narrative.) Nguyễn Khắc Viện has proposed a location of Dương Kinh in the Mạc ancestral village Cỗ Trai, in Hải Phòng. He notes a stele with a date of 1534 in a Hải Dương pagoda names two *kinh* or capitals nearby: Dương Kinh, across the river to the east, and a *kinh sư*, or royal capital, some distance to the west. A stele in a second

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<sup>5</sup> *Ming Shi-lu*, *Shi-zong*, 46:9a-10a; *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Thông Sử*, *ibid*.

<sup>6</sup> Hải Đông seems to have been used to refer to the easternmost Lê/Mạc territories, probably including today's Quảng Ninh. *Ming Shi-lu*, *ibid*; *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; Gaspar Luis, *Cocincinae Missionis Annue Litterae, Anni 1625, Ad R. P. N. Mutium Vite'leschium Societatis Jesu Proepositum Generalem, ARSI, JS. 71, f. 56r-71r*.

pagoda, dated 1589, states that Dương Kinh was near a large market. It is commonly understood that the Mạc capital in Hải Dương was completely destroyed. But if forts and strong walls had been constructed to defend against not only the Lê, but also the Ming, who reportedly amassed hundreds of thousands of troops at the border (perhaps 100 kilometers away), there should be some physical evidence. Many 16th century pagodas, steles, and artwork, including statues that Nguyễn Khắc Viện and Nguyễn Văn Sơn suggest are representations of Mạc kings, survive here. If a Mạc capital were destroyed and dismantled so systematically that no evidence remains, these relics would not have survived in good condition.<sup>7</sup>

Lê texts state that Mạc Đăng Dung ceded the throne to his oldest son Doanh in 1529, becoming *Thái Thượng Hoàng* or Father King, understood to be a senior ruler. However, this detail is not confirmed by the Ming court, which describes Dung, not his son, as “Annam” Commander circa 1540. The Lê do not provide a consistent description of early Mạc rule, with multiple gaps, omissions and contradictions.

Perhaps partly as a result of economic strains, the new Mạc regime demonstrated a sustained interest in strengthening their hold on Qinzhou, to the great concern of the Ming court. Our reliance on the chronicles means that the precise relationship between the early Mạc regime and a political center in Quảng Nam (documented by Europeans yet ignored in the Lê texts), is unknown. However, there is some evidence that Mạc royalty were active in Quảng Nam.

### Beginnings of the Lê-Mạc Wars

When Trịnh Duy Liêu arrived via a Guangdong trading ship only in 1537 to seek aid for the Lê Ninh in Thanh Hóa, the Ming court aired suspicions about the accuracy of Liêu’s claims, noting that he spent had two years in Champa before arriving in

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<sup>7</sup> In the 16th century, the Ming occasionally use Giao Nam, a name earlier given to the part of Champa conquered by Annam, as a name for Lê/Mạc territories. Fuzhou (Phúc Châu) was said to become part of Giao Nam in 1503; in 1537, the Ming court sent a message to the Mạc officials in Giao Nam warning the Mạc of their impending punitive invasion; the term is used by the Ming well into the 17th century. *Ming Shi-lu, Xiao-zong*, 200:11b-12a, *Shi-zong* 199:4b-5b, *Shen-zong* 543:5a; Nguyễn Khắc Thuận, *Lịch Sử Triều Mạc*, 170-5; Nguyễn Văn Sơn, *Di Tích Thời Mạc Vùng Dương Kinh (Hải Phòng)* [Relics of the Mạc in Dương Kinh] (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Khoa Học xã Hội, 1997); *Thông Sử, Mạc Đăng Dung*, 1a-17b.

Guangdong.<sup>8</sup> They also noted that Lê Ninh was suspected to be a pretender who was actually from a Nguyễn clan. Mạc Đăng Dung's son Doanh, called Mạc Phương Doanh (方瀛), sent a mission in 1539, at which time Qinzhou officials advised that several navies attack Doanh simultaneously from the north and south, relying on assistance from Champa. (This was first the mention of Champa in decades, though in 1543, a Champa king complained that his country was still being attacked repeatedly by Annam.) The only other Lê supporter mentioned in the *Ming Shi-lu*, Vũ Văn Uyên (淵), allied with the Ming, and a plan was drawn up for Trịnh Duy Liêu to return at the head of a Ming invasion force. This plan was dropped, and the pacification commissioners (officials nominally responsible for bringing Annam under Ming rule) finally announced the return of western Qinzhou, despite official concerns, which would prove justified, that the local population would not accept the end of Mạc rule.<sup>9 10 11</sup>

In the *Hoàn Châu Ký*, Nguyễn Kim found Lê Ninh, son of Lê *Quang Thiệu*, in Ai Lao before 1536 and placed him on the throne in Sầm Châu (Houaphan). A palace was built at Vạn Lại in 1543, where an Ai Lao king came to visit him. It makes no mention of any relationship between Nguyễn Kim and Nguyễn Hoàng. The *Thông Sử* merely states that Nguyễn Cam (Kim) went to Ai Lao, without further details. In the *Diễn Chí*, Kim went together with Trịnh Duy Sản, a maternal relative of *Chiêu Tông* who in the *Toàn Thư* kills the king and vanishes in 1516. In the *Diễn Chí*, Kim and Sản went to the mountain village (*sách*) Vạn Lại, gathering tens of thousands of troops. The *Toàn Thư* has Kim in Sầm Châu in 1529, allowed to rule there by an Ai Lao king named Sạ Đầu. Kim found and placed Lê Ninh on the throne in 1533; there is no capital at Vạn Lại until 1546.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Thông Sử*, Mạc Đăng Dung, 18b-57a; *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Ming Shi-lu*, *Shi-zong*, 197:1b-2a.

<sup>9</sup> *Tạp Lục*, *ibid*; *Toàn Thư*, XVI:1a-6a; *Ming Shi-lu*, *Shi-zong*, 197:1b-2a, 199:2a-3a, 201:5a, 210:4a-5a, 248:1b-5a, 236:2a-3a.

<sup>10</sup> *Ming Shi-lu*, *Shi-zong*, 274:5a, 275:6a.

<sup>11</sup> *Ming Shi-lu*, *Shi-zong*, 221:16a-17a, 236:2a-3a, 248:1b-5a.

<sup>12</sup> In the *Thông Sử*, Trịnh Duy Sản is described having an adopted son, Trần Chân, who fought against Nguyễn Hoàng Dụ in 1517. Eugène Veillot, in his history published in 1858, states that the first chầu was named Trinh; this Trinh chầu, not Nguyễn Kim, returned the legitimate ruler to the throne following an insurrection, taking for himself control of commerce. Veillot understood that his son-in-law Trinh-Kiểm succeeded him, and the position became hereditary; this transition took place, he wrote, from 1535 to 1560. *Hoàn Châu Ký*, 70; Veillot, *Le Cochinchine et le Tonkin*, 23. *Toàn Thư* XV:73b; *Thông Sử*, *ibid*; *Diễn Chí*, 22-23.



Some sections of the *Thông Sử* interpret Ming descriptions of the Restoration from a Lê loyalist perspective. Mạc Đăng Dung defeated Lê Ý, a Lê maternal relative who was declared king in a mountain district. Dung pursued Ý in 1530 to Mã River, then the Động Bàng mountains, then Thăng Hoa (Quảng Nam); a second general, Mạc Quốc Trinh, finally captured him. Nguyễn Cam (Kim) brought troops back from Ai Lao to Thanh Hóa in 1531, but was driven out again, and Thanh Hóa was divided between the unnamed *Trung Hậu* Marquis and the *Tây An* Earl Lê Phi Thừa. The Trịnh Duy clan placed the Lê *Trang Tông* on the throne in Ai Lao, without Nguyễn Cam's participation, and sought aid from the Ming. In another section of the *Thông Sử*, describing the reign of Mạc Đăng Doanh, Cam fled in 1530 to *châu* Sầm Tượng and Sầm Hạ (Houaphan), gathered an army, and seized Thanh Hóa in 1531, ruling from Lôi Dương. Nguyễn Kính eventually drove him back to Ai Lao. Cam and the Trịnh Duy clan placed *Chiêu Tông's* oldest son on the throne in early 1533; he was declared Lê *Trang Tông* a few months later in the mountain village Thúy Thuần. The *Thông Sử* claim Trịnh Duy Liêu went to seek Ming aid that year, echoing the *Ming Shi-lu*, but without noting the skepticism with which the Ming greeted the Lê claim.<sup>13</sup>

The *Thực Lục* places Nguyễn Kim's departure for Ai Lao in 1527; Sạ Đầu let him stay in Huaphan, and he won victories in Thanh Hóa in 1530 and 1531, allegedly killing Nguyễn Kính. He installed Lê Ninh to rule from Sầm Hạ mountain village in 1533. The *Thông Sử* describes a new rebellion by a Thuận Hóa man in 1533 that Mạc forces were unable to defeat; Thuận Hóa is not mentioned after that until 1554. This rebellion is not mentioned in the *Tạp Lục*, in which Thuận Hóa remained under Mạc control.<sup>14</sup>

In 1537, the Ming decided to support Lê Ninh, preparing an invasion force and sending word that the Mạc would be punished for usurpation. Ming records here refer to the region ruled by the Mạc as Giao Nam. The claim that Lê Ninh was of royal blood, and the opportunistic timing of his discovery shortly before the planned invasion, was problematic. A suspicious Ming court believed that Ninh was actually a member of the Nguyễn clan. The *Thông Sử* states that Mạc Đăng Dung told the Ming that Ninh was really the son of Nguyễn Cam, but the court refused to believe this; the name Cam or

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<sup>13</sup> *Thông Sử*, Mạc Đăng Dung, 18b-57a; *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Ming Shi-lu*, *Shi-zong*, 197:1b-2a.

<sup>14</sup> The *Sùng An* Prince Mạc Nhân Trí is said to be responsible for ritual observances for Dung's mother, rather than Dung or one of his brothers. *Thông Sử*, Mạc Đăng Dung: *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

Kim does not appear in the *Ming Shi-lu*, which simply states a suspicion that Lê Ninh had the surname Nguyễn. (The *Toàn Thư* does not describe Ninh's lineage, but an annotation notes he claimed descent through a brother of Lê Lợi named Trứ.)<sup>15</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* describes a Mạc officer in Thuận Hóa defecting in 1537, when Tây An Marquis Lê Phi Thừa departed for Houaphan. The next year, the Ming Ministry of War reported the Mạc had been twice defeated by Lê Ninh and recommended the king attack the Mạc, but this was not carried out. Vũ Văn Uyên, who appears in the *Ming Shi-lu* as a key supporter of the anti-Mạc coalition of the 1530s, was a regional ruler whose northern mountains were submitted to the Lê in Đông Kinh, strengthening their rule in the north. However, this figure is omitted from the *Toàn Thư* completely. (Much later, in 1551, Vũ Văn Mật, reportedly from the same clan, appears as a Lê ally in the same region in both the *Toàn Thư* and *Ming Shi-lu*, further supporting the Ming statements about Uyên.) At the same time, the chief architects of the Lê Restoration in the *Toàn Thư* and *Thông Sử* are persons completely unknown to the Ming. Neither Lê text contains a complete or accurate description of key events of the Lê-Mạc wars.<sup>16</sup>

An anomalous map appended to the 1490 Lê atlas also suggests that our information about this period is far from complete. John Whitmore has suggested this map, titled *Mục Lục Tổng Quát*, may be a 16th century Mạc map that has retained many Lê terms. The map includes Qinzhou and parts of Guangxi, Yunnan and western highlands as far as Xiengkhuang (Trần Ninh), but does not include the Tây Đô or any part of Thanh Hóa, Nghệ An, Thuận Hóa or Quảng Nam. However, this map does not have any capital in Hải Dương or place named Kim Thành, Dương Kinh, or Bồ Đề marked on it. Either it is not a Mạc map, or the Mạc capital was not in Hải Dương or another place depicted on this map. The extension to the west is also unusual; the territorial extent shown on the map cannot be matched with the territories of any ruler or dynastic period as described in these texts. The Ming, ignorant of any role for either

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<sup>15</sup> In the 16th century, the Ming occasionally use Giao Nam, a name earlier given to the part of Champa conquered by Annam, as a name for Lê/Mạc territories. Fuzhou (Phúc Châu) was said to become part of Giao Nam in 1503; in 1537, the Ming court sent a message to the Mạc officials in Giao Nam warning the Mạc of their impending punitive invasion; the term is used by the Ming well into the 17th century. *Ming Shi-lu, Xiao-zong*, 200:11b-12a, *Shi-zong* 199:4b-5b, *Shen-zong* 543:5a. *Ming Shi-lu, Shi-zong*, 199:4b-5b; . *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Thông Sử*, *ibid*.

<sup>16</sup> *Tạp Lục*, *ibid*; *Toàn Thư*, XVI:1a-6a; *Ming Shi-lu, Shi-zong*, 197:1b-2a, 199:2a-3a, 201:5a, 210:4a-5a, 248:1b-5a, 236:2a-3a; 279:8a-b; *Toàn Thư*, XVI:7a-10b; *Thông Sử*, Mạc Đăng Doanh:24a.

Nguyễn Hoàng or Trịnh Kiểm in supporting the Lê Restoration, do write at length about the *Vũ* clan, who ruled independently in Tuyên Quang, the mountains north Đông Kinh. (One perspective this map might reflect is the territorial concerns of the *Vũ* clan, but I do not have space to examine Tuyên Quang in greater detail here.)<sup>17</sup>

After Mạc Đăng Doanh's death in 1540, in the *Thông Sử*, the ruler moved away from what John Whitmore argues was a secondary capital in the Mạc heartland, and back to Đông Kinh. Doanh's son Mạc Phúc Hải was placed on the throne in Đông Kinh, not Dương Kinh. Mạc Đăng Dung also died in 1541.

In the *Toàn Thư*, Nguyễn Kim attacked Thanh Hóa and Nghệ An in 1542, yet remained in Ai Lao in 1543 when the king seems to return briefly to Tây Kinh, a Mạc general called the *Trung Hậu* Duke surrendered, and the king called Kim to return. However, Kim is subsequently greets the king and resides at the Nghĩa Lộ River (not a known Thanh Hóa river), and there is no description of any battle over Tây Kinh or encounter with its former occupant Mạc Chính Trung, who is never described leaving. The king was still in Laos in the *Toàn Thư*, since he is said to have established the capital in Vạn Lại in 1546. The *Thông Sử* states the Lê *Trang Tông* seized Tây Đô in 1543, defeating Mạc Chính Trung, and the governor of Thanh Hóa, the *Trung Hậu* Marquis, surrendered. The *Thông Sử* does not attribute these victories to Nguyễn Kim, who is not mentioned in that text.<sup>18</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* suggests that the *Trung Hậu* Duke tricked Nguyễn Kim and poisoned him, fleeing to rejoin the Mạc in 1545. The *Toàn Thư* states that in 1545, the Lê court gave Hoàng the title *Hạ Khê* Marquis, and his older brother Uông the title *Lãng* Duke, after which they fought an unnamed enemy. The *Thông Sử* does not mention Nguyễn Cam's sons here, but states that the *Trung Hậu* Marquis returned to Mạc Phúc Hải.

The *Lê Triều Dã Sử* states that the Trịnh Bân/Kiểm (Bân being the name used by Philipê Bình) was given authority after Kim was poisoned, but this contradicts the first

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<sup>17</sup> Kim Thành is the name of a Lê district in Hải Dương that appears in the *Thiên Nam Tứ Chí Lộ Đồ Thư*. The Historical Office editors of the *Cương Mục* state that the Mạc changed the name of Nghi Dương district to Dương Kinh. John K. Whitmore, "Cartography in Vietnam," in J.B. Harley and David Woodward, *The History of Cartography*, vol. 2, part 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

<sup>18</sup> *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Thông Sử*, Mạc Phúc Hải:32a-43a.

half of the same manuscript (subtitled *Lê Triều Trung Hưng*) in which Kim betrayed the king.

The *Thực Lục* repeats the *Toàn Thư* titles, noting Uông was killed by Trịnh Kiểm the same year – which is not mentioned in the *Toàn Thư* – and adds that Hoàng led an expedition to avenge his father, killing the Mạc general who poisoned him. The Nguyễn texts do not explain how Nguyễn Hoàng joined the Lê forces at this time, after his childhood raised by Hải Dương general Nguyễn U Kỷ. In the *Liệt Truyện*, Kỷ was said to have fought against Mạc Đăng Doanh's son Mạc Phúc Hải and killed a Mạc general in Tĩnh Gia district in Thanh Hóa.<sup>19</sup>

The *Tap Lục* places a conflict between Mạc Chính Trung and Mạc Phúc Hải's son Phúc Nguyên before the Lê king returned to Tây Đô in 1543. This passage states that the conflict occurred in the 20th year, with the reign name missing, but surrounding events are dated with the Ming *Gia Tĩnh* reign, placing this war in 1541. Nguyễn Khắc Viện suggests that the *Tap Lục* must be wrong, since both the *Toàn Thư* and the *Thông Sử* describe Trung fighting Đông Kinh forces later on. However, the *Thông Sử* places Trung in Hải Dương in 1546, not Thanh Hóa; no text provides any alternate explanation of what happened to Trung after he was supposedly ousted from the Tây Kinh in 1543. In the *Tap Lục*, Mạc Kính Điển and Nguyễn Kính (who was dead since 1531 in the *Thực Lục*) called many of the Thuận Hóa generals under Mạc Quyết to bring their forces north to defeat Trung in Thanh Hóa in 1543, and he was forced to retreat into the mountains north of Tây Đô; the Thuận Hóa generals, including one from Điện Bàn district near the Thu Bồn, were rewarded for their assistance. This seems to contradict the *Thông Sử*, which states that the Lê king defeated Trung and seized Tây Đô in that year, but not the *Toàn Thư*, which states that at the time the king went to Tây Đô in 1543, where an unknown Mạc general surrendered, but then established a capital in Vạn Lại in 1546.<sup>20</sup>

In the *Thông sử*, Mạc Phúc Hải's death in 1546 sparked a revolt over the crowning of his young son Mạc Phúc Nguyên. In this text, and in a similar narrative in the *Hoan Châu Ký*, Phạm Tú Nghi in Hải Phòng unsuccessfully supported Mạc Chính

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<sup>19</sup> *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*. The *Cương Mục* states that this official was Dương Cháp Nhất, a eunuch official in the Hoàng Hóa district of Thanh Hóa. *Toàn Thư*, *Trang Tông Dụ Hoàng Đế*: 6a-7b; *Thực Lục*, 27-28.

<sup>20</sup> A deputy general named Hoàng Công Châu built large ships and offered his forces to the Mạc and was awarded a title by them, but he or another general was executed after trying to block the Bồ Chính River mouth. *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Tap Lục*, I:22b-23b.

Trung for the throne in Hải Dương, whereas in the *Tạp Lục* he had been defeated by Thuận Hóa generals in Thanh Hóa and forced into the mountains there.<sup>21</sup>

In 1547, in the *Toàn Thư*, Mạc Kính Điển and his Đông Kinh generals had forced Trung and others, including Mạc Văn Minh, a nephew of Dung who had helped negotiate the surrender of Qinzhou and Ming recognition, to flee their coastal base, bringing a population from Hải Dương with them, and settle in Qinzhou in places called Qing and Yuan (Thanh and Viễn). Whereas in the *Toàn Thư*, Trung sent troops to launch raids in Guangdong and Guangxi, with the Ming not daring to restrain him, in the *Thông sử* Trung brought 100 members of the Mạc royal family along with him to settle in Qinzhou.

In 1551, the *Toàn Thư* claims Phúc Nguyên was said to have fled in fear to Kim Thành, while Mạc Kính Điển resided at Bồ Đề. Lê troops seized Đông Kinh and prepared to bring the king to reside there, but Mạc Phúc Nguyên's forces were said to have recaptured Đông Kinh soon after, although Nguyên later again resided in Bồ Đề.<sup>22</sup>

The Ming court's ignorance of the existence of either Nguyễn Kim or Trịnh Kiểm undermines the various descriptions of these men in the Lê and Nguyễn annals. Trịnh rulers are described in vivid detail in the *Ming Shi-lu*, but only beginning with Trịnh Tùng, who first appears after 1596. A line of Nguyễn generals or rulers is never mentioned by the Ming either supporting the Lê Restoration or ruling Thuận Hóa or Quảng Nam. Lê descriptions of the shifting location of Mạc capitals are neither internally consistent, nor compatible with the (admittedly thin) Ming reports of Mạc rule. In any case, Quảng Nam remained a significant political center at the end of the 16th century, but most discussion of it has been removed from the Lê histories.

### The Mạc Presence in Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam

There is disagreement over the timing and extent of the settlement of migrant trading centers in Quảng Nam, with some scholars arguing that there was no significant Vietnamese presence in Quảng Nam before Nguyễn Hoàng. Charles Wheeler suggests

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<sup>21</sup> *Hoan Châu Ký*, 79-81.

<sup>22</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Shi-zong*, 268:3a-b, 331:2a-b, 331:2a-b, 347:7b, 357:4a; *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Thông sử* 53a; *Liệt Truyện*, 67-71, 129-131; *Thực Lục*, 27.

that there were Mạc refugees in Thuận Hóa, but they remained for only a few decades. Most scholars rarely mention the Mạc at all except as an enemy of the Lê, a blind spot affecting the work of practically all postwar Vietnamese historians, including Trần Quốc Vượng (Vượng did note that he had seen family records from the Mạc in Trà Kiệu unmentioned by even Cadière, who had spent a lifetime in Huế). In fact, we have no clear limit on how early the Mạc were present in Quảng Nam. For example, some may have been resident there since the Ming forces, relatives of Mạc Thúy apparently among them, were said to be settled in Thuận Hóa after 1427.<sup>23</sup>

The Ming records do not explain when or how the Mạc took control of Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam. The *Ming Shi-lu* reports that Champa king Sha-ri-di-zhai sent tribute to the Ming in 1543 after three decades with no contact, complaining that his country was still being attacked repeatedly by Đại Việt and all routes were blocked, so the mission had to request a Ming escort to return, apparently along a mountain route. No mention of such a king, or any attacks by Lê (or Nguyễn) forces on Champa during this period appears in the Lê and Nguyễn texts, suggesting that continued conflicts with Champa during Mạc rule have been omitted in those sources.<sup>24</sup>

Lê records are vague about the status of Thuận Hóa in the 16th century. Thanh Hà, a *Minh Hương* village on the Hương River between the Huế citadel and the river mouth at Thuận An, was studied by Ch'en Ching-ho in 1961, who reports it was called a Great Ming guest market. Its resident merchants were registered and placed in a special tax category. Ch'en Ching-ho disputed the traditional founding date of 1610 for Thanh Hà village, established based on a locally held 1810 document that referred to the village as 200 years old, which he found inconsistent with the fact that in the Nguyễn histories,

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<sup>23</sup> Wheeler writes, "The Mạc occupied Thuan Hoa and Quang Nam after being pushed out of Thang Long (Hanoi) in the 1530s. Lord Hoang evicted the clan not long after a Mac official, Duong Van An, wrote his geography..." Since Mạc Đăng Dung took the throne in Đông Kinh in 1529, and the Mạc were pushed out of Đông Kinh in 1592, the Mạc presence in Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam, from the 1530s to 1555, when Dương Văn Châu in Thuận Hóa compiled earlier texts acquired by him in that region to produce the *Cạn Lục*, had nothing to do with any battles in the north. Trần Quốc Vượng's comment on the existence of the Mạc family in Trà Kiệu was noted by Huỳnh Công Bá. Hoàng Anh Tuấn, *Silk for Silver*, 34; John Guy, "Vietnamese Ceramics from the Hoi An Excavation: The Cu Lao Cham Ship Cargo," *Orientalism* (Sept. 2000):47-61; Wheeler, "Cross-Cultural Trade," 73-80; Huỳnh Công Bá, "Về Quyển Gia Phả Của Hậu Duệ Nhà Mạc ở Trà Kiệu (Duy Xuyên – Quảng Nam)." *Thông báo Hán Nôm học* (1997):22-30.

<sup>24</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Shi-zong*, 274:5a, 275:6a.

the capital had not yet moved to this area in 1610. He could not see why Chinese would want to settle there before the Nguyễn capital was established nearby in 1636.<sup>25</sup>

Ch'en Ching-ho did not consider that the Mạc had long been active in this region. Even with the limitations and redactions of the text released by the Nguyễn Dynasty, elements of the *Cạn Lục* support the Ming description of Mạc control over Quảng Nam. A Mạc commander named the *Đoan* Grand Duke travelled to this region accompanied by a Thu Bồn area native and former Mạc commander of Nghệ An, Hồ Tông Sùng, who received the title *Đô Chỉ Huy Sứ Thiêm Sứ Vệ Phò Nam* (Funan). As I argue elsewhere, the reference to Funan in connection with this high office, which appears in discussions of Mạc militarized provincial administration to refer to the commander of the chief office of a province, suggests the Mạc extended their military activities into Cambodia. Another native of the Thu Bồn River area, Đào Bí, became a regional commander called *Đông Tổng Tri Vệ Hải Khang*. In the context of the maritime activities reported by the Ming, this title implies Đào Bí held command either in the offshore islands marked Hải Khang on the “*Lê Hồng Đức*” atlas or possibly Khang Hải district in Qinzhou, the reported homeland of the Mạc rulers of Hà Tiên. Parts of the *Cạn Lục* describe economic and social aspects of the Thu Bồn River, including trade in highland products, elephants, ivory and cash, while praising the region’s scholarship, commercial acumen and craftsmanship in shipbuilding, ironworking, and making silk and paper. As Charles Wheeler and Trần Quốc Vượng note, this text mentions Chinese and Cham cultural features existing side by side in the region. Sinicized cultural features of the region included elements from both South China and Hải Dương. South China myths, assigned

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<sup>25</sup> Nineteenth century texts refer to migrant Chinese as *Minh Hương*, usually translated as Ming loyalists. Persons in Thanh Hóa, Nghệ An, Thuận Hóa, Quảng Nam, and as far as Hà Tiên, were registered into *Minh Hương* villages in the early 19th century by the *Minh Mạng* Emperor, but it is unclear how widely the term *Minh Hương* was used, or how it was defined, in earlier periods. The question of what surnames are “Vietnamese” and what surnames are “Chinese” is not straightforward. Thanh Hà village in 1945 had 792 “*Minh Hương*” residents. Among these were distinctively Chinese names, which generally appear in Vietnam only in persons of Chinese descent: Cam, Chu, Chung, Củng, Đinh, Dư, Hàn, Hầu, Hồng, Kỳ, La, Lâm, Lương, Lưu, Mông, Nhan, Ngụy, Ngu, Nhiêu, Phò, Quang, Tạ, Tăng, Tô, Thái, Trình, Trương and Vương. At the same time, surnames common both to today’s ethnic Vietnamese and to ethnic Chinese populations, such as Hồ, Hoàng, Lê, Lý, Ngô, Nguyễn, Phan, Phạm, Trần, Trịnh, and Vũ, were also found among these Ming guests. Ch'en Ching-ho, “Làng Minh Hương và Phố Thanh Hà” [Ming Hương Village and Thanh Hà Market], *Tạp Chí Đại Học* IV:3 (1961).

to the region's Hindu Cham towers, existed alongside Confucian remembrance of a 15th-century Hải Dương scholar.<sup>26</sup>

While this cultural pattern appears to have existed in Quảng Nam and Thuận Hóa since the first half of the 16th century, the *Cạn Lục* text itself may have been written later. The text, printed by the Nguyễn Dynasty, bears a preface attributed to a Mạc official Dương Văn An, dated the “the middle of the sixth lunar month of the *Cảnh Lịch* “reign of the traitor Mạc Phúc Nguyên,” giving a reign period ascribed to a Mạc ruler (in the *Toàn Thư*, this is 1548 to 1553), yet with no indication of the year. It is unlikely that this vibrant and strategic Mạc center existed in 1553, yet disappeared in a period of only five years before 1558.

In the preface, Dương Văn An is called a Quảng Bình native resident in Thăng Long, and a 1547 examination graduate at 34, yet serving as a chief minister (*Thượng Thư*) in the Mạc regime. He claims to have retired to his homeland in Quảng Bình only seven years after graduation, in 1553, and met two local scholars there who shared with him two local texts, which he incorporated along with his own observations. However, royal institutions managed by the Nguyễn Dynasty court, the state-sponsored Thiên Mục and Sùng Hóa pagodas are described as being already thriving institutions of Mạc governance in the *Cạn Lục*, even though the *Thực Lục* claims that these institutions were first established in 1601 and 1602. Although the preface is signed as if Dương Văn An authored it circa 1553, his posthumous title is included, suggesting it was actually written long after his death. Thus, it is possible that the Nguyễn Dynasty may have dated the text to 1553 to prevent contradiction with the official state histories.<sup>27</sup>

Chinese migrants in Thuận Hóa were not isolated in trading villages; they settled in the wider community, leaving South China influences visible alongside the Cham in the cultural and religious practices of Huế. The most important local religious institution for the Mạc was the Sùng Hóa pagoda in Tư Vinh, an area later considered a Ming loyalist center. All Mạc officials were said to take part in major state rituals there; before the establishment of a Nguyễn capital, the region of Huế was already a Mạc administrative center. Other Mạc pagodas in Thuận Hóa include the Thiên Mục pagoda,

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<sup>26</sup> *Cạn Lục*, 68-93.

<sup>27</sup> *Cạn Lục*, 68-93; *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, vol. 2, 443.



which the *Diễn Chí* and *Thực Lục* claim was founded by Nguyễn Hoàng, and others in Quảng Bình.<sup>28</sup>

The *Cạn Lục* account of the Temple of the Four Ladies in Tư Vinh, discussed in the previous chapter, illustrates the mix of local and northern religious practices. The text notes two legends associated with this temple; in the first, the four ladies were relatives of the Southern Sung *Duanzong* Emperor, who had fled the Mongol incursion from Hangzhou to Fujian, then to Guangdong, where he reigned briefly. The ladies took refuge in a pagoda but were assaulted by a monk who drowned himself in remorse, then drowned themselves and floated to Nghệ An, where their corpses were discovered and worshipped by merchants in all the southern harbors. Due to “obscure” local customs, they were worshipped with *dâm vật*, or licentious objects, presumably *linga*. The text also provides an alternate story, in which the spirit was the exiled wife of the thirteenth *Hùng* King, whose courtiers sought to place his daughter on the throne and castrated the queens’ infant boy. The Cham goddess Po Nagar (here called Y Na) was worshipped in Kim Trà, as was a tree spirit, a virgin who was raped, and a lascivious woman who gave birth to an egg. The local people also prayed where a buffalo herder had gotten drunk, lost his buffalo, then found them again.<sup>29</sup>

In contrast with these practices near Tư Vinh, south of the Hải Văn pass in Điện Bàn there was a temple for the worship of 15th-century Hải Dương Confucian scholar Nguyễn Lục, who headed the *Hàn Lâm* Academy and tutored Lê *Thánh Tông* when he was crown prince. Lục was allegedly executed for refusing to participate in attacks on Champa, yet his son went on to become the highest ranking official in Thuận Hóa and was honored with a funeral procession of a hundred wild elephants. The *Cạn Lục* paints a vivid portrait of Điện Bàn district, north of the Thu Bồn, with wealthy rice farmers, traders and silk weavers, with Mạc officials wearing brightly colored costumes.<sup>30</sup>

Since the Lê records do not describe taking control of Quảng Nam, it seems to have been ruled by the Mạc throughout this period without any significant interruption. Areas further to the south are not described in the *Cạn Lục*, but according the *Tạp Lục*,

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<sup>28</sup> Two other pagodas with unknown locations, Linh Sơn and Kim Quang, are mentioned. Trần Đại Vinh, *Tín Ngưỡng Dân Gian Huế* [Huế Folk Beliefs] (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Hóa Thông Tin, 2006), 37-41; *Cạn Lục*, 94-100; *Thực Lục*, 35.

<sup>29</sup> *Cạn Lục*, *ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Cạn Lục*, *ibid.*; *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, vol. 2, 443.

the Mạc continued to control Quảng Nam throughout this period. Five years after retaking Tây Đô, Lê restoration forces under Lê Phi Thừa returned to Thuận Hóa from Houaphan, killing several of the Mạc generals and seizing control in 1548, then in 1552 also occupying Quảng Nam. Hoàng Bôi held out in the highlands of Quảng Trị until about 1553, when Thừa took the pass leading to the Lao tributary states. Thừa tried to entice people and officials who had fled by sea to join the Mạc in Hải Dương to return.<sup>31</sup>

An episode in Phú Yên, which is dated in the *Thực Lục* in the 45th year of the highly problematic “reign” of the *Tiên* Prince, may have occurred much earlier. (The terms for Nguyễn rulers, *Tiên Vương*, *Sãi Vương* and so on, are typically translated as *Tiên* Prince, *Sãi* Prince, etc. The 19th century fiction was that they remained loyal to the Lê throughout, and thus did not wish to claim a higher title. However, many sources do claim that they renounced any allegiance to Tonkin, or even were independent kings in their own right. Therefore, I will break with common usage here and call them *Tiên* Prince, *Sãi* Prince, and so on.) There is a possibility that an episode in Phú Yên, which in the *Thực Lục* is placed in the *Tân Hợi* year of 1611, might have occurred much earlier, perhaps as early as the previous *Tân Hợi* year of 1551. In that passage, a force from Champa invaded at an unspecified border, and a man named Văn Phong holding the office of *Chử Sự*, which does not seem to be a standard official post for this era, allegedly defeated and repelled them. Following that defeat, the *Thực Lục* states Văn Phong was ordered to govern that border region as the Phú Yên Prefecture (*Phủ*), with two districts, Đồng Xuân and Tuy Hòa. This is not compatible with other descriptions of the 17th century, an issue that will be in greater detail in later chapters.<sup>32</sup>

The *Tap Lục* states that Lê troops garrisoned both Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam in 1552, but most Lê appointed officials in these regions defected to the Mạc. It claims the Lê killed the last of their major Mạc rivals in Thuận Hóa by 1557, but conspicuously does not mention the fate of the Mạc in Quảng Nam. In 1554, according to the *Thông Sử*, a mountain source in Hóa Châu is occupied by the *Đồ Đàm* Earl Hoàng Bôi. Both the

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<sup>31</sup> The timing of this attack suggests that Thuận Hóa was a more important target for the Lê Restoration, at this point, than the Northern provinces. This might have made strategic sense, though it is difficult to interpret these actions without understanding the relations among the Mường forces associated with Nguyễn Kim, their Huaphan troops, the Ai Lao king, and the highland peoples in southern Laos. *Tap Lục*, I:23a-b

<sup>32</sup> *Thực Lục*, 36.

Mạc and local chiefs and officials surrendered to forces sent from Tây Đô by Trịnh Kiểm, and using these troops they defeated Hoàng Bôi, subduing the regions of Thuận and Quảng. Local chiefs and students were given official positions; no Trịnh officer is named being appointed, and the name of the *Trấn* Duke is not mentioned here.<sup>33</sup>

If there were any actual disruption of the Mạc administration in Quảng Nam, it appears to have been temporary. Hoàng Anh Tuấn, referencing John Guy's work on ceramics, recently suggested that the Mạc may have been active in developing trade in Hội An, just as they were in Vân Đồn (though John Guy discusses a shipwreck off the coast near Hội An, but not ceramics production in Quảng Nam). The Lê and Nguyễn texts' silence on the Mạc in Quảng Nam, and the claims that Nguyễn Hoàng established institutions that were already described in the Mạc *Cạn Lục*, have not yet been questioned. It is more likely that the institutions attributed to the Nguyễn were actually established by the Mạc, and that there was political continuity during this period.

#### A Mạc Court in Exile in Qinzhou

As the Mạc consolidated their position in Đại Việt during the 1520s and 1530s, officials in Qinzhou grew increasingly alarmed, and petitioned the Ming court to go on the offensive. Qinzhou officials reported that Mạc Đăng Dung, while pretending to “surrender” to the Ming, was in fact attacking Qinzhou to obtain more warships there. They argued that the Mạc could be driven out of Đông Kinh and back to their coastal stronghold, or possibly driven out to sea entirely, by a massive, coordinated attack by native troops from the southern provinces, as well as their Cham allies. The Ming reportedly chose to continue negotiating instead. In 1537, the Ming prepared a strike on the Mạc, and Mạc partisans were captured while seeking support in Guangdong province, whose officials were punished for submitting memorials arguing against the invasion.

The Mạc gave up claim to part of Qinzhou, perhaps in order to avoid war or in return for Ming recognition of their sovereignty. Mạc Đăng Doanh, called Mạc Phương Doanh (方瀛) in the *Ming Shi-lu*, sent a mission to the Ming in 1539, but Qinzhou

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<sup>33</sup> *Toàn Thư*, Mạc Phúc Nguyên:66b-68a.

officials fearing further losses there advised that several navies attack Doanh simultaneously from the north and south, relying on assistance from Champa, the first interaction with Champa noted in eighteen years. The “Annam” Pacification Commissioners (officials nominally responsible for bringing Đại Việt under Ming rule) finally announced the return of western Qinzhou to the Ming. The Mạc appear to have agreed to this return to extract major concessions, but the “Annam” administrators and the Ming court, in agreement that these territories would not willingly accept Ming rule, negotiated the establishment of a new fort in Hezhou and moved a police office out of the subprefecture seat to control the new population better.<sup>34</sup>

Following Mạc Đăng Dung’s death, the Ming pacification commissioners learned that the general Nguyễn Kinh and his son-in-law Mạc Kính Điển had seized the throne (Điền is never called a regent). The Ming shifted their support to a rival son heir, Mạc Chính Trung, who occupied the lower Red River delta before being forced north along the coast.<sup>35</sup> When a new ruler named *Hồng Ái* (宏灑) replaced Mạc Kính Điển, Ming border officials, amid internal strife over Ming reluctance to grant them their own inheritable posts in the border regions, were ordered to investigate who had the stronger claim in Tonkin. One of Trung’s supporters, Phạm Tư Nghi, attacked Lianzhou and Qinzhou from a base in Quảng Ninh. Since Mạc Chính Trung had submitted to the Ming, however he and his followers were permitted to settle permanently in Qinzhou, where they received salaries from the court. Although the Ming recognized *Hồng Ái* as Annam Commander in 1550, believing him to be the son of the previous Commander’s primary wife, they continued to support Trung in Qinzhou and refused *Hồng Ái*’s request that Trung be sent back.<sup>36</sup> The decision to grant recognition to *Hồng Ái* did not result in immediate resumption of relations with the Mạc, and a mission carrying tribute from *Hồng Ái* only arrived at the court in 1564, a full fifteen years after the tribute had been sent and after half the tribute party had died. Thus, there is no corroboration from the Ming of the Lê texts’ depiction of a Mạc regime in turmoil in these years.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Shi-zong*, 221:16a-17a, 236:2a-3a, 248:1b-5a.

<sup>35</sup> *Hoan Châu Ký*, 79-81.

<sup>36</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Shi-zong*, 331:2a-b, 347:7b, 357:4a.

<sup>37</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Shi-zong*, 331:2a-b, 347:7b, 357:4a.

The *Toàn Thư*, in a section devoted to the reign of Mạc Phúc Nguyên, describes Mạc Kính Điển going to Yên Quảng to attack Mạc Chính Trung and Phạm Tử Nghi in 1551, after they had been described relocating to Ming territory in 1547. Whereas Nghi is reported to have been killed by 1550 in the *Ming Shi-lu*, this section of the *Toàn Thư* states that Điển captured Nghi and executed him in 1551, then sent his head to the Ming, who refused it and sent it back. The text describes Trung returning to Ming territory, where he is said to have remained until his death. An annotation to the section devoted to describing the period of Mạc rule then quotes extensively from a passage in another section devoted to describing events under the contemporaneous Lê ruler, but the section cited does not itself appear in this edition of the *Toàn Thư*. In this cited text, both Nghi and Trung, after their clash with Nguyễn Kính's faction, began to pillage Ming territories, causing the Ming to threaten the Mạc for their disloyalty. In fear, the Mạc had Nghi captured and killed, and sent his head to the Ming, who refused to accept it due to the spread of an epidemic at the time it arrived. These Lê accounts contradict the *Ming Shi-lu* reports of material and diplomatic support for Trung's court in exile, although tolerance of a Mạc king and other royalty in Qinzhou does seem to be at odds with the Ming Dynasty's longstanding efforts to break that region's ties with coastal Đại Việt.<sup>38</sup>

Gutzlaff wrote that in 1550, Tonkin was divided between violent factions, and the *Kea Tsing (Jiajing)* Emperor took advantage of this conflict to make Tonkin a tributary again, but although the Chinese attack was successful, their forces were quickly driven out by the local population. The leader of this effort to drive out the Chinese attackers was a skilled official who received the hereditary title of "lord *Chua*" and held the real power, while the king, stripped of power, was called *Vua Dova Bova*. Gutzlaff, a student of Chinese history, is supported to an extent by the *Ming Shi-lu*, which reports that attacks were ordered against the Hải Dương forces associated with Phạm Tử Nghi, and although the court initially refused to recognize the new ruler, they eventually ceased hostilities. Both Vachet and Gutzlaff appear to have considered a figure roughly equivalent to the man described in the Lê texts as the regent Mạc Kính Điển the first *Chúa* of Tonkin.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVI:10a-b. *Ming Shi-lu*, *Shi-zong*, 371:8a-b.

<sup>39</sup> Gutzlaff, 114.

For most of the late 16th century, the Ming annals fall silent on the fate of the Mạc factions in Qinzhou. However, they are vocal on the Ming court's unsuccessful measures to deal with rampant piracy with links to Đại Việt. It is not clear where the “Guang pirates” described by the Ming court originated, but the Lê complained of pirates moving between Qinzhou and Hải Dương, and the Mạc must have continued to be involved in commercial networks linking Qinzhou and Quảng Nam.<sup>40</sup>

### Relations with the Highlands

There is little documentation of events south of the Thu Bồn in the 16th century, but one text held in Quảng Ngãi purports to have been first written in this period. The *Phủ Tập Quảng Nam Ký Sự* is said to have been produced in the *Chính Trị* reign, or between 1558 and 1571, by an author with the surname Mai. (As discussed further below, Mai Đình Dũng, in the *Liệt Truyện* stated to be a son of Hoàng's adopted father Nguyễn Ư Kỷ, is described in the *Toàn Thư*, but not the *Thực Lục*, as governing in Quảng Nam beginning in 1571.) We should read the text with caution, since the manuscript, kept by the Bùi clan in Thu Phổ village, contains a reference to being recopied 200 years later, and Hán was first awarded a royal diploma only by the *Tây Sơn* in 1795. In 1824, a Nguyễn official in Quảng Ngãi recopied the text and added supplementary material; it was copied again in 1914, seemingly including a section expanding on the rationales for various historical actions attributed to Hán.<sup>41</sup>

Bùi Tá Hán is described as a man from Hoan Châu who joined the Lê in Ai Lao in 1533. The text gives him no Lê rank or title from this period, however. A 1795 diploma from the *Tây Sơn* emperor awards Hán the title of *Trấn* Duke, and yet the title *Trấn* Duke is not mentioned in the family manuscript. In the text, Hán is said to have received a letter from the Nguyễn general who subjugated Thanh Hóa, Nghệ An and Thuận Hóa. This is not in line with the dynastic histories, since Lê and Nguyễn texts do not describe

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<sup>40</sup> *Tạp Lục* I:24a.

<sup>41</sup> Đoàn Ngọc Khôi, “Trần Quận công Bùi Tá Hán: Nhân Vật Lịch Sử Quan Trọng Của Xứ Quảng Nam Thế Kỷ 16” [*Trấn* Duke Bùi Tá Hán: An Important Historical Figure of 16th century Quảng Nam], *Tạp Chí Cẩm Thành*, Sở Văn Hóa Thông Tin Quảng Ngãi; Lê Hồng Long and Vũ Sông Trà, eds., *Bùi Tá Hán*, 5-32.

Nguyễn Kim coming to Thuận Hóa and likewise do not describe Nguyễn Hoàng conquering Thanh Hóa or Nghệ An.<sup>42</sup>

The explanation offered for Bùi Tá Hán's arrival in Quảng Ngãi is strained. In 1545, Hán, here called the commander of the northern army (*bắc quân đô đốc*) brought his men to Cù Lao Ré, the smaller of the two islands of the Quảng Nam coast. Unfamiliar with the territory, they pretended to be just ordinary immigrants. Through a peaceful transition of power, he assumed command over the military commanders and civil governors of the coastal Quảng Ngãi districts. This area near the Vê River, on a trade route leading through the Đá Vách Mountains to the Kontum Plateau and Stung Treng, would have been populated by Bahnaric speakers. Forts near the main garrison, the location of which is not specified, continued to support Hán's enemy, but Hán expanded his control along both the Trà and the Vê Rivers and into the highlands.

In 1546, in this text, an official arrived in the south with a letter from the king (*hoàng thượng*) praising Bùi Tá Hán for taking Quảng Nam Garrison. The court was said to have sent Hán a certain number of poor people to aid in the cultivation of Quảng Nam land, because their agricultural output was expected to help defeat the enemy forces that had occupied agricultural areas in Sơn Nam and Hải Dương and were thus better provisioned. This is likely a late expository addition to the text, as is the statement that the king counseled Hán to ally with the *Chiêm* and highland peoples in order to prevent them from becoming sympathetic to the Mạc.

Another section of the *Phủ Tập Quảng Nam Ký Sự* describes Hán's policies in governing local peoples. Much of this seems to be the work of a later copyist. This section notes that demobilized soldiers, as well as migrants from the north, were incorporated into local villages along the two rivers, and land they had cleared to provide military provisions was added to the common land of the villages, not held by the soldiers. The text notes that land was surveyed and taxed for the first time since 1471, and highland peoples across the length of the Kontum Plateau were encouraged to settle and cultivate land so they would not be tempted to raid the coast. Markets, protected by Hán's army, were established for lowlanders and uplanders to trade, particularly in forest products.

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<sup>42</sup> Lê Hồng Long and Vũ Sông Trà, eds., *Bùi Tá Hán*, *ibid.*

The text describes three large forts, each with 500 soldiers rotating between active duty and cultivation, and an officer responsible for both civil and military matters, which controlled the lowland areas between the ocean and the western mountains. Each fort official supervised one of three major ocean ports, which must have included Quy Nhơn, and allowed *Kinh* and *Chiêm* people to come there to sell agricultural and forest products and artisanal goods. (The term *Kinh* is sometimes used to contrast lowland people with highlanders, though I have not seen any research on the origins of this term. It is not clear when this term was introduced into the text, though the usage seems modern. *Chiêm* might refer to either coastal Cham or Chamic speakers on the Kontum Plateau who travelled to the coast for trade.) The *Chiêm* people were required to register their presence and were governed equitably.

The *Tây Sơn* usage may have been an attempt to link Bùi Tá Hán to a figure who appears in the *Toàn Thư* by conferring a posthumous title on Hán had already received it from a Lê ruler. The Lê chronicle records a *Trần* Duke among the early supporters of the Lê Restoration 1539; he is described as a resident in Quảng Nam in 1558. The text describes the *Trần* Duke's death in Quảng Nam a decade later, at that point calling him a native official (*thổ quan*). The *Tạp Lục* uses language similar to the *Toàn Thư*, placing the *Trần* Duke in Quảng Nam in 1558, giving and receiving aid from Nguyễn Hoàng.

The 19th century Nguyễn Historical Office, however, names the *Trần* Duke as Bùi Tá Hán. This identification appears in the *Liệt Truyện* and *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí* and was apparently based on the 1795 diploma conferring that title on Hán. The *Liệt Truyện* mentions Hán as an ally of Nguyễn Hoàng and a Lê native official. The *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, however, describes him as being an ally of Hoàng from Nghệ An, not a native official.<sup>43</sup>

The worship of Bùi Tá Hán in Quảng Ngãi is linked to that of the Cham goddess Thiên Y A Na, as well as an unknown figure called the *Lê* Duke. The first posthumous diploma held at his temple dates from 1795; Hán was first honored by the *Tây Sơn*. According to a stele set up in his temple by the Bùi clan in 1913, Bùi Tá Hán was a Lê official from Hoan Châu who went to Quảng Nam in the *Nguyễn Hòa* reign (1533-1548).

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<sup>43</sup> Bùi (梅) is a common surname among Nghệ An people, including those of *Mường* ethnic background, as well as of Cantonese and Hokkien immigrants. *Tạp Lục*, I:24a; *Toàn Thư*, XVI:25b; *Liệt Truyện*, 142-143; *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, Vol. 2, 443.



He governed there along with a man referred to, in the stele, as his son, the *Tứ Dương* Marquis, and a Chiêm general under his command named *Xích Y*.<sup>44</sup>

The title *Tứ Dương* Marquis, given the connections among the Phạm, Mạc and Nguyễn in Quảng Nam, might link Phạm Tử Nghi with Quảng Nam. The stele claims that Bùi Tá Hán's son was a *tiến sĩ* examination graduate named Bùi Tá Thế, but there is no Bùi *tiến sĩ* recorded during this period, and no Bùi held any official post in Quảng Ngãi until the 1840s; village elders near Hán's tomb recall Bùi Tá Triều as a local herbalist and Hán's fourth generation descendant. The *Tứ Dương* Marquis title was held by one contemporary of Bùi Tá Hán, the Mạc general Phạm Tử Nghi who the *Ming Shi-lu* reports was beheaded in 1550. The stele attributes the title *Tứ Dương* to Hán's son despite there being no reference to a son of Bùi Tá Hán in the *Phủ Tập Quảng Nam Ký Sự*, or in any Lê or Nguyễn sources, including the *Liệt Truyện*. *Tứ Dương* first appears in connection with Hán in the Nguyễn dynasty diplomas, which do not call him Hán's son. Instead, in the 19th century, *Tứ Dương* was honored alongside Hán and general *Xích Y* (this name, which appears first in 1880, is not Sino-Vietnamese.)<sup>45</sup>

The 1913 stele also describes two wooden statues kept in Bùi Tá Hán's temple. Bùi Tá Hán reportedly went to Phú Yên, where a monk carved a statue in his likeness. He was presented with a second statue by his general, *Xích Y*. The monk placed both statues in a pagoda on a mountain, where they were noticed in the *Cảnh Hưng* reign (1740-1786) by a figure called Nguyễn *đô ty* (a chief provincial official in the system introduced under the Mạc Dynasty) from Hòa Vang (Danang.) This official asked about story of their origin, then asked officials from the adjacent province (why this province is not named is unclear) to bring the two statues back to the *Trần* Duke's family in Quảng Ngãi. The stele notes that Hán was then honored as a top ranked spirit (*Thượng Đẳng Thần*); this title appears first in a diploma conferred by the *Minh Mạng* Emperor. If a pagoda on a hill in Phú Yên existed, it is not clear where it was. The Bát Nhã pagoda on Long Sơn Mountain is associated with Hứa Mật Sơ, an influential *Chan* monk of the late 18th century, but

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<sup>44</sup> The diploma names *Diệu Đức Dương Quang Hiến Chính Đoan Túc Xích Y*. Lê Hồng Long and Vũ Sông Trà, eds., *Bùi Tá Hán*, 54-57.

<sup>45</sup> The Nguyễn Dynasty diplomas honor a figure called *Thanh Trung Hoàng Mô Khuông Hựu Đoan Túc Tứ Dương Phủ Quân*. Lê Hồng Long and Vũ Sông Trà, eds., *Bùi Tá Hán*, 33-50.

there is no evidence this pagoda existed in the 16th century. The “pagoda” might be Tháp Nhà, the Cham tower on a hill in Tuy Hòa.<sup>46</sup>

These descriptions of coastal rulers and highland allies west of Quảng Ngãi and Phú Yên should be considered in the context of a 1560 treaty with Ayutthaya, one of the few events of this period for which there is epigraphic evidence. At that time, Lao efforts to control parts of the region later called Champassak may have increased, although Bahnaric areas not directly on the Mekong were probably less directly controlled by governors or princes from Vientiane than a Champassak court. The legends of Ôi Nô’s relatives might be related to the events circa 1560, an era characterized by Martin Stuart-Fox as a shift in “the center of gravity of Lao political power” south down the Mekong, accompanied, he suggests, by ethnic Lao migration, after Lan Na fell to Burma and Vientiane allied with Ayutthaya. (Paul Sidwell theorizes that the spread of Bahnaric speakers into Northwest Cambodia was a result of Thai/Lao pressure.)<sup>47</sup>

As Nguyễn Hữu Thông points out, there were few geographical barriers to exchange among the diverse groups in the highlands. Andrew Hardy has described routine economic exchange along the Thu Bồn River to Attapeu in the 19th century. Coastal rulers in Quảng Nam in the 1560s would also have relied on the Kontum Plateau and southern Laos for the valuable products described in the *Cạn Lục* and *Tạp Lục*. No conflicts are described between rulers on the coast and the peoples in the Đá Vách Mountains for another 200 years.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> This record of a heroic ancestor on one of the routes to the Gia Lai Plateau is reminiscent of the Tay Son discovery of a *gia phả* fragment connecting Nguyễn Huệ, son of a merchant with highland connections, to a branch of the Hồ clan in Nghệ An. Lê Hồng Long and Vũ Sông Trà, eds., *Bùi Tá Hán*, 54-57.

<sup>47</sup> Prasert na Nagara and Alexander B. Griswold, ‘An inscription of 1563 A.D. recording a treaty between Laos and Ayodhya in 1560’, *Journal of the Siam Society*, 67:2 (1979), 54–69; Paul Sidwell, “A Note on the Reconstruction of Proto West Bahnaric and Investigation of Early West Bahnaric-Katu Contact,” *Mon-Khmer Studies* 33 (2003):159-166; Paul Sidwell, “Genetic Classification of Bahnaric Languages: A Comprehensive Review,” *Mon-Khmer Studies* 32 (2002):1-24.

<sup>48</sup> Andrew Hardy, “Eaglewood and the Economic History of Champa and Central Vietnam,” in Andrew Hardy, Mauro Cucarzi and Patrizia Zolese ed., *Champa and the archaeology of Mỹ Sơn (Vietnam)* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2009), 107-126; Đoàn Ngọc Khôi has suggested that walled defense works, traces of which run along the highlands in Quảng Ngãi, were first erected in this period. Đoàn Ngọc Khôi, “Trần Quận Công;” Nguyễn Hữu Thông, “Several Cultural Features of the Central Region of Vietnam,” *Social Sciences*, 6 (2004):99-106.

## Early Descriptions of the King of Cochinchina

The next reports of Cochinchina's rulers after Tomé Pires and Mendes Pinto date from the last two decades of the 16th century. In 1583, two years after Manila received its first Dominican Bishop whose main objective was to use Manila as a base for proselytizing in China, Dominicans there traveled to Cochinchina. Due to rough winds, they could not put in at the "port of the court," instead sheltering in a small bay six leagues (about 25 kilometers) distant; the provincial governor resided in a populous city there. By "court," the Dominicans could not have meant a fort on the Thạch Hãn River, as there is no suitable port or bay near Quảng Trị; the court more logically would have been in Quảng Nam. A Franciscan monk, Barthélemy, obtained permission to erect a church (apparently near the court), but later left under unexplained circumstances.<sup>49</sup>

The intermittent periods of residence of European missionaries does not suggest a failure of Christianity to spread in Cochinchina. By the end of the sixteenth century, Japan had an estimated 300,000 Christians, many in merchant communities with ties to the Cochinchinese ports (as well as in Tonkin). As Philipphê Bình would assert, Japanese were responsible for bringing Christianity to Tonkin. Thus, Japanese Christians may have resided in or visited Faifo, and communicated with the court about their faith, even after Barthélemy's departure.<sup>50</sup>

In 1596, an expeditionary force from Manila became embroiled in a quarrel in Cochinchina over the galley of their murdered governor. The king of Tonkin was present in Tourane; he reportedly seized the galley, and threatened the Spanish when they later arrived to claim it. Antonio de Morga, the successor governor, repeats the reports from some participants that the king of Sinoa, a son of the king of Tonkin, gave several travellers safe passage into Laos. Another chronicler of the skirmish in Tourane, Gabriel

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<sup>49</sup> Relation des Missions des Franciscains en Cochinchine de 1583 a 1769, *A. M.-E.*, vol. 745, 145, 166, in Launay, *Histoire de la Mission de Cochinchine 1658-1683*, vol. III (Paris: Anciennes Maisons Charles Douniol et Retaux, 1925).

<sup>50</sup> Philippe Bình, *Chuyện Nước Annam*.

de San Antonio, states three kings were present in Tourane, the kings of Tonkin, Sinoa (likely Thuận Hóa or Thăng Hoa) and Cachan (Kê Chiêm or Đại Chiêm).<sup>51</sup>

Jeronimus Wondaer was a resident Dutch merchant in Tachan (Đại Chiêm) in 1602. His report to the VOC describes a king personally active in commerce living close by; travel to visit the king took only a fraction of a day. His letter was dictated in April of that year. The *Thực Lục* first describes Nguyễn Hoàng's son being sent to govern Quảng Nam only in the seventh lunar month, so an argument that the king was actually a crown prince cannot be supported by reference to the Nguyễn texts. He writes at length about Senoa, one of several nearby commercial centers; Senoa might be Thuận Hóa (according to the *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, Thuận Hóa extended to the north bank of the Thu Bồn River until 1605), but it might also be Thăng Hoa.<sup>52</sup>

The earliest detailed description of the king of Cochinchina comes from Cristoforo Borri. The Jesuits, established at Faifo since 1615, were well received by elite families, some of whom, including province governors and a princess at the court, quickly converted. Borri states that the king in 1618 was the grandson of the first king of Cochinchina, who had been a governor when Cochinchina was a province ruled by the king of Tonkin. The king's grandfather:

...being made governor of Cochinchina, rebelled against the said king of Tonquin, to which he was not a little encouraged, by having in a short time got together a great many pieces of cannon, of the wrecks of several Portuguese and Dutch ships, cast away upon the rocks, which being taken up by the country people, there are above 60 of the biggest, at this time, to be seen in the king's palace.

This conflict was with the *Chewa* (*Chúa*) of Tonkin, since the Tonkin king's role was ceremonial. Borri describes no visit by the Tonkin king to Cochinchina, or any family relationship between rulers in the two countries.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> The events of the 1590s are discussed in detail in later chapters. Antonio de Morga, trans. Henry E. J. Stanley, *The Philippine Islands, Moluccas, Siam, Cambodia, Japan and China at the Close of the Sixteenth Century* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1867), 98.

<sup>52</sup> The merchants also do business in Chincheo, which for contemporary Portuguese is typically a city in Fujian, not Qinzhou in Guangdong/Guangxi. Li Tana and Anthony Reid suggest in this case it is Xinzhou (Quy Nhơn). Li Tana and Anthony Reid, *Southern Vietnam under the Nguyễn: documents on the economic history of Cochinchina (Đàng Trong), 1602-1777* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1993).

<sup>53</sup> Olga Dror and Keith Taylor, *Views of Seventeenth-century Vietnam*, 127.

Rhodes' history of Tonkin, written during his stay in Macao in the 1630s, was not published for a mass audience until his return to Europe in 1649. It introduces key elements of this story from the Jesuit history, including restoration by a great general assuming absolute authority and a young boy's flight to the south to avoid death. Rhodes places an occupation of Champa's border territories "two hundred years in the past," or in roughly the mid-15th century. That statement reflects Ming reports that a Champa king complained of such an annexation, and it is also noted in the Macao Jesuit history. Rhodes, however, combines two stories in a novel manner. For Rhodes, after a king was deposed by his general and forced into exile, he invaded a Champa province, which he called Thin Hoa, and ruled it as the country of Cochinchina. These two events appear in the same section of the Macao history, separated by an unspecified period of time, suggesting that Rhodes may have inadvertently combined them. Thus, Rhodes' Thin Hoa is likely the Thanh Hóa province, transliterated in Macao as Tsing-Hiao Fou. (Thanh Hóa is understood in these histories to be unambiguously Lê territory by the mid-15th century, although the region called Thanh Nghệ bordered on Quảng Bình, which historically was contested by Champa.)<sup>54</sup>

In the *Mémoire Historique*, the description of this Mạc palace coup includes a statement that Mạc Đăng Dung held full authority as chief general under the king he had installed: "...le nouveau Roi en fut trop reconnaissant. Il donna à Moteng-Yong toute autorité pour gouverner..." Rhodes, in his version, introduces a new chief general serving under the deposed king in exile in Thin Hoa. This exiled general neglected the prosecution of the war with Champa and fought to regain Tonkin in hopes of seizing it for himself. Acknowledging this general's power, the king invested him and his heirs with full political authority. Ming records only confirm that such a general holding power behind the throne existed after the Lê Restoration circa 1596; neither the Ming nor Macao Jesuits report any similar figure existing in Tonkin at an earlier date. The Lê "1697" *Toàn Thư*, of course names Trịnh Tùng's father as Trịnh Kiểm, albeit without a marriage to a Nguyễn general; however no figure resembling Trịnh Kiểm was known to the Ming or the Jesuits. It is conceivable that Rhodes described a general invested with full authority

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<sup>54</sup> He describes a rebellion two centuries in the past though Trần Cảo's rebellion was a little over 100 years past. Jean-Pierre Duteil, trans., *Histoire du royaume du Tonkin* (Paris: Kimé, 1999)

by an exiled king because he had learned the story of Trịnh Kiểm during his travels in Tonkin, but this figure does not appear in the Macao Jesuit history. The multiple inconsistencies in the Rhodes account suggest it is more likely that Rhodes was relating a story based on the rise of Mạc Đăng Dung as told in a Jesuit version of Ming history known to him in Macao, and inadvertently introduced errors into his own version.

Rhodes places a second element that occurs in the Macao story of Mạc Đăng Dung's rise, a boy's flight into exile, one hundred years in his own past, or a century after the exiled king allegedly seized Thin-Hoa. In his version, a sister, not the mother, arranged the boy's exile. One of the hereditary generals, still living in Thin-Hoa a century later, arranged for his daughter to marry a soldier who had distinguished himself in battle. Upon the general's death, his son and heir was still a young boy, and that soldier usurped the general's position. The daughter, fearing for her young brother's life, sent him to Cochinchina (in the Jesuit usage, a reference to the state of Champa centered in Quảng Nam), where the boy became Governor and later declared war on Tonkin.

In Rhodes' history of Tonkin, drafted in 1636 after a period of residence there, and published in 1651, he writes that 200 years earlier, a trusted deputy took power in a palace coup, and seized Tonkin's four principle provinces (the Red River delta), leaving the king in control of only three outlying provinces (apparently, Thanh Hóa, Nghệ An and Quảng Bình). Unable to retake the capital, this king instead captured the nearest provinces of Champa, which were thereafter known as Cochinchina. The king left a trusted general in charge of the war effort, and retired in a province called *Thin Hoa* (generally understood to mean Thanh Hóa, though again possibly Thuận Hóa or Thăng Hoa.) His general neglected the war with Champa, however, preferring to fight the usurpers in Tonkin in hopes of seizing it for himself. Acknowledging the general's power, the king invested him and his heirs with full political authority.<sup>55</sup>

A Lê conquest in Champa in 1471 (roughly 200 years earlier) is confirmed, but that Lê king had never been driven from his capital by a usurper. Rhodes was apparently referring to the Lê defeat by Mạc Đăng Dung, suggesting he would have had to

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<sup>55</sup> The idea that Cochinchina was Champa prior to c. 1450 was rejected by 18th century Jesuits. Relying on Chinese histories, they refer to the region by the name Cochinchina throughout its history; Rhodes himself contradicts his own usage in his other book. Rhodes, Alexandre de, *Histoire du Royaume de Tonkin*, trans. R.P. Henry Albi (Paris: 1651), 5-10.

mistakenly place that event two centuries in the past. However, Rhodes goes on to describe a descendant of the general from 200 years before, who assumed the same hereditary authority as his ancestor. This descendant lived a hundred years before the time of his writing, and fought the usurpers of Tonkin in mountains lying between an unspecified capital and Laos.

In Rhodes' account, a soldier saved that general's life, so he awarded the soldier his daughter in marriage. He died while his own son was too young to succeed him and the son-in-law claimed the dead general's authority, and would have killed the young son were it not for the intercession of his sister, who asked her husband to send him to rule Cochinchina (which, in this story, had been conquered a century earlier). The son proclaimed himself king there, with the title *Ciua Ou* (*Chúa Ông*), which Rhodes translates as Seigneur King. The son paid tribute to Tonkin's king, sparing the sister's husband. The husband's son next took the same high office, and was named *Ciua Bang* (*Chúa Bình*), or Just King.

In his account of later travels in Cochinchina, published in 1653, Rhodes amends his earlier story:

Cochinchina has been for less than 50 years a separate kingdom from Tonkin, of which it had been a province for 700 years. [Its first king] was the grandfather of he who reigns now; he was governor, sent by the king of Tonkin, his brother-in-law; after he had remained some time there, he found the title of king more beautiful than that of governor, and the quality of sovereign better than that of vassal; he revolted against his prince and made himself head of this kingdom, which he maintained by arms, and left his children a heritage which was disputed by them several times...<sup>56</sup>

These publications by Rhodes are not consistent. In the first text, Cochinchina was a province of Tonkin for 200 years; in the second, it was a province of Tonkin for 700 years. In the first text, the son of a great general from a century before had been banished to Cochinchina by his brother-in-law, who took the hereditary office of the father. In the second, the brother-in-law of the king was sent to govern Cochinchina, then rebelled 50 years earlier.

In the *Lịch Sử Annam*, the detailed history of Đại Việt written in 1659 and sent to Rome by a Jesuit convert and teacher in Thăng Long, Benedict (Bento) Thiện writes that

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<sup>56</sup> Rhodes, *Voyages et Missions*, 76-77.

at the beginning of Mạc rule, a rebel Grand Duke from Thanh Hóa with the surname Nguyễn and the title *Hung* or *Hương* adopted the orphaned future *Chúa*. The *Chúa*, referred to by the title *Minh Khang*, married *Hung*'s daughter, and after *Hung* died led battles against the Mạc, crowning a Lê king as *Chính Trị*. When *Minh Khang* grew old, his oldest son surrendered to the Mạc, and a second son took refuge in Lũy Ría along with *Chính Trị*. Thiện describes names a *Chúa* called *Tiên* crowning “a son” (from the context, his own son) as the king *Gia Thái*. (“*Đức Chúa Tiên ra rước được con vào đặt lên làm vua, tên là Ja [Gia] Thái.*”) The Mạc king, changing his reign name from *Quang Báu* to *Hồng Ninh*, launched devastating attacks on Thanh Hóa from Vân Sàng (in Ninh Bình), and *Tiên* retaliated, first winning “the battle of *bái trời*,” then other battles. After laying waste to Thăng Long (Kẻ Chợ) and capturing a *Thường* Grand Duke, *Chúa Tiên* retreated. When King *Hồng Ninh* returned, he attacked again, capturing a fleeing *Hồng Ninh* in his homeland in Chè Giai, Phụng Nhãn district (Hải Dương) and bringing him back to Thăng Long. A Lê king *Quang Hưng* was returned to the capital. The Mạc who could not escape to Cao Bằng were all captured with the exception of *Doan*. This Mạc officer, father of *Thụy* who “lived in Hóa in the old days,” refused answer the *Chúa*'s summons, seeing that “the *Chúa* did not care for him much at all,” and escaped to live in Quảng:

The *Chúa* suspected he had returned to Thanh Hóa; not knowing that he had gone to Hóa, the *Chúa* pursued him. However, he arrived too late, and returned to Kẻ Chợ where his descendants still rule today. There was fighting against Kẻ Quảng. However it is not known in which reign the rebellion was put down, this has not yet been recorded in books.

There are several points of ambiguity in this account. The honorific *Chúa Tiên*, given by the 19th century Historical Office to their “founder” Nguyễn Hoàng, is for Thiện either one of the persons introduced in his narrative, or a new figure entirely. It might be the second son of *Chúa Minh Khang*, mentioned in the previous sentence. Since the meaning of the title is “First *Chúa*,” it might refer to *Minh Khang*. The statement that *Chúa Tiên* installed “a son” as the Lê king *Gia Thái*, creates further ambiguity, particularly since the Ming court wondered if a Lê pretender in 1537 had a Nguyễn father. Thiện describes the ruler of CochinChina (“Kẻ Quảng” and “Hóa”) as a Mạc



loyalist without noting a relationship to the *Chúa* or Mạc royalty. Thiên closes by noting that the name of the Tonkin ruler that defeated Cochinchina “has not yet been recorded in books” – it was clear to everyone that Cochinchina remained undefeated – tacitly signaling to the reader (Marini) that the author was unable to commit *lèse-majesté* by speaking of the Lê-Trịnh regime’s failings.

Giovanni Filippo de Marini, who visited Tonkin in the late 1640s, developed close relationships with literate Tonkin residents, including the convert Benedict Thiên. He combined knowledge from Macao with a detailed description of the historical narratives available in Tonkin under the Lê. Perhaps because Christianity in Tonkin took hold in coastal regions where sympathy for the Mạc would have been strongest, Marini also provides reports gleaned from informants willing to risk speaking ill of the regime in power at that time. He describes a strong Lê Dynasty ruling until 1536, when a Mạc officer carried out a palace coup, and forced the Lê king to flee. Marini attributes the Lê Restoration to the actions of a member of the Trịnh clan, who ruled Tonkin at the time of his visit. A Trịnh officer married a daughter of the Mạc king and accumulated enough power that he was able to seize power in the capital, forcing the Mạc royal family to retreat to Cao Bằng in 1596. Whole families of Mạc supporters, including children, were then executed in the Trịnh-controlled territories. To better maintain the pretext that he was committed to defending the realm, this Trịnh official identified a purported descendent of Lê royalty and crowned him king, proclaiming himself to the lesser office of *Chúa*, or Governor.

Marini had not yet visited Cochinchina when his book was published in 1663. He explains that the first Trịnh *Chúa* had assassinated the Mạc king by cutting a melon with a knife poisoned on one side and sharing the fruit with his father-in-law. He intended to kill the king’s young son as well, but his wife, the boy’s sister, stayed his hand, and a few years later the boy was made governor of Cochinchina. This Mạc prince refused to pay taxes to Tonkin, and his descendants later expanded their territories to include the wealthy country of Ciampa.

The Vatican was more inclined to trust reports by Christian Mạc sympathizers of the former king’s assassination through trickery, and less sympathetic to a transparently hyperbolic state history claiming that the Lê Dynasty was restored through martial

proWess. Despite incorporating elements from Thiên's manuscript describing Tonkin's legendary origins and the history of past centuries in his 1663 narrative, Marini omitted entirely Thiên's description of a *Chúa*'s heroic victories over the Mạc.

Joseph Tissanier, who visited Tonkin in 1658-60, names the *Chúa* as Tring (Trình). He describes the great-grandfather of the then-reigning *chúa* as a commoner (a plowman) who married the daughter of a noble and fought against the Mạc. His first son, who would be the equivalent of the *Toàn Thư*'s Trình Côi, surrendered to the Mạc, while the second, equivalent to Trình Tùng, successfully captured and killed the king. Tissanier does not mention the story of a deceased general's son being sent to Cochinchina by his sister. Like Borri, he writes that the kings of Cochinchina were tributary rulers who had subsequently rebelled against Tonkin.<sup>57</sup>

Bénigne Vachet, writing from Cochinchina between 1671 and 1685, seems unfamiliar with Rhodes' descriptions of war between a Tonkin king and a usurper a few decades earlier. He describes instead a military conflict between Tonkin and China, which had started approximately 100 years before his writing. Tonkin invaded a small state lying between it and China, driving the prince who controlled that state to seek Chinese protection. In pursuit, Tonkin forces encroached on Chinese territory and were beaten back. Ongoing but sporadic fighting between China and Tonkin ended only after many years, when China grew tired of battling "pirates" led by Tonkin's chief general and made peace, again granting Tonkin tributary status. The general who led these battles became the first *chua* (*chúa*), forming the basis for the joint rule of the *bua* (*vua*) and *chua*, or king and lord, in Tonkin.<sup>58</sup>

The *Ming Shi-lu* does not describe any Ming battles with the Lê after they took over diplomatic relations with China from the Mạc, about 80 years before Vachet's arrival in Faifo. Cadière argues that Vachet was misinformed and dismisses this account without equivocation (yet he continues to rely on other aspects of Vachet's report). However, Vachet might be describing Ming disputes with the Mạc over Qinzhou when the Mạc held Đông Kinh.

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<sup>57</sup> Tissanier, 96-98.

<sup>58</sup> Launay, *Histoire*, vol 1, 78-95.

According to Vachet, the *chúa* had one daughter, who married a powerful official. When the *chúa* died, his son was only seven or eight, and the daughter's husband, ruling as a regent, tried to kill the heir. His wife arranged for the young man, after an unspecified period of time, to be sent to Cochinchina in the company of other nobles, who killed the governor of Cochinchina in order to install the son of the *chúa* as the new governor. The officers played up the danger of an attack by Champa, tricking the regent into sending more troops. The first lord's son took command of three provinces, Dingcat (Dinh Cát), Cambin (Quảng Bình) and Hoée (possibly Huế, Hóá or Hoa). He established a royal residence and administrative seat in the place where it remained during Vachet's visit. The son's Tonkin soldiers, now garrisoned throughout Cochinchina, invaded Champa and exacted tribute. Since the regent could not take Cochinchina back by force, it became a separate kingdom. Unlike the Rhodes' narrative, the son refused to recognize the king of Tonkin, and made no contribution to Tonkin's tribute payments to China.<sup>59</sup>

Thomas Bowyear, who spent half a year in Faifo in 1695-96, offers a brief historical overview without stating his source. He calls the first Lord of Cochinchina *Chewa Tean (Chúa Tiên)*:

...the *only Son* of the *Chewa* of Tonqueen, who dying left this Son, a child, with the *Militia* of the *Kingdom* (til his Son came to Age) to be governed by one of the *chief Mandareens*, to whom he had married his *Daughter*. This *Mandareen*, having the Government at Command, deigned privily to make away his *Young Brother-in-law*, but his *Wife*, having notice of his *Cruelty*, hid her *brother*, till such time as she wrought on her *husband* to send him *Governor* of Cochinchina, then of little Account with the *Tonqueeners*.<sup>60</sup>

Bowyear briefly describes a lineage of *Chewa* descended from this boy, with the titles *Sai*, *Thung*, *Hean*, and *Gnay*, and finally a young king ruling in 1696. The titles from *Sãi* Prince to *Nghĩa* Prince match those found in the *Diễn Chí*, *Tạp Lục* and *Thực Lục* (which like Bowyear calls the founder *Tiên*). Bowyear contradicts Rhodes and

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<sup>59</sup> Cadière writes that Vachet must have heard a local legend about the officers aiding the son and deceiving the regent, since this does not appear in the Historical Office records, and states Vachet is mistaken about the location of the capital and the tributary status of Champa, since these statements contradict the Nguyễn annals. He also suggests that Vachet must have confused Nguyễn Hoàng with his son, who in the annals breaks off tribute only in 1627. Cadière, "Mémoire de Bénigne Vachet sur la Cochinchine."

<sup>60</sup> It is noteworthy that Bowyear was instructed by Nathaniel Higgins, at the outset of this mission, to obtain for the company the names of the current king and his relatives, but he is unable to do so in this report. His sources could have been merchants in Faifo, the British factory in Tonkin, then in its third decade, or published sources. Darlymple, *Oriental Repertory*, vol. 1, 75-91.

Vachet's eyewitness accounts of Cochinchina's wars with Tonkin and Champa; instead, he claims the first two *Chewa*, *Tean* and *Sai*, had ruled their province quietly without any conflict with Tonkin, and only the latter had seized some Cham territory. For Bowyear, *Thung* was the first to refuse to pay taxes to Tonkin, while *Hean*, grandfather of the king at the time of Bowyear's visit, was the first to wage war against Tonkin and established an independent kingdom. Bowyear, recruited for this mission in Fort St. George, does not seem to be aware of the Jesuit accounts.<sup>61</sup>

Gemelli Careri published a description of Tonkin and Cochinchina in Rome in 1696, based on the collected reports of many missionaries who had resided in both countries. Careri states that the king of Cochinchina was descended from one of the *Kivas* (*Chúa*), who died "a little more than one century ago," meaning before the Lê were recognized by the Ming in 1596. This *Kiva* had left his young son in the care of his son-in-law, who is referred to both as a regent and, as in Borri's text, a tutor. Like Vachet, Careri states that the regent tried to kill the heir, but his wife had him brought to Cochinchina with a group of his father's supporters, who in this story helped him kill the governor there and claim Champa as a tributary state. (A later Cham king subsequently rebelled and refused tribute, and by the end of the 17th century, Champa was no longer a vassal of Cochinchina.) Careri does not name subsequent kings, but states that a war began between the regent and the son of the first lord and was continued by their sons, so that movement between the kingdoms was forbidden. Careri called the regent a tutor, like

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<sup>61</sup> Bowyear does not specify who translated for him during his visit. The greater familiarity of the British with the kingdom of Tonkin might help explain Bowyear's choice of the term *Chewa*, which earlier Jesuit visitors used only in reference to Tonkin, and never Cochinchina. (Unfortunately, the Jesuit dictionary, which includes vocabulary from both places, does not describe its usage in detail). In addition, the suggestion that the rulers in Cochinchina considered themselves the heirs of a *Chúa* but not kings in their own right is contradicted by Vachet's description of the king performing the sacrifice to heaven during his visit from 1671-1685; like the Jesuits, Vachet does not mention the term *Chúa* in his memoir. Bowyear's claim that *Chúa* in Cochinchina still used the Lê reign years in correspondence is not substantiated by earlier reports; Cadière notes that earlier in the 17th century they had used their own reign years in correspondence with the Dutch. Franciscan Jerónimo de la Santísima Trinidad, reporting in Spanish soon after 1724, names the king at that time as *Ngnia* (*Nghĩa*), but notes that kings' names were used only after his death, whereas in life they were addressed as "señor;" this account does not use any form of the term *chúa*. I will call the rulers in Cochinchina kings rather than lords here. Darlymple, *Oriental Repertory*, 75-91; Leopold Cadière, "Documents Historiques sur le Nam Giao," *BAVH* 1:1 (1914):64; idem, "Les Européens Qui Ont Vu le Vieux Hué: Thomas Bowyear;" Alexandre de Rhodes, *Voyages et Missions du Père Alexandre de Rhodes de la Compagnie de Jesus en la Chine et autre Royaumes de l'Orient* (Paris : Julien, Lanier et Cie, 1854) ; Lorez Pérez, " Los Españoles," Part V.

Borri (whose *chúa* was the tutor of the son of the king who fled to China). For him, wars with Tonkin and Champa began immediately.<sup>62</sup>

The *Hoan Châu Ký* description of Nguyễn Hoàng also seems to be corrupted by the insertion of material from other Lê texts available to late copyists. It states that Nguyễn Kim found Lê Ninh in Laos prior to 1536, but was poisoned while two sons Uông and Hoàng were young, so his son-in-law Trịnh Kiểm took power, bringing the king back from Laos in 1547. Like the *Toàn Thư*, no young boy escapes to Cochinchina; however, Nguyễn Hoàng is not described as being sent there by the Lê king either. Nguyễn Hoàng appears in Thuận Hóa only in single a formulaic statement, identical the equivalent passage of the *Toàn Thư*, claiming that a different Lê officer was sent as viceroy (*kinh lý*) of Thuận Hóa in 1572, where he gave consideration to Hoàng. Unlike the *Toàn Thư*, however, Hoàng is absent from all battles against the Mạc. When the Lê regain Tonkin, Hoàng Đình Ái, who was present at those battles, is awarded the title General of the Right (awarded to Nguyễn Hoàng at that time in the *Toàn Thư*). The absence of Nguyễn Hoàng and the promotion of Hoàng Đình Ái appear to be elements of an early rescension predating the incorporation of *Toàn Thư* material. The 17th century *Hoan Châu Ký* thus did not honor Nguyễn Hoàng as the officer sent by the Lê to rule Thuận Hóa or Quảng Nam in the mid-16th century, the chief architect of the Lê victories over the Mạc in the 1570s, or the Lê king's new General of the Right after 1596.<sup>6364</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* describes Nguyễn Kim as the *An Thanh* Marquis, a general that supported the Lê king, not *chúa* or king himself. (I have rendered noble ranks in approximate equivalents, such as Marquis or Duke, in order to convey a general sense of their inter-relationships, while leaving more complex titles untranslated.) An annotation to the text states that he was from Bái Trang, in Tống Sơn district of Thanh Hóa, and that according to one story, the source of which is not specified, he was the son of the *An Hoà* Marquis Nguyễn Hoàng Dụ, the early ally of Mạc Đăng Dung. The *Toàn Thư* describes Dụ driving back Hải Dương forces during the 1516 rebellion, remaining one of the most powerful Lê generals until 1518, when he refused to help Mạc Đăng Dung attack his rival

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<sup>62</sup> Careri also uses the terms *chúa* and *búa* only in discussion of Tonkin. Leopold Cadière, "Les Européens qui ont vu le Vieux Hué : Gemelli Carari," *BAVH* 17:3 (1930): 287-319.

<sup>63</sup> *Hoan Châu Ký*, 95-101.

<sup>64</sup> *Hoan Châu Ký*, 72-73, 191.

Nguyễn Kính, at which point he disappears. The *Thông Sử* states the *An Thanh* Marquis Nguyễn Cam (that is, Kim) was the young brother, not son, of Dụ.<sup>65</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* text mentions Nguyễn Kim once by that name, and also calls him the *An Tĩnh* Marquis (*Tĩnh* is a similar character to *Thanh*). It is the first text to state he was from the village called *Gia Miêu Ngoại Trang*, also in Tống Sơn district. (If the *Diễn Chí* were really authored by a senior court official, the personal names of Nguyễn Kim and later royalty were almost certainly added by a copyist, since the ancestors of the king would only be referred to using an honorific title.) The *Thực Lục*, on the other hand, provides a different story of the Nguyễn origins. It claims that Nguyễn Kim's father was the *Thái Phó*, *Trùng* Grand Duke, the Lê viceroy on the Đà River leading to Yunnan under Lê Hiến Tông, who ruled from 1497 to 1504. The *Trùng* Duke fought Lê Uy Mục helped install the young usurper Lê Oanh on the throne at the Tây Đô in 1509. The *An Hoà* Marquis Nguyễn Hoàng Dụ, and battles he fought in the *Toàn Thư* after 1510 when he was allied with Mạc Đăng Dung, are not mentioned at all in the *Thực Lục*. Thus, two different people are described as the father of Nguyễn Kim in the Lê and Nguyễn texts. The *Thực Lục* refers to the father of the founder as *Triều Tổ Tĩnh* Emperor, and like the *Toàn Thư* states that he had been the *An Thanh* Marquis under the Lê until the Mạc seized power.<sup>66</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* mentions Trịnh Kiểm as the son-in-law of the *An Tĩnh (Thanh)* Marquis Nguyễn Kim. The *Lê Triều Trung Hưng* describes Nguyễn Kim as *Hưng* Duke and describes a Trịnh man who cared for Nguyễn Kim's horses, then received from Kim a noble title (*Đức Nghĩa* Marquis) and Kim's daughter in marriage. The only Nguyễn text to describe the Nguyễn Hoàng's mother is the *Liệt Truyện*, which states she was a daughter of a senior Hải Dương commander, Nguyễn Minh Biện. this is difficult to explain, since the *Toàn Thư* acknowledges that the Lê were not able to control Hải Dương after the 1516 Trần Cao rebellion. The *Hải Dương Phong Vật Chí*, a regional text produced outside imperial circles, states that Nguyễn Hoàng's mother had the surname

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<sup>65</sup> The *Toàn Thư* states that Dụ supported the *Tường Dục* in 1510. *Toàn Thư* XV:1a-48a; *Thông Sử*, Mạc Đăng Dung, 18a

<sup>66</sup> *Thực Lục*, 25-26.

Phạm, not Nguyễn. The *Toàn Thư* and *Thực Lục* agree that Kim was given the title *Thái Sú*, Hưng Duke in 1532 or 1533; the *Thông Sử* uses this title for Nguyễn Cam in 1545.<sup>67</sup>

Since the *Thông Sử* was republished by the 19th century court, biographical details of Nguyễn Hoàng may have been inserted under the Nguyễn. These include Trịnh Kiểm's marriage to a daughter of the king's protector Nguyễn Kim in 1539 (as in the *Hoan Châu Ký*, Kim is later poisoned), yet Nguyễn Hoàng, the only son mentioned, does not receive the titles *Đoan Duke* or *Đoan Grand Duke*, which are used exclusively in reference to Nguyễn Khải Khang, a Mạc commander rewarded with the Mạc surname in 1549 who surrendered to the Lê in 1552.<sup>68</sup> In 1558, Trịnh Kiểm petitioned his king that Nguyễn Hoàng, a younger son of *Chiêu Huân Tĩnh Duke*, be sent to Thuận Hóa to hold it against the Mạc, aid a *Trán Duke* in Quảng Nam, and collect taxes for the court, funding its assault on the north. No plot to harm Nguyễn Hoàng is described; Kiểm calls Thuận Hóa "the greatest source of troops under heaven," a coveted strategic command.<sup>69</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* states that Kiểm is awarded the title *Dực Duke* by the Lê king in 1539 and does not describe his marriage. In the *Thông Sử*, before Kiểm receives the title *Dực Duke*, he is called the *Dực Nghĩa Marquis*, a title first awarded in 1525 to a Mạc supporter named Lê Thiệu from *châu* Thúy Thuần, where the Lê king assumes the throne in the *Thông Sử*. Kiểm then joined Nguyễn Cam, who gave him a daughter in marriage. The *Lê Triều Trung Hưng* states that the Trịnh man elsewhere called Kiểm left the service of a Mạc supporter to become Kim's servant, caring for his horses. Kim gave him the title *Dực Nghĩa Marquis* and he married Kim's daughter before gaining the title *Dực Duke*. After this marriage, Nguyễn Kim then betrayed the Lê king by joining the Mạc, a detail found in no other text. This text states that an edict condemning Kim for this treason was still displayed in Thanh Hóa. (The second part of that manuscript, with the title *Lê Triều Dã Sử*, describes the events of this period a second time, but omits Kim's

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<sup>67</sup> The last Lê officials described serving in Hải Dương are Lê Công Trứ in 1511, Phạm Khiêm Bình in 1511 and 1516, and Nguyễn Mậu in 1517. *Liệt Truyện*, 66-84; Ngô Đức Thọ, Nguyễn Thúy Nga, Nguyễn Hữu Mùi, eds., *Các Nhà Khoa Bang Việt Nam 1075-1919*, revised edition (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Học, 2006), 412, 470; see also Nguyễn Phước Tộc, *Nguyễn Phước Tộc Thế Phả* (Huế: Nhà Xuất Bản Thuận Hóa, 1995), 97-100. Nguyễn Khắc Thuần, *Lịch Sử Triều Mạc*, 8, 344; Trần Công Hiến and Trần Huy Phác, *Hải Dương Phong Vật Chí* [Gazetteer of Hải Dương], Ms. A.882, Hán Nôm Institute, Hanoi, published in Vietnamese translation as *Hải Dương Phong Vật Chí*, trans. Nguyễn Thị Lâm (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Lao Động, 2009), 155.

<sup>68</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVI:10b-11a; *Thông Sử*, Mạc Phúc Nguyên:56a; *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ*, 48.

<sup>69</sup> *Thông Sử*, Phúc Nguyên:71a-73a.

betrayal of the Lê and joining the Mạc.) The *Dực* Duke then became the chief general, and he, not Kim, installed the king at Vạn Lại mountain village and directing battles against Mạc forces.<sup>70</sup>

The *Thực Lục* mentions Trịnh Kiểm by that name only, with no titles, but in an annotation once also refers to Kiểm the *Lượng* Duke, a title used for him in the *Lê Triều Trung Hưng* (*Lạng* Duke) and in the *Toàn Thư* after 1546. It repeats the story that Kiểm followed Kim, places the marriage in 1533, and names the wife Ngọc Bảo. The *Toàn Thư* does not include the title allegedly awarded by Kim in the *Lê Triều Trung Hưng*, or state that Kiểm followed Kim. The *Ming Shi-lu* does not mention either Nguyễn Kim or Trịnh Kiểm among the generals and officials supporting Lê Ninh, and are aware only of Trịnh Tùng (in the Lê texts, son of Kiểm and Ngọc Bảo) who was responsible for state affairs at the time of the resumption of diplomatic relations with the Lê after 1596.<sup>71</sup>

In the *Hoàn Châu Ký*, the Lê *Anh Tông* led an army to attack the Mạc in Kinh Bắc and Sơn Tây in 1558; the text states that the *chúa* Mạc *Quang Bảo* (though to be a reign period of Mạc Phúc Nguyên, fled Thăng Long in fear, departing by the southern gate. The text does not state where Mạc Phúc Nguyên went, but adds that the Trịnh continued fighting in the north for three years, so it suggests that Nguyên did not return to Thăng Long; the text has him dying in 1561. No mention is made of the *Đoan* Duke Nguyễn Hoàng either going south or participating in any battles against the Mạc, even though in a later chapter in the same text, undated but apparently describing the 1590s, he is described in great detail.<sup>72</sup>

The *Thông Sử* has the Mạc occupying the lower Red River delta (Sơn Nam) in 1558, encroaching on the Lê court's territories in the mountains of Thanh Hóa. Near the end of that year, Trịnh Kiểm proposed a plan to attack the Mạc, calling Thuận Hóa the greatest source of troops under heaven; a similar phrase is used in the *Tạp Lục* to describe the wealth and strategic importance of this region. Kiểm proposed to the king that the younger son of *Chiêu Huân Tĩnh* Duke be sent to Thuận Hóa to prevent the Mạc from

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<sup>70</sup> *Thông Sử*, Mạc Đăng Dung:27b; *Lê Triều Dã Sử*, 11-14, 74-77; Darlymple, *Oriental Repertory*, ibid.

<sup>71</sup> *Ming Shi-lu*, *Shi-zong*, 279:8a-b; *Toàn Thư*, ibid; *Thực Lục*, ibid.

<sup>72</sup> *Hoàn Châu Ký*, 94-95.



controlling it, provide mutual aid for the *Trấn* Duke in Quảng Nam, and collect taxes for the court. The court could then concentrate on taking Sơn Nam and then Hải Dương.<sup>73</sup>

The *Thông Sử* then repeats a different version of the *Hoan Châu Ký* episode of the Mạc king leaving by a southern gate. In 1559, not 1558, Phúc Nguyên was so terrified of the annual Lê-Trịnh attacks on the north, which were always victorious, that he did not dare to remain in the capital, so he moved outside the south gate, where he erected a thatched roof to hold audience. This hyperbolic statement may be a corruption of the original story, in which the Mạc ruler simply fled south (via the south gate).

The *Thông Sử* also places a major assault on the Mạc in 1559; it involves Vũ Văn Mật, ruler in the northern mountains of Tuyên Quang, the supporter of the Lê Restoration who is identified by name in the Ming records. General Hoàng Đình Ái followed the Thiên Quang road (along the highlands) with 60,000 of the northern army; by 1560, this force, combined with that of northern mountain allies, had occupied most of Hải Dương.

The *Toàn Thư* repeats the *Thông Sử* 1558 proposal from Trịnh Kiểm to the king in summary form, while adding additional information describing Nguyễn Hoàng as the officer selected to go to Thuận Hóa. It states that the son of the *Chiêu Huân Tĩnh* Duke, sent to defend Thuận Hóa against the enemy in the east, was called the *Đoan* Duke Nguyễn Hoàng. It retains the statement that he and the *Trấn* Duke, in command of Quảng Nam, could give each other mutual aid. Hoàng again had total authority over the region and collected taxes for the court. The sudden appearance of the title *Đoan* Duke is not explained. In 1545, in the *Toàn Thư*, Hoàng was awarded the title *Hà Khê* Marquis, but the title of *Đoan* Duke is never conferred by the Lê king at any point. (The *Lê Triều Dã Sử* also refers to Kim's son as the *Hạ Khê* Marquis.)<sup>74</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* omits the great assault on the Mạc in concert with Vũ Văn Mật and other northern allies found in the *Thông Sử*. Instead, it simply states that in 1559 the Mạc suffered a defeat, and Phúc Nguyên, in fear, moved outside the south gate of Thăng Long. It describes Trịnh Kiểm occupying Hải Dương at the end of that year.

The *Tạp Lục* includes a passage similar to the *Toàn Thư*, in which the *Thế Tổ Thái* Prince (*Vương*) ordered the *Đoan* Duke Nguyễn Hoàng to bring his troops and take

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<sup>73</sup> *Thông Sử*, Phúc Nguyên: 71a-73a.

<sup>74</sup> Unlike the threat described by Vachet from Champa – which was exaggerated by officers loyal to the son – the enemy in the Lê text is the Mạc, associated with the east. *Toàn Thư*, XVII: 16a-b.

complete command of Thuận Hóa and give mutual aid to the *Trần* Duke in Quảng Nam. However, next to the words *Thái* Prince in the text is an annotation giving the *Thái* Prince the name Nguyễn Cam, not Trịnh Kiểm. This is striking, since Kim is now dead in most other texts, though the *Tạp Lục* does not describe Cam's death. (In the *Tạp Lục*, Hoàng is only much later described as Cam's son.)<sup>75</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* first introduces Nguyễn Hoàng without any title as son of the *An Tĩnh* Marquis. In another passage, it describes a General of the Right, the *Đoan* Duke Nguyễn Hoàng, son of the *Chiêu Hữu Tĩnh* Prince, gaining fame and power in the Lê court. The text does not use *Hà Khê* Marquis at all. The *Diễn Chí* also contradicts Vachet's description of war with Champa; instead, like the *Toàn Thư*, Hoàng is said to have led a successful campaign against Mạc forces, in this case in a *Mậu Ngọ* year, the first year of the *Chính Trị* reign, 1558. No details of this campaign are described, and the *Toàn Thư* and *Thực Lục Tiền Biên* mention no battles with the Mạc in 1558. The *Thực Lục* states that the son was awarded the title *Hà Khê* Marquis by the Lê at the beginning of the Restoration and was awarded the title *Đoan* Duke around the *Thuận Bình* reign period (1549-1556), apparently for lack of more specific information.<sup>76</sup>

These titles change in an episode occurring in 1593 in the *Toàn Thư*, in which the *Đoan* Duke spent several years in Đông Kinh leading Lê campaigns against Mạc forces; in that year he was awarded the title *Đoan* Grand Duke. The *Diễn Chí* also refers to the *Đoan* Grand Duke for the first time in 1592, but simply states the *Đoan* Grand Duke heard that Trịnh Tùng had killed Mạc Hồng Ninh (Mạc Mậu Hợp), and then he traveled to the capital to greet the Lê king; it omits Hoàng's battles with the Mạc. At that time, according to the *Diễn Chí*, the *Đoan* Grand Duke was made *Hữu Thừa* General, one level below the *Trường* Grand Duke Trịnh Tùng. Hoàng is described as having the title *Đoan* Grand Duke on his arrival at the Lê capital, not receiving it at that time, and there is no explanation for the change from *Đoan* Duke to *Đoan* Grand Duke. The *Thực Lục* repeats the *Toàn Thư* account, placing it in 1592, not 1593. The title *Thụy* (sometimes Duke and sometimes Grand Duke), associated with Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên, is easily confused with *Đoan*, since the two characters (瑞 and 端) are similar. The title *Hà Khê* Marquis does not

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<sup>75</sup> *Tạp Lục*, I:23b-24a.

<sup>76</sup> *Diễn Chí*, Ibid; *Thực Lục*, 25-28.

disappear from the *Toàn Thư* in the years following the first mention of the *Đoan Duke*; a *Hà Khê Marquis* is described fighting with the Lê against the Mạc in the highlands of Thanh Hóa in 1570, then defecting to the Mạc, as noted below. (There are also Mạc generals called the *Đoan Duke* and *Thụy Duke* in the *Toàn Thư*.)<sup>77</sup>

Both the *Diễn Chí* and *Thực Lục* place Hoàng's birth in 1525. According to the *Diễn Chí*, after Nguyễn Kim's death, Trịnh Kiểm wanted to kill Hoàng, jealous of his fame and prowess in battle. The *Thích Grand Duke*, or Nguyễn Ứ Kỹ, Hoàng's maternal uncle and adopted father, secretly advised Hoàng to send word to ask for the help of his sister Nguyễn Thị, Kiểm's wife. She advised her brother to feign insanity and pleaded with Kiểm that he be sent far away to Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam, to command the border regions, which in this passage she called "a poisoned land." This is a variation on the story told by Vachet, in which it was the officers sent to Cochinchina who sought to protect the son by leading the regent to believe that the air and water were killing him.<sup>78</sup>

This *Diễn Chí* palace vignette is clearly fictionalized. It may be useful to contrast the words ascribed to Hoàng's sister with the *Tạp Lục*'s assessment of Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam as the most wealthy provinces and important sources of tax revenue and soldiers for Lê armies.

Events which for Bowyear occurred after the death of the first lord of Tonkin, are divided in the *Thực Lục* between two different periods of the *Tiên Prince*'s life. The lord of Tonkin sending his son at a young age to be raised by a military officer is placed in 1533, when the *Tiên Prince* was only two, which is when his father went to Ai Lao, not on his father's death; this event does not occur in the *Diễn Chí* at all.<sup>79</sup>

Since Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam were Mạc strongholds, in the *Diễn Chí*, Trịnh Kiểm agreed to Ngọc Bảo's proposal, hoping the Mạc would kill Hoàng. He then asked the king to award Hoàng the rank of *Thái Úy*, and send him to command Lê military forces in Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam and collect yearly taxes. Hoàng set out along with the *Thái Bảo, Hòa Duke*, who the *Liệt Truyện* states is Hoàng's oldest son Hà; the *Thụy*

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<sup>77</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVII:37a-b; *Diễn Chí*, 60-62; *Thực Lục*, 33.

<sup>78</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 25-26.

<sup>79</sup> Lê Quý Đôn's amazement at the wealth in Đàng Trong is noted by Woodside, "Central Vietnam's Trading World in the Eighteenth Century as Seen in Lê Quý Đôn's 'Frontier Chronicles,'" in K.W. Taylor and John Whitmore, eds., *Essays into Vietnamese Past* (Ithaca: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1995), 157-172.

Duke, in Historical Office texts his sixth, Nguyên; the generals *Văn Nham* and *Thạch Xuyên*, who the *Thực Lục* and *Liệt Truyện* state are Kim's sons Trạch and Hiệp; and *Tiền Trung* and *Trương Lộc*, who do not appear in the *Thực Lục*, with a navy of 1,000 men. This journey, according to its place in the *Diễn Chí* narrative, would have logically come many years after 1558; according to the *Liệt Truyện*, some of the princes accompanying the navy would not even have been born in 1558.

The Nguyễn Đình/Khoa lineage will require further study. Although the *Diễn Chí*'s purported author is Nguyễn Khoa Chiêm, the text omits the man the *Liệt Truyện* states is Chiêm's grandfather, the *Đô Thắng* Marquis Nguyễn Đình Thân. Though the *Liệt Truyện* describes him as a Hải Dương commander who followed Hoàng south and settled in Hương Trà district, Thân had been completely omitted from the *Thực Lục* a few years before.<sup>80</sup>

In the *Thực Lục*, there is no indication that Nguyễn Hoàng was separated from Nguyễn Kim when his father went to Laos. Hoàng was 21 when his father was abruptly murdered by a Mạc general; he then defeated and killed the general. Rather than feigning insanity on the advice of his sister, he is said to have feigned illness on advice of his uncle and adopted Hải Dương father, Nguyễn Ứ Kỵ. The young man then contacted a renowned Mạc scholar from Hải Dương, Nguyễn Bình Khiêm. Khiêm was said to have sent the following message: "The mountains [or, Hoàn Range] range will shelter you for 10,000 generations" ("*Hoành sơn nhất đá, vạn đại dung thân*"). In the *Hoan Châu Ký*, this advice is only given to Hoàng in 1600, in a somewhat different formulation, by the scholar Phùng Khắc Khoan. The *Diễn Chí* first attributes the advice to Nguyễn Bình Khiêm, but also places the incident in 1600, four decades later than in the *Thực Lục*. The *Thực Lục* editors chose to cite the *Diễn Chí* for the advice of Nguyễn Bình Khiêm as the reason for Hoàng's moving south (ignoring the *Hoan Châu Ký*), even though it required moving the episode forward by over 40 years.<sup>81</sup>

The *Liệt Truyện* departs from the earlier texts with an episode that resembles the story from Vachet about the *Chúa*'s young son. It states that on Nguyễn Kim's departure to Ai Lao, he gave his younger son to be raised by the brother of his father-in-law

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<sup>80</sup> Since Chiêm was born in the late 17th century, it seems unlikely that his grandfather could have been an officer in 1558. *Diễn Chí*, *ibid.*; *Liệt Truyện*, 211.

<sup>81</sup> *Thực Lục*, 25-26.

Nguyễn Minh Biện, another Hải Dương general called Nguyễn Ứ Kỷ. Vachet states that the boy, an only son, was entrusted to a military figure on his father's death when he was seven or eight. (In the *Thực Lục*, this boy was Kim's second son, and the adoption would have had to have taken place decades before Kim's death, when the boy was two years old.) The *Thực Lục* omission of this story suggests that the origins of the "dynastic founder" remained controversial.<sup>82</sup>

In the *Diễn Chí*, Nguyễn Hoàng garrisoned on the Thạch Hãn River at Ái Tử village in Quảng Trị, a location important in controlling commerce with the highland states which connected with the upper reaches of the river. Hoàng faced a hostile populace and had no infantry. He sent spies to Hương Trà, the Mạc administrative center and birthplace of the *Diễn Chí*'s purported author; the author has the spies praise Phú Xuân village (the future capital), and Hoàng tried to win its people's support.

In the *Thực Lục*, the *Đoan* Duke was called the *Tiên* or First King when he arrived in Thuận Hóa Garrison in 1558, together with others from Tống Sơn district and other parts of Thanh Hóa. The *Tiên* Prince built a camp at Ái Tử village, and all the former Lê officials in the region came under his command.<sup>83</sup>

Philiphê Bình places the division of Đại Việt into two regions called Đàng Trong and Đàng Ngoài around 1480, but this date is not very accurate, since he believed Đinh Tiên Hoàng was born around 800 A.D. He describes the first Trịnh *chúa* named Trịnh Bân, not Trịnh Kiểm, being asked by the ruler of the Nguyễn Dynasty (*Nhà Nguyễn*) to rule temporarily, until his son was grown. As a Jesuit writing in Portugal, he adapts a story told by early Jesuits to suit the early 19th century political need to demonstrate that the Nguyễn emperors had a legitimate claim over Tonkin as well as Cochinchina. Because Trịnh Bân plotted to usurp power, the Nguyễn ruler's son, who Bình calls *Chúa Tiên*, following Jesuits such as Manuel Ferriera, left to govern Đàng Trong, and the country was divided.<sup>84</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* and *Thực Lục* omit any mention of Quảng Nam, Bùi Tá Hán or the *Trần* Duke. In the *Diễn Chí*, Hoàng's first conflict with a rival in Thuận Hóa occurs soon

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<sup>82</sup> *Lê Triều Dã Sử* names Kiểm's wife as Ngọc Tuyên, not Ngọc Bảo. *Diễn Chí*, 22-23; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*; *Liệt Truyện*, 129-131.

<sup>83</sup> Common sense alone suggests the title Ancestral King was in use only in later generations. *Diễn Chí*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*; Dalrymple, *Oriental Repertory*, *ibid*.

<sup>84</sup> Philiphê Bình, *Truyện Nước Annam*, book 2, 1-5.

after 1569, a date that appears in reference to an unrelated event occurring in the previous passage. Hoàng's arrival as described by the *Diễn Chí* could be dated to approximately 1570, corresponding with the *Toàn Thư*'s second date for the Hoàng's second journey south to Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam, which is discussed further below. Possibly, later texts may have combined two events described in the *Diễn Chí*, a military engagement against the Mạc in an unspecified location in 1558, and the subsequent journey to Thuận Hóa in the following passage, thus dating Hoàng's arrival to 1558. In any case, there is no clear evidence 1558 was the founding date for a new regime in Thuận Hóa.<sup>85</sup>

### Uncertainty in Mạc Succession

The Lê claims that the Mạc suffered frequent and devastating defeats, moving their capital frequently due to the constant Lê campaigns against them, do not mesh well with evidence of a consistently successful Mạc examination system. This system, which produced a large class of *tiển sĩ* every three years, was unaffected by political upheavals to an extent unmatched by other dynasties. The *Ming Shi-lu* provides little clarification. The 1550 Ming decision to grant recognition to *Hồng Ai* did not result in immediate resumption of relations with the Mạc. For unknown reasons, the mission carrying tribute from *Hồng Ai* was only reported to have arrived at the Ming court in 1564, full fifteen years after the tribute had been sent; over half the tribute party were said to have died in that time. Thus, there is no corroboration from the Ming of the Lê texts' depiction of a Mạc regime in turmoil.

The *Hoan Châu Ký* mentioned a Lê attack on Mạc *Quảng Bảo* in 1558, resulting in the ruler fleeing the south gate in fear. The *Thông Sử* includes a hyperbolic claim that Mạc Phúc Nguyên was so afraid of the Lê forces' annual victorious campaigns that he did not dare to stay inside his capital; he allegedly moved out of Bồ Đề (by implication, where his capital was located) to reside outside its south gate, building an audience hall with a thatch roof. The *Toàn Thư* states that in 1560, Phúc Nguyên sent troops to hold the Thăng Long citadel, but the Trịnh seized Hải Dương, and Nguyên fled to a district called Thanh Đàm; the *Thông Sử* describes Trịnh attacks to the south and east from their Thanh

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<sup>85</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 26.

Hóa base (an attack to the north is not specified) with Mạc Kính Điển and other generals holding Kinh Bắc province and Đông Kinh itself, while Nguyễn moved to Thanh Trì (Thanh Trì or Thanh Đàm are names associated with an area close to the Thăng Long citadel).<sup>86</sup>

Mạc Phúc Nguyên dies, in the *Hoan Châu Ký*, at the start of 1562 and was succeeded by his son Mạc Mậu Hợp. The *Toàn Thư* also repeats the same events, but adds that the *Ứng* Prince Mạc Đôn Nương served as regent. Mậu Hợp's age is not specified, but in the same year he is said to have suspected Phạm Dao of treason and ordered him killed, suggesting he was old enough to rule. The *Thông Sử*, however, abruptly places Mạc Mậu Hợp on the throne in 1564 at two years of age, stating that he had been born in 1563 to Mạc Phúc Nguyên's wife Bùi Thị; strangely, this text does not describe the death of Mạc Phúc Nguyên.<sup>87</sup>

In 1564, according to the *Toàn Thư*, the *Đoan Hùng* Prince Mạc Kính Chi, Mạc Kính Điển's oldest son, plotted to have relations with his father's secondary wife, and he was stripped of rank and made a commoner, while a young son of Kính Phu, a figure whose identity is unknown, was given authority as the *Đường An* King. When Mạc Kính Điển died, the Mạc claim made Kính Chi the *Hùng Lễ* Duke, but did not give him authority. In the same year, the *Thái Sư*, understood to be Trịnh Kiểm, gave his adopted daughter in marriage to the Ai Lao king Sạ Đẩu, who sent tribute of four elephants.

In 1556, in the *Hoan Châu Ký*, Mạc Mậu Hợp's reign name changes a third time in four years, and he is said to return from a location that is not specified to “*quán*” Bồ Đề, a toponym which, as noted above, was used in 17th and 18th century sources to refer to a place far from Đông Kinh. This is repeated in the *Toàn Thư*, which adds that in 1566, an ambassador returning from the Ming court is met by Mạc officials at Lạng Sơn.<sup>88</sup>

The status of areas to the south of Thuận Hóa in these years is particularly unclear. In 1568, two Quảng Nam officials named Hoàng Chấn and Nguyễn Hà are described in the *Toàn Thư* avowing their loyalty to the Lê in performing the task of securing the Lê border regions. On the death of the *Trấn* Duke, the *Toàn Thư* states that Trịnh Kiểm chose a Nghệ An officer, Nguyễn Bá Quỳnh, to govern Quảng Nam, a post

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<sup>86</sup> *Thông Sử*, Mạc Phúc Nguyên:72a; *Toàn Thư*, XVI:18a-20b; *Hoan Châu Ký*, 94-101.

<sup>87</sup> *Toàn Thư*, *ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> The ambassador, Quang Bí, was said to have been away for many years. *Toàn Thư*, XVI:21a-22b.

he held for only two years. This is echoed in the *Tạp Lục*. The *Thực Lục* also repeats the *Toàn Thư* assertion that Quỳnh was appointed by the Lê on Bùi Tá Hán's death. None of this is mentioned in the *Diễn Chí*, however, which ignores Quảng Nam until after 1600.<sup>89</sup>

We should consider carefully the story of Bùi Tá Hán's time in Phú Yên, since the *Dại Nam Nhất Thống Chí* claims that Phú Yên was under the control of “*Man* and *Lao* people” until 1578. Phú Yên's Đà Rằng River, the greatest of these east-west rivers, offers easy access to Cambodia via to the Kontum Plateau. The *Hoàng Việt Nhất Thống Dư Địa Chí*, authored by the Ming loyalist Minister of War under the *Gia Long* Emperor in 1806, describes the Hồ Citadel (*Thành Hồ*), built on the site of an early Cham citadel at the edge of the highland plateau on the Đà Rằng River. It describes the citadel as an ancient brick city built by Champa. Before the Nguyễn (*thời tiền triều*), which in Historical Office texts might be understood to mean before 1558, though it may have a different meaning here, a general called the *Phò* Duke attacked this citadel; it was said to be still standing in 1806. No *Phò* Duke appears in the Lê or Nguyễn histories.<sup>90</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* describes a *Cống* Duke, later called Trần Đức Hòa, living in Hoài Nhơn (Quy Nhơn) and claims he quickly offered allegiance to Nguyễn Hoàng on his arrival in Quảng Nam after 1600. This duke, who also appears in Historical Office texts, is described as a powerful owner of vast plantations. His parents and grandparents received multiple posthumous appointments since 1564, only twenty years after the last Cham tribute reached the Ming; his father was posthumously honored as deputy general of Quảng Nam in a diploma conferred in 1593. The origins of this clan are unknown, but their descendants hold copies of royally conferred diplomas dated with Lê reign names, *Chính Trị* (1558-1571) and *Quang Hưng* (1578-1599). If these documents are authentic, they suggest leaders in Quy Nhơn maintained diplomatic relations the rulers having those reign names before the Mạc are thought to have been driven from Đông Kinh.<sup>91</sup>

This Trần Đức (Chen De) clan may have been tied to the Fujian merchant community which dominated Quy Nhơn in later centuries. It is not clear what effect the elimination of the Ming trade ban in 1567 had on Qinzhou, Hải Dương, and Quảng Nam.

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<sup>89</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVI:24a; *Thực Lục*, 29.

<sup>90</sup> *Hoàng Việt Nhất Thống Dư Địa Chí*, VI:53b.

<sup>91</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Shi-zong*, 275:6a, 276:6b. The Cham ruler in 1544 was named as Sha-ri-di-zhai; see also Wade, “Champa,” 18; Viêt Hiền, “Những tư liệu quý về Trần Đức Hòa và dòng họ Trần ở Hoài Nhơn” [Rare Texts about Trần Đức Hòa and the Trần in Hoài Nhơn], *ms*; *Diễn Chí*, 83, 159-160.



“Pirates” in Guangdong agreed in some cases to pacification and settlement by the Ming, but then launched more raids, evading capture as they moved between the Leizhou Peninsula, Hainan, as far as Siam and into the archipelago. Charles Wheeler states that inscriptions and documents in Hội An are dated with the reign name, Long Phi (*Longfei*), associated with a *Wokou* pirate leader since the early 1560s, suggesting an early Fujian presence there. Trần Văn An, Nguyễn Chí Trung and Trần Ánh have also pointed to Japanese and Chinese pirate activity in Hội An before the Ming loyalists were integrated formally into a court-sponsored regime.<sup>92</sup>

The picture of a civil war dividing the coast of Đại Việt in two, with the Lê in Thanh Hóa controlling southern provinces and battling Hanoi, does not mesh well with contemporary reports by European visitors. Fernão Mendes Pinto did describe a highland king at war, but Gaspar da Cruz passed through Cochinchina (Cauchy China) on his way to Canton without noting any disruptions at all. As noted in the last chapter, his travel narrative is consistent with following the trading ships which routinely moved from Quảng Nam directly to Hainan Island, avoiding the natural hazards and pirates along which would be encountered by a ship hugging the coast. Cruz refers to the kingdom’s fertility, abundance and prosperity, and claims the ruler was a subject of China. Although this last point is not at all clear from the *Ming Shi-lu* at this time, these comments mesh better with the evidence from reports of the regular and crowded Mạc civil service examinations, which suggest peace and prosperity, and less well with Lê dynastic reports.<sup>93</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* narrative of this period, by contrast, is incohesive. Despite its claim that the Doan Duke Nguyễn Hoàng is sent to Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam by Trịnh Kiểm, the *Toàn Thư* continues to refer to a man with the earlier title, the *Hạ Khê* Marquis, who in 1570 went to hold the Ai rampart in Cẩm Thủy district of Thanh Hóa. The *Hạ Khê* Marquis rebelled and surrendered to the Mạc, and the Lê replaced him with the *Tây Hưng* Marquis Hà Thọ Lộc. As noted above, the *Toàn Thư* describes Hoàng being granted the title *Hạ Khê* Marquis in 1545, and the *Thực Lục* repeats this. The son of the man

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<sup>92</sup> It might be noted that Nguyễn Chí Trung argues that “organized” Chinese settlement only occurred in the early 17th century. Wheeler, “Cross-cultural Trade,” 135-137; Nguyễn Chí Trung, *Cư Dân Faiфо - Hội An*, 47-56.

<sup>93</sup> C.R. Boxer, *South China in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century*, 73.

controlling Houaphan might logically build fortifications on the Mã River. Unless the *Hà Khê* Marquis is a second unrelated Thanh Hóa person who received the same title, this raises questions about the identification of Hoàng as *Đoan* Duke or Grand Duke.<sup>94</sup>

In 1570, Mạc Đôn Nhượng was said to have seized the Thần Phù harbor in Thanh Hóa. The next year, however, forces that had surrendered to Mạc Kính Điển approached Đông Kinh. The *Toàn Thư* places an attack by Mạc Kính Điển on Nghệ An in 1571 and notes that most of the Nghệ An people had surrendered to the Mạc and the land from the Cả River to the south was all Mạc territory. He drove out a Lê native general, the *Nguyễn* Duke Nguyễn Bá Quỳnh, who was earlier in Quảng Nam for two years. A *Hoàng* Duke fought the Mạc general Nguyễn Quyện and fled to Thuận Hóa, here called Hoá Châu, in defeat, where he was captured alive by the Mạc. At that point, “from the Cả River to the north [all of Nghệ An] became enemy territory. From then on, [the Mạc] became stronger...”<sup>95</sup>

It is not until 1573 that the *Ming Shi-lu* provides a terse report that *Mậu Hợp* was allowed to inherit the post of Annam Commander from *Hồng Ái*; he offers tribute in each of the next three years. The *Toàn Thư*, in turn, abruptly states that Mạc *Mậu Hợp* moved the capital back to Đông Kinh in 1573 at age twelve, repaired it, and resided there. As with other details, this twist may have been added to the Lê text to match the Ming version. (Strangely, in 1581, *Mậu Hợp* is again identified as *Hồng Ái*'s son, and Ming orders were apparently sent to allow him to inherit the post, although he had already been sending tribute for nearly a decade.)<sup>96</sup>

Awareness that most texts describing the origins of Cochinchina's rulers were modified for political purposes allows us to adopt a more cautious interpretation of events of the 16th century. Following the Trần Cao rebellion, some Lê ousted by Mạc Đăng Dung joined a Trịnh clan in Thanh Hóa, yet Trịnh attempts to enlist Ming aid were unsuccessful given the Ming court's suspicion that their heir, Lê Ninh, belonged to the Nguyễn clan. The Ming shifted their support to the Mạc once Mạc Đăng Dung's son

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<sup>94</sup> *Toàn Thư*, Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> The *Toàn Thư* text appears in general to be quite corrupt for this period. In 1571, Lê *Anh Tông* is said to have given a daughter of his wife with another man to the Ai Lao king Sạ Đẩu, who offered four elephants, in a passage nearly identical to that describing the marriage of Trịnh Kiểm's daughter to Sạ Đẩu in 1564.

<sup>96</sup> *Ming Shi-lu*, *Shen-zong*, 9:11b; *Toàn Thư*, XVI:26b-37a.

abandoned his ambition to hold Qinzhou, but when Nguyễn Kinh and his son-in-law Mạc Kính Điển seized the throne, the Ming supported Mạc Chính Trung, providing him a safe haven in Qinzhou despite continued illicit economic activities involving Quảng Ninh and points to the south. The Ming recognized a ruler called *Hồng Ẩi*, who replaced Mạc Kính Điển, followed by *Mậu Hợp*, who ruled with stability from 1573 to 1590.

Lê texts appear to have reported by the middle of the 17th century, if our primary source from Benedict Thiện is to be believed, that *Minh Khang* pursued a war against the Mạc on behalf of a Lê king *Chính Trị*, who later took refuge in the highlands with *Minh Khang's* son. However, neither the 17th century Ming court nor the Vatican accepted such an interpretation, believing instead that the Trịnh became close to the Mạc ruler by peaceful means, and then killed him through subterfuge, further in the next chapters. The ruler of Cochinchina, for the Vatican, was a son of the Mạc ruler, whose life was spared by Trịnh Tùng after assassinating that king, Tùng's father-in-law; this assessment was shared by the Ming court. For Thiện, writing in a Trịnh political setting, a succession of heroic *Chúa* had won a military victory over the Mạc; *Doan* was simply one Mạc officer who refused to obey.

Dynastic texts written by Mạc enemies are not credible sources on Cochinchina during Mạc rule. The standard chronicle narrative of Lê-Mạc tumult and Nguyễn expansion cannot be easily reconciled with the reports by visitors to Cochinchina during the mid-16th century, who found a peaceful and prosperous country. Rhodes' story of a high general arranging a daughter's marriage to a Tonkin soldier and a young boy's exile to Cochinchina became well known in Europe by the early 17th century, but it appears to have been based on the Ming records of the Mạc founder, and the story evolved quickly as it was retold; there is no evidence that it was based on Tonkin or Cochinchina source materials.

## CHAPTER 4

### The Mạc in Quảng Nam, c.1570-1593

In the standard Nguyễn expansion narrative, a ruler loyal to the Lê governed Thuận Hóa and did not venture south of Hải Vân Pass until circa 1600-1602 (depending on the source text). European reports contradict this, however, describing kings residing south of the Hải Vân Pass in the sixteenth century. Mạc genealogies in Quảng Nam describe Mạc royalty at Trà Kiệu who exerted wide ranging authority in at least some parts of Cochinchina and even intervened in the succession of a Cambodian king, in an episode that most closely matches the events of the 1590s. Only a handful of references to the Mạc appear in the Nguyễn texts, even though Mạc ancestors are known to have been venerated by Huế kings in the 18th and 19th centuries. Although the Historical Office deliberately ignores the Mạc in Quảng Nam in the *Thực Lục*, a few years later the same office published biographies of some important Mạc clan members in the *Liệt Truyện*.

During the period Mạc royalty resided in Trà Kiệu, the Lê ultimately regained control of Đông Kinh; however, many parts of the Lê accounts of the end of the Mạc regime are fictional. Only in 1573 does the *Ming Shi-lu* provide a terse report that *Mậu Hợp* was allowed to inherit the post of Annam Commander from the man thought to be his father, *Hồng Ái*. However, there is a resumption of regular tribute from 1573 to 1590, and political stability returns to Đông Kinh. Although there are no further reports on the fate of the Mạc aristocrats and soldiers exiled in Qinzhou, the Mạc retained control of Quảng Nam during the period leading up to the Lê recognition as Annam commanders in 1596.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Shi-zong*, 268:3a-b, 331:2a-b, 331:2a-b, 347:7b, 357:4a; *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Thông sử* 53a; *Liệt Truyện*, 67-71, 129-131; *Thực Lục*, 27.

## A Mạc Family Record in Quảng Nam

A *Mạc gia phả* in a Mạc ancestral temple in Trà Kiệu describes events contradicting the standard Nguyễn narrative and support European reports of early kings active in Cochinchina and the western highlands. The Mạc family book is an 1832 summary of a longer manuscript submitted to the Nguyễn court in the fifth year of the *Vĩnh Trị* reign, 1680. The 1680 version may have been produced in connection with restoration of that temple to honor Nguyễn king's Mạc mother, an act mentioned in the 1832 text. As elsewhere, branches of the royal Mạc clan in Quảng Nam at some point changed their surname, and the clan holding this family record is now called Nguyễn Trường. Similar texts held by Thu Bồn families, including the Huỳnh Hưng and Đoàn Công clans, have not been reviewed systematically. The *Mạc gia phả* describes the career of Mạc Cảnh Vinh, a son of Mạc Cảnh Huống, and thus a grandson of Mạc Đăng Doanh. Vinh is said to have intervened in a royal succession crisis in the 1650s in Cambodia, which bears no resemblance to any accounts of Cambodia at that time, but has a striking similarity to the Cambodian crisis of the 1590s.<sup>2</sup>

In this *gia phả*, the Trấn Biên ruler Văn Phong rebelled in a *kỷ ty* year, the eighth of the *Đức Long* reign. This is an error; the closest *kỷ ty* year, 1629, was the first year of the *Đức Long* reign, which lasted less than eight years. The *Thanh Lộc* Marquis Nguyễn Phúc Vinh (Mạc Cảnh Vinh) defeated Văn Phong and ruled two regions called Trấn Biên and Bình Khang. The meaning of Trấn Biên is problematic; Bình Khang is a name for Nha Trang. Vinh had a vermilion seal (*chu ấn*, 朱印); he ruled these regions autonomously, appointing all officials there himself. The reign years in the 1832 copy have clearly been altered. In any case, the royal succession in Cambodia is understood well enough to rule out the events described in this text taking place in the 1650s; as discussed in the next chapter, however, similar events were known to take place approximately 60 years earlier, which raises the possibility that the calendric year is correct even though the reign years are clearly in error. Thus, the possibility that Vinh may have been in control of Trấn Biên and Bình Khang in the previous *kỷ ty* year of 1569

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<sup>2</sup> Parallels include the assassination of a Cambodian king by his wife and an external army arriving in the highlands to return that king's exiled son to the throne. Huỳnh Công Bá, "Về Quyển Gia Phả."

should be considered. (Even if the *kỷ tỵ* year is an error, this Mạc prince's rule over what is now Nha Trang may have been within the period the Mạc controlled Tonkin).<sup>3</sup>

None of the Nguyễn texts, the *Diễn Chí*, *Tạp Lục*, *Thực Lục* or *Liệt Truyện*, include any reference to the intervention in Cambodia described in the Mạc family book. Furthermore, the *Diễn Chí* does not mention Mạc Cảnh Vinh or the man called Văn Phong and reports no events at all between 1627 and 1631. That omission is not a simple oversight, since the *Diễn Chí* reports other political and military developments in the far south, including intimate descriptions of the Cambodian court. The *Diễn Chí*, in fact, does not make any reference to any Mạc prince being present in Thuận Hóa or Quảng Nam at all, even though it was ostensibly authored (the *Liệt Truyện* claims) by a man descended from Hải Dương military officers. The *Tạp Lục*, which describes the historical expansion of the southern kingdom in great detail, likewise makes no mention of Vinh, Văn Phong or any battles in 1629.

The *Thực Lục* places Vinh's battle with Văn Phong in the first year of the *Đức Long* reign (1629); it is the only text to use dates that are internally consistent. Văn Phong used a Chiêm army to revolt in Phú Yên, and Mạc Cảnh Vinh defeated him and established the Trấn Biên Encampment. An annotation to the text here explains that when border regions were opened up for the first time, they were always called "Trấn Biên." (As a general statement, this is not factually correct; Trấn Biên's location is considered further in later chapters.) Vinh was given a vermilion seal as a result of his achievement;

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<sup>3</sup> The *Liệt Truyện* states Nguyễn (Mạc) Thị Giai died in 1631, and her tomb remains today at Chiêm Sơn near Trà Kiệu, where descendants of the Mạc clan was still charged with carrying out ritual observances in the 19th century. That Nguyễn's wife, and daughter, as well as his son's primary wife, would be buried in Trà Kiệu, if he ruled from a royal capital in Thuận Hóa, is perplexing. The *Diễn Chí* states that in Nguyễn was buried in the mountains of Hương Trà district; it also states that Nguyễn Hoàng was first entombed in a Thạch Hãn mountain before being moved to a temple it calls the "*miếu Nguyễn Lập*" in Hương Trà. The *Thực Lục* states that Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên's tomb was first at "Quảng Điền mountain", then later moved to Hải Cát mountain in Hương Trà district at an unspecified date. Hải Cát mountain is listed in the *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí* as the location of two other mausoleums. However, Quảng Điền seems to be simply the 19th century district name of the place on the Bồ river where Nguyễn was said to have his Thuận Hóa capital. According to the *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, that area was called Đan Điền under the Lê and changed to Quảng Điền at an unspecified date early under the early Nguyễn state. The *Liệt Truyện* provides *Gia Long* era mausoleum names and the final resting place of the royal lineage, without clarity as to where they may have been originally buried. Huỳnh Công Bá, "Về Quyển Gia Phả," *Liệt Truyện*, 172-174; *Thực Lục*, 44-51, *Diễn Chí*, 90, 196, *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, vol.1, 96.

this assertion, which appears to have originated in the *gia phả* and been repeated by the Historical Office, is highly unusual, since it indicates a seal used by a king or emperor.<sup>4</sup>

In the *Liệt Truyện*, Mạc Cảnh Vinh was given the royal surname Nguyễn Phúc, later changed to Nguyễn Hữu. (A line of historical figures with the royal clan name Nguyễn Phúc would have that name withdrawn by the *Minh Mạng* Emperor in the early 19th century.) Vinh married the *Sãi* Prince and Mạc Thị Giai's daughter Ngọc Liên and was a deputy general during the *Xizong* (*Hy Tông*) reign. In the 16th year (of that reign) Vinh defeated a Phú Yên official named Văn Phong, opened land up to Bình Khang, creating the Trần Biên Encampment and due to his great merit was given a vermilion seal. The *kỷ ty* year is not mentioned, but the dates in this text are also problematic. There is no clear reason why the Historical Office would have used the Ming *Tianqi* Emperor's reign period in describing Vinh's career, and the *Tianqi* Emperor reigned only from 1620 to 1627, so there is no 16th year of the *Xizong* reign.<sup>5</sup>

In creating the *Liệt Truyện*, the Historical Office drew on local texts obtained in many localities. Since the brief entry on Mạc Cảnh Vinh describes some events in the Mạc *gia phả*, but omits others, the Historical Office may have viewed a version of the Mạc *gia phả* to prepare its entry on Vinh, and decided to keep the defeat of Văn Phong, but omit the story about Cambodia.<sup>6</sup>

#### Descriptions of Nguyễn Hoàng's Battles in Thuận Hóa

The Rhodes story of a usurping general and young boy sent by his sister to Cochinchina, which may be a misplaced reference to other events he learned of in Macao, contains echoes in the *Diễn Chí*, *Thực Lục*. However, in the *Toàn Thư*, there is no initial animosity between Trịnh Kiểm and Nguyễn Hoàng, who departs for the south as a grown man, and is never described as Kiểm's brother-in-law. Instead, Hoàng achieves military victories on behalf of Trịnh Kiểm.

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<sup>4</sup> *Thực Lục*, 44.

<sup>5</sup> Văn Phong in this text held the office of *Lưu Thủ*. *Liệt Truyện*, 135.

<sup>6</sup> Historical Office editors apparently relied on the 1680 version (which according to the *gia phả* was submitted to the court), since the 1832 copy used the Lê *Đức Long* reign name, not *Xizong*, and refers to a *kỷ ty* year, outside the *Xizong* reign. (If the 16th year of the *Shenzong* reign, not *Xizong*, was meant, that would be 1587.)

In the *Toàn Thư*, Nguyễn Hoàng goes to visit Trịnh Kiểm in Thanh Hóa (Tây Kinh) in 1569. Kiểm's deputy, the *Bút Xuyên* Marquis, was plotting to seize power, and Hoàng killed this traitor despite Kiểm's desire to pardon him. In 1570, Kiểm petitioned the king to send Nguyễn Hoàng south; the text simply ignores the earlier description of petitioning to send Hoàng there already in 1558. Hoàng's task was to be command the army and navy of this southern frontier (Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam), and Kiểm reminded Hoàng of his heavy responsibility to the court.

This episode is absent from the *Diễn Chí*, in which Hoàng remained in Thuận Hóa for this entire period, and had no personal contact with Trịnh Kiểm since Kiểm sent him to Thuận Hóa decades earlier; hearing of Trịnh Kiểm's death in 1570, he sent his respects. The *Toàn Thư* sequence is also omitted in the *Tạp Lục*.

The *Thực Lục* ignores the *Diễn Chí* and *Tạp Lục*, incorporating a visit by the *Tiên* Prince to Lê Anh Tông in 1569, but does not describe him having any interaction with Kiểm. He simply returns to his post after several months, now with the command of Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam.<sup>7</sup>

Nguyễn Hoàng's departure coincides in the *Toàn Thư* with a new governor of Quảng Nam, Nguyễn Bá Quỳnh, for two years from 1568. According to the *Toàn Thư*, Quỳnh was abruptly called back in 1570, shortly after Hoàng's return south. He does not appear in the *Diễn Chí*. The *Tạp Lục* describes Hoàng being told to rule Quảng Nam after Nguyễn Bá Quỳnh was called back to the capital in 1570, even though it omits Hoàng traveling Thanh Hóa. *Tạp Lục* language similar to the *Toàn Thư*'s account of Hoàng's visit to the court, as if citing the *Toàn Thư*, describes Hoàng being told to rule both areas and control the army and navy, so it is not clear why that text would not also include a visit to the court. The *Thực Lục* adds one detail, that Quỳnh was called back to govern Nghệ An.<sup>8</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* describes a Mạc governor of Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam since the *Quang Bảo* reign (ending 1561), called the *Lập* Duke. The *Lập* Duke was garrisoned in Khang Lộc district in Quảng Bình, and hearing of Hoàng's arrival in Ái Tử, he sent 30

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<sup>7</sup> *Toàn Thư*, 25a-34b.

<sup>8</sup> *Ming Shi-lu*, Shen-zong, 213:9a; Wheeler, "Cross-Cultural Trade," 135-137; Trần Văn An, Nguyễn Chí Trung and Trần Ánh, *Xã Minh Hương Với Thương Cảng Hội An Thế Kỷ XVII-XIX* [Minh Hương Village and Hội An Port in the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries] (Tam Kỳ: Trung Tâm Bảo Tôn Di Sản – Di Tích Quảng Nam, 2005), 7-13; *Toàn Thư*, XVII:24b, 26b; *Diễn Chí*, 37; *Thực Lục*, 29; *Tạp Lục*, I:241-b.



warships and a thousand infantry against him at an unspecified date. Hoàng allied with merchants in the Thuận Hóa Mạc center around Phú Xuân, including the village Thê Lại, where a local wealthy daughter Ngô Thị Lâm, a woman with fine clothing, purity and morals, set a trap by agreeing to marry the *Lập* Duke. She convinced him to meet Hoàng, who ambushed and killed him, and she instead married a Hà Tĩnh sailor in Hoàng's retinue.<sup>9</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, in 1572, a Quảng Bình general called the *Tiên* Duke switched allegiance from the Lê to the Mạc, and brought a Hải Dương general, the *Lập* Duke and over 60 warships to raid Thuận Hoá and Quảng Nam. Many local people in those regions surrendered to the Mạc, but Nguyễn Hoàng killed the *Lập* Duke, whose armada was destroyed in a great storm. The *Tiên* Duke returned to Quảng Bình to join the Mạc. Hoàng held power in Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam, and many foreign merchants came to trade there, since the Mạc dare not return.<sup>10</sup>

According to the *Diễn Chí*, once Nguyễn Hoàng killed the a Mạc general named *Lập Bạo* (not the *Lập* Duke), Trịnh Kiểm contacted his chief tax collector in Thuận Hóa, *Mỹ Lương*, whose brothers were *Văn Lan* and *Nghĩa Sơn*. Kiểm secretly told *Mỹ Lương* to attack Hoàng, despite his reported death in 1570. This suggesting the attack took place around the time of his death, or perhaps that it was added later to the text to bring it into conformity with the Nguyễn narrative of Kiểm's murderous intention. *Mỹ Lương* laid ambush in the hills above Hoàng's camp on the Thạch Hãn. Hoàng sent a local chieftain, the *Trà* Duke, to meet them, but Hoàng led the attack and killed *Mỹ Lương*. The *Trà* Duke (Trương Trà in the Historical Office texts), was killed in battle against *Nghĩa Sơn*, so his wife killed *Nghĩa Sơn* in battle, driving *Văn Lan* out to Thanh Hóa.<sup>11</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* adds that in 1571, a local officer of the *Đoan* Duke Nguyễn Hoàng called the *Mỹ* Duke defected to the Mạc. Hoàng brought troops and killed the *Mỹ* Duke.

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<sup>9</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 21-35.

<sup>10</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVII:33b-37b.

<sup>11</sup> The Tư Vinh market village in this text is called Lại Thê. The *Diễn Chí* had described the Thê Lại woman Ngô Thị Lâm in terms of elegance and feminine virtue; the texts compiled to form the *Cạn Lục* give us a glimpse of the prosperous market town of Thê Lại near the primary Mạc pagoda and administrative center of the province, where: "men are officials... widows prepare altars to honor their husbands." In contrast, in the *Diễn Chí*, Trương Trà's wife, upon her husband's death in battle, donned male clothing and rode an elephant to lead her infantry to victory against *Nghĩa Sơn*. This suggests that there were rulers exhibiting both Sinicized and non-Sinicized cultural traits in Thuận Hóa. *Cạn Lục*, 70-71; *Diễn Chí*, 32-35.

With Thuận Hóa at peace, Hoàng defeated Quảng Nam native generals (*thổ tướng*) who were fighting among themselves, giving Quảng Nam command to a figure called the *Dũng Duke*. Strikingly similar language appears in the *Tạp Lục* section describing a period several decades earlier when Thuận Hóa native generals fought among themselves until Mạc Quyết defeated them.

In the *Toàn Thư*, Lê-Trình Nghệ An forces attacked a highland area, Thiêm Quang, as soon as the Mạc withdrew, and the Ai Lao king Sạ Đẩu offered the Lê four elephants and other tribute in exchange for marrying the princess Ngọc Hoa, daughter of Lê Anh Tông's wife. The text describes virtually the same event in 1564, when Sạ Đẩu is also said to have sent four elephants and tribute; in that case, Trịnh Kiểm's adopted daughter married Sạ Đẩu, these repetitions suggest the text may be inaccurate in this period.<sup>12</sup>

The *Tạp Lục* also describes Nguyễn Hoàng's conflicts with Quảng Bình generals, but divides them into completely separate campaigns in successive years. In 1571, a *Viêm Duke* urged Nguyễn Hoàng to surrender to the Mạc, but Hoàng killed him. The *Tạp Lục* repeats the *Toàn Thư* description of Quảng Nam native generals fighting each other, and states Hoàng killed them all, echoing the description of Mạc Quyết subduing Thuận Hóa generals. Hoàng gave control of Quảng Nam to the *Dũng Duke*, here said to hold the office *Lưu Thủ*. The late *Cương Mục* guesses that the *Dũng Duke* must be Mai Đình Dũng, a son of Nguyễn Hoàng's maternal uncle Nguyễn Ư Kỷ who is mentioned briefly in the *Liệt Truyện*. That the first Nguyễn official appointed by Hoàng to govern Quảng Nam, the wealthiest province and home to Mạc royalty, would be found only in the *Tạp Lục*, suggests information about Quảng Nam at this time is ignored by, or has been removed from, the *Diễn Chí*, *Thực Lục* and *Liệt Truyện*.<sup>13</sup>

In the *Tạp Lục*, the Quảng Bình native *Lập Duke* arrived with the *Tiên Duke* in 1572 from Hải Dương, with 60 warships, and locals surrendered. Nguyễn Hoàng entrapped an enemy admiral, also named *Lập*, in a ruse, and beheaded him on the river in a place called Qua Qua. The *Tiên Duke*'s army were dispersed or killed, but the *Lập Duke* escaped. The Mạc did not attempt another attack. The *Thực Lục* places these

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<sup>12</sup> *Toàn Thư*, Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> *Tạp Lục*, ibid; *Thực Lục*, 29-30; *Cương Mục*, 655.

conflicts in 1571, but returns to the names Mỹ Lương, Văn Lan and Nghĩa Sơn first used in the *Diễn Chí*, and adds that Mỹ Lương supported Mạc raids in Nghệ An.

None of these battles are mentioned at all in the earliest and otherwise quite detailed account of 16th century Nghệ An, the *Hoan Châu Ký*. In that text, the Mạc raided Nghệ An late in 1572 but were repelled by Lê loyalists including Phan Công Tích. The Lê king ordered Phan Công Tích to serve as viceroy (*kinh lý*) in Thuận Hóa, Nguyễn Hoàng was never said to be governor. In the description of Tích's arrival there is a strange abrupt statement that he gave special attention to Nguyễn Hoàng, who is named for the first time in this text, with no further details. This awkward and peripheral placement of Nguyễn Hoàng in story that does not involve him suggests it could well have been during the production known to be made in the 19th century. This visit is repeated in the *Toàn Thư*, but moved to the ninth lunar month, since a visit in the seventh lunar month would conflict with the story of the *Lập Duke*.<sup>14</sup>

None of the stories of Nguyễn Hoàng's battles in Quảng Bình are told in a consistent manner in these texts. They are consistent with the idea that other Lê figures were equally involved in governing Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam, but that by the 19th century these narratives were gradually brought closer together by adding standard Nguyễn elements, yet without resolving all contradictions.

### Lương Văn Chính and the Kontum Plateau

In addition to the Mạc queen mother and Mạc general honored in Quảng Nam, another major figure left out of the *Toàn Thư*, *Diễn Chí* and *Thực Lục*, yet included in the *Liệt Truyện*, is Lương Văn Chính, who appears. Chính was known to the 18th century court, however, as he was honored posthumously in 1740 and 1744, according to documents in the temple for his worship in Tuy Hòa. He is described in the *Liệt Truyện* as a local resident in Phú Yên, with ancestors from Bắc Hà.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *Hoan Châu Ký*, 95-101.

<sup>15</sup> The term Bắc Hà, literally the river in Beijing, is sometimes used to refer to Đông Kinh, but may also suggest Chinese origin. The Lương clan in Thanh Hóa included Mạc scholar Nguyễn Bình Khiêm's tutor, Lương Đắc Bằng. *Liệt Truyện*, 145.

At the time Lương Văn Chính appears, Champa and Cambodia were transformed following a period of silence in the *Ming Shi-lu*, with an increasing Chinese and particularly Fujian presence. In 1580, the Ming records suddenly name a chieftain, from a region called Jian-bu-zhai (Cambodia), Trịnh Thanh (鄭青), sending tribute to Beijing, long after Cambodia disappears as a tributary state. Thanh appears first when Ming officials in Fujian demand that he return to them two Fujian persons, one a former soldier, who had been resident in Siam.<sup>16</sup>

Chính is said to have been a high ranking Lê official and commander of a regional garrison called Thiên Vũ vệ (*Thiên Vũ Vệ Đô Chỉ Huy Sứ*). This blatantly contradicts the other Lê and Nguyễn texts, which do not describe the Lê Dynasty appointing any officials, military or civil, in Phú Yên. Chính had the same post, controlling the *Thiên Vũ* army, awarded to Mạc Đăng Dung in the *Thông Sứ* in the *Đoan Khánh* reign of Lê *Ủy Mục*, or between 1505 and 1509. (Another leader of the *Thiên Vũ* army a decade later was reported to have been killed for treason and heterodoxy.) Around 1578, in the *Liệt Truyện*, Chính brought troops to the Đà Rằng River in response to “invading *Chiêm*” and took the *Chiêm* citadel there, called the Hồ citadel. Nguyễn records suggest Chính was promoted to be a general of the highest order, with the title *Phù Nghĩa* Marquis, as with the Trần Đức (Chen De) clan, it is not clear that the Lê could have had any influence this far south in the late 16th century. Since his exploits are not officially recognized until 1852, when carefully crafted Mạc elements were added back into the Nguyễn narrative, he was potentially affiliated with contemporary Mạc rulers.<sup>17</sup>

The next phase of Lương Văn Chính’s career is problematic. He became the official governing a pacified border region called An Biên Garrison (*An Biên Trấn Quan*) in Tuy Viễn district, a term referring to the Quy Nhơn region. He gathered “wanderers” to reclaim land for cultivation and brought settlers to Cù Mông and Bà Đài, a mountainous region and river valley south of Quy Nhơn and north of Tuy Hòa. He gathered a large population in villages (*thôn ấp*) to reclaim land along the Đà Rằng. If this description is correct, it refers to conquest of the Đà Rằng River leading to the Gia

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<sup>16</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Shen-zong*, 103:3b-4a.

<sup>17</sup> *Liệt Truyện*, *ibid.*

Lai plateau and the production of cash crops for export under a newly organized tax regime.<sup>18</sup>

Since the *Thực Lục* describes Mạc Cảnh Vinh reaching Phú Yên for the first time in 1611, ignoring both Bùi Thế Hán's reported campaign there before 1568 and Chính's presence, the Historical Office actually took note of this contradiction. It claims that on his death, Chính was given high honors by "the court," and a temple was built for his worship. Perhaps compelled to explain why Chính was never mentioned in the *Thực Lục*, only a few years earlier, his biography notes wrote that although he was a great figure, the Historical Office had become aware of his accomplishments too late to include him in the earlier texts. In fact, preparation for those texts had been begun in 1821, and they were released in the middle of the century in censored form.

The late 19th century *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí* clearly draws on the *Liệt Truyện*, but differs in some significant details. It repeats that Lương Văn Chính was from Tuy Hòa and said he commanded a force to attack Champa and was promoted to be a supreme general. However, it states that he then became a commander in Trấn Biên Encampment, not Tuy Viễn district or An Biên Garrison. Again, he gathered wanderers, clearing land for cultivation. The term Trấn Biên (frontier garrison) appears to be here a highland region.<sup>19</sup>

In his 1806 atlas, Lê Quang Định describes the capture of the Hồ Citadel by a dynasty that preceded the Nguyễn, although he does not name the commander or provide a date. The most anomalous statement comes from the *Đại Nhất Thống Chí*, which places the tomb of an unnamed prince of a previous dynasty on Phú Quốc Island. (No dynasty before the Nguyễn in any text is described reaching Cambodia, and other monuments in Hà Tiên are associated with its first governor, not an earlier dynasty.)<sup>20</sup>

The contradictions inherent in accounts of Lương Văn Chính and the striking coincidence of his commanding the army first led by Mạc Đăng Dung, suggest the possibility that the Mạc Dynasty occupied Phú Yên province and the highlands above it

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<sup>18</sup> The term "wanderers" is also used in the 19th century Nguyễn texts to refer to persons settled in Cambodia in the 17th and 18th century. *Liệt Truyện, ibid; Thực Lục*, 36.

<sup>19</sup> *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, 81

<sup>20</sup> *Hoàng Việt Nhất Thống Dư Địa Chí*, 266; *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, vol 5, 30-31.

and was able to project military power on the Kontum Plateau. If true, this would make Mạc activity in Cambodia more plausible.

### Mạc Kính Điển's Descendants in Quảng Nam

According to the *Liệt Truyện*, Mạc Cảnh Huống, a younger brother of Mạc Kính Điển, traveled south with Nguyễn Hoàng, bringing with him members of his family including Điển's oldest daughter, called Mạc Thị Giai (A passage found in the *Toàn Thư* and a brief passage appended to the *Thông Sử* state that Mạc Kính Điển had nine sons and nine daughters; the daughters are not named.) Mạc Cảnh Huống is described as one of Hoàng's greatest generals, despite the fact that he did not appear in their *Thực Lục* at all. With the exception of the *Liệt Truyện*, none of the Lê or Nguyễn texts mentions any alliance between the Mạc and Nguyễn. Even the *Thực Lục*, published only a few years before the *Liệt Truyện*, ignores Mạc Cảnh Huống and his son. The *Liệt Truyện* apparently drew on biographical information from the Mạc clan *gia phả* describing Huống and his son Vinh.<sup>21</sup>

Two narratives of the Mạc presence in Cochinchina appear in the Trà Kiệu and Cổ Trai *gia phả*. The Trà Kiệu text has been introduced above. The Cổ Trai text, published by Cadière in French translation, was written in 1725, a month after the death of the Minh Prince in the *Toàn Thư*, and revised at the end of 1765, several months after Trương Phúc Loan seized power in Phú Xuân. It was held in what Cadière introduces as a "Mạc colony," a village with the same name as their Hải Dương home village of Cổ Trai, located in Quảng Trị not far from the place Nguyễn Hoàng was said to reside in 1558. Cadière does not consider whether Mạc may have already been resident in Thuận Hóa in 1558, despite the fact that it is described as a base of Mạc supporters in both Lê and Nguyễn histories; instead, as with most other aspects of the 19th century Nguyễn narrative, he accepts at face value the assertion that a Mạc general followed Hoàng south. Cadière never mentions the Trà Kiệu *gia phả*.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *Liệt Truyện*, 67, 135

<sup>22</sup> Cadière, "Généalogie de la Princesse Giai Épouse de Sai-Vuong," 379-406

The Trà Kiệu Mạc family book gives the name of the lineage founder as Mạc Đô Giai *Lực Sĩ*, whose son, the great Trần era scholar Mạc Đĩnh Chi, was born in a *bính thìn* year. Chi was honored as Top Scholar of Two Countries (*Luông Quốc Trạng Nguyên*) and a senior official under *Minh Tông* (1314-1329). His oldest son was said to be a monk. At the age of 53, in a *mậu thân* year, his son Mạc Cảnh Thống was born and was adopted as a son by Trần *Giản Định*. These dates appear to be inaccurate, since *Giản Định* made a brief claim to the throne in Nghệ An from 1407 to 1409, backed by the Thuận Hóa chief Đặng Tất. However, this provides another early link between the Mạc and Thuận Hóa. In a *bình dân* year, Thống's son Mạc Đại Thành was born; in an *át mùi* year, Thành's son Mạc Đăng Dung was born. This places Dung's birth in 1475, rather than the standard 1483 from the *Thông Sử*.<sup>23</sup>

The text states that Mạc Đăng Dung took the throne, declaring the *Minh Đức* reign. Mạc *Thái Tông*, his son Đăng Doanh, was said to take the throne for two years, declaring the *Đại Chính* reign. Then, *Huệ Tông* took the throne, changing the reign to *Quảng Hòa*, which conforms to the *Thông Sử* description of the reign of Mạc Phúc Hải. The reign was first changed to *Vĩnh Định*, then *Thuận Đức*. The first is the reign of Mạc Phúc Nguyên, in accordance with the *Thông Sử*. The second reign name, however, is normally attributed to Mạc Kính Vũ, who is thought to have controlled Cao Bằng after 1638, a period which is not covered by the *Thông Sử*, nearly a century later than the previous reign period mentioned and, so far as indicated by the text, completely unrelated to the Mạc in Quảng Nam. The 1680 copy of the *gia phả* may have had detailed information about reigns of Mạc rulers, which was omitted or altered in 1832.<sup>24</sup>

*Huệ Tông*, or Mạc Đăng Doanh, is described having four sons. The oldest, not named, moved to Cao Bằng and established a Mạc clan branch there. The second was Mạc Hoàng Ninh (Mạc *Hồng Ninh*), the third was the *Khiêm* Prince Mạc Kính Điển, and the fourth was Mạc Cảnh Lịch, also called Huống. Điển's oldest son, named Ông Chúa Khánh, also went to Cao Bằng. This information is not compatible with the *Thông Sử*,

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<sup>23</sup> Huỳnh Công Bá, "Về Quyển Gia Phả," *Thông Sử*, Mạc Đăng Dung:1a.

<sup>24</sup> These reign names are mentioned in the *Ming Shi-lu*, but that text states that Dung took the title Father King, enthroning his son as King of Heaven with those reign names. Conceivably, in this 1832 copy of the *gia phả*, the copyist might be adding the information provided by the *Thông Sử*, but getting the duration of the two reigns as described by him reversed in the process. (Since Dung becomes Annam Commander in 1540, it might make sense if he claimed the title king for a longer period rather than giving it immediately to his son.) *Ming Shi-lu*, *Shi-zong*, 199:2a-3a; *Thông Sử*, Mạc Phúc Hải:32a.

which names Mạc Phúc Hải as the oldest son and does not describe him going to Cao Bằng; neither that text nor the *Toàn Thư* describes any additional sons. The *Ming Shi-lu* describes Điền, but does not mention other sons. Mạc Kính Điền's second son is not named in the Trà Kiệu *gia phả*. However, Huỳnh Công Bá describes a second family book belonging to the Huỳnh Hưng branch of the same clan, held in Mông Nghệ village, in Quế Sơn district. The Huỳnh Hưng clan claims direct descent from Mạc Kính Điền through his son, who changed his name to Huỳnh Cầu.<sup>25</sup>

The Trà Kiệu Mạc *gia phả* contradicts the standard Lê descriptions of Điền's nine sons and nine daughters. The *Toàn Thư* states that in 1564, Điền's oldest son, the *Đoan Hùng* Prince, named Kính Chi, attempted to have relations with a secondary wife of his father and was stripped of his ranks and titles as punishment. As a result, a younger son of Kính Phu (not Điền), was given the title of *Đường An* Prince and took military power. After Điền's death, it is noted in the text, the Mạc clan made Mạc Kính Chi the *Hùng Lễ* Duke, but he did not take power. In a later passage, this text notes that the *Hùng Lễ* Duke Mạc Kính Chi had earlier fled to Đồng Triều, a district in Quảng Bình that in the Nguyễn texts was supposedly under the direct control of Nguyễn Hoàng at this time. After Mạc Mậu Hợp was killed in 1592 he gathered the dispersed troops in Hải Dương and placed himself on the throne there, in Chí Linh district, calling himself *Bảo Định* and changing the reign year to *Khanh Hựu*. The *Toàn Thư* claims Chi was captured and beheaded in 1593.<sup>26</sup>

The identity of Mạc Kính Điền's sons is further complicated by descriptions in the *Diễn Chí* and *Thông Sử*. In the *Diễn Chí*, after Mạc Mậu Hợp's death, the Mạc in Hải Dương located a Mạc prince called Hùng Lễ and made him king. He was defeated by Trịnh Tùng in 1593, fled, and was captured and killed in "the region of Chí Linh and Đồng Triều," the names of the two disparate districts in Hải Dương and Quảng Bình (as described in the *Toàn Thư*). The *Diễn Chí* does not mention the name of Hùng Lễ's father. In the *Thông Sử*, in 1590, the wife of the *Đường An* Prince Mạc Kính Chi had relations with his general, the *Hoàng* Duke, and fled her husband to live in his house. When she was discovered, they were killed. A final page of text listing Điền's sons,

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<sup>25</sup> Possibly, the claim that the first son went to Cao Bằng might be intended to convey a general idea that the lineage continued in Cao Bằng.

<sup>26</sup> *Thông Sử*, Mạc Kính Điền:126b-127a; *Toàn Thư*, XVI:20b-21a, XVII:37-39a.



which falls outside the *Thông Sử* narrative scope, is appended briefly and without comment, as if added by a later editor. That page describes Chi as a deputy (*Phó Đức Soái*) and the oldest son of Mạc Kính Điển.<sup>27</sup>

Mạc Kính Điển's daughters in Quảng Nam, according to the Mạc temple *gia phả*, were called Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Giai and Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Lôu. These names are also found in the Cổ Trai (Quảng Trị) Mạc *gia phả* translated by Cadière, which begins with Mạc Kính Điển, said to have four children, but only mentions two daughters, Giai, the older, and the “Bonness” ĐỘ Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Lôu. In the Trà Kiệu Mạc *gia phả*, after Điển's death, his own wife, Từ Dung, remarried to the *Quảng Đô Chiêu Vũ* Marquis, or *Vô Sự*. In the *Liệt Truyện*, which draws on the Mạc *gia phả* for many other details related to the Trà Kiệu Mạc, *Vô Sự* is given as the adopted name (*tên tự*) of Nguyễn Hoàng's maternal uncle Nguyễn Ứ KỶ. In the Nguyễn texts, KỶ's wife is not mentioned and KỶ is not described as having the title of *Chiêu Vũ* or *Quảng Đô Chiêu Vũ*. (The *Toàn Thư* does not mention KỶ at all.) The reappearance of these elements suggests they were being reworked to fit the standard narrative promulgated under Trương Đăng Quế and the *Tự Đức* Emperor.

The *Liệt Truyện* states that Nguyễn Ứ KỶ had a son named Nguyễn Đình Dững. It does not record the identity of Dững's mother, but notes that his surname was sometimes recorded as Mai instead of Nguyễn, because when Nguyễn Ứ KỶ adopted Nguyễn Kim's son, KỶ changed his surname to Mai out of fear that the Mạc would discover him, and then Dững kept that surname. This is not very convincing in the light of the Mạc presence in Quảng Nam. Dững led campaigns against a local uprising in Quảng Nam in 1571, the year in which, in the *Tạp Lục*, Quảng Nam native generals fought among themselves, and that Hoàng killed all of them, installing in their place the *Dững* Duke. In other words, Nguyễn Ứ KỶ's son took command of Quảng Nam in 1571. No connection is drawn in any text between Nguyễn Đình Dững and Nguyễn Khoa Chiêm's grandfather, Nguyễn

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<sup>27</sup> The *Thông Sử* seems to use *Hoàng* Duke to refer to multiple persons. In 1570, a *Hoàng* Duke led one of Điển's armies, but Nguyễn Quyện later captured the Lê governor of Nghệ An, called the *Hoàng* Duke; the *Hoàng* Duke and Quyện were then described fighting together under Điển's command, yet Quyện also was later made *Hoàng* Duke. *Thông Sử*, Mạc Mậu Hợp:116b.

Đình Thân, despite their common clan name and place of origin in the *Liệt Truyện*, as two great Hải Dương generals who joined Nguyễn Hoàng.<sup>28</sup>

Only the Trà Kiệu Mạc *gia phả* names one of Nguyễn Hoàng's wives, a detail removed from all Historical Office texts even though, being recorded at the site honoring a Nguyễn ancestor, it was clearly known to the Nguyễn court. She is called Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Quý in the text; Quý's sister, Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Dương, married Mạc Cảnh Huống. In the *gia phả*, Hoàng had ten sons; the sixth, the *Sãi* Prince, was said to be raised by Huống and his maternal aunt Dương as their own adopted son.

In Bowyear's 1696 report, the *Chua Tean* (*Chúa Tiên*) arrived in Cochinchina and ruled it quietly as a Tonkin province, joined by other great men, a contradiction of other European reports in which this figure declared war on Tonkin. For Bowyear, the son of the *Chewa Tean*, the *Chewa Sai* (*Chúa Sãi*), likewise "did nothing but extend their small province while encroaching on Champa," a blatant contradiction of Jesuits like Borri, who personally witnessed this ruler's war, allied with a small northern state, against the king of Tonkin.

All of the Lê and Nguyễn texts are silent on the marriage alliances formed by Nguyễn Hoàng. According to the *Liệt Truyện*, Hoàng had ten sons and two daughters, and appears to have had three unnamed wives. Other figures that joined in the journey south in the *Diễn Chí* are counted among Hoán's sons; two mothers of the men called his oldest and tenth sons, Hà and Khê, are given honorific titles.

In contrast with the elaborate biographies of the mothers of the subsequent kings, the *Liệt Truyện* offers no further information about the *Sãi* Prince's mother beyond the surname Nguyễn and omits her year of death. The *Sãi* Prince's wife Giai was originally Mạc, but was awarded the surname Nguyễn; her mother is not mentioned. The text claims that Giai died in a *canh ngọ* year, the second of the *Đức Long* reign, 1630, at 53, but as

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<sup>28</sup> The *Liệt Truyện* also notes that Dũng's own son, called Mai Đình Hùng, led a 1630 campaign against Trịnh forces in Quảng Bình. That battle, which is described in the *Thực Lục*, is notable for the close relationship between Nguyễn Ư Kỳ's grandson, who conquered the territory of Bồ Chính, and the man he appointed to govern it, Trương Phúc Phần, the great-grandfather of Trương Phúc Loan, who would seize the Nguyễn throne in 1765. *Liệt Truyện*, 129-131; *Thực Lục*, 47.

Cao Tự Thanh notes, if she were born in 1578, she could not be the first of Điền's nine daughters, so one of those statement is wrong.<sup>29</sup>

In Cadière's *Cổ Trai Mạc gia phả*, Ngọc Liên married Nguyễn Phúc Ban (apparently, Mạc Cảnh Vinh) and had one son, *Toàn*, or Nguyễn Phúc Khuê. Khuê had one son, *Doãn* or Nguyễn Phúc Lý, the latter with two sons, *Hộ*, or Nguyễn Phúc Diên, and Nguyễn Phúc Hoàn. Diên's three sons were *Tư*, or Nguyễn Phúc Kha, Nguyễn Phúc Kiêm and Nguyễn Phúc Lân. Hoàn had one son, Nguyễn Phúc Oanh. An annotation states that when a new king was crowned in an *át dậu* year (1765), Kha was given command of Quảng Nam Encampment, and replaced the king for carrying out worship in a village temple. Cadière romanized the first character of the village name as Trà; he notes the second is illegible. The meaning of this is debatable, but it suggests that Kha took over responsibility from the new king in 1765 to carry out ritual duties in the Mạc temple at Trà Kiệu.<sup>30</sup>

The final section of the 1832 abbreviated copy of the Trà Kiệu Mạc *gia phả*, called the "*Tông Đồ Mục Lục*," provides a line of descent to the head of the Nguyễn Trường clan in that year, Nguyễn Trường Phương. It traces this link in only three generations, through allegedly low ranking soldiers who had the royal name Nguyễn Phúc until in 1832, when this branch of the Mạc clan had this honorific withdrawn and replaced by the name Nguyễn Trường. It is likely that this portion of the *gia phả* was created and placed at the Trà Kiệu Mạc temple in connection with the *Minh Mạng* era ritual observances honoring the Nguyễn ancestors. The son of Giai and Vinh is called the *Toàn Trung* Marquis Nguyễn Phúc Tao. (The title *Toàn Trung* echoes the *Toàn* in the *Cổ Trai Mạc gia phả*.) In this text, Vinh had a single grandson, Nguyễn Phúc Lân, but in the *Cổ Trai* text, Nguyễn Phúc Lân was one of Vinh's four great-great-grandsons.<sup>31</sup>

The version of this lineage found in the *Cổ Trai Mạc gia phả* has several additional generations that are omitted here. Given the implausibility of each son being born to his fathers at such an advanced age, this text is obviously corrupted. Possibly,

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<sup>29</sup> The *Thông Sử* reports that Kính Điền had nine daughters and died in 1580. In addition, the *Toàn Thư* names the oldest daughter Thụ, not Giai. *Toàn Thư*, XVII:9b; *Liệt Truyện*, 46, 68-69; *Thông Sử*, VXII:8a; Cao Tự Thanh, trans., *Đại Nam Liệt Truyện Tiền Biên*.

<sup>30</sup> Cadière, "Généalogie de la Princesse Giai."

<sup>31</sup> Huỳnh Công Bá, "Về Quyển Gia Phả."

sections of the 1680 *gia phả* were removed or altered in the 1832 copy to create a narrative acceptable to the *Minh Mạng* regime.

The *Liệt Truyện* states that Mạc Cảnh Huồng's wife, named Nguyễn Ngọc Dương, was Mạc Thị Giai's maternal aunt. The Historical Office text omits the honorific Ngọc in the name of Mạc Thị Giai, and all mention of Ngọc Quý and Ngọc Lô. The *Liệt Truyện* editors felt compelled to add an annotation explaining that Nguyễn Hoàng's wife, called simply Nguyễn Thị in that text, was from a different clan and not the Nguyễn royal lineage. It may be noteworthy that an unrelated text held locally in the Mạc in *Hải Dương Phong Chí* claims Hoàng's mother was a Phạm, since the Hải Dương Phạm governors in Quảng Nam are omitted in Historical Office texts.<sup>32</sup>

In the Trà Kiệu family book, Mạc Cảnh Huồng, Mạc Kính Điển's daughter Giai and his second daughter Lô fled after Điển's death to stay in the Lam Sơn pagoda (*điện tư*). In the *Liệt Truyện*, after Điển's death, his son Huồng and other family members including Giai went into seclusion in the Lam Sơn pagoda; at that time, they moved to Quảng Trị (the location of the pagoda is unclear). The toponym Quảng Trị did not exist until the 19th century, and if the *Liệt Truyện* authors meant to indicate Hải Lăng district, they would not use its correct name. The *Cạn Lục* mentions no Lam Sơn pagoda; since Mạc royalty would not shelter in a pagoda that was unknown to the local Mạc officials, Lam Sơn pagoda was probably not in Thuận Hóa. It could have been located anywhere along the coastal trade networks, but most likely in Quảng Nam.<sup>33</sup>

The historiographical problems discussed here reflect the Nguyễn court's difficulty in attributing the southern expansion to an ancestral founder Nguyễn Hoàng, yet incorporating local texts that describe powerful Mạc princes and queens resident in Quảng Nam. By 1832, the *Minh Mạng* court had incorporated this Trà Kiệu *gia phả* into royal rituals honoring a Mạc queen mother, Giai, suggesting the earliest official histories produced after 1821 probably recognized Mạc figures. However, the *Tự Đức* era (1844) *Thực Lục* omits all reference to the Mạc, and only with the ascension of *Thiệu Trị* did the (1852) *Liệt Truyện* provide even a terse biography of the queen mother and Mạc Cảnh

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<sup>32</sup> This close relationship to the Mạc royalty may also suggest the origin of the honorific Phúc used for the male royal lineage; prior to Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên, this name was awarded to Mạc Phúc Hải and his son, Mạc Phúc Nguyên. Huỳnh Công Bá, "Về Quyền Gia Phả," *Liệt Truyện*, 135.

<sup>33</sup> The Trà Kiệu Mạc genealogy also states that Hoàng came to the "Nam trấn" in 1568 (*mậu thìn*), rather than the standard 1558 found in most texts. Nguyễn was said to be born in 1563. *Liệt Truyện*, 68-69.

Huống. Thus, the role and importance of these Mạc figures remained a point of contention in the middle of 19th century.

### Defeat of the Mạc in Tonkin

It is unclear what happened to the Mạc aristocrats and soldiers, including 100 of the royal family, who were said to be exiled in Qinzhou. The *Ming Shi-lu* mentions *Mậu Hợp* sending tribute frequently from the 1573 to 1590, with stable relations with the Ming court except for complaints made about Mạc encroachment in territories claimed by Guangxi in 1585 and 1589. There is no indication that he was killed in a Lê attack; instead, the Mạc are said to have been forced to flee Đông Kinh by Trịnh Tùng and Lê Duy Đàm by 1597.<sup>34</sup>

For Vachet, a Tonkin king, dominated by a powerful general, returned to stable tributary relations with the Ming, who reclaimed disputed border territories. The Lê texts are in conflict about the identity of the regent or chief general during *Mậu Hợp*'s reign. In the *Thông Sử*, the regent when *Mậu Hợp* took the throne in 1564 was Mạc Kính Điển. That contradicts the *Toàn Thư*, in which Mạc Đôn Nhượng was regent. Both place Điển's death in 1580, the year Thanh Hóa was attacked unsuccessfully by Mạc Ngọc Liên, Nguyễn Quyện, and a figure called the *Hoàng* or Hoành Duke in the *Toàn Thư* and *Thông Sử*. Describing Điển's death, the *Toàn Thư* states he had nine sons, naming eight, and nine daughters, naming six. This does not appear in the body of the *Thông Sử*, but is appended at the end; a brief section on Kính Điển repeats the sons' names with some alterations, but does not name the daughters. The *Thông Sử* praises Điển as a great general, the paternal uncle of *Mậu Hợp* (a son of Mạc Phúc Hải rather than Mạc Đăng Dung). He ruled for twenty years, and on his death, *Mậu Hợp* chose Nhượng, another paternal uncle (and son of Mạc Phúc Hải) to replace him as military leader. Only the

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<sup>34</sup> In fact, the details of Ming relations with both factions during this period are not clear from the records of either court. The tribute officials sent by Mac Phuc Nguyen in 1549 also reportedly spent fifteen years in China before finally presenting gifts to the emperor in 1565. *Ming Shi-lu*, *Shi-zong*, 540:5a.

*Toàn Thư* describes *Nhượng* as regent for *Mậu Hợp*'s entire reign, but both texts give him authority after *Điền*'s death.<sup>35</sup>

The *Hoan Châu Ký* also incorporates the Lê chronicle account of the death of *Hồng Ninh*, in an undated passage positioned in the text around 1589 or 1590. (In Ming records, *Mậu Hợp* offers tribute in 1590.) *Hồng Ninh*'s forces suffered such defeats that the ruler fled in fear, then a queen mother (*thái hậu*) was captured and died of fear. The *Trịnh* learned *Hồng Ninh* was hiding in *Mô Khuê* pagoda disguised as a monk, and captured him along with two concubines, brought him back to *Bồ Đề* (where he had resided), then presented his severed head to the Lê court at *Vạn Lại*.<sup>36</sup>

A second repetition of the capture of the king disguised as a monk appears in the *Hoan Châu Ký* after 1600, yet this second episode does not appear in the *Toàn Thư*. *Nguyễn Cảnh Hà*, one of the revered ancestors described in this *Nguyễn Cảnh* family book, captures *Mạc Kiên Thống*, who disguised himself as a monk in the *Mô* pagoda in *Phượng Nhãn* district, and *Kiên Thống* was returned to a capital (*kinh sư*) in a cage. (The mother of *Hồng Ninh* was also captured and died of fright.) Four elements of *Thiện*'s text are absent from the passages surrounding the first (*Trịnh*) capture, but present for the second (*Nguyễn Cảnh*) capture: *Doan*'s continued loyalty to the *Mạc*, his departure for *Thanh Hóa*, the *Chúa*'s pursuit, and *Doan*'s departure for *Quảng/Hóa*. The dates of the sequence, ranging from 1600 to 1607, are not internally consistent: it begins in 1600 when the *Doan* Grand Duke *Nguyễn Hoàng*, growing jealous of *Trịnh Tùng*, was advised by *Phùng Khắc Khoan*: "The mountains [or *Hoành Mountain*] are long, one can be at peace; the sea is wide, one can find safety."<sup>37</sup> *Hoàng* rebelled along with *Phan Ngạn* and *Bùi Văn Khuê*, departing for *Thanh Hóa* to entice the *Trịnh* into following him there,

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<sup>35</sup> The eight sons in the *Toàn Thư* are *Chi*, *Trực*, *Giản*, *Tuân*, *Thận*, *Cung*, *Thê*, and *Bang*, the last without any title; the 6 daughters are *Thụ*, *Quán*, *Tý*, *Diễm*, a three year old without name or title, and *Uyên*, called an adopted daughter. The *Thông Sử* adds a third son *Lễ*. *Toàn Thư*, XVII:9b; *Thông Sử*, *Mạc Mậu Hợp*, 78a-79b, *Mạc Kính Điền*, 126a-b.

<sup>36</sup> This contrasts with the *Hoan Châu Ký*, in which the queen mother seems to have been brought to a place called *Bồ Đề*.

<sup>37</sup> *Hoành sơn một dải, có thể dung thân, biển cả là hào, có thể vạn toàn Biển cả là hảo, có thể vạn toàn*. The advice given to *Nguyễn Hoàng* by *Nguyễn Bình Khiêm* in the *Diễn Chí* (also in 1600) and the *Thực Lục* (before 1558) is an abbreviated version of this: "The mountains will shelter you for 10 thousand generations." *Hoan Châu Ký*, 190-199.

then secretly left for Thuận Hóa. Tùng and the Lê king pursued him to Thanh Hóa,<sup>38</sup> and the Mạc seized all of Tonkin north of Thanh Hóa; Mạc *Hồng Ninh*'s mother occupied the empty Trung Đô along with other Mạc royalty, summoning Mạc *Kiên Thống* back to Đông Kinh. Trịnh Tùng retaliated, capturing the Queen Mother, then seizing Đông Kinh, installing *Hoàng Định* at Trung Đô. *Kiên Thống* held the coast while Tùng engaged another Mạc army occupying a district on the Trịnh southern border until the Mạc king's capture by Nguyễn Cảnh Hạ. Like Thiện, the Mạc king is captured in in Phụng Nhãn, not explicitly killed; in the earlier capture, Phụng Nhãn is not mentioned and the king is beheaded.<sup>39</sup>

One of these two *Hoàn Châu Ký* passages must have been written before the other. Since this victory was the highest achievement of the greatest clan hero, this episode could hardly be an 18th or 19th century invention added to the family book. Once this story was included, moreover, later Nguyễn Cảnh clan copyists would face a strong cultural prohibition against the removing it. If the episode attributing capture to the Trịnh was written first, Nguyễn Cảnh copyists could not add a nearly identical episode in which their ancestral hero performed the exact same feat. Instead, copyists in later centuries identified elements of Lê history (most explicitly, as noted, the death of Trịnh Kiểm and succession of Trịnh Cối) absent from the family book and added them. Thus, both Thiện and the family book tell similar stories of a general capturing a Mạc king in Phụng Nhãn and returning him to the capital, and a passage from the family book identifies him as a member of the Nguyễn Cảnh clan, an element almost assuredly already present in the earliest version written circa 1680 to 1705.<sup>40</sup> The main difference from Thiện is the name of the king captured, which may have presented the Nguyễn Cảnh clan with a unique dilemma in reconciling dynastic history, since they could not state that *Hồng Ninh*, captured and killed by the Trịnh *chúa* according to Lê chronicles, was captured by their ancestor.

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<sup>38</sup> In a strange episode, the *Kế* Duke Phan Ngạn, in Đông Kinh, saw the wife of the *My* Duke leading troops from the north, and went to attack her, but was killed.

<sup>39</sup> (Whether Trung Đô and Đông Kinh could be different capitals requires a separate study.) These battles are not explicitly dated; Tráng defeated the *Nghiêm* King and *Trí Thủy*.

<sup>40</sup> *Hoàn Châu Ký*, 215-224.

The *Toàn Thư* and *Thông Sử* have *Mậu Hợp* occupying Đông Kinh, repairing it and apparently inaugurating a new reign year in 1585 or 1586. *Mậu Hợp* had previously been said to do the same in 1570, so it is unclear why he repeated the process, or where he had resided in the meantime. The Mạc suffered a major defeat to Trịnh Tùng in 1589, and Mạc Đôn Nhượng fled back to Đông Kinh. In both texts, the *Đường An* Prince Mạc Kính Chi discovered his wife had indiscretions with the *Hoàng* Duke in 1590, and both of them were killed.<sup>41</sup>

In the same month as the death of *Hồng Ninh*, the Mạc *Hùng Lễ* Duke declared himself the new ruler in Hải Dương. Mạc Kính Chi defeated him, declared himself king, defeated other rivals to control Hải Dương and Kinh Bắc. Trịnh Tùng later killed him, reportedly displaying his head in Thanh Hóa. One general, Mạc Ngọc Liễn, fled to Văn Lan *châu* (that is, Lạng Sơn), where he found a Mạc prince, the *Đôn Hậu* Prince Kính Cung, who he raised to the throne as Mạc *Kiên Thống*. Trịnh Tùng quelled the support for this king in Đông Kinh and returned the Lê king to Đông Kinh in 1593.

The *Diễn Chí* describes Trịnh Tùng attacking Sơn Tây, around the Đông Kinh citadel, in 1591 and in 1592 seizing Đông Kinh, before returning to Thanh Hóa; he planned attacks in the southeast as well. The Mạc general Bùi Văn Khuê, in Gia Viễn district, now Ninh Bình, defected to Trịnh Tùng and offered to lead him to Mạc *Hồng Ninh*. *Hồng Ninh* disguised himself as a monk and hid in a pagoda, then was captured and killed, two years later than in the *Hoan Châu Ký*. A Mạc prince *Hùng Lễ* was placed on the throne in Hải Dương, but was defeated and killed by Trịnh Tùng in 1593. This text does not mention the two queen mothers or Mạc Kính Chi, and does not describe Mạc *Kiên Thống* at this time, although it claims he was alive after 1601.<sup>42</sup>

The *Thông Sử* description of the final 1592 assault is nearly identical to the first of the two capture stories in the *Hoan Châu Ký*: the captured queen mother dies of fear, and *Mậu Hợp* is found disguised as a monk in Mô Khuê Pagoda in Phương Nhân District, and then killed.<sup>43</sup> The narrative ends at this point without any description of the Mạc in Cao Bằng, *Kiến Thông*, or his capture, and no member of the Nguyễn Cảnh clan appear at

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<sup>41</sup> *Mậu Hợp* occupies Đông Kinh shortly after Trần An/Yên, said to be in Ai Lao, offered tribute to the Lê in 1583, the last time Ai Lao is mentioned in the *Toàn Thư*.

<sup>42</sup> The text notes here that the Mạc ruler had married Nguyễn Quyện's daughter (though Nguyễn Quyện was also said to marry a Mạc princess). *Diễn Chí*, 45-63.

<sup>43</sup> *Thông Sử*, Mạc *Mậu Hợp*:109a-125b.



any point despite their prominent role in defeating the Mạc in both the family history and the *Toàn Thư*.

In the *Toàn Thư*, Trịnh Tùng drove out *Mậu Hợp* in 1592 and secured the region around Đông Kinh. Nevertheless, *Mậu Hợp* held regular *thi hội* examinations, choosing four *tiến sĩ* and thirteen *đồng tiến sĩ* graduates. With the help of defector Bùi Văn Khuê, *Mậu Hợp*'s forces were scattered and forced to return to the *kinh áp*, and after that to Kim Thành District in Hải Dương. The Trịnh captured the queen mother, who died in fear on reaching Bồ Đề. Since the Trịnh at this point held Đông Kinh, this usage of Bồ Đề could refer to the location across the river from that capital. However, the constantly shifting references to Bồ Đề, *kinh áp*, and Kim Thành will require more systematic attention.<sup>44</sup>

*Mậu Hợp* ceded the throne, according to the *Toàn Thư*, to his son Toàn, who declared the *Vũ An* reign. He then disguised himself as a monk in a pagoda in Phương Nhân. He was captured, returned to the capital (*kinh sư*) and was beheaded at Bồ Đề. This text incorporates other elements seemingly borrowed from the *Hoan Châu Ký* story above, including his two concubines and displaying his head at Vạn Lại.

The *Thông Sử* has *Mậu Hợp* taking the reign name *Hồng Ninh* in 1591. Trịnh Tùng drove him out of Đông Kinh the following year, but he returned to hold national examinations two months after Trịnh Tùng's return to Thanh Hóa, supposedly choosing seventeen *cử nhân* scholars at the Bồ Đề wharf. Bùi Văn Khuê defected to the Trịnh, and *Mậu Hợp* was pursued to Hải Dương, where he was found, in early 1593, disguised as a monk in Mô Khuê Pagoda in Phương Nhân District. (In the *Hoan Châu Ký*, Mạc *Hồng Ninh* is in the Mô Khuê Pagoda in 1589 or 1590, but it is not in Phương Nhân District; the Mạc *Kiến* Prince is in Mô Pagoda in 1601, in Phương Nhân District.) Trịnh Tùng seized the queen mother and brought her back to the capital (*kinh sư*), but she died of fear upon reaching Bồ Đề river. *Mậu Hợp*'s nonsensical ramblings about Buddhism foiled his disguise, and as he was captured he cried out for a drink of alcohol; he was killed on the bank at Bồ Đề. *Mậu Hợp*'s son Toàn began the *Vũ An* reign, but was quickly captured and killed.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVII:14a-45a.

<sup>45</sup> *Thông Sử*, Mạc *Mậu Hợp*:109a-125b.

The Ming do not support claims that a Mạc king died in 1589 or 1590. Since Ming records describe Mạc border incursions in 1589 and *Mậu Hợp* offering tribute in 1590, the death of the Mạc king could not have taken place at that time. This suggests that of the two nearly identical stories of two different Mạc kings' death, the 1601 episode is most likely the original one and the story of 1589-1590 (moved to 1592 in the "official" version in the *Toàn Thư*) is probably copied from it. The contradictory and inconclusive Lê descriptions of *Mậu Hợp/Hồng Ninh*'s death and are probably transposed from the unrelated story of the *Kiền King*'s 1601 capture. What is clear, however, regardless of the specific circumstances of the capture of *Mậu Hợp* or *Kiền Thống*, is that the Ming court believed the Lê/Trịnh regime was strong enough to be recognized in 1597. (Ming commentary on Đại Việt up to 1628 seems relatively secure, at least compared with later events.) The Mạc were weakened by the late 1590s, and had been driven out of Đông Kinh to other locations. The fate of the Mạc in the closing decade of the 16th century remains unknown.

Commercial networks were changing rapidly in through the 16th century, with *wokou* pirates extending their reach, a growing Portuguese and Spanish presence in enclaves throughout the region, and the lifting of the Ming trade ban, among other factors. One key factor obscured by these texts is the role of Islam in these coastal networks. Pierre Manguin notes Cham Po At sending ships to join the sultan of Johor in an attack on Malacca in 1594, while Islamic gravestones are found as far north as Phú Yên, and Cham populations that incorporate aspects of Islam into their cultural practices are found on the south-central coast. Unfortunately, due to the focus here on examination of the Lê and Nguyễn texts, which avoid discussion of Islam, this issue has not been systematically addressed and will need to be the subject of a separate study.<sup>46</sup>

Ming commentary on the fate of the Mạc dynasty suggests that they may have maintained control the control of Cochinchina after losing Đông Kinh. One key question

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<sup>46</sup> Trần Kỳ Phương, personal communication and photographs from Phú Yên. Rie Nakamura, "The Cham Muslims in Ninh Thuan Province, Vietnam," Omar Farouk and Hiroyuki Yamamoto, eds., *Islam at the Margins: The Muslims of Indochina*, CIAS Discussion Paper No.3, Kyoto University (2008):7-23; Pierre-Yves Manguin, "Études cam II. Introduction de l'Islam au Campam," *BEFEO* 66 (1979): 255-87; idem, "Études Cam IV une Relation Ibérique du Campā en 1595", *BEFEO* 70 (1981):253-269; Danny Wong Tze Ken, "Vietnam-Champa Relations and the Malay-Islam Regional Network in the 17th-19th Centuries," *Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia* 4 (2004).

that must be considered, given the Mạc relationship with South China, is their relationship to Chinese settlers from Guangdong and Fujian who arrived in Cochinchina. Leo K. Shin notes that in many cases the difficulties faced by Ming on the Sino-Vietnamese border were related to the institution of chieftaincy (*tu si*), which allowed the Ming to claim they had brought order in the south, but also invited upheavals as local chieftains' ambitions tempted them to extend their power across porous borders. In the case of Qinzhou, the relationship between Guangdong and Hải Dương populations, some of which settled in Quảng Nam, was exceptionally complex, with linkages among groups in Hải Dương and Qinzhou resisting both the Lê and the Ming thrones and closely related groups in Quảng Nam. Settlements formed on the Quảng Nam coast, populated by both Chamic speakers and merchants from Hải Dương and South China, and allied with highland peoples on the western plateaus, trading via the main east-west river routes. Anomalous aspects of these texts even suggest a possible Mạc military presence in the middle and lower Mekong basin that prefigures the standard narrative of Nguyễn expansion into these areas.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Shin, "Ming China," 100.



**Map 3** Quảng Nam, with a royal citadel (marked by double borders) drawn at Chiêm Encampment, as well as Thăng Hoa (Trà Kiệu) and Mỹ Sơn. From the *Giáp Ngọ Bình Nam Đồ*.

## CHAPTER 5

### Mạc Expansion After the Loss of Hải Dương, c. 1593-1605

Visitors from Manila report meeting a king in Cochinchina in the 1590s, several years before Nguyễn Hoàng, according to the Nguyễn texts, first journeyed to the Quảng Nam region where foreign commerce was centered. Since there is clear evidence that a Mạc royal family resided in Trà Kiệu in the 1590s, the Spanish expedition likely encountered a Mạc ruler in Faifo. However, it is not clear what precise relationship this Quảng Nam ruler had with Tonkin. Ming records state that the Mạc had become weak, and stories of the deaths of Mạc kings, variously in 1589-1601, are fictionalized.

An early itinerary of Việt routes from Quảng Bình to Cambodia, although it is difficult to date, suggests a possible military intervention in Cambodia that could have taken place as early as the 1590s. The Mạc family books contain elements similar to the Iberian accounts of Cambodian succession at that time. Since the stories in Lê and Nguyễn histories of Nguyễn Hoàng returning to battle the Mạc in the north contain serious inconsistencies and are omitted completely in several early texts, the role of the Nguyễn in the return to Đông Kinh before 1596 cannot be firmly established. The Mạc and their allies held both Quảng Nam and Cao Bằng, and remained active on the northern coast in Quảng Ninh and Qinzhou; they were able to make use of this strategic advantage to return several times in the early 17th century to capture Thăng Long and other provinces in the north.

### An Early Map of Cambodia

One of the most puzzling documents describing early Cochinchina is the *Giáp Ngô* itinerary, which is found in a compilation of maps dating from the 15th to 18th centuries. The text opens with an attribution to the *Đoan* Duke:

Map of the pacified south in the year *Giáp Ngọ*  
(Drawn and submitted by the *Đoan* Duke)  
From *Đông Hới* [Quảng Bình] to the Cambodia border.<sup>1</sup>

In the *Thực Lục* and *Toàn Thư*, Nguyễn Hoàng is identified by the title *Đoan* Duke until circa 1572, when his title is replaced by *Đoan* Grand Duke in both texts. This map depicts the *Đoan* Duke's residence near Dinh Cát in Quảng Trị, where Hoàng reportedly resided. These facts in isolation would seemingly date the itinerary to the 16th century, the *giáp ngọ* year of 1594. However, no narrative of Hoàng's life describes his having any contact with Cambodia; even his brief travel to Quảng Nam occurred allegedly in 1602, so there is no way a 1594 attribution of this map to Nguyễn Hoàng can be consistent with his 19th century biography. Furthermore, Quảng Bình, in this map, is heavily fortified with defenses arrayed along the northern border, as is the Quảng Trị mountain route into southern Laos. Fortifications in Quảng Bình, according to the Nguyễn texts, were only built in the 1630s, after Hoàng's death. Thus, this map provides striking confirmation of alternatives to the standard Nguyễn narrative.<sup>2</sup>

The sea route described in this itinerary runs along the coast from Quảng Bình to the mouth of the Mekong River, and then upstream to Angkor. The map identifies two courts, of kings named Thu and Nan, on the Tonle Sap River and lower Mekong River at what might be Lovek and Srei Santhor. This has prompted John Whitmore to suggest that the map actually dates from the late 17th century, despite its attribution to the *Đoan* Duke. (A river route through Laos is also marked. The source of the *Đông Nai* River, above Saigon, is marked as territory of the King of Fire.) Cambodian and Nguyễn chronicles describe an attack on kings Thu and Nan in the *giáp dân* year 1674, although similar names also appear in some texts for Cambodian kings in the sixteenth century. These names could date the itinerary to the *giáp dân* year 1674, in which the *Diễn Chí*, *Tạp Lục*, *Thông Chí* and *Thực Lục* agree that Thu and Nộn/Nan ruled as First and Second King (discussed in Chapter 7). Dating this map to 1674, however, would render many features that seemingly reference earlier periods anachronistic.

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<sup>1</sup> The text reads: *giáp ngọ niên bình nam đồ (đốc suất đoan quân công họa tiến) tự đông hới chí cao mien giới. Hồng Đức Bản Đồ*, 138.

<sup>2</sup> In both texts, he is in Đông Kinh, fighting against the Mạc, from 1572 until 1601. In the *Diễn Chí* and the Nghệ An texts, however, Nguyễn Hoàng played no part at all in these conflicts in Đông Kinh.

Another anachronism, for any point in time in the standard narrative, are the multiple structures found in Thừa Thiên. No capital yet existed near modern Huế in 1594, in any text. However, the itinerary describes what might be interpreted as a set of royal centers and camps: a *chính phủ* (perhaps, main administrative center or palace), a nearby *phủ* (perhaps, administrative center or palace), and *trưởng tử dinh* (camp of the crown prince), surrounded by numerous army posts. In other words, princes or perhaps a king in Thuận Hóa were engaged in some kind of military campaign. However, the place marked with a double-lined square, a map symbol traditionally reserved for a capital or place of great importance, not in Thừa Thiên. Instead, it is the Dinh Chiêm citadel on the Thu Bồn River in Quảng Nam. The symbols and map styles used to depict these features suggests that neither the *Doan* Duke's residence in Quảng Trị nor the Phú Xuân palaces were equal in prestige to the Dinh Chiêm citadel, and represented an army camped near Huế on behalf of the Quảng Nam power center.<sup>3</sup>

This itinerary matches no known narrative of Nguyễn history. Some aspects, particularly the names of two Cambodian kings, suggest it relates to the *giáp dần* year of 1697. If so, the date appearing in the heading of the text itself would be an error, and the attribution to the *Doan* Duke could not be explained. If the text is understood to date originally to the period in which the *Doan* Duke appears in various histories, the late 16th century, it would have been produced in the *giáp ngọ* year 1594; in some of the several conflicting records describing Cambodian kings, similarly named kings are in fact also associated with a Cambodian succession crisis in the 1590s.

#### A Mạc Intervention in Cambodia

The texts from Cochinchina describe no contact with Cambodia before the mid-17th century, despite Borri's claim (supported in Cambodian texts) of a royal marriage alliance in 1618. Two texts describe events very similar to the Cambodian succession crisis, but date them the *giáp ngọ* year 1654, not 1594. However, in that later *giáp ngọ*

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<sup>3</sup> *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ*, 138-144; Whitmore, "Cartography in Vietnam."

year, it is certain that no such succession crisis existed. These two texts seem to imply that there was Cochinchinese involvement in Cambodia during the events of the 1590s.<sup>4</sup>

In the 1832 copy of the 17th century Mạc document in Trà Kiệu, as noted in the previous chapter, Mạc Kính Điển's son Mạc Cảnh Vinh is described ruling autonomously over two regions called Trấn Biên and Bình Khang. Phú Yên, Biên Hòa, and the Kontum Plateau were all called Trấn Biên in different contexts. Nguyễn texts refer to Nha Trang by the name Bình Khang after 1690.

The Mạc *gia phả* describes Mạc Cảnh Vinh intervening in a crisis in Cambodia royal succession in an episode beginning in a *canh dân* year. In the second year of the *Khánh Đức* reign, or 1650, a man named Xí Nhật killed the Cambodia king, Vu Thượng, and stole the throne. Xí Nhật's brother-in-law, Giao Ba, was forced to flee to the mountains. Vinh sent a man called Đốc Thiết to entice Giao Ba to surrender, then brought a *giáo phường* man from Thạch Kiều (Quảng Nam) and arranged his marriage to a Cambodia queen. This Quảng Nam man then took the name Lord of the Hills (*Chúa Đồi*). The meaning of *giáo phường* is not clear, though it might refer to a musician. Two years later, Vinh brought an army to Đồng Nai to retrieve Giao Ba and depose Xí Nhật. Xí Nhật was then killed by his wife, and Vinh placed Giao Ba on the throne. When Champa (Chiêm Thành) forces saw Vinh approach, they fearfully submitted Champa as a tributary kingdom. Three years later, he returned home; in a *giáp ngọ* year, which would be 1654, he died at 76. Vinh's tomb is not found at Trà Kiệu.<sup>5</sup>

This story does not make sense in the context of Cambodian kingship in the period in 1650-1653. As reconstructed by Mak Phoeun, a king ruled from 1642 until 1658. In 1658, this king was deposed by a force from Cochinchina, an event corroborated in European reports as well as in Cambodian and Aytutthayan chronicles. No other claim

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<sup>4</sup> Vickery, Michael. "Cambodia after Angkor: the chronicular evidence for the 14th to 16th centuries." (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1977); Michael Vickery, "Mak Phoeun : Histoire du Cambodge de la fin du XVIe au début du XVIIIe siècle," *BEFEO* 83:1 (1996), 405 - 415; Mak Phoeun, *Chroniques Royales du Cambodge (de 1594 a 1677)* (Paris, L'École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1981); Mak Phoeun, *Histoire du Cambodge de la Fin du XVIe Siecle au Debut du XVIIIe* (Paris: L'École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1995).

<sup>5</sup> It seems improbable that Mạc Cảnh Vinh led a campaign in Cambodia at the age of 75, and then returned to Quảng Nam to die a year later. (The toponym Thạch Kiều is found in the *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ* near Quy Nhơn, but is also associated with Quảng Nam.) Huỳnh Công Bá, "Về Quyển Gia Phả."



of an intervention in Cambodia in either the 1590s or 1650s is found in any Lê or Nguyễn text, with the sole exception of the *Giáp Ngọ* itinerary.<sup>6</sup>

The *Mạc gia phả* has few elements in common with the first passage of an annotation to a *Thông Chí* passage dated to 1674. The passage begins with a standard narrative 1674 citing both the *Diễn Chí* and the *Tạp Lục* as its sources. (There is no reference to a Cambodian king being killed by his wife before a military intervention in the *Diễn Chí* or *Tạp Lục*.) In the passage citing those sources, a Cambodian man named Đai forced the king, Nan, to flee and come to the southern court. The *Dương Lâm* Marquis and *Diên Phái* Marquis, from Thái Khang Encampment, attacked Đai, who escaped; a king named Sô surrendered.

An annotation in the *Thông Chí* following these 1674 events mirrors the *Mạc gia phả* story. The annotation describes Cambodia's three kings: the First King Sô, the Second King, his younger brother, Tân, and the Third King, Sô's oldest son Xá Phủ Tâm. Xá Phủ Tâm killed his father to become king. Tân and his son Non fled to Nam Việt; Xá Phủ Tâm was then killed by his wife, and his son Chi took the throne. In a *giáp dần* year, Nam Việt troops came to attack, Chi fled and died, and then Tân and Nan were sent home. The second son of Sô, named Su, surrendered, and Tân died of illness. The court made Su the first king and Nan the second king, dividing the rule of the country between them. At the conclusion of this annotation, the author or compiler notes the discrepancies between these events and those in the main text above it.

At least in broad outline, the events in Cambodia described in the *Mạc gia phả* match events in Cambodia 60 years earlier, at roughly the same point in the previous calendrical cycle, circa 1594. Given the similarities between this second story and the events in 1593-1594, *giáp dần* might be a copying error, or a deliberate correction, of *giáp ngọ* 1594. While the differences between the *Thông Chí* annotation and *Mạc gia phả* story are significant, the two stories have enough points of similarity that both may be references to the historical events of 1594.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, no visitors remained in Cambodia throughout this period, and there are some glaring inconsistencies between the Cambodian chronicles and European reports. Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 48-80.

<sup>7</sup> *Thông Chí*, III:4a-b.

## Similarities between the Mạc Intervention and the 1594 Crisis

The Cambodian king who took power in 1594, called Rām Joeñ Brai in the Cambodian *P57* chronicle and *F1170* fragment, bears similarities to the king Giao Ba in the Mạc text. In the late *VJ* text, however, the same king is called Jăy, a name similar to the equivalent figure in the *Thống Chí*, Chi. As Mak Phouen notes, *P57* states Rām Joeñ Brai was the son of a “king” known as Abhayadas in the province of Treang in the lower Mekong delta. The kings described in the *Thống Chí* are also named in later Cambodian texts that contradict *P57* and *F1170*. Later texts claim that following Rām Joeñ Brai’s death, two kings named Tan and Non each reigned briefly. Thus, the *giáp ngo/giáp dân* ambiguity found in the *Thống Chí*, *Giáp Ngộ* itinerary, and Mạc *gia phả*, in which kings named Tan and Non, usually described in the 1670s, are also sometimes associated with the 1590s, extends to Cambodian texts.<sup>8</sup>

Reports surrounding a Spanish expedition to Cambodia in 1596 provide a useful check against the chronicles, but they must also be read with caution. The European visitors often relied on third party information, and reports by members of the expedition, which describe a rash attempted regicide, are not always trustworthy. Diego Aduarte, the Dominican who provides the only uncontested firsthand account of the expedition to Cambodia, goes to great lengths to portray himself as a righteous Christian soldier. A journey by Blas Ruiz and Diego Belloso from Cochinchina through Laos to Srei Santhor is described in Morga’s account based on letters from Blas Ruiz. There has been a tendency by historians to assume a direct equivalence between the kings and princes named in European texts and those named in Southeast Asian texts, which seems to me to have the potential to be misleading. Since I rely on secondary literature on the

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<sup>8</sup> Michael Vickery and Mak Phouen note that the *P57* chronicle and *F1170* fragment appear to be the oldest of the extant Cambodian chronicle versions. Since they may be considered likely to be more accurate, I focus on their treatment of these two texts. The Mạc *gia phả* states that Giao Ba was the king’s brother-in-law. In *P57*, during Sathhâ’s escape, Rām Joeñ Brai was given two of the king’s principal wives, as well as two princes, Nan and Nūr. *F1170* describes Nan and Nūr as Rām Joeñ Brai’s own sons. Given Joeñ Brai’s connection with the Mekong, it is noteworthy that Mạc Cảnh Vinh is said to go to Đồng Nai to enthrone Giao Ba. The toponym Traeng survives today in the province of Sóc Trang. Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, *ibid*.

Cambodian and Spanish texts, however, I may not have avoided all such faulty equivalences entirely in the discussion below.<sup>9</sup>

A dispute between the Spanish government in Manila and CochinChina has been explained only from the perspective of the Spanish regime. In Antonio de Morga's account, the governor since 1590, Gomez Perez Dasmariñas, secretly renewed Spanish efforts to conquer the fortress of Terrenate in the Molaccas in 1593. He sent around 1,000 men on 200 ships, commanded by his son Don Luys Dasmariñas, at an unspecified date in 1593. The governor supposedly followed his son's armada at a later date, travelling in a single galley with a small group of companions. En route, Morga claims, Chinese rowers on the galley mutinied, "from a desire to save themselves the labor of rowing on this expedition, or from coveting the money, jewels and other articles on board," killing the governor and others, yet (conveniently) dropping off a small number of eyewitnesses at the next port. The rowers then supposedly tried to reach China, but failed, stopping at CochinChina, where the "king of Tonkin" seized the dead governor's galley, royal standard, and weapons, and the Chinese dispersed.<sup>10</sup>

As arguments arose over who would become acting governor in Manila, the dead governor's son returned. Morga describes a suspicious fleet of ships from China arriving just behind him; seeing that the Spanish fleet had returned to Manila they left abruptly without conducting any business. The Spanish king's council, having earlier received complaints from rivals in Manila regarding the elder Dasmariñas, had by this time appointed Morga as lieutenant-governor to provide a check on the governor. Dasmariñas' son believed the galley had been taken to Chincheo (probably Fujian), and had letters sent there and to Guangdong, to no effect. Some Chinese captured in Malacca were

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<sup>9</sup> A second narrative of the journey through Laos, which first appears in print only in the 19th century, is allegedly written by a member of the expedition named as Christoval or Miguel de Jaque de los Ríos Mancaned, but has been suspected as a forgery. Diego Aduarte, "An Eyewitness Account of the Cambodian Expedition," *General History of the Philippines*, part I, vol.3 (Manila: Historical Conservation Society, 1988), 13-45; Gabriel Quiroga de San Antonio, trans. Antoine Cabaton, *A Brief and Truthful Relation of Events in the Kingdom of Cambodia* (Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 1998); Henri Ternaux-Compans, *Archives des Voyages*, vols. 1 - 2, (Paris: Bouchard-Huzard, 1840); Morga, *The Philippine Islands*; L.P. Briggs, "Spanish Intervention in Cambodia," *T'oung Pao* (1949) 132-160; Robert Richmond Ellis, "Cambodia in the Writings of Diego Aduarte and Gabriel Quiroga de San Antonio." *Hispanic Research Journal* 8:3 (June 2007):217-231; Jenny Klages, "Cambodia, Catholicism, and Conquistadores: Spanish-Cambodian Interactions from the Late Sixteenth to the Mid-Seventeenth Century," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawaii, 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Morga, *Philippine Islands*, 32-55.

brought to Manila and executed for this crime; presumably, they were forced to confess. If the galley was at this point in Quảng Nam, as claimed later, the Manila regime appears to have not been aware, since it launched an expedition to Cambodia.<sup>11</sup>

The informants who reported to Manila on Ayutthaya's invasion of Lovek are not very credible. Blas Ruiz and two other Spaniards claimed to have been captured by the king of Siam during the attack on Phnom Penh and placed on the king's junk, which the three of them commandeered after overpowering and killing first Siam's forces, and then the Chinese crew, arriving in Manila in 1594. Diego Beloso claimed that he was an adopted son of the Cambodian king; instead of being placed on the junk with the other Europeans, he had been carried overland by the invading king. That king, concerned when his junk did not arrive by sea, was convinced that since Beloso knew the archipelago well, he should be appointed to head a mission to search for the lost junk. Beloso was entrusted with a second junk, with elephants as a gift for the Manila governor and assorted trade goods to sell in exchange for a large colored stone Beloso had described to the king, which the king wished to make into the hilt of a sword. Beloso set out with the king's officer and navigators, but was driven to Malacca by a storm, where the king's officer, hearing of the fate of the other junk, insisted on selling off the trade goods and returning to Siam. The officer died mysteriously in his sleep the same night, and Beloso continued to Manila, where he met Blas Ruiz. The two men planned an invasion of Cambodia with the support of Dasmariñas and the Dominicans, but, according to Morga, opposed by others in Manila.<sup>12</sup>

Aduarte reports hearing that the Ayutthayan king had earlier been driven out by a Cambodian with a large army returning from the mountains, who then declared himself king. Details of the Spanish expedition to Cambodia differ somewhat in various accounts, but it ended with an attack on Chinese merchants, and then Srei Santhor itself, setting fire to the royal residence and commandeering Chinese ships. The Spaniards do not actually report killing the king, though later Cambodian chronicle texts claim that the king was assassinated by two Europeans. To speculate, the claim in later Cambodian texts that two Europeans assassinated the king may well have its origins in Spanish accounts. If Rām

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<sup>11</sup> Morga presents the governor's untimely death as a tragedy for Spain. Morga, *Philippine Islands*, *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Morga, *Philippine Islands*, *ibid.*

Joeñ Brai were killed, it seems to have happened after their departure, and the end of Rām Joeñ Brai's reign, and how the young princes, his real or adopted sons, came to replace him in Srei Santhor, is not satisfactorily explained by any source. The *Thông Chí* annotation describing the king fleeing an attack from Nam Việt, with the Nam Việt troops installing two princes as kings, is not contradicted by other sources.<sup>13</sup>

Blas Ruiz describes a man called Chupinaqueo, whom he considers another relative of the dead king (Satthā). Upon learning of the king's death, Chupinaqueo raised an army in an unknown province and allegedly came to search for the Spaniards, hoping they would join him in attacking the usurper and placing the man considered the rightful heir, called Prauncar, on the throne. Mak Phoeun suggests that Prauncar is Satthā's son Tan (Paramarājā V). Blas Ruiz apparently never saw Chupinaqueo; he repeats a story that on arriving in Phnom Penh, and not finding the Spaniards, Chupinaqueo seized all the Chinese persons living there and took them back to his unnamed province.<sup>14</sup>

Blas Ruiz claimed that two Malay officials had led a revolt in the capital of Champa in 1593 or 1594, bringing hostages and artillery back to Cambodia, where they were supposedly received warmly by Anacapan (according to Mak Phoeun, Rām Joeñ Brai). Anacapan sent the Malay officials back again in early 1596 to attack Champa under the command of an Ocuña de Chu (for Mak Phoeun, *Oknha* Tejo). Cambodian and Cham chronicles do not mention this attack, although an attack on Champa led by Mạc Cảnh Vinh is noted in the *Mạc gia phả*. Blas Ruiz described Chupinanu, the son of Anacapan, taking power in Srei Santhor with the support of the Ocuña de Chu, who had returned from the attack on Champa upon hearing of the former king's death. A cousin of the dead king who opposed Chupinanu was said to have fled to Laos, and later met the Spaniards there.<sup>15</sup>

Cambodian texts are divided over whether Satthā and some of his relatives fled to Laos, or merely to Stung Treng, and *P57* suggests he stopped in Sambaur before moving

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<sup>13</sup> San Antonio claims that the Portuguese adventurer Diego Beloso was sent a gold seal by this new king and made governor of the province of Barrarra (Bà Rịa), upon his arrival there. L. P. Briggs and Mak Phoeun do not accept the story, since San Antonio was not actually present and the other accounts do not mention this. Some accounts claim Beloso's ship was wrecked in Barrarra, but others claimed it was wrecked near Cà Mau, which Briggs suggests means the entire lower delta was called the province of Barrarra. Briggs, "Spanish Intervention in Cambodia," Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Morga, *Philippine Islands*, 92-112; Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, *ibid.*

on to Laos. Mak Phoeun notes that Wuysthoff, in 1641, describes a site near the Lao border called Boetjong or Baetjong, in which a Cambodian king was said to have resided at the end of the previous century. *P57* states that Nūr, a son of Satthā taken by Rām Joeñ Brai, took the throne in Srei Santhor as Rām Rājādhirāj, while his half-brother Nan held power in Kampong Svay, though Blas Ruiz later places the two brothers together in Srei Santhor. *F1170* provides a similar account, but calls Nūr the son of Rām Joeñ Brai. Mak Phoeun suggests that Nūr is the man Blas Ruiz calls Chupinanu.

Blas Ruiz gives a secondhand report of an attack on Srei Santhor, and an attack which scattered the Iberian as well as Japanese traders resident Cambodia. A new unnamed regional king was said to arrive from an area described as the large province of Tele, which does not correspond to any known place name. The Tele army reportedly conquered Srei Santhor, seized Chupinanu's elephants and artillery, in the process killing almost all the Europeans and Japanese remaining in the region. Chupinanu and six brothers were forced to retreat to another unnamed province with the Ocuña de Chu, where they were also supported by two senior Malay officials. Mak Phoeun suggests this story is not supported, because the chronicles have a different description of the end of Nūr's (in his view, Chupinanu's) reign.<sup>16</sup>

### The Spanish in Cochinchina

According to Morga, Blas Ruiz and Diego Beloso rejoined the expedition's commander, general Gallinato, and persuaded him to move on to Cachan to negotiate with the king of Tonkin, described as the chief king of that kingdom, for the return of the dead governor's ship, royal standard and artillery. This would imply that Blas Ruiz had learned of the location of the galley while in Cambodia, and this became the new overriding objective. Aduarte, however, states that Gallinato travelled to Cochinchina simply to take on provisions there, although he also describes Gallinato in negotiations with "the king of Tonkin," whom he apparently understood to be present in Quảng Nam at that time, over the galley. According to Morga, after arrival in Cachan, the general

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<sup>16</sup> Morga, *Philippine Islands*, 92-112.

refused to leave his galley and sent a captain Vargas ashore instead to negotiate with this king of Tonkin, who became hostile and nearly killed Vargas.<sup>17</sup>

The capital of Cochinchina would be described by Christopher Borri, two decades later, as “Cacchiam, the city where the king lives, six or seven leagues from Turon by boat up the river,” describing the location of the Quảng Nam citadel. In San Antonio’s secondhand report, Gallinato allegedly discovered the galley “by chance” and learned that its contents had been shared between the three kings of Tonkin, Sinoa and Cachan. He is described as sending Vargas as an ambassador to the King of Tonkin; however, from context, it is clear that this king was also in Cachan, since there is no mention of leaving the port or making the long trip to Thăng Long. Morga reports that a chief woman of Cochinchina came to see Gallinato, warning him that the king would seize his ships, and in fact hostilities did break out, forcing Gallinato to return to Manila. In San Antonio’s version, the fighting was the result of a Spanish quarrel with Japanese sailors, and the two sides battled at sea with the kings of Sinoa and Cachan standing on shore hoping the Japanese would win.<sup>18</sup>

During the negotiations for the galley, Diego Beloso and Blas Ruiz were permitted to go seeking the former king, believing him to be still alive. Departing from Cachan, they travelled into Laos. These two men visited the king of Sinoa, the son of the king of Tonkin who gave them safe passage to Laos. In the (disputed) Jaque narrative, they were provided an escort by the king, and travelled from Cachan to Laos with a caravan of elephants.<sup>19</sup>

Cadière’s analysis of this episode is predicated on the assumption that Sinoa must refer to Thuận Hóa. In his view, the viceroy whom the expedition met was Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên, and de Vargas travelled on to Đàng Ngoài in order to meet Nguyễn Hoàng in Thăng Long. Cadière reaches this conclusion because Hoàng is described in the *Thực Lục* as having been in the middle of an extended stay in Thăng Long in that year. Groslier writes that the fleet left Faifo and went up to Quảng Trị, where Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên

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<sup>17</sup> San Antonio’s description of Gallinato taking on supplies by force in Champa, at 11 degrees latitude, which would be Phan Rang, is not mentioned in other accounts, and it serves principally as a vehicle for San Antonio to provide a gratuitous description of vile Cham cultural practices unrelated to this narrative. San Antonio, *A Brief and Truthful Relation*, 24-25.

<sup>18</sup> Dror and Taylor, *Views of Seventeenth-century Vietnam*, 149; San Antonio, 25-27.

<sup>19</sup> Morga, *Philippine Islands*, 92-112.

welcomed them. However, it appears Groslier is simply following Cadière's reconstruction, since this would contradict Morga, who merely notes the men were allowed to go ashore while their galley was anchored off the coast at Faifo. It is conceivable that these men could have travelled from Faifo to Quảng Trị, as Cadière suggests, and from there along the Thạch Hãn River to Sepone, then to the Mekong at today's Savannakhet, and from there to Vientiane. However, the assertion that Nguyễn Hoàng was resident in Thăng Long at this time, discussed further in the next section, needs to be reconsidered. In addition, since the *Mạc gia phả* places Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên in Quảng Nam at this time, the expedition to Cachan could have had met with Nguyễn (or alternately, another person of the Mạc clan) while in Faifo.<sup>20</sup>

Antonio de Morga describes Diego Beloso and Blas Ruiz arriving in Alanchan, the capital of the kingdom of Lao, where they met the king of that country. Briggs suggests there is no doubt that they arrived in Vientiane, because the country was said to be depopulated (he cites the Jaque text in making this point), noting that Vientiane had been raided (in 1574, in the course of the wars of Auyutthaya and Pegu).<sup>21</sup>

In my view, it is possible that the group did not actually travel to Vientiane. Discussions of the expedition assume southern Laos was under the direct control of Vientiane at this time, when there is some evidence, notably the account from Mendes Pinto, that this was not the case. Blas Ruiz makes no comment about whether he and Diego Beloso passed through the kingdom of Champassak. Archaimbault's reconstruction of Champassak history includes kings said to have ruled there in the late 16th century, but he does not establish a clear chronology. Rather than going to Vientiane, the party might have travelled from Hội An to Attapeu, reaching the Mekong at Stung Treng or Champassak. It is also possible that the group may have travelled to Quảng Trị and Sepone before reaching the Mekong, but their arrival at Vientiane is not necessarily a better fit with what we know about the region in the 1590s. Sinoa in this instance is probably not Cadière's Thuận Hóa, which the Spaniards did not visit, but rather Thăng Hoa (pronounced Singwa in Cantonese), which the Spaniards would pass if

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<sup>20</sup> Cadière, "Les Residences de Rois," 105 ; B-P Groslier, trans. Michael Smithies, *Angkor and Cambodia in the Sixteenth Century According to Portuguese and Spanish Sources* (Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2006), 38-40.

<sup>21</sup> Briggs accepts the which he believes would have been the result of Peguan raids



they had traveled up the Thu Bồn. Since Quảng Nam was under Mạc control at this time, the ruler there may well have been a son of the Mạc king of Tonkin, as reported by Morga.<sup>22 23</sup>

Blas Ruiz describes meeting a party of Cambodian royalty in exile, although their precise identities are unclear. They appear, in Mak Phoeun's terms, to include a man considered to be a cousin of Saththā, Saththā's young son Tan, and women including Tan's grandmother, aunt and mother. The Ocuña de Chu, who had previously led an attack on Champa, suddenly arrived in Laos at this point, with "ten praus well equipped with artillery and weapons to fetch their lawful king." After reinstating the prince as the new king, the Ocuña de Chu departs again for Laos a second time to retrieve the king's crown. There are some similarities between this story and the *Thông Chí* annotation, which states that Nam Việt troops came to attack, causing the king Chi (Rām Joeñ Brai) to flee, and the king Tân (Tan) was sent home. The *Thông Chí* contradicts *F1170, P57*, and the Spaniards and does not mention Nūr becoming king. However, it agrees with later Cambodian chronicle texts that Tan was the next king after Chi. The *Thông Chí* describes a second king, Non (Nan), ruling in Saigon; this does not necessarily contradict Morga, who describes Nan leaving Srei Santhor and declaring himself king in another unnamed province.<sup>24</sup>

Morga describes an unnamed governor of an unnamed province, with 4,000 troops, who built a hill fort. Tan's forces were said to approach this fort, but the governor attacked Chupinanu (for Mak Phoeun, Nūr) instead of Prauncar (Tan), who fled to the mountains, and Prauncar ordered Chupinanu to be found and killed. Mak Phoeun suggests that although Nūr was killed, Nan continued to fight in Kampong Svay until the arrival of Suriyopear from Siam in 1602. The influence of the chief Malay official throughout these rapid events is unclear. Morga emphasizes the Malay official's support

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<sup>22</sup> The Jaque account was described as a forgery in Cabaton's 1908 study, but accepted by Groslier. San Antonio's version claims that a few days after being sent to Laos, the two men reported that Saththā was alive and had married his oldest son to the daughter of the king of Laos; his brother had returned from Siam where he was held captive and they planned to visit him. Morga, *Philippine Islands*, *ibid*; Ternaux-Compans, *Archives des Voyages*, *ibid*; Ellis, "Cambodia in the Writings of Diego Aduarte."

<sup>23</sup> These Cambodian royal women reportedly wished to appeal for aid from Manila, though this might have been simply Blas Ruiz flattering the Spanish regime. Charles Archambault, "L'Histoire de Cāmpasāk," *Journal Asiatique* (1961), 578; Morga, *Philippine Islands*, *ibid*.

<sup>24</sup> Morga, *Philippine Islands*, *ibid*; Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, *ibid*.

for Tan's "stepmother" and suggests that there was a relationship between them. The lack of clarity over this aspect highlights our poor understanding of the Malay and Cham factions.

*P57* and *F1170* claim Nūr was killed by Kaev Braḥ Bhloēñ, said to be a regional ruler. Mak Phoeun argues that this was a different person than Chupinaqueo, because Chupinaqueo was called a relative of the dead king (Satthā), whereas Kaev Braḥ Bhloēñ was reportedly merely a provincial ruler who had declared himself king. He also suggests Kaev Braḥ Bhloēñ was a different person than the king of Tele described by Morga, because the Spanish report of the king of Tele is not compatible with the chronological sequence described in the chronicle texts.

The relevant passage of *P57*, in Mak Phoeun's translation, claims an inhabitant of the western side [of the Mekong] declared himself king Kaev Braḥ Bhloēñ, and forced several governors of the provinces west of the Mekong to submit to him. At the same time, Nūr tried to forcibly take Nan Ddav, the wife of a man called Bana Sthiy, imprisoning the husband who then escaped to join Kaev Braḥ Bhloēñ. This rival king led his troops "across" – Mak Phoeun suggests this refers to travel across the Mekong River, but this is not spelled out in the text – to launch a surprise attack on Nūr, who died, before crossing again to return.<sup>25</sup>

*F1170* says Kaev Braḥ Bhloēñ was a *Chong*, which Michael Vickery and Mak Phoeun consider a reference to the Chong people, a Pearic minority group found today in areas including parts of western Cambodia and near Preah Vihear. However, Mak Phoeun also notes that the description of this king's connection with minority peoples appears only in *F1170*. Ayutthayan court officials who contributed to the text may not have had knowledge or interest in the names of ethnic, linguistic or regional groupings in Cambodia and Laos, so perhaps we cannot be certain of exactly what was meant by *Chong* in that original text, beyond, perhaps, some kind of barbarian or outsider. Vickery suggests the name Braḥ Bhloēñ, literally God of Fire, could be related to the King of Fire, a figure important to multiple groups in the region. Those include the Jarai on the Kontum Plateau, although this is not an aspect of Vickery's argument, since he posits this figure originating in western Cambodia. The King of Fire is also described in the *Giáp*

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<sup>25</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, *ibid*; *idem*, *Chroniques Royales du Cambodge*, 225.

*Ngọ* itinerary, but that text describes the coast, and does not include details on overland routes.<sup>26</sup>

Mak Phoeun also speculates that Kaev Braḥ Bhloeñ may have been connected to a hypothetical upland polity appearing in scattered European references across hundreds of years. He notes that Jean-Baptiste Pallegoix wrote that Kĕo (or *Kaev*) could indicate a Lao tribe in the 19th century. Simon de Loubère, wrote that there were two kingdoms on Siam's eastern border, Cambodia and "Keo." Mak Phoeun also cites John Villiers, who notes that there was a state called Phookeow, between Battambang and Luang Prabang, which paid tribute to Siam in the 17th century.<sup>27</sup>

In this discussion, I have tried to place some of the unconventional aspects of the *Mạc gia phả* and the *Thông Chí* passage in broader context. As far as I know, to date no one has suggested that some of the regional kings and generals intervening in royal succession in the Cambodian chronicle texts and Spanish reports of this era may have originated in Cochinchina. However, the fact that these events are described only in pre-Historical Office sources, and bear no relation to the content of the official Nguyễn histories, suggest at least the possibility that these events are related to the Mạc activities that were problematic for the Nguyễn court.

One obstacle to resolving these questions is the difficulty in interpreting the *Giáp Ngọ* itinerary of routes to Cambodia attributed to the *Đoan* Duke, which includes features associated with the *giáp ngọ* year of 1594 in some texts, and the *giáp dân* year of 1674 in others. These events, as described in the *Mạc gia phả* and the *Thông Chí*, could not have taken place in either 1654 (the next *giáp ngọ* year) or 1674, because they are unequivocally contradicted by Dutch and other sources. If they occurred the late 16th century, a dramatic revision of the "southern expansion" narrative is required. In any case, Nguyễn dynastic sources are not a trustworthy guide to the internal affairs of Cochinchina, or its relations with neighboring states, in the 16th and 17th centuries.

## The Lê Conquest of Hải Dương

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<sup>26</sup> Vickery, "Mak Phoeun," 406-407.

<sup>27</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 76.

Before 1593, the *Diễn Chí* places Nguyễn Hoàng in Thuận Hóa, conspiring with a Lê official who later defected to Hoàng to circumvent payment of the taxes that would have funded campaigns against the Mạc for control of Đông Kinh and Hải Dương. The *Ming Shi-lu* does not provide significant details though it mentions war breaking out between the Lê and Mạc circa 1591. The Mạc *gia phả* briefly describes Hoàng entrusting his wife, called Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Quý in this text only, and his children to Mạc Cảnh Huống and Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Dương from 1593 to 1600, while he traveled to Tây Kinh in Thanh Hóa.<sup>28</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, Trịnh Tung's general Hoàng Đình Ái led campaigns against Mạc Kính Chỉ at Thanh Lâm district in Hải Dương in 1593; this does not appear in the *Thông Sử*, which ends with the brief reign and death of Mạc Mậu Hợp's son Toàn in 1592. In the *Toàn Thư*, Trịnh forces defeated Mạc Mậu Hợp, who was killed at "Bồ Đề." His head was sent for public display at the Lê center Vạn Lại in Thanh Hóa. Another prince, Mạc Kính Chỉ, had escaped and declared himself king in Hải Dương, adopting two reign names in rapid succession, but was killed in battle in 1593, his head also brought to Vạn Lại. Mạc Ngọc Liên discovered Mạc Kính Cung in Yunnan, although it is not explained why he would be there, declaring him ruler with the *Càn Thống* reign, and the Mạc again controlled, according to this text, the region west of Đông Kinh. In the list of Mạc Kính Điển's sons in the *Toàn Thư* and appended to the *Thông sử*, Mạc Kính Cung is the seventh of nine sons. Hoàng Đình Ái and the others who fought against Mạc Kính Chỉ were then honored with new titles.<sup>29</sup>

The *Doan* Duke Nguyễn Hoàng brought his own forces from Thuận Hoá to the capital, submitting registers accounting for his men and treasure in Thuận Hoá and Quảng Nam. The *Toàn Thư* states that Trịnh Tùng arranged for him to be proclaimed *Doan* Grand Duke and sent him to command his southern navy to attack the Mạc in Hải Dương and Sơn Nam. Hoàng supposedly destroyed them all, killing uncountable tens of thousands. A son of Mạc Ngọc Liên, *Quận Lập* or *Lập* Duke, was killed by the Mạc for rebelling, while his sons escaped. In 1594, Mạc Ngọc Liên was driven by General of the Right Hoàng Đình Ái into Ming territory (*Siming fu*), where he is said to have accepted a

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<sup>28</sup> *Diễn Chí*, XXX; Huỳnh Công Bá, "Về Quyển Gia Phả,"

<sup>29</sup> *Toàn Thư*, 26a-28b; *Thông Sử*, Mạc Kính Điển:125b-126a.

Ming command position but would soon die of illness. Hải Dương and Sơn Nam remained under Mạc control. Both Hoàng Đình Ái and Nguyễn Hoàng continued to launch attacks on Mạc Ngọc Liễn and others, and Mạc Kính Cung's regime soon moved into the Ming territories in Longzhou, west of Cao Bằng, with local people there joining in his raids. By the end of 1595, Phạm Ngạn commanded Hải Dương for the Trịnh and killed Mạc Kính Chương.<sup>30</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* describes the Trịnh general, the *Vinh* Grand Duke, which was the title given to Hoàng Đình Ái in the *Thực Lục*, and the Mạc king *Hùng Lễ* in Hải Dương in 1592 and 1593. *Hùng Lễ* was defeated, but escaped and was pursued to the districts of Chí Linh and Đông Triều, where he was captured and killed. The *Trường* Grand Duke Trịnh Tùng reportedly returned to Đông Kinh and repaired that capital. It then describes Hoàng visiting Lê *Anh Tông* in the capital; it is not clear whether Tây Kinh or Đông Kinh is meant, since Trịnh Tùng had repaired the Đông Kinh, but the king is not described moving there. The *Diễn Chí* describes Trịnh Tùng, petitioning the king to bestow ranks and titles on officials of great merit. He is not described bestowing any honor on Hoàng. Hoàng then renews his relationship with the retired Lê official who formerly visited him in Thuận Hóa, Nguyễn Tạo. Hoàng was still in the capital at the time Tùng conferred the honors, but he is not described receiving any honor himself. In 1595, Trịnh Tùng forced the king to cede power to him as *Bình An* Prince (though this title mentioned in the *Toàn Thư* only in 1599). Hoàng is no longer described in the capital at this point in the *Diễn Chí*, suggesting that in that text he had paid only a short visit to the king, met Nguyễn Tạo, and then returned. Hoàng does not bring his forces to attack the Mạc, receives no command, and takes part in no battles; none of the attacks on Mạc forces in Hải Dương or Sơn Nam in the *Toàn Thư* after the death of Mạc Kính Cung occur in the *Diễn Chí*.<sup>31</sup>

The *Tap Lục* devotes only a few lines to this period, noting that in 1592 the *Thánh Tổ Triết* Prince (Trịnh Tùng) attacked the east, capturing Mạc Mậu Hợp, and the Trịnh king returned to the capital in 1593. These ambiguous statements do not clarify whether Trịnh Tùng's royal residence was at this point in Tây Kinh or Đông Kinh, and the Lê

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<sup>30</sup> In 1594, the king sent Nguyễn Hoàng to bring a gold-leaf book conferring posthumous honors on Trịnh Kiểm, and Nguyễn Mậu Tuyên brought an edict conferring on *Hùng* Grand Duke Nguyễn Kim the title *Chiêu Huân Phụ Tiết Tĩnh Công*. There is also a reference to Nguyễn Hoàng designing a two wheeled carriage for Trịnh Tùng. *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, 33.

<sup>31</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 44-45, 63-64.

king is not mentioned at all. Nguyễn Hoàng then returned to the court – it is not clear in which location – at the age of 70 (which, incidentally, would fix his birth two years before the date given in the *Thực Lục*). He was retained by the court as Great General of the Right (*Thái Úy Hữu Tướng*) and promoted from Duke to Grand Duke, but still held authority over Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam as before. The text states that during the time he remained in the capital, Hoàng followed the Trịnh to Lạng Sơn and led campaigns in Hải Dương and Tuyên Quang. The *Tạp Lục*'s only major departures from the *Toàn Thư* are the scale of the battles fought by Hoàng and the identification of Sơn Nam rather than Tuyên Quang, as the location of a campaign.<sup>32</sup>

It is only in 1596, when the Ming court notes Trịnh Tùng's relationship to the Lê king, that documented history of the *chúa* regime in Tonkin can really be said to begin. The story of the Trịnh *chúa*'s origins are described a story that has multiple variations, including some versions beginning with a ruler called Trịnh Kiểm or Trịnh Bân, and some that claim a marriage alliance between the *chúa* and a Thanh Hóa Nguyễn general. The element of that general having a young boy who escaped to become the ruler of Cochinchina (Thuận Hóa) is far from universal, and even into the mid-19th century, before the Nguyễn Historical Office standard narrative became widely known outside the court, variations on that aspect of the story were commonplace. After retaking the north by 1596, this Trịnh ruler continued to battle Mạc princes or kings who are known to have held power in Cao Bằng, Qinzhou and Quảng Nam.<sup>33</sup>

### Conflicting Accounts of the Lê Enfeoffment

In 1596, the Ming court reported that the Lê hand Mạc had been fighting each other in “Giao Nam” for only five years, or since about 1591, and the court had been aware of it for three. The Ming believed that Trịnh Tùng then assassinated the legitimate

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<sup>32</sup> The *Toàn Thư* notes Mạc Kính Cung, Mạc Ngọc Liễn, and the Second King, Mạc Kính Khoan, among others, survived. *Toàn Thư*, XVII:37a-76b; *Tạp Lục*, I:24b-25a.

<sup>33</sup> MSL In Eugene Veillot's 1858 study of Tonkin and Cochinchina, Trịnh Kiểm took power from his father-in-law, who for Veillot was also named Trịnh, and established the hereditary office of *chúa* between 1535 and 1560. A viceroy of Cochinchina, Nguyen-hô-Ang, is described as a viceroy of Cochinchina that revolted against Trịnh Kiểm out of allegiance to the Lê ruler in 1600. Veillot accepts Nguyen-hô-Ang (Hoàng) as a historical figure renouncing the Trịnh *chúa*, but describes no family relationship between this figure and Trịnh Kiểm. Veillot, *Le Cochinchine et le Tonkin*, 23.

Tonkin ruler, and sought to have his surrogate Lê Duy Đàm recognized in that ruler's place. When communication with the Lê began in 1596, Đàm returned unspecified stolen territory and appeared at the border for inspection, claiming to have lost the Lê Commander's seal. In one memorial, Đàm was called a renegade pawn of Trịnh Tùng, who killed the legitimate ruler and seized a seal. The official reporting on the inspection claimed that Trịnh Tùng called Đàm urgently back to the capital in the middle of the night, allegedly fearing that if Đàm received Ming approval, this would interfere with his own ability to manipulate the Lê ruler, although his motive was the source of confusion. By the end of 1597, however, Đàm was approved as Annam Commander, partially out of recognition that the Mạc were weakened and the Lê had grown more powerful. His previous visit to the border is mentioned a second time, in a memorial which notes that the Ming emperor ordered the casting of a new seal. The ambassador Phùng Khắc Khoan visits the Ming court the following month, although Khoan receives no special honors.<sup>34</sup>

The *Hoan Châu Ký* has the king return to reside in Đông Kinh in the middle of 1593; the *Đoan* Grand Duke Nguyễn Hoàng is not among the generals and officers of that court and Hoàng Đình Ái receives the title General of the Right. It places Phùng Khắc Khoan's visit to the Ming court at the end of 1597. The Ming emperor gave Lê Duy Đàm the old Mạc rank of Commander (Đô Thống), but Khoan argued that he should be recognized as king.

The *Toàn Thư* places a border visit in 1596 and states that initially, Hoàng Đình Ái and his troops approached the border along with two princes (*hoàng huynh*) Lê Ngạnh and Lê Lựu, as well as Phùng Khắc Khoan, called an official of the Ministry of Works, who brought the seal of the former Annam Commander and sheets bearing the stamp of the Đại Việt's previous king. A Ming officer demanded the king appear in person, and four days later, the king set out with an army of 10,000 troops led by generals including both Hoàng Đình Ái and Nguyễn Hoàng. The Ming side created delays, and the king returned to the capital after waiting with no result. In 1597, an accompanied by a different group of officials approached the border, without Nguyễn Hoàng, but with an unnamed *Hội* Duke, and the *Hoành* (𠵼) Duke, an officer who is called the *Hoằng* (𠵼) Duke in version appearing in the *Nghệ An Ký*. Arriving in Lạng Sơn, enemies called the

<sup>34</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Shen-jong*, 298:3a-4a; 315:4a-b, 316:4b-5a.

*Phúc* King and the *Cao* Grand Duke, neither identified as *Mạc*, attacked them, killing the *Hội* Duke. The *Thuần* Duke and the *Hoành* Duke fled and were relieved of command, while two officers, one of whom was named Nguyễn Văn Giai, escaped and seized a mountainous area. A month later, the king himself led the same group of officers again, this time with 50,000 men and accompanied by a Ming officer named Vương Kiến Lập, and the Ming border official had brought other officials from surrounding prefectures to the Pass. The text continues by describing Phùng Khắc Khoan's embassy to Ming court, and the Ming emperor's praise for him.<sup>35</sup>

In the *Diễn Chí*, Tùng sent an officer named Nguyễn Văn Giai, one of the many appearing in the *Toàn Thư*, to the border in Lạng Sơn to receive a Ming demand for tribute in 1595, and then sent Phùng Khắc Khoan to offer tribute. Khoan was received by the Ming emperor; the text provides an elaborate description of that audience, in which he demonstrated his intelligence and was awarded the rare title of Top Scholar of Two Countries (*Lưỡng Quốc Trạng Nguyên*), the same honor claimed for *Mạc* loyalist Nguyễn Bình Khiêm and royal *Mạc* ancestor *Mạc* Đĩnh Chi. Khoan traveled widely in China, then returned at the end of the year to Đông Kinh, although the king wanted him to stay in China. In 1599, according to the *Diễn Chí*, Hoàng realized that Tùng was turning against him and began to plan a return to Thuận Hóa. The *Diễn Chí* does not describe Hoàng fighting the *Mạc*, or participating in any military or other actions in Đông Kinh; it mentions no role for him in the contact with the Ming.<sup>36</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* states that the Ming court demanded tribute and describes Nguyễn Văn Giai traveling to the Ming border in 1595 to receive "orders." It describes no further visits and omits the appearance and departure of the Lê king mentioned in the *Ming Shi-lu* and *Toàn Thư* in 1596. It gives an elaborate account of the tribute mission by Phùng Khắc Khoan and his audience with the Ming king. The *Diễn Chí* does not describe Nguyễn Hoàng playing any role in these events, which it places in 1595, contradicting the *Ming Shi-lu*.<sup>37</sup> The *Hoảng* Duke appears in the *Toàn Thư* and the *Thông Sử* as both a general fighting against the *Mạc*, and an unnamed *Mạc* general with the same title. In the

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<sup>35</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVII:53a-58b.

<sup>36</sup> Huỳnh Công Bá, "Về Quyển Gia Pha"; *Diễn Chí*, 65-76

<sup>37</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 39, *Toàn Thư*, *Thế Tông Nghị Hoàng Đế*:55b-57a



*Diễn Chí*, a *Hoàng* Duke is appointed governor in Quảng Ninh after a battle with Mạc forces there.

A different narrative appears in the *Nghệ An Ký*, which includes detailed biographies compiled in the early 19th century of some Nghệ An officials involved in events of this and other periods. The *Nghệ An Ký* describes in detail the attacks on sons of Mạc Kính Điển, omits any mention of Nguyễn Hoàng's presence in those attacks, which he was said to lead in the *Toàn Thư*. The *Lê Triều Trung Hưng* also describes these attacks on the Mạc in detail without mentioning Nguyễn Hoàng's involvement. The *Nghệ An Ký* additionally fails to mention Nguyễn Hoàng's presence during the border visit, on which it cites the *Toàn Thư* explicitly. In 1596, in this text, Mạc subjects reported to the Ming that the Lê restoration was a Trịnh deception, so the Ming repeatedly demanded to inspect the Lê claim. Đỗ Uông, head of the Board of Finance, and Nguyễn Văn Giai, went to Nam Quan Pass and met the Ming officer there. The Lê king then sent General of the Right Hoàng Đình Ái, with more than 10,000 troops, for the appointed inspection. The Ming created delays, so after the appointed day passed, they returned to the capital. In 1597, Uông and Giai again went to Quan Pass, escorted by the North *Đạo* general called the *Thuần* Duke Trần Đức Huệ, the *Hội* Duke and the *Hoàng* Duke, to bring the troops to escort them to Lạng Sơn. The Mạc *Phúc* Prince attacked them, killing the *Hội* Duke in battle. The *Thuần* Duke and *Hoàng* Duke both fled. Uông, and Giai, occupying a hill, were unable to respond. In yet another trip, the king himself appeared for inspection, met the Ming officer, and relations became friendly.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, there are essentially two conflicting accounts: in one version, appearing in the *Diễn Chí* and *Nghệ An Ký*, Hoàng did not fight the Mạc or escort the Lê king to the Ming border. In other, as appearing in the *Toàn Thư*, *Tạp Lục* and *Thực Lục*, Hoàng led the wars against Kính Điển's sons and escorted the king. If the *Diễn Chí* account is false, this raises the question of why Nguyễn Khoa Chiêm would have omitted a true story of Hoàng's leadership in fighting Mạc Kính Điển's sons. Another puzzle is why, since the king Lê Duy Đàm's personal appearance at the Ming border is confirmed in the *Ming Shi-lu*, the *Tạp Lục* would state that Hoàng followed the royal carriage of the Trịnh to Lạng Sơn, rather than escorting Lê Duy Đàm. In none of the other versions did Trịnh

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<sup>38</sup> Bùi Dương Lịch, *Nghệ An Ký*, II:39b-41b.

Tùng travel to the pass for the Ming inspection; only in the Ming memorial was it suggested that Tùng was involved at all, and that involvement was explicitly indirect, with Tùng plotting to have Đàm summoned back to the capital urgently in order to foil the inspection.<sup>39</sup>

### Support for a Mạc Revolt in Đông Kinh and the South

Lê-Trịnh forces appear to have most likely lost substantive control of Đông Kinh for a period lasting roughly from 1599 to 1605 and were replaced by a new commander with a dubious claim in that year. In 1605, when the Ming admonished Trịnh Tùng stop attacking border regions, they were informed by a new ruler called Lê Duy Tân his alleged father, Đàm, had died seven years earlier. The new ruler claimed to have been fully occupied putting down the rebellion of Phan Ngạn, who among other exploits allegedly attacked Trịnh Tùng while he was carrying all the formerly issued Ming seals, causing them all to be lost once more. The new ruler denied responsibility for another attack on the Ming by Vi Đạt Lễ (韋達禮).<sup>40</sup>

The Lê, Nguyễn and Nghệ An texts all place Nguyễn Hoàng in the north, although the *Diễn Chí* and Nghệ An texts give him no role in battles against the Mạc or in the Lê enfeoffment. The *Toàn Thư* describes a different Lê official, *Thắng* Duke Mai Cầu, being appointed a senior military commander (*Tổng Binh*) in Thuận Hóa in 1597. In all these texts except the *Thực Lục* (which ignores the Mạc), the Mạc seized Đông Kinh about three years later. The other texts describe the return of a Mạc king to Đông Kinh and a female ruler, seemingly the mother of *Hồng Ninh*, who occupied a capital called Trung Đô. The *Đoan* Duke Nguyễn Hoàng is said in one of several contradictory stories of the Mạc revolt to have tricked Trịnh Tùng into leaving the capital. After the Mạc queen mother was killed, the Mạc king escaped and was eventually captured and killed in a story identical to the account of *Mậu Hợp*'s death. The dates of all these episodes are clearly corrupted. In the early texts, the Trịnh battle the Mạc forces on their southern border, in addition to Hải Dương. This corroborates the other accounts of the Mạc

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<sup>39</sup> *Tạp Lục*, Book I:24b-25b; Bùi Dương Lịch, *Nghệ An Ký*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, 33-34.

<sup>40</sup> *Ming Shi-lu*, *Shen-zong*: 409:8b, 418:3a-b.

presence in Quảng Nam described earlier and suggests that a Mạc king took refuge there.<sup>41</sup>

The *Ming Shi-lu* has very little information about Đông Kinh politics after Phùng Khắc Khoán's visit until 1605, when the Ming admonished Trịnh Tùng stop attacking border regions. That year, Lê Duy Tân reported to the Ming that his father, Annam Commander Lê Duy Đàm, had died seven years earlier. He claimed to have been fully occupied since then with putting down the rebellion of Phan Ngạn, who among other exploits attacked Trịnh Tùng while he was carrying all the formerly issued Ming seals, causing them all to be lost once more. Meanwhile, the new ruler claimed, a figure named Vi Đạt Lễ (韋達禮) had attacked Chinese territory without his permission. Thus, the Lê-Trịnh forces lost control of Đông Kinh for a period lasting roughly from 1599 to 1605 and were replaced by a new commander with a dubious claim in that year.<sup>42</sup>

The Ming ignorance of Mạc Kính Cung or *Kiên Thống* (Cung's reign name in Lê texts) raises questions about the *Hoan Châu Ký* claim that Mạc *Kiên Thống* was in Guangxi by 1598. This king, in the *Hoan Châu Ký*, allegedly asked the Ming court to be allowed to govern Thái Nguyên and Cao Bằng, while attacking the Trịnh in Lạng Sơn. However, Ming records mention a Mạc in Cao Bằng only after 1615, when Mạc Kính Khoan and his allies controlled Cao Bằng, Quảng Nam and what seems to be part of Guangxi (Guishun). (In 1624, Khoán's son died during a Lê attack on these regions, but Khoán continued to rule in Cao Bằng.)

In the *Hoan Châu Ký*, the *Đoan* Grand Duke Nguyễn Hoàng first appears in 1600. Hoàng jealously plotted against Trịnh Tùng; he confided with the scholar Phùng Khắc Khoan (recently returned from China). The scholar told him:

*The mountains [or Hoàng Mountain] are long, one can be at peace; the sea is wide, one can find safety.*<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Mai Cầu is not mentioned by name again, but a *Thắng* Duke is also described fighting on the side of Mạc Kính Cung against Trịnh forces in Hải Dương in 1599. The surname Mai was also reportedly used by the wife and sons of Nguyễn Ư Kỳ, including the governor of Quảng Nam, Mai Đình Dũng, but no connection is made with Mai Cầu. *Toàn Thư*, XVII, 61b.

<sup>42</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Shen-zong*: 409:8b, 418:3a-b.

<sup>43</sup> *Hoành sơn một dải, có thể dung than, biển cả là hào, có thể vạn toàn Biển cả là hào, có thể vạn toàn.* The advice given to Nguyễn Hoàng by Nguyễn Bình Khiêm in the *Diễn Chí* (also in 1600) and the *Thực*

Nguyễn Hoàng then conspired with former Mạc generals surrendered to the Lê, Phan Ngạn and Bùi Văn Khuê. As noted in Chapter Three, this text includes a highly dramatized dialogue between Hoàng and a Mạc sympathizer. Hoàng rhetorically makes claims found in the standard Nguyễn Historical Office narrative: his father, the *Chiêu Huân Tĩnh* Duke (not named in this passage as Nguyễn Kim) found the Lê king in Ai Lao, yet Trịnh Tùng's father (and Hoàng's brother-in-law) seized power; Hoàng went south, but still sent troops to aid in the war with the Mạc. Since earlier chapters barely mention Nguyễn Kim, with one very oblique reference, and give no credit to Hoàng for fighting the Mạc, these elements may well be late additions to the text in the 19th century.

The conspirators in the *Hoan Châu Ký* launched a rebellion against Trịnh Tùng in the *đinh mùi* year 1607, seven years later than the *Toàn Thư* and *Thực Lục*, and five years before Nguyễn Hoàng's death in the *Thực Lục*. Hoàng convinced Tùng to let him put down the rebels, then departed for the south, apparently in the same year, 1607. He went to Thanh Hóa in order to trick the Lê-Trịnh regime to return to Thanh Hóa so that they could prevent Hoàng from occupying that province. A ship from Thuận Hóa was waiting in Thanh Hóa, and the *Đoan* Duke sent troops there, but remained in Thanh Hóa. Fearing that the duke intended to occupy Thanh Hóa, Trịnh Tùng and the king returned there, where three of the duke's sons surrendered. Mạc loyalists in the north then seized the unoccupied Đông Kinh and called *Kiên Thống* back from Longzhou.<sup>44</sup>

A different version of the Mạc takeover is given in the following passage. A female Mạc ruler, Mạc *Hồng Ninh*'s mother, had heard that Trung Đô was empty and occupied it along with other Mạc royalty, taking the title of Mother of the Country (*Quốc Mẫu*). (Trung Đô and Đông Kinh are used as if they refer to two different places, at least in this passage.) She summoned Mạc *Kiên Thống* back from Bắc Quan, and *Kiên Thống* then returned to Đông Kinh. Mạc partisans and princes were given control of the entire coastal region, from Hải Dương to the borders of Thanh Hóa, which they had held before the Lê had occupied Đông Kinh. More than a month later, Trịnh Tùng sent the Yên

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*Lục* (before 1558) is an abbreviated version of this: "The mountains will shelter you for 10 thousand generations." *Hoan Châu Ký*, 190-199.

<sup>44</sup> In a strange episode, the *Kế* Duke Phan Ngạn, in Đông Kinh, saw the wife of the *My* Duke leading troops from the north, and went to attack her, but was killed.

Trường army to capture alive the Mạc Mother in Trung Đô. After that, the forces were sent by a water route to the mouth of the Hát River (a name for the river around Hanoi) and secretly entered Thăng Long by night, defeating its patrols.

After the Mạc defeat, according to the *Hoan Châu Ký*, Lê Hoằng Định was installed in Trung Đô, where the Mother had been captured. This is significant, since the text suggests that Trung Đô is not the same as Thăng Long in this usage. *Kiên Thống* fled east, taking control of Kim Thành a few months later. Trịnh Tùng's forces were defeated by the *Nam Dương* Marquis, a man with the surname Nguyễn. After he seized 40 Lê ships in battle, the Mạc king awarded him the title *Nam Duke* and sent him to hold a place called Nam Xương (or Nam Xang) District, where he killed a rival and assumed command of all the Mạc forces.

This Nam Xương/Xang District was south of the Lê-Trịnh territories. In 1601, Trịnh Tùng launched a campaign against the Mạc by bringing his navy and infantry to attack Mạc on his southern border, killing the *Nam Duke*. (The previous chapter kept Nguyễn Hoàng and the Mạc sympathizers plotting in Đông Kinh from 1600 to 1607, which implies all this took place after 1607. The next chapter returns to 1601, suggesting the dates are badly corrupted.) The Mạc king briefly seized Hà Đông (Hải Dương) and was driven out again. At this time, the king is returned from Thanh Hóa to Đông Kinh. Late in 1601, the Mạc king was found disguised as a monk, hiding in the Mô pagoda in Phương Nhân District; in 1592, in this text (and the *Thông Sử* and the *Toàn Thư*), Mạc Hồng Ninh is captured in an identical fashion in the Mô Khuê pagoda. The Lê king finally returns to Trung Đô rather than Đông Kinh.

The *Diễn Chí* changes the name of the scholar advising the *Đoan Duke* and moves the date forward to the *canh ty* year 1600, the first year of the *Hoằng Định* reign. Nguyễn Hoàng, seeking to protect himself from Tùng, sent treasure to an unnamed Mạc official in 1600 to ask for Nguyễn Bình Khiêm's advice. By most accounts, Khiêm had certainly died by this time, but in the *Diễn Chí*, he sent the reply, "the mountains allow you to remain for 10,000 generations." The phrase "the mountains" (*hoành sơn*) appears to be a literal reference to Hoành Sơn mountain range in Quảng Bình. However, this is an adaptation of the *Hoan Châu Ký* advice, in which mountains and ocean are used metaphorically. Thus, it appears to mean simply that the land was large enough for both

Trịnh Tùng and Nguyễn Hoàng to co-exist; in the story's earlier form, Hoàng was not advised to cross a specific mountain, and simply returned home.<sup>45</sup>

In *Diễn Chí*, Nguyễn Hoàng followed the advice by returning to Thuận Hóa. He called the former Mạc generals to his own camp to conspire, when an emissary from Trịnh Tùng arrived to tell him that they were suspected of plotting a revolt. Hoàng pretended to agree to capture them, but instead took his navy, and defector Nguyễn Tào, directly back to Thuận Hóa. The Mạc sympathizers surrounded the capital, forcing the Lê king to Thanh Hóa. (Tùng met and forgave three of Hoàng's sons there.) En route back to Đông Kinh, Tùng drove out a Mạc general called the *Vân Duke*. Mạc *Kiên Thống* and the mother of Mạc *Hồng Ninh* are not mentioned.<sup>46</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* describes the *Nam Dương* Marquis from Hải Dương being garrisoned in *Nam Đạo* (literally, "southern way") in 1601. Ngô Đức Thọ suggests that *Nam Đạo* might be a copying error for the Hải Dương location *Nam Sách*. However, since the *Hoan Châu Ký* describes the Trịnh attacking a southern border region, *Nam Đạo* is probably not an error. The Trịnh attacked and killed the *Nam Dương* Marquis. In this version, this defeat made Mạc *Kiên Thống* flee to Kim Thành in fear. Trịnh Tráng, Tùng young brother, then drove him out of Kim Thành, and he fled to Cao Bằng. The Mạc navy logically could not have followed *Kiên Thống* to landlocked Cao Bằng.<sup>47</sup>

In the *Tạp Lục*, Nguyễn Hoàng incited Phan Ngạn to rebel, pretended to be defeated, and returned to Ái Tử in Quảng Trị, where Trịnh Tùng sent him a letter of reproach. There is an abrupt reference to eighteen children, a sixth called the *Thụy Duke*, Phúc Nguyên. (The Historical Office gives Hoàng only ten sons and two daughters.) The *Cấm Duke* (not described as Hoàng's son here) and two others were sent to meet Trịnh Tùng in Thanh Hóa, to serve as hostages. In the political narrative of the *Tạp Lục*'s first book, Phúc Nguyên and the line of southern kings that followed him are not called by the surname Nguyễn. (In other chapters of the *Tạp Lục*, this lineage is given the surname

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<sup>45</sup> *Hoành sơn nhất đái, vạn đại dung thân*. The *Diễn Chí* does not describe the Mạc ruler taking the capital in 1607. The *Toàn Thư* notes that Nguyễn Bình Khiêm passed the 1535 examinations, and he is thought to have died in 1585 at the age of 95, but there are conflicting accounts of his year of birth. Trần Thị Băng Thanh and Vũ Thanh, *Nguyễn Bình Khiêm: Về Tác Giả và Tác Phẩm*. [Nguyễn Bình Khiêm, the Author and his Works] (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Giáo Dục, 2001), 11-60.

<sup>46</sup> In a version of a story first appearing in the earlier text, Ngạn killed Khuê in order to claim his wife, Triệu Thị, who then had Ngạn killed as well. *Diễn Chí*, 63-72.

<sup>47</sup> *Diễn Chí*, *ibid*; *Toàn Thư*, XVIII:5a-6a.

Nguyễn; this is one of the inconsistencies suggesting that the chapters of the extant *Tạp Lục* may not have a single common origin.)

In the *Toàn Thư*, Mạc Kính Cung had bribed a Ming native official in 1598, and was allowed to govern Thái Nguyên and Cao Bằng, not Longzhou. In mid-1600, Nguyễn Hoàng ordered the three Mạc sympathizers to rebel, pretended to attack, then fled to Thuận Hóa. In this version, although Phan Ngạn and the others take the capital and use the *Kiên Thống* reign name, the Mạc king does not return. After the rebellion was put down, the king was returned to Thanh Hóa, but to Tây Đô, not Yên Trường as in the *Hoan Châu Ký*. Trịnh Tùng then sent a Lê prince to bring a letter to Nguyễn Hoàng in Quảng Nam (not Thuận Hóa), reproaching Hoàng for abandoning his duty in Thanh Hóa.

The *Toàn Thư* states that the *Uy Vũ* Marquis, corresponding to the *Uy* Duke in the *Hoan Châu Ký*, took power in Hải Dương. The *Toàn Thư* states that the second general was a person of the Mạc lineage, called the *Kỳ Huệ* Prince, not Nguyễn Dựng/Nghiêm, the *Nam Dương* Marquis or *Nam* Duke. This *Kỳ Huệ* Prince took power in Sơn Nam (the lower Red River delta) and called himself *Commander of the Southern Territory* (*Nam Thổ Tiết Chế*). Mạc Mậu Hợp's mother took power, along with Mậu Hợp's oldest son and other royalty. The mother called Mạc Kính Cung back from Cao Bằng to rule. The mother and Cung ruled from the Trung Đô, which is placed here in Trường Yên. In this context the capital seems to be the ancient seat of Hoa Lư in Ninh Bình. Cung then moved to reside in the capital (*kinh sư*).

Trịnh Tùng's forces in Tây Đô reached the Trung Đô, capturing the mother, then reaching the Hát River and retaking the capital, in this context Đông Kinh. The *Hoan Châu Ký*'s wording of the battle resulting in the capture of 40 ships is reversed, with the Lê seizing the ships instead of the Mạc, and Trịnh Tùng being glad instead of the Mạc king; however, the 40 ships are later lost again to the *Nam Dương* Marquis. The *Nam* Duke is introduced as a separate figure, holding the mysterious Nam Xương/Xang District and killing the *Uy Vũ* Duke. Mạc Kính Cung held Kim Thành (assumed to be Hải Dương). In the first month of 1601, Trịnh Tùng killed the *Nam* Duke in battle, but unlike

the *Hoan Châu Ký*, he is not said to attack the southern border region; he then forced Cung to flee from Hải Dương to an unspecified location.<sup>48</sup>

In the *Bản Ký Tục Biên* edition of the *Toàn Thư*, neither Phùng Khắc Khoan nor Nguyễn Bình Khiêm is named giving the advice to Hoàng. He was advised to travel to the distant Hoành Sơn; in this adaptation of the original verse about wide mountains and oceans, the words seem to refer literally to the Hoành Mountain Range in Quảng Bình. Phan Ngạn and the others rebelled twice; the first time, Hoàng was ordered to attack but fled. A week later, he requested permission to attack them, but then fled with 20,000 troops and 300 ships, along with his sons the *Thủy* Duke Phúc Nguyên, and other sons, the *Văn* and *Thạch* dukes, Phúc Hiệp and Phúc Trạch. Worried that Hoàng would occupy Thanh Hóa, Trịnh Tùng returned the king there. (Đỗ Uông remained in Đông Kinh and was killed in a revolt.) Hoàng's three sons were forgiven. Only at this point did Phan Ngạn use the Mạc reign name; the rebels do not take the capital, and no Mạc royalty are mentioned.

Marini's statement that a Trịnh lord was married to the Mạc king is echoed in other 17th century European texts, although not confirmed by the Ming, who became aware of a struggle between the Lê and Mạc in about 1593, and do not comment on Trịnh Tùng's personal background. In the *Bản Ký Tục Biên*, Nguyễn Hoàng, in this text, returned to Cát Encampment in Quảng Trị; his son Phúc Nguyên took military command in Thuận Hoá, and his sons Phúc Hiệp and Phúc Trạch controlled Quảng Nam. Meeting Lê Nghĩa Trạch, Hoàng asked Trịnh Tùng to allow him to rule Thuận Quảng and offered his daughter to be Trịnh Tráng's wife. This event is not repeated in the *Toàn Thư*.

This is followed in the *Bản Ký Tục Biên* only with additional statements about the Mạc that do not appear in the *Toàn Thư*. The *Nam Dương* Marquis, here named Nguyễn Nhậm, claimed for himself the title *Nam* Duke, and the Mạc *Kỳ Huệ* Prince took the title Commander of the Southern Territories. The *Uy Vũ* Marquis gathered 300 warships, calling himself *Hải Dương* Great General, and bringing Mạc *Mậu Hợp*'s mother, here said to be of the Bùi clan, to be the "king," calling her queen mother; other Mạc royalty also returned. The mother summoned Mạc Kính Cung from Longzhou. Cung left China

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<sup>48</sup> In both cases, the battle with the *Nam Dương* Marquis takes place on the *Hoàng Giang* (literally, royal river), which is difficult to interpret.



and held Đông Kinh. The Trịnh forces advanced to Trường Yên, then Đông Kinh, where the mother was killed and Cung escaped. Near the end of 1600, the Lê king returned to Đông Kinh; Cung then fled to Kim Thành, while Nguyễn Nhậm occupied Nam Xương/Xang and killed the *Uy Vũ* Marquis. The Trịnh killed Nguyễn Nhậm at Lãnh Giang, which is not said to be a southern border region; Cung is driven out of Hải Dương, in this text to Lạng Sơn.<sup>49</sup>

The *Thực Lục* includes the shorter phrase about Hoàng Mountain Range advice attributed to Nguyễn Bình Khiêm. However, it places Khiêm's advice before Nguyễn Hoàng went south in 1558, instead of 1607 (in the *Hoan Châu Ký*) or 1600 (in the *Diễn Chí*). The episode was clearly moved forward in order to add gravity to the depiction of Hoàng as a dynastic founder in 1558. In 1600, he returned to Thuận Hóa only after obeying Trịnh Tùng's orders to attack the Mạc sympathizers, leaving behind his son Hải, and Hải's son Hắc as hostages. Again, Tùng suspected he would occupy Thanh Hóa and moved the king there; in this text, there is no Mạc occupation at all, and the Trịnh quickly returned to Đông Đô.<sup>50</sup>

The *Toàn Thư*, *Tạp Lục*, *Bản Ký Tục Biên* and *Thực Lục* all state that Nguyễn Hoàng's daughter Ngọc Tú was married to the Thanh Duke, Trịnh Tùng's son Trịnh Tráng. In the *Thực Lục* and *Toàn Thư*, Tráng was a grandson of Hoàng's own sister Ngọc Bảo. However, the marriage is not a universal element, and it does not appear in the *Diễn Chí*, the *Hoan Châu Ký*, or even the *Lê Triều Dã Sử*, which includes extensive biographical information about Tráng, so it may have been added to these chronicles at a fairly late date.<sup>51</sup>

All stories of the Mạc revolt in Đông Kinh and the south have contradictions and inconsistencies. However, they share with the *Ming Shi-lu* a framework in which Mạc royalty and their allies held Cao Bằng and Quảng Nam during the early 17th century. The Mạc sometimes also controlled Hải Dương, and were able to occupy Đông Kinh. An identical story is told about Mạc Mậu Hợp in 1592, and Mạc Kiên Thống in 1607 or 1601, in which the Mạc mother is captured and killed and the king flees to the same

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<sup>49</sup> The 40 ships are captured at Nhật Chiêu, which (in this text only) is at Bạch Hạc;

<sup>50</sup> Hải is identified as the *Cầm* Duke in another passage, and is said to have died in Đông Kinh in 1616. *Diễn Chí*, 70-71; *Toàn Thư*, XVI:2a; *Hoan Châu Ký*, 191.

<sup>51</sup> Tráng was said to be the grandson of Trịnh Kiêm and Ngọc Bảo; *Tạp Lục*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, 34-35; *Bản Ký Tục Biên*, *ibid*.

pagoda disguised as a monk. At least one of those stories about the death of a Mạc ruler, if not both, is untrue. If a *Doan* Grand Duke really did exist at this time, he would have been allied with a powerful Mạc ruler in the south.

### Rulers in Quảng Nam after Lê Recognition

In its deliberation over whether to proceed with the enfeoffment of the Lê ruler in 1596, the Ming court noted that the Lê had become strong, whereas the Mạc were weak. In the following decades, a succession of weak Mạc kings would seek protection in the mountains along the Ming border. In 1596, since no Mạc center in Cao Bằng yet existed, it is not clear to which weak Mạc lineage the Ming were referring. This remark may have been in reference to the Mạc in Quảng Nam, who were weak insofar as they struggled with the Lê to hold Đông Kinh.

According to the *Mạc gia phả*, *Sãi* Prince would have resided in Trà Kiệu at this time along with several of Mạc Kính Điển's children, although in the Nguyễn histories he would only take the throne as king on his father's death. The relationship between the Mạc and the *Sãi* Prince is deliberately obscured in the Nguyễn histories. The *Liệt Truyện* follows the two *Mạc gia phả* in naming the *Sãi* Prince's mother as Ngọc Quý and his wife as Mạc Kính Điển's daughter (Nguyễn/Mạc Thị Giai). None of the other texts name the *Sãi* Prince's wife.<sup>52</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* also gives contradictory information about the king's sons. One passage states that the oldest prince was the *Nhân* Duke, born in 1601, but elsewhere the oldest is the *Khánh Mỹ* Marquis, Kỳ. Kỳ, the first crown prince, was said to become governor of Quảng Nam in 1614, which would date his parents' marriage to well before 1600.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> As noted earlier, the honorific *Vương* is generally translated as Prince, but in the case of the line of the *Tiên Vương*, *Sãi Vương*, and so on, I have tried to balance this discussion with reference to the numerous texts which refer to these rulers as independent kings, or even assert that they refused to recognize the Lê Dynasty. For this reason, I will continue to use the unorthodox translation of *Vương* as King in this context only.

<sup>53</sup> Ngô Đức Thọ suggests that the *Nhân* Duke is a reference to Nguyễn Phúc Lan, who is said elsewhere to have been called the *Nhân Lộc* Marquis; he suggests that the statement that the *Nhân* Duke is the oldest prince is a mistake, since the Historical Office gives that honor to Nguyễn Phúc Kỳ. *Liệt Truyện*, 68-69; *Diễn Chí*, 86.

Nguyễn texts describe a civil administration in Thuận Hóa as if it were founded by Nguyễn Hoàng, whereas the *Cạn Lục* suggests its institutions were created under a Mạc regime. In the *Diễn Chí* and *Thực Lục*, Nguyễn Hoàng was said to build a granary and to establish two of the region's most famous pagodas, the Thiên Mụ pagoda in 1601 and the Sùng Hóa pagoda in 1602; foreigners were drawn to the Sùng Hóa festivals. However, these pagodas figure prominently in the *Cạn Lục*, a Mạc text which has not been firmly dated, and were important under Mạc rule in Thuận Hóa. The *Diễn Chí* claims Hoàng had long been hostile to Buddhism due to political conflicts with Thanh Hóa monks and heretofore had only patronized Daoist institutions.<sup>54</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* claims that in 1600 the *Đoan* Grand Duke Nguyễn Hoàng returned to Quảng Nam, not Thuận Hóa. While there, he received the letter of reproach from Trịnh Tùng. The *Diễn Chí* does not date Hoàng's visit to Thăng Hoa Prefecture explicitly, but based on its confusing placement in the text, the visit could be inferred to occur between 1600 and 1602. (It is described after his return, but it happens before an event occurring in a *Tân Sửu* year, 1601, called the second year of the Lê *Hoằng Định* reign, which is actually 1602 according to the *Toàn Thư*.) Hoàng found the region to be of strategic value, with safe ports, so he built a royal residence and granary and left his son there as governor in the same year. This is contradicted by the Mạc *gia phả*, in which Nguyễn was already resident in Trà Kiệu during the previous decade. Given the *Diễn Chí*'s omission of all mention of the Mạc in Quảng Nam, it seems unlikely that it is correct on this point.<sup>55</sup>

The *Tạp Lục* states Hoàng sent Phúc Nguyên to be governor of Quảng Nam in 1602, again without using the surname Nguyễn, or stating explicitly that Phúc Nguyên was Hoàng's son. The *Tạp Lục* does not describe Hoàng visiting Quảng Nam. The *Thực Lục* has the *Tiên* Prince's sixth son becoming the Quảng Nam governor in 1602, and also repeats the *Diễn Chí* language of the king visiting Quảng Nam, finding it strategic and building granaries. Unlike the *Diễn Chí*, it places the seat of the “*trần dinh*,” camp or

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<sup>54</sup> The *Diễn Chí* traces the Thiên Mụ pagoda back to the Tang commander Cao Biền, said in local legend to have worshipped there. The *Cạn Lục* describes the Sùng Hóa as a Mạc ritual center; a Thiên Lão pagoda (a similar term with the same meaning as Thiên Mụ). The Long Hưng pagoda in Danang, which is drawn on the *Giáp Ngọ* (1594 or 1654) map, is also noted in some texts. The *Thực Lục* also notes the 1607 endowment of the Bảo Châu pagoda in Trà Kiệu and the 1609 endowment of Kính Thiên pagoda in Lê Thủy, Quảng Bình. *Diễn Chí*, 81-89; *Tạp Lục*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, 35-36.

<sup>55</sup> The Lê annals claim the king took the *Thuận Đức* reign name for only one year, in 1600.

garrison, in Cần Húc, not Thăng Hoa, and an annotation explains this is in Duy Xuyên district. This contradicts both the *Diễn Chí* and the *Mạc gia phả* (since the Mạc, and the *Sãi* Prince, were already resident in Trà Kiệu). The text then adds that Hoàng built the Long Hung pagoda, in Danang, to the east of this garrison, at that time; this pagoda appears on the *Giáp Ngộ* itinerary. The *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, however, indicates that Điện Bàn was not part of Quảng Nam Encampment at that time and remained part of Thuận Hóa until 1605. In the *Thực Lục*, there is no discussion of events in Quảng Nam before 1602 and no acknowledgment of any trace of Mạc institutions, or mention of Bùi Tá Hán or Nguyễn Bá Quý.<sup>56</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* states that Trần Đức Hòa visited Hoàng in Quảng Nam in 1600, and the *Thực Lục* places the visit in 1602. The *Diễn Chí* explanation is that Hòa requested assistance in fighting Champa troops. Hoàng sent the troops as asked, the Champa resistance surrendered, and Hòa was appointed viceroy (the territory he was viceroy of is not specified). The *Diễn Chí* called Hòa the sworn brother and trusted advisor of the *Sãi* Prince in Quảng Nam. The *Thực Lục* notes that Champa sent an envoy to visit Hoàng in Quảng Nam during his residence there in 1602 to establish friendly relations, rather than Hòa defeating them in battle. (The *Tạp Lục* omits both Hòa and the war.)<sup>57</sup>

That a ruler in Quảng Nam or Thuận Hóa was an active participant in the regional trade networks is documented in the *Gaiban Tsusho*. In a 1601 communication to the first Tokugawa shogun, Ieyasu, two years before he took power, one ruler called himself the Annam Supreme Commander under Heaven, *Thụy* Grand Duke. Phan Thanh Hải suggests that the character for *Thụy* in this text was a result of copying errors, and it should read *Doan* instead, since *Doan* was the title of Nguyễn Hoàng (who, Hải suggests, would have been the figure corresponding with foreign powers until his death in 1613). As noted earlier, though, *Doan* could also be a copying error for *Thụy*.<sup>58</sup>

The *Thụy* Grand Duke wrote:

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<sup>56</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 83-86; *Thực Lục*, 35; *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, Vol. 2, 333.

<sup>57</sup> When Nguyễn later refused outright an appointment from the Lê king and formalized his independent rule in the *Diễn Chí*, his emissary to Đông Đô is said to have protested that he was defending the borders; in the south, Champa, in the east, Macao and Malacca, and in the west, Vạn Tượng and Ai Lao.) *Diễn Chí*, 83; *Thực Lục*, 36.

<sup>58</sup> The full title is *An Nam Quốc Thiên Hạ Thông Bình Thụy Quốc Công*. Phan Thanh Hải, “Về Những Văn Thư Trao Đổi.”

it is kind of Your Excellency, Lord Ieyasu, to have concern for us, having dispatched Shirahama Kenki with his ship to do business and build good relations and deigned to correspond with our former Commander. As newly appointed Supreme Commander, I wish to continue the relations according to previous examples... In Đông Kinh, I heard the news [about a naval altercation with a Kenki, which seems to be reported in the *Thực Lục* in 1585, during the Mạc occupation of Đông Kinh] and was very much saddened. Last year [in 1600] I returned [to Thuận Hóa] by imperial order [replacing the old commander there] and found Kenki still in our country. I wanted to get a ship and permit him to leave for home, but things were not favorable and his departure was delayed till now, when we fortunately see again the arrival of a merchant ship from your country.

Later, as shogun, Ieyasu would assure him that legitimate traders would be authorized with the vermilion seal.<sup>59</sup>

In the *Diễn Chí*, a *Thụy* Grand Duke becomes Supreme Commander of Quảng Nam in 1601. Quảng Nam's active participation of in regional trade is confirmed by Diego Aduarte's report of the arrival of an ambassador from the king of Cochinchina in Phnom Penh (Chatomuk) in 1603. In the *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, Quảng Nam Encampment was created in 1602 (when Nguyễn Hoàng traveled south of Hải Vân in the *Diễn Chí*, and made his son governor there in the *Tạp Lục*); Điện Bàn District (including Hội An), added to Thuận Hóa after 1471, was transferred to Quảng Nam in 1605.<sup>60</sup>

The descendants of Mạc Thị Giai and the *Sãi* Prince are described very differently in the *Cổ Trai Mạc gia phả* and their official biographies in the *Liệt Truyện*. Giai's oldest son is called *Hữu Phủ Khánh*. An annotation notes *Khánh* was born in the capital, but his home village (his "home" or course may have been the original Mạc Cổ Trai in Hải Dương). The second son is the *Thuợng* Prince, born in a *tân sừu* year, 1601. The third son, Sang Trung, is born in the same *tân sừu* year. The fourth son is Sang Yên (An); the fifth son's name is illegible. Three daughters are the *Thanh* Duchess, *Vạn* Duchess, and

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<sup>59</sup> Letters in 1601, 1603, 1605, and 1606 bear the titles "*An Nam Quốc Thiên Hạ Thống Bình Đô Nguyễn Soái Thụy Quốc Công*," "*An Nam Quốc Đại Đô Thống Thụy Quốc Công*," "*An Nam Quốc Đại Đô Thống Thụy Quốc Công*," and "*Thiên Nam Quốc Khâm Sai Hưng Nghĩa Doanh Phó Đô Tướng Hành Hạ Thuận Hóa Quảng Nam Đẳng Xứ Thai Ủy Đoan Quốc Công*," respectively. If taken at face value, only one of the four are authored by a *Đoan* Grand Duke. (Kawamoto Kuniye appears to reverse the standard titles of two Nguyễn rulers mistakenly in his article on the subject, calling Nguyễn Hoàng the *Thụy* Duke.) Phan Thanh Hải, *Ibid.*; Kawamoto Kuniye, "The international outlook of the Quang Nam (Nguyen) regime as revealed in Gaiban Tsuusho." *Ancient town of Hoi An: International Symposium held in Danang on 22-23 March 1990* (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Thế Giới, 1993), 109-116.

<sup>60</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 147; *Diễn Chí*, 91; *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, vol 2, 333.

*Khoa*. In the *Liệt Truyện*, Giai and the *Sãi* Prince had five sons and four daughters. The man described as the *Sãi* Prince's oldest son (except in one *Diễn Chí* passage), Kỳ, was born around 1580; he was the *Khánh Mỹ* Marquis, likely *Khánh* in the *gia phả*.<sup>61</sup>

One of the *Sãi* Prince's daughters, in the *Liệt Truyện*, Ngọc Liên, married Mạc Cảnh Huống's son Mạc Cảnh Vinh. There is no Liên in the *gia phả*, but Cadière suggests the *Thanh* Duchess is the wife of Vinh (*Thanh Lộc* Marquis). Cao Tự Thanh points out that marriage of cousins to solidify the alliance between two great families is described elsewhere by the Historical Office, and suggests that this practice was common among the Cochinchinese elite (his examples, the *Tổng Phúc* and *Nguyễn Phúc/Cửu* clans, are both problematic and will be discussed in detail later). In to the *Liệt Truyện*, Vinh was awarded the royal name *Nguyễn Phúc* at an unspecified time and was later awarded the name *Nguyễn Hữu*, an honorary name given to several other, apparently unrelated persons. There is no explanation why Vinh would be given the highest honor, the royal name, but have it taken away and replaced with a less exalted honorific.<sup>62</sup>

There is no further mention in the Historical Office texts of any descendant of Mạc Đăng Dung, other than the children of the *Sãi* Prince, with the single exception of Mạc Cảnh Vinh, who married the *Sãi* Prince's daughter. No other children of Mạc Cảnh Huống are described even though the *Liệt Truyện* twice states Huống arrived with his family. In the *Liệt Truyện*, Huống was supreme commander, and he died in this post, yet he is never described participating in any battles in any text. The Mạc family book states that after Hoàng's death, Huống retired as supreme commander and became a monk in Bửu Châu pagoda in Trà Kiệu, where he died in 1617. Mạc Thị Giai was also buried in Trà Kiệu. The Quảng Nam man Huỳnh Cầu claimed as a son of Mạc Kính Điển appears in no other texts.<sup>63</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* is the first text refer to the *Sãi* Prince by a given name, *Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên*. It notes *Nguyễn Hoàng* died in a *quy sừu* year, the 14th year of the *Hoàng Định* reign, 1613. His son, the *Thụy* Grand Duke *Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên*, also called the *Sãi* Prince, took the throne at age 51. The reference to taking the throne is anachronistic,

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<sup>61</sup> Cadière, "Généalogie de la Princesse Giai."

<sup>62</sup> Similar questions surround the family of *Nguyễn Phúc Vân*, who governed parts of the lower Mekong in the 18th century, yet later lost the name *Nguyễn Phúc* and were instead given the clan name *Nguyễn Cửu*; that name change did not take place until the 1830s. *Diễn Chí*, 94; *Thực Lục*, 39; *Liệt Truyện*, 47, 135.

<sup>63</sup> *Liệt Truyện*, *ibid*.

since Hoàng was said to have been loyal to the Lê court, and only in the 1620s would Nguyễn allegedly break his relations with the north. He is described moving the royal residence to Phúc Yên, in Quảng Điền district, on the Bồ River near the former Mạc administrative center; although this event is not explicitly dated, it occurs immediately in the text following Hoàng's death. The *Tạp Lục* repeats this and describes the move as happening after Hoàng's death, but does not specify any date. At this point, the *Tạp Lục* begins omitting the surnames Nguyễn when describing the royal family in nearly all cases. Nguyễn Hoàng's father is not identified in the *Tạp Lục* until the description of titles awarded to the royal ancestors in 1744; in that passage, Hoàng's father is named as Nguyễn Cam (a variant on the character Kim). This surname is used only to describe Nguyễn Hoàng and Nguyễn Cam. In the first book of the *Tạp Lục*, the section describing the political history of Đàng Trong, the surname Nguyễn is not used for the *Sãi* Prince Phúc Nguyên, or for the kings which followed him.<sup>64</sup>

In the *Diễn Chí*, the future *Sãi* Prince's oldest son, *Hữu Phủ*, *Khánh Mỹ* Marquis, was sent to govern Quảng Nam and encroach on Champa in a *giáp dần* year, 15th of the *Hoàng Định* reign, with army to govern its people.

The *Thực Lục* agrees that a Kỳ was sent to govern Quảng Nam, but it does not call him a prince or son of the king. The move of his court, from Trà Bát in Quảng Trị to Quảng Điền not far from Huế, did not occur until the *bính dần* year of 1626. In the *Liệt Truyện*, Nguyễn's oldest son Kỳ, son of the Mạc queen, became Quảng Nam governor in 1614.

The *Toàn Thư* also describes a Lê official in Thuận Hoá, the *Hiển Sát Phó Sứ* Vũ Chân, who from 1614 was prevented by the Nguyễn from performing his duties in Thuận Hóa. The official remained in Thuận Hóa for eighteen more years, however, and returned to the Lê court only in 1631.<sup>65</sup>

In the *Liệt Truyện* biography of the Mạc queen, the *Thượng* Prince is her second son, followed by Trung, An and Nghĩa; the *Cổ Trai Mạc gia phả* calls the third son Sang Trung, and the fourth Sang An; the final son's name is illegible. The *Liệt Truyện*

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<sup>64</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 90-92; *Tạp Lục*, I:25b, 40b.

<sup>65</sup> Both the *Diễn Chí* and *Thực Lục* state that Hoàng's tomb was built on a Thạch Hãn mountain above Ái Tử, and moved to Hương Trà (near Huế) at an unspecified date, to what the *Diễn Chí* called Nguyễn Lập Shrine. *Diễn Chí*, 90; *Liệt Truyện*, 68-69, 135; *Toàn Thư*, XVIII:28b; *Thực Lục*, 38-42.

biography of Nguyễn Phúc Khê contradicts the queen's, and calls Nguyễn's third son Anh, not An, and Nguyễn Phúc An's biography describes him as the fifth son, born of the Mạc queen. (There is no Historical Office biography for Nghĩa.) Eight sons of Nguyễn by other, unnamed mothers are mentioned, along with one daughter by an unnamed mother, Ngọc Đĩnh, said to have been married to another highly problematic figure, with the royal clan name, Nguyễn Phúc Kiều.<sup>66</sup>

These texts contain contradictory statements concerning the *Sãi* Prince's family and events which determined the royal succession, but this early 17th century king appears to have continued to reside at the Mạc center in Trà Kiệu. Basic problems with the story of a Nguyễn-Mạc alliance in the *Liệt Truyện* and the 1832 *gia phả* in Trà Kiệu suggest that both those texts were altered out of political expedience.

These inconsistencies suggest the story of a marriage between Nguyễn Hoàng's son Phúc Nguyễn and the eldest sister of Mạc Kính Điển cannot be accurate. It is clear a Trà Kiệu ruling family included members of a Mạc clan. The sparse descriptions of other Mạc princes are highly suspect. In particular, it is unusual that Mạc Cảnh Vinh, said to be the autonomous ruler of Nha Trang and Trấn Biên, married a first cousin, after which the Mạc lineage disappears completely from all Nguyễn texts.

Early European reports differ radically from the Lê and Nguyễn histories. Taylor's comparison of the depictions of Nguyễn Hoàng's journey south in the *Toàn Thư* and *Thực Lục* led him to conclude that 1558 was a watershed year, marking the beginning of "a new way of being Vietnamese" led by Hoàng's experiment. However, neither of those dynastic texts, produced and edited centuries later, gives us an accurate description of the 16th century. By the mid-17th century, both the Ming and the Vatican were convinced that Trịnh Tùng, the first Trịnh ruler confirmed by outside sources, assassinated the Mạc king and brought a surrogate, Lê Duy Đàm, from Thanh Hóa to rule in his place. In 1596, when Đàm returned stolen territory and appeared at the border for inspection, he claimed to have lost the Commander's seal, and Trịnh Tùng reportedly

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<sup>66</sup> Cao Tự Thanh suggests the name An in the *Liệt Truyện* is an error for Anh, because in a later passage, in the biography of the "rebels Anh and Trung," this same text describes two rebels named Anh and Trung as Nguyễn's third and fourth sons. As discussed in the next chapter, Kiều is alternately described as royalty, son of the king, and as common soldier from Đông Kinh. *Liệt Truyện*, *ibid*; Cadière, "Généalogie de la Princesse Giai."



called Đàng back to the capital in the middle of the night, an assertion which is difficult to interpret. At the end of 1597, Đàng was approved as Annam Commander, yet the continued Mạc presence in two strongholds to the north and south of Trịnh territories prevented the Trịnh from launching an offensive on one Mạc center for fear of retaliation by the other.

The Trịnh victory through is described as subterfuge in Ming and missionary reports, but portrayed in early Lê histories as a restoration. For Marini, the first Trịnh ruler simply married a daughter of the Mạc king, and then assassinated him, crowning a Lê prince to maintain appearances. In the Lê version, as retold by Benedict Thiện, a rebel Nguyễn Grand Duke from Thanh Hóa adopted Trịnh *Minh Khang*, who married his daughter. Wars began intensifying with a Trịnh ruler called *Tiên* who crowned a son named *Gia Thái*, who eventually captured Thăng Long (Kẻ Chợ) and defeated the Mạc king *Hồng Ninh* and brought a Lê king *Quang Hưng* to the capital. In this restoration myth, one Mạc supporter, *Doan*, refused to answer the *Chúa*'s summons and resided in Quảng Nam, while the Trịnh Tùng held Thanh Hóa and Đông Kinh.

Although the manner in which Mạc gained control of Cochinchina and the identity of its early rulers remains uncertain, there was significant continuity between the regime in Quảng Nam during the periods of Mạc rule and the Lê Restoration. Further study is needed to determine which Mạc royalty resided at Trà Kiệu, and how to interpret the various legends and stories about the rulers' origins found in dynastic chronicles and visitor's reports. References to Cambodia from disparate sources, describing episodes that cannot be reconciled with the standard *nam tiến* narrative, raise the possibility that the Mạc might have been active there by the end of the sixteenth century.



## CHAPTER 6

### Cochinchina during the Later Lê-Mạc Wars c. 1605-1637

A strong king of Quảng Nam, in the first three decades of the seventeenth century, fought a war with Tonkin, allied with a king near the Chinese border, and had strong ties with Cambodia. These aspects of the *Sãi* Prince's rule, some of which must have been known to the Nguyễn Historical Office, are omitted in the *Thực Lục*. This is apparently because the *Diễn Chí*, one of its primary source texts, plays down or omits these aspects, particularly when they involve the Mạc. In these decades, the king intervened heavily in economic activity in a kind of vermillion seal trade, and strengthened an alliance with a Cambodian king. Forces from northern coastal regions joined the court after first moving to what later became the Ming loyalist stronghold Quy Nhơn.

#### Consolidation and Regulation of Trade in Quảng Nam

As the Ming proved unable to control their southern ports in the late 16th century, reports from Manila describe Champa under the control of a pirate king, a usurper who robbed passing ships. Champa was considered a sufficiently important trade center that the Spanish governor, Dasmariñas, argued in the early 1590s that an expedition to Champa would be more beneficial to the empire than an expedition to Siam or Cambodia, and a few years later an expedition even set off with the intent of conquering Champa. Trần Đức Hòa, near Quy Nhơn, is reported in the *Diễn Chí* asking for help from Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên fighting Champa troops in 1600. This might be a reference to coastal Cham, or to upland Cham on the Kontum Plateau.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Diego Veloso reported that in 1595 that Champa was ruled by a Moor. Klages, "Cambodia, Catholicism, and Conquistadores," 106-109; *Diễn Chí*, 83.

Li Tana, drawing on Iwao Seiichi, notes that Japanese vermillion seal trade with Champa (Chiêm Thành) stops in 1608, the year that trade with Cochinchina (Giao Chi) began, with the exception of a lone mission in 1623. Prior to 1608, one Shogunate trading ship visited Champa each year, and a greater volume of vermillion seal shipping was carried out under the rubric of trade with “Annam.” (She also notes one ship to “Thuận Hóa” and one to “Cajian.”) She concludes that the disappearance of Champa was due to effective competition from private traders at Hội An. However, she also notes “considerable Japanese confusion before 1611” about what to call the region of “Đàng Trong.”<sup>2</sup>

Complicating any effort to locate these ports is the *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí* claim that Faifo was still part of Thuận Hóa until 1605. Điện Bàn district was moved out of Thuận Hóa three years after the formation of Quảng Nam Encampment in the 45th year of the “reign” of Nguyễn Hoàng and third year of the Lê *Hoàng Định* reign. Thus, according to the Historical Office, Quảng Nam Encampment was established in 1602 and Hội An was not made part of Quảng Nam until three years later. This calculation seems to be derived from the problematic story of Hoàng’s first visit to Thăng Hoa in the *Diễn Chí*.<sup>3</sup>

In 1617, when William Adams visited the Japanese trading community in what he called Quinam (a name that appears on mid-17th century VOC maps to indicate the Thu Bồn River), one of his Japanese merchant companions met the “young king,” who resided nearby. A Japanese junk owner then went to see the “old king” in Shinnofa, and a week later Adams reports that his ship received its *goshuin* (vermillion seal) from Shinnofa, like the seal the East India Company obtained in Nagasaki in 1613. Adams kept a meticulous log and made no reference to some or all of his party launching a major expedition some hundred miles north along the coast to Quảng Trị (the location where the Historical Office claims the capital was located at that time), before returning to Faifo. Although Adams does not specify the location of the court of Shinnofa, likely the same

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<sup>2</sup> She suggests that ships to Annam were bound for Hưng Nguyên, in Nghệ An, but also notes a 1605 letter to Nagasaki from Hoàng also mentioned a ship bound for Annam which arrived in Cajian. Li Tana, *Nguyễn Cochinchina*, 62-63.

<sup>3</sup> *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, vol. 2, 333-334.

place later called Sinoa by Rhodes, it is unlikely, based on this description, to have been north of the Hải Vân Pass.<sup>4</sup>

There is little reason to believe that there was any autonomous period of trade on the Thu Bồn River that was left unmanaged by the state. Richard Von Glahn notes that the export of cheap bronze coin to Quang Nam was the major source of profit for Japanese merchants, particularly old Song Dynasty coin; even after the vermilion seal trade was abolished, volume continued to grow and remained high through the 1640s. By 1634, the Nguyễn territories had obtained fourteen tons of Japanese silver in exchange for silk yarn, almost as much as Chinese, primarily Fujianese, ships carried to Nagasaki and the Ryukyus combined. Nearly a quarter of the Tokugawa vermilion seal ships were bound for Quảng Nam. Glahn suggests that this trade volume was the result of the “Nguyen rulers’ benign neglect of the entrepot at Hoi An” and that Chinese silk was traded for Japanese silver at a new, unregulated, commercial hub, “the free port of Hoi An,” after Japanese trade was banned in Macao in 1608. Several Vietnamese historians concur that trade in Quảng Nam was relatively independent of the Nguyễn court’s political influence.<sup>5</sup>

The “free port of Hội An,” a place where Cochinchinese rulers ignored a lucrative source of income even as they fought wars on multiple fronts, may be an artifact of the Historical Office silence on Mạc political control south of the Hải Vân pass. Diplomatic letters collected in the *Gaiban Tsusho*, discussed further below, suggest that trade was closely managed by the king. One clue regarding economic affairs comes from a passage in the *Diễn Chí*, which is repeated in summary form in the *Thực Lục*. In 1632, Nguyễn is described as making an abortive attempt to fix prices in the ports from Hội An to Quy Nhơn. In order to encourage implementation of the regulations for state purchase of lucrative export products including pepper, eaglewood, sharks fin and bird’s nests, Nguyễn bought products at prices fixed by court officials. Đào Duy Từ persuaded Nguyễn to back out of this plan by appearing at the court dressed up as a lowly merchant. Từ’s fictionalized mockery of Nguyễn could be based on an actual change in policy to

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<sup>4</sup> Cristoforo James Purnell, ed. *The Log-Book of William Adams, 1614-1619, with the Journal of Edward Saris, and Other Documents Relating to Japan, Cochin China, Etc* (London: Eastern End Press, ?), 38-48.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Von Glahn, *Fountain of Fortune: Money and Monetary Policy in China, 1000 - 1700*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 122; Li Tana, *Nguyễn Cochinchina*, 78-87; Wheeler, “Cross-Cultural Trade,” 137.

allow commodity prices to be set by the market. However, rather than leading to benign neglect, state-sponsored commerce in Quảng Nam and Trấn Biên likely continued with Nguyễn and Mạc Cảnh Vinh's active participation.<sup>6</sup>

### The Location of a Royal Capital

The Mạc presence in Quảng Nam supports a reassessment of the standard treatment of the location of the “royal capital,” which is the subject of contradictory descriptions in the dynastic texts and visitors' reports. Borri and his contemporaries in Faifo cited by Gaspar Luis are explicit that the royal residence was near Hội An. Borri spent nearly all his time in Quy Nhơn and did not go north of Hải Vân Pass. He mentions that the king of Cochinchina lived in Sinua, while a prince, his son, resided in and governed Cacciam (Kẻ Chiêm). Later, the king's residence is described a few leagues upriver from Danang. Borri may have been confused about the location of this residence, or referred interchangeably to the king and his son as “king.” Sinua or Sinoa is about as accurate a (Cantonese influenced) pronunciation of Thăng Hoa as of Thuận Hóa. In addition, the Thuận Hóa region is labeled Thoanoa, not Sinoa, on an early Jesuit map. Even if Sinoa it is a pronunciation of Thuận Hóa, the geographical extent that of province is unclear, since the Lê seem to have considered Điện Bàn District part of Thuận Hóa. The *Diễn Chí* does not specify that the *Sãi* Prince moved north of Hải Vân Pass. Borri described the principle sea port of Cacciam as follows:

...[Cacchiam] has two mouths, or inlets from the sea, the one called *Pulluchiampello*, and the other of *Turon*, being at first three or four leagues distant from one another, but running in seven or eight leagues like two great rivers, at last join in one, where the vessels that come in both ways meet. Here the king of *Cochin-China* assigned the *Chineses* and the *Japoneses* a convenient spot of ground, to build a city for the benefit of the fair. This city is called *Faifó*, and is so large, that we may say they are two, one of *Chineses*, the other of *Japoneses*; for they are divided from one another, each having their distinct governor, and the *Chineses* living according to the laws of *China*, as the *Japoneses* do according to those of *Japan*.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Diễn Chí*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, 41-49; *Liệt Truyện*, 146-152; Dương Tự Quán, *Đào Duy Từ, Tiểu Sử Và Thơ Văn* [Đào Duy Từ, Life and Works] (Saigon: Khai Sinh, 1944).

<sup>7</sup> Dror and Taylor, *Seventeenth-Century Vietnam*, 133.

This is a fairly accurate description of the rivers joining Danang and Hội An, before the *Minh Mạng* Emperor's construction of the Vĩnh Điện channel to link Danang with the Thu Bồn, bypassing the small 17th century town of Hội An. (John Barrow, outlining the commercial potential of the Thu Bồn in 1792, fails to note the Vĩnh Điện channel.) Borri's contemporaries, in Gaspar Luis' letters, also suggest that the king resided near the port. Cadière, prefacing Borri's text, states that there is good reason to suggest that the *Sãi* Prince lived near Faifo during Borri's stay, since the *Thực Lục* describes him moving to Quảng Điền, near Huế, only in 1626. Even a 1626 move, however, is not confirmed in the *Diễn Chí*, which describes no change in the king's residence; the source of the *Thực Lục* assertion is unknown. In another article, Cadière assumed Nguyễn remained at his father's old residence in Quảng Trị. In any case, Borri's king resided on or near the Thu Bồn, with captured Dutch and Portuguese artillery placed at a palace there.<sup>8</sup>

Cadière attempts to reconcile Borri's text with the Nguyễn chronicles, suggesting that Borri's king near Faifo is the Quảng Nam governor, the king's son Kỳ. However, Borri also states that the grandfather of the present king was a governor who rebelled against Đông Kinh. Given the diversity of narrative material available to us, there is no simple formula to explain Borri's statement. The *Sãi* Prince's "adopted" father in Trà Kiệu was Mạc Cảnh Huống, according to the *gia phả*, so that grandfather might be Mạc Cảnh Huống's father, understood to be Mạc Kính Điển. Both Điển and Nguyễn Kim, in various texts, rebelled against a Mạc king, but neither is described residing in Quảng Nam in extant sources. Điển's son Mạc Kính Chi, however, is noted in the *Toàn Thư* and *Diễn Chí* to have resided in Quảng Bình, Điển's daughter lived at Trà Kiệu, and another son is described in Quảng Nam *gia phả*.

Beginning in late December 1624, Rhodes spent eighteen months in Cochinchina, at missions run by François de Pina in Cham province (Faifo) and François Buzomi in Quinchin (Quy Nhơn). Rhodes praises a great lady of the kingdom, a close relative of the king, who converted and took the name Mary Magdelene. The opulent church she

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<sup>8</sup> It is possible that other trading grounds, or Chinese and Japanese settlements, existed in the 17th century, but have not survived. However, Borri's comments suggest the location of Hội An. Cadière, "Les Residences de Rois ;" idem, "Les Européens qui ont vu le Vieux Hué : Cristoforo Borri," *BAVH* 18:3-4 (1931): 259-266.

constructed near the court was still standing in the 1650s. He refers for the first time to an edict from the king at the end of his stay, ordering all missionaries expelled. The *Thực Lục* marks the date of this expulsion (the third lunar month of 1626) by having the *Sãi* Prince move his capital abruptly and without explanation from Quảng Trị to a palace near Huế, despite claiming that he was so old and infirm that he left all matters of state to his youngest brothers. While other kings reportedly would move the capital to mark the beginning of a new reign period, this is the only case where an elderly, infirm king, nine years before his death, moves his capital to mark no occasion whatsoever.<sup>9</sup>

Borri describes a court in Sinua a decade earlier than the *Sãi* Prince's alleged move from Quảng Trị to Thuận Hóa in mid-1626. In my view, Borri and Rhodes' Sinoa is most likely Trà Kiệu, labeled Thăng Hoa on the *Giáp Ngộ* itinerary. Rhodes' province Hoâ may be the eponymous province Hoa (*châu* Hoa), one half of the larger Thăng Hoa, since an early church is known to have been built near Trà Kiệu.

The location of the capital is still unclear in 1672, when Vachet (in Faifo) wrote:

An idolator being made Christian; strongly pressured his wife to convert like him, and threatened to separate from her if she did not acquiesce to his request. Without deliberating this unhappy creature entered a furious anger, and transported by spite, went to find the governor of Cacham who is the third person of the State: after having presented her petition against her husband, she carried on terribly against the sect of the Christians; and said that if one did not take remedial action as soon as possible, everyone would embrace this new religion, that already people no longer made any pretense about making public prayers to the God of the sky, that there were considerable assemblies everywhere, in great contempt of the ordinances of the Prince, and that if one did not return prompt justice to her on her appeal, she was determined to seek it at the Court, where undoubtedly it would not be refused. But as she saw that it was not listened to extremely favorably, she was so offended that she left within the hour for Sinoë, where the king makes his current [*ordinaire*] residence, declaring that she would stop at nothing to succeed in her claim.

This suggests that wherever the court was, the king habitually resided in Sinoë (near Faifo, since the woman would not likely leave “within the hour” for an arduous multi-day journey to Huế which, according to a c. 1696 traveller, did not have a paved road and was made using elephants). Adding more ambiguity, a 1677 letter mentions the

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<sup>9</sup> In the map accompanying Rhodes' book, the area north of Hải Vân Pass is marked as Thoan Hoa and Hoa, while Đông Hoi in Quảng Bình is marked Kehoa. Rhodes, *Voyages et Missions*, 90-94.



“three provinces that are known as Hoé (which is known at the court as Sing-hoa [*qu'on appelle à la Cour Sing-hoa*]), Dinh-cat and Quam-bing.”<sup>10</sup>

The first generation of the Nguyễn Historical Office, through contact with the Bishop of Adran in Gia Định, may have been aware of Rhodes’ remarks about Sinoa in 1626; it is conceivable that they introduced the *Sãi* Prince’s abrupt move to Huế to account for it. If so, they seem not to have been aware of Borri’s king, who was already in Sinua a decade earlier. Sixteenth and early 17th century references to Sinoa were probably to a court at Trà Kiệu. Late 17th century references to Sinoa/Sinoe/Sing-hoa/Hoé may have been to a center Quảng Nam, the mountains, a delta north of the pass, or a combination of these, and there could have been confusion among these places in the missionary reports.

### Marriage Alliance with a Cambodian King

The possibility that Mạc were active in Quảng Nam, and possibly further to the south, by the turn of the 17th century, also suggests a new interpretation of the story of a royal marriage with a Cambodian king. This element, as with others discussed above, is absent from Historical Office texts, but supported by European visitors. It is also accepted by Cambodian chronicles. What seems to one of the oldest and most reliable Cambodian chronicle fragments, *F1170*, places the marriage alliance between a Cambodian and king from Cochinchina in 1616. The king Suriyopear was returned from Ayutthaya in 1602 and established a capital, apparently on an island (this is usually understood to mean one of the islands in the Mekong). In a rough rendering based on Mak Phoeun’s French translation:

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<sup>10</sup> Missionaries refer to Faifo’s province as Cacham or Cham Province, but one notes its local name, correctly, as Thang-hoa. Thăng (升) can be pronounced in Cantonese as Sing; if the missionary transcribed Thuận (順) as spoken as Seun in Cantonese, it is unclear why a final -ng would be added. In 1686, Labbé visits a “small province between the Court and Dinh-cat [Quảng Trị].” Cadière explains this by identifying a village name there similar to a contemporary village on the Quảng Trị border with Huế, and concludes that by 1686 the court is in Huế; however, no noteworthy features exist in the 60 kilometers between the Thuận An and Cửa Việt estuaries that would suggest that small area might be considered a separate province by Labbé. Another 1676 letter mentions a Sin-hoa without identifying it as a capital. Launay, *Histoire*, I, 100, 178, 198.

A *ñuon* [I provisionally translate this as Cochinchinese; Mak Phoeun and Vickery use “Vietnamese”] provincial governor (or governors) [Mak Phoeun gives *chef d’un territoire de première*, Vickery “head(s) of first-class province(s)] had the practice of each year sending tribute to the king of *ñuon* [both give Tonkin]. In the eleventh month, a great governor betrayed the kingdom of *ñuon* and declared himself *cau* [Mak Phoeun gives *seignur*, Vickery gives king]. He had two daughters. He offered one, whose name is not known, to the king of Lanxang. He offered the other to His Majesty [“Paramaraja VII/Suriyopear”]. She was called Nān Cūv. His Majesty, being of advanced years, did not find it appropriate [to marry] Nān Cūv. Then, His Majesty gave her to Jayajettā, his son, and ordered the marriage [...]

After [the marriage] Nān Cūv’s father, who was at the head of the *ñuon* kingdom, brought a message with royal gifts of sabers, lances, saddles of high quality, and 50 bars of gold, to offer His Majesty. The king [stated that he] needed elephants [Vickery corrects Mak Phoeun’s “horses”] as well as resin for lacquer. He also proposed to buy these. His Majesty prepared these items to offer in return to the king according to his wishes. Thereafter [His Majesty] and the king acted with this regard for the other each year without fail.<sup>11</sup>

In Mak Phoeun’s reconstruction, Jayajettā II took the throne on his father’s abdication in 1619. Suriyopear had already stopped paying tribute to Ayutthaya, and Jayajettā II took the throne without Ayutthaya’s consent, refusing again to pay tribute. His father became the Elder King (*Ubarayoraj*), while his brother Outei became Second King (*Uparaj*). This “rebellion” allegedly led to a reprisal by Ayutthaya, yet Jayajettā II was able to defeat an Ayutthayan navy and infantry and secure his independence. The daughter of the Cochinchinese governor or king became his principle queen (*Aggamahesi*) by 1619.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Vickery writes: “A final point of interest concerns Cambodian-Vietnamese relations. In A.D. 1616, the chronicle says, ‘Vietnamese [ñuon] high official(s) [khunnañ], head(s) of first class province(s), had been in the habit of offering tribute to the Vietnamese king [cau] in Tongking every year without fail. In the eleventh month a (the) great khunnañ rebelled against Tongking, set himself up as king [cau]. He had two daughters. He gave one of them to the king of Lan Chang, but her name is not known. The other one he gave to His Majesty [Suriyobarn]. Her name was Nañ Cu. His Majesty was already old, and was not suitable for Nañ Cu. So His Majesty gave Nañ Cu to Prince Jay Jeththa, his son.’ They were duly married with Nañ Cu being accorded formal installation as consort of an *upayuraj*. Her father sent tribute to Cambodia and asked to buy elephants and lacquer which he needed, and this was agreed to by Suriyobarn.” Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 103-155; Vickery, “Cambodia after Angkor,” 141-2.

<sup>12</sup> Some later chronicle texts claim that land was given to Annam, or two customs posts were “borrowed” and not returned, or land was borrowed to train troops to fight the Chinese. Mak Phoeun suggests these reports are all inaccurate, arguing that there is evidence that Vietnamese took no Cambodian land until the 1690s. However, this is based in part on his reading of the *Thông Chí*, a very late text with many historiographical problems of its own. The Ayutthayan naval expedition that accompanied the overland invasion included Chinese ships. Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 125-154; Po Dharma and Mak Phoeun, “La

A scholar reading this passage and remembering the 19th century “Trịnh-Nguyễn” narrative framework, as elaborated by the Nguyễn Historical Office, might conclude immediately that the “Vietnamese governor” is *Sãi Vương Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên*, and turn to the *Liệt Truyện* to see which of Nguyên’s daughters these might be. It is worth pausing to remember that strong evidence suggests the Nguyễn account of *Sãi Vương*’s reign is inaccurate. No Nguyễn record describes any contact or any military involvement, much less royal marriage, in Cambodia in this period. Cambodian texts record this marriage alliance as an abrupt and isolated event, unlikely from a diplomatic standpoint. Chronicles revised during periods of royal dependence on Siam might have played down early aspects of their military or diplomatic interactions, making this marriage seem to come from nowhere. One interesting feature of *F1170* is that a Cochinchina governor declares himself king in late 1616, after the marriage, and is then described as a head of his kingdom.

That Cochinchina had some official presence in Cambodia in this period is confirmed by missionary records. A high ranking court official from Quy Nhon had already been posted and was well known in Cambodia before 1621. Christopher Borri describes this official, a Quy Nhon native deputy province governor, and Gaspar Luis names him Zegrò. Zegrò returned to a permanent posting in Cambodia described by Borri as an embassy. While he was at the court of Sinua to discuss this assignment, his wife became a high profile convert to Christianity. Zegrò was persuaded to join her but reluctant to renounce his other wives. The missionaries describe the husband and wife arriving in the Cambodian capital, and shock when the population realized they had converted to Christianity; this could be hyperbole, but hints the Jesuits received detailed information from Cambodia, which would help support Borri’s assertions about the royal marriage.<sup>13</sup>

Borri wrote of the Cochinchinese king: “He is also in continual motion, and making warlike preparations to assist the king of Cambodia, who has married his bastard daughter, sending him succors of gallies, and men, against the king of Siam; and

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première intervention militaire vietnamienne au Cambodge (1658-1659),” *BEFEO* 73:73 (1984):285-318, 294-96; Kersten “Muslim King”; Richard Cushman, trans., ed. David Wyatt, *The Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya* (Bangkok: The Siam Society, 2006), 149; Vickery, “Mak Phoeun.”

<sup>13</sup> Leopold Cadière, “Lettre du Père Gaspar Luis sur la Concincina,” Dror and Taylor, *Seventeenth-Century Vietnam*, 128.

therefore the arms of Cochinchina and their valour, is famous and renowned, as well by sea as by land.” Jeremias Van Vliet reports that Ayutthaya sent two forces to Cambodia that year, and claims the navy, including large armed galleys, arrived at the Mekong, but then departed, taking no action, while Cambodia routed Ayutthaya’s overland forces. Cochinchinese troops and ships could well have contributed to the Ayutthayan naval withdrawal. Thus, the idea that the yearly exchange described in *F1170* would have given Cochinchina needed war elephants and valuable trade goods, while providing Cambodia ships to repel Ayutthaya and cash to buy weapons, is consistent with multiple European reports.<sup>14</sup>

Borri’s Catholic disdain for a “bastard daughter” suggests her mother was not the king’s primary wife. After a decade in residence, Jesuits would have known who was the crown prince, understood his mother to be the principle wife of the king, and considered only her daughters legitimate. One other daughter of the king in this era may have been to a Japanese merchant, although it is not clear to me how much textual evidence there is of this Japan, or it is primarily Nagasaki folklore. Cao Tỵ Thanh notes that one of the *Sãi* Prince’s daughters is thought to have married Japanese merchant Araki Shutaro, also called Nguyễn Taro or Hiễn Hùng. Phan Văn Hoàng places this marriage was in 1619, and his wife lived in Nagasaki under the name Oukakutome (*Vương Gia Cửu Hộ Mại*) or Anio. She is reportedly associated with a tomb, and some artifacts in the Nagasaki Fine Arts Museum.<sup>15</sup>

The *Liệt Truyện* does not provide the *Sãi* Prince and Mạc Thị Giai enough daughters for all these alliances. Three are named in the *Liệt Truyện*: Ngọc Liên, who was married to Mạc Cảnh Vinh in the *Liệt Truyện* and *Mạc gia phả*, and Ngọc Vạn and Ngọc Khoa, whose husband’s names have been omitted. The *Liệt Truyện* lists another seven children of Nguyễn (six sons, and a fourth daughter, Ngọc Đĩnh) who are not

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<sup>14</sup> The contemporary Nguyễn Phúc clan genealogy cites Madrolle’s *L’Indochine du Sud* as its source for the information that Ngọc Vạn was married to the Cambodian king Jayajettā II in 1620, leading to the establishment of a Nguyễn garrison in Mô Xoài, a name for Bà Rịa or Biên Hòa, suggesting this is a fairly recent interpretation. Bruce Lockhart, comparing the *Patsavat Lao* with the *Toàn Thư*, describes no marriage alliance, or any other reports of contact in this period. Hội *Đông Trị Sự Nguyễn Phúc Tộc*, 113; Claudius Madrolle, *L’Indochine du Sud*, (Paris: Hachette, 1926); Dror and Taylor, *Seventeenth-century Vietnam*, 130; Lockhart, “The Historical Lao-Vietnamese Relationship,” Van Vliet, “Description”

<sup>15</sup> *Liệt Truyện*, 68; Phan Văn Hoàng, “Nhà Nguyễn - Lịch sử thăng trầm của một dòng họ - Kỳ 3: Trung tâm giao thương.”

children of Giai. The mothers are not named. Ngọc Đĩnh married the problematic figure Nguyễn Phúc Kiều, discussed below.<sup>16</sup>

Some Vietnamese nationalist scholars have assumed that the princess married to a Cambodian king must be Ngọc Vạn. Essentially, in this argument, the Nguyễn must have felt that the marriage was inappropriate to report in a royal biography, so they listed Ngọc Vạn's name but removed her Cambodian king husband, as well, apparently, as her sister's Lao husband, and another Japanese one. If the Nguyễn text is actually taken literally, though, there are not enough daughters for the five reported marriages.<sup>17</sup>

Some writers in Vietnam have made assertions about the children of that union, without textual support. A scholar of southern Vietnam, Lê Văn Lựu, suggests in passing that Ngọc Vạn was the mother of princess Néang Nhéa Ksattrey, born in 1624. A French colonial writer, Claudius Madrolle, asserts this “Vietnamese queen” was the mother of the king Ponghóa To. Cambodian chronicles do not describe this, and Mak Phoeun believes none of Jayajettā's male children were sons of his primary queen Cūv. Ponghóa To seems to have married his sister or half sister Vodey, whose mother was a daughter of the first minister in the court of the *abjoréach*), and had married her uncle Outei first, before returning to marry Ponghóa To. Ponghóa To died soon after taking the throne in 1618. However, a “Vietnamese queen” is reported to have maintained a position of prestige in the court for decades.<sup>18</sup>

Another striking parallel is with the Quảng Nam man married a Cambodian queen in the *Mạc gia phả*, related to a Mạc military intervention in a *giáp ngọ* year. Jayajettā II may have married Mạc Kính Điển's granddaughter, and the men and galleys offered to Cambodia may have been under control of the Mạc in Quảng Nam. If so, there is textual

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<sup>16</sup> The daughter of the *Thượng* King, and information about his first and third sons, are also omitted. *Liệt Truyện*, 68.

<sup>17</sup> Thái Văn Kiểm Thái Văn Kiểm, “La Plaine aux Cerfs et la Princesse de Jade.” *Bulletin de la Société des Etudes Indonchinoises* 34 (1959) : 385-389.

<sup>18</sup> Madrolle, Claudius, *L'Indochine du Sud*, (Paris: Hachette, 1926).; Lương Văn Lựu, *Biên Hòa Sử Lược Toàn Biên* [History of Biên Hòa], vol. 2, 1973, 89-95; Carool Kersten, “Cambodia's Muslim King: Khmer and Dutch Sources on the Conversion of Reameathipadei I, 1642–1658,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 37:1 (February 2006):1–22; Bùi Thụy Đào Nguyên, “Công Nữ Ngọc Vạn, Người Không Có ‘Truyện’ Trong Sử Nhà Nguyễn” [Princess Ngọc Vạn, One with No “Biography” in Nguyễn History], ms.; Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 157-93. Trudy Jacobsen suggests a powerful Queen Mother was a common feature of the court in *Lost Goddess: The Denial of Female Power in Cambodian History*. Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2008), 84-90.

evidence of two marriage alliances which may have taken place to broker military assistance to a Cambodian faction by Quảng Nam forces.

### Mạc Attacks on Qinzhou and Tonkin

In the early 17th century, the Mạc were able to launch successive attacks on the Lê and maintained at least sporadic control over parts of northern Đại Việt and even Đông Kinh. Mạc factions, in addition to maintaining bases in both Quảng Nam and Cao Bằng, grew increasingly active in the port of Qinzhou. In 1607, Ông Phú (翁富), described as being of the Mạc faction, brought 4,000 persons to Silin, in Qinzhou, and established a settlement and markets there. The Ming blamed him for instigating repeated sackings and burnings in Qinzhou over several years, yet he evaded capture.<sup>19</sup>

In some cases, coastal raids occurred under the protection of Ming commanders in Guangdong and Guangxi. Court officials investigating the raids on Qinzhou reported that defensive forces guarding the harbors at Fangcheng and Longmen (Long Môn) had repeatedly refused to take action during the raids, attacking forces relied on guidance from former members of the coastal guard, and patrols and troops frequently raised no response to the attacks. The whole Guangdong chain of command was blamed for a cover-up. The supreme commander of Guangdong/Guangxi was stripped of all rank for supporting a rebellion in Qinzhou. (He at first blamed the Lê king for only apprehending a small number of these raiding parties.) Calls for reforms, banning trade and raising troop strengths were met with skepticism at the court, where officials wondered whether interfering with the trade would increase or actually harm their tenuous control there.<sup>20</sup> Mạc Kính Khoan appears in Cao Bằng in 1615, by which time the Mạc also controlled the province of Quảng Nam. Although a delegation arrived from Tonkin in 1614, Guangdong reported more unrest there in 1615, and Guangxi officials complained in that year about annual attacks by barbarian *Yi* raiders allied with border chieftain Mạc Kính Lâm. (The court demanded that both the Lê Commander and Mạc Kính Khoan take

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<sup>19</sup> The surname Ông, found in South China, also occurs in Quảng Nam, where an Ông clan claims to be descended from Cham ancestors. *Ming Shi-lu, Shen-zong*, 444:5b-6b, 472:8b-10a, 538.3b-4a.

<sup>20</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Shen-zong*, 444:5b-6b, 592:8a-b.

action to punish them.) In 1624, the Ming learned from Guangxi officials that Trịnh Tùng had died; his son Trịnh Đổ tried unsuccessfully to take power, but was driven out by mass revolt followed by an attack by Mạc Kính Khoan from Cao Bằng. A new Commander, Lê Duy Kỳ, reportedly returned from hiding overseas only in 1624, after Đổ had driven Mạc Kính Khoan back to Cao Bằng. Khoan's son died during a Lê attack in 1624, but Khoan continued to rule in Cao Bằng.

The Ming remark on Trịnh Tùng's death in 1624, when Mạc Kính Khoan took the opportunity to seize the capital. A Trịnh rebel named Đổ drove Khoan out and brought back the Lê ruler Duy Kỳ, and prepared to attack both Khoan in Cao Bằng and a commander in Tuyên Quang who was allied with the Ming. This 1624 campaign against Khoan is reported as a three-pronged attack against Khoan's allies who held Cao Bằng, part of Guangxi, as well Quảng Nam. Khoan's eldest son, as captured in Guangxi, committed suicide, but Khoan and a second son returned to Cao Bằng. The fate of the Mạc in Quảng Nam is not described by the Ming,<sup>21</sup> but Mạc factions continued operating on the northern coast until 1629, with Mạc Kính Khoan raiding Leizhou and Mạc Kính Mão raiding Qinzhou. Although the final *Shi-lu*, does not record additional Mạc activities before 1644, it was compiled by the Qing court, who knew little about Qinzhou, in the late 17th century, a period when Ming loyalists were still active there. However, it looks likely that the Mạc were one of the regional forces active at the beginning of the Wars of the Three Feudatories.<sup>22</sup>

Borri, in Faifo and Quy Nhon from 1618 to 1624, appears to have learned little about the faltering Lê-Trịnh presence in Đông Kinh. Borri recorded what he had learned about the relationship between the son of the former king in Đông Kinh, the king in Cochinchina, and a new king in Đông Kinh. He wrote that while the Cochinchina king paid tribute to Đông Kinh as to avoid war, he also entered "into a league with the fugitive son of the late king, who lorded it in the utmost province of Tonchin, which borders upon China, that in case he succeeded, and became master of Tonchin, Cochinchina might remain free from all tribute and acknowledgement." He describes the new king in Đông Kinh:

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<sup>21</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Xi-zong*: 17:13a, *Xi-zong (Liang)*, 39:20b, 42:5b.

<sup>22</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Chong-zhen* 2:5a Supplement.

... already in the possession of the kingdom of *Tonchin*, not the son of the preceding king, but the tutor or governor of that son, who made his escape from the said governor to save his life. The [exiled] prince lived like a fugitive, in the farthest province adjoining to China, where being known to be what he was, that is, the late king's son, he was received by that people as their sovereign lord, and by his good government he had so strengthened himself, that his tutor, already declared king of *Tonchin*, was much afraid, seeing him grow so great, lest he should agree with the king of *Conchin-China*, who is on the opposite side, to catch him between them, and expel him his unjust possession. He therefore every year form'd a considerable army to destroy the aforesaid prince but always to no purpose...<sup>23</sup>

Borri writes that the king of Cochinchina was engaged in:

...a sort of civil war, raised by two of his own brothers, who aiming to be equal in command and power, not satisfied with what has been allotted them, have rebelled against him, and craving succours from Tonkin, gave him perpetual trouble. While I lived in those parts, they having got some pieces of cannon, which they carried upon elephants, fortified themselves so well upon the frontiers, that the king's army marching against them, was in the first engagement routed, with the loss of 3,000 men; but coming to a second battle, the king's brothers lost all they had gained before, being both made prisoners; and they had both immediately lost their lives, had not his majesty's natural clemency and brotherly affection prevailed, and taken place of his anger, so far as to spare their lives, yet so as to keep them prisoners.<sup>24</sup>

Basing his report largely on information offered by Đông Kinh sailors in Quy Nhơn, Borri describes a *Chiuua* of Tonkin, who held real power, while the position of *Buna*, or king, was ceremonial. When a Lord died, he would try to have his son replace him, but the tutors of those sons would try to murder them and “possess themselves of the dignity of the *Chiuua*.” Borri then refers to the man previously called the king, who was deposed by his tutor or governor, who fled to the province bordering on China, as the “other *Chiuua*.”<sup>25</sup>

The *Hoan Châu Ký*, which had described the capture of Mạc *Kiên Thố* and *Hồng Ninh*'s mother in 1601/1607, introduces the Mạc *Khánh* Prince, named Kính Khoan, taking refuge in Cao Bằng by 1618. In that year, Trịnh Tráng forced this king to

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<sup>23</sup> *Bản Kỷ Tục Biên, Kinh Tông Huệ Hoàng Đế Thành Tổ Triết Vương*, 10b-23a; Olga Dror and K.W. Taylor, *Views of Seventeenth-century Vietnam: Christoforo Borri on Cochinchina and Samuel Baron on Tonkin*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University SEAP Publications, 2006), 182.

<sup>24</sup> Dror and Taylor, *Seventeenth-Century Vietnam*, 129.

<sup>25</sup> Dror and Taylor, *Seventeenth-Century Vietnam*, 182-3.



flee Cao Bằng, and defeated other pretenders. (Trịnh Tùng's death is described in 1623.)<sup>26</sup>

The *Diễn Chí*, which had not described Mạc Kính Cung or his questionable defeat, has Mạc controlling some parts of the coast up to circa 1613, when Trịnh Tráng defeated Mạc forces in An Bang (Quảng Ninh). This defeat was not definitive, with Tráng pulling his troops back and the *Hoằng* Duke being appointed to govern there. A Mạc Phủ Long attacked Thăng Long in 1617, burning the city. In 1618, the Mạc *Khánh* Prince in Cao Bằng seems to have reoccupied part of the coast, but the text seems to imply there were additional Mạc forces already on the coast. Tráng's commander drove *Khánh* Prince back to Cao Bằng. Regional commanders acting on secret orders from Trịnh Tráng, the *Phú* and *Lộc* Dukes, defeated the Mạc *Lập* Duke – after the *Khánh* Prince had already retreated. Unnamed Mạc in Cao Bằng were able to briefly take the Lê capital again in 1621.<sup>27</sup>

A revolt similar to the one Borri describes appears in the *Diễn Chí*. The *Văn Nham* Marquis and *Thạch Xuyên* Marquis, and sons of a wife other than the *Sãi* Prince's mother, had accompanied Nguyễn Hoàng on his original journey to Ái Tử; their elder sister, by the same unnamed mother, was married to Trịnh Tráng. In 1620, the two brothers sent word (through a maternal relation) to Trịnh Tráng, then garrisoned in Nghệ An, hoping that he would draw the *Sãi* Prince into a conflict there, leaving his southern flank undefended. The brothers planned to seize throne and eliminate the *Sãi* Prince's maternal relatives (i.e., those identified as Mạc in the *Liệt Truyện*), including the king's nephew, their greatest rival, the *Tuyên Lộc* Marquis. Then, they would place their own mother's clan in power in Quảng Nam. Realizing this this, the *Tuyên Lộc* Marquis advised the king to send another prince to Quảng Bình in his place; once they were discovered, the brothers seized Ái Tử, but the *Tuyên Lộc* Marquis defeated them.

The *Tạp Lục* describes the same revolt in different terms. Phúc Nguyên's young brothers, the *Văn* Duke and *Hữu* Duke, secretly wrote (the Trịnh?) asking for troops, saying the *Sãi* Prince had committed treason. The *Đặng* Duke Nguyễn Khải arrived at

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<sup>26</sup> These battles are not explicitly dated; Tráng defeated the *Nghiêm* King and *Tri Thủy*.

<sup>27</sup> The figure called *Hoằng* Duke will require further study.

Nhật Lê to aid the brothers only after the king had already killed them, and he departed. For the *Tạp Lục*, this incident sparked Nguyễn's hatred for the Trịnh.

The *Toàn Thư* omits the 1618 campaign against Cao Bằng. However, it appears again in the *Bản Ký Tục Biên*, sons of Mạc Kính Điển were at this point defeated by Trịnh Tùng. Mạc Kính Cung had ruled in Cao Bằng throughout, but by 1609, had given up trying to control the coast. The continued presence of Mạc Kính Cung does not prevent the text from reporting the 1618 Trịnh defeat of the *Khánh King* Mạc Kính Khoan.

In the *Thực Lục*, the Nguyễn king's brothers Hiệp and Trạch rebelled and asked for aid, so Trịnh Tráng sent them 5,000 troops under Nguyễn Khải. Hiệp and Trạch feared Prince Tuyên, fourth son of the *Hòa Duke* Prince Hà, so they asked the king to send Tuyên to fight the Trịnh. Advised by Tuyên, the king ordered Prince Vê, Hà's second son, to meet Khải's army. Hiệp and Trạch seized Ái Tử and Tuyên captured them; the king placed them in prison where they died of shame. In this version, the king stopped paying tribute to the Lê at this time.<sup>28</sup>

There is no way to interpret Borri's account of Tonkin in a way that comes close to matching the Lê histories. One fundamental problem is that no murderous quarrels over the office of *Chúa* between his sons and their "tutors." As Borri describes, "the tutors of those sons would try to murder them and "possess themselves of the dignity of the *Chiuua*." When Trịnh Kiểm died, a struggle was reported between two of his sons by different mothers, Tùng and Cối, but that was a full 50 years earlier, and did not involve a tutor. Taylor and Dror suggest that Borri may have meant to say *Buna* here, not *Chiuua*, because that would be somewhat reminiscent of the 1619 events, reported in various forms in the *Toàn Thư*, *Diễn Chí* and *Thực Lục*, in which Mạc Kính Tông plotted against Trịnh Tùng with Tùng's son, and was killed, but that event is problematic in itself, and it is also unclear that Borri would have learned ongoing about Tonkin palace intrigues during his stay in Quy Nhơn. However, since Borri admits gaining most of his knowledge of Tonkin from Hải Dương sailors in Quy Nhơn, it could be that all most of his informants belonged to groups allied with the Mạc. In addition to Dror and Taylor's suggestion, we should consider the possibility that after the Lê retreated to Thanh Hóa

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<sup>28</sup> *Tạp Lục*, I:25b-26a; *Thực Lục*, 40.

circa 1601/1607, parts of Tonkin were still being contested by competing Mạc factions up until his period of residence.

Borri's prince, living "like a fugitive, in the farthest province adjoining to China" after having been deposed by his former tutor or governor, does not match any figure in the Lê texts. (Dror and Taylor suggest that Borri here confused Mạc Kính Cung with Lê *Thế Tông*.) However, Mạc princes certainly travelled with Mạc Chính Trung to Qinzhou after the conflict with Mạc Kính Điển and were apparently in control of the northern coast for much of Borri's stay, so Borri may have been describing stories about conflict between Mạc princes.<sup>29</sup>

There is some ambiguity in the missionary sources about which king is responsible for the split with Tonkin. Rhodes writes in 1653 that "Cochinchina has been for less than 50 years a separate kingdom from Tonkin... [Its first king] was the grandfather of he who reigns now... he revolted against [Tonkin]... which he maintained by arms, and left his children a heritage which was disputed by them several times..." During the time of Rhodes' visit, the *Sãi* Prince's son would have still been ruling (the *Sãi* Prince's grandson might have taken the throne around the account was published, but there is no reason this would have stopped the presses in Rome). However, Borri makes the same claim in 1624. He states that the current king's grandfather was governor of Cochinchina and rebelled against the king of Tonkin (making use of large numbers of cannon salvaged from the Portuguese and Dutch).<sup>30</sup>

### Cochinchina's Influence in Highland States

The *Diễn Chí* claims that the *Sãi* Prince established Ai Lao Encampment in 1621. In an episode dated by its position in the text to 1621-23, a Lạc Hoàn chieftain is described rebelling against the *Sãi* Prince, crossing the Cả River, and launching raids on merchants. The Cả River is in Nghệ An. (Ngô Đức Thọ suggests that in this passage the

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<sup>29</sup> "The farthest province adjoining to China" might be either Cao Bằng, or Qinzhou.

<sup>30</sup> Conceivably, Rhodes was not aware of Tần's rule, since he departed to Macao in 1645 before Tần reportedly took power, but the news of the death of the king should have reached his order. If he meant Nguyễn Phúc Lan, who appears to have died in 1648, though this is uncertain, the king of Tonkin, brother-in-law of the grandfather might have been Nguyễn Hoàng's sister's husband Trịnh Kiểm, who was merely a general in Thanh Hóa at the time. Rhodes, *Voyages et Missions*, 76-77.

Cả River is actually the Thạch Hãn River in Quảng Trị, since the Nguyễn are understood not to have held Nghệ An. However, the Trịnh would also later use the Nghệ An River to reach Lạc Hòn/Hoàn.) The *Sãi* Prince sent the *Hòa* Duke to attack Lạc Hoàn, ambushing the raiders as they pursued the merchants downstream. The king gave the raiders costumes and salaries, and Lạc Hoàn became part of his realm. The *Tạp Lục* also alludes to this episode.<sup>31</sup>

The *Thực Lục* repeats the story, but claims Lạc Hòn raided across the Hiếu River instead of the Cả River. Even though *Hòa* is clearly the title of the *Sãi* Prince's brother, the Historical Office mistakenly claims that a prince named Hòa was sent to attack them, and an annotation notes that this prince named Hòa at that time was called a Duke. The creation of the Ai Lao Encampment is moved to 1622, though no actual battles to the west are described in that year. From 1622, Ai Lao people were formed into six military divisions called *thuyền quân*; the divisions were called Man Lục Hoàn, Vạn Tượng (Vientiane), Trấn Ninh (Xiengkhuang) and Quý Hợp (now part of Nghệ An). The reference to Nghệ An is omitted, and they were all reached, in this text, by traveling along the Thạch Hãn River in Quảng Trị.<sup>32</sup>

Borri describes “Renran” as the westernmost province of Cochinchina. Rhodes also mentions a martyr born in 1625 in the province Renran. Phan Đình Khiêm suggests that this is Phú Yên, the name a corruption of the name of its river, Đa Răng. However, Borri and Rhodes wrote of Renran (Ranran) independently of each other. Borri states Cochinchina reaches the eleventh parallel, which is at Phan Rang, not Phú Yên. The eleventh parallel appeared in Spanish texts as the demarcation of Champa two decades earlier. That term appears in no Nguyễn texts, but does appear as *Răn Răn* Harbor in the *Giáp Ngọ* itinerary. It is south of Phú Yên's Đà Răng River (on which lies Phú Yên *Phủ Trị*, at the Hồ Citadel), but north of the pillar representing the marker *Lê Thánh Tông* allegedly placed to mark Đại Việt's claim. The 1653 Jesuit map places coastline features

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<sup>31</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 118-119; *Tạp Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>32</sup> The Quy Hợp archive from the following century describe the Trịnh authorities appointing a Quý Hợp intermediary in the upper Cả River in Nghệ An to collect tribute from the rulers of Lạc Hoàn. As discussed later, documents dated to the 1750s describe a titular Trịnh governor of the three regions Nghệ An, Quảng Bình and Trấn Ninh (Xiengkhuang), though it is not clear whether that official actually administered Xiengkhuang. *Thực Lục*, 41.

and major rivers roughly corresponding to those of Nha Trang within Ranran (and shows Champa, to the southwest, extending far inland).<sup>33</sup>

The Jesuits received their warmest welcome from the governor of Pulucambi (Quy Nhon), a province they reached by ship after a stop in Quanghia (Quảng Ngãi), itself ruled by an autonomous governor. Borri was escorted from Hội An by the Pulucambi governor himself. The governor approved construction of a church before his death due to sudden illness; they were also received by his sister. (This may be the governor who wrote to VOC factories in Siam and Pattani in 1617, inviting them to trade in Quinam.)<sup>34</sup>

Borri attended his funeral. A lavish wooden palace, twice as magnificent as his residence in Quy Nhon, was built on a “spacious plain” on the outskirts of Kifu, said to be the place of the governor’s birth. Borri describes the city of Kifu as three day’s journey from Quy Nhon. Borri’s fellow priests spoke the local language well, he claimed to have excellent translators, and he personally witnessed this funeral ceremony. The wooden palace contained wooden elephants, horses, and wooden galleys on wheels so they could travel on land, representing each of the governor’s real galleys. Offerings including oxen and buffalo were made at its altar, then all the contents of the palace were burned in a funeral pyre except the coffin, said to be buried in one of twelve tombs to preserve the secrecy of its location. The governor’s son then ruled the province as a lieutenant during three years of mourning.

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<sup>33</sup> The *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ* copy is too blurred to make out the characters “Răn Răn,” so I rely on the Viện Khảo Cổ annotation here. In fact, there is a small river in southern Phú Yên province called the Bàn Thạch River, but the Răn Răn river appears on the map as a major river, further suggesting that it is actually Nha Trang, not the region of a river in southern Phú Yên. *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ*, 161. A short passage in the *Thực Lục* describes forces from Champa invading at the “border” in 1611. An official called by the unusual name Văn Phong defeated the Cham in that year. Văn Phong was ordered to govern that border region as the prefecture (*phủ*) of Phú Yên, divided into Đồng Xuân and Tuy Hòa districts. Văn Phong is not mentioned in the *Diễn Chí* or *Tạp Lục*, two texts that had an overriding interest in the development and expansion of the Nguyễn kingdom; the reference to the *phủ* of Phú Yên, with the 19th-century Nguyễn Dynasty names of its two districts, is also anachronistic. As noted in Chapter Three, it may be necessary to consider whether this event should be moved to the previous calendar cycle, placing it in the period of Mạc rule. Văn Phong is called *Chỉ Sự*, which sounds like a low level official, though what the meaning of this would be at this early date is unclear; it is a hint that the region had an elaborate court hierarchy. *Thực Lục*, 36; Phạm Đình Khiêm, *Người Chứng Thứ Nhất: Lịch Sử Tôn Giáo Chính Trị Miền Nam Đầu Thế Kỷ XVII* [History of Religion and Politics in the South in the Early Seventeenth Century] (Saigon: Lam Hồng, 1959), chapter 2.

<sup>34</sup> Dror and Taylor, *Seventeenth Century Vietnam*, 147-155; Hoàng Anh Tuấn, *Silk for Silver*, 64.

Since Borri does not describe the city itself, it is unclear whether it contained shrines and towers like those of the walled sanctuary at Phú Đa village (Chà Bàn). In the absence of further evidence, the spacious plain Borri described is probably in the highlands. To speculate, the name Kifu appears to be a transliteration of *Khê Phú* (Phú Mountain Stream), which suggests that the city of the governor's birth, three days travel by elephant from Quy Nhơn, was beyond Phú Phong village and the Phú Quý pass, which leads to the region that was later called An Khê, literally Pacified Mountain Stream.

Even An Khê is only a short distance from Quy Nhơn, and although the speed at which a funeral procession might have travelled is debatable, Borri is clear that his party also returned to Quy Nhơn on elephants lent by their hosts, so his estimate of the travel time should be accurate. It seems possible that the governor's home could also have been higher on the Kontum Plateau in the vicinity of Pleiku, a journey of closer to 100 kilometers, which might require three days travel by elephant. Gerald Hickey reviews the traces of many built structures discovered by early French explorers in Kontum; unfortunately many of the structures observed around the turn of the 20th century, including brick towers, had been dismantled and removed by the time methodical surveys were carried out. To date, little archaeological work has been done in Kontum with a focus on the historical period.<sup>35</sup>

According to Po Dharma, Po Rome was a highlander west of Phan Rang, from the region now part of the provinces of Đồng Nai and Lâm Đồng, and ruled until 1654. He is associated with the Po Rome tower on a route from Phan Rang into the highlands. There is no text, to my knowledge, confirming the story of his marriage with the *Sãi* Prince's daughter Ngọc Khoa, which was proposed by Thái Văn Kiêm based on very slight evidence. If accurate, the alliance with this Cham leader of highland origins would have taken place shortly after Đào Duy Từ and Nguyễn Hữu Tiến aided Nguyễn in formalizing his separation from the Lê regime. No Cham marriage alliance appears in any Nguyễn text, but Borri notes that, in addition to his wars with the Trịnh and his two brothers, Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên was fighting a third "continual war" c.1620, "on the west side, and

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<sup>35</sup> As noted above, the *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí* describes remains of an ancient citadel in the hills of what is now Tây Sơn district, near Phú Phong village (*thôn*), only about twenty kilometers from Quy Nhơn. The place name Phú Yên (An), or Pacified Phú, also appears in the region near An Khê. *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, vol. 3, 37-38; Gerald Hickey, *Sons of the Mountains: ethnohistory of the Vietnamese central highlands to 1954* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982),

utmost bound of his kingdom called ‘Renran,’ against the king of Champa; whose efforts being weaker, are sufficiently repulsed by the troops of that same province, and the governor.”<sup>36</sup>

Although the Trịnh were successful, by 1624, in retaking Đông Kinh, Mạc forces and their allies retained control of not only the northern mountainous regions, but the western mountains as well, possibly including much of the middle Mekong basin. The *Sãi* Prince controlled a region accessible via Nghệ An, called Lạc Hoàn, which would be claimed by the Trịnh only more than a century later. Mạc allies on or at least near the Kontum Plateau, in control of Quy Nhơn, were among the court factions most sympathetic to the Christian missionaries.

#### Northern Coastal Forces in Thuận Hóa and the Struggle for Nghệ An

The Lê and Nguyễn texts cannot be trusted to give us a true sense of the territorial extent of or military support for the various Mạc regimes. However, Mạc Kính Khoan is described in the *Diễn Chí* coming from Cao Bằng and occupying the Đông Kinh capital itself, the rest of the delta and the northern coast, possibly restricting the Trịnh forces to Thanh Hóa and Nghệ An. This appears to be dated to 1623, which would have been after Borri’s departure, although there must have been reports from other missionaries about such a dramatic event, if true. An undated passage appearing after an unrelated episode dated to 1623 states that a high officer (*Thái Úy*) of the Southern Dynasty (*Nam Triều*) called the *Lương* Grand Duke brought more than 1,000 warships to Yên Trường in Thanh Hóa, though the circumstances and outcome of this are not at all clear in the text. Yên Trường probably refers to the Hoa Lu area, the old Trường Yên Prefecture, in today’s Ninh Bình province. In the *Toàn Thư*, the title *Lương* Grand Duke is reserved for Trịnh Kiểm and not used in connection with any Nguyễn ally. In 1623, the *Toàn Thư* describes Trịnh Tùng’s illness and the struggles between his sons resulting in the death of Trịnh Xuân and the ascension of Trịnh Tráng as the new ruler. The circumstances differ in the

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<sup>36</sup> Po Dharma, *Le Panduranga (Campa) 1802-1835* (Paris: EFEO, 1987), 65, 182; Dror and Taylor, *Seventeenth-Century Vietnam*, 128; Thái Văn Kiểm, “La Plaine aux Cerfs et la Princesse de Jade,” *Bulletin de la Société des Etudes Indonchinoises* 34 (1959): 385-389.

*Nội Các Quan* edition and the *Bản Kỷ Tục Biên*. In the *Nội Các Quan* edition, after Tùng's death, Mạc Kính Khoan's forces came down the Red River intending to occupy Thăng Long, but they were repelled. The *Bản Kỷ Tục Biên* claims that Thăng Long was left undefended due to the fraternal rivalry among Trịnh Tùng's sons, so Mạc Kính Khoan arrived with tens of thousands of troops from Cao Bằng, and garrisoned in areas near the capital. The Mạc occupied Thăng Long for at least a short time before they were driven out by Trịnh troops, and the king returned from Thanh Hóa to Đông Kinh. Neither Nguyễn Phúc Kiêu nor these 1623 incidents appear in the *Tạp Lục*, which simply notes that Nguyễn sent condolences on Trịnh Trùng's death. The *Thực Lục* mentions no *Lương* Grand Duke or thousand warships reaching Thanh Hóa.<sup>37</sup>

The editors of the *Thực Lục* and the *Liệt Truyện* choose to ignore the *Diễn Chí* report of more than a thousand warships going to Ninh Bình in 1623 and make no mention of the *Lương* Grand Duke. However, the Historical Office texts describe another incident in 1623 that appears in none of the earlier texts. Nguyễn Phúc Kiêu, called the commander of the *Mã Cơ* army, brought a secret letter from Trịnh Trang's wife Ngọc Tú in Đông Đô to give to her brother Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên. For this reason, Nguyên awarded him this command position and arranged for him to marry his own daughter, the princess Ngọc Đĩnh. He is given no title in the *Thực Lục*. A *Quảng Lâm* Marquis named Nguyễn Kiêu is described in the *Diễn Chí* as a young brother of Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên, who is made governor of Quảng Bình in 1633; the same episode is repeated in the *Liệt Truyện*, which calls that individual Nguyễn Phúc Kiêu, making him the king's son-in-law in that text, instead of young brother, as in the *Diễn Chí*. His royal clan surname was reportedly taken away by the *Minh Mạng* Emperor in the early 19th century, in a decree changing his surname together with that of all his descendants from Nguyễn Phúc to Nguyễn Cửu, so he is called Nguyễn Cửu Kiêu in Historical Office texts. In the *Liệt Truyện*, he was from the Nguyễn native district in Thanh Hóa. His father is called Quảng, with no surname and an unusual title. Kiêu brought Ngọc Tú's seal and letter from Đông Đô in 1623, disguising himself as a cockfighter. Pursued by the Trịnh army all the way to the Gianh River on foot, he prayed to the river god, and a buffalo appeared from

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<sup>37</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVIII:20a-22b; *Bản Kỷ Tục Biên*, Kỷ Hoàng Triều Nhà Lê:3b-6a; *Diễn Chí*, 119-144.



nowhere, then vanished as soon as he had used it to cross the river and evade the Trịnh forces stuck on the other side. The *Sãi* Prince made him commander of the *Mã Cơ* navy.

A significant military campaign may have been obscured, replaced with a facetious story about a magic buffalo. The story that Kiêu was a prince is more plausible than the story that he received the royal clan name for carrying a letter.<sup>38</sup>

The *Ming Shi-lu* remarks on Trịnh Tùng's death in 1624, placing it several years in the past (earlier than Tùng dies in the *Toàn Thư*). Đại Việt was in a bloody rebellion led by his son Trịnh Đổ, and Mạc Kính Khoan took the opportunity to seize the capital. Đổ drove Khoan out, brought back Lê Duy Kỳ (*Thần Tông*), and prepared to attack both Khoan in Cao Bằng and commander in Tuyên Quang who also had some allegiance to the Ming. The 1624 move against Mạc Kính Khoan is reported as a three-pronged attack against Khoan's allies in Cao Bằng, part of Guangxi, as well Quảng Nam. Khoan's eldest son was captured in Guangxi and committed suicide, but Khoan and a second son returned to Cao Bằng. This report corroborates the Mạc control of Quảng Nam in the first quarter of the 17th century, at the time of Borri's visit.<sup>39</sup>

In the *Diễn Chí* passage following the story of the *Luong* Grand Duke, in the eighth month of the year, still 1623, Mạc Kính Khoan brought his troops from Cao Bằng to Trường Yên Prefecture or Ninh Bình, where the *Luong* Grand Duke's 1,000 ships had already arrived from Thuận Hóa. (No conflict between them is described.) Khoan sent generals to hold the core Đông Kinh provinces Hải Dương, Sơn Nam, Sơn Tây, and Kinh Bắc. These Mạc forces attacked the Trịnh in Thanh Hóa. Arriving in Sơn Nam, Trịnh Tráng fought a Mạc general named *Xuân Quang*; a Nghệ An general, the *Định* Duke Hoàng Nghĩa Phì, also joined him. Together, they drove *Xuân Quang* back to Cao Bằng. The Trịnh advanced to meet Mạc Kính Khoan's forces. The *Diễn Chí* portrays Khoan's

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<sup>38</sup> Kiêu was called *Điện Tiên Đô Kiểm Đĩnh* Duke. Đĩnh died in 1683, and her tomb is also near that of Nguyễn's wife in Trà Kiệu, which provides additional evidence that senior court officials were resident in Trà Kiệu to the end of Nguyễn's reign. For a man to move to his wife's home was not unusual for clans of this area, which retained non-Sinicized cultural practices. As late as 1747, one *Gia Phả* records that a man named Đào Quang Quý, from another village in the region, married a woman of the clan Phạm Viêt in Bảo An on the Thu Bồn. The husband moved to his wife's home and together they established a new clan with the family name Phạm Đào. *Thực Lục*, 41; *Liệt Truyện*, 172-174. *Liệt Truyện*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*; Phan Nam, et al., *Bảo An*, 18.

<sup>39</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Xi-zong*: 17:13a, *Xi-zong (Liang)*, 39:20b, 42:5b.

daughter pleading to be allowed to meet Tráng in battle herself; Khoan withdrew to Cao Bằng first, and the Mạc lost Đông Kinh because she was a woman.

According to the *Diễn Chí*, Mạc Kính Khoan brought troops down from Cao Bằng in the *át sừu* year 1625, and Trịnh Tráng sent forces without success before asking the Ming for assistance. The Ming sent a message of only two enigmatic words, which the scholar Phùng Khắc Khoan, who by this time was certainly dead, interpreted as advising the date that Tráng should attack. Tráng sent his eldest son, called the *Sùng* Duke Trịnh Kiền, as Grand Marshall and his young brother *Thiếu Phó*, *Tung* Duke Trịnh Đống as Deputy Grand Marshall. They defeated the Mạc forces, capturing Khoan's oldest son, called the *Sùng* King Mạc Kính Loan with the former king, Mạc Kính Cung (here called by the reign name *Kiên Thống*) and their whole lineage group, but other Mạc troops escaped and returned to Cao Bằng. Khoan sent word that he would surrender and sent his son Mạc Kính Dung back to the Lê capital as a hostage. Tráng arranged for Dung to marry his own daughter and gave him the rank *Thiếu Phó* and title *Tham* Duke, then gave Khoan command of Cao Bằng, making him *Thái Úy*, *Thông* Duke. The *Cẩn* Grand Duke *Vũ Công Ý* was made *Thái Phó*, *Muru* Duke, and given command of Đại Đồng (a place name that occurs in China, but not normally in Đại Việt). Trịnh Kiền was promoted to *Sùng* Grand Duke, and Phùng Khắc Khoan was reportedly made head of the Board of Finance and *Thiếu Úy*, *Thông* Duke.

Thus, in stark contrast with the *Toàn Thư*, in which the delta regions of Đàng Ngoài were no longer contested by Mạc Kính Cung and Mạc Kính Khoan after 1609, the *Diễn Chí* describes other Mạc forces and Khoan as persistent challengers to the Trịnh in Đông Kinh, seizing the capital itself near the end of Borri's stay in Quy Nhơn, in 1621, an event Borri would have heard of from his merchant informants, and again a year after his departure. A battle in 1625 reportedly ended with the Mạc still in power, after having arranged a marriage alliance with Trịnh Tráng. We should not assume we have a clear sense of the military balance between these forces based on the claims made in the either the northern or southern chronicles, which aggrandize the Trịnh and marginalize the Mạc.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> *Diễn Chí*, *ibid.*

The military forces of the Cochinchina court in the late 1620s were controlled by a new group of officers appearing at that time. They were apparently part of the coastal network linking Hải Dương and Qinzhou, Thanh Hóa, and Vijaya, and had already been in Cochinchina for some time before allying with the court there. These men were originally from the Thanh Hóa coast in Tĩnh Gia, a harbor historically connected with Hải Dương (homeland of the naval officer married to the woman in the Thuận Hóa Mạc center). Some of them first traveled to Vijaya (Bồng Sơn) and lived there for an unspecified period of time before allying with the *Sãi* Prince.<sup>41</sup>

Đào Duy Từ is not mentioned in the *Toàn Thư*, but the *Bản Kỷ Tục Biên* places his alliance with Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên in 1623. Từ met him in Quang Nam, not Thuận Hóa; Nguyên is called a prefecture commander (*trấn phủ*) of Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam. The text summarizes events involving Từ that in other texts occur later in this decade: he convinced Nguyên to stop paying tribute, recruited a rebel force commanded by Nguyễn Hữu Tiến and Nguyễn Hữu Dật, and built a rampart on the south side of Nhật Lệ harbor. The name Nguyễn Hữu was awarded to multiple figures in the Historical Office texts who seem unrelated, notably Mạc Cảnh Vinh.<sup>42</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* describes a man with the title *Chiêu Vũ*, described as only sixteen years old in 1623, but already a civil official, the son of a general named *Triều Vãn*. He was dismissed after daring to question the *Sãi* Prince, but restored to his civil office after 1626, when the king withdrew from public life and turned over governance to a young brother called the *Tường* Duke. In the 1626 passage, this official is called the *Chiêu Vũ* Marquis, son of the *Triều Vãn* Marquis, Nguyễn Hữu Dật; he was given command of an infantry in 1627. He is introduced in a third time in 1655 with the same name and parentage, but in that third passage his family was said to have been natives of Thanh Hóa from the same village as the Southern King. Dật, born in the capital (which one is not specified), followed his father to the south when he was six years old. The greatest bulk of the novel is a glorification of *Chiêu Vũ*'s military career, culminating in a victory

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<sup>41</sup> The Tống Phúc clan would dominate the 18th century court, and the *Liệt Truyện* also states they originated in the same district as the Nguyễn homeland; however, with the exception of a single line stating that Tống Phúc Trĩ helped Nguyễn Hoàng in 1559, references to this clan do not appear in the *Thực Lục* until the late 17th century. *Liệt Truyện*, 137-140, 146-161, 172-174, 184-185; *Toàn Thư*, XXI:9b.

<sup>42</sup> *Bản Kỷ Tục Biên*, *ibid.*

over the Trịnh in Xiengkhuang in the 1670s. He died in 1681, said to be about 80, implying he would have arrived as a child in the middle of first decade of the 1600s.<sup>43</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* also relates the story that in the same year as the Mạc defeat, the *ất sừ* year of 1625, Đào Duy Từ went to Hoài Nhơn. He is also called *Lộc Khê*, a scholar from Hoa Trai village of Ngọc Sơn district in Thanh Hóa. He was forbidden from joining an examination in that year because he was from a family of singers. Đào Duy Từ travelled south, then to Hoài Nhơn, and stayed in a village (*thôn*) called Tùng Châu, across a small stream from the Bồ Đề village where Trần Đức Hòa lived. The usage of Bồ Đề here recalls that in Benedict Thiện, describing a location where a Lê king a rebellion, and its usage in Lê descriptions of the Lê-Mạc wars as a location where the Mạc often resided. There is no specific evidence suggesting that the Bồ Đề located in Quy Nhơn was a home of Mạc princes.

In the *Diễn Chí*, a wealthy man in Tùng Châu, who loved literature, patronized the scholars and discussed classical philosophy with them. His rice fields were said to be endless, and he owned 1,000 buffalo. In this fictional dramatization of his career, Từ began working for the landowner as a common buffalo herder, impressed the man with his brilliant scholarship, and went on to marry Trần Đức Hòa's daughter. In the *Tạp Lục*, Từ fled Đàng Ngoài. He is described as a man from Hoa Trai village of Ngọc Sơn district, who was refused entrance to an examination in 1625, again for his background in music, so he did not leave Thanh Hóa until after 1625; however, his arrival in Thuận Hóa, introduced by the *Cống* Duke, is described in 1623.<sup>44</sup>

Rhodes reports departing from Macao for Tonkin in March of 1627, driven off course to a port he called Chouaban, in the province of Sinoa. The place name Chouaban is unusual, though it seems unlikely that Rhodes is mistaken on the name of a place he remained in for two months. Cadière insists Sinoa is always a reference to Thuận Hóa, using Cantonese pronunciation (Seunhua). However, as noted earlier, Sinoa also matches the Cantonese for the province name Thăng Hoa (centered at Trà Kiệu). The Cochinchinese king resided in a capital also called Sinoa during Rhodes' prolonged stay in later years. Thuận Hóa would be the obvious stopping off point for an attack on Thăng

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<sup>43</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 127, 145.

<sup>44</sup> *Tạp Lục*, I:26b.

Hoa, although the location of a port in Thuận Hóa that could hold the armada witnessed by Rhodes is unclear, suggesting he might have stopped in Thanh Hóa (Qinghua).<sup>45</sup>

Rhodes describes the Tonkin king having an army of 80,000 men, and 400 galleys. Rhodes and others presented him with gifts, but “...the king did not have time to look at them, so eager was he for the war which he was going to make on the king of Cochinchina. He ordered us to await him in the province of Sinoa, where he left all his belongings and his wives, and he left us with an escort.” Two months later, the king “returned from war, where his army had met a great defeat...” The location of the fighting, and whether the battle took place on the coast or in the highlands, is not specified. Rhodes then accompanied that king back to Checho or Ke Cho (Đông Kinh). Although Rhodes, in the following decade, again describes Tonkin as being at war with Cochinchina, he mentions no further specific battles during his period of residence there.<sup>46</sup>

A similar inconclusive attack on Cochinchina is alluded to by Marini. Writing circa 1663, he states that the father of the current Tonkin *Chúa* had previously brought an army against Cochinchina, but he encountered an inauspicious portent en route and retreated. Moreover, the *Chúa* was well aware that the kings of both Cao Bằng and Cochinchina held ancient claims to Tonkin, and if he amassed his armies to attack one of these regions, the armies of the other would take advantage of divisiveness among his own children to seize his capital.

The threat of a military conflict in 1627 is alluded to in the Lê and Nguyễn texts, but no such two month assault is described. The *Toàn Thư* states that in 1627, an official brought an order to the *Thụy* Grand Duke (the Nguyễn text’s *Sãi* Prince) demanding troops, elephants and ships, but does not mention a child hostage. When he refused, Trịnh Tráng brought the king to join a battle at Nhật Lệ harbor, but the text simply states they were unsuccessful and retreated.<sup>47</sup>

In the *Diễn Chí*, due to his jealousy of the *Sãi* Prince, Trịnh Tráng sent the *An Toàn* Marquis Lê Đại Nhậm to Thuận Hóa, ordering the king to send his oldest son back

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<sup>45</sup> It is also noteworthy that in early Jesuit maps, the name Thuận Hóa, which seems to refer to an upland region, is transcribed Thoan Hoa. Rhodes, *Voyages et Missions*, 109-113.

<sup>46</sup> Rhodes, *Voyages et Missions*, *ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVIII:23a-25b.

to Tráng as a hostage, along with 30 elephants and 30 warships, needed as tribute for the Ming. The king at this point is no longer called the *Thụy* Duke and becomes the *Thụy* Grand Duke in the text. He refused these demands, and Tráng brought the Lê king to lead a naval expedition to punish him, arriving at the Nhật Lệ harbor. The king sent his cousin the *Vệ* Duke against Tráng, along with Trương Phúc Gia, with Nguyễn Hữu Dật commanding the infantry and the king's fourth son Trung commanding the navy. They were said to have sent a spy north to plant the rumor of a planned coup by Tráng's brothers Trịnh Gia and Trịnh Nhạc, and Tráng quickly pulled all his forces back to the capital. Thus, it is not clear that the two forces actually met in battle in this account.<sup>48</sup>

Both the *Diễn Chí* and *Thực Lục*, which repeats a similar story, note that Trần Đức Hòa learned of this "great victory" and arrived from Bồng Sơn to pay Phúc Nguyên a visit, presenting him with a verse written by his son-in-law Đào Duy Từ. The *Diễn Chí* claims that Trịnh Tráng returned to the capital and decided never to attack or harass the *Sãi* Prince again. The *Toàn Thư* describes no further dealings with him in the years following 1627. The *Thực Lục*, however, claims that Tráng planned an invasion in 1629, but then sent the Minister of Civil Service, Nguyễn Khắc Minh, to give the *Sãi* Prince a high appointment as a *Thái Phó* Grand Duke and ask for aid in attacking the Mạc in Cao Bằng. On Đào Duy Từ's advice, in this text, the *Sãi* Prince pretended to accept, planning to renounce it later.<sup>49</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* mocks the *Sãi* Prince's stature in an episode a few months after Trần Đức Hòa's first visit. Hòa came to the court for a second time with Đào Duy Từ, but Từ refused to wear the outlandish costume provided for a royal audience. The king stood outside the door to meet them, in white and green clothing, with a cape and a cane. Từ turned around and departed, saying that the king was dressed for a pleasure jaunt, not to receive a guest. The king changed to proper attire, presented Từ the costume of a court official, and said he had been waiting for Từ for a long time. Từ then handled all state affairs as *Lộc Khê* Marquis.

In a *Thực Lục* dialogue, Đào Duy Từ and the *Sãi* Prince discuss the construction of defenses in Quảng Bình to guard against northern infantry in 1630. The style of the

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<sup>48</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 154-163.

<sup>49</sup> *Diễn Chí*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, 43.

passage is similar to dialogues between Tù and the king that appear elsewhere in the *Diễn Chí*, but the *Diễn Chí* is missing some pages at this point, and is silent about events between Tù's first meeting with the king and 1630. It makes only a brief allusion to Tù urging construction defenses in 1631, with no construction date.<sup>50</sup>

In this episode in the *Thực Lục*, Đào Duy Tù argues against paying any further taxes to the Trịnh. In the past, he says, Nguyễn had to be patient, because the generals in Thuận Hóa were commanded by the Trịnh, restricting Nguyễn's actions. Now that they were gone, Tù asked him to build a long rampart for defense against the north. The Historical Office provides here an annotation explaining that during the reign of Lê Duy Đàm, Mai Cầu was Commander (*Tổng Binh*) in Thuận Hóa, and in the reign of Lê Duy Tần, Vũ Chân was the *Lê Hiến Sát* official in Thuận Hóa. With the exception of this single instance, their names appear in none of the Nguyễn texts, although a brief reference appears in the *Toàn Thư*.<sup>51</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* describes Vũ Chân as a man from Bình Lãng Thượng village in Thiên Lộc district, now in Hà Tĩnh. Since 1614, according to that text, this official had been prevented from performing his duties in Thuận Hóa. In 1631, he abandoned his post and returned overland to the Lê court, together with the *Mậu Lương* Marquis Bùi Văn Tuấn, a man from the Tổng Sơn district of Thanh Hóa. Trịnh Tráng rewarded both of them with new positions. These accounts suggest that the Lê had a military and administrative presence in Thuận Hóa independent from the ruler in Cochinchina between roughly 1573 and 1631. The texts suggest that only after Đào Duy Tù arrived and constructed defenses in Quảng Bình did Nguyễn gain firm control over Thuận Hóa. A version of this episode, similar in style to the *Diễn Chí*, may have been included in that text, but the pages describing the year 1630 have been removed.<sup>52</sup>

The *Tap Lục* describes Phúc Nguyễn refusing to pay tribute after 1630. The *Thực Lục* describes him refusing an appointment by the Lê, formalizing his independent rule, and claims that the Trịnh were unable to attack him because they faced other threats in Cao Bằng and Hải Dương. The man called Mai Đình Hùng in the *Liệt Truyện*, the grandson of Nguyễn Ứ Kỹ, is called Nguyễn Đình Hùng in this text; he is described

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<sup>50</sup> *Thực Lục*, 44-45.

<sup>51</sup> *Thực Lục*, *ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVIII:28b.

seizing the northern part of Quảng Bình from a Trịnh general named Nguyễn Khắc Kham and preventing travel along the Gianh River, but then awarding Trương Phúc Phân command of Quảng Bình. In the same year, the court established three artillery divisions.<sup>53</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* notes in 1631 that Đào Duy Từ urged Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên to construct the Nhật Lệ rampart, but Nguyên did not initially follow his advice. Từ then discussed it with an unnamed civil official called *Chiêu Vũ*, despite the earlier description of *Chiêu Vũ* Nguyễn Hữu Dật commanding an infantry. They eventually convinced Nguyên to let them build it. In 1632, in the *Diễn Chí*, Từ met a second important military leader, a man from his home district in Ngọc Sơn, Thanh Hóa, the *Thuần Nghĩa* Marquis, also named as Nguyễn Tiến. Từ arranged a marriage between Tiến and his own daughter and brought him to join Nguyên's court. According to the *Thực Lục*, Từ built the first rampart on the Nhật Lệ River in 1630, extending from the coast to the Trường Dục Mountain, apparently to block or regulate movement along both the coast and the highlands. In the same year, Nguyên's forces took Nam Bố Chính, north of the river, killing all officials there and conscripting the populace, and in 1631 Từ built a second rampart called Đồng Hải. After 1632, according to this text, Nguyên no longer offered tribute to the Lê court.<sup>54</sup>

Kawamoto Kuniye, examining 17th century diplomatic correspondence reproduced in the *Gaiban Tsusho*, suggests that there is evidence of a ruler in Quảng Nam (or in the standard narrative, Thuận Hóa) changing his title from Supreme Commander of Annam (*An Nam Quốc Đại Đô Thống*) to King of Annam (*An Nam Quốc Vương*) in two letters dating to 1632. Since the shogunate corresponded with Đông Kinh as well as with Quảng Nam, and the two letters in 1632 may have been written by different rulers, this question requires more systematic study of the shogunate's diplomatic correspondence with rulers in the region.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> *Tạp Lục*, I.26b-27a.

<sup>54</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 165-192.

<sup>55</sup> Kawamoto Kuniye, "The international outlook of the Quang Nam (Nguyen) regime as revealed in Gaiban Tsusho," *Ancient Town of Hoi An* (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Thế Giới, 1993), 109-116.



## Culmination of the Mạc Lineage in Nguyễn Texts

As the 17th century continued, it is clear that the Mạc did not simply retire to an isolated mountain refuge and cease all coastal involvement. A powerful Mạc faction on the coast is confirmed in the *Ming Shi-lu*, which reports that in 1629, Mạc Kính Khoan raided Leizhou. A Mạc Kính Mão organized yet another raid on Qinzhou. Yet despite the decision by the 19th century Historical Office to reverse itself and place some Mạc royalty into its official narrative, no further Mạc activities are reported in the south.<sup>56</sup>

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the authors or editors of Nguyễn texts from the *Diễn Chí* to the *Thực Lục* must have deliberately eliminated all references to Mạc royalty surviving into the 17th century. Other than the children of the *Thượng* Prince (Nguyễn Phúc Lan), Mạc Cảnh Vinh is the last descendant of Mạc Đăng Dung in Quảng Nam who is named in the Historical Office texts. None of the other sons of Mạc Thị Giai are said to have had any heirs at all. Vinh himself has no children named in the *Liệt Truyện*, even though both versions of the *Mạc gia phả* record his having a son with Ngọc Liên. The names of the husbands and children of Giai's daughters Ngọc Vạn and Ngọc Khoa are also omitted.

There are major discrepancies in the accounts of the sons of the *Sãi* Prince. The *Diễn Chí* alludes to an alliance between the man described as the *Sãi* Prince's second son, the *Nhân* Duke (Nguyễn Phúc Lan), and the *Vân Hiên* Viscount. When the *Khánh Mỹ* Marquis died of illness in 1631, he was replaced as Quảng Nam governor by Nguyễn's third son, the *Dương Nghĩ* Marquis, Nguyễn Phúc Anh. The *Nhân* Duke and the *Khánh Mỹ* Marquis are both described as the oldest son of Nguyễn in different passages in the *Diễn Chí*. Nguyễn sent his trusted supporter, the *Vân Hiên* Viscount, to watch over Anh. An annotation states that the *Vân Hiên* Viscount is Công Phạm, a problematic name discussed further below. This episode is repeated in the *Liệt Truyện* and *Thực Lục*, but the Historical Office replaces the title attributed to the *Sãi* Prince's son, *Khánh Mỹ* Marquis, with the given name Nguyễn Phúc Kỳ.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Chong-zhen 2:5a* Supplement.

<sup>57</sup> Ngô Đức Thọ notes that the third son's given name in the *Diễn Chí* manuscript is Hán, not Anh. *Diễn Chí, Liệt Truyện*, 90; *Thực Lục*, 47-48

The *Sãi* Prince reportedly allied with a clan called *Tổng Phúc*, arranging a marriage between his first son Kỳ, who became governor of Quảng Nam in 1614, and the daughter of a man called the *Mậu Lẽ* Marquis *Tổng Phúc Thông*, a marriage that produced three sons. According to the *Diễn Chí*, Thông hoped one of these sons would inherit the throne. When Kỳ died in 1631, Thông reportedly fled back to the capital Thăng Long to care for the graves of his ancestors. The passage describing Thông's departure varies slightly in the various surviving copies of the *Diễn Chí*, and its meaning is not completely clear; Ngô Đức Thọ suggests it means Thông left with his family out of the Noãn estuary in Thuận An. After learning of his departure, Nguyễn had his naval patrol executed out of anger, but he forgave his dead son's wife, *Tổng Thị*, who remained behind.<sup>58</sup>

In the *Cổ Trai Mạc gia phả*, Giai's oldest son, *Phủ Hữu Khánh*, who according to an annotation to the text is Nguyễn Phúc Kỳ (i.e. *Khánh Mỹ*), had four sons, the *Nhuệ Vũ* Marquis, *Xuân Lãn* Marquis, *Thừa Đức* Marquis, and *Trí Thắng* Marquis. The *Nhuệ Vũ* Marquis had three sons: *Vĩnh* (named as Nguyễn Phúc Hồng in an annotation), with one son; *Mĩ* (named as Nguyễn Phúc Thiên in an annotation), with three sons; and the *Đới Thắng* Marquis, with no sons recorded. The *Xuân Lãn* Marquis had one son, the *Mỹ Đức* Marquis. The *Thừa Đức* Marquis had three sons: the *Khuông Võ* Marquis, with two sons; *Tín* (whose given name, in an annotation, is illegible), with one son; and *Kiêm* (whose given name is also illegible), with two sons. The *Trí Thắng* Marquis had one son, the *Huệ Ân* Marquis, who had two sons of his own. Their descendents were active in the regime that ruled Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam at the time the *gia phả* was purportedly produced in 1765.

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<sup>58</sup> The *Liệt Truyện* describes a prominent family descended from *Tổng Phúc Trị*, who was said to be a Lê Governor (*Trấn Phủ*) of Thuận Hóa and the *Luân* Duke, though his name is not found in Lê texts. The *Liệt Truyện* calls him "*Bản Xứ Công*," which Cao Tự Thanh translates as "Man of this Region". The text also states that he was from the Nguyễn home district of *Tổng Sơn*, which seems contradictory. *Tổng* is a surname commonly associated with Vietnamese of Chinese descent. Despite both having the same clan name, however, *Tổng Phúc Thông* is never stated to be related to the clan of *Tổng Phúc Trị*, and the *Diễn Chí* claims his ancestors were in Thăng Long. The *Liệt Truyện* states that *Phúc Trị* quickly joined Hoàng upon his arrival in Thuận Hóa and ranked as high as the great generals Nguyễn U Kỳ and Mạc Cảnh Huống. Like Huống, the *Liệt Truyện* does not discuss any events in *Phúc Trị*'s life, except to say he died at his post; the other texts do not mention him at all. According to the *Liệt Truyện*, *Tổng Phúc Trị*'s sons and grandsons continued to hold military rank in Thuận Hóa, but *Tổng Phúc Thông* is not listed as among their relatives. The *Liệt Truyện* recites eight generations of descendents, but does not trace any direct line of descent to the *Tổng Phúc* clan members who played important roles in the battles of the late 18th century discussed later chapters. *Liệt Truyện*, 131-134

The *Thực Lục* does not mention Kỳ's marriage and omits the events after his death, simply noting that he was a well-regarded figure in Quảng Nam. The *Liệt Truyện*, on the other hand, agrees with the *Mạc gia phả* on the names of Kỳ's sons, which it gives as Nhuệ, Xuân, Tài and Trí. The *Cổ Trai gia phả* describes one of Kỳ's great-grandsons, a son of the *Khuong Võ* Marquis, taking over from the new king his ceremonial duties for worship of the ancestors in Trà Kiệu when that king took the throne in 1765. If this claim were accurate, it would be highly significant, since it suggests that the new king in 1765 had ritual duties at the site of the Mạc family temple and Giai's tomb, and upon taking the throne, he was replaced in those duties by another Mạc relative whose lineage has been erased from the Historical Office records.<sup>59</sup>

#### Trịnh Support for an Attempted Coup

The Nguyễn texts describe the battles of 1633 as resulting from palace intrigue, in which sons of the king sought northern military assistance. These battles are also noteworthy in introducing a seminal figure, the *Quang Lâm* Marquis, or Nguyễn Phúc Kiêu (also known as Nguyễn Cửu Kiêu), into the narrative. In our earliest southern source, the *Diễn Chí*, this figure is introduced as a young brother of the *Sãi* Prince and thus a potential heir to the throne. In the *Thực Lục*, this alleged prince was simply a soldier awarded the royal clan name for an act of bravery.

In 1633, in the *Diễn Chí*, the *Sãi* Prince made the *Tuấn Lương* Marquis the governor of Quảng Bình Encampment; the *Liệt Truyện* calls this man Nguyễn Phúc Tuấn, son of Nguyễn's brother Nguyễn Phúc Điền. According to the *Diễn Chí*, the *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis (in the *Liệt Truyện*, Nguyễn's son Anh) wanted that post so that he could more easily conspire with the Trịnh, and he secretly sent word to a Quảng Bình officer *Lý* (or *Lễ*) *Minh* accusing Tuấn. The *Sãi* Prince agreed to appoint Anh the new governor of Quảng Bình in Tuấn's place, but Anh was off hunting at the time, and in anger the king changed his mind and gave the position to another officer, described in this text only as the king's young brother, a deputy general, the *Quang Lâm* Marquis, named Nguyễn

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<sup>59</sup> *Thực Lục*, 39; *Liệt Truyện*, 90; Cadière, "Généalogie de la Princesse Giai."

Kiều. As noted above, no brother of Nguyễn named Kiêu exists in the Historical Office texts, which claim that Nguyễn Phúc Kiêu had recently arrived from Thăng Long.<sup>60</sup>

*Lý Minh* sent word to the *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis that he would entice Trịnh forces to attack Nguyễn Kiêu, who out of his natural weakness would flee his post. The *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis sent word of this plan to Trịnh Tráng through a merchant, and that winter Tráng brought his forces to the Nhật Lệ harbor in Quảng Bình. The *Sãi* Prince sent the *Mỹ Thắng* Marquis along with the *Chiêu Vũ* Viscount. The Quảng Bình governor, here called the *Tuấn Lương* Duke, rather than *Tuấn Lương* Marquis, but also the *Quảng Lâm* Marquis, defended Nhật Lệ, and the *Chiêu Vũ* Viscount built a rampart at Trường Sa. However, when Trịnh Tráng brought the Lê king to the other side of Nhật Lệ harbor and fired the prearranged signal, the *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis did not emerge and surrender as planned, so their forces pulled back and waited. The southern forces launched an attack, and Trịnh Tráng and the Lê king fled back to the northern bank of the Gianh River. The region south of that river came under the southern regime's control from this time. The *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis secretly began to arm the foreign merchants (*môn khách*) as mercenaries and wrote down the names of all the notable persons who pledged to support him in a book.<sup>61</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* describes these battles in a single sentence: “The prince [*trương* - Trịnh Tráng] himself brought the forces of the various encampments to attack Thuận Hóa, but they were unsuccessful and returned.” The king is not mentioned. Despite this lack of detail in the *Toàn Thư*, a late version of unknown origin, the *Bản Kỷ Tục Biên*, provides a vivid narrative mirroring that of the *Diễn Chí*. It states the *Thụy* Duke (Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên) ordered his generals to construct defenses in Thái Xá and Động Hải, an apparent reference to locations in Quảng Bình. An official named Nguyễn Danh Thế three times urged the court not to attack, but he was ignored. That winter, a Trịnh officer held the outlying and coastal Đông Kinh regions of Thanh Hóa, Sơn Nam, Hải Dương, and An Quảng, while the *Tung Nhạc* Duke and *Dũng Lê* Duke controlled the capital and the provinces surrounding it and to the north. Trịnh Tráng brought the Lê king to attack,

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<sup>60</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 182-185.

<sup>61</sup> The title *Chiêu Vũ* had been mentioned earlier, but without a noble rank. *Diễn Chí*, *ibid.*

and they arrived at Nhật Lệ and battled the Thuận Hoá army. However, Trịnh advance forces were dispersed out of fear, and the army withdrew.<sup>62</sup>

In the *Tạp Lục*'s brief summary, similar to the *Diễn Chí* in most respects, the *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis Phúc Anh is described as a son of Phúc Nguyên. He promised to surrender to Trịnh Tráng's troops, so Tráng took Lê *Thần Tông* to Nhật Lệ, where the *Mỹ Thắng* Marquis, the *Chiêu Vũ* Marquis and *Quảng Lâm* Marquis met them and built a rampart along the river. (The *Quảng Lâm* Marquis is not described in the *Tạp Lục* as Nguyên's younger brother, nor is he named as Kiêu or Phúc Kiêu.) Tráng's troops pulled back when they did not see Anh surrender; no attack is mentioned.

The *Liệt Truyện* calls Anh the third son of the king and names the *Ký Lục* official as Phạm. However, the text states that Phạm is a given name, not a surname, and the surname is omitted. The *Sãi* Prince was said to be very close to Phạm, and Phạm was made *Ký Lục* in Quảng Nam to spy on Anh, whom the king did not trust. The Historical Office texts all ignore the Phạm clan in Quảng Nam entirely, using that surname only in describing northern figures. The text repeats that Anh secretly kept a book listing those officers pledged to support him and adds that Anh wished to be posted in Quảng Bình in order to have contact with the Trịnh. However, the king instead chose Nguyễn Phúc (Cửu) Kiêu. Kiêu is not described as a young brother of the king in the *Liệt Truyện* (earlier, it describes Kiêu as a northern soldier being awarded the Nguyễn Phúc surname for his merit in carrying a letter to the king). Here, Anh secretly sent gifts to the Trịnh to encourage them to attack Kiêu, but the Trịnh were suspicious when they fired the prearranged signal and Anh did not appear; in this version, Trịnh Tráng and the king are not mentioned, and the Trịnh are said to withdraw without any fight.<sup>63</sup>

The *Thực Lục* claims Trịnh Tráng sent other Trịnh clan members to amass naval and infantry forces on the Quảng Bình border early in 1633, before Nguyễn Phúc Kiêu replaced Prince Tuấn there. It then follows the *Diễn Chí* in almost every detail, except that again, Kiêu is not described as a brother of the king. Nguyễn Phúc Anh conspired with a civil official in Quảng Bình, Lý Minh, who gathered mercenaries there, then

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<sup>62</sup> The Trịnh officer holding the coast was called a *Tiết Chế Phủ*. The *Tung Nhạc* Duke and *Dũng Lê* Duke held Sơn Tây, Kinh Bắc, Lạng Sơn, and Thái Nguyên; Nghệ An is not mentioned. *Toàn Thư*, XVIII:19b-20b.

<sup>63</sup> *Liệt Truyện*, 172-175.

falsely accused Tuấn to have him replaced by Anh. As in the *Diễn Chí*, Anh was off hunting when word of the appointment arrived, and the *Sãi* Prince angrily ordered Kiêu to take his place. However, in the Historical Office version, Lý Minh is said to have written to Anh that “Nguyễn Phúc Kiêu... is only a maternal relative of the king,” suggesting the northern troops be used to attack him. Trịnh Tráng and the Lê king reportedly then arrived at the border, met by Nguyễn Mỹ Thắng and Nguyễn Hữu Dật, who barricaded Trường Sa, with Kiêu blocking the harbor. The Trịnh signal was not answered, and they retreated. A week later the king’s troops attacked and dispersed the Trịnh.<sup>64</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* describes a turncoat general on the northern bank in Bồ Chính, the *Hiền Tuấn* Marquis Nguyễn Khắc Tôn. He offered gifts and money to the new merchants (*tân khách*) to buy their loyalty and pretended to give his allegiance to the *Sãi* Prince, but secretly planned to betray him. The *Tạp Lục* and *Thực Lục* also describe his appointment by the Trịnh to Bồ Chính, calling him Nguyễn Khắc Loát or Liệt, but they ignore the reported alliance with the king and secret plans for betrayal.<sup>65</sup>

All the Nguyễn texts report Đào Duy Từ’s death in 1634, honoring him as a military commander, yet without describing any actual battle in which he fought. The *Thực Lục* notes that following his years in Hoài Nhon, Từ spent only eight years in Thuận Hóa; for such a short career, he reportedly had a profound impact on the court. The *Liệt Truyện* reports that on Đào Duy Từ’s death in 1634, he was allowed to be taken back to Tùng Châu. It is unclear why Từ was removed from the court to be interred in a place which was allegedly not his family home, especially given evidence that travel between Thuận Hóa and Thanh Hóa continued. A small temple said to be dedicated to his worship survives in Bồng Sơn today, although it appears to have originally been dedicated to the worship of three of his wives, one named in a local Đào Duy *gia phả* in Bồng Sơn as Cao Thị Nguyễn.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> *Thực Lục*, 50.

<sup>65</sup> *Diễn Chí*, *ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> The early appearance of a Sinitic placename, Tùng Châu, so far south of Điện Bàn is striking, since as late as 1776, the *Tạp Lục* documented a prevalence of non-Sinitic toponyms along the coast from Quảng Nam to Phú Yên. Tùng Châu is the name of a district in Guangzhou, and if there were a village of that name in Hoài Nhon it may have been a community of South China migrants. The local place names are removed from the *Tạp Lục PQ.H23* manuscript, but appear in the copy held by the Institute of History at the end of the first book. *Diễn Chí*, 189-192; *Liệt Truyện*, 138-140; *Thực Lục*, 50-51.

The 19th century Historical Office does not acknowledge Prince Kiêu as a member of the royal lineage (in the Historical Office texts, he is simply a soldier, not a prince), selectively ignoring this element of the *Diễn Chí*, which it relies on heavily for other information about this period. The *Minh Mạng* Emperor, in the decades before the Historical Office records were published, withdrew the royal clan name Nguyễn Phúc from Kiêu and simultaneously from all of his descendants up until the 19th century, some of whom were active in the expansion into Cambodia. For this reason, all persons said to be members of this clan are called Nguyễn Cửu, not Nguyễn Phúc, in the mid-19th century Nguyễn records.

#### A Succession Crisis in Quảng Nam

The *Diễn Chí* places the *Sãi* Prince's death of illness in 1635, at the age of 73. On his deathbed he called the *Tường* Duke, in the *Thực Lục* the tenth son of Nguyễn Hoàng, Nguyễn Phúc Khê, and in this text called the governor, along with the crown prince, the *Nhân Lộc* Marquis Nguyễn Phúc Lan. The king declared that the *Tường* Duke should rule after his death, because the king's son, the *Nhân Lộc* Marquis, was too young. The *Diễn Chí* elsewhere also describes the “*trưởng tử Nhân công*” or “oldest prince the *Nhân* Duke,” which as Ngô Đức Thọ suggests was apparently also Lan, as born in 1601, which means he would have been 35 at Nguyễn's death, contradicting this passage.<sup>67</sup>

Key information about Lan's own sons has been removed from the Historical Office texts. Lan's oldest son in the *Liệt Truyện*, Vũ, died at a young age with no sons. Lan's second son Tần was born in 1620; the mother, Lan's second wife, was the daughter of Đoàn Công Nhạn. (The relationship between the Mạc and the Đoàn Công clan, another Quảng Nam family living near Trà Kiệu, needs further study.) The spectacular tomb honoring Lan's Đoàn wife remains near that of his mother and sister not far from Trà Kiệu. Queen Đoàn Thị is said to have had only a single son; Lan's first wife, the mother of Vũ, whom he would have married some time before 1620, is omitted from all records. The *Liệt Truyện* also describes a third son, after Nguyễn Phúc Tần, named Quỳnh, but

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<sup>67</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 193-205.

claims nothing is known about him, and he had no sons. Vũ and Quỳnh, and their mothers, are omitted in the *Diễn Chí*, *Tạp Lục* and *Thực Lục*.<sup>68</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* creates a dramatic deathbed scene in which the *Tường* Duke advised Nguyễn (perhaps facetiously) that unlike China, where succession to someone other than the ruler's son sometimes occurs, in the southern realm of the Đinh, Lý, Trần and Lê the king's younger brother was forbidden from taking the throne on his death. Nguyễn reluctantly agreed. A funeral ceremony was carried out in mountains of Hương Trà; since this text never mentioned Nguyễn moving the royal residence (as described in the *Tạp Lục* and *Thực Lục*) it is noteworthy that his funeral is said to be in this location.

After the *Tường* Duke placed the *Thượng* Prince on the throne, apparently to the north of the Hải Vân Pass, but with no location specified after Hoàng's Quảng Trị residence, the new king's younger brother, the *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis, decided to "rebel" and declare himself king near Danang. The *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis asked the *Vân Hiên* Viscount, called a *Ký Lục* official, who suggested they fortify a rampart at Cu Đê, on the river north of Danang, to defend themselves. He ordered the harbors blockaded, and a great general called *Khang Lộc* joined him with his navy in Danang. The *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis then sent another brother, the *Đức Lễ* Marquis, back alone to attend the king's funeral, while he garrisoned at Cu Đê. *Triều Khang* (similar to *Khang Lộc* above) abandoned the *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis and rejoined the *Thượng* Prince. The *Vân Hiên* Viscount, called the *Ký Lục* and his family fled at night, and crossed the Hải Vân Pass to report this situation to the new king.<sup>69</sup>

The *Thượng* Prince wished to cede the throne to his brother the *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis and avoid bloodshed, but the *Tường* Duke sent forces (*Yên Vũ* and *Hùng Uy* by road and *Hùng Lương* and *Triều Phương* by sea) to capture the Marquis. *Dương Sơn* and the prince *Tuyên Lộc* launched a surprise infantry attack on the *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis' camp, discovering a book with hundreds of names pledging allegiance to him. *Dương Sơn* tore off five or six pages and threw them away. After *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis was captured, Lan ordered the persons whose names remained in the book secretly killed, and he promoted the *Dương Sơn* Marquis to captain and the naval commander to garrison

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<sup>68</sup> *Liệt Truyện*, 120.

<sup>69</sup> *Diễn Chí*, *ibid*.



commander. The *Vân Hiên* Viscount became an inner court official; a fourth official in the Ministry of Finance *Hoa Phong*, was also promoted.

The *Diễn Chí* mentions a royal residence being moved for the first time. The *Thượng* Prince moved his capital to Kim Long village in Hương Trà *nguồn* (mountain river source). Kim Long village, however, is an area adjacent to today's Huế citadel, near the coast, nowhere near the mountain source. On the northern border, the *Bố Chính* governor, the *Hiền Tuân* Marquis, is said to have returned his allegiance to Trịnh Tráng after the *Sãi* Prince's death.

The *Tạp Lục* also describes the second son of the king, the *Nhân Lộc* Marquis Phúc Tần, taking the throne in 1635. The governor of Quảng Nam is not called the *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis. He is called Phúc Anh, but not described as a son of Nguyễn. As in the *Diễn Chí*, Anh built a rampart at Cu Đê (a river leading from Danang through the mountains to the Hương Trà mountain source). The *Thượng* Prince had Anh killed. His brother, in the *Diễn Chí* the *Đức Lễ* Marquis, who had been sent back to the court, is not mentioned here. Anh was replaced as Quảng Nam governor by *Hùng Lương*, whereas the *Diễn Chí* simply stated that the *Hùng Lương* Marquis was made a garrison commander. The king moves the royal residence to Kim Long village in Hương Trà district; here, the mountain river source (*nguồn*) is not mentioned.<sup>70</sup>

The *Thực Lục* repeats most of the details of the *Diễn Chí* story involving the capture of Anh, again not called the *Dương Nghĩa* Marquis, but without mentioning his having any relationship at all to the *Thượng* Prince. Anh is said to have rebelled with a *Ký Lục* named Phạm, who had been sent by the king to join him there in 1631. The king then decided to move the capital from Phúc Yên, on the *Bố* River, to Kim Long, on the Hương River (next to the current Huế citadel), supposedly because the previous location was too small, and Kim Long was more beautiful. (The Hương Trà mountain source of the *Diễn Chí* is not mentioned.) The four promotions are mentioned, like the *Tạp Lục* specifying Bùi Hùng Lương as a Quảng Nam commander, and naming the others as in the *Diễn Chí*.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> *Tạp Lục*, I:27a-b.

<sup>71</sup> *Thực Lục*, 47-50.

The *Liệt Truyện* repeats the story that when the *Thượng* Prince took the throne, Anh rebelled and was captured. Here, the *Hùng Lương* Marquis is Bùi Hùng Lương and *Triều Phương* is Tống Triều Phương. The infantry commander *Yên Vũ* is Prince Yên (or An), suggesting he was the *Sãi* Prince's son An; *Hùng Uy* is Tống Văn Hùng. An annotation notes the *Dương Sơn*'s surname is omitted, and calls the *Tuyên Lộc* Marquis Prince Tuyên, apparently a son of Prince Hà. The *Diễn Chí* and *Thực Lục* both claim that after the *Thượng* Prince took the throne, Tống Phúc Thông's daughter remarried to him in 1638 or 1639; in the *Diễn Chí*, others in the court wanted to kill her.<sup>72</sup>

The shifting location of the capital in the *Thực Lục* is difficult to reconcile with the missionary and VOC reports, discussed further in the next chapter, which do not describe the royal capital being twice abandoned and rebuilt in these years. Cadière, unable to find a trace of the *Sãi* Prince's residence at all, provides only circumstantial evidence of some kind of official structure at Kim Long, including small landscaped lakes, one of which still exists today, and reports from the then-current landlord of brick foundations. No archaeological work had been done at either site. Cadière also admits that this site was the residence of one of the most powerful early 19th century generals, Lê Văn Duyệt. Phan Thanh Hải examined bricks at the site, and notes that many are dated or marked in the 19th century style.<sup>73</sup>

There is no city marked on VOC maps to the immediate north of the Hải Vân pass, where the Nguyễn texts place the Nguyễn capital. Two cities appear south of the pass, however, near the rivers that flow out to the sea at Tourane and Hội An. One city is marked *Destad* Faifo, on the Quinam River. Slightly to its north, closer to the Hàn River, is a city marked *Destad* Soeifoe. This position of this city on the map is ambiguous; it may be the capital near Faifo described by Adams and the Jesuits. It is not clear whether it is on the Thu Bồn River, or a river at Danang.<sup>74</sup>

Cochinchina's political center probably remained on the Thu Bồn during the early 17th century. If there were any center near Huế, as claimed by the 19th century Historical

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<sup>72</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 178, 206-207; *Thực Lục*, 50-54; *Liệt Truyện*, 268-269.

<sup>73</sup> Cadière notes that the local place name Thượng Dinh replaced an older name, Cu Đa, and is thus not related to the king. Cadière, "Les Residences de Rois."

<sup>74</sup> James Purnell, *Log-book of William Adams, 1614-1619*, 46-47.

Office, it was well hidden from visitors and has left no unambiguous trace. The rulers in Quảng Nam expanded their influence over highland areas, providing an overland link to the middle Mekong. The marriage of a Cochinchinese queen in the Cambodian court should be considered in the context of the Mạc clan's wider political and economic ties in the early 17th century. Mạc rulers remained active across a wide territory ranging from Qinzhou and Cao Bằng in the north to one or more seaports south of Quảng Nam.

## CHAPTER 7

### Wars in Cochinchina and Tonkin, c. 1637-1674

The mid-17th century wars are commonly understood as a conflict between two clans, the Trịnh and the Nguyễn, each clan claiming the birthright to rule from Đông Kinh, and each giving nominal support to a Lê figurehead. There is strong evidence, however, that Cochinchina was radically transformed after the fall of the Ming Dynasty, with waves of immigrants from the Southern Ming provinces settling there and taking control of the court. At the same time, Cochinchinese forces, and even a Cochinchinese queen, remained active in the lower Mekong delta. This period ended with a stalemate in the north, but dramatic developments in the south that divided Cambodia between factions supported by Ayutthaya and Cochinchina.

#### A Dutch-Tonkin Alliance

The VOC set up a Faifo trading house in 1637, having failed to gain concessions from Cochinchina's king over a confiscated 1635 shipwreck. However, they never achieved the close relations they had with the Tonkin ruler Trịnh Tráng. The Trịnh appear this time seem to have dispensed with the charade of fealty to the Lê, and ruled as kings of Đại Việt.<sup>1</sup>

Hoàng Anh Tuấn notes that Japanese and Chinese in Hội An, who collaborated in running the Quinam-Japan trade, were accused of reneging on agreements with the Dutch. In a letter sent to Batavia in 1637, the Trịnh ruler claimed that the weak country folk of the south had refused to obey his authority, and asked for Dutch warships to

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<sup>1</sup> *Ming Shi-lu, Chong-zhen*, 13:10a Supplement. The *Toàn Thư* maintains the fiction of a Lê king, while the *Bản Kỷ Tục Biên* calls Trịnh Tráng Second King or *Phó Quốc Vương*.

support his infantry in an invasion. The VOC closed their southern factory in 1638 and sided with Tonkin.<sup>2</sup>

Rhodes returned to Cochinchina in 1639 and writes that in this tense environment, *Onghebo*, whom he understood to be a Cham province governor hostile to the priests, had gained the favor of the king in his absence. Rhodes went again to Faifo in 1640 and reports being led by the governor of its Japanese enclave to the royal city of Sinoa. Two wealthy Christians, Andre and Marie, patronized a “beautiful church which was a refuge for all the Christians of this big city.” Rhodes spent 35 days in the capital before returning to Hôi An, where *Onghebo* soon forced the missionaries out. On a 1642 visit to the “big city” he was again received by the king, then sent back to Faifo after a few days.<sup>3</sup>

Although Rhodes never describes the location of Sinoa, foreign visitors reached it by anchoring near Faifo, and were taken there by royal boat; he mentions a naval display for the king on a wide river. Prefacing his remarks on Cochinchina in the 1650 *Voyages*, Rhodes would later call the city where the king resided Kehue, praising its well-dressed nobles and intricate wooden buildings. Early Jesuit maps show a Kehoa on the Gianh River in Quảng Bình; the town near Huế is named Dinh Ca. The word Hoa appears in one version of the map to label some or all of Thuận Hóa and Quảng Bình. François Cardim, in a text published in 1646, was explicit that the king lived in Cachiam, not north of the pass. Cardim wrote: “Our Fathers were constrained to give up four houses which they founded in this Kingdom, in Turam, Faifo, Cacam, location of the King’s Court, and in Nurcman, or Pullocambi.” Rhodes’ royal city of Sinoa may have been Thăng Hoa, rather than Thuận Hóa as Cadière insists, since they are pronounced similarly in Cantonese. To speculate, there is a seventeenth century church in Thanh Chiêm, which may be Andre and Marie’s church.<sup>4</sup>

The portions of the *Diễn Chí* which describe the period from at least 1642 to 1655 are removed, so this novel gives no clear indication whether any battles were fought in this period. There are ambiguous descriptions of conflict circa 1640 in the local texts. The

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<sup>2</sup> Hoàng Anh Tuấn, *Silk for Silver*, 73-74.

<sup>3</sup> Cadière notes the spelling variations of Sinoa in other European accounts include Sinua, Sennua, Senua, Singoa, and Soingua, all of which could be either Thăng Hoa or Thuận Hóa. Leaving Faifo, Rhodes went to a town called Cahan and began visiting Christian communities throughout the country. Cadière, “Les Residences de Rois,” 138.

<sup>4</sup> Launay’s *MEP* letters later transcribe the province of the capital as Sing-hoa, which would be Thăng Hoa, not Thuận Hóa; this is discussed below. Cadière, “Lettre du Père Gaspar Luis.”

*Tap Lục* mentions that, in 1640, the court ordered the killing of the governor of north Bắc Chính, the *Hiền* Duke Nguyễn Khắc Loát, and mentions a court intrigue in the same year with Phúc Lan taking as a concubine his dead brother's wife Tống Thị. However, the *Bản Ký Tục Biên* states that Nguyễn Phúc Lan attacked Bắc Chính in 1640, capturing the family of *Hiền Tuấn* Marquis Nguyễn Khắc Loát, who was imprisoned, but this is not mentioned in the standard edition of the *Toàn Thư*. In the *Thực Lục*, to get rid of their turncoat ally in Bắc Chính, Nguyễn Hữu Dật sent a letter to Trịnh Tráng in 1640, falsely claiming Loát had betrayed Tráng; Tráng sent 5,000 troops and killed him, and Dật immediately took the region back from the invading Trịnh. This story is unsupported by the Lê or Dutch texts.<sup>5</sup>

The Dutch report preparing to attack Cochinchina by 1642, and the Trịnh *chúa* promised to send his infantry to Poutsin, which Hoàng Anh Tuấn locates on the Gianh River in Quảng Bình, to prepare for a joint assault. After one of a series of VOC shipwrecks in Cochinchina, in late 1641, survivors were “imprisoned” in Faifo, at personal liberty but under Japanese guard. At the request of the Tonkin ambassador, the VOC launched a raid on Tourane, taking hundreds of hostages who were used to negotiate release of the Dutch, until the negotiator learned from Dutch in Faifo that a secret attack by 300 ships was being planned (it is not clear how a Dutch prisoner would know or relay this). The Dutch ship left for Batavia with a captured senior official, leaving the prisoners at Faifo; 50 of these “captives” then went to Batavia on a junk they procured themselves, while nineteen remained. Three were taken to serve the king at his palace, yet remained in Faifo, suggesting that the king's residence was nearby.

In 1696, Thomas Bowyear recounts this episode, stating that the Dutch had “three ships anchored between the bay of Tourane and the river of the Court, from where the King sent his ships, the Dutchmen ... opening fire, started a combat which lasted all day.” Since the Thuận An harbor, the river from which a king in Huế would send ships, is

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<sup>5</sup> In the *Tap Lục*, Lan sent a message to the Lê court regarding a person named Công Khuê and returning the border region (*cuong thố*) Quy Vần. Hoàng Anh Tuấn, *Silk for Silver*, 76-79; *Bản Ký Tục Biên*, Kỳ Hoàng Triều Nhà Lê: 23b-24b; *Tap Lục*, I:27b-28a. *Thực Lục*, 54.

over 70 kilometers away from the bay at Tourane, this suggests Bowyear was referring to a closer river, probably the Cu Đê.<sup>6</sup>

In mid-1642, five ships were sent from Batavia with orders to capture prisoners on the way to Tourane, where the captain would contact the king; a letter was sent to the Dutch in Faifo “ordering them to escape with the assistance of the fleet.” The captain sent word to Cochinchina’s king that if they were not released quickly, hostages would be executed or sent to Tonkin. Dutch raided the bay of Cambir, which Hoàng Anh Tuấn suggests is Quảng Ngãi (although Dutch maps associate Cambir with Quy Nhon), and a few Dutch on a small ship supposedly tried to capture some islanders and were killed. Negotiations failed, and the ships went to rendezvous with Tonkin infantry, who failed to appear, so they sailed to Tonkin, where the *chúa* claimed he had been there a month earlier and left when no Dutch arrived. Claims on both sides seem dubious.<sup>7</sup>

The Dutch Formosa governor sent word to the Trịnh to coordinate another invasion attempt the next year. VOC forces arrived at the “island of the fishers,” which Hoàng Anh Tuấn locates near the Thái Bình River; they left in disappointment, but three ships remained in Tonkin. The three ships agreed to a final attempt in 1643, but they quickly encountered 60 southern warships and retreated with heavy losses. The *chúa* later claimed in a letter to Governor-General Van Diemen that he had set out with 10,000 troops and one warship, which if true would be an absurd strategy. He claimed that the southern troops refused to meet them in battle, yet the northern army lost many men trying to conquer unspecified forts, partly due to the hot weather, and withdrew after four months. Hoàng Anh Tuấn notes that the Dutch gunners said to travel with him did not report any fighting.<sup>8</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, Trịnh Tạc and Trịnh Lê attacked in 1643, killing the *Thắng Lương* Marquis and capturing the *Vãn Toàn* Viscount, then advancing on Nhật Lệ harbor

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<sup>6</sup> The term *Ding* is just as likely a transcription of the word *đình* (court), not *dinh* (encampment). A correspondent to the *BAVH* suggested that Phú Xuân might have been called *Dinh Trại*, meaning camp, but is also a stretch. Bowyear, *ibid*.

<sup>7</sup> Hoàng Anh Tuấn, *Silk for Silver*, *ibid*.

<sup>8</sup> In 1650, a Đàng Trong official wrote to the Chinese community in Batavia announcing the king’s readiness to release the remaining Dutch prisoners, which took place at the end of 1651, when a representative of Batavia chose a location for a new factory in Faifo and visited the court. Whether he reported on the location of the court is not clear. The new factor, however, also became a prisoner in the eyes of the Dutch after the king heard rumor of a Tonkin ambassador aboard a Dutch ship, and the VOC returned to a hostile stance. Hoàng Anh Tuấn, *Silk for Silver*, 96.

with Trịnh Tráng. Like the Dutch report, Tráng ordered these forces to withdraw due to the hot climate. The *Tap Lục* does not mention any 1643 Trịnh attack. The *Bản Ký Tục Biên* describes a large force sent in 1643 to attack Bồ Chính, with not only Trịnh Tráng but also Lê Thần Tông himself. The man called Trịnh Đào in the *Toàn Thư* is here Lê Văn Hiểu, from the Ngọc Sơn district, Thanh Hóa. When the forces withdrew, Phạm Tất Toàn held the north of the river in Bồ Chính, Lê Văn Hiểu and others returned to Thanh Hóa, and the king returned to Đông Kinh.<sup>9</sup>

The *Thực Lục* combines the *Toàn Thư* account and the additional details in the *Bản Ký Tục Biên*. Again, Trịnh Tráng brought the king to this unsuccessful battle, then retreated, with many dying from disease in the unusual heat. *Thực Lục* and *Toàn Thư* agree that near the end of 1643, the king became Father or Senior King (*Thái Thượng Hoàng*), ceding the throne to Lê Duy Hựu, who was fourteen. None of these texts mention the Dutch.<sup>10</sup>

In summer 1644, four VOC ships left Cambodia following a massacre of Dutch there and tried to implement a blockade of the Quinam coast, but halted after a few days because they found no significant force to attack. The *Thực Lục* describes this as a heroic victory by the *Dũng Lễ* Marquis over Dutch ships attacking the Hương River; an annotation called him the *Thuợng* Prince's son, the future *Hiền* Prince. Another prince, Trung, in the *Liệt Truyện* a son of the *Sãi* Prince and the Mạc queen, refused to join the attack out of cowardice and disloyalty. The Dutch report that Rhodes offered to mediate an exchange of prisoners; Rhodes simply mentions patrols along Cochinchina's rivers before his 1645 expulsion, and feared the new Tonkin king would attack. (No new Trịnh *chúa* appears in the chronicles, which record no attack by the young Lê king; the Trịnh defeat a Cao Bằng force in early 1645, when, according to Rhodes, the Cochinchinese king was cordially receiving Spanish nuns). In Rhodes' view, the climate turned against the missionaries in Cochinchina partly due to suspicion over to their associations with Tonkin.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVIII:36a-37a; *Bản Ký Tục Biên*, Kỷ Hoàng Triều Nhà Lê: 25a-26b.

<sup>10</sup> *Thực Lục*, 55.

<sup>11</sup> Hoàng Anh Tuấn, *Silk for Silver*, 96-99; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*; Rhodes, *Voyages et Missions*, 315-329.



## New Arrivals from Nghệ An

The French merchant Tavernier claims to have witnessed another conflict during his visit, which did not result in battle. Summarizing his letters, his brother reports that Tonkin's king prepared a show of force against Cochinchina, reportedly in 1649, over "certain ships which the Cochinchinese had taken from the Tonkinese." The king marched toward the southern kingdom with 8,000 cavalry, 94,000 infantry (about a third of Tonkin's standing army), 130 war elephants and several hundred transport elephants, and 318 "long and narrow" ships. The Cochinchinese king's ambassadors, however, resolved the dispute through diplomacy, and the army withdrew.

The *Diễn Chí* pages describing 1644 to 1655 have been lost or removed, but a later passage describes, with dramatic license, 1648 battles with *Hàn Tiển*, a border general later described as a eunuch. *Hàn Tiển* sent *Bộ Gia* and *Quyển Gia* to attack; their forces were paralyzed in fear of the southern king. The attacks seemingly were on the orders of the Nghệ An general, not Đông Kinh. Later, *Chiêu Vũ Nguyễn Hữu Dật* (previously a civil official) became commander at *Bố Chính*; he wanted to take the capital (the northern one?) and secretly forged weapons in the northern fashion. When the southern king learned of these actions, Dật was temporarily demoted.<sup>12</sup>

The Lê history has no event remotely like the 1648 battles with *Hàn Tiển* in the *Diễn Chí* or the c. 1649 show of force described by Tavernier. The only *Toàn Thư* event in 1648 is in the fifth month of that year, after the battle in the *Thực Lục* was over; at that time, an edict prohibited people from avoiding military service by falsely claiming noble descent. This suggests there was no battle that year. The most noteworthy events of this period were in the previous year, when the Southern Ming finally recognized the Lê as King of Annam (*An Nam Quốc Vương*), and the following year, when the Lê king died and the Father King took the throne a second time. In 1651, a Southern Ming emissary from Nanning awarded Trịnh Tráng the title Second King (*Phó Quốc Vương*).<sup>13</sup>

This is not the only statement by Tavernier that is not supported by the *Toàn Thư*. The French merchant describes a prince entering into an affair with the widow of his

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<sup>12</sup> Dật got his post back by composing a literary story for the king. *Diễn Chí*, 260.

<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, the *Bản Kỷ Tục Biên* cuts off before 1648. *Toàn Thư*, XVIII: 40b-41a.

uncle, the deceased king, during his stay in Tonkin in 1649. The reigning king imprisoned this prince for seven years, until that king died, and his son took the throne. This is difficult to reconcile with the *Toàn Thư*, in which a king abdicates but later returns to rule.

Despite the *Toàn Thư* omission, the *Tạp Lục* follows the *Diễn Chí*, and states that, Trịnh Tráng sent Trịnh Đào to lead an attack on Nhật Lệ harbor, without describing a reason for the attack. The *Thượng* Prince garrisoned elsewhere, while his son Phúc Tần drove them off and then remained on the border to guard against further incursions. Tần captured all the *Gia* Duke's navy, and Trịnh Đào fled. There is no mention of the *Thực Lục*'s relocation of 30,000 troops from Nghệ An to settle in the region from Quảng Nam to Phú Yên, described below. The identity of the *Gia* Duke is unclear; in the *Diễn Chí*, the attack is led by *Hàn Tiến*'s men, but there is also a *Gia* Duke described as Trịnh Tráng's younger brother.<sup>14</sup>

The *Tạp Lục* places the *Thượng* Prince's death after his return to the court. It adds a story, repeated in the *Liệt Truyện*, that his son Phúc Tần (the *Hiền* Prince) fell in love with a Nghệ An woman named Đào Thừa, but had her killed in a devious manner. Having glossed over the circumstances of the death of the king, the *Thực Lục* states that the *Hiền* Prince took the throne on his father's death in 1648. According to the *Liệt Truyện*, by the time he became king he would have been 29, while his primary wife Chu Thị Viên would have been 44; they had two sons, Nguyễn Phúc Diễn and Nguyễn Phúc Thuần, and a daughter, Ngọc Tào. No source provides any information on Chu Thị Viên's background. The *Hoan Châu Ký* describes an immigrant Chu (Shu) clan becoming influential in Nghệ An; these Chu likely arrived from the Ming territories, and a Chu clan is identified by Ch'en Ching-ho among the "Ming guests" in Thuận Hóa. The next Chu mentioned in *Diễn Chí* is Chu Hữu Tài, a Confucian scholar and leader of the Nghệ An forces.<sup>15</sup>

In a 1648 episode in the *Thực Lục*, the *Thượng* Prince's *Tống* wife, formerly his son's wife, feared the new king's brother Trung would kill her, so she sent a message

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<sup>14</sup> The *Toàn Thư* elsewhere describes a *Gia* Duke in a different context, as a native mountain general in the north. *Tạp Lục*, I: 28a-b.

<sup>15</sup> The next Chu in the *Thực Lục*, Chu Nhuận Trung, made a brief appearance in the army in 1705, decades after Nghệ An forces were integrated into the Nguyễn army. It mentions the death of three descendants in the battles against the Tây Sơn in 1774. *Liệt Truyện*, 70-71.

asking her father Tống Phúc Thông, now living in Đông Kinh and trusted by Trịnh Tráng, to persuade Tráng to order a naval invasion. This is unusual, since all previous battles involved infantry, with reliance on a Dutch navy. It is not explained why the grandfather of the original crown prince was now a Trịnh confidant in Đông Kinh. In the *Thực Lục*, Trịnh Tráng sent the Nghệ An commander, the *Tiến* Duke Trịnh Đào a figure roughly equivalent to *Hàn Tiến*. Nhật Lệ commander Nguyễn Phúc Kiều sent Nguyễn Triều Văn to meet them, but he was unable advance. The *Thượng* Prince led the attack, but fell ill and sent his crown prince, Nguyễn Hữu Dật and Văn on ahead.<sup>16</sup>

In the *Thực Lục*, the Trịnh navy was surprised and destroyed, with 30,000 enemy troops captured along with commanders named only as *Gia*, *Lý*, and *Mỹ*. An annotation claims that their surnames were unknown. (This appears frequently in the *Thực Lục* in the 17th and 18th centuries; the text often copies a *Diễn Chí* noble title as if it were a given name, adding the surname Nguyễn, or noting that the surname is unknown.) Trịnh Đào heard of the defeat, turned around and fled north. The *Thượng* Prince freed the 60 highest ranking officers to return north, but sent the 30,000 troops to settle and farm from Quảng Nam to Phú Yên, organized in settlements 50 men each. The king is said to have died of illness, however, before his return to court.<sup>17</sup>

The *Thực Lục* places Nguyễn Hữu Dật's punishment in 1650. Dật dressed in northern style and carried the flag of the north (*bắc hà*), but in this text for the purpose of inciting revolt among Trịnh soldiers. He pretended to surrender to the Trịnh, and then planned to revolt, without informing his own king. A prince named Tráng informed the king and Dật was imprisoned. As in the *Diễn Chí*, he sent the king a classical (Ming) story; here, he was given in a high civil post.<sup>18</sup>

In the *Tap Lục*, Tống Phúc Thông's daughter feared for her life, so in 1654, she seduced the dead king's young brother, the *Trung Tín* Marquis, and induced him to rebel. The *Hiền* Prince ordered Tống Thị killed. The *Thực Lục* also repeats this story, but calls the lover an officer named Trung, not the king's brother. The *Liệt Truyện*, published a few years later, calls the lover the dead king's brother, named Trung, and adds that Tống

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<sup>16</sup> This is apparently the *Triều Văn* elsewhere described as Nguyễn Hữu Dật's father. *Thực Lục*, *ibid.* *Thực Lục*, 57-59

<sup>17</sup> Conceivably, the capture of 30,000 troops may appear in the missing pages of the *Diễn Chí*. It is unclear why a Lê scholar would not remark on such major discrepancies between the *Tap Lục* and *Toàn Thư*.

<sup>18</sup> *Thực Lục*, 61.

Thị was wife of another brother, Prince Kỳ. Trung earlier wished to kill Tổng Thị due to her immorality, so she seduced him, and they plotted a revolt. The *Hiền* Prince placed Trung in prison, where he died.<sup>19</sup>

The *Toàn Thư* does not describe Trịnh forces in battle with the Nguyễn until 1655. In this text, the new king took the throne in that year and attacked the north, seizing southern Nghệ An. Thus, the *Toàn Thư* contradicts the *Thực Lục*'s account, which claims the *Hiền* Prince took power after the *Thượng* Prince fell ill during a 1648 battle that is not acknowledged by the *Toàn Thư*.<sup>20</sup>

The *Thực Lục*'s greatest victory against the Trịnh is ignored in the Lê chronicle, yet described in another Lê text, the *Tạp Lục*. Even that text, however, still omits two crucial events, the capture of 30,000 troops and death of the king. With the absence of Dutch and Jesuit observers, none of these events can be confirmed. While there seem to have been major battles, with tens of thousands of sailors and a new elite arriving in Nghệ An and Cochinchina, their connection with the Trịnh is tenuous at best, and we may consider whether this navy's appearance is a result of the changing environment in South China.

### A Misplaced Defeat of Champa

An attack on Champa set in 1653, which appears in several texts, is not confirmed by European reports. Peter Kettingh, in a 1658 letter, writes that the Dutch fleet withdrawing from Cambodia in the aftermath of the 1644 attacks met the king of Champa. (This Cham king had visited Cambodia in 1641, and claimed that he no longer considered Cambodia a friend, but Cham merchants continued to trade there. He asked that the VOC not to instigate hostilities from Cham waters against Cambodians or Portuguese, since he wanted to maintain good relations with both Cambodia and Cochinchina.) Kettingh would have mentioned a war in which Cochinchina had attacked

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<sup>19</sup> Trung has no sons recorded in any text. *Tạp Lục*, I: 29b.

<sup>20</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVIII: 44b-47b; *Thực Lục*, 63.

and deposed a Cham king five years before the time of his writing in 1658, had he been aware of it.<sup>21</sup>

Campaigns in Champa in 1653 are reported in the Trà Kiệu Mạc *gia phả*, the *Tap Lục*, and the *Thực Lục*. (The surviving *Diễn Chí* only picks up in 1655.) The Mạc *gia phả* describes no battles: as discussed in Chapter Four, it simply mentions in passing that the Cham were in awe of Mạc Cảnh Vinh's power and submitted their country as a tributary state without fighting. In any case, other events in the *gia phả* narrative better describe the 1590s, and cannot be placed in 1653 without contradicting European reports, so this submission by Champa would most logically be dated to the previous calendar cycle.<sup>22</sup>

The *Tap Lục* does not mention Mạc Cảnh Vinh, and does not date the Champa campaign, which occurs in the text following an event set in *quý tý*, the first year of the *Thịnh Đức* reign, 1653. Champa invaded Phú Yên, and the *Hùng Lộc* Marquis was sent as Supreme Commander, along with an aristocratic person (*xá nhân*), the *Chiêu Vũ* Marquis, commanding 3,000 troops. The leader of the Champa forces seems to be written as Ba Tầm (with no position or title); the character that seems to be Tầm (糝, similar to 糝) is amended in the manuscript to Chinh. The Champa forces were driven to the An Triều River; Bà Tầm/Chinh sent his son, Xác Bà Ân, to offer tribute and surrender. The *Hiền* Prince marked a border, with land from the east of the An Triều River to Phú Yên becoming the prefectures Thái Khang and Diên Ninh, part of Thái Khang Encampment. The west of the river was Champa. The river mentioned is commonly understood to be in Khánh Hòa, since that province is south of Phú Yên, and had a Cham population. It may be the case that a local name for a river in Khánh Hòa was An Triều, but that name does not appear in any Nguyễn geography; neither the 1806 *Hoàng Việt Nhất Thống Du Địa Chí*, a comprehensive military atlas, nor the late 19th century gazetteer the *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí*, describe a river called An Triều anywhere in the Nguyễn territories.<sup>23</sup>

The *Thực Lục* repeats the *Tap Lục* story, also placing this incident in 1653, but changes some details. A captain *Hùng Lộc* was Supreme Commander, along with *Minh*

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<sup>21</sup> *MEP* reports describe the king of Champa in 1685 as a Muslim, with a capital in Phan Ri; its two other provinces were Phan Rang, bordering Cochinchina, and Citran, bordering Cambodia. Launay, *Histoire*, vol I, 352. Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 266.

<sup>22</sup> Huỳnh Công Bá, “Về Quyển Gia Phả.”

<sup>23</sup> *Tap Lục*, I:28b-29a.

*Vũ* (possibly a copying error for *Chiêu Vũ*). Again, the editors treat noble titles as given names, and state that their surnames are unknown. (Mạc Cảnh Vinh, said to have been chief commander in Trấn Biên, or “Phú Yên,” at that time is not mentioned.) *Hùng Lộc* crossed Hồ Đường Pass at the Thạch Bì Mountain (legendary site of Lê Thánh Tông’s border marker) and destroyed an unnamed citadel in a surprise attack on Cham king Bà Tâm. The area to the west of the Phan Rang River, not the An Triều River, still belonged to Champa and was now forced to pay tribute. From the east of that river to Phú Yên, the land was divided into two prefectures, Thái Khang, giving the names of its two districts, and Diên Ninh, giving the names of its three districts. This became Thái Khang Encampment, which an annotation describes as Khánh Hòa, governed by *Hùng Lộc*. In 1654, *Hùng Lộc* was replaced by *Xuân Sơn*, earlier governor of Bồ Chính, who was in turn replaced by *Phù Dương*, a commander that had aided Nguyễn Hữu Dật and Nguyễn Hữu Tiến in the 1648 capture of the Nghệ An navy.<sup>24</sup>

It is difficult to draw any conclusions about the 1653 events. If the battle described in the *Tạp Lục* and *Thực Lục* is correctly set in 1653, this does not explain the Trà Kiệu Mạc *gia phả* claim that Mạc Cảnh Vinh placed *Giao Ba* on the Cambodia throne in that year. There might be more than a coincidence in the similarity in the names of King Ba Tâm and the Cambodian King Botum (Padumrājā): Mak Phoeun places the killing of one king called Padumrājā, Aṅ Non, in 1642, and notes Padumrājā was also among the titles used by Non’s son, who in his chronology would have been in exile in 1653.<sup>25</sup>

Although the state of conflict with Champa in 1653 is uncertain, there is some evidence of conflicts over highland resources at this time that would have affected Ai Lao Encampment (established by the *Sãi* Prince). Xiengkhuang may have been invaded by Lao forces in the early 1650s; the Xiengkhuang king’s daughter was reportedly married to the Lao king Chao Soulinga Vongsa, with 500 families captured and removed to the Lao capital. The presence of Lao troops in Xiengkhuang would have disrupted the flow of trade goods in the region that was contested in the battles over Nghệ An.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Phủ Biên Tạp Lục*, Book I:28b-29a; *Thực Lục*, 62.

<sup>25</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 250-251

<sup>26</sup> As discussed below, the Lê governor of Nghệ An in the 1750s claimed command of Xiengkhuang, though it is not clear whether this was a practical or honorary title at that time, and more than one coastal

Another obstacle to our understanding of these events is the lack of information about the region of Champassak. Archaimbault suggests a queen said to rule there in the mid-17th century is probably legendary, since the Dutch trader Wuysthoff described the region being governed by a Lao official in 1641; however, as noted earlier, there may have been more than one rival center in the middle Mekong region. The highland Cham king in Phan Rang, Po Rome, who Po Dharma believes reigned until 1654, is not mentioned in any of these texts.<sup>27</sup>

In any case a literal interpretation of the *Thực Lục* description of the seizure of political events of 1653 is derivative of several inconsistent sources. No aspects of these narratives of 1653 can be matched with the information found in the *Giáp Ngọ* itinerary, which can be matched closely only with the *giáp ngo* year 1594 and the *giáp dần* year 1674. Like the Mạc intervention in Cambodia, the invasion of Champa is most likely placed in the wrong cylindrical cycle.

### Naval Campaigns in Nghệ An

Travel between Tonkin and Cochinchina was commonplace in the 1620s; Borri learned about Tonkin from the Tonkin sailors in Quy Nhơn. One reason Cochinchina was attractive to the VOC was its imported Tonkin silk. Hoàng Đức Đôn passed a Lê doctoral examination in 1656, but was from Phú Mậu village in Tư Vinh district, Thuận Hóa, a Ming guest village. Đôn served as a Lê official during the period Taylor describes as a literati revival in the north, suggesting at least a possibility that Ming refugees might have contributed to that revival.<sup>28</sup>

A partition seems to come in 1655, with a blockade of Nghệ An ports. *Chiêu Vũ* and *Thuần Nghĩa*, or Nguyễn Hữu Dật and Nguyễn Hữu Tiến, controlled the southern Nghệ An districts with support from new scholars and commanders who were integrated into the southern court.<sup>29</sup>

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faction competed to receive elephants and tribute goods from the group called Lạc Hoàn during the 1750s, the earliest period for which surviving records have been found and examined.

<sup>27</sup> Archaimbault, "L'Histoire de Cămpasăk," 532-533.

<sup>28</sup> Ngô Đức Thọ, *Các Nhà Khoa Bang*, 496.

<sup>29</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 244-245.

European reports do not seem to offer any corroboration that battles over Nghệ An, described in great detail from 1655 to 1658 in the Nguyễn and Lê texts, actually took place. Hoàng Anh Tuấn has not noted any VOC description of them. In Tonkin, merchants remark on a bloody rebellion by a son of the *chúa* who tried to supplant the crown prince in 1655. This revolt was suppressed, but had a negative impact on the foreign commercial presence in Tonkin. The *Toàn Thư* describes no such 1655 revolt by any prince, apparently replacing it entirely with battles in the war with the Nguyễn. (There is a 1657 revolt by Trịnh Toàn, on the death of his father Trịnh Tráng; however, in 1655, Toàn was distinguishing himself in battles against the *Hiền* Prince).<sup>30</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, the *Hiền* Prince proclaimed himself the ruler in 1655 and ordered his generals to attack the north of the Bồ Chính River, held by a Lê general, the *Mậu* Grand Duke Phạm Tất Toàn. Toàn retreated, and continued north attacking the *Tiến* Duke Lê Văn Hiếu and *Đông* Duke Lê Hữu Đức, who fled to Thạch Hà in Nghệ An. Called back to the capital, Lê Văn Hiếu died en route of his injuries. Lê Văn Hiếu's seal and his men were seized by the court. The *Thái Báo*, *Khê* Duke Trịnh Trương attacked, but was forced to withdraw with the south of Nghệ An still in southern hands. Trịnh Tráng's son Trịnh Tạc was sent to Nghệ An, then a fourth general, the *Ninh* Duke Trịnh Toàn (who is not described in this passage as a son of Tráng) was also sent. The southern army withdrew before Tạc's forces arrived, no battle took place, and he returned.<sup>31</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* picks up in 1655 with elaborate campaigns led by *Chiêu Vũ* Nguyễn Hữu Dật against *Hàn Tiến*, who corresponds roughly to Lê Văn Hiếu in the *Toàn Thư*, but in the *Diễn Chí* is the southern court's principle adversary (the Trịnh are incidental). In 1654, *Hàn Tiến* sent *Mậu Long* to attack, killing monks, women and children, and killing *Hàn Tiến* was the primary objective of the attacks of 1655, *Chiêu Vũ* would succeed by "using the hand of the Trịnh to destroy *Hàn Tiến*." *Chiêu Vũ* eventually forced *Hàn Tiến* to retreat to Trung Đô. *Hàn Tiến* drank poison en route.<sup>32</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* describes unrelated preparations for a general assault on the Trịnh capital in conjunction with Mạc forces. In 1656, *Chiêu Vũ* sent word to Mạc forces in Cao Bằng and Hải Dương, and other regional armies, to arrange a coordinated assault on

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<sup>30</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVIII:44b-53a.

<sup>31</sup> *Toàn Thư*, *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 260-345



the Trịnh from all directions. In Cao Bằng, the Mạc king *Thịnh Đức* agreed. *Thịnh Đức* is the current reign name of Lê *Thần Tông*; there is a major error in the *Diễn Chí* or *Toàn Thư*. In Hải Dương, the *Phấn* Duke also agreed. In Sơn Tây (near Đông Kinh), the *Ký Lục Hồ* pledged to revolt; he is later said to be a trusted tutor of Trịnh Tạc's sons and had two son-in-laws always at Tạc's side.<sup>33</sup>

In the *Tạp Lục*, there were 1655 raids by border soldiers there on Thuận Hóa with no indication of direct Trịnh involvement. The *Hiển* Prince sent *Thuận Nghĩa* and *Chiêu Vũ*, who seized southern Nghệ An. The figure called Lê Văn Hiểu in the *Toàn Thư* and *Hàn Tiến* in the *Diễn Chí* is here Trịnh Đào. The *Ninh* Duke Trịnh Toàn then took the disputed region.

The *Bản Ký Tục Biên* fragment does not describe Lê Văn Hiểu's defeat (and breaks off before the end of 1655). Here, the official Phạm Công Trứ chose Lê Thị Hiến (not Trịnh Toàn), to lead the attack; the southern troops withdrew, then the Trịnh.<sup>34</sup>

The *Thực Lục* describes the 1655 battles as a conflict between the two courts. It follows the *Toàn Thư*, calling the chief northern general Trịnh Đào. Đào sent Phạm Tất Đồng to attack in 1655; *Phù Dương*, Nguyễn Hữu Tiến and Nguyễn Hữu Dật responded. Dật send a message to Trịnh Tráng that Đào was about to surrender, and Tráng ordered Đào captured and brought north, but he died of his wounds en route. Dật and Tiến repelled a new attack by Trịnh Trượng, then Trịnh Tạc arrived in Nghệ An and sent Trịnh Ninh (called the youngest son of Trịnh Tráng) to attack. The southern troops withdrew, and Tạc returned north. In this text, Dật sent word to Mạc Kính Hoàn, the *Phấn* Duke, and Phạm Hữu Lễ (rather than *Ký Lục Hồ*).<sup>35</sup>

In the *Toàn Thư*, the south attacked the Trịnh forces without success in the first lunar month of 1656. Trịnh Toàn took command in Nghệ An, but retreated to An Trường (where he was awarded titles including *Ninh* Duke). Trịnh Tráng's crown prince Trịnh Căn, his second son, was sent to Nghệ An with Toàn. Late that year, they advanced and

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<sup>33</sup> The Mạc king asked that the Nguyễn troops attack the north of the Đàm Giang. Ngô Đức Thọ suggests this means the Cả River in Nghệ An. *Diễn Chí*, *ibid*.

<sup>34</sup> *Tạp Lục*, I:29b.

<sup>35</sup> *Diễn Chí*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, 63-66.

retreated again. The Trịnh conflict with the Southern Ming, which appears in the *Diễn Chí*, is not described in the Lê annals.<sup>36</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* has no attack in the first month of 1656. Spies from the north reported to *Chiêu Vũ* that the three regional armies would join the attack; he and *Thuận Nghĩa* killed or pushed back the Trịnh (to Vĩnh Encampment), while Trịnh Toàn advanced. *Thịnh Đức* attacked the Trung Đô (perhaps Ninh Bình) and waited at Đoàn Thành for the signal to seize the capital and capture Trịnh Tạc and his son. The *Phán* Duke also prepared for battle, but as the southern forces crossed the river, they were ambushed by a captain, *Hoàng Tín*.

The *Hiên* Prince was already residing in a palace in Bồ Chính. When he heard that his generals were ambushed, he came to their aid. Arriving in north Bồ Chính, an aristocratic man (*xá nhân*) named Phú warned that they had been defeated, and the king must turn back. Instead of going to Trung Đô to capture Tráng and his son, he withdrew to the south. When he realized that he had been tricked, he killed Phú and returned to the Quảng Bình palace, placing his army under *Chiêu Vũ*.<sup>37</sup>

Like the *Diễn Chí*, the *Tạp Lục* has no attack in early 1656. The *Hiên* Prince, hearing of *Thuận Nghĩa*'s victory, decided to take his place. Phú reported a defeat, and the king fled in fear. When he learned that although *Thuận Nghĩa* and *Chiêu Vũ* had also retreated, the *Ninh* Duke did not pursue them, he killed Phú and returned to garrison at An Trạch, Quảng Bình.<sup>38</sup>

The *Thục Lục* includes the *Toàn Thư*'s failed attack on Nghệ An in the first month of 1656, and a successful one in the second month. Trịnh Tráng sent Trịnh Ninh to Nghệ An. The court received word that Hải Dương, Sơn Nam and Sơn Tây would come to their aid as soon as their army crossed the Cà River. As Nguyễn Hữu Dật advanced, Nguyễn Phúc (Cửu) Kiêu and a Prince Tráng attacked the Trịnh navy; Kiêu died in battle. Tiến sent *Hoàng Tiến* by sea, while Dật led the infantry, and Trịnh Ninh withdrew. The

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<sup>36</sup> *Toàn Thư*, *ibid*.

<sup>37</sup> The king was residing at Phù Lộ palace in Bắc Hà village, which is strangely named; Bắc Hà is a reference to the north, or to Beijing. He then met a local aristocrat named only as Phú, in Mộc Hãn village, north of the river.

<sup>38</sup> *Tạp Lục*, I:30a.

*Hiền* Prince arrived in Quảng Bình, and Dật advised the king that they should wait south of the Cà River. He sent secret instructions to Phạm Hữu Lễ in the north.<sup>39</sup>

In the *Diễn Chí*, Trịnh Tạc held a Southern Ming partisan named Ngô Cửu Lương hostage in Đông Kinh (Trịnh Tráng's is still alive in the *Toàn Thư*, yet he is ignored in the *Diễn Chí*.) In response, the Southern Ming emperor sent a Guangdong general, Dương Tông, to invade the Red River with 100 warships. The Ming were joined by coastal forces loyal to the *Phán* Duke and a second figure named *Triều Kỳ*. Trịnh Tạc placated the *Phán* Duke, sending two of his own secondary wives, whom the Duke desired, to their home near the coast. Their father, *Hoàng* (or *Hoằng*) *Tín*, presented them to the Duke, and he was captured while drinking. *Hoàng Tín* was rewarded with a regional command. *Triều Kỳ* withdrew, and there is no further word about the Southern Ming armada.

The remaining conspirator, the *Ký Lục* Hồ, spread men through the districts surrounding Thăng Long on each festival day to gather sympathizers. In one colorful episode, he designed a fireworks show for Trịnh Tạc and intentionally set fire to the city. *Ký Lục* Hồ offered the *Hiền* Prince a son as a hostage and sent the names of 30 generals and 25,000 soldiers pledged to support the revolt.<sup>40</sup>

These texts offer mixed and contradictory accounts of new officials entering Cochinchina, many offering support to its king, but do not explain clearly where the new officials in Cochinchina came from, or their motive for joining the southern regime. Although their proximate place of origin was Nghệ An, their relationship to the Trịnh is unclear. Tonkin's relationship with the Southern Ming throne is poorly documented, and the threat of Ming invasion may be apocryphal. However, the fluid movement among forces associated with the Southern Ming, Tonkin and Cochinchina suggest at least that new arrivals joined local forces in the struggle over Nghệ An. The standard explanation of a power struggle between two great families may be rejected as overly simplistic.

### A Ming Loyalist in Hội An and Quảng Bình

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<sup>39</sup> *Thực Lục*, 67-69.

<sup>40</sup> The local forces were said to join the Ming attack in the *Đông Đạo* and the *Tây Đạo*. *Diễn Chí*, 347-400.

One Ming loyalist, Shu Shunsui, gives a detailed account of a meeting with the southern king in early 1657. Shu, from a powerful family in Zhejiang, claims to have rejected personal requests from the Southern Ming emperor to accept a high military command. He departed first to Japan, then Hội An, and lodged in the Japanese quarter for over a decade. Early in 1657, he reports that literate persons were temporarily jailed by an official called the *Cai Phủ*, and feared death at his hands. Vĩnh Sinh and Ch'en Ching-ho note that the *Cai Phủ* was Fujianese, creating problems for residents such as Shu who were not. The Southern Ming court was in Fujian province at the time.<sup>41</sup>

The king kept a permanent residence at Thượng Chiêm. It is not clear if this is Dinh Chiêm is in Quảng Nam. At the time of Shu's story, the king was garrisoned with his troops at Ngoại Dinh Sa or Ngoại Dinh (Outer Encampment). The *Cai Phủ* later departs from the Hội An area to go to Ngoại Dinh, but has to return suddenly to Thuận Hóa. Vĩnh Sinh, citing Ch'en Ching-ho, suggests Ngoại Dinh Sa was Dinh Cát in Quảng Trị; on the other hand, the *Diễn Chí* and *Tạp Lục* place the *Hiên* Prince in residence in An Trạch, Quảng Bình. Shu describes *Ông Nghè Bộ* as the highest state official and commander, standing in for the king in Thượng Chiêm; he also mentions lower officials there called *nha môn*. Since Rhodes and Shu describe an *Onghebo* or *Ông Nghè Bộ* a little more than a decade apart, this seems to be the figure controlling Quảng Nam.<sup>42</sup>

Shu was granted an audience with the king (*quốc vương*) at Ngoại Dinh Sa. Unlike Cantonese, Fujianese and Japanese present, Shu claims to have refused to prostrate himself before the king, although there were daily horrific executions all around him. The king invited him to join the court, stating:

My family members are now fighting each other, causing great troubles for the country. The oldest son of the previous king is locked away in isolation, while the friends of the troublemakers are loved and all power is given to them. People in my family are fighting each other. When I read history books I am saddened, because in the past the family was highly respected, yet no one cares for it now.

The term the king uses to reference a high official, in Shu's text, is *Mỗ Quan*, or the unnamed one, praised as the only man who could persuade the people to fight, defeat

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<sup>41</sup> The name Hội An appears in Shu's account; it is also found in the *Giáp Ngọ* itinerary and a 1806 Nguyễn atlas. Vĩnh Sinh, *An Nam Cung Dịch Ký Sự*, 22-24. Julia Ching, "Chu Shun-Shui, 1600-82: A Chinese Confucian Scholar in Tokugawa Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica* 30:2 (1975):177-191

<sup>42</sup> The term *ông nghè* in later Nguyễn usage refers to a minor functionary, however, not a senior official or great general.

the enemy, and bring order to the kingdom. The meaning seems to be that the king wished to rely on Shu Shunsui to defeat the northern forces. The king complains that generations of evil rulers and their cohorts used the throne as a pretext for their own power. Vĩnh Sinh suggests this is a reference to Trịnh Kiểm, Trịnh Tùng, Trịnh Tráng and Trịnh Tạc. More generally, the words Shu attributes to the king mirror Shu's own dilemma – estranged from Manchu China, and even from the Fujian Southern Ming court of those years, yet loyal to his Ming roots.

The claim that oldest son of the previous king is locked away in isolation cannot be easily explained. Most texts have the *Thượng* Prince dying under mysterious circumstances in 1648, but the battle in which he allegedly died does not appear in Lê annals or VOC reports. His oldest son Vũ (in the *Liệt Truyện*) died young; the mother is omitted. If the king that Shu Shunsui met is in fact the *Hiền* Prince Phúc Tần, the Historical Office describes him having no living older brother. A “previous king” might be a Lê king, which would explain the reference to four generations of evil men who ruled in his name. However, *Thần Tông* is in the *Toàn Thư* the oldest son of Lê Kính Tông. He took the throne on his father's death in 1619, then ceded the throne to his son, and took the throne again on the death of his son in 1649. If the Lê king had an older brother locked away, then succession in the *Toàn Thư* is incorrect.<sup>43</sup>

The “previous king” might be Trịnh Tráng, who died, in the *Toàn Thư*, around the time of Shu's visit, two years after the protracted revolt by a prince described by the VOC (omitted in the Lê text) and shortly after the revolt instigated by northern allies in the *Diễn Chí* and *Thực Lục*. After Tráng's death, the *Toàn Thư* describes a revolt by Tráng's youngest son Toàn; many who supported Toàn fled to join an unnamed enemy when he was defeated, while Trịnh Căn led a successful campaign in Nghệ An.<sup>44</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* itself describes a similar visit to the king, also in early 1657. The visitor here is the *Ký Lục Hồ*. At first, the *Ký Lục Hồ* sent his son *Tú Phụng* and others to meet *Thuận Nghĩa* and *Chiêu Vũ*, who sent them together with the official *Tú Minh* to meet the *Hiền* Prince. No location is given, but the king had been residing in Quảng Bình. After this visit, *Thuận Nghĩa* and *Chiêu Vũ* led campaigns in Nghệ An, and the prince

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<sup>43</sup> *Toàn Thư*, 18a-41a.

<sup>44</sup> *Toàn Thư*, XVIII: 51a-53a.

Trịnh Toàn (Tuyền) surrendered, then he was captured and returned to the northern capital, where he was imprisoned.<sup>45</sup>

In the *Tạp Lục*, the king traveled to the front in Nghệ An in the fifth lunar month, after the events described by Shu, and built fortifications along the river into the mountains. Trịnh Tạc was sent to attack, but the king returned to Quảng Bình. The *Thực Lục* describes the *Hiền* Prince in Quảng Bình shortly before the death of Trịnh Tráng, meeting Phạm Hữu Lễ (instead of *Ký Lục Hồ*). The king moved to Nghệ An, where his generals had several victories.<sup>46</sup>

In the *Diễn Chí*, *Chiêu Vũ* wrote a proclamation praising the *Hiền* Prince and condemning the Trịnh and had it sent to every northern province. After a long residence in Nghệ An, the *Hiền* Prince gathered civil and military officials from southern districts of Nghệ An, then called on the region's scholars to serve as local officials. Further battles with Trịnh forces ensued (followed by an attack by a Cambodian king on Trấn Biên, discussed below). The *Tạp Lục* ignores the Trịnh battles, but mentions the Cambodian battle. The *Thực Lục* does not state that the *Hiền* Prince resided in Nghệ An for a long time, or that Nguyễn Hữu Dật issued a proclamation, but agrees with the *Diễn Chí* on officials from southern Nghệ An and the various battles.<sup>47</sup>

A missionary coming from Siam to the court in 1665 crossed Champa, Nha-Rou province, and then Phuan, Quining or Pulocamby, and “three or four other provinces” before reaching the capital “Diuh-hac.” Cadière suggests this is a misprint for Dinh-Hue, meaning Huế. However, crossing three or four provinces after Qui Nhon suggests court was farther north than Huế; some Jesuit maps from this period place a “Kehoa” on the Gianh River in Quảng Bình.<sup>48</sup>

If there were a series of northern campaigns at this time, it would make sense that the king of Cochinchina was resident in Quảng Bình for an extended period in the late 1650s. (In contrast, by 1675, a king in “Sinoë” again received visitors immediately after their arrival.) The precise identity of this king in Quảng Bình, however, remains unclear,

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<sup>45</sup> There is no parallel in the *Diễn Chí* to the daily violent executions Shu described that month. *Diễn Chí*, *ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Tạp Lục*, I:30a.

<sup>47</sup> *Toàn Thư XVIII*: 53a-54b; *Diễn Chí*, 286-287; *Thực Lục*, 69-71.

<sup>48</sup> *Relations des Missions Evesques Francais aux Royaumes de Siam, Cochinchina, Etc.* (Paris, 1776), 108-110; Cadière, *Les Residences*, 138; Launay, *Histoire*, I, 66.

particularly since the only visitor's account includes biographical statements that cannot be applied to any of the contemporary kings and princes, at least not as they are described in the Lê and Nguyễn texts.

### Defeat of Cambodia's Muslim King

There are fewer European descriptions of Cochinchina in the late 1650s, but there are several reports of the end of the reign of Cambodia's Muslim king that can be usefully compared with local sources. These sources suggest that western parts of Cambodia, and the lower Mekong, continued to be under some kind of Cochinchinese influence.

Nicolas Gervaise, writing four decades later, describes a Cochinchinese princess in the Cambodian court in the early 1640s. She informed the sole remaining son of the former king of a plot against him by his uncles, and he had them killed. In a public address, this princess persuaded the masses to crown him king. All that is clear from this is that there was Cochinchinese involvement in factional struggles in Cambodia.<sup>49</sup>

In VOC reports, a king and his retinue in Oudong were massacred in early 1642. In Mak Phoeun's reconstruction, three children of the *Ubhayorāj*, including future king Sūr, were spared, taking refuge in a monastery; the new king supported by the Cochinchinese princess was Cau Bānā Cand (Chan). Observer Peter Kettingh writes that the new king quarreled with his older brother, accused of adultery with his wife, Perkees

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<sup>49</sup> Mak Phoeun surmises that the Cochinchinese princess was Cūv, widow of Jayajettā II (the only "Vietnamese" princess mentioned in the chronicles), and suggests a daughter of Cūv married Aṅg Nan (who he believes was the oldest son of the *Ubhayorāj* that became king Padumarājā circa 1641) and became his primary queen. However, he also notes that it is not logical that Cūv would have championed Cand and sent her son-in-law to be killed. (The queen is quoted addressing Nur as her son, although she is not reported to have any sons at all; Mak Phoeun suggests she did so as the primary queen of his father, not his actual mother.) A chronicle passage suggests Outei had a liaison with a wife of Chei Chetta II before he became king, but the wife is not named. A Khmer chronicle does report that a wife of Jayajettā II had indiscretions with Outei, which might be a euphemistic way of indicating that she had a son with him. Mak Phoeun argues that the wife of Jayajettā II guilty of this indiscretion was not Cuv but rather a Cham or Malay wife. On the other hand, if Sur were a grandson of a Cochinchinese ruler, this would provide a clear justification for the intervention that would return Sur to the throne in 1658, an episode which is itself relatively uncontroversial. Mak Phouen, *Histoire*, 142, 241-243; Kersten, "Muslim King," 7.

Satry. (Mak Phoeun’s reconstruction gives Cand no older brother at all, which presents a problem for his reconstruction of royalty in this period.)<sup>50</sup>

In *P57*, after Cand claimed the throne, a Cochinchinese (*ñuon*) princess built a palace in Phnom Penh, took the high office of *Ubhayorāj*, established a court, and ruled as a queen. Building on his guess that Nān Cūv was the “princess” who aroused public support for Cand, Mak Phoeun suggests that this princess is also still Nān Cūv; his reasoning is that Cand would have allowed her to take sole power as ruler of Phnom Penh, out of gratitude for her earlier support for him. However, other Cochinchinese forces were influential in the lower Mekong, and if the chronicle description of a female *Ubhayorāj* is correct, there would have been significant local support for such a remarkable political event. That a Cochinchinese population lived along the Mekong by this time is noted by in 1654 by Quarles Browne, who complained of obstruction from Cochinchinese residents when trying to obtain provisions in the lower delta. He describes Cochinchinese residents manufacturing silk in three cities at the “entry of the large river going back to the kingdom of Laos.”<sup>51</sup>

Kettingh writes that in early 1658 two Cambodian princes raised an army of Cambodians and Cochinchinese much larger than the king’s. Nac Monton (the prince that Mak Phouen suggests is Sūr), sent a letter to the king offering to respect the king’s authority provided he would distance himself from the Malay.<sup>52</sup>

The Dutch withdrew until 1664 to avoid taking sides in this conflict, and cannot corroborate subsequent events, but Kettingh reports that the king in Ayutthaya attacked Cand in 1658. (Mak Phoeun speculates this might be at the request of princes wishing to avenge their dead father.)<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> The king’s brother’s house was reportedly set on fire and he was either executed or beheaded by a Japanese court official, and the wife was said by one observer to be stripped of her possessions and killed – but later was said to be alive. Mak Phoeun notes that a late Cambodian chronicle, *DV*, states that Cūv imposed on Cau Bānā Nūr, who took the throne in 1632, to prevent him from taking back the customs houses in Prei Nokor and Kampong Krabei that had in that text been given to the king of Cochinchina after Cūv’s arrival. Kersten, “Muslim King,” 16-17, 20; Mak Phouen *Histoire*, 259-265.

<sup>51</sup> The An Nam queen was said to rule from a capital “east of Phnom Preah Reach Troap.” Browne called the three cities of Cochinchinese Kimkaw, Trafferlond and Maccasser. *DV*, but not *P57*, claims that circa 1657, Cand demanded from the Phnom Penh queen the return of the customs and territories of Kampong Krabei and Prei Nokor, which in that text had been “loaned” to Cochinchina to aid in its war with China; this claim is not found in older texts. Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 253-301.

<sup>52</sup> Carool Kersten cites Kettingh’s letter for Chan’s response that he was “a Moorish Malay himself.”

<sup>53</sup> Kersten, “Cambodia’s Muslim King,” 20.



There are reports of Cochinchinese troops under the command of a Cambodian contender for the throne, apparently Aṅg Im (Kaev Hvā). Gervaise specifies that 200 men had been sent by the Cochinchinese king at Im's request. Mak Phoeun notes Dutch reports of hundreds of Cochinchinese troops among Im's forces, but dismisses Gervaise's report, arguing that the Cochinchinese appeared about ten days after the revolt and there would not have been time for troops to travel from Hué. He concludes there must have been only a small number of such troops in the service of the "Vietnamese ex-queen," not 200. Gervaise describes an estrangement between the king and this queen.<sup>54</sup>

Joseph Tissanier writes from Tonkin that the Cochinchinese king hoped to obtain in Cambodia "all the things necessary to make the war in Tonquin." According to Gervaise, a rebel prince had sent his two younger brothers, Nac Tam and Nac Pane, to request help from the king of Cochinchina but had received no word from them. Ayutthayan chronicles agree that Cand's young brother Pathum requested troops from a Cochinchinese king. (Mak Phoeun suggests troops were requested by Cand's cousin Sūr.)<sup>55</sup>

The 1658 rebellion was instigated in *P57* by four princes; a few others appear in European reports. Three are sons of the former *Ubhayorāj*: Aṅg Sūr, Aṅg Tan, and Aṅg Im (Kaev Hvā). Sūr, Tan and Im conspired to avenge their father, but the king learned of the plot. Mak Phoeun suggests the fourth is his grandson, descended from the Cochinchinese queen, Srī Jayajetth, son of the murdered king Nan. Cochinchina troops attacked, looting the treasury.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Gervaise attributes their estrangement to the conversion to Islam (not a recent development), and an assassination of a Cochinchinese ambassador that is not reported elsewhere; these points seem speculative (given his distance from the events) and do not fit well with other accounts. Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, *ibid*.

<sup>55</sup> Mak Phoeun writes, "*P57* initially says that a princess took the office of *Uparāj* and a little later, that of *Ubhayoraj*... It may be noted that there is one other example of princess having been raised to this office. It was under the reign of the queen Aṅg Mī (1835 - 1840)." There is a strange similarity between the names of the general in the Cambodian chronicle, Phu Beng, and the name given by the Sino-Vietnamese text, Phúc Vinh. Among the many inconsistencies is one noted by Kersten: Chan was given a Buddhist funeral, while his Muslim regalia were retained by a Buddhist-Brahmanic court. *VJ* claims that on Cūv's request, the Cochinchinese king to sent four generals named Phu Beng, Phu Duc, Duoy and Cai to depose Chan; the information about the four generals might be drawn from the Đàng Trong texts discussed below. Mak Phoeun, "Histoire," 290-301; Po Dharma and Mak Phoeun, "La première intervention militaire;" Kersten, "Cambodia's Muslim King", 15.

<sup>56</sup> Late texts including *DV* claim that Sūr and Tan brought their troops to garrison near Phnom Penh with the Cochinchinese queen, and in Samrong Tong; however, *P57* just states they fled to Samrong Tong with no mention of the queen. Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, *ibid*.

The European accounts are speculative and contradictory. Dutch reports suggest the capital was ransacked and plundered. For Gervaise, the king fled and was captured by Cochinchinese troops in an old temple, then taken to the Cochinchinese court. Tissanier writes that a Cochinchinese general brought infantry and a few small ships and encountered no resistance. The invaders took 27 large boats, several smaller ones, 800 elephants, many horses, and artillery. A Cambodian king was actually said to have been held prisoner in Faifo in “a common house, resembling a pagoda, which was used as assembly hall, courtroom and prison.” This detail suggests the Chinese community in Hô An could have played a role in the attack.<sup>57</sup>

Summarizing this period a few decades later, in 1696, Bowyear writes:

*Chewa Hean* maintained a Strong War against the Tonqueeners; he brought *Nock Ramass*, the Rebel King, from Cambodia to his Court, his Aid being desired by *Nock Boo Toom*, he over-ran Champa; in his time the broil happened with the Dutch, he settled the Kingdom, bringing it to what it is now, and after 44 years Reign, left it to his Son.<sup>58</sup>

Mak Phoeun states that Bowyear’s Nock Ramass is Cand, who in the chronicles began his reign with the name Rāmājdhpati, though he quickly adopted the name Ibrahim. Nock Boo Toom, in his view, is Sūr, who used the title Anak Padumrājā. He interprets Bowyear’s statement that the *Hiên* Lord ordered his troops to cross Champa, because Cochinchina did not share a border with Cambodia. However, another possible interpretation is that the *Hiên* Lord overran Champa to aid Nock Boo Toom separately, unrelated to bringing the rebel king Ramass to his court. It is noteworthy that the *Thục Lục* gives the name Bà Tắm to a Champa king said to encroach the border in 1653 (a year in which, as discussed above, there is no war reported in Champa).

The division of the kingdom suggested by the female Cochinhinese *Ubhayorāj* in Phnom Penh continued after 1658, with brothers ruling from two capitals. Gervaise reports that the previous king had designated the younger of the princes as heir to his throne and had instructed the commander of his small Cochinchinese escort to announce this. The older brother claimed he was entitled to the throne. The Cochinchinese king

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<sup>57</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, *ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> It is not clear whether he received this information from a local source, or how much he gleaned from reports of other foreign visitors. Dalrymple, *Oriental Repertory*, *ibid.*

decreed that the two should share the kingdom each one of them exerting sovereignty on one of the two halves.<sup>59</sup>

*P57* indicates that the deceased king received a (Buddhist) funeral in Prei Nokor, with his only *kris* brought back to Oudong. Cambodian chronicles do not mention the divided rule by two brothers.<sup>60</sup>

The 1658 invasion is the first interaction with Cambodia or Champa that is described by the Historical Office texts and also found in both the *Diễn Chí* and *Tạp Lục* (unlike 1611, 1629, and 1653). In the *Diễn Chí*, while the *Hiền* Prince was preoccupied with *Nghệ An*, Cambodia's king Chan invaded at the border. *Trần Biên* Encampment sent word to the king while he was in *Quảng Bình*. The southern border (in the *Thực Lục*) was at this time *Thái Kháng* Encampment, or *Nha Trang*, to the south of *Phú Yên*. (*Trần Biên* was *Phú Yên* in a 1627 *Thực Lục* annotation). Whatever the location of *Trần Biên* in 1658, the border may have been with western Cambodia, on the highland plateau.<sup>61</sup>

A deputy general, called *Yên Vũ* in the *Diễn Chí*, and the *Yên Vũ* Marquis in *Tạp Lục*, *Thông Chí* and *Thực Lục*, responded to the Cambodian incursion. The *Diễn Chí* and *Thông Chí* add a captain, the *Minh Lộc* Marquis, and the *Diễn Chí* and *Tạp Lục* add the adjutant, the *Văn Lĩnh* Earl. The *Diễn Chí*, *Tạp Lục* and *Thông Chí* add a fourth, the *Xuân Thăng* Marquis. In the *Diễn Chí*, their troops took eleven days to reach Cambodia, and the *Yên Vũ* Marquis sent spies to its capital. The *Thông Chí* adds that king Chan also called himself *Ông Mỗ*, the meaning of which is unclear, and that he resided at the *Mỗi Xoài* citadel, a name for *Biên Hòa* in *Đồng Nai*. In the *Tạp Lục* Chan resided simply at the “Cambodian citadel,” where they captured him with his officials and highland (*Man Lao*) chieftains. The *Thực Lục* names the deputy general as a prince, *Nguyễn Phúc Yên*,

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<sup>59</sup> The later Khmer chronicle texts present a story that appears to be apocryphal: a Vietnamese fleet of between 2000 and 5000 soldiers under the command of a military official, *Uri Pien Dhūr*, which joined *Sūr* and *Tan* in *Phnom Penh*, after first attacking *Đồng Nai* and other provinces; *Cand* and *Im* met them at the *Tonle Sap*, during which *Im* disappeared and *Cand* was captured. *Mak Phoeun* adds that the invaders captured a Portuguese maker of artillery, *Jean de la Croix*, who was taken back to the court and became a high official there, although he does not cite his source for this information. W. J. M. Buch, “La Compagnie des Indes néerlandaises et l'Indochine,” *BEFEO* 36:1 (1936): 97 – 196, 147.

<sup>60</sup> Later chronicles claim his remains were returned to receive a state funeral at Oudong. *Mak Phoeun*, *Histoire*, *ibid*.

<sup>61</sup> Unlike the earlier texts the *Thực Lục* uses *Chân Lạp*, an older Chinese name, in place of *Cao Miên* to refer to Cambodia. *Diễn Chí*, 384; *Tạp Lục*, I:30b; *Thông Chí*, III:3a-3b; *Thực Lục*, 71-72.

with a captain Xuân Thắng and adjutant Minh Lộc. Three thousand soldiers arrived at Hung Phúc citadel in Trấn Biên, where Yên destroyed the citadel and captured Chan.<sup>62</sup>

The texts differ on the final outcome. In the *Diễn Chí*, the *Hiên* Prince forgave Chan, who was released. The *Tạp Lục* takes this literally; he was brought to Quảng Bình to meet the king, who released him; this is repeated in the *Thông Chí*. In the *Thực Lục*, Chan was forgiven and sent back to offer annual tribute.<sup>63</sup>

The chronicles of Ayutthaya reference the king Chan dying in Cochinchina without returning the throne. He quarreled with his young brother Pathum, who sent a letter to Cochinchina's "*Phraya*" asking him to conquer Cambodia; the date is not specified, but appears to be around 1658. Cochinchina ordered Ciang Thu to conquer Cambodia, taking Chan, along with treasure and guns back with them. Chan was commanded to return to Cambodia, but he died upon reaching Champa. His brother, Pathum took command of close to a thousand supporters and relatives, reassembled his soldiers, and took refuge in Siam with thousands of other Chan supporters. The story of Chan being taken to Quảng Bình and returned to Cambodia to continue his rule, likely originates in the *Tạp Lục*, which later texts followed. Chan may have died in either Cochinchinese or Cham territory, and this is not contradicted by the *Diễn Chí*, which simply states that he was freed.<sup>64</sup>

Two texts place Chan in Đồng Nai rather than Oudong; western visitors, none of whom witnessed any attack personally, suggest forces from Cochinchina invaded Oudong,

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<sup>62</sup> *Tạp Lục*, *ibid*; *Diễn Chí*, *ibid*; *Thông Chí*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>63</sup> None of the texts mentions the disappearance of Mạc Cảnh Vinh from Trấn Biên, or when the other generals were appointed there. The only scholar to have suggested an interpretation of this, to my knowledge, is Phạm Đình Khiêm. Khiêm points out that Mạc Cảnh Vinh was sent to Trấn Biên (understood, following the *Thực Lục*, to be Phú Yên) in 1627. He notes that the next mention of Trấn Biên in the *Thực Lục* comes in 1658, when a Nguyễn prince named Yên (An) leads an attack on Chan. The only prince with this name mentioned in the Historical Office records is a son of Nguyễn Phúc Nguyên, Vinh's nephew Nguyễn Phúc An. Khiêm notes that Rhodes describes baptizing the husband of the Christian aunt of the reigning king, who was the governor of Ranran, and was in his 80s in 1644. Khiêm understands Ranran to be Phú Yên, and he suggests this was Vinh, who decades earlier was made commander of Trấn Biên, called Phú Yên in the *Thực Lục*. Khiêm suggests that Vinh's wife's brother An took his place around 1644 and ruled until the events of 1658. An's biography in the *Liệt Truyện* has been omitted. One difficulty with this argument is Vinh's problematic year of birth. Phạm Đình Khiêm, *Người Chứng Thứ Nhất*; *Tạp Lục*, *ibid*; *Diễn Chí*, *ibid*; *Thông Chí*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>64</sup> Ayutthaya chronicles later note that one thousand Chinese conscripts under a Chinese general laid siege to Ava; the chronicles also describe the use of Cham soldiers. Cushman, Richard, trans. and David Wyatt, ed., *The Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya* (Bangkok: The Siam Society, 2006), 248-249, 266-67.

but describe no resistance and no actual battles being fought. Only in the late *DV* does the king mount a counterattack from Oudong to repel the invaders.

### Integration of Nghệ An Forces into the Southern Court

In the late 1650s, there was a dramatic change in the court, which began admitting participants from the opposing side in the Nghệ An campaigns to senior posts. In the *Diễn Chí*, the *Hiền* Prince appointed several leaders of the surrendered Nghệ An forces to high office in 1659, including Chu Hữu Tài, *Cổn Lương* and *Văn Tuyển*. (Chu/Shu was a common Ming loyalist surname, but not a common local surname.) Chu Hữu Tài presented the *Hiền* Prince a treatise on the three keys to his victory, which were the three Confucian concepts of Heaven, Earth and Humanity. The king's rule was due to Heaven's will, which assured his victory in battle. Chu Hữu Tài then stated that he believed the king's legitimacy was derived from association with the Mạc. In this remarkable passage in the *Diễn Chí*, Tài informed the *Hiền* Prince that when Mạc Đăng Dung first occupied Đông Kinh, a prophecy had magically appeared there which began:

*Mạc thị thừa long phụ nguyên thừa thống.*

Chu Hữu Tài, addressing the king, interpreted this as follows:

*The Mạc who rides a dragon [will] pass on the throne to Nguyễn.*<sup>65</sup>

The obvious interpretation, which the next line in the manuscript provides, is that the Mạc kings passed the throne to the *Sãi* Prince and his descendants.

Chu Hữu Tài spoke of the Earth, the southern land strategically superior for defeating the Trịnh. Most important was Humanity, for the Trịnh had manipulated and killed the king, losing all moral authority. Tài instructed the *Hiền* Prince on reforming and expanding institutions such as the examination system and agricultural taxes. The king gave all three men senior army posts, appointing Tài as senior advisor in his court.

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<sup>65</sup> *Diễn Chí*, *ibid.*

The *Thực Lục* describes additional movement from Nghệ An to the court during the following years; by 1661, Chu Hữu Tài had successfully recruited an unstated number of sailors in Nghệ An to serve the court.<sup>66</sup>

It is not clear whether the Chu in Nghệ An were related to the *Hiền* Prince's wife Chu Thị Viên; the Historical Office omits her background. Tài's quick rise suggests a marriage alliance, and other new arrivals married into powerful families near the political center. *Gia phả* describe Guangdong migrants settling in Đà Nẵng and Hội An in the late 17th century. One is Lương Văn Sĩ, awarded the title Learned Gentleman by the *Hiền* Prince, who married into a prominent Phan clan on the Thu Bồn River. The arrival of Yang Yan-di (Dương Ngạn Dịch) in the 1670s was not an isolated event, and the migrants were not distant from the court.<sup>67</sup>

#### A Defense of Xiengkhuang from Trịnh Invasion

*MEP* visitors report that a Cochinchinese army commanded by a young prince, second son of the king, unsuccessfully tried to order his troops to advance across the wall that separated his country from Tonkin in 1672. The prince was prevented by others from attacking, and the Cochinchinese army merely defended its own territory. The *MEP* observers were not privy to the details of battles over highlands regions, which were crucial to this conflict.<sup>68</sup>

In the *Diễn Chí*, Prince An had been a trusted senior advisor to the *Hiền* Prince since his returning from Cambodia in 1658; his birth year is not recorded, but if he is the *Thượng* Prince's brother, he would have been in his 60s. When the *Hiền* Prince became ill, he followed An's advice, appointing his young son Hiệp crown prince and Grand Marshall. In 1672, Hiệp fought the Trịnh for control of Xiengkhuang, which appears in a southern text (as Trấn Ninh) for the first time. The Xiengkhuang citadel was repeatedly threatened by northern forces, with Hiệp's troops defending it while Nguyễn Hữu Dật reportedly battled northern ships. Lê Duy Cối and Trịnh Tạc personally led some battles, with up to 20,000 on each side. The literary style leaves room for interpretation but the

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<sup>66</sup> *Thực Lục*, 78.

<sup>67</sup> Phan Nam, et al., *Bảo An*, 18.

<sup>68</sup> Launay, *Histoire*, I, 28,

southern king in this account seems most concerned with holding highland areas (perhaps for commercial reasons), which the Trịnh utterly failed to occupy.<sup>69</sup>

The outcome of this struggle, however, is ambiguous; in the *Diễn Chí*, Nguyễn Phúc Hiệp and Nguyễn Hữu Dật kept control of the Xiengkhuang citadel, while the Trịnh placed artillery along the Nhật Lê River, then were driven north of the Gianh River. What happened farther north than Quảng Bình is not explained in the *Diễn Chí*, which ends with Grand Marshall Hiệp's triumph.

Both the *Toàn Thư* and *Thực Lục* mention a 1670 episode in which Trịnh Tạc sent a distinguished emissary by sea to the Bồ Chính harbor at Nhật Lê, but the Nguyễn refused to receive him. In the *Toàn Thư*, a major assault took place in 1672, when the (apparently, titular) commander of Nghệ An and Bồ Chính, an old Trịnh Tạc loyalist, Dương Duke Đào Quang Nhiêu, died. Tạc and his son Căn led a force to attack the south. Reaching Bồ Chính, Trịnh Căn led the army across the river, spreading word to local people of the Nguyễn's usurpation of power in 1600. Their first attack was successful, but the unfamiliar climate allegedly forced the army to return north, freeing captured prisoners. There is no mention of an epic battle for the highland citadel. The *Thực Lục* follows the *Diễn Chí* in describing forces reaching the highlands, with 1,000 warships sent to hold the Gianh River and again has Nguyễn Hữu Dật arriving in Xiengkhuang to keep the Trịnh at bay. In this interpretation, Lê Thời Hiến, the general that launched a final assault on Xiengkhuang, held the north side of Bồ Chính when Trịnh Tạc withdrew, and the Gianh River again became the border between the two countries.<sup>70</sup>

The *Tap Lục* admits the south ultimately held the Trấn Ninh/Xiengkhuang citadel, but claims Trịnh forces reoccupied the southern districts of Nghệ An court; if true, the Lê commander there would have controlled the territories up to the Gianh River, effectively cutting Xiengkhuang off from the coast. A MEP missionary who crossed into Tonkin in 1675 describes a general named Chet Che wished to convert, but feared the Tonkin court might learn of his Christian sympathies. (In 1721, the Tonkin missionaries would claim

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<sup>69</sup> The *Tap Lục* calls the prince the *Hiệp Đức* Marquis, named Phúc Huân. The *Liệt Truyện* calls him Thuần, with a second name of Hiệp, and the fourth son of Tần, his mother was Chu Thị; the *Thực Lục* calls him Hiệp, with an annotation stating he had a second name Thuần and was *Hiệp Đức* Marquis. *Diễn Chí*, 515-578.

<sup>70</sup> The attack in the *Toàn Thư* took place under the new eleven-year old king, Lê Duy Cối, a younger brother of the previous child king Lê Duy Vũ, who had died at age eighteen. *Toàn Thư*, XIX:25b-34b.

that a Chinese Christian, whose faith had by then lapsed, governed the border province of Cochinchina.) A 1675 account seems to suggest that Tonkin might have acquired some territory, but it describes no battle and makes no specific mention of what region changed hands.<sup>71</sup>

An Italian Jesuit in the north, Horta, much later describes a 1671 battle. Tonkin mounted its largest invasion attempt ever, with a force of 80,000, Horta wrote, yet they lost 17,000 in only three days of battle, with a decisive victory for Cochinchina's mere 25,000 defenders. For Horta, this resulted in Cochinchina's unchallenged authority over highland regions, which were obliged to pay tribute along with Champa and Cambodia; Tonkin would make no further attempts on its neighbor. Thus, there is little evidence to support the assertion that Tonkin achieved a major victory by reclaiming its lost territories in Nghệ An.

#### Christian and *Chan* Buddhist Royal Factions

When Vachet arrived at the court in 1671, sympathetic elite were hopeful that the queen's two Christian sisters would convince the king to convert. Vachet met the Nha-Ru governor (in the Ninh Hoa bay in the north of Nha Trang) who along with his wife was openly Christian, baptized in childhood. By late 1673, the king's son-in-law had also converted, and missionaries were favored at the court.<sup>72</sup>

Mahot reports the mid-1674 the baptism of an infant son of the "second prince" at the court, who had adopted Christianity along with his mother. J-B Roux suggests this was a son of the king's second wife, suggesting a Christian branch of the royal family. Lambert wrote in 1675 that the sudden death of a second prince created a great setback for *MEP*'s hopes for their influence at the court, since the official overseeing foreign residents was married to the dead prince's sister; although the deceased prince may have been the king's (Buddhist) chief general, not necessarily the prince whose son was

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<sup>71</sup> The Tonkin king is reported to have died in 1681 by the East India Company; this might be a reference to Trịnh Tạc, although in the *Tục Biên* it is the young brother of the *Chúa*, Trịnh Đổng, who had led multiple campaigns against the south, who died in 1681, and the *Tây Định* King Trịnh Tạc died in late 1682. Around the same time, *MEP* were able to expand their mission to highland groups, including a region called *Phuong-Tay*. *Asiatic Journal*, 17; Launay, *Histoire*, I, 164; *Diễn Chí*, *ibid*.

<sup>72</sup> Launay, *Histoire*, I, 185-193.



baptized. Still, in 1675, even as the king granted permission to build a church in Faifo, a prime minister married to the king's daughter turned against them.

*MEP* reports describe 40 thousand soldiers amassing on the border with Tonkin in 1676, with the intention of invading the north. The assault was reportedly called off due to the sudden death of the second prince, a respected general of the armies. (Deeper reasons for avoiding a coastal attack on Tonkin may have been related to the contested highland centers, which the missionaries had little information about.)<sup>73</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* and *Liệt Truyện* describe Grand Marshall Hiệp's newfound religious fervor after his victory in Xiengkhuang, as *Chan* Buddhism spread by migrants and traveling monks became a major factor in court politics. Hiệp made a pilgrimage to a monastery on Hainan Island with a group of seafaring monks shortly before his death from smallpox in 1675. Jean de Courtaulin reported that in the late 1670s or early 1680s, the "first prince," who Cooke suggests is Prince Diễn, had sent envoys to China to bring back monks and built temples in the provinces. Courtaulin derisively pointed to his infatuation with a new concubine who was Buddhist (one of several sex scandals among court Buddhists), rather than a shift toward royal *Chan* patronage. Whether the convert was Diễn or Hiệp, both are in the *Liệt Truyện* sons of the king's Chu wife, making this family a driving force in the adoption of a state *Chan* Buddhism that peaked in the 1690s.<sup>74</sup>

The apparent death in 1675 (if the *Diễn Chí* story of the grand marshal is accepted) of two primary contenders for the throne, one Buddhist and one Christian, would have left an opening in which either faction could attempt to take power. By 1677, Vachet reports one son-in-law of the king, in poor health, surrounded by Chinese monks; at the same time, the baptized prince Thomas, now eight and residing at Dinh Cát under the care of its governor, was old enough to express concern with the treatment of Christians there; still another grandson of the king considered adopting the faith. Royal conversions continued into the following decade, with a queen arranging her daughter to be baptized in 1689.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Roux, J-B, "Les Premiers Missionnaires Français a la Cour de Hiên-Vuong: Le Petit Prince Chrétien du Dinh-Cat," *BAVH* 2:4 (1915):59-68.

<sup>74</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 591-598; *Liệt Truyện*, 92-95, Cooke, "Strage Brew."

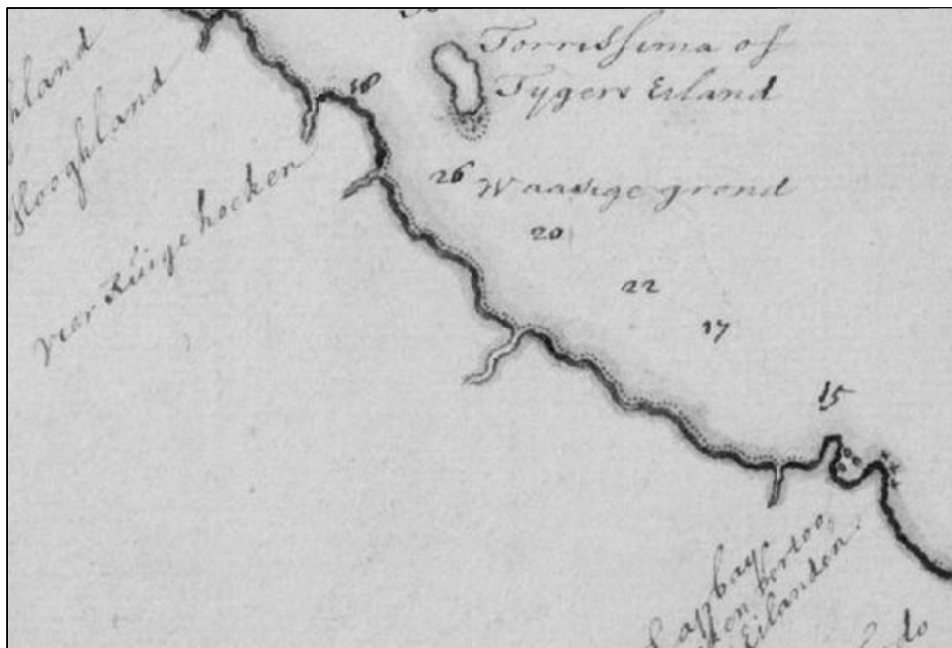
<sup>75</sup> Launay, *Histoire*, I, 200-205, 211, 342.

The influx of South China migrants, from the fall of Beijing to the final surrender of Taiwan, had profound repercussions for Cochinchina. A surviving Southern Ming and Qing travel narrative describes a king mobilized for war at “Ngoại Dinh Sa,” most likely in Quảng Bình, in 1657, while the oldest son of a previous king was imprisoned. This description is incompatible with the *Thực Lục*, and along with internal inconsistencies in the local texts suggests that Cochinchina, like Tonkin, underwent a major transformation.

Nguyễn texts describe the adoption of a more Sinicized culture at the Nguyễn court in the last decade of the 17th century; on closer inspection, Ming influence was felt almost immediately after 1644. There is evidence that the Tonkin-Cochinchina wars were fought with the participation of newly-arrived naval forces that contributed to a restructuring of the southern court. Their battles were not attempts at territorial expansion south along the coast; instead, they were probably struggles for control of the Lao hinterlands and their trade goods. Some texts claim victory for the south, which held Xiengkhuang against a Trịnh invasion; missionary observers confined to the coast report no specific campaigns, and may not have understood the dynamic of the conflict over the interior. Cochinchinese and Chinese factions also appear to have staked claims to parts of Cambodia at this time, but the relationship between the forces in Cambodia and the court itself is not clear.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> John E. Wills writes that after 1644, with Qing acceptance of the Lê/Trịnh regime, the “Nguyễn regime survived in full *de facto* autonomy in the central coast, advancing steadily into the Mekong Delta, completely outside the view of the Qing state.” Our lack of access to sources from a Southern Ming perspective suggests that the relationship between China and its southern neighbors was more complex. John E. Wills, Jr., “Great Qing and Its Southern Neighbors, 1760-1820: Secular Trends and Recovery from Crisis,” Conference on Interactions: Regional Studies, Global Processes, and Historical Analysis, Library of Congress, 2001.



Map 5 Details of VOC Joen Blau 1657 map showing two cities near the Thu Bồn River, and no features inland from the two rivers leading to what was later Phú Xuân/Huế. Rotterdam Maritime Museum.

## CHAPTER 8

### The Beginnings of a Kingdom in Gia Định, c. 1674-1714

Few descriptions survive of the region that came to be called Gia Định in the late 17th century, a time when Portuguese and mestizo traders operated from prosperous Cambodian ports with links to Macao. Neither French missionaries arriving there in the late 18th century in competition with Jesuits and Franciscans, nor the mid-19th century Historical Office, who produced their histories at a time when mestizo and European-born state officials were purged from the Hué court, emphasized the region's Iberian connections. This chapter examines the formative years of that kingdom in lower Cambodia, as it asserted independence from the Cambodian court, and strengthened its relations with Cochinchinese factions.

### A Cochinchinese Colony and Divided Rule of Cambodia

The Dutch returned to Cambodia two decades after the massacres there, finding a Cambodian king was allied with Chinese factions in a conflict with a “crown prince” allied with the Cochinchinese. The identity of this prince, and his precise relationship to the king, is unclear. The Dutch report 3,000 Ming loyalists arriving by early 1667 under a pirate chief Piauwejja. This navy was welcomed by the king at Oudong, but they quickly began fighting with Cochinchinese supporters of the crown prince, with this pirate chief ordering that thousands of Cochinchinese be killed.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> The *DV* chronicle omits the king of Cochinchina's decision, reported by Gervaise, that the two brothers would share the realm between them; instead it reports the ascension of prince Tan to the office of *Ubhayorāj* in 1664. Chevreul writes that there were about 500 Cochinchinese resident a mile from Phnom Penh, with 5 or 600 resident outside Oudong. He reported the king there was a devout Buddhist, who had

Chevreuril reports in 1665 that Cambodia was still a tributary of Cochinchina. A king supported by Chinese was victorious over a rival supported by Cochinchinese. Cochinchinese ships from Siam to the mouth of the Mekong in 1665 did not dare travel upriver, fearing capture by Khmers coming from Siam, which was at war with Cambodia; Cochinchinese sailors passing the mouth of the Mekong, according to Vachet, feared capture and execution by the Cambodian king. *MEP* reports concur that Chinese supported the king, and the Cochinchinese who fled or were captured included a significant number of them were Christians; Launay writes that “all Annamites, parishioners of the French missionary, were massacred.” Although in Dutch reports, Piauwja promised not to attack again without authorization from the king, Chevreuril states the king ended tribute payments and refused to allow ships to travel to Cochinchina. Even after Kettingh made a large payment to the Chinese pirates, the Dutch were still attacked. They withdrew again in 1671, so they do not shed light on the period of 1672-74.<sup>78</sup>

Ethnic Chinese captains of ships from various ports in the region were required to submit reports at Nagasaki. One ship owned by a retainer of Southern Ming ruler Zheng Jing in Formosa brought Japanese silver to Cambodia in 1677. It was seized and its crew conscripted, in 1679 “escaping” with a cargo of zinc. Its captain reports that in 1673, a Great King was overthrown by his brother, called the First King. The Great King’s son retreated to the mountains, later returning to fight a son of the First King, who was aided by 600 troops from Cochinchina (in these reports, Guangnan).<sup>79</sup>

Labbé dates the founding of a Cochinchinese colony in Đòng Nai to between 1670 and 1675, 35 to 40 years before his writing in 1710. He describes a group of Cochinchinese settling between Champa and Cambodia, on the Đòng Nai River. (In 1685, *MEP* reports describe the Champa port of Citran, or Phan Thiét, as being on the border with Cambodia. *MEP* was also active in Fu-Moy or Nha Ru, seemingly centered in the Ninh Hoa bay just north of Nha Trang, and in 1674 calls it the province farthest

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himself been a monk and followed Buddhist regulations. Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 303-329; Buch, "La Compagnie des Indes Néerlandaises."

<sup>78</sup> One passage in the *Relation of the missions* states that an ambassador of the kingdom of Cambodia arrived in Tonkin. Mak Phoeun suggests it took place in 1672; this is not mentioned in the *Toàn Thư*, and there is no other evidence linking this to the events in the south. Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, *ibid.*; Launay, *Histoire*, I, 80.

<sup>79</sup> Ishii, *Junk Trade*, 28-34, 156-160.

away on the side of Cambodia.) Labbé locates the settlement “a certain country called Donnai, bordering the kingdoms of Cambodia and Champa... a flat, low land, very large and extensive, covered with a forest of tall trees.” By 1710, he believed, there were 20,000 persons in this Cochinchinese colony, including 2,000 Christians.<sup>80</sup>

European reports of the 1672 intervention, however, are based on hearsay. Nicolas Gervaise writes that a Cambodian king was assassinated by his son-in-law and prince Cotrei took refuge in Cochinchina. A *MEP* letter describes a brother of an assassinated king fleeing to Cochinchina in 1672. Both state that a queen married the new king and killed him on their wedding night, but a third king, who took power with her support, killed her in turn. In *MEP* reports, two brothers disputed the crown (Mak Phoeun believes they are first cousins, Ji and Nan); the younger had been chosen by his dying father. The older brother took the throne, but their paternal uncle supported the younger brother, who asked for help from the king of Cochinchina. He received 3,000 Cochinchinese troops. Learning of the death of the princess upon meeting Nac-Non (Nan) at the mouth of the Mekong, he ousted the king, whose army fled to the northwest, and Cambodia was divided between them.<sup>81</sup>

Mak Phoeun notes an inconsistency in the *MEP* reports; one states the new king died suddenly of illness two years later without an heir; in the other, after ousting the king, he was assassinated by a minister who seized the kingdom. In the first account, Cochinchinese troops advanced on the royal city after the king died of illness, returned to the port for reinforcements, and attacked again. Nan declared himself the rightful king, and the occupying troops settled, in order to cultivate land and provision themselves to attack the exiled king. A truce was called, with one king controlling the region from the capital to the mouth of the Mekong and the other from the capital to Laos and Siam. Ayutthaya sent 10,000 troops, but recalled them without incident despite the western king’s plea for support. The eastern king sent tribute to Cochinchina, and some Cochinchinese troops were recalled in 1675.

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<sup>80</sup> John Barrow uses the toponym Donnai in the 1790s to refer to the entire region from the southern tip of Cà Mau up to Cam Ranh Bay. Barrow called the region that was later occupied by Nguyễn Nhạc, from the north of Cam Ranh to Quảng Ngãi, *Chang* (Cham), and the region up to Quảng Bình was *Hue*. Launay, *Histoire*, I, 131,353; Georges Taboulet, *La Geste Française en Indochine, vol. 1* (Paris: Librairie d’Amérique et d’Orient Adren Maisonneuve, 1955), 95-96.

<sup>81</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 328-338.

For Gervaise, when Cotrei learned of the assassination of the princess, he became a monk, but the next king did not dare to assume the throne officially while he was still alive. Gervaise omits the Cochinchinese troops and attack on Oudong. When Cotrei was dead, his nephew Cesta was crowned. Again, Gervaise mentions no Cochinchinese troops, but he writes that the king of Cochinchina decided to divide the kingdom between the two rivals (for Gervaise, the second time the king of Cochinchina had done so, the first being 1659).<sup>82</sup>

Cambodian chronicles refer to a king seeking Cochinchinese aid against his rival. Mak Phoeun's comments on P57 include an episode after the events of 1658 in which Tan adopted an infant prince named Aṅg Nan, a son of Im. Sri Jayajetṭh assassinated Sūr in late 1672, but Tan escaped departing for the lower delta, requesting troops from the king of Cochinchina. Sri Jayajetṭh's new queen arranged for the new king to be assassinated by his Malay guards in mid-1673. Mak Phoeun suggests that Sūr gave his nephew Sri Jayajetṭh, son of former king Nan and grandson of the Cochinchinese queen (for Mak Phoeun, Cūv), the title Padumarājā (like his own father), and Sūr's nephew married his daughter. In Mak Phoeun's reconstruction, Kaev Hvā II or Aṅg Ji then took the throne; he massacred the previous king's supporters.<sup>83</sup>

Two *Diễn Chí* episodes involving a Cambodia usurper are repeated, with slight variations, in the *Tạp Lục*, *Thông Chí* and *Thực Lục*. The *Diễn Chí* does not provide any explicit date for either episode, but they appear in the final portion of the manuscript, describing events taking place between 1673 and 1689, the year in which the extant copies suddenly break off. An unrelated event is repeated twice, between and after the two episodes, and is dated both times to a *giáp dân* year, first of the Đức Nguyên reign, 1674. This seems to suggest the text is corrupted by a copying error.<sup>84</sup>

In the first episode, a Cambodian named Đài, who is not called a prince, rebelled against king Nan, constructing a pontoon bridge and stretching chains across the river, building defenses at Gò Bích (Lovek) and Phnom Penh (Nam Vang). (I will refer to Nam Vang as Phnom Penh.) Đài vowed to resist the Southern Dynasty to avenge earlier kings.

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<sup>82</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 339.

<sup>83</sup> The chronicles do not mention the death of the queen. Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, *ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 584-590.

Đài was reluctant to gather an army, however, fearing Nan would receive reinforcements from that dynasty.<sup>85</sup>

An *oknha* named Lạc Chi Gia, called a man from the Ming country, advised Đài that it would be difficult to oppose the Southern King of Heaven (*Nam Thiên Vương*) due to his powerful army. Đài should instead get reinforcements from Siam, then advance on the Southern King and avenge earlier kings; in case of defeat, he could take refuge in Siam. The Siamese king urged Đài not to attack hastily, but Đài tricked Non into believing that Siam had sent a large army, so Nan fled through the hills to Thái Khang garrison (apparently over the highland plateau to Nha Trang). Thái Khang commander *Triều Đức* gave aid to Nan and his family.<sup>86</sup>

Following this episode in the *Diễn Chí*, there is an unrelated report dated to a *giáp dần* year, first of the Đức Nguyên reign, 1674. The *Hiền* Prince, here named as Nguyễn Phúc Tần, ordered officials to carry out recruitment for civil and military posts in Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam, adding that this was done as had been done in the previous year. However, the text describes no recruitment in 1673.<sup>87</sup>

This is followed by the second episode. Thái Khang officers reported to the court that Đài had asked Siam for aid and the *Hiền* Prince sent as supreme commander the *Dương Lâm* Marquis, commander of Nha Trang Encampment, with the *Diên Phái* Viscount and *Văn Sùng* Earl. They attacked Gò Bích and then also blocked the river before surrounding Phnom Penh; Đài fled to the forest and died. A second Cambodian, Thu, who is mentioned for the first time, surrendered and offered tribute. The *Dương Lâm* Marquis realized that Đài had lied about a Siamese army, but the *Diên Phái* Viscount and *Văn Sùng* Earl died of illness due to the inhospitable climate. The Cambodians worshipped *Diên Phái*, who was thought to manifest miracles, and their king built him a temple at the Mỹ Tho river mouth. The supreme commander returned with Cambodia's tribute and was promoted to governor of Thái Khang (from Nha Trang Encampment commander). The *Hiền* Prince gave posthumous titles to the deceased men and sent *Thu Đường* to declare Thu the First King (*Chính Quốc Vương*); Nan, the Second

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<sup>85</sup> This figure is called Ô Đài in the *Diễn Chí*, and Nặc Đài in later texts. Ngô Đức Thọ, like Mak Phoeun, suggests that Đài must have been Ji. *Diễn Chí*, 584.

<sup>86</sup> Mak Phoeun, 338-343; *Hồng Đức Bản Đồ*, 159.

<sup>87</sup> *Diễn Chí*, *ibid.*



King (*Thứ Quốc Vương*), resided in Saigon. Cambodia was at peace, and offered annual tribute.

The *Diễn Chí* repeats for a second time the same statement that in 1674, there was a civil and military recruitment in Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam. This time, it adds that it took place in the second month of the year, but does not repeat the statement that it was the same as in the previous year.

The *Tạp Lục*, *Thông Chí* and *Thực Lục* all omit the Ming advisor Lặc Chi Gia and his advice about Siam, but repeat most of the other details of the *Diễn Chí* account. The *Tạp Lục* dates these events to the first year of the *Đức Nguyên* reign, 1674, and reproduces the account in the *Diễn Chí* almost verbatim. (The author presumably took the date from the 1674 recruitment, although that statement is not itself repeated.) Đai drove out king Nan, and the Nha Trang Encampment commander, the *Dương Lâm* Marquis, attacked Đai with a *Thủ Hợp*, the *Diên Phái* Viscount as adjutant. They attacked by night, destroyed Khu Bích (Gò Bích)'s defenses, then blocked the river and surrounded Phnom Penh. Đai fled, Thu surrendered, and the *Dương Lâm* Marquis returned. Thu was made First King, and Nan was made Second King in Prei Nokor (Saigon). Cambodia paid yearly tribute, and the *Dương Lâm* Marquis became governor of Thái Khang Garrison.<sup>88</sup>

The *Thông Chí* cites the *Diễn Chí* and *Tạp Lục* as its sources, and dates this event to *giáp dần*, the first year of *Long Đức*, the thirteenth year of the Qing *Kangxi* reign. It states that a Cambodia man named Đai drove out the king, called Nan, who fled to what Trịnh Hoài Đức described as “our country.” The king ordered a general of Thái Khang Encampment, the *Dương Lâm* Marquis, to be Supreme Commander, and the *Diên Phái* Marquis was his adjutant; these officers are described as being responsible for border security. (The Nha Trang Encampment in the previous two texts is omitted.) Defenses at Saigon, Gò Bích, and Phnom Penh were destroyed. The aggressor named Đai fled, and the king Sô surrendered.<sup>89</sup>

An annotation to the *Thông Chí* text describes a different episode placed in a *giáp dần* year, discussed in Chapter Three. This is likely an error for the *giáp ngọ* year 1594,

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<sup>88</sup> *Tạp Lục*, I:33b-34a.

<sup>89</sup> The first year of the *Long Đức* reign is 1732, a *Nhâm Tý* year, but the thirteenth year of the *Kangxi* reign is in fact the *giáp dần* year 1674. Conceivably, the author or editor meant the first year of the *Lê Đức Nguyên* reign, 1674, and mistakenly wrote *Long Đức* instead of *Đức Nguyên*. *Thông Chí*, III:4a-b.

because the account bears a striking resemblance to the descriptions in the Cambodian chronicles and European accounts of that year, as well as the description of Mạc Cảnh Vinh's intervention in the Mạc *gia phả*. (It does not match the 1674 events described by contemporary observers.)<sup>90</sup>

Following this annotation, the *Thông Chí* states that the court made Thu, introduced here as a faction leader (*phái trưởng*) and First King (*Chinh Quốc Vương*), residing in the citadel at Vũng Long (Oudong). Non became the Second King (*Phó Quốc Vương*) in Saigon. Tribute was restored and the *Dương Lâm* Marquis became Thái Khang Encampment governor (the same place he was posted before), charged with holding the border.<sup>91</sup>

A third story appears in the description of a ruined fortress in the *Thông Chí* section devoted to famous monuments in Trấn Biên (Đồng Nai). This story does not appear in the chronological narrative of political events in Gia Định or Đồng Nai. No date appears at the beginning of the passage, which describes the First King Sô residing in Vũng Long (Oudong) and the Second King Nan at Saigon. Sô's oldest son Bô Tâm killed his father and declared himself king. Nan asked the court for troops, building earthen defenses at Gò Bích and Phnom Penh and blocking the river. Bô Tâm asked for Siam troops to kill Nan, who fled to Thái Encampment (instead of Thái Khang). Bô Tâm attacked Saigon, but the Siamese did not arrive as promised; he built fortifications in Trấn Biên (at Mỗi Xoài, or Biên Hòa), holding that territory for more than a year.

At this point, the story is dated to a *giáp dân* year, called the 27th year of the *Thế Tông* reign, which is clearly an error. Thái Khang commander Nguyễn Triều Đác reported this, and the court sent Thái Khang generals Nguyễn Dương (clearly the *Dương Lâm* Marquis) and Nguyễn Diên (clearly the *Diên Lộc* Marquis). Diên arrived at Mỗi Xoài first and drove out Bô Tâm, but Cambodian people fought him until Dương arrived. They took Saigon, Gò Bích (Lovek) and Phnom Penh, and Bô Tâm fled to the forest and was killed by a relative of his *Chà Và* wife. Sô's second son Thu surrendered and was made First King, with Nan as Second King. Diên died of illness and was honored with the title *Trung Vũ*. A temple was built for him where prayers were always answered;

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<sup>90</sup> *Thông Chí*, *ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> *Thông Chí*, *ibid.*

Cambodian people did not dare to enter it. The Trấn Biên fortifications were preserved for generations as the main garrison for the Mỗi Xoài (Biên Hòa) army, but had been destroyed (presumably by circa 1820).<sup>92</sup>

The *Thực Lục* repeats the story, placing it in 1674, and copies the *Diễn Chí* recruitment in the second month, like the *Diễn Chí* without mentioning recruitment in the previous year. In this text only, the chief general is Nguyễn Dương Lâm, taking the *Diễn Chí* title as a given name; an annotation states he was a son of Quảng Bình Commander Duke Nguyễn Văn Nghĩa. He was captain of the Nha Trang regional army (*đạo*) in Thái Khang Encampment. This is the first claim that Nha Trang was part of the Thái Khang Encampment, contradicting the earlier texts.<sup>93</sup>

Nguyễn Dương Lâm brought his troops to rescue Cambodia. Đai rebelled earlier and controlled Phnom Penh, but feared king Non and secretly asked Siamese troops, pretending they sent 20,000 infantry and 20,000 sailors to punish Non for disloyalty. Non fled to Thái Khang, and the court sent Dương Lâm and Nguyễn Diên Phái, along with *Văn Sùng* (without a surname), to seize Saigon, Bích Đôi (Lovek), and Phnom Penh. Again, Đai fled and died, Thu surrendered and became First King at Long Úc, with Non Second King in Saigon, with annual tribute. Diên Phái and *Văn Sùng* died, and the Cambodians built a temple for Diên Phái in Mỹ Tho. Dương Lâm, now supreme commander, returned and was made Thái Khang governor.<sup>94</sup>

The temple to the *Diên Lộc* Marquis was located in Đồng Nai (Trấn Biên), instead of Mỹ Tho, only in the third *Thông Chí* story, which also reverses its meaning. Instead of Cambodians building the temple, Cambodians feared and avoided it. The claim that the Đồng Nai fort taken from Bô Tâm was then used by the army for many generations, but destroyed by the 19th century, is unique to this passage.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> If the *Thế Tông* reign referred to is the Lê *Thế Tông* reign, the 27th year would be 1599, a *Kỷ Hợi* year. If the Ming *Shizōng* reign is meant, that would be 1547, a *Đinh Mùi* year. The Qing Yongzheng emperor's *Shizōng* reign lasted from 1722 to 1735 and did not have a 27th year. *Thông Chí*: VI:25b-26b.

<sup>93</sup> Such a recruitment occurs three times in the *Thực Lục*, first when they were instituted by Đào Duy Từ in 1632, and then when they were extended to Diên Ninh and Thái Khang in 1669. This is the only mention of recruitment without any context, suggesting the passage was copied directly from the *Diễn Chí.Thực Lục*, 49, 82, 89-90.

<sup>94</sup> Cambodia is always Chân Lạp in the *Thực Lục*.

<sup>95</sup> The year 1674 is also problematic for Đàng Ngoài, despite its reported “victory” in Nghệ An; the British East India Company withdrew their factory in that year after a reported rebellion that resulted in the death of the king’s brother and a senior official, events not reported in the *Thực Lục* or the *Diễn Chí*. In 1676, the

Residences of kings named Thu and Nan also appear in the *Giáp Ngọ* itinerary. This is a particularly difficult document, due to the range of elements it includes which stretch across such a vast period of time in the Historical Office narrative, beginning with the *Doan* Duke's residence in Quảng Trị (for the Historical Office, circa *giáp ngọ* 1594), that their inclusion on a single map makes little sense within that narrative. This map includes palaces of Thu and Nan on the Mekong and Tonle Sap Rivers, which appear to be the kings of 1674 (*giáp dân*). However, other rival kings bearing some similarities to Thu and Nan do appear circa *giáp ngọ* 1594 in some versions of the Cambodian chronicles.

These stories bear signs of censorship, reinterpretation, and the conflation of stories about different episodes occurring at different times. It is unclear to whether the 1674 stories in the Nguyễn texts are equivalent to the 1672 wars in Cambodia described secondhand by various foreign observers. Notably, the war in Cambodia involved the support of a Ming Loyalist navy against the Cochinchinese, whereas for the Historical Office, Ming Loyalists only appear a decade later, as discussed below.

In 1672, a war seems to have broken out between two Cambodian kings, one possibly based in Saigon or Đồng Nai. A recently arrived Chinese force supported the western king, while an eastern king relied on support from Cochinchina. The Historical Office describes a similar conflict, in which Nha Trang forces which seem only tangentially related to the court helped a Cambodian prince against a rival backed by Ayutthaya. However, the various descriptions of these 1672 and 1674 wars are sufficiently different from each other as to question whether the Historical Office narrative of 1674 is a description of the 1672 event.

### Restoring a King in Oudong

The eastern Cambodian king allied with Cochinchina, according to *MEP*, maintained an advantage even after Cochinchinese troops withdrew. The western king

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British report a man named Tecketu ruling Tonkin independent of the king; this might be an equivalent figure to Grand Marshall Trịnh Căn, who was said in the *Thực Lục* to become *Định Nam* king in 1764. *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies, Vol. 13* (London: Kingsbury, Parbury, Allen, and Co., 1822), 17.

turned to Ming loyalist ships, which supported him in resisting king allied with Cambodia. By early 1677, the king with Cochinchinese support controlled then more than 400 rice transport boats, whereas the king supported by Ming loyalists was running low on provisions. Both sides sent ambassadors to the Cochinchinese court, which took no action. The king holding the west, and a king's son (it is not clear which), both died. Gervaise describes two kings battling each other until one died; Non sent the deceased king's son (who Mak Phoeun suggests was really his half-brother Sūr) monks for the funeral, who were put to death on arrival. The war was restarted, with troops and funds arriving from Cochinchina and Ayutthaya.

A new Cambodian king announced his ascension to the VOC in February 1677; the Cochinchinese king ordered the Fu-moy (Ninh Hoa) governor to punish him. Vachet claims that this governor seized the ports at the Mekong mouth with 1,500 soldiers, driving the king out of the capital into the forest. He comments that Cambodia might suffer the fate of Champa, with a king ruling in name only. By late 1678, though, the eastern king was forced to retreat into Cochinchina; the East India Company reports Cambodia and Cochinchina were at peace.<sup>96</sup>

A Chinese ship captain escaping Cambodia in 1679 confirms that in 1678, Siam sent 6,000 troops to join the Great King's 10,000, while the First King's son had only 6,000 troops, with 600 more from Guangnan. The First King's son was defeated in 1679, and may have fled to Laos. Guangnan troops departed, and Siamese troops remained in Cambodia.<sup>97</sup>

According to Mak Phouen, Cambodian chronicles also describe another Cochinchinese assault. In *P57*, Cochinchinese generals with 3,000 troops led the princes they supported to return to Cambodia, where they battled with Ji. Tan died of illness, and then Cochinchinese generals were defeated at Oudong, and returned home. Nan was proclaimed by the people to be *hluon Ubhayorāj*, which Mak Phoeun suggests is "the king [who is] *Ubhayorāj*". Nan and Ji continued fighting until 1676, with Nan in Srei Santhor and Ji in Phnom Penh. Finally, Nan drove his rival out; the young pring Sūr in Oudong seized Phnom Penh with troops from northern provinces in early 1677, while

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<sup>96</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 343-360.

<sup>97</sup> Ishii, *Junk Trade*, 28-34, 156-160.

Nan returned to Srei Santhor. Ji died of illness, Sūr was crowned in Oudong and requested aid from Siam to defend himself from Nan's attacks. The Siamese reinforcements defeated Nan.<sup>98</sup>

### Ming Loyalist Control of the Mekong

Neither the Cochinchinese-allied nor Siam-allied king had a decisive victory in these battles. In a 1680 *tōsen* report, Siam's troops left Cambodia, and the Third King, who had the strongest army, drove the Great King's heir to a base in the mountains. These rivals were called Mountain King, supported by Siam, and Water King, supported by Guangnan. One crewman of a ship owned by Qin She's Ming loyalist forces was killed by Chinese official Wu Li at the mouth of the Mekong, with the Cambodian king refusing requests by local Chinese to intervene. In a 1681 report, the reigning king sent tribute to both Siam and Guangnan, while the Second King appears in Chan-in, where Guangnan troops had returned after their defeat by Siam. In a 1682 *tōsen* report, the Second King had taken refuge at the court of Guangnan, but its king had not sent any troops. In missionary reports, in 1682, the king of Cochinchina sent a large Cochinchinese colony under a great general, including a number of Christians.<sup>99</sup>

Jean Genoud reports that Chinese raided Champa first, and then pillaged villages at the Mekong mouth. The Cambodian king's forces destroying Phnom Penh in retaliation shortly after Genoud's departure from Cambodia in late 1682. A Father Louis notes Cambodia was quiet in 1682, yet disturbed by Chinese pirates who burned villages and churches. *MEP* describes Chinese destroying the royal palace after the king refused to let them occupy Phnom Penh. In 1684, Siam sent 5,000 infantry to the king's aid. Gervaise describes 3,000 Ming loyalist Chinese joining Cochinchinese and Cambodians to support the ousted Nan, together defeating the reigning king in battles that are not explicitly dated.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Mak Phoeun names the Cochinchinese generals *Dioen Gun* and *Dhammü*. He notes that *P57* does not provide a date of departure of the invaders. Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 345-347.

<sup>99</sup> Ishii, *Junk Trade*, 28-34, 156-160.

<sup>100</sup> *Tục Biên*, 21-23; Ishii, *Ibid*; Launay, *Histoire*, I, 320-322.

In a 1683 *tōsen* report, Yang Er, an officer of Qin She, arrived in Cambodia from “islands off the coast of Guangdong” in 1682, with 3,000 men and about 70 warships. The king escaped to the mountains with thousands of people. The Siamese king sent an envoy, but failed to persuade Yang Er to join his navy, reportedly because the officer intended to return to Dongning. Descriptions of Yang Yan-di in the Nguyễn texts do not match Yang Er in the *tōsen* reports.<sup>101</sup>

Jesuits under the control of the Portuguese Prince Regent were ordered to depart Cochinchina in 1682, but disputes between *MEP* and the Portuguese population continued in Siam, and also in Cambodia, where Portuguese were active in Hà Tiên. A Portuguese embassy of 1684 led by Pero Vaz de Siqueira tried to win the support of the Siamese king in this quarrel.<sup>102</sup>

The figure Mo Jiu (Mạc Cửu) appears in Nguyễn texts at this point, described as the father of future Hà Tiên governor Mạc Thiên Tứ. (Mo Jiu is not named in the *Tạp Lục*, however, which merely describes Mạc Thiên Tứ as having a Chinese father who arrived to open up new land.) The *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* claims Mo Jiu served as a Cambodian official, without specifying any date. In the *Thông Chí*, Mo Jiu and other Chinese went to Phnom Penh in 1680; in Sài Mạt there were Viet, Chinese, Khmer, Malay and other merchants. The *Thông Chí* and *Thực Lục* agree that he ruled seven “villages”; in the *Thực Lục*, he gathered drifters or wanderers. This is sometimes interpreted as meaning that ethnic Vietnamese migrants colonized these regions; although there is no evidence to support this interpretation.<sup>103</sup>

The *Diễn Chí* describes Ming loyalist general Yang Yan-di (Đương Ngạn Dịch) arriving in Danang in 1679, yet it does not describe him going to Cambodia until 1687. Yan-di had taken control of Longmen guard ships to fight the Qing in 1678. He brought more than 200 ships to the Thuận Hóa coast, plus reinforcements a month later, but a storm reduced his force to over 50 ships and 3,000 soldiers. Among his men were merchants that had business in Nam Việt (Cochinchina). One, called Guo San-qi (Quách

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<sup>101</sup> Ishii, *ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> Halikowski Smith, “No Obvious Home,” 20.

<sup>103</sup> The villages (*xã thôn*) were in Phú Quốc, Lũng Kè, Cần Bột (Kampot), Vụng Thom (in the *Thực Lục*, Hương Úc), Rạch Giá, and Cà Mau. *Thông Chí*, IV:56a-b; *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 17-18.

Tam Kỳ), led him to Danang, where Yan-di, San-qi and Huang Jian (Hoàng Tiển) met the *Hiền* Prince.

The *Diễn Chí* does not describe what happened to them following this audience. Yang Yan-di disappears for eight years. In 1687, a year before his assassination, he takes residence at the Tiên Giang River's harbor. The *Tạp Lục*, *Thông Chí*, and *Thực Lục*, all combine both *Diễn Chí* episodes into a single passage, and omit the eight year interval between the arrival in the Danang and departure for Cambodia.<sup>104</sup>

Cambodian chronicles, which echo the European reports, describe several Chinese generals. In P57, Nan received 3,000 troops from Cochinchina to support another attack on Oudong in 1682. A Ming loyalist general, Chen Chongkoun, had taken refuge in Champa with 20,000 sailors. A grandson of the king (Mak Phoeun suggests this is actually former king Nan) offered Chen territory in return for aid in reconquering the kingdom. A third Chinese general Tan Chong Ea served Sūr, before defecting to Nan in Srei Santhor. Chinese and Cochinchinese troops seized the Saigon, Đồng Nai, and Hậu Giang Rivers, administering these conquered provinces. They brought Nan to Phnom Penh, razing Oudong and driving out Sūr in 1683 (though he later returned).<sup>105</sup>

Mak Pheoun argues that the general providing aid to Nan was Yang Yan-di by reference to the Nguyễn texts. He argues that Nan, in exile in Cochinchina in 1681-82, obtained aid from Yang Yan-di and the Ming loyalists because of their connections with his Chinese wife; Ming loyalists, who had “already offered allegiance to the Vietnamese lord of Phú-Xuân, can be considered as Nguyễn subjects.” Mak Phoeun's reconstruction of events accepts the *Thực Lục* assertion that a Ming loyalist fleet settled the Mekong in 1678 under the instructions of the Vietnamese court. However, the *Thực Lục* account is derivative of the *Diễn Chí*, which does not support this interpretation. Descriptions of Yan-di's 1679 arrival in Cambodia are derived from the *Diễn Chí*, in which Yan-di only moves to Cambodia in 1687. The *Diễn Chí*, *Tạp Lục*, *Thông Chí* and *Thực Lục* describe no attacks on Cambodia in 1682 or 1683. The Chinese and Cochinchinese support for Nan described by several observers was either independent of any Cochinchinese king, or sponsored by a ruler who is not described in these texts.

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<sup>104</sup> *Thông Chí*, III:4b-5a; *Diễn Chí*, 559-603.

<sup>105</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 370, 381.



Mak Phoeun suggests that Chen Chongkoun should not be identified with Chen Chang-shuan (Trần Thượng Xuyên), because in the *Thực Lục*, Chen Chang-shuan was only following the orders of Vietnamese generals. Again, view is not supported by the examination of the *Diễn Chí* and the Historical Office texts. Chen Chang-shuan may have been in Cambodia for a long time, independently of Yang Yan-di. Thus, there is no specific for the participation of either Chinese figure mentioned in the Nguyễn sources, Mo Jiu or Yang Yen-di, in the battles for control of the lower Mekong in the 1670s and early 1680s. There is more substantive evidence for the early participation of Chan Chang-shuan, although he is only mentioned by name by a Chinese ship captain in 1690, so his arrival at this earlier date cannot be confirmed.<sup>106</sup>

#### Ascension of the a New Ruling Clan

The appearance of migrants in the far south was mirrored in the Cochinchinese court itself, which would be transformed by Southern Ming refugees. A new group appeared in the court and abruptly consolidated its power, following the sudden deaths of the remaining recorded contenders for the throne. Factions supporting the Jesuits at the court were among those purged by the new ruler in alliance with a clan named who are named by the Historical Office as the Tống Phúc clan. The *Thực Lục*, however, appears to be particularly corrupted for the period surrounding the apparent crowning of a new king circa 1691, providing a string of nine consecutive false reports of solar eclipses in 17 years, from 1690 to 1697; its description of the Tống Phúc rise to power under the *Minh* Prince may be equally problematic.

As Jesuits were forced out of Cochinchina by French bishops, tensions between *MEP* and Jesuit missionaries escalated. As the Jesuits were departing, violence against the Christian-allied factions increased. Nola Cooke cites an anonymous document in the *MEP* archives, which states that, in the early 1680s, the “second most influential prince” at the court became friendly with Laneau. Several princes died around this time, so it is unclear which one might have sought out the missionary. In 1690, Labbé writes that a

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<sup>106</sup> Mak Phoeun also suggests Cin Cuit Gun is a Teochiu phrase “the Chinese [who is] the big boss of army.” Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 359-389.

queen named An had recently died. Writing from Phú Yên a decade later, Cappony describes the king at this time as a cruel tyrant who assassinated two first cousins after taking the throne, and then wiped out other rivals, killing Christians.<sup>107</sup>

An edict banning Christian practice was issued in 1690, ostensibly due to insults by local Christians, and *MEP* relations with the court deteriorated further; it has little information about the king's death, although it is noted that a son took the throne. Franciscan Jerónimo de la Santísima Trinidad, writing in 1726, describes a new king born around 1674, who took the throne in 1688 or 1689. This king was an absolute ruler with some 150 children by concubines, yet none by a legitimate wife; a first-born prince was recognized as heir, while most children were distributed to be raised by court officials, a practice later confirmed by Pierre Poivre.<sup>108</sup>

The Nguyễn texts seem to describe, indirectly, a gradual change in the environment at the court in the 1680s, with the natural death or assassination of key figures. In the *Diễn Chí*, a crown prince, the *Phúc* Duke, the only remaining living son of Nguyễn Phúc Tần's primary queen Chu Thị Viên, died of illness, and the queen his mother died soon after. These events are not dated, but their position in the text suggests that the deaths occurred in 1684.

In the *Tạp Lục*, the deceased crown prince is Phúc Diễm, the *Phúc Nghĩa* Marquis. However, the *Tạp Lục* omits the 1684 death of Chu Thị Viên, replacing it with the death of a queen called Tống Thị in that year. In the manuscript, the surname Tống has been amended and replaced by Thái. The death of a Tống or Thái wife is not mentioned in any other texts. (In the *Liệt Truyện*, Tống Phúc Khang's daughter Tống Thị Đôi, originally a low ranking concubine, is the ruling *Nghĩa* King's mother.)<sup>109</sup>

The *Thực Lục* calls him the oldest prince Diễm, the *Phúc Mỹ* Marquis, with the annotation of a second name Hán. The *Liệt Truyện* ignores the title, calling him the oldest prince Diễm, with an annotation noting the alternative Hán. Both state Chu Thị Viên died

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<sup>107</sup> Cooke suggests this prince was the future *Nghĩa* King, who would send Laneau gifts after taking the throne. (The court in 1684 was said to be a three day journey from Faifo.) Cooke, "Strange Brew;" Halikowski Smith, "No Obvious Home," 20.

<sup>108</sup> Pérez, "Los Españoles," Part V.

<sup>109</sup> The Historical Office offers no details about Đôi's mother except her surname, Phạm. Her father is described in general terms as descended from ancestors serving Nguyễn Hoàng in Thanh Hóa, but no details or line of descent is provided, suggesting this vague assertion might have been included by the Historical Office to give more prestige to this low-ranking queen. *Diễn Chí*, 612; *Thực Lục*, 94.

in 1684 and omit the death of Tống Thị Đồi. The name An cited by Labbé is associated with neither queen in the dynastic records.

A fourth prince appears, with several names, in the *Diễn Chí*, *Tap Lục*, and *Liệt Truyện*, but not the *Thực Lục*. In the *Diễn Chí*, the king's fourth son, the *Cương Lĩnh* Marquis, died suddenly and mysteriously in 1685 after attending a horse race.

In the *Tap Lục*, the prince dying in 1685 is called the *Cương Lĩnh* Marquis. His name has been written and then amended. The original name seems to be Phúc Thái (泰 with the radical 水); it was later amended to Phúc Trăn (榛, also with the radical 水).<sup>110</sup>

The *Liệt Truyện* also records the 1685 death of a prince; this text names Trăn (an annotation notes he was also called Huyền), the king's third son, not the fourth; his mother was the king's Tống wife. The *Thực Lục* merely notes the 1685 death of a military officer named Trăn, who was also called Huyền; it does not call him a son of the king. Labbé writes in 1690 that the ruling king's taboo name was Bút (meaning quill). The name Bút is not found in any of these texts, which call the *Nghĩa* King by the taboo name Thái, with a second name Ngàn.<sup>111</sup>

In the *Diễn Chí*, after the *Hiền* Prince died in 1687, a member of the royal lineage (*vwong tộc*), the *Dạt Nghĩa* Marquis, who has not appeared before, appealed to the court to choose a new king quickly. After five days without an heir, officials chose the *Hoàng An* Marquis as king. The Marquis also was given the title *Hoàng* Grand Duke. An annotation calls him the *Hoàng Nghĩa* King.<sup>112</sup>

In the *Tap Lục*, on the kings's death, the third son, the *Hoàng An* Marquis, became king. The name Phúc Trăn (as described above) is amended to read Phúc Thái. A later section describing the honors conferred by Phúc Khoát on his ancestors calls him (in my reading) Phúc Thái (泰 with the radical 水).<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Lê Xuân Giáo reads this name as Trăn, whereas Nguyễn Khắc Viện reads it as Thái. Cương's tomb was in the village of Thế Lại, suggesting the mother might have been among the Ming guests. *Diễn Chí*, *ibid*; *Tap Lục* I:35a-b; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>111</sup> The taboo name forced people to use an alternative word, Biết (that is, Viét, also pen), in daily conversation to avoid speaking the king's name. Launay, *Histoire*, I, 366.

<sup>112</sup> Ngô Đức Thọ, following the standard histories, identifies him as Nguyễn Phúc Trăn.

<sup>113</sup> Lê Xuân Giáo reads the new king's name as Phúc Trăn (also the name he gives to the prince who died in 1684), whereas Nguyễn Khắc Viện reads his name as Trăn. In the section describing honors, Nguyễn Khắc Viện again reads the name as Trăn and Lê Xuân Giáo as Trăn.

The *Thực Lục* has the second son, the *Hoàng An* Marquis, taking the throne immediately, without the delay or debate. The *Liệt Truyện* also implies that this king was the *Hiền* Prince's second son (the prince dying in 1685 was the third, and the fifth and sixth son died young).<sup>114</sup>

The assassinations described by Cappony seem to be obliquely mentioned in the *Diễn Chí*, which describes the death of *Tín Nghị* (son of the *Dương Xuyên* Marquis, who is described as a member of the royal lineage, with no other clue as to his identity.) In 1688, *Tín* died in a strange boating accident, apparently an indirect way of saying that he was assassinated. Like Prince *Hiệp*, *Tín Nghị* was an active Buddhist, restoring the *Khoảnh An* pagoda before his death. The *Thực Lục* includes this death, acknowledging him as a prince (Prince *Tín*), but simply states that he died suddenly. *Tín*, his father and another member of the royal lineage involved in this succession, the *Dạt Nghĩa* Marquis, are all omitted in the *Liệt Truyện*.<sup>115</sup>

In the *Thực Lục*, the new *Ngãi (Nghĩa)* King again moved the capital. Illogically, however, he built his new capital in *Phú Xuân*, where his father's court was already supposedly located. The royal biographies do not disguise certain revisionist elements. For example, the king's mother, *Tống Thị Đồi*, was elevated to the status of queen posthumously. Less credibly, he married a woman named in the *Liệt Truyện* as *Tống Thị Lĩnh*, daughter of his mother's brother *Tống Phúc Vinh*. This *Tống Phúc* queen allegedly had five sons and four daughters. Three sons died young, and the fate of a fourth is not recorded. The remaining surviving son in the *Thực Lục*, descended from the *Tống Phúc* clan through both his mother and his father, was the future *Võ* Prince.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 618-621; *Tap lục*, I:34b-35b, 40b; *Thực Lục*, 95-98.

<sup>115</sup> The crown prince is first called the *Hoàng* Duke, then the *Hoàng An* (or *Hoàng An*) Marquis, then proclaimed *Hoàng* Grand Duke on taking the throne. (The name *Huyền* for the reportedly dead third brother *Trần* might have been read as *Hoảng*.) The young brother of *Nguyễn Phúc Lan* called the *Trung Tín* Marquis in the *Tap lục*, or *Nguyễn Phúc Trung* in the Historical Office texts, was said to have been seduced by *Tống Thị* and induced to rebel. The later texts state he died in prison, but the *Diễn Chí* does not. The *Trà Kiệu Mạc Gia Phả* mentions a great-grandson of *Nguyễn Phúc Kỳ*, whose name is illegible in the text, but whose title was *Tín*. *Diễn Chí*, *ibid*; *Tap lục*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*; *Huỳnh Công Bá*, “*Về Quyển Gia Phả*.”; *Launay, Histoire*, II, 433.

<sup>116</sup> No information about *Lĩnh*'s mother is recorded except that her father had the surname *Lê*. The names of *Lĩnh*'s first two daughters are omitted from the *Liệt Truyện*, and the other two were named *Nhiễm* and *Niêu*. The husbands of the first two unnamed daughters are recorded as the *Tín Quận Công* and the *Tài Quận Công*. It is not known whether *Niêu* had a husband. *Phan*'s great-grandfather, named as the *Luong* Duke *Gia*, was said to have followed *Hoàng* to the south and fought with *Nguyễn Hữu Dật* in 1627. His grandfather *Phân* was said to have fought in the battles of 1640 and 1648 that are not mentioned in the

Officials from new families joined the *Nghĩa* King's court. The Trương Phúc, who would later seize the throne in 1765 and place Trương Phúc Loan as regent, entered the royal family when Nhiễm, third daughter of the *Nghĩa* King and Tống Thị Lĩnh, married Trương Phúc Phan, a great-grandson of the *Lương* Duke.

In the *Tap Lục*, state rituals were changed to conform to Ming dress and customs. There were also radical economic changes; these are not highlighted in the dynastic records, but the *Gaiban Tsusho* includes a letter, dated 1688, in which the King of Annam (*An Nam Quốc Vương*) – apparently, the *Nghĩa* Prince – sought to restore relations with Japan and urgently sought bronze coins, explaining that he was unable to produce his own currency.<sup>117</sup>

The *Diễn Chí*'s delay and debate before selecting a new king is problematic, since all named sons of the *Hiền* Prince but one were dead. It is unlikely that two sequential sons of the *Hiền* Prince would have names written in a nearly identical fashion. Given these inconsistencies, it is likely that other contenders for the throne in 1688 are not described accurately.

In the *Tap Lục*, on Phúc Trăn's 1691 death, his son Khoát (濶) took the throne as the *Thái Phó Tộ* Grand Duke. The name Phúc Khoát is crossed out and replaced in the margin with a scrawled name that appears to be Phúc Chu. In the section describing 1744 honors bestowed on royal ancestors, Chu appears, but is crossed out and replaced by the Khoát, which is also crossed out and replaced, with ultimate character difficult to read. (I will use Phúc Chu in the discussion below.) This king had 46 children.<sup>118</sup>

In the *Thực Lục*, the *Minh* Prince, oldest son of the *Nghĩa* Prince, was born in 1675, and was seventeen at his father's 1691 death. In that year, he took the title *Thái Bảo, Tộ* Duke, but only formally claimed kingship in 1693, when he took the title *Thái Phó* Grand Duke. (The title *Thái Phó* Grand Duke was not used by earlier rulers, and the significance of the delay is not clear.) The Historical Office explanation is that the delay

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*Toàn Thư*, and his father fought the Trịnh under crown prince Hiệp in 1672. Phan became Commander of Trấn Biên, and with a group of Bồ Bà (Java) sailors was captured by then helped attack the English at Côn Đảo in 1702. *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>117</sup> The *Thực Lục* editors frequently remark that they do not know the surnames of the most powerful officials serving under Trăn, such as *Văn Nhung*, *Gia Du*, and *Hòa Tín*, which appear to be the titles of new figures not related to the established elite families. *Thực Lục*, 96-104; Phan Thanh Hải, "Về Những Văn Thư"; Kawamoto Kuniye, "The international outlook," Li Tana, *Nguyễn Cochinchina*, 95-98.

<sup>118</sup> *Tap Lục*, I:36a-b.

was required due to ritual observance of filial piety, but this is not consistent with the actions of the previous or subsequent monarchs. The *Thực Lục* describes the *Minh* Prince continuing reforms in the court, constructing a Temple of Literature (*Văn Miếu*) in 1692; he had 146 children. The *Liệt Truyện* repeats again this number of children, listing 38.<sup>119</sup>

In the *Tạp Lục*, the princes Huệ and Thông rebelled, but were captured and killed in 1694. The *Liệt Truyện* describes them as sons of the first crown prince, Diễm, who had died ten years earlier.

A series of events at the court in the 1680s led to the rise of an anti-Christian faction with support from a new king, but the specifics of the transition are not well documented, since Christian observers encountered difficulties in the court in the years surrounding the transition, and the Historical Office texts appear to have internal inconsistencies which suggest some elements have been removed. One aspect of the Historical Office account, the move of the capital to Phú Xuân, may be confirmed by 18th century reports in which the capital seems to be located there.

### New Forces Intervene in Cambodia

Ayutthaya's 1688 crisis was accompanied by a battle between Cambodian kings, one supported by Cochinchinese troops with no clear connection to the court. *Tōsen* reports describe Guangnan sending troops to attack Cambodia, deposing its king, and returning. Huang Jian's group of Chinese or possibly Cochinchinese, outside any direct state control, supported one Cambodian king in Saigon to depose a Siam-backed king; there is some indication that a "Guangnan king" sent troops to join them, but the nature of this assistance varies in different reports. In the Nguyễn texts, Huang Jian is replaced by Chen Chang-shuan's Longmen guard acting under the command of a general sent by

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<sup>119</sup> His son would take the title *Thái Phó Đĩnh* Grand Duke immediately on his death in 1725; there is no indication of any delay or change after a mourning period at that time. His grandson would take the title *Thái Bảo Hiếu* Duke on taking the throne in 1738, and only one year later was proclaimed *Thái Phó* Grand Duke, after the completion of his new capital. On the other hand, it is certainly clear that filial piety was an important moral value for Chu and the court at this time. Several of the listed 38 children have names omitted. *Thực Lục*, 104-105, 139, 148-149.

the king. In a final transformation, the *Thục Lục* removes the king in Saigon, describing an invasion of Oudong by forces sent from the court.

By late 1684, Genoud reports a king present again at the “the Court of Cambodia,” but states Christians fled to the forest and to Siam for safety in the following years. Ayutthaya was said to be at war against “the Cochinchinese and the people of Laos” (Narai sent 5,000 troops overland, escorting the priest to safety). The eastern king also arrived in Ayutthaya to seek aid; Gervaise writes in late 1685 that Narai prepared to send 18,000 troops, including several western galleys and 60 warships, to the western king.<sup>120</sup>

A 1688 battle in Cambodia is confirmed by Constance Phaulkon, who reports that after Narai’s death, the Cambodian king was deposed by a younger brother of the king waging war from the forest (with Cochinchinese support), but the king supported by Siam was restored. The king of Cochinchina demanded that the younger brother cease fighting, without effect.

In a 1689 *tōsen* report, a Second and Third King had been fighting since 1685. Huang Jian (Huang Zhen), with a few hundred itinerant pirates, had blocked the river and occupied Cambodia, driving out the king. The Second King received several thousand Guangnan reinforcements with 60 or 70 ships and defeated Huang Jian and then the Third King, taking two thirds of the country while the Third King escaped to the mountains. A few hundred of Huang Jian’s men were sent to Guangnan; there is no mention in any report of Huang Jian being connected to Chen Chang-shuan (who appears in later unconnected reports).<sup>121</sup>

Another *tōsen* report in the same year gave the Cambodian kings Sinicized names: Liu Ren and Liu Shu, who tried to usurp the throne at the end of 1688. (The Chakri Dynasty rulers also had Chinese ancestry and used the surname Trịnh/Zheng in communications with the Qing. Ch’en Ching-ho speculates that Sūr was Liu Shu and Nan was Liu Ren.) Huang Jian occupied the harbor with 500 men, supporting Liu Shu. The Guangdong governor, fearing this conflict would endanger regional (and his own)

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<sup>120</sup> A British merchant arriving in Siam in 1684 was advised to go upriver well above Bangkok to conduct his trade, due to the threat of Cambodian pirates in the lower Chaopraya; the Siamese king reportedly also feared a sudden assault by Chinese ships. *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*, Vol. 13, 463. Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 376-398.

<sup>121</sup> Ishii, *Ibid*.

security, asked the Guangnan king asking him to punish Huang Jian; Guangnan troops pretended to attack Liu Ren, as a trick to kill him. Six thousand men on 70 ships arrived, but Huang Jian attacked them, and both Huang Jian and Liu Shu escaped to the mountains, while Liu Ren resided in the capital. In a third 1689 report, Chinese in Cambodia reported that the “Great King” was in the mountains, while the Second King and the Chinese controlled the coast.<sup>122</sup>

Chen Chang-shuan is first mentioned by a *tōsen* captain in 1690, a period when these reports indicate Chinese and particularly Teochiu influence rising in both Siam and Cambodia; some Chinese ships were commissioned by the court of Ayutthaya, while others were connected to semi-autonomous Teochiu officials. Chang-shuan was a retainer of Ming loyalist admiral Li Wuguan, harassing ships along the Tiền Giang with his own small fleet. He supported the Second King, but after that king was driven to the mountains by Siam, he blocked the river again, with about 500 men on six or seven ships. By 1691, the kings reconciled, and several thousand Chinese lived in Cambodia, with many serving as officials. A 1692 *tōsen* report calls the Second King a cousin of the Great King, who fled without fighting; the Second King in 1691, and two reports confirm the infant son who was taken to Guangnan. One 1693 *tōsen*, however, denied that the dead Second King had joined Chen Chang-shuan, and others report that by 1692 the two kings had made peace, and Siam’s troops departed.<sup>123</sup>

Reports of a 1688 attack on Cambodia also appear in the *Diễn Chí*, *Tạp Lục*, *Thông Chí*, and *Thực Lục*, which describe an alliance of Longmen guard and Nha Trang forces, although whether they acted alone, or even against the interests of the court, is not clear. Yang Yan-di first appears in the *Diễn Chí*. He and his men were given permission to stay at the river mouth of Mỹ Tho, on the Tiền Giang, only in 1687. This is stated unequivocally to take place eight years after his 1679 arrival in Danang.

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<sup>122</sup> Almost a century later, Taksin, whose father was from Chaozhou (Teochiu), would also use Chinese names and royal titles, as did his successor Rama I. Ibid.; Mak Pheoun, 399-404. Ishii, Ibid.; Chen, “Qing-chu Zheng Cheng-gong,” Part Two;

<sup>123</sup> The Teochiu officials are said to have exploited a silver mine for years without the Qing administration discovering it. The *tōsen* report also noted Japanese officials involved in Siam’s commerce and the regulation of its “tributary states.” Near the same time there are reports of migrants leaving Champa and residing in Guangnan, but then traveling to the Cambodian coast for commerce. Ishii, *The Junk Trade*, 52-77, 167-175.



In the *Diễn Chí* story, Huang Jian (Hoàng Tiên) killed Yan-di the following year, 1688, and took command of his troops, then proclaimed himself supreme commander of the Longmen guard, constructing pontoon bridges and stretching chains to obstruct passage near the river mouth. Huang Jian harassed Cambodians, including ambassadors bringing tribute, and forced the second king Nan to provide wood for ships, seizing silver if wood were not delivered, and demanding ransom for Cambodian hostages. The first king Thu hated the *Hiên* Prince for allowing the Longmen forces to reside here; he planned to rebel against the court, kill Huang Jian and take back Cambodian land. An *oknha* named Hà, holding the office *Cống Sa*, urged him to kill Huang Jian first, then Nan; he blockaded the river at Phnom Penh, Gò Bích and Cầu Nam, and a river called Lạch Cá, then built warships and forged cannons, taking merchants from Quảng Nam hostage.<sup>124</sup>

Nan sent word to the court, which debated the best course of action. The *Minh Lễ* Marquis wanted to send the *Thắng Long* Marquis, a captain in Trấn Biên Encampment at Nha Trang, who was familiar with the country, as commander, with Huang Jian leading the vanguard. The king agreed, but was later persuaded to change his order by a nephew of the *Vạn Long* Marquis, deputy general in Trấn Biên, who is characterized in the novel as a pathetic and unheroic figure motivated by greed. The king ordered the *Vạn Long* Marquis to instead, and his men, including a *Văn Vị* and others, left from Trấn Biên in early 1689; Nan came to meet *Vạn Long* at Mỹ Tho and they prepared for battle. The outcome of this battle cannot be known from the surviving text, since the *Diễn Chí* cuts off suddenly at this point.<sup>125</sup>

The the *Tap Lục* echoes the *Diễn Chí* report of Yan-di's move, but moves it to 1679, claiming that Phúc Tân had "immediately" ordered Yan-di to Cambodia upon his first arrival in Danang, and instructed the Cambodian king to give them land at the river mouth at Mỹ Tho; each year, they were to pay tribute to the court. In 1688, the same year as the *Diễn Chí*, Longmen general Huang Jian killed Yang Yan-di, and then began raiding Cambodia. The king Thu built defenses at Phnom Penh, Cầu Nam and Gò Bích, blocked the river, and built warships, forged cannon, forbidding merchants to pass. Nan

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<sup>124</sup> *Diễn Chí*, 622-630.

<sup>125</sup> *Diễn Chí*, *ibid.*

reported this to the deputy general of Nha Trang Encampment in Trấn Biên, which sent the *Vạn Lang* Marquis along with the *Thắng Long* Marquis, *Tân Lễ* Marquis and *Văn Phái*. Huang Jian was to lead their vanguard force, but on arriving at the Tiên Giang, Huang Jian fled, and then died. *Vạn Long* surrounded Phnom Penh, and Thu promised to surrender and pay tribute. *Vạn Long* withdrew to wait for an entire year, during which many of his men died of disease. His officers secretly reported this to the court, so in the winter of 1689, a year later, the court sent a son of *Chiêu Vũ* (Nguyễn Hữu Dật), the *Hòa Lương* Marquis, to replace him, along with the *Hòa Nghĩa* Marquis and *Thắng Sơn* Marquis. They brought troops from the region from Phú Yên to Phan Rí, capturing *Vạn Long*. The king made *Vạn Long* a commoner, stripped of all ranks or titles; and *Văn Phái* was demoted. In 1690, there was a successful attack on Cambodia, though the *Tap Lục* does specify the commander; an unnamed local chief was made the Cambodian king.<sup>126</sup>

The *Thông Chí* repeats this story, calling Huang Jian Yang Yan-di's deputy. In addition to these two, it adds a second commander, Chen Sheng-cai (Trần Thắng Tài), which it calls commander of the Leizhou (Cao Lô Liêm) forces, together with his deputy, Chen An-bing (Trần An Bình). Since their customs were different than those of the court, the king sent them to live in the distant region of Đông Phố (an annotation notes this is an old name for Gia Định). They were allowed to remain there, and they kept their old titles, and were awarded high ranks. Huang Jian rebelled against Yang Yan-di, killing him; Thu prepared for war, and the second king Nan in Saigon reported this. The *Vạn Long* Marquis, deputy general of Thái Khang Encampment, a new element (the *Diễn Chí* and *Tap Lục* had referred to both Nha Trang and Trấn Biên), was sent with the *Thắng Long* Marquis, *Tân Lễ* Marquis, and the *Vị Xuyên* Marquis. Their mission is described for the first time as opening up the border region. Arriving at Rạch Gầm, near Mỹ Tho, they pretended to give Huan Jian the role of leading the vanguard, then pursued him on the river; Huang Jian fled and died. The new figure earlier called Chan An-binh, the commander of Leizhou forces, now referred to as *Thống Tài* Marquis, then took command of all the Longmen troops, and attacked Thu, who withdrew to Vũng Long (Oudong), sending a woman, Chiêm Luật, to surrender and promise tribute. The *Vạn Long* Marquis pulled back to garrison in Saigon, but Thu failed to pay tribute by the next

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<sup>126</sup> *Tap lục*, I:35a-36a.

year, and an epidemic spread among the troops. Again, Nguyễn Hữu Dật's son, here named as Nguyễn Hữu Hào, was sent to replace him, and chose the best troops of Phú Yên, Thái Khang and Bình Thuận. The *Vạn Long* Marquis was made a commoner and in this version, *Vị Xuyên* was demoted. Nguyễn Hữu Hào attacked Cambodia in 1690, capturing Thu and bringing him to Saigon, where he later died of illness. Nan also died, and his son Im (according to Mak Phoeun, Kaev Hva III) was made king at Gò Bích. The most dramatic departure from the earlier texts is the *Thông Chí* suggestion that Nan resided in Saigon as a tributary ruler.<sup>127</sup>

The *Thực Lục* repeats the *Thông Chí*, but the *Thông Chí*'s commander Chen Sheng-cai is removed from the story, and replaced with Chen Chang-shuan. They cleared land in Đồng Nai, built markets, and traded with Chinese, Westerners, Japanese, and *Chà Và* merchants. *Hán* culture spread throughout Đông Phố. *Hán* cannot in this usage be a reference to Vietnamese people, since these men are clearly Ming loyalists.<sup>128</sup>

In the *Thực Lục*, Thu was attacked for refusing to pay tribute to the court, not revolt by Nan. Nan learned of Thu's preparations for war and fled to Trấn Biên. This account incorporates details from the *Diễn Chí* that are dropped from the *Tạp Lục* and reverts to calling the *Vạn Long* Marquis the deputy general of Trấn Biên, not Thái Khang, Encampment. The *Vạn Long* Marquis becomes Mai Vạn Long; likewise, the *Minh Lễ* Marquis is Tống Đức Minh. On Long's advice, the king sent Trấn Biên officer Nguyễn Thăng Long, son of Thái Khang Commander Nguyễn Dương Lâm, who knew the territory well, to trap Huang Jian. Long's nephew requested that Long, almost 60, should command instead. Long did not immediately kill Huang Jian; king Thu and *oknha* Da Trình sent a woman, Chiêm Dao Luật, to Huang Jian's camp to convince him to make peace (the *Thông Chí* only mentions her after Huang Jian's death).<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> *Thông Chí*, *ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> The meaning of the term *Chà Và* is debatable, but suggests Muslims or Malay origin. In my view, Dương Ngạn Dịch is not named in the *tōsen* reports. The *Thực Lục* also describes the two kings, Thu and Nan, at peace until *Hiền* King's death, an occasion they supposedly marked by jointly sending the court an ambassador, *Oknha* Đa Thi Na. *Tạp lục*, I:35a-5; *Thông chí*, III:4b-7b; *Thực Lục*, *ibid.*; Mak Phouen, *Histoire*, 368-370; Farrington and Dhiravat, *English Factory*, 1349-67; Ishii, *The Junk Trade*, *ibid.*; *Diễn Chí*, 622.

<sup>129</sup> Nguyễn Đình Hùng, a descendant of Nguyễn Hoàng's adopted father (and perhaps, Mạc Kính Điển's unnamed wife), was called Mai Đình Hùng in the *Liệt Truyện*, and was said to be a senior military commander in the Trịnh battles in 1630, but Mai Đình Hùng had no children recorded by the Historical Office. Nguyễn Đình clan officers are prevalent in the *Thực Lục* account of the 18th century, but these

The *Thực Lục* describes a soldier in Mai Vạn Long's army, *Văn Thông* from Quảng Ngãi, who spoke several languages. He told Long about a renowned old man in the Longmen guard surnamed Trương, who Huang Jian desired to meet. *Văn Thông* went pretending to be Trương; he told Huang Jian that since the Longmen troops came to the south, the King of Heaven (*Thiên Vương*) had made him (“Trương”) an officer the Trần Biên commander; he viewed Huang Jian as a friendly neighbor. Huang Jian went straight into Long's ambush; he escaped, but Long killed his family.<sup>130</sup>

The *Thực Lục* names Chen Chang-shuan, not Chan An-bing, as general under Dương Ngạn Địch, here leading a separate force. He blocked the river and held Phnom Penh, while Thu held Gò Bích; Mai Vạn Long's forces withdrew due to heavy floods. Long took Thu's first emissary hostage, but Thu then sent the woman Chiêm Dao Luật, who offered gold, claiming earlier tribute had been stolen by Huang Jian. Long was suspicious, but his ships could not move against the current, and his officers did not know the area well. They decided to stop fighting and settle down; they planted crops and ceased to prepare for battle. This was reported to the court, and Nguyễn Hữu Hào, was sent to replace Long with additional troops from Phú Yên, Thái Khang and Phan Rí. As before, Long made a commoner, and Văn Vĩ was demoted.<sup>131</sup>

Mak Phoeun suggests that Thu is Sūr (Jayajettā III). Circa 1684, in *P57*, Sūr controlled the west, apparently up to Phnom Penh; Nan ruled from Srei Santhor with support from Chen Changkoun, and controlled Sadec, Saigon, Bà Rịa and Đồng Nai, using the seal of the office of *Ubharoyāj*. Two high court officials defected to Srei Santhor in 1688; one was Nūr, and the other Tan Chong Ea. Nan sent Chen Changkoun to invade Oudong, spearheaded by “Nūr” and Tan Chong Ea, but they were defeated. New support from Cochinchina arrived to join Nan at Srei Santhor, but were driven all the way back to Cochinchina again. In *P57*, Nan died in exile in Cochinchina, although later chronicles place him at Srei Santhor.<sup>132</sup>

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Nguyễn Đình may have been a different clan originating in Nghệ An. Nguyễn Phúc An, who appears to have led the campaigns of 1658, also likely had sons whose names are omitted in Historical Office records. *Thực Lục*, 99-101.

<sup>130</sup> *Thực Lục*, *ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> *Thực Lục*, 101-102.

<sup>132</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, *ibid.*

The Ming loyalist settlers were not a unified force arriving under Yang Yan-di. A part of the Longmen forces were in Quảng Nam circa 1687. When the king paying tribute died, his young heir may have been taken to Cochinchina, though *tōsen* reports are not conclusive. An evolution of the Nguyễn sources may be discerned, in which later elements can be distinguished from elements appearing in early versions of this episode. There is no evidence for a real life association between the figures Yang Yan-di and Chen Chang-shuan, since their arrival together is not part of the original story, and appears only in 1847, when Chen Sheng-cai is omitted to make room for Chang-shuan. In early versions, Yan Yen-di moves to the Mekong region in 1688, and only in later versions does his arrival appear to date to 1679. Initially, in these stories, he moves to Mỹ Tho, then to Đồng Nai, before being killed. In some versions of this story, a Cambodian second king resides in Saigon, and the commanders who lead the attack are from Trấn Biên or Nha Trang/Thái Khang, though Nha Trang and Trấn Biên are initially described as if they are the same location.

#### A *Chan* Buddhist Court

Persecution of Christians reached a peak with the royal patronage of *Chan* Buddhism under the *Minh* Prince, from roughly circa 1691 until 1725, but was reversed in the next reign, when a an anti-Buddhist king took the throne. Labbé confirms rising influence of Chinese *Chan* monks, writing that some time before 1698, a young, superstitious king summoned from China and patronized more than one bonze; two of his cousins, one described as the greatest influence in the court, were enemies of Christianity. Cappony also writes, in 1700, that a king devoted to Chinese Buddhism built a pagoda inside his palace and invited a Chinese monk to live in a specially built residence. Further Buddhist symbols in the court are described in the *Thực Lục* and *Tạp Lục* in 1710 or 1714, followed by major symbolic changes which may correspond to the relocation of the capital to Phú Xuân. *MEP* sources describe Chinese monks continuing to live in the

royal palace, with the king under the sway of an anti-Christian uncle, at least until that uncle died around 1712.<sup>133</sup>

The earliest concrete evidence of such a change is a Guangdong bell, held in a Guangdong museum together with a 1607 bell of the destroyed *Caodong* Changshou An monastery, yet bearing a *Linji* inscription:

On a favorable day of the 10th moon of the 14th year, *quy dâu*, of the *Chinh Hòa* reign [1693]. The bonze disciple of the thirty-third generation of *Linji*, [transmitter of] the lamp of origin, who received the title of *Nam Hoàng Quốc Sư*, saw himself assigning the order to cast [a bell] and to take care of the Royal Nursemaid [*quốc nữ*], Nguyễn Thị Đạo.<sup>134</sup>

The 1852 *Liệt Truyện* describes such a Royal Nursemaid. According to her biography, the woman honored as the *Nghĩa* Prince's queen, one of the *Nghĩa* Prince's many wives since before took the throne, gave birth to the future king, but the boy was then given to a concubine, "Nguyễn Gia phi," who raised him. The birth mother, according to this biography, died at age 44 in the spring of 1696.

Royal patronage of *Chan* Buddhism was not limited to the southern court. Around this time, interestingly, Lê Hy Tông's Royal Nursemaid in Tonkin reportedly funded the restoration of many pagodas centered in Mạc territory in Hải Dương and Quảng Ninh; in 1678, Lê Hy Tông ordered all Buddhist monks out of the capital, including all members of the venerable *Linji* sect, retaining only a single Hải Dương monk, 37th generation of the *Caodong* school popular among Cantonese and Japanese merchants, who was offered, but declined, official titles. One element open to question is the respective roles of two sects of *Chan* Buddhism, the dynamic *Caodong* (*Tào Động*) and the ancient yet by this time relatively stagnant *Linji* (*Lâm Tế*). *Caodong* was expanding rapidly, by the early eighteenth century becoming the single largest school of Buddhism in Japan and seeing growth in both Tonkin and Cochinchina. This rapid international adoption has been

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<sup>133</sup> Cadière, "Les Residences de Rois."

<sup>134</sup> Claudine Salmon, "Opacite du commerce entre Canton et Hue: Une mysterieuse affaire de cloche (1693)," *BEFEO* 92 (2005).

attributed to *Caodong* priests' willingness to absorb local customs and beliefs, appealing to society at large, rather than to esoteric elements such as meditation.<sup>135</sup>

Two versions of a funerary stele honoring a 33rd generation *Linji* master existed in the first decade of the 20th century, when Cadière completed a study of this monk. At that time, he wrote, the “bottom six lines” of the earlier of the two steles were “completely illegible.” The later copy, which Cadière assumes is faithful, was beside the earlier stele; while there is little reason to doubt Cadière’s description, the two remain at the site today, and if the earlier copy were partially legible in Cadière’s time, is now completely illegible. The replica is dated the tenth year, fourth month, and eighth day of the *Bảo Thái* reign (May 5th, 1732). This is inconsistent with the reign period in the late and inaccurate *Cuong Mục*, which begins the *Vĩnh Khánh* reign of the subsequent Lê king on the first day of the fourth month); Cadière suggests that the southern court simply had not yet learned of the new Lê reign which had begun only recently. This seems unlikely as news of the death of a king would spread internationally very quickly. There is no unambiguous evidence, for that matter, that the court used Lê reign titles in this period, particularly for non-diplomatic purposes. At the top of the replica stele are the words “given by patent of the sovereign,” with a seal comprised of the characters reading Seal of the King of Đại Việt (*Đại Việt Quốc Vương Chí Án*); This is not a part of the main body of the inscription, and was not an element of the original; it was added at a later date.<sup>136</sup>

Cadière’s interpretation of the stele relies heavily on the six final lines that he himself claims were completely illegible in the original. Without the information added by those final lines, the text is a quite general, praising Buddhism as the state religion. This is followed, as Cadière notes, with a few lines on the biography of a monk, which are slightly different in the two stelae. The monk is said to to have entered a monastery at 19 years of age. The two stele give different years of death: the earlier states he died 51 years after his arrival; the replica amends this to 50 years without explanation. Thus, some dates in the stele, according to Cadière, are changed from the original, although

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<sup>135</sup> Thích Thanh Từ. *Thiền Sư Việt Nam* (Ho Chi Minh City: Thành Hội Phật Giáo TPHCM, 1992); Jiang Wu, *Enlightenment in Dispute: the Reinvention of Chan Buddhism in Seventeenth-Century China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>136</sup> Leopold Cadière, "La Pagode Quac-An: Le Fondateur" *BAVH* 2:2 (1914) :147-161.

Cadière attempts to explain this discrepancy while maintaining his assertion that the text of the replica, including six illegible lines, must (otherwise) be an identical copy.<sup>137</sup>

According to the 1852 *Liệt Truyện*, the 33rd generation of the *Linji (Lâm Tế)* sect was a Chinese monk Yuanzhao (Nguyễn Thiệu). Cadière notes that the *Liệt Truyện* gives Yuanzhao the birth year of *mậu tý*, 1648 and claims he arrived in Quy Ninh (Quy Nhơn) in 1665 to establish the Thập Tháp-Di Đà pagoda. The Historical Office record has a fundamental conflict with this stele, since if the birthdate of 1648 were accepted, according to the stele he would have arrived significantly later than 1666, the year he became a monk in that version. His year of death is given by the Historical Office as *mậu thân* 1728; if it were true that he had remained 51 years, he would have arrived in 1677. There is no unambiguous corroborating evidence of this biography before Trương Đăng Quế's *Tự Đức* era historical office. A small stupa near Huế honors a monk called Yuanzhao with the posthumous name Hành Đoan, a supreme religious official of the Quốc Âm Temple, honored with a royal decree. However, that stupa is dated in the twelfth month of *nhâm tý*, which is consistent with its construction in *nhâm tý* 1852, the year that the Historical Office biography of Yuanzhao was released. Cadière remarks in 1914 that the stupa did not show signs of age or wear, yet suggests that it nevertheless *might* date to either the *nhâm tý* 1732 or 1792; this hope reflects his desire to discover ancient artifacts, since few structures exist in Huế from earlier periods.

Since the funerary stele would have been well known to the Historical Office editors in early 19th century Huế, it is difficult to believe that this discrepancy was the result of confusion or ignorance. Perhaps the Historical Office was knowingly asserting a narrative of the monk's life that differed radically from that on the stele. However, it is possible that the name Yuanzhao did not appear on the original stele. The portion of the stele consistent between both versions (according to Cadière) continues with poetic references to Buddhist spirituality, but no biographical information. This is followed by six lines that Cadière believed to appear in the original stele, but were found in the replica. Since a legible original stele apparently no longer exists, direct comparison is not

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<sup>137</sup> Cadière offers the explanation that the monk must have reported his arrival date as a *tý* year, without specifying in which cycle (1665, 1677, or 1689) he actually arrived. However, this explanation is not consistent with numerous other problems with the dating of Yuanzhao's biography and the obvious fact that the 1852 Historical Office would have consulted the funerary stele as it existed in 1852.



possible. It appears to be this “missing” text only that names the *Minh* Prince as dedicating the inscription, and describes Yuanzhao by the posthumous name Hạnh Đoan, Master with Right Life.

The travel narrative attributed to the *Chan Caodong (Tào Động)* monk Dashan (Thích Đại Sán, or Thạch Liêm) in 1696 places the palace in Thuận Hóa.<sup>138</sup> On Dashan’s arrival, escorted to Thuận Hóa from Cù Lao Chàm by a royal barge, he resided in the Thiên Lâm pagoda. This pagoda is thought to be in Huế, but the Historical Office could not agree on its location. The text describes a king’s residence with a Buddhist design, surrounded by bamboo and artillery, but no fortified walls; an influential queen mother had a second residence a league away. This does not match the early 1670s descriptions of the capital where the son of an influential prince was baptized, suggesting a new location in a region where the king’s maternal relatives were most powerful. This is the first text in which the king is cited claiming his ancestors (without a surname) were from Đông Kinh. The king is named in passing in a single passage as Phúc Chu; however, a preface purports to be written by “King [*Quốc Vương*] of Đại Việt Nguyễn Phúc Chu,” a detail obviously added by a later editor, since the monarch would hardly name himself so bluntly in an actual royal dedication.<sup>139</sup>

The authenticity of the *Hải Ngoại Ký Sự*, or at least the provenance of surviving copies, is open to question. One clear problem is that the *Tạp Lục* does not mention Dashan’s visit at all. The *Thực Lục* does not report his arrival either, nor does it mention the Buddhist lineage or religious titles allegedly claimed by the king in that text. Two annotations do mention Dashan, as if later editors had access to the *Hải Ngoại Ký Sự*, but the original Historical Office authors had no knowledge of him. The queen mother in the *Liệt Truyện* dies at about the time of Dashan’s visit, yet his text describes an active queen

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<sup>138</sup> This text states that Hội An was now part of Thăng Hoa (having been absorbed into Thuận Hóa under the early Lê). Launay, II, 435; Thích Đại Sán, *Hải Ngoại Ký Sự*, 30-40; Charles Wheeler, “Buddhism in the Re-ordering of an Early Modern World: Chinese Missions to Cochinchina in the Seventeenth Century,” *Journal of Global History* 2 (2007): 303–324; Duncan Ryuken Williams, *The Other Side of Zen* (2004, Princeton University Press).

<sup>139</sup> Two 19th century versions of the *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Dư Đại Chí* place this pagoda in different districts; there is a restored “Thiên Lâm” pagoda in Huế, but its stele naming a head monk of Dashan’s lineage, dated 1702, has been tampered with so that the original text can no longer be seen. Nguyễn Đắc Xuân, “Chùa Thiên Lâm Chông Chặt Những Bí Ẩn” [Mysteries of the Thiên Lâm Pagoda], ms.

mother, suggesting the maternal relatives running this Buddhist court are related to the Royal Nursemaid.<sup>140</sup>

In Dashan's text, fellow travellers debated whether call on the king at Thuận Hóa first, or Hội An first, before proceeding to the other place. Later, he describes a route open to elephants called Lĩnh Ngãi, or the Hải Văn Pass, which allowed travel between Hội An and the court in a day; the author urges construction of a road linking them.

British East India Company special envoy Thomas Bowyear arrived at roughly the same time, and also travelled to the court from Faifo. While customs officers unloaded his cargo, he fell ill and could not accompany it, which was carried (by water) to the court without him. When he was well, he writes of “parting from *Foy Foe*, travelling along the Sea-side, and over the Great Mountains, though there is a much nearer way, but prohibited, for what reasons I cannot fathom.” He arrived at the court five days later, longer than the typical three days cited by earlier travellers (his return, encumbered with trade goods, took eight days).

To reach Phú Xuân, Bowyear would have either travelled northwest in a straight line along the coast, crossing three high mountain overlooking the sea, or else taken a circuitous path through the western mountains. If the first were the case, there is no way he could have concluded that there was a second, much shorter route to the court. His description suggests the final destination was not near the sea, since it is unclear why he would undertake such a trip on foot, alone, over the Hải Văn Pass rather than by ship (as Dashan did); also Bowyear does not mention relying on elephants. Bowyear's complaint of an unavailable shorter route is echoed by Flory in 1730, who complained that the shortest route to court, via the Cu Đê River west of Tourane, was no longer allowed. That route would cross the mountains much farther west, suggesting a possible alternate location of the king's palace. Bowyear also references a river from which the king sends his ships near the bay at Tourane.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Dashan is mentioned only obliquely in two annotations to the *Thực Lục*. In a later passage of the *Thực Lục*, two men were sent to the Qing emperor bearing gifts treasure from the Quảng Nam king to seek formal recognition in 1702, which was refused. An annotation mentions they were disciples of Đại Sán. In a second annotation remarking on the purchase of religious texts in 1714, it is noted that Đại Sán received gifts used in restoration of the Trường Thọ temple in Quảng Đông. *Thực Lục*, 115, 130.

<sup>141</sup> Flory's preferred (but, he claims, banned) route followed the Cu Đê past Khe Ram, a mountain valley west of Danang. Dalrymple, *Oriental Repertory*, 75-91; Launay, III, 8.

Like Dashan, Bowyear's description suggests that a queen mother played a pivotal role; four maternal uncles dominated the court, three near the palace and commanding its guard. (Dashan Bowyear's letter describes a powerful queen mother in Hue, without describing her death, is dated "Faifo, April 30, 1696," or the time of the birth mother's death in the *Liệt Truyện*, so again, he may have been referring to the Royal Nursemaid.) The king was deeply involved in trade. Bowyear requested that he issue his royal chop for two *Sinja*, clearly royally sponsored merchant ships, to trade freely in Champa, Cambodia and Siam, which suggests a kind of vermillion seal trade remained in force. The king personally handled their commercial negotiations. Bowyear was explicit that Cochinchina was not at war at that time, despite the revolts described in the *Đàng Trong* texts.<sup>142</sup>

Bowyear calls the court Ding Claye; Cadière suggests this was Dinh Chính, the main encampment, thought to be another name for the court at Phú Xuân, but there is no reason that *Chính* would be written Claye. Gemelli Careri, in a 1696 publication based on Jesuit reports, suggests a court still in Quảng Nam, stating that the king lived in *Champelo*, a day's journey from the sea. Champelo is called the "Capital of Cochinchina that the Chinese call *Sayfo*," on a river south of Taran [Tourane]; from Tourane, "another river, practicable with the small vessels, also led to Champelo." (This river, no longer navigable, was eclipsed when the *Minh Mạng* Emperor dug the Vĩnh Điện channel for commercial traffic between the Thu Bồn and Danang.)<sup>143</sup>

It is unclear whether the king Shu met is describing the state of affairs in Tonkin or Cochinchina; the VOC had withdrawn from Cochinchina's affairs at the time of Shu's visit, leaving us with no independent confirmation of the state of political affairs there, but they describe a protracted revolt by a Tonkin prince a few years earlier. This apparently new court was dominated by the relatives of an influential Buddhist queen mother, who had a second residence one league distant from the king's palace.

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<sup>142</sup> Bowyear might have been unaware of revolts, or omitted them, hoping to establish a British factory. At the same time, there is indirect evidence of a war with Đông Kinh in 1696; the decision to close the British factory in Tonkin that year was attributed to difficulties resulting from a war between Tonkin and Cochinchina.

<sup>143</sup> Careri calls the country *Tlaon-Kuang* (Trần Quảng?), with provinces *Moy-din*, *Dincat*, *Kegué*, *Tlenquan* and *Fumoy*. Cadière, "Gemilli Careri."

In the *Tap Lục*, Phúc Chu sent tribute to Guangdong in 1702, to ask for recognition from the Qing. The Guangdong governor supported this. In the *Thực Lục*, Dashan had two Cantonese disciples who became court officials, and were sent to Guangdong in that year with a large tribute gift for the Qing to seek formal recognition. (A Siamese tribute ship, blown off course, was repaired and provisioned, and a group associated with Trần Triệt – who is not described – had been sent along with them.) The Qing emperor refused because Guangnan had committed aggression against Champa and Cambodia and (perhaps predictably for a Lê text) because the Lê remained in power.<sup>144</sup>

The next dramatic change in the *Tap Lục* occurs in 1714, when it notes that the king had a bell carved with the words “King of Đại Việt” (*Đại Việt Quốc Vương*). The *Thực Lục* also describes the bell, but contradicts the *Tap Lục* on the date of its production, stating that it was cast in 1710, which is the date inscribed on the bell itself. It states that the king cast a bell at the Thiên Mụ pagoda, weighing 3,125 *cân* and personally wrote the inscription on the bell. The bell in the Thiên Mụ is today housed in a structure apparently built in 1844, three years before the *Thực Lục* was released, along with a second, similar bell dating from the 19th century. In association with the bell is a stele purportedly erected by Nguyễn Phúc Chu in 1715, asserting his legitimacy in verse (it is unclear if Nguyễn Phúc Chu’s name was written along with the verse), along with a stone turtle.

The inscription associated with the bell casts some doubt on its authenticity:

Lord (*Chúa* [主]) of Đại Việt Nguyễn Phúc Chu, the 30th generation in the lineage of the *Động Thượng*, with the religious name Hung Long, cast this bell weighing 3,285 *cân* and placed it in the Thiên Mụ pagoda as an offering to the *Tam Bảo*. [The king] prays for winds and rain to cease, the land to be wealthy and the people at peace, and the whole world to be enlightened. The sixth year of the *Vĩnh Thạnh* reign, *Phật Đản* day, fourth month, *Canh Dần* [1710].<sup>145</sup>

The use of the word *Chúa*, which is not found in any formal communications by the southern court, contradicts the *Tap Lục*, which states that Chu’s title of King (*Vương*) was inscribed on the bell, and dates the episode to four years later, in 1714. The actual

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<sup>144</sup> The *Thực Lục* offers here an annotation explaining that the country was called Guangnan by the Qing simply because merchants came to trade in Quảng Nam. As elsewhere, though, the *Thực Lục* minimizes the extent that Quảng Nam was a political center, so there is no reason why this explanation of the usage of Guangnan should be accepted uncritically. *Tap lục*, I:37a.

<sup>145</sup> *Tap Lục*, I:36a-37b; *Thực Lục*, *ibid.*

bell, which is housed in a structure dating from the 19th century, might be a replica or a forgery, particularly since the use of the given name Chu in place of a formal royal title is an unusual feature, and would most logically such a royal project would use a royal title. If this bell were authentic, this would be the first evidence of a king named Nguyễn. It would suggest that the king not only considered himself a benefactor of Buddhism, but claimed an orthodox lineage as the direct successor to the 29th generation monk Động Thượng. The implication is that this is Dashan, who was of the *Caodong* lineage, although another Guangdong bell dated 1693 is reportedly commissioned by *Linji* monk Nguyễn Thiều.

An unusual passage here describes a *Lại Bộ* (Ministry of Civil Service), which would have given Phú Xuân the first trappings of an imperial capital with one of the classical Six Boards four decades before they are established (according to these texts under Nguyễn Phúc Khoát. In addition to its anachronistic appearance, the name of the official called *Lại Bộ* in 1709, Qua Tuệ Thư, is highly unusual. Qua (Ge) is never a Vietnamese surname; this Minister was Chinese in origin. Qua Tuệ Thư created a new seal, which according to the *Thực Lục* honored the Nguyễn lord of the country of Đại Việt (*Đại Việt Quốc Nguyễn Chúa Vĩnh Trấn Chi Bảo*). The seal is found carved on the stele at the Thiên Mụ Pagoda, yet the *Tạp Lục*, whose purported author had a great vested interest in this subject, does not mention it at all. Had the stele or its seal originated in the early 18th century, it would have been known to a 1774 Trịnh scholar in Phú Xuân determined to research the regions' political history.<sup>146</sup>

Another passage in the *Thực Lục* describes royal artifacts created at this time (and handed down to Nguyễn Ánh) one gold and three copper seals, as well as gold leaf books or royal genealogies (*kim sách*). (Gold leaf books were frequently issued by a king or emperor to invest a high official, tributary ruler, crown prince or ancestor and were awarded many times by the Lê Dynasty, including once to Mạc Đăng Dung, and once allegedly carried from the Lê court by Nguyễn Hoàng to honor the deceased *Minh Khang*

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<sup>146</sup> *Thực Lục*, 122; *Tạp Lục*:37a; Nguyễn Công Việt, *Ấn Chương Việt Nam Từ Thế Kỷ XV Đến Cuối Thế Kỷ XIX* (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Khoa Học Xã Hội, 2005), 290.

*Thái Vương*, Trịnh Kiểm.) The seal claimed to be passed from Nguyễn Phúc Chu to Nguyễn Ánh is said to have been subsequently lost.<sup>147</sup>

The king's devotion to Chinese Buddhism continued, and *MEP* letters continue to describe Chinese monks resident in a pagoda in the court. Increased royal patronage of *Chan* Buddhism is noted in both the *Tạp Lục* and the *Thực Lục* at this time, including a major restoration of the Thiên Mục pagoda and a royally sponsored mission to Zhejiang to purchase sacred texts for the Thiên Mục; at that time, *Upādhyāya* Dashan (Thích Đại Sán), now residing in Guangdong, was presented with rare woods as a gift from the *Minh* Prince. (It is at this time that the *Tạp Lục*, but not the *Thực Lục*, notes that Phúc Chu had a bell made with the words King of Annam.) The king began leading new state rituals at Thiên Mục; the *Thực Lục* claims that the Thuận Thành border king Kế Bà Tử also brought his sons and generals to join the *Minh* Prince in these festivals, and his that children were given the rank of Marquis. No other text confirms this new relationship between the capital and Thuận Thành.<sup>148</sup>

The willingness of *Thực Lục* compilers to compromise on the consistency of their narrative, by having a Chinese-run Ministry of Civil Service spring out of nowhere decades before the first mention of the other classical ministries is difficult to explain. The compilers seem primarily concerned with preserving the symbolic thread of a narrative in which the king creates a royal seal that was later passed down to his great-grandson, at the expense of logical consistency in that narrative.<sup>149</sup>

Although the specifics of a radical change in the court cannot be confirmed, a turning point which saw the rise of the clan called Trương Phúc in the Historical Office records, and the decline of clan called Tống Phúc, appears to have come two years after the death of the anti-Christian prime minister described by *MEP* as taking place in 1712. At that time, a new family seems to have gained power at the court, as the *Minh* Prince Phúc Chu married the daughter of Trương Phúc Phan in 1714. Phan's daughter is said to have given birth to the future *Võ* Prince in the same year.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> *Toàn Thư*, X:64b, XII:4a, 65a, XIV:18a, XVII:46a.

<sup>148</sup> *Thực Lục*, 130; *Tạp Lục*, I:37a-b.

<sup>149</sup> To speculate briefly, although the *Lại Bộ* does not appear to have been a feature of local administration in the southern court, it might be conceivable that the official Ge was from a Ming court in exile.

<sup>150</sup> Launay, II, 538.

The gift of the bell to the Royal Nursemaid, and reports by Shu Shunsui and Dashan, suggest that the Ming diaspora played a role in political upheavals in Cochinchina (as well as Tonkin) in the late 17th century. These descriptions also hint that the changing of the capital to Phú Xuân, as the *Thực Lục* claims, was in this case accurate, and there may have been a new capital, by 1696, away from earlier citadels. It is noteworthy that although Dashan reportedly resided in Quảng Nam only briefly, Chinese monks (in the *Thực Lục* and *MEP* letters) resided in the court for decades. The Buddhist images in the palace would not be removed until the next regime change in 1725, when a new monarch reportedly abandoned that faith.

### Nguyễn Hữu Cảnh and the “Gia Định Prefecture”

Reports from Nagasaki describe Cambodia at peace through most of the 1690s. There are no contemporary reports of anything resembling an attack on Cambodia by Cochinchina resulting in the seizure of Saigon. Instead, the greatest risk for passing sailors was possible attack by Chinese pirates on the lower Mekong. This is at odds with Nguyễn texts, which place the conquest of Gia Định in 1698, with the court taking control of Trấn Biên and Phiên Trấn (Biên Hòa and Saigon) in a famous passage that became a key element of the *nam tiến*.

Careri describes ongoing war in 1696 with Tonkin, but also with Cochinchina’s former possession, Champa, which had stopped paying tribute. Movement across the mountain chain dividing Cochinchina and Tonkin was now considered impossible, with Cochinchina setting an infantry of 50 thousand (said to be the better soldiers) against a Tonkin infantry double that size. Disputing accounts of earlier visitors seeing Cochinchina as independent, Careri believed it recognized the authority of the *Boua* (*Vua*) in Tonkin.

For Careri, two brothers contested Cambodia, supported by the kings of Siam and Cochinchina, one brother in the mountains and one holding a capital city of poorly constructed huts which he calls Pontaypret. (Mak Phoeun suggests that this is a reference to Banteay Pich, another name for Oudong.) *P57* describes strained relations with

Cochinchina; 5,000 Cham families, called descendants of the royal Po clan, fled Cochinchina's control by moving to Cambodia in 1692 (this is before the *Tap Lục* describes a Champa tributary). Prince Anđ Im, possibly the infant son that in *tōsen* reports went to Guangnan, was allowed to return to the capital in 1696, around the time Bowyear met both a Cambodian and a Cham ambassador.<sup>151</sup>

One captain reports that in 1698, 300 men on four ships were sent from Guangnan to Cambodia to demand unpaid tribute, threatening a military strike. Another *tōsen* describes Cambodia at peace in that year, but some kind of armed incursion into Cambodia in this year is confirmed. In 1699, a Cambodia *tōsen* reports that when entering the Cambodian port, pirates stole much of their cargo, then released them. Ships trading in Cambodia made an agreement with pirate chief Chen Chang-shuan to surrender a portion of their cargo; it was suggested this might deter ships from trading in Cambodia.<sup>152</sup>

With the final chapter of the *Diễn Chí* no longer available to us, the *Tap Lục* is the first text to describe the creation of Gia Định, which it describes as the extension of the court's formal administrative structure to incorporate the people of this fertile region:

In the *mậu dần* year, the 19th year, the *Chương Cơ, Thành Lễ* Marquis brought forces to attack Cambodia, taking the fertile land of Đồng Nai to establish Gia Định Prefecture (*Phủ*), creating Phúc Long and Tân Bình districts (*huyện*), establishing Trấn Biên and Phiên Trấn encampments (*dinh*), opening 1,000 leagues of land with 40,000 households.

This is the first iteration of the widely cited claim of 1,000 leagues with 40,000 households. Logically, this would be 1698, the 19th year of the *Chinh Hòa* reign of Lê Hy Tông. These claims are simply not supported by contemporary reports from Nagasaki. *MEP* letters reference a substantial settlement from Cochinchina existing in Biên Hòa since the early 1670s, contradicting this claim that region was taken from Cambodia in 1698. Furthermore, priests report no second Cochinchinese settlement in Saigon as of 1710. As with the claims about Bình Thuận above, it is also unclear why Gia Định, if it were created, would be designated as a prefecture.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 390-398.

<sup>152</sup> Ishii, 187-189.

<sup>153</sup> *Tap lục*, *ibid.*



The 1806 *Hoàng Việt Nhất Thống Dư Địa Chí* places Gia Định's creation under the *Ninh* Prince, who ruled only decades later, from 1725 to 1738. The text states the *Ninh* Prince established Gia Định from Bình (Biên) Hòa inward, created the five encampments, and appointed civil and military officials, establishing a fort in Phiên Trấn (Saigon). (Even after 1736, when the Mạc ruler of Hà Tiên is claimed to have submitted to the court, Hà Tiên is called a garrison, not an encampment, so Gia Định even then would have included four encampments and one garrison. Nevertheless, many texts refer to the five encampments.) Thus, an early and definitive Nguyễn Dynasty source contradicts the *Tạp Lục* on the year and circumstances of Gia Định's founding.<sup>154</sup>

Further complicating matters, a shrine to the first viceroy (*tiền khâm sai*), the *Lễ Thành* Marquis, is in neither Saigon nor Biên Hòa. Instead, it is located on a small channel off the Hậu Giang River, well upriver from Cần Thơ toward Phnom Penh, in an area said in 1809 to be still populated by Khmer. He is worshipped for his merit in defeating a Cambodian army and opening up land, but no date is given. The Marquis was known locally as Chưởng, and the site called Chưởng's Field (*Bãi Ông Chưởng*).<sup>155</sup>

The *Thông Chí* states that the *Thành Lễ* Marquis, who it calls, for the first time, a man with the Nguyễn surname, was made viceroy (*kính lược*). He established Gia Định prefecture (*phủ*) in Nông Nại (Đồng Nai), creating the settlements Trấn Biên (that is, Biên Hòa) and Phiên Trấn simultaneously. (I will replace Phiên Trấn with Saigon in many cases for the convenience of reading.) In both, he appointed civil and tax officials, gathered “wanderers” in the territories from Quảng Bình south to create districts, villages, and hamlets, and created population and cadastral registers. From this time on, the Tang people (*Đường nhân*) living in Biên Hòa were gathered to form Thành Hà xã, while those in Saigon were gathered to form Minh Hương xã.<sup>156</sup>

In its description of the local history of Vĩnh Long, the *Thông Chí* contradicts this. In the *kỷ mảo* year (1699), in this section, the Cambodia king Thu erected ramparts in Gò Bích (Lovek), Phnom Penh and Cầu Nam, launching raids on merchants. The Longmen general Chen Chang-shuan, at Doanh Châu, reported this, and at the end of that year the

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<sup>154</sup> *Hoàng Việt Nhất Thống Dư Địa Chí*, II:56a.

<sup>155</sup> *Hoàng Việt Nhất Thống Dư Địa Chí*, II:75a-b.

<sup>156</sup> The *Hương* character used here is 香, meaning incense, not 鄉, meaning a village, which appears in Historical Office texts. *Tạp lục*, *ibid*; *Thông Chí*, III:7a-b.

*Thành Lũ* Marquis went with the Longmen generals at Tân Châu fort on the Tiên Giang to investigate. Early in 1700, they attacked Phnom Penh in a major offensive. Thu retreated, and the troops took Lovek. Yêm (Im) surrendered, and in the following month Thu surrendered. The *Thành Lũ* Marquis let him remain in Lovek and returned to *Bãi Cây Sao*, also called *Bãi Ông Chưởng*. This is local name for the location of the death of the Marquis on the Hậu Giang in the 1809 atlas, which places his sphere of influence on the lower branch of the Mekong, not Saigon or Biên Hòa.<sup>157</sup>

The shrine appears in the same *Thông Chí* passage. After a storm arrived, an epidemic decimated the *Thành Lũ* Marquis' army, and he became gravely ill, pulling back and dying en route in Rạch Gầm. His body was returned to Trấn Biên for “temporary” interment, and the king bestowed posthumous honors. Cambodia people built a temple for his worship at a military field outside Phnom Penh, called the *Lũ Công* field in his honor. (A temple was also built in Trấn Biên.) Chen Chang-shuan later was worshipped in a temple erected at the same location, outside Phnom Penh, by Cambodia people. Tân An *xã* in Saigon; Tân Lân *xã* in Trấn Biên also observed ceremonies for these figures.

The *Thông Chí* repeats the *Tap Lục* phrase describing 1,000 leagues and 40,000 households and includes the statement that “wanderers” from Bô Chính south were gathered to increase the registered population. Byung Wook Choi suggests there were already 40,000 ethnic Vietnamese households settled in Gia Định, and more were added at that time. However, no framework for describing categories of ethnicity is specified, and it seems reasonable that persons recorded for tax purposes could have been Khmer, refugees from the Ming, Cham, Malay, or others. Note that it is plausible that as in the discussion of Mo Jiu noted earlier, the term “wanderers” was applied principally to Southern Ming migrants.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> *Thông Chí*, VI:40b-52b.

<sup>158</sup> The *Thông Chí*'s description of the early appearance in 1698 of the place names Thanh Hà and Minh Hương is not supported by the *Hoàng Việt Nhất Thống Dư Địa Chí*. In that 1809 text, the term *Minh Hương* appears only in reference to three towns, and *Minh Hương xã* is never used as a place name. The people of a market town called Vân Sàng *Phố* (in modern Ninh Bình) are described simply as being descended from Ming loyalists, and two Minh Loyalist market towns called *Minh Hương phố* were described, but they were identified by other unique toponyms in the text. One was in the administrative center of Quảng Ngãi, and the other was called Phú Thạch *phố*, at a strategically important branch of the Cả River across the river from Triều Khẩu village in Nghệ An. If these terms were used as actual toponyms at the time of the *Thông Chí* was written, rather than simply as categories for registration of the populace for

The *Thực Lục* repeats the *Thành Lễ* Marquis story, adding a full name: Nguyễn Hữu Cảnh. The details of the attack (here on Cambodia) and a Gia Định administration are repeated from the *Thông Chí*; it adds that Qing people (*Thanh nhân*) coming to trade were in later years registered and taxed under Thanh Hà and Minh Hương villages. Nguyễn Hữu Cảnh (*Lưu Thủ* in *Trần Biên*) and Nguyễn Phúc (Cửu) Vạn secured the harbors with their navies. In addition to the civil and tax officials in the *Thông Chí*, it adds local militias. At that time, Qing traders became local people under Nguyễn Hữu Cảnh in Biên Hòa.<sup>159160</sup>

Of the conflicting accounts in the *Thông Chí*, the punitive expedition against a Cambodian ruler, not establishment of a new administration over Gia Định, matches closely the contemporary *tōsen* reports, although they occur one year later. It also more closely matches the most authoritative early Nguyễn text, by the Minister of War in 1806, which dates the founding of Gia Định, including five encampments, to between 1725 and 1736 (the *Ninh* Prince's reign). The story of a temple for the *Thành Lễ* Marquis to honor his victory on the upper Hậu Giang River is probably drawn from that same 1806 atlas, from a passage which does not provide dates or any details beyond this figure's general merit in battle. The possible conflation with a very similar 1674 event in which an unnamed *Diên Lộc* or *Diên Phái* Marquis has a temple either built by the Cambodia/Cambodia people, or which they feared and refused to enter makes this story even more difficult to interpret.

### Coastal and Highland Rebellions

Revolts occurred after the *Minh* Prince took the throne in the Nguyễn text, but descriptions are contradictory. The *MEP* mission confirms only a rebellion in Champa,

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taxation, they appear to have come into use between 1810 and 1819. *Thông chí*, *ibid.*; Byung Wook Choi, *Southern Vietnam*, 39, 165

<sup>159</sup> The official's title was with the title *Biên Hòa Trần Văn Miếu Suất Lễ Sinh Hiệu Huấn Đạo*. *Thông chí*, III:7a-b; *Hoàng Việt Nhất Thống Dư Địa Chí*, IV:20b, VI:1b, XIV:47a, 9/4a; *Thực Lục*, 111-112.

<sup>160</sup> The *Thực Lục* indicates that a character (*Hương*) was replaced by a cognate (the *Hương* meaning perfume being replaced by the one meaning village). Another unrelated toponym was also changed (the character *Hòa* in *Hòa Đa* in *Bình Thuận*), without explanation of the reason for either change. However, one hypothetical reason for this change, of course, is that the original character might have had connotations of loyalty to the Ming unacceptable to the later Nguyễn court. *Thực Lục*, *ibid.*

described a decade earlier as a small Muslim-ruled tributary kingdom based in Phan-Ri, with links to the highlands. Champa, had been peaceful in 1685, but a king rebelled there in 1693. The court sent troops to imprison the king and crown his brother, but those troops were killed in a violent uprising that drove out the last of the missionaries. After the *Diễn Chí* breaks off, the remaining texts form no cohesive narrative, with the *Tạp Lục*, *Thông Chí* and *Liệt Truyện* falling mostly silent in the first fifteen years of the 18th century. A wide range of events in the south and the highlands are described in the *Thực Lục* only, and have no parallels in the other texts, raising questions about their veracity. The insertion in the *Thực Lục* of false solar eclipses on the average of once every two years for 17 years, as noted above, suggests the Historical Office description of this period is highly corrupted.<sup>161</sup>

The *Tạp Lục* does not describe a 1693 Champa invasion completely, although the *Thực Lục* does describe a raid on southern borders. When Nguyễn Hữu Hào was deposed, his brothers governed Bình Khang (Nha Trang), with Nguyễn Hữu Oai the commander in 1692. Champa king Bà Tranh launched a raid, and Nguyễn Hữu Cảnh attacked him with Phú Xuân, Quảng Nam, and Bình Khang troops. He captured the rebel king and two others, Kế Bà Tử and Bà Ân; the *Nghĩa* Prince made Champa into Thuận Thành Garrison (imprisoning Bà Tranh, and giving him a state funeral in 1694.) Thuận Thành enemies in the highlands were held at bay by Chu Kiêm Thắng in Phan Rang and others in Phan Rí and Phố Hải (Ninh Thuận). Late in 1693, Thuận Thành was changed into Bình Thuận Prefecture, with viceroy Kế Bà Tử and three sons of Bà Ân reportedly wearing the court's costumes.<sup>162</sup>

Again in the *Thực Lục* only, a Qing immigrant A Ban rebelled in Thuận Thành in late 1693, with a local conspirator, *oknha* Thát Đi, and Chế Vinh gathered Thuận Thành barbarians to raid Ninh Thuận. Bà Rịa Encampment (at the mouth of the Saigon and Đồng Nai Rivers) appears for the first time; Bà Rịa officers defended Ninh Thuận and were killed. In Phan Rang, Chu Kiêm Thắng captured Kế Bá Tử, and Thát Đi asked A

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<sup>161</sup> Launay, *Histoire*, I, 352, 414.

<sup>162</sup> Although the *Tạp Lục* does not describe these battles, it but does state that Thái Khang Encampment was renamed Bình Khang Prefecture in 1690, which suggests its pacification. The *Thông Chí*, which is focused on the lower Mekong, does not discuss any of the regions that might be called Champa. Chu Kiêm Thắng is the second official with the surname Chu to appear in the Nguyễn records after the Nghệ An defector Chu Hữu Tài, and appears only in the *Thực Lục*. *Tạp lục*, Book I:36a; *Thực Lục*, 106-109.

Ban to leave to get him released. Thắng called Nguyễn Hữu Oai and others, who forced A Ban to retreat to the highlands, first to Bào Lạc (Bảo Lộc), then Phố Châm, where Nguyễn Hữu Cảnh and Trinh Tường defeated him. Bình Thuận Prefecture was supposedly changed back to Thuận Thành Garrison again, with Kế Bà Tử still ruling.<sup>163</sup>

The *Thực Lục* describes a 1695 rebellion by the *Linh* Prince, a Quảng Ngãi merchant, together with a Quy Nhơn man Quảng Phú and 100 troops. Chu sent Quảng Nam, Quảng Ngãi and Quy Nhơn troops against him, but none from Bình Khang. The *Linh* Prince was killed; Quảng Phú was captured and killed by Phú Yên highlanders. The *Tạp Lục* contains none of these episodes.<sup>164</sup>

In 1697, the *Tạp Lục* does report an attack on Champa/Chiêm Thành, which, in this text, only then became a tributary state. The “west of Phan Rí and the west of Phan Rang,” or the highlands, became Bình Thuận, divided into An Phúc and Hòa Đa districts, and the remainder of Champa (or the coast) became Thuận Thành Garrison; five sons of the ruler received court posts. The *Thực Lục* borrows the episode directly from the *Tạp Lục* and states that Bình Thuận Prefecture was created yet again, with land from Phan Rang and Phan Rí to the west as districts An Phúc and Hòa Đa.<sup>165</sup>

There is no clear reason why, if the campaigns described in the *Thực Lục* between sons of Nguyễn Hữu Dật in Nha Trang and Champa forces in Bình Thuận actually took place, they would not also be described in the *Tạp Lục*. Along with the other problems described earlier, the *Thực Lục*'s repeated reversion of the name of Thuận Thành/Bình Thuận appears to be a sign that the text is particularly corrupted in this period.

There are hints of dramatic political changes in Vientiane and Champassak at this time, perhaps as the result of armed intervention from Cochinchina, but the details are obscure. Archaimbault suggests that a Theravadic monk offered power in Champassak sometime after 1695 was a historical figure; his arrival there followed a circuitous journey through Phnom Penh and many Khmer regions. For Victor Grabowsky, this journey is a “symbol for a long-term cultural process” where “Lao Buddhist settlers from

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<sup>163</sup> The *Thực Lục* claims that when Bà Tranh was captured, A Ban fled to Đại Đồng, changed his name to Ngô Lãng, and claimed to have supernatural powers; he sent a *Chiêm* girl to poison the court's Phan Rí commander. *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>164</sup> The *Thực Lục* has no other information about the *Linh* King's background, but the connection with the highlands foreshadows the *Tây Sơn* revolt 80 years later. *Thực Lục*, 110

<sup>165</sup> The *Thực Lục* notes that the character Hòa had been altered and replaced with a phonetically similar cognate character, like the place name Minh Hương. *Tạp Lục*, I:36b; *Thực Lục*, 111.

the North intermingled with a strong pre-Buddhist Mon-Khmer substratum.” Arcaimbault draws attention to the *Cuong Mục* story of Triều Phúc, which might confirm Lao chronicle accounts of the triumphant return from Cochinchina of a Vientiane ruler. In the *Cuong Mục*, a native chief, Cầm Đàng, requested assistance for Triều Phúc in 1696, said to be the refugee son of a deposed Ai Lao king, and the Lê ruler ordered Nghệ An governor Đặng Tiến Thự to bring an army placing him back on the throne at the “Mang Chan” citadel. The *Cuong Mục* editors reject the idea that this describes the return of a king to Vientiane and insist that it refers to a tributary king placed back on the Xiengkhuang throne. However, the *Cuong Mục* cannot be supported on this point. It apparently adapted this story, not found in standard Nghệ An histories, from the problematic and anonymous *Tục Biên*, adding the Nghệ An governor. No hostilities are described in the Nguyễn Historical Office texts, or *Toàn Thư*, beyond these references to Triều Phúc.<sup>166</sup>

None of these texts includes a Lanxang chronicle episode in which Sai Ong Hue, apparently born at the Cochinchina court to a Vientiane prince previously exiled there. Sai Ong Hue reportedly convinced the king of Cochinchina to give him an army to recapture the throne in exchange for Lanxang as a tributary. Sai Ong Hue allied with the Xiengkhuang king, captured Vientiane and proclaimed himself Setthathirath II, appointing a half-brother to rule Luang Prabang until Chao Kingkitsarat drove him out in 1706. Luang Prabang forces seized Vientiane, forcing Sai Ong Hue to seek aid from Siam’s king Phetrarcha, who sent a large army. There seems to be a good chance this story is apocryphal, since Phetrarcha’s reign had ended, kingdoms in Vientiane and Luang Prabang were divided, and Chao Sai Ong Hue was said to rule Vientiane until 1735.<sup>167</sup>

The *Thực Lục* alone describes a rebellion, centered on Quảng Nam, in 1709. Nguyễn Phúc (later, Cừu) Khâm, a cousin of Nguyễn Phúc Vân, revolted together with Tống Phúc Thiệu, a son of Tống Phúc Trí, and a prince Thận, described in the *Thực Lục* as a prince of the royal lineage. However, no prince of that name is found in the *Liệt*

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<sup>166</sup> Victor Grabowsky, “Buddhism, Power and Political Order in Pre-Twentieth Century Laos,” in Ian Harris, *Buddhism, Power and Political Order* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 133-135; Arcaimbault, “L’Histoire de Cămpasăk,” 536; *Cuong Mục*, 758.

<sup>167</sup> Lockhart, “The Historical Lao-Vietnamese Relationship.”

*Truyện*, even in the section describing princes that committed treason. The *Tạp Lục* does not mention the Nguyễn Phúc/Cửu clan, Prince Thận, or a 1709 rebellion at all.

According to the *Thực Lục* only, their plan was to first attack Bình Khang and Trấn Biên, return to defeat troops of a man called *Hòa Đức* in Quảng Nam, and claim the seat of power there. In the text, most of their party was killed, Thiệu was stripped of rank and imprisoned, and Thận was said to be made a common soldier. The apparent implication is that the region from Hội An to Quy Nhơn continued to be politically important, and did not submit quietly to the new Phú Xuân elite.

The *Thực Lục* reports that Kê Bà Tử, the border king of the state called Thuận Thành, earlier defined as the eastern part of Phan Ri and Phan Rang, offered tribute to the court in 1709. By 1711, barbarians on the Kontum Plateau were attacking ships and levying their own taxes on trade goods moving along the Côn and Đà Rằng Rivers.<sup>168</sup>

Also in the *Thực Lục* only, there is a 1711 visit to the *Minh* Prince by Mo Jiu, Supreme Commander of Hà Tiên, who in this text appears in Hà Tiên only three years before this submission to the court. (The *Tạp Lục* did not mention Cửu except to state that Mạc Thiên Tứ's father was a Ming Loyalist, whereas the *Thông Chí* and *Tạp Lục* in Cambodia several decades before his first contact with the court, which in the *Thông Chí* does not occur until 1714. (Franciscans, like the *Thực Lục*, report the first Can Cao governor arriving there in 1713 or 1714.) In addition, the *Thực Lục* only describes a general named only as *Thuận Đức* being sent to Cambodia in 1711. He gathered groups of “wanderers” who had left the areas controlled by the court and gradually returned. Nguyễn Phúc Vân, here called the deputy general of Trấn Biên, allegedly angered others by taking a personal income from this migrant population, and the king reproached him for putting personal profits over his duty to the throne. The king ordered Trấn Biên and Saigon to place the returned drifters in village (*thôn* and *phường*) registers, granting a three year tax holiday. Again, there are no similar episodes in the *Tạp Lục* or *Thông Chí*, which make no comment about events in the far south until 1714, when in the latter text Mo Jiu joined the court.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Cầm Bửu and Trương Bửu Lâm, *Hồng-Đức Bản Đồ Tủ Sách Viện Khảo-Cổ* (Saigon: Bộ Quốc-Gia Giáo-Dục, 1962); Trần Nghĩa, “Bản đồ cổ Việt Nam”, *Tạp Chí Hán Nôm*, 4:1990.

<sup>169</sup> The *Thực Lục* first mentions awareness of Mo Jiu's presence in Cambodia in 1708, the year he allegedly sent a letter to the Nguyễn king asking to submit. It notes he was from Leizhou, became an *oknha* in

The *Thực Lục* alone describes a visit from *Đôn* Prince and *Nga* Prince, rulers of Nam Bàn and Trà Lai (Gia Lai), which Historical Office editors, in an annotation, speculate may be related to the King of Fire. A court official called *Kiểm Đức*, familiar with these people, was sent to provide the highland kings with instructions, costumes and items, but failed to convince them to pay taxes.<sup>170</sup>

Again in the *Thực Lục* only, Cambodian prince *Thâm* (Mak Phoeun reconstructs this figure as *Srī Dhammarājā II*) returned from Siam and plotted with an *oknha* named Cao La Hâm to overthrow Im. Im sent a man from Ai Lao, Xuy Bòn Bọt, to seek aid from *Trần Biên* and Saigon. This was reported to the court by both *Nguyễn Phúc Vân*, who controlled *Trần Biên* and Saigon, and *Chen Chang-shuan*, who was in *Mỹ Tho*. However, the *Minh* Prince took no action, telling *Vân* and *Chang-shuan* to tell the two Cambodia princes to work it out among themselves. As with earlier episodes involving *Nguyễn Phúc/Cửu Vân*, none of these events appear in the *Tạp Lục* or *Thông Chí*.<sup>171</sup>

The *Thực Lục* states that, in order for merchant “guests” to visit the upland villages to conduct trade, they were required to have a permit from the supervising *Nguyễn* officer there. Any merchant guests who left *Thuận Thành* to trade in *Trần Biên* (the location referred to being unclear in this case), thus escaping these restrictions, were to be returned to *Thuận Thành* and watched closely so that they did not create unrest. *Kế Bá Tử* in *Thuận Thành* “requested regulations” in 1712, which included new restrictions on commerce. Again, there is no discussion of *Thuận Thành* in the other texts.<sup>172</sup>

### Increasing Cochinchinese Presence on the Mekong

In the early years of the 18th century, Christians in *Đồng Nai* may also have fared better than those at the court. *Joannes Antonius*, writing from *Sinoa*, the capital of Cochinchina, in 1700, describes threats against Christians by the devoutly Buddhist king:

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Cambodia, and that he lived in *Sài Mạt* Prefecture, where he is said to have become wealthy operating a casino and taxing merchants. This seems to be a paraphrasing of the ambiguous *Thông Chí* passage placing *Mo Jiu* in *Phnom Penh* in 1680, but adding the reference to *Sài Mạt* Prefecture; it is not clear why it has been moved to 1708. *Thực Lục*, 122, 126-27; *Launay, Histoire*, III, 531.

<sup>170</sup> *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>171</sup> *Thực Lục*, *ibid*; *Mak Phouen, Histoire*, 428.

<sup>172</sup> *Thực Lục*, 128



[In] 1698, a storm burst at the Court against our churches. The king, very young and extremely superstitious, had brought bonzes from China and was completely devoted to them. Two of his cousins in his entourage, one of whom had the greatest influence at the Court, were enemies of Christianity. Many churches were destroyed, and persecution would have further increased without some terrible storms which caused enormous damage... my church remained unscathed and the ill treatment of the missionaries softened... The king ordered that upon their next gathering, the Christians would be attacked and butchered... I managed to prevent the usual gatherings [and no one was killed].

... the royal judgment of the Christians was published everywhere: all remaining churches in the kingdom were demolished, our books burned, the missionaries imprisoned. .... It is certain that the cousin of the king favorable to the Christians [did not profane the church, or force his subjects to do so]. The other cousin of the king, sworn enemy of Christianity [forced all Christians in the kingdom to profane the church].<sup>173</sup>

Extreme persecution in “all parts of the kingdom” followed. This persecution seems to have been only intermitten in in Đồng Nai, however, where a Portuguese Jesuit arrived in 1697 or 1698 and constructed “a fairly large church.” (As usual in this tense period, Labbé criticizes the Jesuit, stating that the church was used infrequently because local Christians were not happy with the priest.) The *Tap Lục* claims an order was given to track down Christians in 1699. The *Thông Chí* picks up on this statement and adds a claim, which the *Thực Lục* repeats, that Catholics communities were dispersed, churches closed, and missionaries expelled. Since this was apparently not the case in Đồng Nai, it is unclear if the *Thông Chí* refers a specific situation in Gia Định; possibly, it simply repeats the *Tap Lục* comments.<sup>174</sup>

By about 1700 or 1701, missionaries report Cochinchina’s subjugation of Champa, and some intervention in Cambodia. A son-in-law of the king, called Prea-iô-co, who Mak Phoeun considers to be Kaev Hvâ (Im), gave Phnom Penh to the Cochinchinese, who “exerted great cruelties” while the king fled Oudong to the mountains. *MEP* reports that the governor of Nha Ru, concurrently the governor of half the small provinces in the kingdom, was absent from his post, having gone to war in

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<sup>173</sup> “Lettres de Missionnaires de la Cochinchine et du Tonkin au Commencement du XVIIIth Siècle,” trad. de L’Allemand par A. Del V Aux, préface de L. Cadière, notes de L. Cadière et H. Cosserrat, *BAVH* (1943).

<sup>174</sup> Trịnh Hoài Đức, *Thông chí*, *Book I : 7b*.

Cambodia. In another report, Cochinchinese forces supported a Cambodian rebel in 1701.<sup>175</sup>

According to the *Thực Lục* only, the Cambodia king Thu rebelled again in mid-1699 and continued to launch “raids” on merchants. Chen Chang-shuan, described here as holding Doanh Châu (Vĩnh Long), reported this, and Nguyễn Hữu Cảnh was said to join Chang-shuan in an attack in 1700 against Thu, who fled. Im, described as the second son of Nan; came out to surrender, and Cảnh took him back to his citadel; Thu surrendered a month later offered tribute, so Cảnh withdrew, but became ill and died at age 51. A subsequent passage mentions that Trương Phúc Phan, son of the high ranking official Trương Phúc Cương, and husband of Chu’s daughter Ngọc Nhiễm, was Commander of Trấn Biên in 1703.<sup>176</sup>

A passage in *Thông Chí* description of the Saigon region (Trấn Phiên An) describes a battle with Siam in *át dậu* year 1705; this episode does not, however, occur in its main political narrative. Prince Im (in an annotation, Giao Hoa), returned to Cambodia from Gia Định at this time and was made king. There is no mention anywhere in the *Thông Chí* of the sequence in the *Thực Lục* (described above) in which Im, a second son of Nan, surrendered in Gia Định to Nguyễn Hữu Cảnh and was returned to his citadel. In this single passage of the *Thông Chí* description of Phiên An only, Im’s young brother Thâm and another young brother went to Siam to seek military support. Im rushed to Gia Định to ask the court for aid. In the *át dậu* year 1705, *Vân Trường* Marquis Nguyễn Phúc (in the Historical Office texts, Cửu) Vân was sent to attack Siam’s forces, and Im returned to reside at Lovek. The *Vân Trường* Marquis cleared land at Vụng Cù, and his unnamed son, a deputy commander, the *Triêm Ân* Marquis, was rewarded with command of Trấn Biên.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 405-407; Launay, *Histoire*, I, 457.

<sup>176</sup> The *Thực Lục* describes new rules on commerce in 1700, a date not confirmed elsewhere. (It describes a system of colored flags established for the purpose of taxing commercial transportation: Thăng Hoa used a gold flag, Điện Bàn green, Quảng Ngãi red, Quy Nhơn red and white, and Phú Yên white and black, while Bình Khang, Diên Ninh, Bình Thuận, and Gia Định were all red and green. Several armies participating in the subsequent *Tây Sơn* wars, which came from some of these commercial regions, were described by the *Tap Lục* as using transport ships in battle, and also carried colored flags.) Its report on 1703 suggests the possibility that the Trương Phúc clan, who later seized the throne, gained a foothold in the lower Mekong by taking control of the existing settlement in Biên Hòa. *Thực Lục*, 112.

<sup>177</sup> This passage continues with a discussion of land being awarded to officials in 1725. *Thông Chí*, II:29a-b.

The *Thông Chí* story of a 1705 battle is repeated in the *Thực Lục*. (The text had earlier claimed Nguyễn Hữu Hào was stripped of ranks and titles in 1690. In 1704, however, a man named Nguyễn Hữu Hào is described as Commander of the vital border territory of Quảng Bình.) Before Nan's death, Im had married the king Thu's daughter. Thu, now close to death, was said to have transferred the throne to a man referred to in this text as Thâm. Thâm, backed by troops from Ayutthaya, is said to have clashed with Im, and as a result Im came to Gia Định to seek aid. In 1705, according to the *Thực Lục*, Nguyễn Phúc (later, Cừ) Vân, a son of Nguyễn Phúc (Cừ) Dực, was sent by the *Minh* Prince to attack Cambodia and return Im to power. The Gia Định navy attacked Thâm, and the Siam troops were dispersed. Thâm with his young brother Tân fled to Siam, while Im returned to Lovek. In Saigon, the Siamese troops were said to capture Mai Công Hương, who drowned himself. The commander was rewarded with land near Mỹ Tho for subduing Thâm, but the forces on the river there continued to be harassed by ships from Siam, and a long rampart was erected at Rạch Gầm.<sup>178</sup>

Ayutthayan chronicles describe a Cambodian King, in one text called Nak Phra Im, fleeing Cambodia to take refuge in Thailand and a subsequent war between Siamese and Cochinchinese forces in which the exiled king in Thailand was returned to the throne. These episodes are dated differently in different versions of the chronicles, but in all cases seem to have taken place well after 1709. A *tōsen* report discussed in the next chapter places this war in 1714-1715, so it is reasonable to conclude that that is a more likely date; the *Thông Chí* and *Thực Lục* description of war with Siam in 1705 has less credibility.<sup>179</sup>

Cambodian chronicles, unfortunately, provide a confusing picture of these years. *P57* and other texts, Mak Phoeun notes, describe Cochinchinese (*ñuon*) troops driving forces under a man called “Huk” to retreat west out of Oudong to Banteay Mean Chei in 1699. The chronicles offer no explanation for the attack, but report it ended in failure and the invaders were defeated and driven out of Oudong by 1700. *P57* claims the capture of “Im” and other Khmer officials who had joined the invasion, along with thousands of the invading troops. Having read the *Thông Chí*, however, and accepting the story of Nguyễn

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<sup>178</sup> This is the fifth instance of the surname Mai to appear in the *Thực Lục*, following Mai Cầu, Mai Đình Dũng, Mai Đình Hùng, and Mai Vạn Long. *Thực Lục*, 45, 117-118.

<sup>179</sup> Cushman, *Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*.

Hữu Cảnh as historical fact, Mak Pheoun believes this date of 1699 must be an error, and he suggests Cochinchina's attack on Oudong occurred in 1698 to match the claims of the 19th century Nguyễn court.<sup>180</sup>

Mak Phoeun suggests Im took power from Sūr for one year in 1700, before being ousted by Sūr again, who gave the throne to his son Srī Dhammarājā II in 1702. In 1704, Sūr took the throne again, and gave it to his son once more in 1707. In this reconstruction, Sūr's son ruled until 1714. Only after 1714 did Im take the throne a second time and rule for another eight years (*tōsen* reports confirm a king ousted in 1714).<sup>181</sup>

A *Chan* Buddhist court appeared in the final decade of the 17th century in a location quite different than the heavily fortified capital visited by Europeans from the 1620s to 1670s. This new court was dominated by the relatives of an influential Buddhist queen mother, in a residence one league distant from the king's palace, possibly the intended recipient of a bronze bell cast in a Guangdong monastery inscribed with a dedication to the Đại Việt king's Royal Nursemaid. Christian factions lost influence at this Buddhist court, but remained more active in southern provinces.

The Nguyễn Dynasty's account of Mỹ Tho being settled by 3,000 Ming loyalists under Yang Yan-di in 1679 is an abridged version of a passage in the *Diễn Chí*, a work of fiction, and one that literally cuts off only part way through the episode being told. One group among many Chinese settlers in the Mekong delta, the Longmen guard from Qinzhou had ties with Quảng Nam, in addition to their already complex ties with Hải Dương dating from the Mạc settlers there in the previous century. A group of settlers from Cochinchina appeared in Đồng Nai in the early 1670s and grew over the next decades. They had connections with the Nha Trang officials who seem to have joined them and intervened in Cambodia. The leniency toward Christians in Đồng Nai, at a time when persecution was most severe elsewhere, suggests the possibility that, after *Chan* Buddhist royal factions had seized control of the capital, members of a branch of royalty sympathetic to the Christians may have held power in the far south.

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<sup>180</sup> Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, *ibid.*

<sup>181</sup> Mak Phoeun, 404-407.

A kingdom in Gia Định began to take shape in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, but in a different form than that described by the Historical Office. A punitive mission by some forces from Cochinchina against a Cambodian king in 1698 seems to have taken place. However, the establishment of Gia Định is a composite of problematic earlier stories, and the Historical Office narrative of the early history of Gia Định is therefore equally suspect. The origins of 1698 as a founding story are not clear, since the *Diễn Chí* description of 1698 is missing from that manuscript.

## CHAPTER 9

### The Struggle for Cambodia, c. 1714-1773

At the court, a *Chan* Buddhist faction and a faction more sympathetic to Christians struggled from the 1720s to the 1740s, but *Chan* faction gradually prevailed in the court, while Christians came to play a larger role in administration of the far south. Franciscans were able to restore churches abandoned in Saigon with the disruption of Portuguese communities by the 1720s. By this time, the historically Portuguese trading town at the port of Hà Tiên had been sacked in wars with Siam and Cambodia. One of the chief officials ruling in Saigon was known to the Franciscans as Martin Diez, who interceded with the Cambodian king on behalf of Cochinchinese Christians. Pierre Poivre also describes a *mestizo* Chinese merchant as the ruler of the petty state of Pontimias at Hà Tiên.

By the middle of the century, a weakened central court allowed factions based in the south to take control of the Mekong trade along the Tiên Giang River, and also to move north along the Mekong. Battles erupted along the middle and lower Mekong as Trịnh forces expanded into Laos and Teochiu forces contested with the Mạc and the Longmen guard from Guangdong for control of the main ports.<sup>1</sup>

The toponym Can Cao, by the early 1800s, was synonymous with Hà Tiên, but in earlier periods Can Cao encompassed a wider territory. The term Can Cao, but not Saigon, appears in the letters of Pierre Joseph Georges Pigneaux de Behaine, who first arrived in Can Cao in 1766, where he and other missionaries were initially arrested by its governor, accused of aiding an escaped Siamese prince. Pigneaux describes high ranking Christians in the Can Cao governor's service. It seems improbable that Pigneaux's governor, who is understood to be the Mạc Thiên Tứ of the Historical Office texts, could

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<sup>1</sup> The *Thực Lục* claims the court begin recruiting civil and military personnel from Bình Thuận and Gia Định prefectures (*phủ*) for the first time, while also strengthening the regulation of commercial shipping. Ishii, *The Junk Trade*, 88; *Thực Lục*, 122-123.

possibly be the person as the same official called Martin Diez by Franciscans and a *mestizo* king by Poivre. However, it is probable that rivalry with the Jesuits may have constrained Pigneaux in describing the full background of his allies in Hà Tiên. The Nguyễn texts and surviving works of Lê Quý Đôn call Mạc Thiên Tứ a “Ming Loyalist” scholar (althgouh he appears half a century after the last Southern Ming regime fell) who famously initiated poetic exchanges with Chinese literati, and the *Tap Lục* calls the state Tứ ruled *Hải Quốc*, or Sea Country, implying that it was a wider maritime region, not a small stretch of Cambodian coastline with a minor harbor. The ruler of this region seems to have controlled parts the Mekong delta and at times Saigon, paying tribute to both Cambodian and Cochinchinese rulers.

#### A Punitive Mission in Cambodia

During the first decade of the 1700s, commerce in Quảng Nam slowed, with trade shifting to the far south. A 1708 *tōsen* in Nagasaki, where numbers of ships from Cochinchina were again restricted, reported that trade in Quảng Nam was declining, with valuable woods hard to find at its markets. Conflicting accounts briefly converge again in 1714. A *tōsen* ship captain reports that the King of Guangnan dispatched troops led by Commanders named Trần (Chen) and Ông (Weng) to support the Water King and defeat his rival, the Mountain King, who fled to Siam in early 1715 with a Chinese official. The father of the Mountain King blamed the civil war on the exiled Chinese official Wu Dashe, who had since died, and suggested they make peace. The king of Siam refused and dispatched an infantry of several thousand troops overland – avoiding the Guangnan navy – to place the Mountain King on the throne.<sup>2</sup>

The chronicles of Ayutthaya describe a war between two Cambodian rulers circa 1711. A rival had requested and received troops from a Cochinchina (*ñuon*) king, so the Cambodian king fled and was given refuge in Ayutthaya, which sent a force to restore him to the throne. A formulaic statement gives troop strength of 10,000 infantry, and claims a Chinese officer led a naval force of 10,000 sailors with 100 warships. The

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<sup>2</sup> Ishii, *The Junk Trade*, 93-98, 190-193.

Chinese-led navy reached a river mouth (Phutthaimat) where it was defeated by Cochinchinese forces and retreated. The infantry, however, successfully returned the escaped king, now a tributary ruler.<sup>3</sup>

In the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, during repeated raids on Cambodia, the chief Siamese general captured Mo Jiu and brought him back to Siam, yet no year is specified for these raids. Mo Jiu paid off a Siamese official, and stayed at Vạn Tuế Mountain near the Chantaburi coast, eventually returning to Lũng Kỳ on the Mekong. The text then claims that his son Mạc Thiên Tứ was born in Lũng Kỳ. For a text that is supposed to be a genealogy, it is unusual that Tứ's mother's name is omitted. Mo Jiu then left Lũng Kỳ and returned to his original residence of Mãng-kham.

The *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* describes no attack directed by a Cochinchinese king, but alludes to Mo Jiu deciding to break away from the Cambodian king, betraying him and joining the Nguyễn court. It states that he acted on the advice of a man of the Tô clan (seemingly Chinese), who convinced him that it was more beneficial to submit to the Việt king. However, there is no detailed narrative of events in this year, since the biography of Mo Jiu is brief; the bulk of the text is devoted to his son Mạc Thiên Tứ and Tứ's sons. This general reference to turning against Cambodia in 1714 does not rule out the battles of 1714 or early 1715 described in the *tōsen* report.

In the primary section containing a political narrative of Gia Định, the *Thông Chí* repeats the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, stating that 1714 was the year Mo Jiu visited the court and was made Supreme Commander. Like the *Mạc* text, it provides no other information about that year, and describes no battles in Cambodia. A different passage of the *Thông Chí* manuscript actually agrees that he visited the court in 1711, but in that second passage, that event appears out of chronological order, surrounded by incidents that occurred in 1714. This gives the appearance that the date 1714 may have been a correction made by a person transcribing the text (to match the date in the *Thực Lục*).<sup>4</sup>

In a section of the *Thông Chí* devoted to geographic features, Siam attacked Hà Tiên in an unspecified year; Mo Jiu fled west to Lũng Kỳ River, the region where he had originally become an *okhna*. His wife, Bùi Thị Lắm, from Đồng Môn village in Biên

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<sup>3</sup> 1703 of the Royal Era. Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 396-7, 401-404.

<sup>4</sup> *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 18; *Thông Chí*, III:7b, IV:57a



Hòa, gave birth to Mạc Tông (Thiên Tứ), and Cửu returned to Hà Tiên a month later. The Cambodian king Thâm attacked Hà Tiên again, with aid from a Siamese navy in early 1715; Mo Jiu fled west to Lũng Kỳ River, then returned a few months later. The text here cites “Cambodian histories” for a similar story, but it seems to a story from the 1770s, mistakenly placed in the previous cycle by the compiler.<sup>5</sup>

The *Tap Lục* simply states that Mo Jiu received an office from Phúc Chu, without any date or battle with Cambodia or Siam. The *Thực Lục* combines elements of several stories, possibly including some displaced from another calendrical cycle. It moves Mo Jiu’s surrender to 1711, then claims that in 1713, Cambodian king Thu rebelled against the *Minh* Prince. The *Minh* Prince took no action, but sent a warning. (The *Thông Chí*, which suggested that Thu had already died of illness at an unspecified date following the events of 1688, and does not mention any further contact between Thu and the Nguyễn court. Mak Phoeun has Sūr again abdicating to his son, for the final time, in 1707, so if his reconstruction is followed, Sūr, or Thu, was alive, but would not again become king.)<sup>6</sup>

In 1714, according to the *Thực Lục*, Thâm and Cao La Hâm attacked Im suddenly, bringing 40,000 against Im and Xuy Bồn Bọt’s 10,000. (The text does not comment on the transition from Thu, who was threatened by the *Minh* Prince the previous year.) Im sent Xuy Bồn Bọt to Gia Định; this second time, his request was answered. Chen Chang-shuan sent 2,000 infantry through Saigon, while Nguyễn Phúc (Cửu) Phú, called Trần Biên deputy general, blocked the rivers. Trần Biên persons were temporarily conscripted and Nguyễn Phúc (Cửu) Triêm provided naval reinforcements from Bình Khang. (Ships from Quảng Nam were sent to defend Bình Khang; what enemy was threatening Bình Khang by sea is not specified; this suggests a wider conflict than an attack by Siam infantry on a Cambodian king.)

Trần Biên forces, together with Im, surrounded Thâm in Lovek, while Cao La Hâm fled. Thu (not Im) then sent an admission of guilt, blaming Cao La Hâm for

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<sup>5</sup> In the alternate story, Thâm returned to the throne in 1709 (perhaps, 1769), but Lao forces supported his brother Im against him, and Cambodians came from the forest to Gia Định, which sent them to attack Lovek at Im’s request, driving Thâm and his younger brother Tân to Siam. In 1715 (1775), Siamese troops advanced on Im, then returned home leaving Tân; Chakri brought 10,000 troops there in 1717 (1777), with a navy of 5,000 joining Thâm to attack Hà Tiên in early 1718 (1778). The Mạc commander retreated until Siam’s navy withdrew after a storm; Im was obliged to make a tribute payment to Siam, and the forces of Thâm and Tân were withdrawn. *Thông Chí*, I:78a-b.

<sup>6</sup> *Thực Lục*, 128-133.

subverting Thâm. However, Chen Chang-shuan and Nguyễn Phúc Phú were instructed by the court to concentrate on stabilizing the borders, and not to make any decision about the Cambodian kings. (Repeated statements in the *Thực Lục* that the *Minh* Prince decided to make no decision suggest that Chen Chang-shuan and Nguyễn Phúc Phú were acting independently of the court. The *tōsen* report, on the other hand, is explicit that the two generals were sent by the Guangnan king on a punitive mission.)

In the *Thực Lục*, Thâm and Thu were driven out of Lovek. Chen Chang-shuan and Nguyễn Phúc (Cửu) Phú seized weaponry, and the *Minh* Prince sent a demand for Thu's surrender. Im was recognized as tributary king by the *Minh* Prince. An annotation gives Im a second name, Kiều Hoa (probably, Kaev Hva). Siamese troops then occupied Hà Tiên along with Thâm. Mo Jiu was forced to flee to Lũng Kỳ. Thâm seized Mo Jiu's wealth before he could return, and Cửu erected, for the first time, earthen walls and other fortifications. Siam sent a letter reproaching Im and offered aid to Thâm. Chang-shuan and Phú were again told by the king to decide themselves how to proceed.<sup>7</sup>

This 1714 invasion of Hà Tiên appears in neither the Mạc history nor the *Thông Chí*, which only describe Mo Jiu joining the Nguyễn in 1714. John E. Wills has surveyed Qing archives on Siam and "Annam", and has not found the Qing court, which investigated Hà Tiên thoroughly, describing any such invasion until Taksin's attack of 1771. Mak Phoeun notes *P57* has Cochinchina attacking Prei Nokor (Saigon) circa 1707-1714, suggesting that it was at this time still at least partly under Cambodian control.<sup>8</sup>

The *Thực Lục* then claims Nguyễn Phúc (Cửu) Phú was recalled and replaced by Nguyễn Phúc (Cửu) Triêm. Triêm is said to have taken agricultural land that his father Vân had cleared as *quan điền*, land allocated to him for his own profit. The Historical Office, perhaps again conscious of the court's apparent lack of authority, adds this use of the land was personally approved by the king. The *Thực Lục* also states that Trần Biên had a temple of literature (*văn miếu*) built during the regime of Phú. In the *Thông Chí*, however, the temple of literature in Trần Biên (Biên Hòa) was not built until 1725, under governor Nguyễn Phan Long. It would be hardly possible for Trịnh Hoài Đức, a great

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<sup>7</sup> *Thực Lục*, *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Wills, "Great Qing and Its Southern Neighbors."

Confucian scholar who lived in the region, to be mistaken on the first temple of literature.<sup>9</sup>

Continued rivalry between Siam and Cochinchina forces at this time is evident in the *tōsen* reports, yet unmentioned these other texts. Siam had been forced to retreat from Cambodia, but made a second assault in 1717. Hamilton claims that this attack was led by a Chinese official he calls the *Barkalong*, who was reluctant and inexperienced in war, yet Ponteamass (Hà Tiên) was destroyed in the fighting. A 1718 *tōsen* reports things had calmed down, and a junk flying a Cambodian flag had been seen in Quảng Nam waters. A 1722 *tōsen* reports that the Mountain King had been sent back to Cambodia from Siam after unsuccessful attempts to take Cambodia by force in 1720. On the other hand, a 1723 *tōsen* reports that the Water King had also requested reinforcements from Guangnan when they went to war; however, the Mountain King failed and died of illness in Siam. Mak Phoeun does not address this period in any detail.<sup>10</sup>

The accounts of Cochinchina's interactions with Cambodia during the first period of *Chan* Buddhist domination of the court, which can be dated from circa 1688 up until the mid-1720s, are so inconsistent that no firm conclusions can be drawn. To speculate, if the Cochinchinese court did have an interest in extending its influence in the Mekong delta in this period, this might have been a result of commercial imperatives. As Quảng Nam trade with Nagasaki declined; the shogunate enforced stricter limits on the numbers of ships and amount of silver traded by 1715. We know little for certain except that one king relied on Cochinchinese support, driving out a rival with Chinese support.

### A Christian-Allied Monarch

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<sup>9</sup> The *Tap Lục* reports that the elderly Phúc Chu sent Fujian guest merchant Binh, along with another from Guangxi, to secretly enter Đông Kinh via Lạng Sơn. Binh's party arrived in Thăng long in early 1716 as a guest of the Chinese merchants there. Binh obtained detailed strategic information about the Trịnh from a close friend, a Thăng Long geographer, then returned via Guangdong and reported that Thăng Long and Nghệ An were extremely well defended. Chu's designs on Đông Kinh were destroyed; instead, he personally inspected and reinforced his military installations in Quảng Nam, Quảng Ngãi and Phú Yên. The *Thực Lục* omits this story entirely. (It notes a grandson and other relatives of the problematic 16th century Quy Nhơn official Trần Đức Hòa – Hòa does not appear in the *Tap Lục* – were given land in honor of Hòa in this year.) *Tap Lục*, I:37b-38a; *Thông Chí*, IV:28a-b; *Thực Lục*, 132.

<sup>10</sup> Ishii, *The Junk Trade*, 93-97; Alexander Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies*, vol.1-2 (London: The Argonau Press, 1930), 105.

By the time of the *Minh* Prince's death at the beginning of 1726, Christians had been gaining influence at the court, despite continuing unease between Buddhist and Christian factions. Within four years of the death of a senior anti-Christian minister circa 1711-12, the crown prince was declaring his Christian sympathies. Labbé describes him showing kindness to a Christian army officer unjustly punished by his older brother. For Labbé, the crown prince had an older brother from a Buddhist family, but the missionary considered this brother to be the illegitimate son of a concubine, suggesting that the king had passed over a Buddhist family to name a woman born to Christian parents as the mother of his chosen heir.<sup>11</sup>

After a *MEP* Apostolic Vicar returned to the court, struggles between French and Iberian interests continued to play out on both religious and economic fronts. The Jesuits were particularly successful, in part to their connections with the longtime Portuguese and *mestizo* residents who were well established in the lower Mekong, which was becoming the new engine of economic prosperity with the decline of Quảng Nam as a commercial center. Perhaps Jesuit popular success was due in part due to promotion of the “Chinese Rites” allowing Christian families to maintain ancestral altars. (It is unclear when the *Nam Giao* ritual began in Cochinchina.) The Franciscan Seraphic Mission, was established in Cochinchina, beginning with a house in Trà Kiệu in 1720. Franciscans established several churches in or near the capital in 1721, and a Franciscan was quickly appointed to Đồng Nai in 1722, where existing Saigon Christians, under an administration that was historically Cambodian, but had links to both Cambodian and Cochinchinese interests, reportedly offered him an existing church on their property.<sup>12</sup> They referred to the location of their “church in the court,” one of the earliest of the numerous churches founded after 1720, as Phu-Cam. This is often understood as a reference to Phú Cam village on the outskirts of Huế, where the Phủ Cam Cathedral was later constructed, but its original location is not known.

Another anti-Christian backlash soon occurred, although it does not appear to have been very severe. It may have been set off by the attempts to enforce the Pope's

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<sup>11</sup> Jesuit reports from Tonkin circa 1721 describe a Chinese governor of an area bordering on Cochinchina (*Tum-ke*), who had been Christian but turned against the church; a priest faced such hostility there he barely escaped with his life. Partly due to illness or death of senior missionaries, relatively few detailed reports survive from this period. *Lettres Édifiantes et Curieuses*, vol. 16, 53; Launay, *Histoire*, II, 573.

<sup>12</sup> Pérez, “Los Españoles en el Imperio de Annam.”

banning of the Chinese Rites in Cochinchina, beginning in 1717. The Cochinhinese court may have been observing events in China, and anticipating similar trouble, since the backlash followed on the heels of the Yongzheng Emperor's early 1724 decision to persecute Chinese Christians and force missionaries to take refuge in Canton (and later Macao). The Yongzheng decree might even have played a direct role in encouraging Christian merchants in China to shift increasingly to Cochinchina.

The French efforts to denounce the Chinese Rites, which resulted in the Vatican taking the position that the Rites were unequivocally ancestor worship, greatly strengthened the *Chan* Buddhist's advantage at the Cochinhinese court. At the end of 1724, the *Ming* Prince issued a decree forbidding the open practice of the Christian faith. This was aimed at priests who had begun forbidding the Chinese Rites in line with the Vatican's requirement. Christian officials, including those from *Đông Nai* and *Saigon*, fell out of favor at the court. The king instructed priests to cease instructing their congregations not to honor their deceased parents at an ancestral altar. Some priests prudently left the country or went underground for a short period and were not harmed. The impact of the decree on the far south was less significant than in the court, although a false accusation culminated in the imprisonment of chief evangelist, named *Quintaon*, in *Saigon*.

Franciscan reports describe the *Nội Tân* as one of the two chief officials leading the anti-Christian faction, along with the *Án Sát*. The Historical Office does not explicitly describe the presence of Christian factions in the court, but the *Tạp Lục* and *Thực Lục* describe an abrupt transfer of power to this new senior minister. In the *Tạp Lục*, the king orders an unnamed civil official, the *Diên Tường* Earl, to establish defensive forts in *Quảng Nam*, *Quảng Ngãi* and *Phú Yên*. A civil service examination produced 77 "*Trúng Cách*" graduates in 1721, and yet the *Minh* Prince abruptly revised the examination subjects, requiring all of them to repeat the examination. All 77 of these exemplary scholars refused, and consequently were not accepted into the administration. In their place, in 1722, the king appointed the same *Diên Tường* Earl to an office called *Nội Tân Tổng Tri Chư Quân Thân* (revised to read *Quân Sự* in an annotation). The *Thực Lục* reverses the order of these final two events, and the *Diên Tường* Earl is named as *Nguyễn Khoa Đăng*, the son of the reputed *Diễn Chí* author *Nguyễn Khoa Chiêm*. An

examination occurs in 1721, without the story about 77 graduates. Đăng is then sent to wipe out a band of robbers at Hồ Xá (or *truông* Nha Hồ, an overland route between Quảng Trị and Huế). The examination producing 77 graduates is placed in 1723 in this text; in this version, they are summoned to the court for a second examination, but all fail the second time. The second anti-Christian high court officer mentioned by missionaries, the *Án Sát*, is not described in the *Thực Lục* by that name.<sup>13</sup>

A month after the *Minh* Prince's death in 1725, Flory reports that the new king ordered the missionaries to leave the country:

The king having died, his oldest son succeeded him, and whose paternal grandparents/relatives [*les parents paternels*] are Christian, had always appeared extremely well disposed to us. However, [we are treated more severely] than under the other reigns... When one points out to the king how contrary this is to expectations, especially after the strong recommendation which, while dying, his paternal grandfather made him concerning our holy religion, His Majesty answers that he does not have any part of that; but that the great ones of the kingdom want it ... it appears that if the king offended the great ones, they would form a dangerous faction against him, supported especially by the second son, who appears to have the ambition to dethrone his brother, if he could.

In his reproduction of this letter, Cadière states that referring to the paternal grandparents of the new king as Christians is a “glaring error,” and revises the text to read “maternal grandparents.” Pires also suggests that the mother of the king had been baptized, helping draw her son toward Christianity. At the same time, the previous *Hiền* Prince and some of his relatives were, broadly speaking, more supportive of Christianity than the *Minh* Prince. In that sense, there may be at least some chance that Flory's statement was intended as written. Franciscans also later describe the new king justifying the reversal of his father's 1724 edict, saying he was following the lead of his paternal grandfather. (As Franciscans continued to gain allies in the court a brother of the king would be baptized in 1732, and given a high military command.)<sup>14</sup>

Franciscans who persevered in the year that followed Flory's letter provide a more nuanced view of the political scene. José de la Concepción claimed that although the edict against Christianity issued by the *Minh* Prince at the end of his life was not

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<sup>13</sup> Thái Văn Kiểm, “Nội-tán Hầu Nguyễn Khoa Đăng Khai-quốc Công-thần.”

<sup>14</sup> Launay, *Histoire*, II, 587; Cadière, “Généalogie de la Princesse Giai Épouse de Sai-Vuong”; Lorenzo Pérez, “Los Españoles en el Imperio de Annam,” part 12, 183-4.

immediately and publically reversed by his son, that edict was also not strictly enforced, due to the new monarch's Christian sympathies:

Although the King does not want [the priests to leave the court], said ... José de la Concepción, and has many reasons to silence the [Buddhist] court officials, yet, still in mourning, he temporizes until the custom finishes next year, and he declares himself absolutely. He is no idolator; he inclines to the Christianity, because his maternal grandparents, and [perhaps his] mother, were Christian.

For the Franciscans, this interval was necessary as a show of respect for the king's dead father. At the same time, however, they hinted that the new king heeded Christian teaching by avoiding "superstition and idolatry" in carrying out the mourning rituals, and confined himself to "atheistic" rituals of the "sect of the lawyers" (or Confucian rituals), which were necessary to appease his rival brothers and their supporters.<sup>15</sup>

José de la Concepción reports that as soon as the king had died, a Buddhist faction, backed by an anti-Christian prince, moved quickly to eliminate the Christian-leaning crown prince. The *Án Sát*, the young, ambitious official who held supreme authority during the *Minh* Prince's final years and led anti-Christian campaigns, ordered the failed assassination. The *Án Sát* was quickly executed; Franciscans report that he was killed and his body was defiled in front of the church. Although the *Thực Lục* does not mention an *An Sát*, it describes the murder of the *Nội Tân*, Nguyễn Khoa Chiêm's son; he was reportedly murdered, shortly after the king's death, by an unnamed thief.<sup>16</sup>

Rather than move against a brother directly, the king replaced the *Án Sát* with a governor sympathetic to the missionaries, and supported Christian mandarins in the court and provinces. At the same time, he ordered comprehensive reforms of Buddhist practice, seemingly to limit the wealth and prestige of these factions, either as a show of his Christian sympathies or desire to root out Buddhist corruption and decadence. The king destroyed the crowded Buddhist institutions within the court, and drove the monks out of the houses of his father's Buddhist concubines. He unfrocked the majority of Buddhist monks, and destroyed most religious imagery in the villages, permitting only a few monks, and some older shrines, to remain. In late 1725, Pires reports from *Đồng Nai* that although Quintan was still in prison with some prominent Christians, most practiced

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<sup>15</sup> Lorenzo Pérez, "Los Españoles en el Imperio de Annam," Part 4.

<sup>16</sup> *Thực Lục*, 140.

openly; the next year, the prohibition was officially rescinded, and Quinaon was released.<sup>17</sup>

Cadière notes that Pires describes the king's mother converting to Christianity a decade after death of both of the *Minh* Prince's queens (both the *Ninh* Prince's purported mother and the second named queen) is reported by the Historical Office. The *Mạc Cỗ Trai gia phả* was revised a month after the king's death in 1725, and again in 1765; contesting claims about the royal lineage were already being subject to revision.<sup>18</sup>

The Historical Office descriptions of ruler cannot be reconciled with missionary reports described above, and display numerous internal inconsistencies. The *Minh* Prince's heir is called the *Ninh* Prince. His maternal grandfather, who for the missionaries was Christian, is given the surname *Đào* in the *Thực Lục*, but in the *Liệt Truyện* this grandfather was an army officer named *Hồ Văn Mai*, from *Hương Trà* District near *Huế*. His daughter, the king's mother, was said to be a minor secondary wife within an elaborate ranking with more senior wives above her. She died at age 37 in 1716, implying she was born in 1679, and was raised in status to primary queen posthumously. The Historical Office does not name any wives of the *Minh* Prince who were honored as primary queens during their lifetimes.

The *Ninh* Prince's mother is inexplicably given the surname *Tông*, not *Hồ* (or *Đào*) like her father. An annotation asserts, without any clear logic, that she took the *Tông* surname after marrying the king. The *Liệt Truyện* names the mothers of the *Minh* Prince's second and fourth sons, but does not honor these two women as queens; mothers of the fifth, sixth and seventh sons, as well as seventeen later sons, are omitted entirely. The only other recorded queen (called *Tu Dung Phu Nhân*) was also said to have been originally a lower ranking wife, daughter of court official *Nguyễn Hữu Hạp*; her son

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<sup>17</sup> Pires reports sending a fellow Jesuit to Cambodia in 1725, and reports two Franciscans in Cambodia in 1726. Cadière, "Lettres de Missionnaires de la Cochinchine et du Tonkin au Commencement du XVIIIe Siècle."

<sup>18</sup> Cadière, assuming that the Historical Office is correct, guesses that Pires must have been referring to one of the former king's other secondary wives, who might have become a sort of adoptive mother to his son (after the death of the real mother); however, this would not explain numerous other contradictions in these biographies. Cadière, *ibid*.



Prince Điền was born in 1700. She was also elevated to be a primary queen in an unspecified year, again apparently after her death.<sup>19</sup>

The *Liệt Truyện* implies the *Ninh* Prince was the oldest son, since the biographical entry for the first son is removed from the list of princes (the others are either named or stated to be censored), a distinction reserved for the sovereign himself. In the *Tạp Lục*, the *Ninh* Prince, called Phúc Chú, is born in the more reasonable year of 1697, and this is this birth year that is repeated in the *Thực Lục*. A few years later, the *Liệt Truyện* contradicts this. The second son, Lê, died at the age of 74 in 1762, meaning he was born in 1689, when his father was fourteen. If this is the true birth year of the second son, the oldest son would have been born when the *Minh* Prince was fourteen or younger and his mother was reportedly eleven or younger. The text omits the third son; the fourth was born in 1693 and the eighth in 1699. In the *Liệt Truyện*, the fifth son, named Hải, died in a year that is omitted (*khuyết năm*). The name of the sixth son is removed (*khuyết tên*), and the seventh, Liêm, also died in a year which is omitted. This would make the *Ninh* Prince, were he born in 1697, the fifth, sixth or seventh son. The *Thực Lục*, Flory and the Franciscans, report that this king was the oldest prince.<sup>20</sup>

The most dramatic growth of the church was in the south; Quy Nhơn (Cai-nhum or Kenhung) dominated by Christians by 173. The original gentile population was said to have been lost in the Cambodia wars and local strife; the Christians of this town refused to worship its traditional tutelary deity. Franciscans also gained allies in the court itself, baptizing in 1732 a brother of the king; the king gave his Christian prince the office *Ong-Doi* (perhaps *ông đội*, division commander), and he still held this rank 22 years later under the Buddhist-allied successor.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> The 2nd and fourth sons were born to Trần Thị Nghi and Lê Thị Tuyên. *Tạp lục*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, 72-73, 97-105. Hội Đồng Trị Sự Nguyễn Phước Tộc, *Nguyễn Phước Tộc Gia Phả*, 149-154;

<sup>20</sup> The *Liệt Truyện* states the fourth died at 51 in 1743, and the eighth died at 55 in 1753. The *Minh* King's 30-fifth and 30-sixth sons, and his fourth daughter, are also omitted. *Tạp Lục*, I:39b; *Thực Lục*, 110, 138-140; *Liệt Truyện*, 73-74. Confusingly, Bissachère (who lived in Tonkin from 1790 to 1804), reports that the *Minh* King ruled 40-two years instead of 30-5, and the *Võ* King took the throne in 1732, seven years earlier than claimed in the *Thực Lục*. He reports a second *Minh* King, rather than *Ninh* King, ruling for an unknown period of time between them. The lineage as known to observers in Tonkin at the end of the century thus also seems to differ from the court records. Lemonnier de La Bissachère, *État actuel du Tunkin, de la Cochinchine, et des royaumes de Camboge, Laos et Lac-Tho*, vol. 1-3 (Lausanne: Galignani, 1812), vol. 2, 138-201.

<sup>21</sup> Lorenzo, Pérez, "Los Españoles en el Imperio de Annam," part 12.

In 1737, Francisco de la Concepcion described a Christian woman as “mother of the first concubine of the king,” held in highest esteem by the king and the whole country, praised for frequently interceding on behalf of the Seraphic Mission. It is unclear whether the daughter, reportedly was allowed by her husband the king to affirm her own Christian faith, was mother of a potential heir. On the northern front, captured Tonkin soldiers were pardoned, given aid and resettled when the king discovered they were Christians.

Despite finding favor in the court, however, internecine rivalries between the orders over the future of the Cochinchinese church cloud the remainder of this king’s reign. Launay’s *MEP* letters suggest that Christians remained influential in the court of the 1730s, but offer few details, and the king’s death goes unreported. Cochinchina was ultimately divided primarily between ecclesiastical French and Jesuits, with Franciscans operating Cambodia, including the border lands of ambiguous status controlled by a *mestizo* governor. By the time Jean Koffler and Pierre Poivre arrived in Hué in 1740s, a different situation was observed at the court.<sup>22</sup>

### A New Intervention in Cambodia

The Franciscans in Saigon had expanded to three churches by 1731, which were destroyed in that year during a Cambodian invasion of Saigon. The immediate outcome of this incursion is unclear, but by 1733, José de la Concepción had rebuilt churches in Saigon and surrounding towns, in 1739 opening a church in a port he called Ka-hom, on the border with Cambodia. Francisco de la Concepcion, writing in 1737, was explicit about the high status of Iberian and mestizo residents in Saigon in the eyes of both the Cambodian king and Cochinchinese merchants:

In the provinces of *Đông Nai* (Dou-nay), at a great distance, even in times of peace the Christians suffered much. Our brother Fr. Jose wrote to me that they have achieved at present much peace. All the mandarins showed themselves to be very inclined like this towards the Priests as well as the Christians. The wars that have been kept up for many years with the Cambodians, they were settled. They held themselves in Cambodia to receive the attack of this king. All the years, they

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<sup>22</sup> Launay, *Histoire*, II, 37.

had sent four elephants, and the cochinchinese could always go, whenever they wanted, to recruit in that kingdom. The past king of Cambodia had conceded to Don Martin Diez, that he is the first mandarin of that king, six small villages for tribute to him; the past year, the new king took away two. By February of this year D. Martin Diez wrote to the mandarins of this king in European characters, complaining to the king. The mandarins called to our brother Fr. Jose, to interpret, apologize, and it was the P. Manuel Quintao, and the mandarins they wrote to that king, that they returned the villages, and could not determine a thing without counting on D. Martin Diez, whom they constituted the supreme mandarin of all the cochinchinese, that found themselves in that kingdom, with whom the king could not go into. This D. Martin Diez has shown himself to be very dear to this king.<sup>23</sup>

Francisco de la Concepcion refers in a 1744 letter to Martin Diaz as the chief mandarin of the Cambodian king at his capital of Tonol, and notes that Martin Diaz introduced the Franciscan Valerius Rist to that king in 1724, which led to the founding of “a very peculiar church” run by Portuguese and mestizos. The presence of influential Christian merchants in the far south was also remarked upon by Pierre Poivre, who met a Christian official from Đồng Nai while in Huế in 1749 that responded enthusiastically to Poivre’s commercial overtures by offering a contract for hardwoods. Twelve or fifteen years before, this man reported, Đồng Nai had belonged to Cambodia, “of which it made the best part.” Bandits from Cochinchina had seized all of Cambodia at that time; they kept Đồng Nai and returned the rest to the Cambodian king. The Cambodian king became a tributary ruler, assisted by a Cochinchinese resident official. Poivre does state clearly whether that king gave tribute to the Huế court, or directly to the bandits who seized Đồng Nai. *MEP* reports, described earlier, note that a Cochinchinese colony with a Jesuit priest had been established in Đồng Nai between 1670 and 1675, Cochinchinese Seraphic Mission churches are described in the Saigon region from 1722 to 1731, and 1733 to 1739.<sup>24</sup>

In the *Tap Luc*, in 1732, an unnamed general was sent to attack Cambodia, take the land of Saigon, and establish *châu Định Viễn* and Long Hồ Encampment. (Control of Long Hồ, upriver from Mỹ Tho at a strategic fork in Tiền Giang River, permits access to

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<sup>23</sup> Francisco de la Concepcion. “Relación del P. Francisco de la Concepción: Misionero de Cochinchina (fechada en 24 de julio de 1737).”

<sup>24</sup> The “best part” in this context is its convenience for trade, bringing goods along the Đồng Nai River from the highlands. Poivre, “Voyage en Cochinchine”; Cadière, “Thomas Bowyear.”

both of the Mekong's major branches.) The land of Saigon being taken by the court in 1732 seems to contradict the earlier claim that Nguyễn Hữu Cảnh settled Saigon in 1698.

The *Thông Chí* suggests that that when Mo Jiu allegedly transferred his loyalty to the *Minh* Prince in 1708, he controlled the entire lower Mekong. The *Thông Chí* omits the *Tạp Lục* story that an unnamed general was sent to attack Cambodia in 1738, to take the land of Saigon. However, the *Thông Chí* repeats the second *Tạp Lục* claim about 1732; in this text, the *Ninh* Prince ordered Gia Định officials to claim the Tiên Giang River from Mo Jiu, creating Định Viễn *châu* and Long Hồ Garrison.

The *Thông Chí* main narrative of Gia Định's political history has no battles in 1732. In that narrative, Saigon was already settled in 1698 by Nguyễn Hữu Cảnh. However, there is a second competing narrative within the *Thông Chí*, with an elaborate clash between the Longmen guard under Chen Chang-shuan's son, and Lao and Cambodian forces. This story is buried deep in the *Thông Chí*, in a local history explaining why an old wooden bridge in Saigon came to be called the Cambodian Bridge.

In this bridge story, Ai Lao man Sá Tót brought Cambodian troops from Cầu Nam to raid Gia Định in 1731. They killed the forces of the *Đạt Thanh* Marquis, which the Gia Định Controller sent to meet them at Bến Lức. Chen Chang-shuan's son Trần Đại Định (to avoid confusion, I will refer to "Ming loyalists" resident for more than one generation by the Vietnamese spelling of their names) then dispersed them with his Longmen guard troops, building an earthen rampart for defense. Trương Phúc Vĩnh ordered Nguyễn Phúc Chiêm to join Định in the attack, and the enemy retreated. Vĩnh, Chiêm and Định launched an attack, seizing Cầu Nam.<sup>25</sup>

The king Im had a son named Tha. (Mak Phoeun's reconstruction of the royal lineage ends in the early 18th century, and he does not discuss any sons of Im.) Im and Tha fled to Sơn Bô prefecture, asking Trần Đại Định for a ceasefire because of Lao border raids. Trương Phúc Vĩnh insisted that Định continue his attack, and Tha fled, only returning to Lovek when heavy rains forced the army back Gia Định. Lao in Cầu Nam their raids, and Tha raised an army to fight them.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> The Long Môn met the Cambodians at Vườn Trầu, and built a rampart at Hóa Phong.

<sup>26</sup> *Thông Chí*: VI:15a-19b.

In 1732, Trương Phúc Vĩnh ordered attacks on the invader from Laos, but Tha bribed him into leaving Trần Đại Định alone. Vĩnh lied to the court that Định was conspiring with Tha, but Định and Tha together defeated the Lao invader, with Định installing Tha as king at Lovek before returning to Gia Định.<sup>27</sup>

Trương Phúc Vĩnh reported to the court that Trần Đại Định had fled to Guangdong, and imprisoned Định's entire clan. Định avoided ambush and sailed to the capital to report Vĩnh's deception. His cousin Thành begged him not to raise an accusation against the court's most powerful family, but Định insisted that the clan of his father Chen Chang-shuan (Trần Thượng Xuyên) had been generals loyal to the southern court for generations. This statement is impossible to reconcile with claims that Chang-shuan first arrived in 1679 as a deputy of Yang Yan-di (Dương Ngạn Dịch).

Reaching the Hàn River mouth in Danang, Thành steered the ship to the east instead (to Guangdong?), and Định killed him on the spot, continuing to Quảng Nam. He was imprisoned, and died after twelve days. Because Nguyễn Phúc Chiêm, a respected warrior feared by the Lào, maintained Định's innocence, he was honored posthumously. Trương Phúc Vĩnh was demoted and Nguyễn Hữu Doãn was made the new Controller.

The *Thực Lục* follows earlier texts in noting Long Hồ and Định Viễn's establishment in 1732 by an unnamed official; like the *Thông Chí*, it omits the *Tạp Lục* description of a general sent from the court to attack and seize Saigon. That story is replaced with a facile statement that the king decided to form Long Hồ because he observed that Gia Định is a very big place.<sup>28</sup>

The *Thực Lục* offers an account similar to a section of the Cambodian bridge story (and omits the bridge). Tha bribed Vĩnh, who left Trần Đại Định in his place, while pretending that Định refused to attack. Nguyễn Phúc Chiêm then commanded Trần Biên, putting fear into the people there (in the *Thông Chí*, Lào people).<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Mak Pheoun does not speculate on the identity of the king in Lovek in 1732, but has Sī Dhammarāja II returning for a third reign by 1738, lasting until his death in 1747. *Thông Chí*, *ibid*; Mak Pheoun, *Histoire*, 429.

<sup>28</sup> *Tạp Lục*, I:39a; *Thông Chí*, III:7b-8a; *Thực Lục*, 143.

<sup>29</sup> A pagoda in Biên Hòa used by Nguyễn Phúc Vân in his attack on Cambodia was endowed by Nguyễn Phúc Chú as Hộ Quốc pagoda. *Thực Lục*, 142-143; *Thông Chí*, *ibid*.

## A “New” Mạc Clan in Cambodia

European sources do not support does not support the Historical Office description of a “new” Mạc clan arriving in the late 17th century. In 1749, Poivre notes that Cambodia had lost Đồng Nai province in the 1730s, and the port of Pontiamas in Hà Tiên, the remaining port under Cambodia’s control, had been seized at an unspecified date by “a simple merchant mestisse Chinese” from Cochinchina, who established a small kingdom, paying the Cochinchinese king for protection, including a hundred soldiers, while also giving a smaller tribute to the Cambodian king, who was obliged to accept his presence. Poivre is explicit that this was a new sovereign, who had recently begun to attract Cochinchinese ships to his port to trade in rice, wax, ivory and various other goods.<sup>30</sup>

A man called Thiên Tứ apparently erected steles in Hà Tiên, dated 1735, to honor his parents, who are described in the *Tap Lục* and *Thực Lục* as Mo Jiu (Mạc Cửu) and his wife from a Nguyễn clan. The steles are dated with the enigmatic *Long Phi* (*Longfei*) reign period, the meaning of which is not well understood; Claudine Salmon points out that *Longfei* is associated with Ming loyalists in different contexts and appears from Phó Hiến to Malacca in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Texts describing the origins of the Hà Tiên rulers repeat a formulaic statement that Mo Jiu left Guangdong out of loyalty to the Ming, though the Southern Ming were driven from Guangdong long before Cửu and his mother reportedly arrive.<sup>31</sup>

Early Mo/Mạc in Hà Tiên may have used the standard Mạc character, and the Mo surname on 1735 tombs in the same way as the Mạc (莫) kings. In the *Tap Lục* biography of Cửu’s son Mạc Thiên Tứ, however, at least in copies associated with the Nguyễn Historical Office, the name is written with the element *áp* to the right of the character (鄭, which bears a resemblance to the surname Trịnh). The relationship between the Hà Tiên Mạc and Mạc Dynasty, since their surnames may have been identical before the 19th

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<sup>30</sup> Poivre, “Voyage du Pierre Poivre en Cochinchine.”

<sup>31</sup> The *Thông Chí* names Cửu’s home village as Lê Quách. Charles Wheeler suggests a possible connection between the *Longfei* reign period in Hội An and a 16th century pirate. Wheeler, Charles, “Cross-cultural Trade,” 135-137; Claudine Salmon, “Réfugiés Ming dans les Mers du sud vus à travers diverses inscriptions (ca. 1650-ca. 1730),” *BEFEO* 90:90-91 (2003), 177-227; *Thông Chí*, III:64b.

century, should be considered unresolved. It is not known how Mạc royalty in Guangdong responded to the War of the Three Feudatories.<sup>32</sup>

The *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, with an 1818 preface by an “adopted son,” is not truly a genealogy; it gives no history of lineage before Mo Jiu’s birth in 1655 in “Hải Khang District,” on the Leizhou Peninsula except to state that his mother, who joined him in the south, was a devout Buddhist. The *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* describes Cừ’s first arrival in Mang-Kham, called Phụng Thành by Chinese, in 1671 at seventeen. The Cambodia king made him *oknha* with authority over all commerce, which suggests he controlled customs on the Mekong. In the *Thông Chí*, a temple for Mo Jiu’s worship also existed in Đồng Nai, hinting that this Mạc clan was associated with all of Gia Định.<sup>33</sup>

There is no clear equivalence between the historical figure Piauwjā and Mo Jiu as described in nineteenth century records. Descriptions of the Mạc tend to suggest they were inclusive rulers, allowing Cochinchinese and Christians, safe haven. If Mo Jiu were really a “Ming loyalist,” there is no evidence that he arrived at the head of a Ming navy. As Pierre Poivre notes, the Portuguese traders in Cambodia were active in Hà Tiên, and would have remained so in the 1670s, as noted below. Hà Tiên does not seem to have been continuously occupied, since it was reported to be destroyed and in ruins upon Alexander Hamilton’s visit in 1720. Since European descriptions of the Mạc only begin with the man reported to be his son, Mạc Thiên Tứ, there is no clear confirmation of the story of Mo Jiu’s arrival in the 1670s found in the *Tạp Lục* and *Toàn Thư*.

Some 18th century travellers describe reaching Can Cao by going up the Mekong River from the coast. In 1768, Lasseur’s boatmen took him off the Hậu Giang River without his knowledge, on a side channel; he was detained for several days at a Chinese city called So-lin-son, in the territory of Can Cao, before he was allowed to continue to Phnom Penh. The Vĩnh Tế canal, constructed in 1819, would later permit commercial traffic to travel some 90 kilometers from Châu Đốc to the port at Hà Tiên, but in the mid-eighteenth century, travellers followed a dirt track part of the way between Hà Tiên and

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<sup>32</sup> *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 15-12. Trương Minh Đạt, *Nghiên Cứu Hà Tiên*, 90, 477; *Tạp Lục*, V:169b-180b.

<sup>33</sup> Chinese officials had long had a place in Cambodian courts; Europeans report, at various times, Cochinchinese, Malay and Chinese in the king’s service. Cambodian chronicles state that Srei Dhamarājā, who in Mak Pheoun’s chronology reigned from 1627 to 1632, appointed 4 Chinese commanders over the kingdom’s regiments of Chinese troops; they were described as close to the king, and provided him with Chinese bodyguards. Mak Pheoun, *Histoire*, 216-217; *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 15-16.

the Mekong River except during the heaviest rains, when the path was flooded. This is also confirmed by Alexander Hamilton. L'Assesseur's diversion, in a dry April, was not to the coast.<sup>34</sup>

That Can Cao was Franciscan territory might partially explain *MEP* reticence in describing it. However, the missionaries in Saigon, deeply involved in the region, never mentioned Mo Jiu, or mentioned Can Cao by name during his lifetime. When Franciscans arrived, in 1720, Hamilton reports Hà Tiên's town still lying in ruins after its 1717 destruction. Instead, Francisco de la Concepción reports that the "first mandarin" of Cambodia was Don Martin Diez, seemingly a mestizo official friendly with the Saigon missionaries, who had been given six villages (in an unspecified location) by the previous Cambodian king. In 1736, when the new king took away two of the villages, he sent to Cochinchina a letter of complaint in European script, which the Saigon missionaries translated for the local Cochinchinese officials. These officials ordered the Cambodian king to return the villages to Diez, who was given authority over the many Cochinchinese doing business in that kingdom.<sup>35</sup>

A new church was built in Saigon in 1745, and Saigon appears in published *MEP* letters for the first time in 1747, in reference to the Franciscan churches "from Saigon [four or five hours by small boat from Đồng Nai] to Cambodia." Faced with internecine conflicts over missionary jurisdiction, as an alternative route for expansion, *MEP* considered a move into Hà Tiên.<sup>36</sup>

In the *Tap Lục*, Mạc Thiên Tứ became Hà Tiên commander in 1736, after his father's death; the text ignores the confirmed destruction of Hà Tiên from 1717 to at least 1720. He his officials dressed in red court costumes and sent tri-annual tribute. Hà Tiên became a center of commerce, learning and devotion; Buddhist, Taoist, and Confucian monks and teachers came from Quy Nhon, Guangdong and elsewhere. In contrast to this

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<sup>34</sup> Another possibility is that L'Assesseur passed along a smaller channel, either natural or man made, to the Tiên Giang River. He wrote that the Can Cao governor was under the authority of the Cambodian king, but was gradually asserting his independence. In 1775, Behaine himself writes of travelling from the coast, up the Bassac (Mekong) to Can Cao in two days, to meet its governor; the trip from Can Cao to the capital of Cambodia took another two days. Can Cao must be located on or near the Mekong, but whether it located at Saigon is open to question. Launay, *Histoire*, III, 531. Hamilton, *New Account of the East Indies*, 195.

<sup>35</sup> *Relación de P. Francisco de la Concepción*, 24 de Julio de 1737

<sup>36</sup> L'Assesseur states two Franciscans established a church in Can Cao; they are apparently the same two Franciscans later forced to flee Saigon. Launay, *Histoire*, II, 162-163.



text, missionaries praise the Can Cao governor's Christianity; his highest official was a Cochinchinese Christian. He later allowed Pigneaux de Behaine and others to open a college at Hòn Đát (on the coast near Hà Tiên's center), and one of his sons was later baptized. Other Cochinchinese officials in the region from Đồng Nai to Cambodia also reportedly urged Christian elites persecuted near the court to join them. Thus, to the extent that migration of Cochinchinese into Cambodia occurred, many were Christians escaping the mid-century persecutions.<sup>37</sup>

The *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* places Mo Jiu's death in 1735; Tứ allegedly paid a personal visit to the court in 1736, and king made him supreme commander (*tổng binh đại đô đốc*), with a red court costume and seal.<sup>38</sup>

A section of the *Thông Chí* describing Hà Tiên's geographic features, notes that Quy Nhơn monk Hòa Long Đại arrived to build a mountain pagoda in 1737. Allegedly as reprisal for the seizure of Hà Tiên, a Cambodian man *Nặc Bồn* attacked Hà Tiên in 1739; an unnamed *Mạc Tôn* (宗) pushed them back to Sài Mạt Prefecture (*Phủ*), occupied by both *Han* and *Yi* people (Chinese and Cambodians – the role of Cochinchinese is unclear). A wife of *Mạc Hầu* (侯), Nguyễn Thị, organized the wives to feed the troops. As a reward, the court made *Mạc Tôn* was made a commander (*đô đốc tướng*), and given a red court costume, Nguyễn Thị was also honored. Thus, in a second version of the legend how the *Mạc* became Hà Tiên commanders, which is also included in the *Thông Chí*, the *Mạc* general is not named, his promotion has no relation to Mo Jiu, and he received the same official post and court costume awarded to *Mạc Thiên Tứ*, but four years later than the date they were awarded in the “standard” version. Since both cannot be true, one possibility is that the 1739 *Mạc Tôn* episode of was present in the earliest *Thông Chí* manuscript. In a later revision, the “standard” 1736 *Mạc Thiên Tứ* episode was added, yet the 1739 version was not removed.<sup>39</sup>

In the *Thông Chí* bridge story, Cambodian king Keo Hoa (apparently, Im), died in 1736, and his son Tha was placed on the throne, even though Trần Đại Định seems to

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<sup>37</sup> The *Tạp Lục* also notes the arrival in Hà Tiên of a wealthy Cantonese merchant, Trần Từ Hoài (also called Trần Từ Tính), in 1736. *Tạp Lục*, V:169b-181a; *Thực Lục*, 145-146.

<sup>38</sup> *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 20-21.

<sup>39</sup> The monk's arrival and Cambodian reprisal occur in the section describing geographic features of Hà Tiên. Like all these texts, the *Mạc* surname is written with the *áp* element. *Thông Chí*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

have installed Tha already in 1732. The king Thâm (equivalent to Mak Pheoun's Srī Dhammarājā II) returned from Siam and resided in a region called Lô Khu. Thâm's young brother So joined Tha in Lovek, forcing Tha to flee to Phnom Penh, and So raised a rebel force in Lò Việt and Cầu Nam. Tha then resided in Saigon, on the Nghi Giang River, reportedly with the permission of a Gia Định official. (At this point, Tha built the Cambodian Bridge.) So took total control of Cambodia, and restored Thâm to the throne, where he paid tribute to the southern court in 1737. The *Thông Chí* sequence ends with two rival Cambodian kings residing in Saigon and Lovek.

The *Thực Lục* borrows some aspects of each of these stories. Mo Jiu died in 1735, with posthumous court honors; in 1736, Mạc Thiên Tứ became commander (*đô đốc*) of Hà Tiên, without the red court costume. Tứ received three tax exempt royal ships and authority to mint his own coins, and created a fortified city; the text draws on the *Tạp Lục* to describe a bustling center and literary works. The *Thông Chí* battles and Cambodian king residing in Saigon are all omitted from the *Thực Lục*, which only mentions Thâm's disloyalty to the court after Im's death. Tha was placed on the throne in 1736, but not in Saigon; when Cambodia sent tribute in 1737, the name of the king is omitted. The 1739 Cambodian attack on Hà Tiên is described in the same terms as in the *Thông Chí*, except that Sài Mạt is no longer called a prefecture (a term reserved for "Cambodian" provinces). Tứ receives the red court costume in 1739, and illogically, he is promoted for a second time to commander (*đô đốc*), which already occurred in 1736.<sup>40</sup>

Charles Wheeler's suggestion that *Chan* Buddhism played a key role in the integration of the far south into a Vietnamese state is logical for Buddhist migrants. At the same time, there were waves of Christian migrants, particularly from Quảng Nam, to Saigon and Hà Tiên. The remixing of stories suggests that the episodes in the Lê and Nguyễn texts are unlikely to be accurate descriptions of the early Mạc clan. In particular, the transition of rule from "Mo Jiu" to his "son" is problematic.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> The *Thực Lục*, borrowing from the *Tạp Lục*, describes Tứ as being made *Đô Đốc* of Hà Tiên Garrison in 1736; as we have seen several times in the *Thực Lục*, this appears anachronistic, as *Trấn* (Garrison), and the title *Đô Đốc*, were not in widespread use at the time. *Thông Chí*, II:79a, III:9b, VI:15a.-19b

<sup>41</sup> Wheeler writes, "This seventeenth-century patronage of Buddhist temples and monasteries and local deity temples served the Nguyen lords' primary need to control the wider demographic shifts underway in their frontier regions... By 1708, when Mac Cuu, the ruler of Ha Tien, declared his loyalty to the Nguyen, Vietnamese dynastic rule for the first time extended to the Gulf of Siam, consuming the southern half of historical Cambodia. By the 1690s tensions peaked among Cochinchina's indigenous inhabitants. The

## The *Võ* Prince's Reforms

Pierre Poivre later called the new king at this time “Thieong, eighth King of Cochinchina, of the family of Dieongs, former mayors of the Tonkin palace, is the most powerful prince and the most despotic to control the country of Cochinchina. He has reigned for twenty years, although he is only 39 years old...” Poivre even marks the king's birthday, October 2, 1711 or 1712. Published *MEP* letters do not remark on the death of the *Ninh* Prince, so it is difficult to evaluate Poivre's assertion that the new king took power circa 1730. Neither the name or title Thieong, nor the family name “Dieong” matches any dynastic records; the mayors of the Tonkin palace.<sup>42</sup>

For Bissachère, from his vantage in Tonkin 60 to 75 years later, the *Hiên* Prince was the most powerful ruler, extending the country's territories and promoting good government. He believed that a weak *Võ* Prince took the throne in 1732, agreeing roughly with Poivre's timeline. Bissachère believed the kings were descended from Tonkin royalty, similar to Poivre's claim of ancestors who were “mayors of Tonkin palace.”<sup>43</sup>

The *Tap Lục* claims that the *Ninh* Prince ruled thirteen years, dying in 1738, when his oldest son Phúc Chú took the throne. The name Chú is crossed out and amended to Khoát. (Having noted this, I will use the standard Khoát below.) On taking the throne, he built a new palace in Phú Xuân, even though his father already had a palace there. He appointed a new senior advisor, Nguyễn Đăng Đệ, described in the fourth book of the *Tap Lục* as originally a member of a Trịnh clan, descendants of early Lê supporter Trịnh Cam, but resident in Huế.<sup>44</sup>

The *Thực Lục* has the *Võ* Prince born to a mother from a Trương clan on October 12, 1714, contradicting Poivre. It agrees with the *Tap Lục* that he took the throne at 25 in

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Nguyen court preempted this volatile combination that could have produced rebellion along cultural, religious, or political lines. Buddhist monks offered Lord Nguyen greater legitimacy, since Buddhism provided one of the few common bonds within this diverse, hybridizing society...” Charles Wheeler, “Missionary Buddhism in a Post-Ancient World: Monks, Merchants, and Colonial Expansion in Seventeenth-Century Cochinchina (Vietnam).”

<sup>42</sup> Poivre, “Voyage en Cochinchine,” 483-484.

<sup>43</sup> He states that the *Võ* King followed a second *Minh* King (as opposed to *Ninh* in the *Tap Lục*), who reigned for an unspecified period. *Tap Lục*, *ibid*; Bissachère, *État actuel du Tonkin*, *ibid*.

<sup>44</sup> Where *trường* Phù Lưu was is unclear. *Thực Lục*, 146; *Tap Lục*, I:39a-b, IV:143b, V:169b-181a.

1738, but notes that the king used the Lê calendar and only called himself king in correspondence with tributary states. Sinoa's 17th century correspondence with the VOC had not used Lê reign names, yet Poivre describes a 1749 letter to France which does.

Jesuit court physician Jean Siebert arrived in 1741 to the acclaim of the king's mother, who instructed her son on the previous monarch's high esteem for Christianity. Siebert's converts included two brothers of the late king and their families, the kingdom's governor-general, the viceroy at Dinh Cát who commanded the northern wall, and many military officers. Siebert makes no mention of Poivre's strange claim that although the king had ruled for twenty years, it was only in 1744 that he "declared himself king of Cochinchina..." A similar statement appears in the *Tạp Lục* and *Thực Lục*, in which the *Võ* Prince declaring himself a king independent of the Lê in 1744 (Poivre does not link 1744 kingship to renouncing the Lê).<sup>45</sup>

Poivre's description places the capital at Huế, with senior officials spread out for leagues in different directions. The officer responsible for overseeing the palace was a Cambodian, said to be favored by the king. The king's paternal uncle, who held a senior position, was 64, retiring after years controlling the kingdom. Younger maternal relatives were dominant and controlled commerce.<sup>46</sup>

For Bissachère, the *Võ* Prince's inability to control his court threw the country into chaos. Unlike earlier kings, he had no popular support. Dominated by his mistress and a "skillful but perverse minister," the king placed a concubine's son in the line of succession before his wife's two sons, leaving orders in the care of the minister. Koffler describes a sweeping social change: a 1744 edict required people to forsake "sordid"

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<sup>45</sup> He declined to swear the oath of loyalty to the king because it was in the name of a pagan goddess, suggesting the religion of the court at Sinoa was not strictly *Chan* Buddhist at this time. Dinh Cát is called by some Jesuits the "second capital," rather than Dinh Chiêm. *Voyages et Travaux Missionnaires de la Compagnie de Jesus II*, 261-270.

<sup>46</sup> Many aspects of Poivre's description of the capital are difficult to reconcile with Phú Xuân; he describes a river that could be a quarter-league across, four major palaces and residences of maternal uncles some hours travel apart from each other and from the Chinese quarter where Poivre was housed. Poivre met an eleven year old son of the king's first concubine, noting that according to the custom in Cochinchina, the king does raise any children except the heir to the throne; the others are each sent to a mandarin for adoption. Poivre noted the king had nine such adopted children.

Tonkin clothing for finer Chinese clothing. Koffler seems to have first visited the court in 1747, so this may be hearsay.<sup>47</sup>

Two senior officials, in the *Tap Lục*, were Nguyễn Đăng Đệ and Nguyễn Đăng Thịnh, originally of the Trịnh clan. They are described as fifth-generation descendants of Trịnh Cam from Nghệ An, a Minister of War under the early Lê that moved to Thuận Hóa to escape the Mạc. It is not actually clear to what extent Nghệ An Trịnh could have been pillars of a Lê government before the Restoration, and in the *Toàn Thư*, the Minister of War in 1521 was Lê Thúc Hựu. The *Tap Lục* itself does not mention Trịnh Cam in its description of the Lê-Mạc conflicts in Thuận Hóa. The *Tap Lục* states that Đệ changed his own name, whereas the *Liệt Truyện* states that the *Minh* Prince gave him the royal surname after he entered the civil service. His sons are also given the clan name Nguyễn Đăng, with the exception of the most successful son, Nguyễn Cư Trinh, who apparently used the name of an unrelated, rival Nguyễn Cư clan.<sup>48</sup>

In the *Tap Lục*, the *Võ* Prince proclaimed himself king in 1744 at the urging of Nguyễn Đăng Đệ's brother Thịnh. A new seal was created for the king (*quốc vương*). An annotation explains that the Nguyễn clan had earlier been called *chúa*, and Phúc Chu's bell carved with King of Đại Việt is simply ignored. Đệ was placed in charge of reforming and rationalizing the administration according to Sinicized structures. It agrees that people wore Chinese (*bắc quốc*) clothing. The *Thông Chí* states that the court was restructured in 1738, without mentioning any changes in 1744. It includes a reference to changing costumes and abandoning false *Bắc Hà* (here, Tonkin) customs of the past.

The *Thực Lục* repeats the claim of a 1744 seal. An annotation notes that the king previously used seals with the title *Thái Phó* Grand Duke and Supreme General (*Tổng Trấn Tướng Quân*). This seems to contradict its own report of a 1709 seal for a “Nguyễn Lord of Đại Việt” (*Đại Việt Quốc Nguyễn Chúa*).<sup>49</sup>

The *Tap Lục* suggests that power was centralized in the hands of Nghệ An migrants and Ming guests. The new senior minister of Trịnh descent appointed allies to high civil and military posts, including several Grand Marshals. Officials changed their

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<sup>47</sup> Cadière, “Le Changement du Costume sous Vo-Vuong, ou une Crise Religieuse a Hué au XVIIIe Siècle,” *BAVH* 2:4 (1915):417-424.

<sup>48</sup> Trịnh Cam was from “Phù Lưu trường” in Thiên Lộc. *Tap Lục*, V:143b; *Thông Chí*, Book III:58a-b; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*; *Liệt Truyện*, 196.

<sup>49</sup> *Thông Chí*, III:8a; *Tap Lục*, I:40a-b.

costumes and “bad customs transformed into civilized practices.” The classical six ministries were said to be established. If these reports are accurate, they may have existed in name only, and were held closely by this faction, since Nguyễn Đăng Thịnh himself was the first Minister of Rites and Minister of Civil Service, and the Ming loyalist Lê Quang Đại (father of the future *Gia Long* Minister of War Lê Quang Định), was both Minister of War and Minister of Finance.<sup>50</sup>

A phrase appears in the *Tạp Lục*: “after eight generations, return to Trung Đô.” The *Thực Lục* explains that after eight generations in Thuận Hóa, Phú Xuân would become an imperial center; the capital was now called the Đô Thành, officials wore new civil and military costumes.

The claim that a new capital was built is not corroborated by visitors. Siebert arrived in 1741, and Koffler in 1747, and neither makes any obvious mention of changes to what they describe as a wooden palace on the north end of the “Isle of the King” or “Royal Isle.” (Koffler states only that Chinese clothing was introduced.) The king and noble persons were clustered on this narrow island, one league long, formed between the river and a second channel.<sup>51</sup>

In 1744, in the *Tạp Lục*, the previous kings were given imperial titles. The name of the *Võ* Prince’s grandfather is written as Chu, but amended to Khoát, yet the *Võ* Prince’s name is also written as Chu, but amended to Khoát. As noted previously, the

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<sup>50</sup> The *Tạp Lục* notes that equivalents to the 6 ministries had existed under earlier names. Nguyễn Thừa Tự controlled Quảng Nam, while Nguyễn Đăng Đệ’s son Nguyễn Cư Trinh was now *Hàn Lâm Viện*. In 1745, Lê Quang Đại died, while Nguyễn Quang Tiễn was made *Hàn Lâm Viện*. A new temple of the royal ancestors (*tôn miếu*) was constructed, though there was a royal ancestral temple in the *Điện Chí* much earlier.

<sup>51</sup> In the *Thực Lục*, Trần Đình Hỷ, the son of Trần Đình Khánh, was placed in charge of this new capital at Phú Xuân. Cadière cites Coricée describing the “*flumen Kim-long, quod circumdat partem posteriorem insulae regiae*,” but suggests that the capital did not actually move; rather, massive (unrecorded) earth engineering projects transformed the existing palace. Cadière integrates these statements into his series of capitals framework by suggesting that *Minh Mạng* era excavation of new river channels, documented by steles erected in the 1820s, must have originally taken place at a much earlier time, causing the capital to become an island in the eyes of visitors without actually moving. Given the entirely wooden construction of the eighteenth century court, without no walls or earthen works, it seems likely to have been moved to a new location. That its current location in Huế was a narrow island about three kilometers long is a stretch of the imagination, but there is no other obvious location with these features. That it took Poivre a full day’s travel to visit each major court official also suggests a less compact center. The first clear description I have found by any visitor observing a sacrifice to heaven being performed is by Michel Chaigneau, who described a mountain south of Huế (although Pirey considered his description fanciful and inaccurate) where the Tây Sơn performed this ritual; Chaigneau did not state that any earlier kings had done the same. *Thực Lục*, 148-166; Cadière, “Les Residences de Rois;” Pirey, “Le Vieux Huế D’Après Duc Chaigneau,” *BAVH* 1914, 71-72.

royal Nguyễn surname appears in later chapters of this text, including the chapters on literati similar another work of Lê Quý Đôn, this surname is conspicuously absent from the names of kings in this first chapter, which describes political history.<sup>52</sup>

The general picture is of a major shift at some point in the 1730s, though the precise date is disputed, with a weak king dominated by recent arrivals to the court falling under the sway of a new senior minister and a concubine. There may have been a literal movement in the capital to a “royal isle” by 1740. This change was accompanied by the adoption of Ming political institutions and some aspects of Chinese material culture among the new elite.

### Challenges to the *Võ* Prince

Pierre Poivre’s Christian governor of Đồng Nai claimed that although Đồng Nai had been siezed from Cambodia sometime around the period from 1734 to 1737, a local dispute between Cambodians and Cochinchinese broke out in 1748. To respond, the court sent 3-4,000 troops under a great mandarin, who brought the captured son-in-law of the Cambodian king back to the court in a cage, and then ransomed him. In 1749, the Cochinchinese king’s highest palace official was Cambodian. Poivre noted the declining influence of the 64-year old paternal uncle of the king, who held a high rank second only to the king, but was retired, deferring to the maternal uncles who conducted the business of the state. The paternal relatives of the king appear to have retained strong affiliation with Christianity; in the early 1750s, José de la Concepción describes the former king’s brother and an army commander (*Ong-Doi*) as a Christian named Alexandre, one victim of the 1750 persecution who refused to renounce his religion; the wife of the captain who led the recent attacks on Cambodia was also a Christian.<sup>53</sup>

Li Tana has described how inflation and poor monetary policy probably contributed to a series of challenges to Phú Xuân in the decades after the *Võ* Prince took the throne. In the *Thực Lục*, zinc coins were introduced in 1746 to address a chronic

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<sup>52</sup> Only Nguyễn Cam and Nguyễn Hoàng are given the Nguyễn surname (however, the name Nguyễn Phúc Khoát does appear in a single instance after 1744). *Tap Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>53</sup> *Thực Lục*, *ibid*; Poivre, “Voyage en Cochinchine,” 413; Pérez, “Los Españoles”, Part 12.

shortage of copper, alleged to be due to copper being kept for private use. Huang, a Qing person, operated a mint using zinc from the mountains in the west, producing Song Dynasty style coins. The court attempted to ban counterfeiting. In 1748, penalties were introduced for refusal to use the new coins. Copper would certainly be in high demand as the court prepared for war.<sup>54</sup>

A 1746 mountain revolt appears only in the *Thực Lục*. Dương Bao Lai and Diêm Mã Lăng rebelled in Thuận Thành, and Trần Biên commander Nguyễn Cường defeated them, erecting the Cổ Tỉnh rampart to keep them at bay.

Li Wen Guang, a Fujian Qing merchant, proclaimed himself king in Trần Biên in 1747 with 300 partisans, calling himself Great King of Đông Phố. This Fujian ruler prepared a surprise attack during the lunar Tết New Year holiday and killed the Trần Biên Encampment commander, Nguyễn Cư Cẩn. (The *Thực Lục* does not comment on the fact that Nguyễn Cư Cẩn shares a clan name with the future Trần Biên commander Nguyễn Cư Trinh.) Li Wen Guang was surrounded and captured by the same Trần Biên commander who had intervened in Thuận Thành, Nguyễn Cường, with aid from Tống Phúc Đại, commander of the *Hung Phúc* army. The pretender and his men were not killed because the false king was from the Qing country (although Fujian criminals are killed in other episodes).<sup>55</sup>

In 1747, in the *Thông Chí*, a Quy Nhơn man proclaimed himself *Võ* Prince, the same royal title as the king in Huế; the text also gives him a pejorative name, Đức Bụng. Mạc Thiên Tứ sent the court tribute on a tax-exempt royal ship, and Đức Bụng captured it off the coast near the Hậu Giang. Tứ's son-in-law, a captain of the *Ngũ Nhung* army called the *Kỳ Tài* Marquis Từ Hữu Dụng, pursued Đức, who evaded capture for one year in Bassac, apparently the Hậu Giang's port town. The *Thực Lục* includes this story, but omits the title *Võ* Prince and Quy Nhơn origin, simply calling him a pirate, and Từ Hữu Dụng is just a captain with no noble title and no relation to Mạc Thiên Tứ. The *Ngũ*

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<sup>54</sup> These statements about coins should be interpreted with caution, since the issues not described in the same way in the *Tạp Lục*, despite that text's close attention to the Phú Xuân economy. Coins adulterated with zinc were commonplace, so it may be that the Historical Office wished to assert that new coins in circulation at this time were of particularly low value. *Thực Lục*, *ibid*; Li Tana, *Nguyễn Cochinchina*, 95-98.

<sup>55</sup> The Historical Office adds an unconvincing note that by chance, few troops of any army happened to be stationed there, since the country was at peace. *Thực Lục*, *ibid*; Poivre, "Voyage en Cochinchine," 413.



*Nhung* army, an important faction in the *Thông Chí* and the *Mạc Gia Phả*, does not appear at all in the *Thực Lục*.<sup>56</sup>

For the first time in four decades (six if the 1705 battle is discounted), the same events in Cambodia that are described in the *Thực Lục* also appear in the *Thông Chí*. The *Thông Chí* describes a Cambodian from the lower branch of the Mekong, Sô Liên Tộc, raiding the upper branch at Mỹ Tho, in 1747. The Cambodian king had died, and three of his sons are mentioned: Im, the oldest (apparently Aṅg Im), and a fourth and fifth, called Hen and Dun (in Mak Phoeun’s reckoning, the third and fourth sons of Srī Dhammarājā II, Aṅg Hin and Aṅg Duong). Dun became king, fighting Hen for power, while a monk named Chiêm Hậu and prince Yết supported Thâm’s oldest son Im against the younger brothers.<sup>57</sup>

In the *Thông Chí*, Im continued to rule until 1748, when Controller Nguyễn Phúc Doãn destroyed Sô Liên Tộc’s ships near Mỹ Tho and moved on Phnom Penh, defeating prince Yết’s army. Im fled to Siam, Hen and Dun also fled to unspecified places, and Tha was again put on the throne in Lovek. Siamese troops under general Cao La Hâm attacked a few months later, and Tha fled again to Gia Định, where he died. His second son Nguyễn (Aṅg Sngun) returned from Siam to take the throne, offering regular tribute. This sequence is repeated in the *Thực Lục*. (Mak Phoeun has a different reconstruction of 1747: Srī Dhammarājā II dies at the end of a third reign, and Im takes the throne for three months before being killed by Hen.)<sup>58</sup>

Gutzlaff’s claim that “Annamese” took permanent possession of all the territory around Saigon (Ghiadingh) in 1750 is difficult to confirm. In 1751, Maigrot reports that in the previous year the king killed his son, who was under suspicion after returning from the Cochinchinese court. In November 1751, Franciscans report, an army of Cochinchinese and their Cambodian allies seized the Cambodian court and restored the older of two princes that had taken shelter in Cochinchina, but this army was soon driven out, along with prince. The Cambodian king, himself close to death from leprosy,

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<sup>56</sup> In 1747, the *Thực Lục* claims a system of roads and stations was built in Gia Định. Nguyễn Hữu Doãn, said to be a descendant of Nguyễn Hữu Dật (though he is not described as such in the *Liệt Truyện*), constructed a series of stations and ferries connecting Tất Kiêu, an old place name in Saigon, to Trấn Biên, called the “thiên lý” road; this is not described in the *Thông Chí*. *Thông Chí*, I:58a-b; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>57</sup> *Thông Chí*, III:19a-b.

<sup>58</sup> To Cao La Hâm’s name, the text here adds *Ốc Đột Lục Môn*. *Thông Chí*, *ibid*; Mak Phoeun, *Histoire*, 429; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

according to Maigrot ordered a massacre of Cochinchinese men, women and children “from Cahon to Hà Tiên,” lasting over a month, with only a few escaping; it is unclear whether Cahon might be Saigon. Without an heir, he sought seek Spanish support to help return his uncle and cousin from exile in Cambodia. Perhaps the first missionary reference to Gia Định is in 1757; Jose de la Concepcion defines it as Đồng Nai, Saigon and Bà Rịa, “until the borders of Camboja,” suggesting that both branches of the Mekong were in Cambodian hands in that year; in 1764, Jumilla describes Saigon as the ultimate Cochinchinese province, bordering Cambodia.<sup>59</sup>

*MEP* letters continue to describe a Cochinchinese church in Đồng Nai, but the Mekong seems to be Cambodia. Their reports describe mostly Chinese living along the Hậu Giang River, which remained under titular control of Cambodia (and possibly the Can Cao governor). They are less specific about the Tiên Giang and Saigon. Piguel writes in 1751 of Cambodians waging war on Cochinchinese that resided “not far from Can Cao, where the Court is.” In this usage, Can Cao seems to mean a place centered in the lower Mekong or in Saigon, not the coastal town in Hà Tiên.

Jesuit, *MEP* vicars and Franciscans all report the abrupt imprisonment of missionaries in 1750, followed in many cases by expulsion. At the court, only the court physician Jean Koffler was accepted, though in the far south at least one sympathetic mandarin warned Jose de la Concepcion of his imminent arrest. The king himself was not anti-Christian, but Buddhist factions forced his hand against after an attempted coup in which a reported 20,000 resident Chinese were implicated, creating an atmosphere in which foreigners were treated with suspicion, combined with a reaction against Poivre’s French overtures. The elderly *Cai-An-Tin*, wielding power behind the throne, helped force missionaries to leave the country, and an attempt to revive their fortunes in 1753 led to another persecution. (Cadière suggests that *Cai-An-Tin* was future regent Trương Phúc Loan, but the *Tạp Lục* states that Loan became a senior official only in 1755.)<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Launay, *Histoire*, II, 368.

<sup>60</sup> *Cai-An-Tin* may have been one of the Nguyễn Đăng, but this is speculative. At this time, Nguyễn Hữu Bác (son of Hữu Khôi, line of Dật) headed the Board of Justice, while Nguyễn Thừa Tự headed the Board of Finance and also Board of War. Pérez, “Los Españoles,” Part 10; Gutzlaff, “Geography,” 109. *Lettres Édifiantes et Curieuses*, IX, 95-101 ; *Voyages et Travaux Missionnaires de la Compagnie de Jesus II*, 320.

In 1753, in the *Tạp Lục*, the unnamed *Thiện Chính* Marquis and the *Nghi Biếu* Marquis Nguyễn Cư Trinh led an attack on Cambodia. The *Tạp Lục* and *Thực Lục* describe these battles in different terms.

By early 1754, Father Hermosa al Provincial wrote that the Cochinchinese king had made peace with the Cambodian court, which he affirmed by sending sent a Christian official to Siam to meet Constantin Falcon and discuss trade. José de la Concepción describes the large numbers of Christians arriving in Saigoin from their home provinces, particularly Quảng Nam, where they had refused the king's orders to defile Christian icons. For several years, Saigon officials ignored the orders to persecute Christians, and Christians as far north as Quy Nhơn, where the population was nearly entirely Christian, refused to venerate the village tutelary deity or destroy Christian objects of worship.<sup>61</sup>

By 1757 the king grew exasperated with their determined persistence, launched a new campaign against Gia Định Christians. Saigon's chief official reluctantly destroyed some churches but ignored efforts to blacklist Christians or force them to commit heresy; Đồng Nai was not so sheltered, and many Christians there departed for Hà Tiên or even Siam. By 1763, two Franciscans in Saigon were overwhelmed ministering to 15,000 Christians, while in Hà Tiên, upon a false rumor the king had died, missionaries put on their traditional attire and the Christian chief official there, along with the oldest son of the Mạc governor along with other family members, joined them openly in celebrating mass. After the king had commuted some punishments of local Christians, the Apostolic Vicar Piguel, Franciscan Francisco de Hermosa and some others returned to Saigon, with support from the high officials there, including some Christian officials, and in Đồng Nai.

That the *Võ* Prince in Phú Xuân presided over some form of military action in Cambodia seems to be confirmed, but its effect is unclear. If these stories are accurate, ultimately forces allied by marriage with the Mạc, yet omitted in the *Thực Lục*, drove out a rival Fujianese ruler to take control of Saigon.

#### Loss of Xiengkhuang to the Trịnh

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<sup>61</sup> Pérez, "Los Españoles", Part 12, 183-86.

Trade with the highlands was an important source of wealth for the Ming loyalists, who were tied into the Hội An trading world. Hội An seems to have been particularly prosperous circa 1753; a group of Chinese benefactors made a donation to fund an elaborate shrine to Quan Công there (a plaque placed at the site now claims that it had been first built a century earlier). The changes in the Phú Xuân court were linked to changes in the highlands, for which we have less direct evidence, since missionaries had difficulty gathering information about the interior. However, local texts demonstrate that the Lê-Trịnh regime regained tributary control over the upper Cả River above Nghệ An, if not Xiengkhuang itself, during the 1750s. In the diplomatic correspondence between Trịnh officials and the *Mường* Lạc Hoàn contained in the Quý Hợp archive, there were conflicts in the highlands in the 1750s and early 1760s, with the ultimate prize being Xiengkhuang (Trần Ninh) itself. This supports Bissachère's description of a relatively weak *Võ* Prince, who seemed to be losing control over highland regions. For the first time in centuries, a Đông Kinh regime was exercising political control over the Nghệ An highlands and adjacent parts of Laos.<sup>62</sup>

The *Tap Lục* and *Diễn Chí* state that Xiengkhuang was still in the hands of Grand Marshall Hiệp and the southern forces in the 1650s, and this presumably continued over the next century. However, there is a document in Quý Hợp that was purportedly written by hand of a *Đại Tư Mã Siêu* Duke in 1750, claiming to be Nghệ An province chief (*tỉnh trưởng*, an unusual title), chief of *Bố Chính châu* and commander of the military camp Trần Ninh (Xiengkhuang). He expresses dissatisfaction with elephants purchased from Lạc Hoàn the previous year.<sup>63</sup>

The next Quý Hợp texts, dated 1753, show firmer Trịnh control; they are signed by the Minister of War, *Thái Tử Thái Bảo, Hải* Duke, who was also governor (*trấn thủ*) of Nghệ An and *Bố Chính châu*, and commander of Trần Ninh (Xiengkhuang). He

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<sup>62</sup> A lacquered panel found in the shrine today proclaims it was constructed in 1653 by Ming loyalist officials of the village (*Minh Hương Viên Quan Các Toàn Xã Lập/明香員官各全社立*). The placement of a wooden panel, however, is not conclusive evidence that early Ming guests used the term *Minh Hương* to refer to themselves, or were organized into self-governing administrative units at that early date.

<sup>63</sup> Trần Văn Quý. "The Quý Hợp Archive: Vietnamese and Lao Relations Reflected in Border-Post Documents Dating from 1619 to 1880," in Mayoury Ngaosrivathana and Kennon Brazeale, eds, *Breaking New Ground in Lao History: Essays on the Seventh to Twentieth Centuries* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2002), 239-260; Trần Văn Quý, *Historic relationship between Laos and Viet Nam through the Quý Hợp documents (XVII-XIX centuries)* (Sathāban Khōnkhwā Vatthanatham Lāo, 2000), 89-140.

claimed to be satisfied with Lạc Hoàn's tribute elephants. Another text describes a need to regulate the *Mường* (highland) peoples, previously ruled by the southern country. This suggests that a northern regime had just reclaimed control of the Nghệ An highlands.<sup>64</sup>

As the Trịnh extended their influence into the northern highlands formerly claimed by Cochinchina, another new figure took control of the lower Mekong. Nguyễn Cư Trinh is described in the *Tạp Lục* as a son from the Nguyễn Đăng clan, who had only recently taken this surname, being descendants of a Lê Minister of War surnamed Trịnh. However, other members of a Nguyễn Cư clan held high positions in Trấn Biên. The *Tạp Lục* author's ignorance of Trấn Biên commander Nguyễn Cư Cần and events in Trấn Biên suggests that the line of descent from Trịnh Cam to Nguyễn Đăng Đệ to Nguyễn Cư Trinh may be fictional.

Whatever his background, Nguyễn Cư Trinh is described as leading a series of battles up and down the Mekong river basin from 1750 to 1755, after which he appears to spend a decade controlling the lower delta. (His career seems to end in 1765, when he was dismissed or retired.) Trinh was dispatched to Quảng Ngãi in 1750, in the *Thực Lục*, to prevent Đá Vách highlanders from raiding merchants trading along the Vệ River. Trinh convinced his troops to attack the highlands, routing the enemy forces, then camped in their upland villages, by "pretending" to stay there permanently, convincing the highlanders to return. (This is the first record of highlanders in Đá Vách since Bùi Tá Hán's alliance with them in the 1550s.)<sup>65</sup>

The Lê-Trịnh control over Quy Hợp described in 1755 proved to be tenuous at best. Taxes in Quy Hợp district itself were temporarily lowered due to raids on the region, and in 1756 alleged representatives of Đông Kinh allow that there had been difficulties with Lạc Hoàn's prompt and full payment of tribute, noting in passing that an enemy had been there for nine or ten years, apparently forcing people to leave the hills

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<sup>64</sup> Trần Văn Quý suggests this minister was Phạm Đình Trọng.

<sup>65</sup> Some Lao texts describe an Annam army attacking Luang Prabang in 1749, and being defeated by a prince there, though neither Martin Stuart-Fox nor Bruce Lockhart describes this event in their studies of the chronicles. The *Thực Lục* makes no mention of such an attack. However, Nguyễn Cư Trinh's residence in the highlands means a conflict with Laos would not be unlikely. An interesting detail is that Trinh raised an army after writing a *quốc âm* text called the *Sãi Vãi*.

for the river valleys. A 1757 letter announces appointment of an intermediary with Lạc Hoàn, although he was already described in 1753.<sup>66</sup>

### Campaigns for the Middle Mekong

The 1750s and early 1760s saw Nguyễn Cư Trinh and Mạc Thiên Tứ, as well as northern Tonkin forces, involved in battles for Cambodia and the middle Mekong basin. The Trinh, extending their control into territories formerly held by the southern court well before the outbreak of the *Tây Sơn* rebellion, were frustrated by a man claiming descent from Lê Ninh called Lê Duy Mật (at least in some texts), who reportedly blocked their expansion into Laos. Commanders in the far south installed a Cambodian king allied against Ayutthaya, then seem to have moved up along the Mekong, even interacting with the Trinh.

The personal history of Lê Duy Mật, of the royal family in the *Cuong Mục*, is not well understood. His background is described in greater detail in the *Cuong Mục*, compiled by northern literati in the late 19th century. That text claims that he occupied a highland region in Nghệ An around 1751; he and four others amassed at least 30,000 soldiers each, a staggering number that, if accurate, suggest the highland's immense strategic importance. He renounced the Trinh in 1752, declaring himself a king in the hills of Thanh Hóa and enticing native chiefs to join him, seizing Xiengkhuang a decade later.<sup>67</sup>

In three texts, an expedition to Cambodia in late 1753 was led by the *Thiện Chính* Marquis, whose name is omitted, and Nguyễn Cư Trinh. In the *Tạp Lục*, the *Võ* Prince sent them to attack Cambodia; the *Thông Chí* and *Thực Lục* add they brought the forces of the five encampments and garrisoned at Bến Nghé, Saigon. The *Thông Chí* claims that the office of Controller was created this year; the *Thực Lục* repeats the *Thông Chí* language, but omits this detail, since it has a Controller much earlier.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Trần Văn Quý, *Historic relationship between Laos and Viet Nam*, *ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> In most cases I have elected not to rely on the *Cuong Mục*, from the end of the nineteenth century, due to its many historiographical problems; in the case of the pivotal figure Lê Duy Mật, however, it includes information not found in the early Historical Office texts. *Cuong Mục*, 880-900.

<sup>68</sup> *Tạp Lục*, I:41a-43a; *Thông Chí*, III:8a; *Thực Lục*, *ibid.*

In the *Thực Lục*, Lê Duy Mật extends into Laos in 1753, holding Trình Quang citadel in 1753 against Trịnh Doanh. No Xiengkhuang ruler was yet at war with the Trịnh in 1753, though a war may have occurred after 1760, a period with no Quý Hợp documents. The *Nghệ An Ký*, with local knowledge, states that Lê Duy Mật held Xiengkhuang and launched attacks on Nghệ An in the *Cảnh Hưng* reign, any year from 1740 to 1786. Archaimbault notes that Xiengkhuang chronicles mention fugitive king Cau Muong No, possibly an 18th century figure from his place in the lineage, who fled to *Mường* called Mo and Me that were apparently considered part of “Annam.”<sup>69</sup>

In the *Thực Lục*, Nguyễn Cư Trinh conveyed to Trịnh Doanh his king’s refusal to help fight Mật in 1753. The descriptions of Nguyễn Cư Trinh battling highlanders in Thuận Thành and Cambodia, and engagement with Xiengkhuang, imply southern troop movements along the middle Mekong basin.<sup>70</sup>

Nguyễn Cư Trinh’s *Tạp Lục* biography states that he attacked Cambodia in 1753, subdued 30,000 *Côn Man* in Thuận Thành, and had a close friendship and prolific literary exchange with Mạc Thiên Tứ. The first chapter of the *Tạp Lục* places the attack in 1754; Trinh seized Phnom Penh and surrounding areas, joining the unnamed *Thiện Chính* Marquis at the Mekong. A *Chấn Long* Marquis was sent on to Trầm Trì Tiêm prefecture, to encourage the *Côn Man* people of Thuận Thành to rise up. (*Côn Man* seems to refer to highland tribes on the Kontum Plateau.) A Cambodian king Nguyễn fled to Tầm Trì Thu.<sup>71</sup>

In a *Thực Lục* annotation, Thuận Thành *Côn Man*, or Vô Tỳ barbarians, “drifted” to Cambodia. In the *Liệt Truyện*, the *Thiện Chính* Marquis and Nguyễn Cư Trinh defeated the Cambodians in 1753, then continued to attack Saigon. In the *Thực Lục*,

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<sup>69</sup> ; It states that his troops followed the road at *Giăng Màn* Mountain to attack Nghệ An, holding the *Phố* fort there Bù Dương Lịch. West of the river was a road leading to *Mường Lạc Hòn* (Lạc Hoàn), who passed the Quý Hợp fort to pay tribute. *Nghệ An Ký*, 65; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>70</sup> Annotations note that Trinh had been sent to Quảng Bình Encampment (he was in Gia Định up until now), where there was a road that the Trịnh intended to borrow to attack Xiengkhuang (clearly through the highlands). A high official Mai Văn Hoan (one of the few occurrences of the surname Mai) was at this time described inventing the large amounts of gold, silver and coins in the treasury. *Thực Lục*, 158-164; *Liệt Truyện*, 200-204.

<sup>71</sup> Nguyễn Khắc Viện suggests this is Trầm Trì Tiêm and Tầm Trì Thu are Kompong Cham and Kompong Thom. The text mentions a place called Kha Khâm and a garrison in Bình Thanh. Trinh seized Soài Rạp, Tầm Bôn, Ba Cầu and Nam Vang. Tầm Đôn was an early name for the strategic fork in the Tiền Giang at Long Hồ (Vĩnh Long), while Xoài Rạp (Soài Rạp) estuary leads to Saigon and Biên Hòa. Trinh attacked along the Bát Đông or Nhập Đông River, which is less clear; the two forces garrisoned at Lê Yêm. *Tạp Lục*, I:41a-42a.

instead of attacking, the *Võ* Prince wrote asking Siam not to aid Cambodian refugees. All texts after the *Tap Lục* omit the *Chấn Long* Marquis.<sup>72</sup>

In the *Tap Lục*, that the *Võ* Prince heard that a Cambodian had sought aid from Nghệ An and feared a Tonkin incursion. He ordered ship inspectors at *Võ Xương* and *Tâm Sầm*, where highland rivers connect with Cambodia, to send “southerners” to investigate and told *Côn Man* to report any Lao mobilization.<sup>73</sup>

In the *Thực Lục*, Nguyễn Cư Trinh and the *Thiện Chính* Marquis built a fort at *Bến Nghé*, Saigon, in 1754. In the *Tap Lục*, the *Thiện Chính* Marquis pulled his forces back to *Mỹ Tho*, bringing *Côn Man* soldiers; over 10,000 arrived at a place called *Vô Ta Ân*, where over 10,000 Cambodians attacked. Trinh rescued the *Côn Man*, and more than 30,000 moved to the foot of *Bà Đen* Mountain (*Tây Ninh*). The two generals accused each other and were recalled; the *Thiện Chính* Marquis was replaced by the unnamed *Du Chính* Marquis, who attacked *Phnom Penh*. A Cambodian king sought aid from *Mạc Thiên Tứ*.

The *Thông Chí* repeats this story almost verbatim, but changes the persons involved. When the *Thiện Chính* Marquis was prevented from rescuing the *Côn Man*, he sent the unnamed *Nghi Biểu* Marquis to bring 5,000 *Côn Man* to *Bà Đen*. (*Nghi Biểu* is not Nguyễn Cư Trinh.) The *Thiện Chính* Marquis was demoted and replaced by the *Du Chính* Marquis, now named as *Trương Phúc Du*. *Du* used the *Côn Man* to attack *Phnom Penh*, and the Cambodian king took shelter in *Hà Tiên*. The *Thực Lục* repeats the story, adding that the *Thiện Chính* Marquis had been lost in the forest; the court replaced him with *Trương Phúc Du*, whose cruelty drove the Cambodian king, named *Nguyễn*, to seek help from *Mạc Thiên Tứ*.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>73</sup> *Võ Xương* is an old name of the upper *Thạch Hãn* River region in *Quảng Trị*, which connects to *Stung Treng*, while *Tâm Sầm* referred to the highlands above it, including part of what is now the Central Highland province of *Đắc Nông*. This passage is one of the single instances in the first book of the *Tap Lục* in which the surname *Nguyễn* appears for a king (after *Nguyễn Hoàng*), suggesting it was amended later than other parts of the chapter. *Tap Lục*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>74</sup> Here, *Mạc Thiên Tứ* reported this to the court, claiming a border general had attacked the *Côn Man*, but the Cambodian king accepted responsibility and sought forgiveness. *Thông Chí*, III:9a-b, 59a-b. This text omits *Tứ*'s report and *Nguyễn* accepting responsibility. *Thực Lục*, *ibid*. The text describes in detail the new taxes levied on commercial shipping in this period. The *Thực Lục* also records failed diplomatic overtures from Siam; the Siamese king complained that when their ships were forced to stop in *Đàng Trong* ports on the way to China they risked losing their entire cargo and asked that port taxes be lowered.



In the *Tạp Lục*, Nguyễn offered the *Võ* Prince two prefectures conquered by Nguyễn Cư Trinh, including the Soài Rạp estuary near Saigon, in return for recognition as tributary ruler in 1756, but refused to turn over the general who attacked the *Côn Man*. In the *Thông Chí*, the king pretended that that general, his nephew and co-conspirator, had been killed, and Trinh advised seizing the two regions. The *Thực Lục* claims that Mạc Thiên Tứ was the intermediary.<sup>75</sup>

Lefebvre found the Cambodian civil war still raging at the end of 1758. The king's rivals drove him out and burned down his palace; Cochinchinese tricked the senior Cambodian general into an ambush, though another general escaped. By mid-1760, a king with Cochinchinese support had driven two rivals to flee to Laos and a third to Siam; his grandfather, the former king, died "in the forest of disease and sorrow."<sup>76</sup>

In the *Tạp Lục*, king Nguyễn's maternal uncle Giồng seized power on his death in 1758. Unnamed Gia Định generals wished to recognize Giồng, but the *Võ* Prince enthroned Giồng's son-in-law Hinh, forcing prince Tôn to flee to Hà Tiên. Trương Phúc Du and others attacked Hinh (although he was recognized by the *Võ* Prince), who fled and was killed by an *oknha* in Phnom Penh. Du placed Tôn in power, seized Phnom Penh, and withdrew to Long Hồ Encampment on the Tiên Giang.

In the *Thông Chí*, Nguyễn's paternal uncle Nhuận seized power on his death in 1757; Nhuận's son Tôn fled to Hà Tiên where he was adopted by Mạc Thiên Tứ. Trương Phúc Du attacked Hinh, who was killed by a different *oknha*. On Tứ's request, the *Võ* Prince gave Tôn the throne in return for more land (Tâm Phong Long). Du and Nguyễn Cư Trinh established camps on the Tiên Giang. Another prince called Non fled to Siam, and Tứ claimed five Cambodian regions from the Hậu Giang to the coast and organized people into villages there.<sup>77</sup>

The *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* identifies Tôn as the oldest son of Nguyễn, not Nhuận; Mạc Thiên Tứ sent 10,000 cavalry to make Tôn tributary king (though with a Chinese-style costume sent by the *Võ* Prince), then took administrative control of the Hậu Giang and the coast. In the *Thực Lục*, when Nguyễn died in 1757, the *Võ* Prince's border officials

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<sup>75</sup> The *Thực Lục* has Trinh advising the king to use barbarians (the *Côn Man*) to attack barbarians (Cambodia). *Tạp Lục*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>76</sup> Launay, *Histoire*, II, 377.

<sup>77</sup> *Tạp Lục*, I:42b-43a; *Thông Chí*, III:9b-11a;

made his paternal uncle Nhuận king in exchange for the mouth of the Hậu Giang River. Hinh killed his father-in-law and stole the throne; Nhuận's son Tôn fled to Hà Tiên, offering Tứ more land from the Hậu Giang to the coast.<sup>78</sup>

Quy Hợp documents reveal a Trịnh governor of Nghệ An and Bồ Chính (but not Xiengkhuang) instructing a Quy Hợp fort commander in 1759 to station tribute elephants there. A *Hải* Duke, through an intermediary, admonishes Lạc Hoàn to be loyal and stop joining the Lào. A few days later, Trịnh officials address a different Nghệ An governor, the *Quán* Duke. The Lạc Hoàn intermediary protests onerous Trịnh demands for silver.<sup>79</sup>

In the *Cương Mục*, Lê Duy Mật seized Xiengkhuang in 1763, building sixteen defensive forts. A treasonous Trịnh commander failed to report this to the court; but Trịnh Doanh still favored him, dismissing his opponents and appointing Bùi Thế Đạt, who later led the Trịnh occupation of Phú Xuân. Mật then moved to Thanh Hóa battling another Trịnh commander. In 1764, in the *Thực Lục*, Mật asked the *Võ* Prince for aid, via Ai Lao Encampment, citing their allied ancestors Nguyễn Kim and Lê Duy Ninh, but the king refused. A *Thực Lục* annotation notes that Mật was defeated in 1770, six years before the Quy Hợp texts pick up again. Although Bruce Lockhart and Martin Stuart-Fox do not discuss this, Lao stories of an exiled prince in Champassak with an army sent by a Cochinchinese (*ñuon*) King, defeated by Vientiane, are found in some popular Lao histories.<sup>80</sup>

There is no evidence of full scale war in 1753 between Đông Kinh and Xiengkhuang, as portrayed in the *Tục Biên*, though there might have been such a war in the 1760s. In these decades, there was a Cochinchinese military presence in Saigon, and up the Mekong into Laos. There were reports of conflicts between Đông Nai forces and the Trương Phúc clan behind the throne, and what seems to be a Mạc alliance with a Cambodian ruler against the court.

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<sup>78</sup> In the Mạc text, the regions newly under Mạc control are here Long Xuyên, Kiến Giang, Trấn Giang and Trấn Di; in the *Thực Lục*, the final two are omitted. *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 25-27; *Thực Lục*, 166-167.

<sup>79</sup> Throughout this decade, the standard texts do not describe any contact with Xiengkhuang. The title of the commander of Trấn Ninh appears to be an honorary one, awarded to the Nghệ An governor, and possibly claimed by rivals as well.

<sup>80</sup> The unusual names associated with this entry in the *Cương Mục* include “Ngọc Lâu xã and Vĩnh Đông,” the *Bồn Xà* named Lu Cẩm Hương, and Trình Quang Động. Mật controlled Lao peoples to the border with Nghệ An, the Lạc Hòn and Cao Châu regions, and prefectures Quý and Trà in the north. In 1764, the *Cương Mục* states the court, which had previously doubled the taxes on rice paddy during the fighting, returned the tax to normal levels. *Cương Mục*, 880-900; *Thực Lục*, 169-171.

## A Regent Seizes Power in the Court

The *Tap Lục* hints at factional tensions in the court mirroring those in Cambodia. When a senior official of Fujian and Zhejiang “blown into southern waters” was delivered to the Qing, along with sixteen Qing prisoners associated with the ousted Chinese king of Trấn Biên, Li Wen Guang, the *Võ* Prince instructed the head of his Academy to sign his name as King of Annam (*An Nam Quốc Vương*). The *Hàn Lâm Viện* head, Nguyễn Quang Tiễn, refused and was dismissed. This is omitted in the *Thực Lục*, in which Tiễn was head of the Academy after the king’s death.

Bissachère, and the Montmignon letters, a set of contemporary reports published in 1809, reports that the senior court official had taken full control of the central government apparatus during the *Võ* Prince’s long illness. This regent placed the son of a concubine on the throne on the king’s death in 1765, while the “legitimate king,” in the Montmignon letters, later died in prison leaving behind two young heirs as possible candidates for the throne should the regent be defeated. By some accounts, the king’s death in 1765 was a good sign for Christians, and Jumilla wrote from Saigon the following year to report his ministry was thriving there without any further interference from civil or military authorities. The mother of the new thirteen-year old king, Pigneaux believed, was supportive of Christians, as were most of the four officials he described acting as regents; many lower officials practiced Christianity openly. Jumilla describes a formal pardon being issued to all Christians punished under the previous regime, and the son of a court official was even baptized. Despite these signs of optimism, the ban on missionaries was not rescinded.

In the early 1750s, the *Võ* Prince had married Trương Phúc Loan’s daughter Ngọc Cầu, who had two sons. The original crown prince, son of Trương Thị Dung (said to be the daughter of a Thanh Hóa officer), apparently his primary wife, had died several years earlier. Her second son Côn (or Luân) was in his 20s. In the *Tap Lục*, however, the next heir was not Côn but Dương, an infant son of the deceased crown prince. Côn was

supported by a different powerful court faction, led by Trương Văn Hạnh, who supported Côn to take the throne.<sup>81</sup>

There is almost no information about Trương Văn Hạnh in the Historical Office texts. Hồ Văn Quang notes that some works on the *Tây Sơn* describe Hạnh as being closely allied with Li Yuan Xian, a member of the Southern Ming royal family in exile in Quy Nhơn. The *Liệt Truyện Chính Biên* makes no mention of his lineage, simply stating that he was a “guest” of Trương Văn Hạnh. Dutton notes their relationship, as well as a description, found in multiple texts, of a ceremony with Ming-style elements in which Hiến proclaimed Nhạc emperor in Quy Nhơn. Dutton does not mention the hypothesis that Trương Văn Hiến may have been related to Ming royalty. He does dispel, however, the common misconception that the *Tây Sơn* emperors were in any way anti-“Confucian,” highlighting their patronage of classical studies, examinations, and production of dynastic histories.<sup>82</sup>

Gutzlaff describes the next king as an effeminate prince called Voo Tsoi, dominated by his eunuchs, who took pride in seizing eastern Cambodia to attach to his empire and imposed heavy taxes. He mentions no regent, and the reign name he provides, *Kaung Shung* (although attributed in many French accounts to both this king and later to Nguyễn Ánh), appears in no local texts.<sup>83</sup>

The *Tạp Lục* states that Trương Phúc Loan, acting together with the *Chử Đức* Marquis, whose identity is not clear, imprisoned Phúc Côn and killed Trương Văn Hạnh. The prince whom Loan and the *Chử Đức* Marquis chose in Côn’s place was Loan’s own grandson Thuần, son of Ngọc Cầu. Thuần took the throne at age twelve. Loan continued his purge, imprisoning a paternal uncle of the new king. Bissachère reports that, on the king’s death, a concubine’s son was crowned *Anh* King, while the two legitimate princes were quickly thrown in prison where they died. Bissachère believes, however, that this was in fact following the orders of the deceased king. In the hands of the official, the young king pursued frivolous pastimes, while the “oppressed” populace grew more

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<sup>81</sup> Although this would keep the throne in the hands of the Trương Phúc faction, choosing a grandson over a primary wife’s living son would be unusual, so this claim is difficult to evaluate. Dương’s mother is unknown, as the name of Prince Chương’s wife appears in none of these texts. *Tạp Lục*, I:43a-50a.

<sup>82</sup> *Tạp Lục*, *ibid.*; *Liệt Truyện Chính Biên*, 491; Hồ Văn Quang, “Nhà Tây Sơn và Trương Phúc Loan,” ms.; Dutton, “Reassessing Confucianism in the Tây Sơn regime.”

<sup>83</sup> Gutzlaff’s description has some similarity to John Barrow’s overly simplified 1792 narrative. Gutzlaff, “Geography,” 118-9.

outraged. Bissachère uses the term *Nquien* in the royal titles of the rulers from the *Sãi* Prince to the *Võ* Prince (i.e. *Sai-Nquien-Vuong*, *Vo-Nquien-Vuong*), but does not use *Nquien* in the title of the *Anh* King (*Anh-Vuong*).<sup>84</sup>

The *Thực Lục* omits the *Tạp Lục* statement that Thuần was Loan's grandson, and the name of Ngọc Cầu's father is omitted in the *Liệt Truyện*. In the *Thực Lục*, Nguyễn Phúc (later, Cừ) Thông was one of Trương Phúc Loan's co-conspirators; they changed the king's orders posthumously to put Thuần on the throne (agreeing with Bissachère). Loan killed Côn's main supporters, scholar Lê Cao Kỳ, nephew of the powerful Ming guest official Lê Quang Đại and cousin of future *Gia Long* Minister of War Lê Quang Định, as well as Trương Văn Hạnh. The new monarch is called the *Định* King; Côn reportedly died four months later.<sup>85</sup>

Loan's first move was to seize personal control over state finances and taxation. In the *Thực Lục*, he took control of the trade from the upland regions throughout Quảng Nam. His sons were quickly married to princesses and given military commands, and his clan brought into high court positions. The *Tạp Lục* does not mention Côn's death, and Nguyễn Ánh, the future *Gia Long Emperor*, would not be described as Côn's son until the *Thực Lục Chính Biên* was published in Guangdong, fifty years after his death.<sup>86</sup>

### Hà Tiên's Engagement with Ayutthaya

Pigneaux took up a post in Can Cao in early 1767, but a year later was arrested with Artaud and a Chinese priest by Can Cao's governor, for abetting the escape of a captured Siamese prince. They were freed on condition that Artaud bring the prince back, but *MEP* letters do not elaborate on their relationship with this prince.

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<sup>84</sup> To speculate, this might be the surname Nguyễn and reflect his understanding that the previous kings were legitimate, but this last son of a concubine was illegitimate. *Tạp Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>85</sup> The omission of Côn is a major problem with the *Tạp Lục*, since Lê Quý Đôn, if he authored this text as part of an occupying army in 1776, would have had an overriding interest in accounting for claimants to the throne.

<sup>86</sup> Nguyễn Quang Tiễn returned to head the *Hàn Lâm Viện*. Gia Định Controller Nguyễn Cư Trinh was called back from Gia Định to be Minister of Civil Service until his death in 1766. The *Thực Lục* notes that on Nguyễn Cư Trinh's death, Nguyễn Hữu Tôn headed the Ministry of War and Civil Service. *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

Again, there are signs that the Can Cao governor controlled more than merely the Hà Tiên coast. John Wills notes references in the Qing archives to the story of the Hà Tiên governor giving refuge to two princes of the old royal house of Ayutthaya fleeing the Burmese invasion. (In his brief paper, Wills does not comment on the extent of the territory this ruler claimed, or how he is named in the Qing archives.) Qing records describe the governor sending envoys to Guangzhou to ask for Qing aid for the princes, and trying unsuccessfully to restore one to the Siamese throne in a naval attack of 1768. Such an attempt would require a larger naval force than could be fielded by the governor of a small province.<sup>87</sup>

The *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* describes this Mạc request for Qing intervention. After the Burmese sack of Ayutthaya (in a blatant copying error, this copy of the manuscript dates the attack to 1741), two younger princes, Chiêu Hoa and Chiêu Xi Xoang sought Mạc Thiên Tứ's aid. He sent to Guangdong a map of Burma, receiving the Qing emperor's praise (in fact, the Qing did send four investigative missions.) A wealthy Chinese merchant, Gang Liu Xing (Giang Luu Hạnh), advised Guangdong officials to support the princes, and the Gia Định Controller also joined Tứ for the invasion (in this text, reportedly on the instructions of the regent Loan). They prepared to fight Taksin, a chieftain of the Tang people (*Đường Nhân*, here meaning Fujianese), but another Teochiu general, Chen Nie (Trần Nghiêp), tried to negotiate return of the princes in exchange for land and tribute.

The Mạc navy was commanded by Mạc Thiên Tứ's son-in law *Ngũ Nhung Từ* Marquis (Từ Hữu Dụng in the *Thông Chí*). Over a hundred warships attacked Bangkok, but a storm forced their return. In the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* he reportedly dies on the way back from Bangkok, and only then is replaced by a better known figure, Trần Đại Lực, son of Trần Đại Định and grandson of its first leader of Longmen forces recorded in the delta, Chen Chang-shuan (Trần Thượng Xuyên). Like the *Ngũ Nhung Từ* Marquis, Lực was also married to one of Tứ's daughters. He brought 50,000 troops against Taksin, but was unsuccessful in persuading another Teochiu general to switch sides, and an epidemic wiped out nearly all his forces, forcing another retreat. (Teochiu forces attacked Hà Tiên

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<sup>87</sup> The Qing were initially sympathetic, but by 1771 decided to recognize Taksin out of pragmatism. Wills, "Great Qing and Its Southern Neighbors."

while they were gone, then retreated to join Taksin.) The court allegedly ordered the Gia Định Controller to send the five Encampments' troops when needed.<sup>88</sup>

In *Thông Chí*, only the prince fled to Hà Tiên; Chiêu Xi Xoang fled to Cambodia. Siam did not attack Hà Tiên. Mạc Thiên Tứ sent an apology, asking the Controller to pull back reinforcements summoned in Hà Tiên's defense. Trần Đại Lực and Tứ's daughter brought troops to Chantaburi. The epidemic struck, but in this text Trần Đại Lực died first, then was replaced by the *Ngũ Nhung* Marquis, who then also died.<sup>89</sup>

In the *Thực Lục*, Mạc Thiên Tứ allegedly asked the Controller for reinforcements a year before Taksin seized power, because Siam's "Leper King" was preparing to attack Hà Tiên. Controller Nguyễn Phúc (Cử) Khôi sent two other Nguyễn Phúc (Cử), Siêu and Tự, and brought three deep sea ships, twenty warships and a thousand soldiers to defend Hà Tiên against Siam in 1766. The princes going to Hà Tiên and Cambodia is repeated, and Tứ asked for reinforcements a second time, fearing an attack. Tứ sent Trần Đại Lực to seize Chantaburi, and the *Ngũ Nhung* Marquis is omitted completely.<sup>90</sup>

The naval battles are not corroborated by Artaud, writing from Hà Tiên in 1768. He states that officials in Đồng Nai, Saigon, and the Tiên Giang continued to support the missionaries despite the court's persecution and encouraged Christians from the north to join their administration. Saigon and the Tiên Giang are now labeled seats of Cochinchinese provinces, and *MEP* letters comment that the Hậu Giang was the only remaining artery for Cambodian commerce.<sup>91</sup>

Levasseur exemplifies the confusion about the extent of Can Cao, as if it had been reduced in size. Initially describing it as the place that one would pass along the Hậu Giang to Phnom Penh, in 1768 he states that it was the coast of Hà Tiên only. He also notes in 1769 that its governor, having "nearly shaken off the rule of the Cambodian

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<sup>88</sup> The second Teochiu general was called Trần Lai (Liên). *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 27-33.

<sup>89</sup> Nguyễn Phúc Khôi's father is named Nguyễn Phúc Pháp. In the *Thông Chí* there is also a *Đức Nghiệp* Marquis that patrolled the Cambodian islands, where a Teochiu man named Huo Ran (Hoắc Nhiên) had launched an attack on Hà Tiên and then been killed. *Thông Chí*, III:59a-71b.

<sup>90</sup> This text also describes Tứ sending a patrol to Koh Kong, where Hoắc Nhiên gathered partisans to attack Hà Tiên; Tứ killed him and dispersed his men. The text gives Cồ Cốt and Dàn Khâm as the location of the patrol; the former is likely Koh Kut, now in Thailand, and the latter the coast of Koh Kong province. *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>91</sup> Another school of thought is that the Vinh Tế Canal linking Châu Đốc and Hà Tiên, infamously constructed in the 19th century, actually existed half a century earlier. See Sakurai, *Water Frontier*, 40; Launay, *Histoire*, III, 408.

king,” allowed Cochinchinese Christians to come to practice freely. *MEP* do not remark on the governor’s Christian first minister, first cited by Franciscans, who may have been dead by this point.

Taksin, in the *Thông Chí*, demanded tribute from Cambodia, then attempted to return prince Nan to the throne there in 1769, but Tôn (who had earlier sheltered in Hà Tiên) drove Taksin out. In 1770 soldier Phạm Chàm, *Chà Và* (Malay/Cham) man Vinh Ly Ma Lô and *oknha* Gê gathered an army of 800 on coast, but were all killed. The *Thông Chí* places the court’s order that Gia Định generals supply troops if Hà Tiên needed aid in this year. The *Thực Lục* adds that the court sent this order to the Gia Định Controller, an office which still did not exist in the *Thông Chí*.<sup>92</sup> The Nguyễn texts do not give a complete account of the struggles among Bangkok Teochiu, Mạc Thiên Tứ, and Gia Định in the 1760s.

### A Merchant Revolt

The French regime, trying to catch up with competitors in Asia, was growing anxious to conquer Cochinchina, and Pierre Poivre wrote from Mauritius in 1768 to advise that immediate military action was required. Poivre’s proposal was never acted on, and by the 1770s, French efforts in Cochinchina were left in the hands of *MEP* and Pigneaux. Pigneaux’s presence before the *Tây Sơn* war is absent from many descriptions of the period, including the *Thực Lục*; in both French and local texts, his meeting Nguyễn Ánh in the archipelago is sometimes described as if their alliance arose out of serendipity, and Pigneaux had no prior involvement in politics.<sup>93</sup>

An early account of the merchant revolt is provided by Bissachère, who sketches the figure of “Nhac,” a wealthy merchant from Quy Nhơn who was provoked by Trương Phúc Loan’s actions into opposing the court. He had a brother who was a “monk”

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<sup>92</sup> In the *Thông Chí*, a Fujianese named Trần Thái, also described in the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, gathered men and plotted with two members of the Mạc clan Mạc Sùng and Mạc Khoan who were to stage a revolt from within Hà Tiên, but they were captured by Mạc Thiên Tứ, with Trần Thái escaping to Chantaburi. Tứ killed a Cambodian man named Bòn with 900 of his men, suspecting them of rebellion. *Thông Chí*, *ibid*, *Thực Lục*, *ibid*, *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 34.

<sup>93</sup> Maverick, Lewis, “Pierre Poivre: Eighteenth Century Explorer of Southeast Asia,” *The Pacific Historical Review* 10:2 (June 1941): 165-177, 175-176.



respected by the religious hierarchy and the public. A third brother, Long Nhu Ong, was a strategist. Li Tana and George Dutton have argued that a heavy tax burden resulted in a Quy Nhơn merchant rebellion. Since there were again weakened monsoons in the late 18th century, drought may have contributed to instability; years of famine in Thuận Hóa are reported concurrently with Nhạc's revolt.<sup>94</sup>

The *Tạp Lục* does not date the *Tây Sơn* rebellion, but place it during the machinations of Phúc Loan after the 1765 death of Phúc Khoát. Loan had an unnamed hated royal uncle falsely accused and imprisoned, then later accused and killed Phúc Thuần's older brother, the *Văn Đức* Marquis. In this period, "*Tây Sơn* Nguyễn Văn Nhạc" rebelled, seizing Quy Nhơn and Quảng Ngãi. Nhạc also seized the Quảng Nam encampment, and received the support of Chinese merchants. Meanwhile, a Nghệ An commander in Đông Kinh, the *Doan* Duke Bùi Thế Đạt and the unnamed *Việp* Duke prepared to use the army which had recently conquered Trấn Ninh to move against the southern court.<sup>95</sup>

The description of a 1776 battle in the *Thông Chí* is prefaced with reference to the initial *Tây Sơn* uprising taking control of the area from Quảng Ngãi to Phú Yên. At that time, 20,000 troops from the Tiên Giang region had been sent Phú Yên, where they forced the *Tây Sơn* to retreat to the highlands. In the *Thực Lục*, Nhạc allied with Qing merchants resident in Hội An controlling the *Hòa Nghĩa* and *Trung Nghĩa* armies, dressing barbarian soldiers (*thổ dân*) in Qing style, and spread out across the region from Quảng Ngãi to Bình Thuận. Tổng Phúc Hiệp here attacks Nhạc in 1773, leading all the troops of the five Encampments to Phú Yên, with an annotation that this was ordered by Controller Nguyễn Phúc (Cửu) Đàm.

The *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* places the rebellion in 1771, and claim that it had such popular support that the regent Loan's soldiers refused to take up arms against Nhạc. The *Liệt Truyện Chính Biên* also dates Nhạc's return to his base in the highlands base in 1771. In Bình Định Province, Nhạc is known in local folklore as the son of a betel merchant on

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<sup>94</sup> Gutzlaff, "Geography," 116; *Chính Biên Liệt Truyện*, Nguyễn Nhạc.

<sup>95</sup> *Tạp Lục*: I, 43b-45a.

the Côn River, at the edge of the Kontum Plateau. His father married Nguyễn Thị Đồng, daughter of a South China migrant in a market town along the river route to Quy Nhơn.<sup>96</sup>

In local legend, Nhạc's surname is Nguyễn because Đồng's children took their mother's surname. Đỗ Bang also cites a poetic explanation, in an untitled local text describing Nhạc's relationship with exiled minister Trương Văn Hiến. When Hiến fled Trương Phúc Loan, he opened a school in the Ming loyalist region of An Nhơn and advised the brothers to change their surnames to Nguyễn because they would revolt and build a great legacy in the North to aid the Nguyễn reunification. Nhạc's background as a betel trader in a Bana region of Gia Lai is open to interpretation, but ascribing his surname to future ambitions in the north is clearly hindsight. Once Hiến left the court, in any case, he was supported by Fujian merchants in Quy Nhơn, allied with Bahnaric people of the Kontum Plateau.<sup>97</sup>

#### Taksin's Invasion of Hà Tiên

In the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, Taksin attacked Hà Tiên in 1771, capturing ten of Mạc Tiên Tứ's children including sons Tử Hoàng, Tử Xương and Tử Dung; Tứ and others fled to the five Encampments. Taksin left Chen Lian (Trần Liên) to hold Hà Tiên while he attacked Cambodia, driving out king Tôn, then garrisoned at Phnom Penh. The court sent over a hundred warships from Nha Trang (Bình Hòa) and Bình Thuận, removing the Controller, and ordered 100,000 troops of the five Encampments and other districts to restore Hà Tiên. At the same time Mạc Tú, apparently Tứ's relative, brought a letter and ritual objects from Hà Tiên to Siam to make peace. After this tribute, Chen Lian withdrew and released the hostages.

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<sup>96</sup> Only later would Nguyễn Huệ claim descent from the line of Hồ Quý Ly, during his campaigns in Nghệ An in 1786. On the basis of the *gia phả* of a Hồ family he found near the mouth of the Cà River Huệ reportedly declared himself the great-great-grandson of Hồ Sĩ Anh, a mid-17th century Nghệ An district official. Hồ Sĩ Anh's birthplace was also the location of a Ming guest market town. As Dutton notes, a principle source for the *Tây Sơn*, the *Hoàng Lê Nhất Thống Chí*, is a 19th century work of historical fiction. It is, in fact, written in a similar style to the *Diễn Chí*. The Nguyễn Historical Office seems to have relied on both novels and used the *Hoàng Lê Nhất Thống Chí* as a source for its account of the *Tây Sơn* revolt. Ngô Gia Văn Phái, trans. Nguyễn Đức Vân, Kiều Thu Hoạch, *Hoàng Lê Nhất Thống Chí* (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Học, 2006); *Đại Nam Nhất Thống Du Địa Chí*; *Liệt Truyện Chính Biên*, Nguyễn Văn Nhạc; Đỗ Bang, *Những Khám Phá Về Hoàng Đế Quang Trung*, 11-12; Dutton, "Reassessing Confucianism in the Tây Sơn Regime."

<sup>97</sup> Đỗ Bang, *Những Khám Phá Về Hoàng Đế Quang Trung*, *ibid*.

In the *Thông Chí*, Siam attacked Phnom Penh first, capturing 10,000 men, then suffered an epidemic. The Controller Nguyễn Phúc Khôi refused Tứ's call for aid, thinking it a false alarm. Taksin sent prince Chiêu Thùý and Chen Tai (Trần Thái) with 20,000 troops to destroy Hà Tiên, and Chen Lian pursued Tứ to Châu Đốc, defeating a *Chà Và* (Malay/Cham) man under Tứ's command. Long Hồ commander Tống Phúc Hợp arrived and drove Chen Lian back to Hà Tiên, and the Controller escorted Tứ to Trấn Giang (a toponym omitted in the *Thực Lục*) to move against Chen Lian. Taksin placed Nan on the Cambodian throne, and prepared to strike Gia Định. (Elsewhere, Tôn was on the throne in 1775.) Mạc Thiên Tứ pretended to accept Taksin's peace, and Taksin returned his fourth wife and daughter the following year, abandoning Hà Tiên. Tứ did not return and remained in Trấn Giang, sending Tử Hoàng to rebuild.<sup>98</sup>

The *Thực Lục* repeats the *Thông Chí* account, but prefaces the story with a remark that in early 1772, Prince Văn carried out a major troop recruitment in Quy Nhơn. An annotation calls him the *Võ* Prince's third son (in the *Liệt Truyện*, the third son is named Mão, with a second name Văn), though when Nguyễn Nhạc seizes Quy Nhơn the following year, Văn and his army are not mentioned. In 1772, Nguyễn Phúc (later Cửu) Đàm (called a son of Nguyễn Cửu Vân), brought 20,000 troops and 30 warships from Nha Trang (Bình Khang) and Bình Thuận to relieve the failed Controller of his command. Although his navy was defeated, he sent Cambodian Nhậm Lạch Đồi to drive Taksin from Phnom Penh, while king Nan fled to Kampot. Đàm occupied Phnom Penh and Lovek (La Bích), returning Tôn to the throne and returning himself to Gia Định. Tứ rejected Taksin's peace offer, so he engineered the capture of Tứ's daughter and prince Chiêu Thùý and carried them back to Bangkok as hostages; Chiêu Thùý was later killed.<sup>99</sup>

These texts do not elaborate on Taksin's operations in Laos, but an uneasy alliance seems to have been offered Taksin by the Vientiane court in 1771; he compelled

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<sup>98</sup> The *Thực Lục* adds that that Chiêu Thùy fled to Hà Tiên and that Taksin sent troops to retrieve him. *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 35-38; *Thông Chí*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>99</sup> The *Thực Lục* adds note of a border guard stationed in Mỹ Tho. *Thông Chí*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*; *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 35-38; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

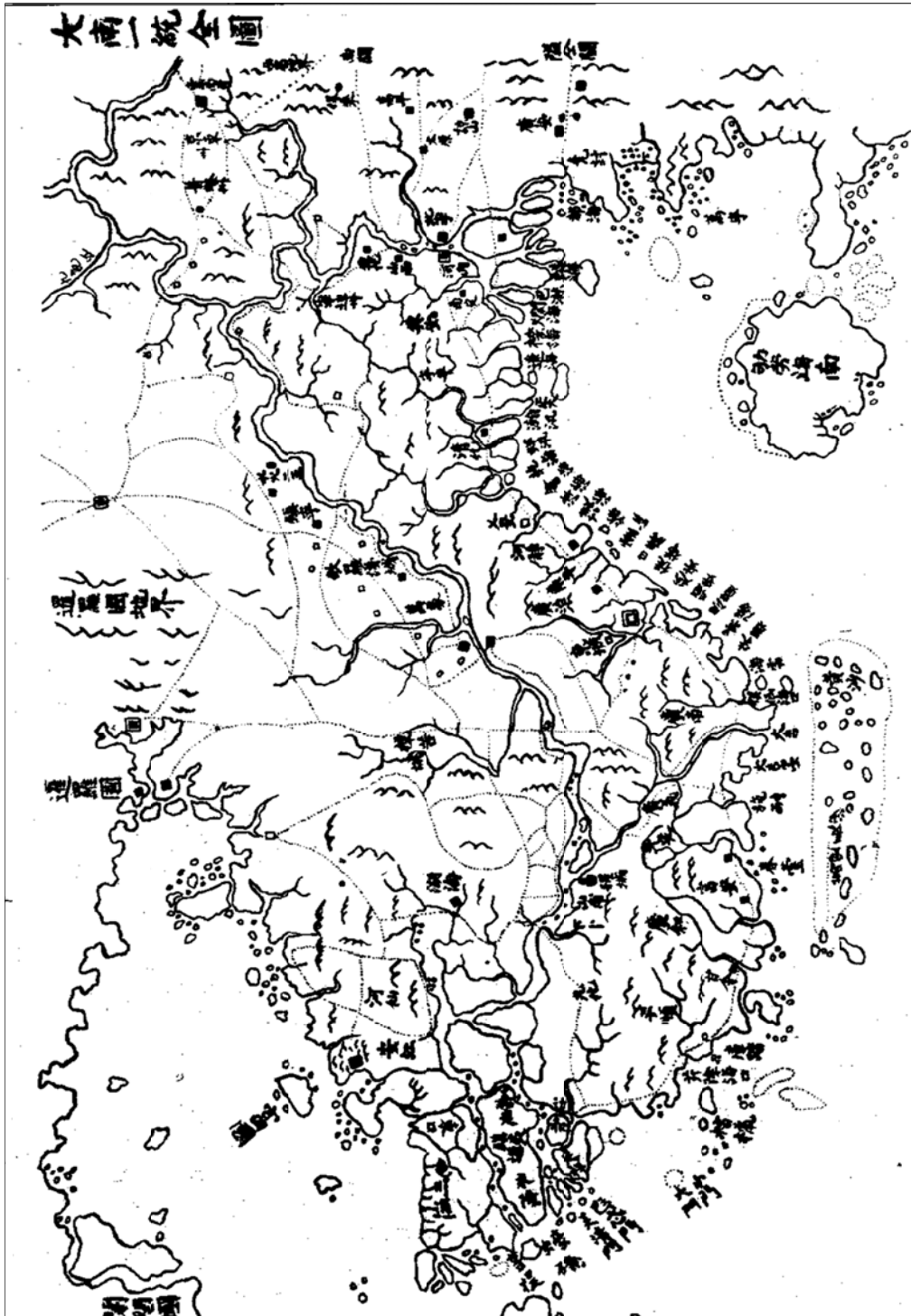
Champpassak to accept Siam's authority at the same time as he conquered Cambodia, before securing Chiang Mai in 1774.<sup>100</sup>

By 1774, the Can Cao governor seems to have regained some of the territory he had apparently lost in the 1760s. Pigneaux writes that he controlled three additional provinces, and was highly supportive of the Christians. In 1775, Pigneaux stops in Can Cao along the Hậu Giang River; its governor sent three warships to protect him on the way to Phnom Penh.

By the 1760s, a new Thuận Hóa regime controlled by the Trương Phúc clan appears to have clashed with factions in the south. One possibility is that there were allied groups of Chinese, Cambodian and some Cochinchinese forces nominally under the Cambodian king, but paying tribute to Huế as well. Following an abortive attempt to depose the Teochiu ruler Taksin in Siam, they lost control of the Saigon and Tiên Giang Rivers to the Trương Phúc clan, who intervened behind the throne in Huế while eliminating several rivals in the south. This intervention is more credible than the reported establishment of Gia Định Prefecture some 60 years earlier. As an economic crisis worsened, several groups allied against the faction behind the throne, including the so-called Nguyễn Phúc/Cửu clan (descended from a prince in the *Diễn Chí*), the Mạc, and forces associated with the Longmen guard, and may have reclaimed territory lost to the Trương Phúc. Clashes over the Cambodia trade in Saigon and the two Mekong branches are not well understood, but may have been an important proximate cause of the *Tây Sơn* wars.

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<sup>100</sup> Pheuiphanh Ngaosrivathana, *Paths to conflagration: 50 years of diplomacy and warfare in Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam, 1778-1828* (Cornell: SEAP Publications, 1998), 39.



Map 6 Đại Nam Nhất Thống Toàn Đồ. An early 19th century map, perhaps based on maps first drawn in the late 18th century. Hán Nôm Institute, Hanoi.

## CHAPTER 10

### The Birth of Nguyễn Vietnam, c.1773-1788

The *Tây Sơn* wars are usually considered a peasant uprising against a ruling clan that had held power for centuries. George Dutton acknowledges that the *Tây Sơn* commanded Chinese armies in early battles, but he points out the difficulties of learning much about these armies' origin or motivation given the lack of documentary evidence about them. For this reason, he places Chinese merchants and mercenaries at the “social margins” of the *Tây Sơn* wars. Dutton's monograph on the *Tây Sơn* focuses primarily on its leaders, with particular attention given to Nguyễn Huệ, who ruled Đông Kinh after 1782 with the support of many Lê literati. Dutton observes that his narrative is constrained by the 19th century histories of the *Tây Sơn*, which describe no peasants; he suggests that those texts, in which history is shaped by a series of arcane decisions made out of the rulers' personal ambition, fail to describe roles played by the tens of thousands of peasants who died in these wars.

The *Diễn Chí* may have been written in a climate in which support was sought for the legitimacy of legendary Nguyễn ancestors, and, by extension, late 18th century claimants to the throne of Tonkin, despite those rulers having proximate roots in Cochinchina and Cambodia. In this chapter, I explore some facets of the struggle for control of the lower Mekong in this period; these include the rise of Nguyễn Ánh in Gia Định and support by populations originating in South China, Christians and others. These factors suggest that the *Tây Sơn* uprising can also be viewed in the context of wider regional conflicts.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dutton, *Tây Sơn Uprising*, 198-205; idem, “The Hoàng Lê Nhất Thống Chí and Historiography of Late Eighteenth-Century Đại Việt” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 36:2 (June 2005), 189; idem, “Reassessing Confucianism in the Tây Sơn regime (1788–1802),” *South East Asia Research* 13:2 (July 2005), 157-183.

## “Nguyễn” Support for a Trịnh Occupation

Missionaries offer conflicting versions of the Trịnh occupation of Cochinchina and its aftermath. Pigneaux writes that Tonkin seized upper Cochinchina, driving the king to flee to Đồng Nai in about 1775. Brigands then placed on the throne a nephew of the exiled king. Pigneaux considered the heir selected by “brigands” to be legitimate, since that nephew’s son was Pigneaux’s ally Nguyễn Ánh.<sup>2</sup> Bissachère describes the young *Anh* King, who held power at the court, as the illegitimate son of a concubine. A “common trader” from the mountains west of Quy Nhon named Nhạc had led an insurrection in Quy Nhon in 1774, but the regime ultimately collapsed due to lack of popular support within the court itself. In Bissachère and the Montmignon letters, rivals of the young king’s regent asked Tonkin to intervene, and then helped Tonkin to occupy the capital and install a legitimate heir. The young king himself handed over the regent to the Trịnh before fleeing to lower Cochinchina, while the rebel Nhạc took up arms against the invading northern forces in the name of the ousted king’s family. The Montmignon letters state that a nephew of the son of a different prince (not the king who had died in prison after 1765) was crowned king after marrying Nhạc’s daughter; again, however, this nephew is considered legitimate.<sup>3</sup> *MEP* letters concur with these accounts, although the king was said to be killed in the fighting, so a grandson of the prince previously passed over took the throne in his place; this grandson married Nhạc’s daughter. John Barrow presents a very different version of events, in which the court was occupied first by Nhạc, who captured the king and then marched on Saigon; a conflict with Tonkin ensued only later, after Nhạc’s brother was given command of Huế.<sup>4</sup>

The *Tap Lục* is the only local text to describe locals summoning the Trịnh. The surname Nguyễn reappears in the *Tap Lục* with regularity for the first time when a Nguyễn clan requests aid from the Trịnh, who had already prepared their army in Trấn

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<sup>2</sup> *Nouvelles Lettres*, XVI, 291.

<sup>3</sup> Jean Baptiste de Montmignon, ed., *Choix des Lettres Édifiantes: écrites des missions étrangères, précédé de tableaux géographiques, historiques, politiques, religieux et littéraires, des pays de mission*, vol. 3, 2nd ed., (Paris, Casimir: 1825), 463.

<sup>4</sup> Jean Felix Onésime Luquet, *Lettres à mgr. l'évêque de Langres: sur la Congrégation des missions étrangères* (Paris: Gaume Frères, 1843), 333-334 ; Barrow, *A Voyage to Cochinchina*, 251.

Ninh for such an invasion, to depose Loan. (Rulers after Nguyễn Hoàng were almost without exception named only as “Phúc” in the *Tạp Lục* political narrative, so the reappearance of the surname Nguyễn here is striking.) This Nguyễn clan called for the Trịnh to march down through the mountains from Trấn Ninh, and an army led by the *Việp* Duke crossed the pass and descended on Quảng Trị completely unopposed by any southern forces. As this army approached the court, local people captured Loan, destroyed his property and killed his older brother. Phúc Thuận reportedly tried to appease the advancing army by delivering Loan upriver to them. The Nguyễn clan surrendered to the Trịnh on their arrival at the court, but the king and his relatives fled. The Trịnh army pursued the king to Quảng Nam, capturing his wife and mother, and the king fled on to Long Hồ in Gia Định.

The Trịnh army defeated “Lý,” apparently Lý Tài (Li Cai is described in the *Thực Lục* as a Qing merchant - I will use Vietnamese spelling here) and Nguyễn Phúc Dương, then Nhạc and the *Tập Đình* Marquis (described in the *Thực Lục* as another Qing merchant named Tập Đình), capturing the Quảng Nam citadel from them. Contradicting missionary reports, the *Tạp Lục* does not describe Nguyễn Nhạc taking up arms against Tonkin on behalf of a legitimate prince. Instead, the Trịnh award Nhạc the captured Quảng Nam Citadel, giving him a Trịnh command with instructions to attack Gia Định; Nhạc later appoints his brother Bình (an annotation notes this is *Quang Trung*) as a general in that attack.<sup>5</sup>

The *Thực Lục* does not mention court factions requesting Trịnh aid, instead claiming that the war first broke out with Nguyễn Nhạc, and the Trịnh chose that moment strike. Since most sources suggest that state officials invited Tonkin to invade, and then submitted peacefully, the *Thực Lục* seems to be incorrect. It is also widely agreed that the ruling king handed over the regent and fled south. However, the identity of the various heirs who appeared over the next several years stake a claim for the throne is not consistent across these descriptions.

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<sup>5</sup> Someone has here added an annotation to the *Tạp Lục* that Dương was the son of Thuận, and Văn Bình was later *Quang Trung*. They defeated Thuận in locations that are not standard Quảng Trị toponyms. Loan’s brother was called the the *Sinh Đức* Marquis. *Tạp Lục*, I: 44a-50a.



## Mạc Support for Princes in Exile

When Pigneaux moved from the Cambodian court to Can Cao from mid-1775 to mid-1776, at the invitation of the enthusiastic pro-Christian Can Cao governor, he wrote that the exiled king was at that time “on the Cambodian border” in Đồng Nai. The exiled king’s nephew remained in Quảng Nam, and although the king offered to turn over regalia to his nephew, the nephew was reluctant to accept it. In 1776, the rebel leader in Quảng Nam proclaimed himself king, although the populace did not accept this; by mid-year, the king’s 25,000 troops in Đồng Nai were surrounded by twice that number. When the king was defeated, Pigneaux predicted, the rebels would quickly overrun the Can Cao governor, who had only a few thousand troops. Pigneaux notes that Can Cao was simultaneously subject to both the king of Cambodia and of Cochinchina; since the latter king was residing in exile in Đồng Nai with support from the Can Cao governor, the territory controlled by the Can Cao governor included both the Tiên Giang River and Saigon. By July of that year, the king had been forced out of Đồng Nai and took refuge in Can Cao.<sup>6</sup>

The sources closest to the events of the *Tây Sơn* rebellion suggest that its cause was persecution of Christians. Quy Nhơn missionary Faulet reports that the *Tây Sơn* leader Paul Nhạc and both his parents were Christian. He was son of a former sexton (*fiils d'un ancien sacristain*) in a Quy Nhơn church; another missionary claims that Nhạc had been baptized. Pigneaux also confirms that after the *Tây Sơn* takeover of the south, Fransiscains were permitted celebrate mass. George Dutton notes that Nhạc allowed Christian worship and some missionary activity, at least around Quy Nhơn, until he turned against the Christians abruptly in 1785. Dutton suggests that it is impossible to verify these reports of Nhạc’s Christian origins, which may have been missionary “wishful thinking” and had “no discernable effect on their attitudes toward the religion or its practitioners.” On the other hand, early *Tây Sơn* support for Christianity would be consistent with the Christian sympathies reported among other southern officials.<sup>7</sup>

For Bissachère, Nhạc’s plundering of provincial treasuries and households prompted the exiled king in lower Cochinchina to raise an army against Nhạc and

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<sup>6</sup> *Nouvelle Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses*, III, 291-3.

<sup>7</sup> Launay, *Histoire*, vol. 1, 65-68; Dutton, *Tây Sơn Uprising*, 179-185.

Tonkin. An incompetent king installed by Nhạc was assassinated in a theatre, and “the people” crowned in his place a son of the last legitimate king of Cochinchina (an apparent reference to the son of the legitimate heir who had died in prison after 1765). This king married Nhạc’s daughter, but later raised an army against his father-in-law; defeated, he soon disappeared. This king’s son, grandson of “last legitimate king,” raised another army to rescue his father, but Nhạc’s brother Long-Nhu-Ong (Nguyễn Huệ) tricked the grandson’s officers into surrendering him, permitting only his wife and his second son Nguyễn Ánh to escape with aid from Pigneaux. Letters to the Bishop of Langres add that the *Tây Sơn* beheaded the captured grandson in Saigon, along with other royalty, and razed the city to punish his loyalists.<sup>8</sup> A different version appears in the Montmignon letters: a nephew of the legitimate king was crowned by Nhạc, but then fled to lower Cochinchina, where some officials forced the king who had been ruling there to turn over the crown to him. This old king fled to Can Cao, was killed by the *Tây Sơn*, then the nephew was also secretly killed, leaving his brother Nguyễn Ánh as the last surviving “legitimate” heir.

In local texts, Phúc Thuận was welcomed by the Mạc clan, but these texts disagree on whether the future king Nguyễn Ánh accompanied him. The *Tạp Lục*, supposedly completed by Lê Quý Đôn in Phú Xuân in eighth lunar month of 1776, includes a description of events in Gia Định up until the fourth month of that year. The king arrives in Long Hồ alone, while his companions on 18 ships all perished during the journey. Although the political narrative in the first book does not mention the Mạc greeting the king, the biography of Mạc Thiên Tứ in the fifth book states that when Phúc Thuận arrived in Gia Định, Tứ helped the Nguyễn fight against Mạc despite his advanced age of 70 years. However, the biography continues, “now, it is not known where Mạc Thiên Tứ is,” which makes little sense since he was just described as aiding the king. An identical passage, including the statement that Tứ’s present location is unknown, appears verbatim in the *Kiến Văn Thiệu Lục* biography of Mạc Thiên Tứ dated mid-1777. The biography of Mạc Thiên Tứ in these two texts appears to have been written after 1776. Since the *Tạp Lục* does not describe Phúc Thuận being welcomed by Mạc Thiên Tứ on

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<sup>8</sup> Letters to the Bishop of Langres agree.

his arrival in Long Hồ, that episode, which appears in all the later texts, appears to be a composite of two different stories.<sup>9</sup>

The political narrative of the *Tap Lục* ends abruptly with Phúc Thuận moving to Bà Rịa and calling on Tống Phúc Trị's grandson Hiệp, whose army in Bình Khang attacked Nhạc with the goal of re-taking Trấn Biên encampment. Nguyễn Nhạc is described engaged in battles in Quảng Nam. An unnamed *Bích Phương* General brought the *Đông Sơn* army, mentioned for the first time, to seize “Phan Trấn.” Nhạc lost three battles, fleeing back to Quy Nhơn with 3 million “bowls” of rice.

The *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* states the king arrived in Gia Định (no location is specified) where he was received by Mạc Thiên Tứ and his sons; his traveling companions are not named. A year later, Nguyễn Huệ attacked Gia Định.<sup>10</sup> In the *Thông Chí*, after fleeing the Trịnh invasion in mid-1774, the king remained in Quảng Nam over six months before traveling to Saigon (Bến Nghé), not Long Hồ, in early 1775, where he was received by the Mạc. This text states that the king arrived together with Nguyễn Ánh, and Prince Dương is not present. Here, the third *Tây Sơn* brother Nguyễn Lữ attacks Gia Định in 1776.<sup>11</sup>

The *Thực Lục* provides a composite narrative combining elements of each of these stories with new information. Nhạc's war with the armies of the five Encampments is placed in 1773; the Trịnh seize this opportunity to invade in 1774, without a local invitation. Prince Dương, who had broad popular support in Quảng Nam, remained there, and only Nguyễn Ánh traveled with the king Gia Định. As in the *Thông Chí*, the king's companions were all killed in a storm, yet this text specifies that all the other companions except Ánh travelled in a second ship which was lost, and so only Ánh survived. The Mạc clan welcomed Ánh in Saigon rather than Long Hồ; Dương was captured and “forced” to declare himself king in Quy Nhơn. After another royalist faction

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<sup>9</sup> The *Tap Lục* ends its political narrative at this point, a few months before it purports to have been written; following this political summary, it turns to listing place names in Thuận Hóa and Quảng Nam (but not further south), then describing topics including administration, tax revenues, and the biographies of famous literati; *Kiến Văn Thiệu Lục*, IV:143b.

<sup>10</sup> *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 41.

<sup>11</sup> *Thông Chí*, III:66a-74b.

was defeated in Quảng Nam, Prince Xuân (in *Liệt Truyện* the *Võ* Prince's 17th son) also joined the king.<sup>12</sup>

The king then fled an attack on Saigon by Nguyễn Lữ, arriving in Trần Biên. Nhạc proclaimed himself *Tây Sơn* Prince, placing Dương in a pagoda, while Dương's ally Chu Văn Tiếp held Phú Yên, and Đỗ Thanh Nhân's *Đông Sơn* returned Thuận to Saigon. Lý Tài defected and took command of Tông Phúc Hiệp's soldiers, but quarreled with Nhan, moving to a hill in Trần Biên to fight the *Đông Sơn* in Saigon. Prince Dương secretly left Quy Nhơn, meeting Prince Xuân by coincidence, and they reached Gia Định together. Lý Tài drove the *Đông Sơn* out of Saigon and back to Trần Biên, but kept Dương on the throne in Saigon.<sup>13</sup>

No source provides a complete or consistent account of the years following the *Tây Sơn* control of Quảng Nam. The *Thực Lục* description of Phúc Thuận's arrival in Gia Định with Nguyễn Ánh, welcomed by the Mạc, is a composite account combining elements from several source texts which are internally inconsistent and conflict with each other.

#### A King of Gia Định

There is little evidence of Nguyễn Ánh's background in the years before the Bishop of Adran began to promote him to French authorities as a legitimate heir. Though written not long after Ánh's death, the *Thực Lục* fails to note his year of birth, and names neither of his parents. His first action in the Historical Office records is a 1776 attack on Cambodia. At this time, missionary Le Clerc reports suspicions that the Cambodian king was behind rebel attacks in Cochinchina, and describes a rival to the Can Cao governor, Kikric, who arrived at the Hậu Giang in 1776 in an attempt to seize control of Can Cao.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Those said to attack Nhạc were Nguyễn Phúc Thống (later Cửu, said to be son of Princess Ngọc Huyền and Nguyễn Phúc Thông), Nguyễn Phúc Sách (later Cửu, son of Nguyễn Phúc Pháp and Princess Ngọc Anh), Phan Tiến, Nguyễn Vệ, Tông Sùng, and Đỗ Văn Hoàng. The prince Chí is described defeating another local enemy in Phú Yên at this time. Đỗ Thanh Nhân is described as being from a *Minh Hương* village in Hương Trà district in Huế in Nguyễn Huyềnh Anh, *Việt Nam Danh Nhân Từ Điển*, (Saigon: Nhà Sách Khai Trí, 1970), 87; *Thực Lục*, 179-186. *Tạp Lục*, *ibid*; *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 38-43; *Thông Chí*, III:66a-b; *Thực Lục*, 177-179.

<sup>13</sup> Nhạc placed Dương in the Thập Tháp pagoda. The extent of Trịnh penetration in the south is unclear; the *Thực Lục* mentions that Trịnh Sâm ordered Bùi Thế Đạt to forge 30,000 copper coins, and unspecified parties unsuccessfully mined for gold in the hills above Nam Phố (Đồng Nai). *Thực Lục*, 186-189.

<sup>14</sup> Launay, *Histoire*, III, 67.

In the *Thông Chí*, a Cambodian king Vinh was disloyal in 1776, and an unnamed *Tuấn* Duke led a punitive attack to subdue him. In the *Thực Lục* version of this battle, the attack being led by Nguyễn Ánh, only fourteen in that year, on Nguyễn Phúc Thuần's orders. Ánh went together with Nguyễn Phúc (Cử) Tuấn (replacing the *Tuấn* Duke) and Trương Phúc Thuận to depose Vinh. There are several problems with this account, however. An army would not be sent to Cambodia at a time when Gia Định's own defenders had fled in the wake of Lý Tài's attack. A very young prince would not be given high command by the king responsible for his father's death. The author of the *Thông Chí*, who would have witnessed these events, would have been required to mention his own king's leadership, so it is evident that the Historical Office inserted Nguyễn Ánh into the story found in the *Thông Chí*. Following his alleged defeat of Vinh in the *Thực Lục*, Nguyễn Ánh becomes king in Saigon at the age of about fourteen.<sup>15</sup>

The *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* has the king ceding the throne to Prince Dương in Trần Giang. Dương became First King (*Tân Chính Vương*); Thuần took the title Senior King (*Thái Thượng Vương*). The new king joined the *Đông Khẩu* army on the Tiên Giang, where Chu Văn Tiếp also arrived, but Dương was soon captured by the *Tây Sơn*. Thuần and Tứ went to Kiến Giang, then Tứ (and the merchant that had urged the Qing to restore the exiled Siam princes) sent word to the Qing asking them to punish the Trịnh and *Tây Sơn*. Thuần was left in the care of an officer called *Ngũ Nhung Cai Cơ*. There was earlier a *Ngũ Nhung Từ* Marquis, also called Từ Hữu Dụng, a son-in-law of Mạc Thiên Tứ who led an attack on Siam, but he was already dead the *Thông Chí* and appears to have also died in the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*. No figures with a similar name or title appear at all in the *Thực Lục*. That the officer caring for the king when the king died mysteriously (paving the way for Nguyễn Ánh to take power) seems to have a corrupted title suggests that this is an important figure whose identity is obscured in extant texts.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> The only Vinh in the Nguyễn texts is Vinh Ly Ma, a *Chà Và* rebel described below. Phuangthong Rungwasdisab suggests that Tôn abruptly decided to abdicate in favor of his rival Non in 1775, taking the position of *Uppayaraj*, and died two years later, in 1777. *Thông Chí*, III:15a; *Thực Lục*, *ibid*; Phuangthong Rungwasdisab, "War and Trade," 67.

<sup>16</sup> This practice of ceding the throne while living had not been adopted by the Lê Restoration, although in 1740, the *Toàn Thư* reports that Lê Ý Tông ceded the throne to Lê Hiến Tông, and at the same time the Trịnh lord, since the mid-17th century called a Second King, Trịnh Giang, reportedly ceded his position to Trịnh Doanh. Wills does not discuss Tứ's call for Qing aid, but he notes Qing descriptions of Nguyễn Ánh become detailed only in the 1790s. *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 43-48. *Tap Lục*, *ibid*. *Thông Chí*, III:66b-68b.

In the *Thực Lục*, like the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, Thuần ceded the throne to Dương. However, Xuân and another prince, Chí, shared power under Lý Tài in Saigon. Nguyễn Ánh suddenly appeared, having gathered the *Đông Sơn* to oust Dương and Lý Tài, and Thuần returned to Saigon.<sup>17</sup>

In the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, the *Tây Sơn* attacked the *Ngũ Nhung* officer caring for the Phúc Thuần, taking him to Gia Định, while Mạc Thiên Tứ and Prince Xuân escaped in a Chinese ship. Nguyễn Ánh is not present in this text. Tứ brought an armada of small ships to Phú Quốc Island, and from there the Cambodia king's son brought Tứ to Bangkok, with Xuân joining him later. In the *Thông Chí*, Nguyễn Huệ drove Thuần out of Gia Định to meet Tứ in Trấn Giang. Thuần went to Long Xuyên without Tứ and returned to Saigon with Dương. Here the *Thông Chí* states that Ánh was left alone in Long Xuyên. Again, Taksin ordered a Cambodian prince bring Xuân and Tứ to Siam, but Vinh Ly Ma does not appear.<sup>18</sup>

In the *Thực Lục*, Huệ attacked Saigon, forcing Dương to Trấn Biên, but was later defeated by the *Hòa Nghĩa* army, which was subsequently massacred by the *Đông Sơn*. Nguyễn Ánh found Thuần in Đăng Giang (Định Tường), and they joined Dương in Gia Định. When the *Tây Sơn* attacked again, Thuần met Tứ in Cần Thơ, while Nhân sent for aid from Chu Văn Tiếp in Bình Thuận. Both Dương and Thuần died, along with other royalty, under unexplained circumstances. They are not said to be killed by the *Tây Sơn*, and it is not explained how Nguyễn Ánh alone survived a massacre. The *Thực Lục Tiền Biên* ends here. In the *Thực Lục Chính Biên*, Ánh followed Thuần to Cần Thơ, then Long Xuyên, where Thuần died for reasons that are again unexplained. Ánh then left for the island of Thổ Châu.<sup>19</sup>

The *Liệt Truyện Chính Biên* biography of Ánh's mother would remain unpublished for half a century due to controversies that 19th century compilers do not specify. The Historical Office claimed ignorance of the queen mother's background; it was not known, they wrote, whether Ánh's maternal grandfather, called Nguyễn Phúc Trung, actually used this royal surname in his lifetime, or whether he received it

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<sup>17</sup> *Thực Lục*, 188-191; *Liệt Truyện Chính Biên*, 17-23.

<sup>18</sup> There appears to be an inconsistency in the text: in one passage, the king of Cambodia Vinh (or Trí) killed the second king, Tôn, in this year; in a separate passage, however it states Thâm was the king who was killed, and Tôn then died from illness. *Thông Chí*, III:68a-b; *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, *ibid*.

<sup>19</sup> *Thực Lục Chính Biên*, 204-205.

posthumously. These politicized details of Nguyễn Ánh's background and early life found in these Historical Office records cannot be accepted at face value.

### Consolidation of Power by the *Đông Sơn* Army

The consolidation of power in Saigon under the *Đông Sơn* army, which supported Nguyễn Ánh, occurs in a period poorly documented by the French. Although the name Saigon itself does not appear in Pigneaux's published letters. The captain James Cooke claims to have read an August 1779 message from Pigneaux, who sent a navigator to wait at Poulou Condore in hopes of guiding a passing French ship to the aid a king in the court of Saigon. (Cooke did not come to his aid.) Decades later, *MEP* letters would claim that Nguyễn Ánh and his mother hid for one month in Pigneaux's house before his departure for Cambodia, although Pigneaux's published letters first describe a meeting with the king in 1783. Pigneaux was driven out of Can Cao (or Saigon) in March 1782, with two Franciscans. They went to Cambodia, where a king was removed by Siam in early 1783; war and famine drove the priests to move to the islands of the Gulf of Siam, as Pigneaux reported in letters dated 1785.<sup>20</sup>

In the *Thực Lục Chính Biên*, Nguyễn Ánh and Đỗ Thanh Nhân gathered troops separately in the delta in 1777; in an annotation, Nhân is the *Phuong* Duke, resembling the *Tap Lục*'s *Bích Phương* leading the *Đông Sơn* in mid-1776. Nhân and others proclaimed the young Nguyễn Ánh Grand Marshall, and Lê Chử's *Quang Hóa* army brought reportedly brought Ánh regalia and seals of the previous dynasty, which had been repeatedly lost. (These details had not appeared previously, in either the *Thực Lục* or *Thông Chí*.)<sup>21</sup>

Nguyễn Ánh also appears abruptly in a leadership position in the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*. The Mạc in Bangkok learned that the *Đông Sơn*, led by Nguyễn Ánh, took Gia Định in 1778. Ánh sent an offer of peace with Siam, inviting Tứ and Prince Xuân to return, but they remained in Bangkok on Taksin's advice that it was a trap, and Taksin imprisoned Ánh's emissaries. The *Thông Chí* concurs that which Ánh took Gia Định in 1778,

<sup>20</sup> *Lettres a Mgr l'Evêque de Langres*, 355.

<sup>21</sup> *Thực Lục*, 122, *Thực Lục Chính Biên*, 204-215.

sending a peace offer Bangkok. In 1779, in that text (and the *Thực Lục Chính Biên*), the *Phuong Duke*, or *Đỗ Thanh Nhân*, killed Vinh, placing Tôn's son In on the throne. In a different passage, settlements in *Trần Biên*, Saigon and on the *Tiên Giang* were expanded in this year, with people recruited to settle on their borders.<sup>22</sup>

In the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, the *Tây Sơn* forged a letter, tricking Taksin into thinking the *Đông Sơn* intended to use *Mạc Thiên Tứ* and Prince *Xuân* to depose him. (*Xuân* was tortured into admitting a conspiracy; *Từ Dung* maintained his innocence). Taksin sent *Mạc* followers into the hills, and killed *Tứ*, *Xuân*, other *Mạc*, and the *Đông Sơn* emissaries. When the *Đông Sơn* arrived in Cambodia, *Chakri* and *Sosi* went to meet them. The *Thông Chí* and the *Thực Lục Chính Biên* report this, but describe the *Đông Sơn* letter to Taksin as authentic.<sup>23</sup>

In the *Thực Lục Chính Biên*, by 1779, at about seventeen, *Ánh* married the daughter of a man named in by the Historical Office as *Tổng Phúc Khuông*, a *Đông Sơn* general under *Đỗ Thanh Nhân*. (*Nhân* attempted to seize power from *Ánh*, but *Tổng Phúc Thiêm* killed him and took command of the *Đông Sơn*.) Their first son Prince *Cảnh* was born in 1780.<sup>24</sup> *Pigneaux* met *Nguyễn Ánh*, reduced to fifteen ships and 600 men, off the *Chantaburi* coast in January of 1784. When they met again, in January 1785, after the king had spent a year fighting on behalf of *Chakri*, *Pigneaux* accepted the care of the king's oldest son, aged six.<sup>25</sup>

### An Alliance with Bangkok

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<sup>22</sup> In Thai sources, Non was executed in 1779 by “anti-Thai nobility” who placed Ton's son Eng (In), a child of seven, on the throne. (Vinh does not appear.) Taksin sent *Chakri* to capture *Udong*, but his army returned to Bangkok due to the agitation against Taksin. *Phuangthong Rungwasdisab*, “War and Trade,” *ibid. Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 51-53 *Thông Chí*, III: 69b-71b.

<sup>23</sup> The letter was brought by *Bồ Ông Giao*. In the *Thông Chí*, the *Gia Định* court learned of Siam's attack on Cambodia in 1781. *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, *ibid*; *Thông Chí*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục Chính Biên*, *ibid*.

<sup>24</sup> *Nguyễn Phúc Dụ* in *Bình Thuận* and *Chu Văn Tiếp* in *Phú Yên* continued to fight the *Tây Sơn*, but without *Đông Sơn* aid, *Tiếp* retreated to the highlands. *Khuông* is described in the *Liệt Truyện Chính Biên* as from a family of *Thanh Hóa* natives, son of a military officer in the *Phú Xuân* court. The initial authors of the *Thực Lục Chính Biên* had lived during this first *Gia Định* regime, and yet they were not able to name some of *Ánh*'s senior officials, stating twice that they were not sure of a surname; *Ánh*'s first Minister of War was called *Minh*, with no known surname, and his infantry was commanded by a man called only *Hoàng*. The *Liệt Truyện Chính Biên* calls *Tổng Phúc Thiêm*, commander of the *Gia Định* navy, a *Thanh Hóa* native, but gives no details of his family background. *Thực Lục Chính Biên*, *ibid*; *Liệt Truyện Chính Biên*, 83-84, 208; *Thông Chí*, *ibid*

<sup>25</sup> In December 1783, the bishop encountered a Siamese army sent to attack *Cochinchina* and in his own version of events decided to spend the year quietly in the islands without getting involved in these affairs.



In July 1784, a local Christian, André Tôn, sent a letter to Paris that captured the French imagination. A king was driven out of the royal city of Saigon by the rebel chief, Pigneaux fled with four colleagues, and 10,000 Chinese were massacred. Enemies of the fugitive king captured two Franciscans in Cambodia in August and brought them to Saigon, where one was imprisoned briefly. In January 1784, the rebels captured Christian refugees including André in the Cambodian capital, but were beaten back by Siam. The priest's companions arrived at the Tiên Giang in May 1784, where they practiced openly among Portuguese Christian refugees from Cambodia. The war between the rebels and Siam continued; more than 40 Chinese vessels arrived in Saigon, and then left quietly.<sup>26</sup>

For Bissachère, the legitimate king's grandson was executed in Saigon's public square, along with other princes and most inhabitants of the city, who had supported them. A "confederation of Christians, who had remained faithful to the king, was dispersed and destroyed." Chung and his mother hid in the forest until Pigneaux rescued them. For Barrow, the king had returned to Saigon and was crowned *Caung-shung*, the reign name used by his father, but soon fled with his family to the islands, then Siam, where he brought 1,000 soldiers to join the wars against Burma. Ánh's mother and father (the first *Caung-shung*) are described only vaguely in Barrow's account. Gutzlaff writes that the "widow queen" was the one responsible for enlisting Portuguese and one French ship while still in Saigon; her mercenaries supported the 1781 attack on Quy Nhon. After the defeat in Quy Nhon, her son took refuge in Phú Quốc, then Siam, where he fought in the wars with Burma.<sup>27</sup>

Multiple, conflicting versions of the king's expulsion from Saigon by the *Tây Sơn* appear in Nguyễn texts, none indicating that Christians loyal to the king were targeted by the *Tây Sơn*. Ánh is described repeatedly recapturing of Gia Định in the intervening years, but since there are no eyewitness reports of events in Saigon until Pigneaux's return in 1789, these may have been exaggerated by the Historical Office.

Nguyễn Ánh described to Pigneaux going to fight the *Tây Sơn* under Siamese command in 1784. They were able to capture the Tiên Giang, which the prince called *Rạch* (Rạch Gầm). Despite the significance of this battle in later eras, it is not clear that it

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<sup>26</sup> Though the rebel chief appeared to tolerate Christians, they worked in secrecy in Dong-nai and Champa.

<sup>27</sup> Dutton notes the Spanish missionary, Pérez, also wrote that the *Tây Sơn* murdered Chinese in Hội An, Danang and, during their entry into Cambodia in 1782, Chinese refugees fleeing Cochinchina.

was large in scale; the letter describes seizing a single warship and five transport ships from the *Tây Sơn*. Ánh was driven out, which he blamed on his fellow generals:

Siamese soldiers devoted themselves to all their passions, plundering, raping women and girls, stealing the people's goods, killing young and old without distinction. Therefore the force of the rebels grew day by day, while that of the Siamese soldiers decreased gradually. Thus, on [January 18th, 1785], we were defeated, and all troops were dispersed.

Nguyễn Ánh returned to the islands and reported his defeat to the Siamese court, returning to Bangkok in May, and remaining there, Cadière contends, until August 1787. As described in the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, Ánh returned to Bangkok in 1785 to again join Siam's army, fighting Burma and a Malay state. Ánh's men received land and settled down in Siam at that time.<sup>28</sup> In the *Thông Chí*, Chu Văn Tiếp (who was killed in battle) and Mạc Tử Sinh are described as Ánh's own officers. The *Thực Lục Chính Biên* adds the first appearance of key supporters of Ánh after 1788, including Lê Văn Duyệt; many Ming loyalists from Gia Định that follow Ánh to Bangkok in this text would serve in the Gia Định regime in the 1790s and in the early Nguyễn Dynasty.<sup>2930</sup>

Barrow states that while *Caung-shung* (Ánh) was on campaign against Burma, Siam's king tried to convince his mother to let the king take Ánh's sister as a concubine. After this quarrel, Ánh learned of plots by Siamese officers and fled by night to a small island near Cambodia, where he met Pigneaux and sent his son to Pondicherry. Barrow does not date this event, but he places the meeting with Pigneaux after the king's departure by night from Bangkok, an event which the Historical Office places in 1788.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, our accounts of the years preceding Pigneaux's 1789 return to Saigon reveal a period of great uncertainty for the future ruler, Nguyễn Ánh, and his family. Ánh first served as an officer in the Chakri regime, then fled to the islands. Finally,

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<sup>28</sup> Sinh led the naval attack on Gia Định together with Sa-uyen, Chieu-thuy-bien, and Thất Xi Đa. The place Ánh's men settled is called Long Khâu or Gò Khoai. *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 61-74.

<sup>29</sup> Cadière, Leopold, "Les Français au Service de Gia-Long," *BAVH* 13:1 (1926)

<sup>30</sup> Neither text repeats the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* claim that the nephews gave up Gia Định to Huệ and occupied Phnom Penh. Among the men who joined Ánh in Bangkok are Nguyễn Phúc Bảo's son Nguyễn Phúc Huy, Nguyễn Phúc Hội, Lư Văn Bình, Mai Đức Nghị, Nguyễn Văn Thụy, Trương Phúc Luật, Tôn Phúc Ngoạn, Lê Thượng, Nguyễn Tân, Dụ Kỳ, Nguyễn Văn Thành, Đỗ Văn Hựu, Tô Văn Đoài, Nguyễn Văn Mẫu, Lê Văn Luật, Nguyễn Văn Thịnh, Đoàn Công Duệ, Nguyễn Thái, Tống Đồng, Võ Tiến Sinh, Lê Văn Duyệt, Nguyễn Đức Xuyên, and Nguyễn Văn Khiêm, with about 200 troops. Only a small fraction of these men has any discernable connection to Phú Xuân. *Thực Lục Chính Biên*, *ibid*.

<sup>31</sup> Barrow, *A Voyage to Cochinchina*, 258-261.

descendants of Ming loyalists with local support in the delta appear to have agreed to accept him as their ruler.

### Establishment of the Gia Định Regime

The French and Nguyễn texts valorizing Nguyễn Ánh describe him sneaking out of Siam and quickly occupying Saigon, yet Ming loyalists provided the bulk of the troops in this occupation. In the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, Ánh received a secret message to leave for Gia Định with Siamese support; he departed by night, leaving behind Chakri's gold and silver gifts. (Chakri sent the items again, asking for forgiveness.) Although a Chinese general surrendered to Ánh in Hà Tiên, Chakri retained the loyalty of Mạc Tử Sinh, who soon returned to Hà Tiên, as well as Tử Hoàng's son Công Bính, who controlled Long Xuyên and Kiên Giang. Sinh reportedly sent artillery to support Ánh, however, in driving an ally of Huệ out of Gia Định.<sup>32</sup>

In the *Thông Chí*, a Tống Phúc man brought word that Gia Định was “unoccupied;” Chakri's navy chased Ánh to Hà Tiên, but failed to capture him. Reaching the Tiên Giang, Ánh joined with two South China pirates and others, capturing Saigon and Đồng Nai, while Mạc Tử Sinh held Hà Tiên (his loyalty to Chakri is not mentioned). *Tây Sơn* allies surrendered or fled to the Hậu Giang.<sup>33</sup>

In the *Thực Lục Chính Biên*, Võ Tánh provided the greatest new force, of 10,000 troops (and married the former king Phúc Thuần's daughter). A new administration was established in Saigon and Trấn Biên, with regulations on clothing, money, salaries, and conscription. Many of the officers providing the troops and weapons for the Gia Định takeover, including Võ Tánh, are clearly of Ming loyalist origins.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Huệ's ally was called Phạm Văn Tham, who had defeated the third *Tây Sơn* brother Lữ.

<sup>33</sup> Ánh's new pirate allies are named Hà Hỷ Văn and Chu Viễn Quyền, plus Trấn Biên officer Võ Công Tánh and Nguyễn Văn Nghĩa. It was at this time that the Bishop of Adran and Nguyễn Ánh's son were able to organize some French support, in return for a promised concession near Danang. One of the last *Tây Sơn* commanders to fall was reportedly a Khmer *okhna* in Cần Thơ; nevertheless, it is not clear whether Cần Thơ (like Hà Tiên) was claimed by Gia Định during the Siamese domination of Cambodia. A *Tây Sơn* navy from Quy Nhơn and Thuận Hóa was said to be scattered. Gutzlaff, “Geography,” 118; *Thông Chí*, III:77a-80b; *Thực Lục Chính Biên*, 227-239; *Liệt Truyện Chính Biên*, 263. *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, 76-80.

<sup>34</sup> The *Thực Lục Chính Biên* first mentions the Europeans joining Ánh's army; the surrendered Khmer *okhna* was named Long.

Although the *Thực Lục Chính Biên* acknowledges that “Ming loyalist” Chinese provided military support to Nguyễn Ánh, the published version of this text seems to minimize some aspects of the Ming loyalists’ role. The *Liệt Truyện* praises Ming loyalist scholar Võ Trương Toàn, from Bình Dương, as having great influence on the new court as Ánh’s close advisor, yet he is not mentioned in the *Thực Lục Chính Biên*. In the *Liệt Truyện*, Toàn took on hundreds of disciples, including the core group of Ming loyalist scholar-officials during the early years of the Nguyễn Dynasty after 1802 that held key positions in the *Gia Long* emperor’s administration in Huế. Among these was Trịnh Hoài Đức (also from Bình Dương), the tutor of Prince Cảnh. After his death in 1792, Ánh honored Toàn with a temple in Bình Dương.<sup>35</sup>

The Qing archives only begin to provide detailed descriptions of Ánh, seeking recognition from the Qing for his kingdom in Đồng Nai, around 1797. In the intervening decade, the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả* suggests a Mạc regime under Chakri controlled much of the Mekong delta. Pigneaux, arriving in 1789 in Saigon, does not contradict this.<sup>36</sup>

In the *Mạc Thị Gia Phả*, Mạc Tử Sinh died after his return to Hà Tiên, and the Bangkok court sent Mạc Công Bình back to rule Hà Tiên. This text claims that a new Hà Tiên ruler was sent from Bangkok “at Ánh’s request,” and describes Mạc Tử Hoang’s sons Công Bính, Công Du, Công Tài and Công Thiêm receiving ritual articles (costumes and gold and silver items) from the Bangkok ruler, and being sent back along three Mạc princes, Long, Mai, and Giác, and the remains of Mạc Thiên Tứ, Tử Dung and a third man. In the *Thông Chí*, however, Mạc Tử Sinh died before the reconquest of Gia Định. Bangkok sent Bính to Hà Tiên to take charge of military affairs in Long Xuyên, but Bính also died quickly, and Ánh sent other officers to hold Long Xuyên and Kiên Giang. The *Thông Chí* refrains from mentioning who controlled Hà Tiên.

The *Thực Lục Chính Biên* mentions Sinh’s death in 1788, but states that he was replaced by a man called Ngô Ma from Siam (omitting Mạc Công Bình’s rule). In 1799,

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<sup>35</sup> The new Ministry of Civil Service was headed by Nguyễn Thái Nguyên, while Phan Thiên Phúc and Nguyễn Bào Tri together ran the Ministry of Finance. Tống Phúc Đạm led the new Ministry of War, and Ngô Hữu Hựu headed the Ministry of Punishments. No mention is made in this year of a ministry of Rites or Works. *Thông Chí*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục Chính Biên*, 235-239; *Liệt Truyện*, 256-257; Cao Tự Thanh, *Nho Giáo ở Gia Định* (Saigon: Nhà Xuất Bản Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh, 1996); Zottoli, “Confucianism.”

<sup>36</sup> Wills, “Great Qing and Its Southern Neighbors”

two other Mạc, Từ Thiêm and Công Du, returned from Bangkok to govern Hà Tiên, and the Mạc were not incorporated into Ánh's government until 1802.<sup>37</sup>

In the *Thực Lục Chính Biên*, longtime *Đông Sơn* commander Hoàng Đức returned from Bangkok in 1788. He had held Nghệ An against a Trịnh army in the highlands on behalf of the *Tây Sơn* (in the eyes of the Historical Office, against his will), then tricked the *Tây Sơn* and escaped to Bangkok via Laos. Ánh reportedly summoned Đức over Chakri's objections; despite having departed via the highlands, he returned with 50 ships and heavy artillery.<sup>38</sup>

Although the *Thực Lục Chính Biên* reports new allies, new defenses, and vast plantations worked by conscripts to prepare for a push north, Ánh was only able to seize Quy Nhơn ten years later. A civil bureaucracy is said to have existed in Gia Định; some of the Ming loyalist scholars in the new Academy were also high ranking military commanders. After Quy Nhơn, this coalition quickly reached Xiengkhuang and Nghệ An, and was soon able to take Đông Kinh as well. (A year later, Ánh delivered to the Qing a group of Guangdong "pirates" led by Mạc Quan Phù.)<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> In the *Thực Lục Chính Biên* version, Mạc Công Bình was given command of Long Xuyên in mid-1789, though he had been brought back by Siam as soon as Sinh died. Bùi Văn Hiếu and Nguyễn Kim joined him there to organize the local residents into militia. Mạc Công Tài's tomb in Hà Tiên is dated 1873, the year a version of the *Chính Biên Sơ Tập* was published in Guangdong, suggesting the tomb must have been made or remade decades after his death. The character *húy* (諱), or taboo, is carved above the name Công Tài. Under the name Công Tài is carved "tomb of Mạc Công" (*húy* Công Tài, Mạc Công *chí mộ*). The alternate Mạc surname found in the *Tạp Lục* is used in this second phrase. A second tomb nearby, also dated 1873, honors Mạc Như Đông, who Trương Minh Đạt argues must be another grandson of Mạc Thiên Tứ, although he was apparently young enough to have fought the French in Gia Định in 1860. On his tomb, the Mạc surname from the *Tạp Lục* is carved, in his case with the surname appearing directly above the given name Như Đông. Of Cambodia, Gutzlaff writes: "The presumptive [Cambodian] heir did therefore not return after having reached maturity. His cousin conceived it on that account expedient to assume the sceptre and proclaim himself sovereign in 1809." *Thông Chí*, *ibid*; *Thực Lục Chính Biên*, 240-261; Gutzlaff, "Geography," 109; James Silk Buckingham, ed., *Oriental Herald and Colonial Review*, vol. 1 (London: J. M. Richardson, 1824) 333.

<sup>38</sup> Hoàng Đức held Nghệ An together with together with Nguyễn Văn Duệ, and allegedly "tricked" Duệ into taking over 5 thousand troops across the mountains to launch a revolt against Nguyễn Văn Huệ in Quy Nhơn. He travelled through the Lao states of Lạc Hoàn and Vạn Tượng (Ventiane). The *Thực Lục Chính Biên* here also makes a reference to supporters of Nguyễn Ánh called Mộc Hoa Lê, Bác Nhĩ Mộc, Bác Nhi Hốt, Xích Lão Ôn, and Nguyễn Thái Tô - these names are difficult to interpret in this context. *Thực Lục*, *ibid*.

<sup>39</sup> The last *Tây Sơn* holdouts were said to be in Bassac and Cần Thơ. New supporters included Nguyễn Văn Trương, Đoàn Văn Kho, who died in that year, Phùng Văn Nguyệt, and Phan Văn Đồng, a tax collector in Cần Thơ named Nguyễn Long (the *Tây Sơn*'s *Oknha* Long?), *Oknha* Đầu Ròng Ong, Phạm Văn Tham and *Oknya* Ốc defected to join Ánh. Among the influential scholar-officials of this period, the text names Phan Như Đăng, Trần Đại Luật, Lê Quang Định, Trịnh Hoài Đức, Ngô Tông Chu, Hoàng Minh Khánh, Lê Xuân Min, Lê Phúc Mão, Hồ Phúc Uân, Vũ Công Chấn, Hồ Văn Định and Hoàng Văn Đệ. *Thực Lục Chính Biên*,

After 1802, three of Võ Trường Toản's Ming loyalist disciples, Trịnh Hoài Đức, Lê Quang Định and Ngô Nhân Tĩnh, headed the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of War and Ministry of Civil Service. Tĩnh and Định died midway through the *Gia Long* reign, but Đức remained powerful under the *Minh Mạng* Emperor; he oversaw affairs of Gia Định, was Minister of Civil Service, and became deputy of the Historical Office and Minister of War before his death in 1823. Another Ming loyalist, Phan Thanh Giản, would rescue Toản's remains and give them a new resting place in Quy Nhơn in the wake of the French occupation of Gia Định. Giản was head of the Nguyễn Historical Office, yet at his death in 1867, his *Thực Lục Chính Biên* had not yet been published in Huế.<sup>40</sup>

Ultimately, these accounts in the *Thực Lục Tiền Biên* and *Thực Lục Chính Biên* are not satisfactory guides to the formation of the Nguyễn Dynasty. The next generation of histories that followed the *Thực Lục*, written from the 1880s onwards by a generation of literati more influenced by northern, Đông Kinh traditions, are a full century removed from the founding of the Gia Định regime. The case for legitimacy presented by *MEP* missionaries for the support of Prince Cảnh, made compelling by the French economic and religious interests in Cochinchina, edged out alternative narratives. Other narratives, such as those of the Franciscans, who were active in the regions supporting the *Tây Sơn*, should be considered in order to provide contrasting perspectives on Nguyễn Ánh's rise in the 1780s and the emergence of the Nguyễn Dynasty.

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ibid; Hồ Bạch Thảo, trans., *Thanh Thực Lục: Sử Liệu Chiến Tranh Thanh – Tây Sơn* (Hanoi: Nhà Xuất Bản Hà Nội, 2007), 240-244.

<sup>40</sup> *Liệt Truyện Chính Biên*, 184-194; Nguyễn Huyền Anh, *Việt Nam Danh Nhân* [Famous Persons of Vietnam], 170-171, 243-244, 472-477, 596-597, 640-641; Daudin, Pierre. "Phan-Thanh-Gian 1796-1867 et sa Famille d'après Quelques Documents Annamites," *Bulletin de la Société des Études Indochinoises* 17 (1941); Nam Xuân Thọ, *Võ Trường Toản* (Saigon: Tân Việt, 1957); Nam Xuân Thọ, *Phan Thanh Giản* (Saigon, Tân Việt, 1957).

## CHAPTER 11

### Conclusion

Historians have had great difficulty reconciling the reports of foreign visitors to Cochinchina with the dynastic histories produced by the Huế court. In many cases, when forced to choose between contradictory or ambiguous statements, the scholars most influential in the formation of the current standard narrative gave preference to the highly politicized claims made by the 19th century Nguyễn Historical Office over earlier accounts, sometimes even those of eyewitnesses. This strategy has not been successful, and the current nearly wholesale acceptance of Nguyễn Dynasty records as statements of historical fact should be replaced with a more balanced consideration of diverse sources. This study has only been a small step toward ascertaining the scope of the problem and pointing to issues that deserve more careful attention.

In this review of the political history of Cochinchina, I have attempted to answer Taylor's call to abandon the *nam tiến* and made tentative progress toward identifying alternatives to the story of a Vietnamese Southern Push. The components of the Southern Push narrative are drawn from texts explicitly intended to valorize the victors in dynastic struggles, sometimes at the expense of logic or internal consistency. The Nguyễn Dynasty histories were written centuries after events they purport to describe, and their chief sources include a historical novel and other equally problematic texts. Texts attributed to authors in the 16th to 18th centuries may have been radically altered by 19th century copyists, court editors and censors. A more cautious reading of these texts is required.

Although I am not able to examine the tenth to 15th centuries in detail, it is clear that there were dynamic, multicultural societies in Đại Việt and Champa, with interaction among groups with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds along rivers to the highland plateaus. Some had a historical connection with people of regions of South

China, with identities, given political expression during the Ten Kingdoms period, that were not fully assimilated by the Ming Dynasty. The idea that Vietnamese gradually advanced south to encroach on Champa over nearly a millennium is no longer tenable, and Champa remained a viable, essentially independent political entity long after 1471.

The Lê-Mạc transition remains murky. When the Mạc clan was edited out of the Nguyễn histories as part of a project to trace legitimacy from Nguyễn Hoàng as a dynastic founder, the extent of political continuity with a Mạc regime in Quảng Nam may have been obscured, and the role that the coastal regions from Quảng Nam to Quy Nhơn played, in addition to Hải Dương, in the formation of the Mạc Dynasty regime has been obscured in Lê and Nguyễn dynastic sources. This suggests that we should reconsider the severity of the economic or political decline of the Thu Bồn region before the 16th century. Close reading of the dynastic records cannot confirm that any of the stories about Nguyễn Hoàng, his journey south, or the divisions of Đại Việt based on Trịnh-Nguyễn rivalry, are accurate. Certainly, the Mạc retained control of an important center in Quảng Nam even after their loss of Đông Kinh.

Recent studies focused on coastal networks have helped us to understand the dynamics of interactions between South China and the eastern littoral, but the role of the highlands in the conflicts between Đại Việt, Champa and Cambodia must also be reconsidered. The Cochinchinese rulers' political and economic preoccupation with the coast was no more important than their involvement with production centers in the highland interior; indeed the latter made possible the former. Study of the maritime world should be complimented by more focused study of interactions between highland groups and their relationships to multiple coastal centers. This might be accomplished through the elaboration of more complex model of trading networks, which are typically discussed in terms of a river connecting an upland production region with one port.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Philip Taylor notes a new wave of scholarship on contemporary Vietnam that demonstrates “ethnic minorities have been active in the transformations of their worlds.” Stan Tan and Andrew Walker suggest a “middle ground” in which the state is reshaped as it “asserts its claim on the frontier.” This appreciation is of course relevant to highland groups in early periods as well. Phillip Taylor, “Minorities at Large: New Approaches to Minority Ethnicity in Vietnam,” *Journal of Vietnamese Studies*. 3:3 (Fall 2008), 3-43. Stan B-H Tan and Andrew Walker, “Beyond Hills and Plains: Rethinking Ethnic Relations in Vietnam and Thailand,” *Journal of Vietnamese Studies*. Fall 2008, Vol. 3, No. 3, 117-157; James Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).



One reason the Southern Push is a poor description of the political dynamics of Đàng Trong from the 16th to 18th centuries is that political integration was driven in part by efforts to control trade routes running from the Mekong basin in many directions. Given the multiple east-west rivers connecting the coast with the middle Mekong, a multi-directional model is more appropriate. The conflicts over coastal territories attributed to Nguyễn-Trịnh rivalry were only part of a larger set of contests to control upland production areas and multiple transshipment centers. Faced with the complex geography of the Mekong basin, competing forces pursued multiple strategies in their efforts to control parts of this network.

The length and complexity of this study is shaped by the Nguyễn Historical Office decisions to reinterpret the history from 1558 to 1802, in a series of publications in the middle decades of the 19th century. It may not be possible to reconstruct the histories lost at this time, although a more systematic comparison of all available source texts may help us to recover at least an outline. Multifaceted conflicts were over-simplified and dramatized as a personal rivalry between two great families, the Trịnh achieving control over Đàng Ngoài and the Nguyễn having control over a partitioned and unified Đàng Trong. These conflicts had more to do with the complex consequences of the fall of the Ming Dynasty than clan rivalry, and both Lê and Nguyễn histories grossly exaggerate the ability of one political lineage to maintain power for hundreds of years in such a chaotic setting.

A more intensive study of Laos is required to improve our understanding of conflicts that drew participation from the northern and southern courts; this review suggests that a court in Quảng Nam (or Thuận Hóa) retained control over Xiengkhuang in the 17th century, but its rule was challenged by Tonkin forces by the 1750s. Our understanding of Cambodia and Champa in the 16th century has suffered from the removal of the Mạc Dynasty; this remains speculative, but the Mạc may have been involved in Cambodia earlier than was previously understood. The *Tây Sơn* “uprising,” typically characterized as an internal revolt or civil war, had an important regional dimension, with a focus on the highlands as well as the deltas, and may be better described as a series of economic and political struggles among multiple groups throughout the region.

The highly politicized court histories are not accurate reflections of where and when population movements may have taken place. However, after demonstrating that there is little historical evidence of indigenous communities being displaced by migrant populations, we are left with an apparent paradox. If the *nam tiến* is not a valid framework for description of the 15th to 18th centuries, why does it appear that the Nguyễn Dynasty ruled over a “Vietnamese” state with a fairly high degree of ethnic and linguistic homogeneity? The reforms of the *Minh Mạng* Emperor in the 1830s (as described by Alexander Woodside and Byung Wook Choi), and subsequent migrations and reforms under colonial rule, were clearly the principle drivers for cultural integration in the Mekong Delta, since as late as the turn of the 19th century, Vietnamese-speaking inhabitants of the delta are described as a minority compared with Chinese, Khmer and Cham communities. In the central region, however, the dynamics of cultural standardization are less clear.

Victor Lieberman proposes several possible explanations for the apparent success of Vietnamese populations displacing the Cham and Khmer, as noted in the first chapter. He suggests that the agriculture of Đông Kinh, due to either superior location or technique, allowed its people to dominate and displace populations to the south. This study has not examined agricultural techniques, or internal dynamics in Tonkin, so Lieberman’s query whether the intensive rice farming in Đông Kinh led to geographical expansion of those populations is unanswered. Yet while these processes probably do help explain the 19th century reshaping of the lower Mekong delta as a “Viet” space, particularly given new global rice markets, they may not explain the transition from Champa to Cochinchina so well. Rice-poor Cochinchina often showed greater strength, suggesting the advantages of Tonkin agricultural superiority were often insufficient to counter other factors favoring the south.

In early 17th century Hội An and Quy Nhơn, “Annamite” was spoken by sailors, not farmers, who did not necessarily share a common language. One productive line of inquiry might be further study of the central Vietnamese dialects. Despite their proximity, Huế and Quảng Nam dialects are essentially unintelligible to each other. Huế’s Fujian connections, Hội An’s with Guangdong, and both regions’ contact with Mường and Katu highlanders and Hải Dương traders, surely helped shape the dialects in each delta.

Rhodes' dictionary, almost certainly compiled during his long years in Tonkin, may be somewhat misleading. Even in Cochinchina, the Jesuits proselytized among sailors, and some aristocrats, who might have been familiar with a coastal Đông Kinh dialect. A cursory review of Rhodes' dictionary suggests that that most (though not all) its vocabulary is northern, and no attempt was made formally to describe or classify regional speech.

Although agriculture was an important aspect of Đại Việt's dynamism, Richard O'Conner's argument that an "agro-cultural" succession led to a change in ethnicity seems weak in Cochinchina, since O'Conner agrees Champa appears to have been multi-ethnic, and with great versatility in farming. Other economic activity, derived from local industries and trade in upland products, probably contributed to migration of populations between Quảng Nam and other regions. Contact through trade may have dispersed cultural elements more broadly than population displacement due to agriculture. It is not clear to what extent Đông Kinh immigrants to central Vietnam, if they brought superior agricultural techniques, would have disrupted existing communities. By reclaiming less desirable farmland, whether in higher elevations or delta marshes, they would have contributed to existing villages, and immigrants may have been assimilated gradually over many generations.

On the other hand, for Lieberman, a neo-Confucian lineage structure, along with an administrative system and social organization borrowed from China, gave Vietnamese an advantage over Indianized neighbors. Underlying this hypothesis is an assumption that c. 1550, a culturally and linguistically unified Đông Kinh ethnicity displaced a Champa culture (defined in ways that sharply differentiated it from the culture of the north). Although social organization is a fruitful approach, these sources do not suggest Confucianism being forced on a southern population by the arriving Vietnamese, and this has led scholars to argue essentially the reverse, that migrants felt free to "discard or downgrade" that aspect, while "embracing a degree of syncretism." Building on Li Tana and John Whitmore's work on the 13th and 14th centuries, we should reconsider this premise. The early cultural divide between Đại Việt and Thuận Hóa or Quảng Nam may have been less dramatic than commonly understood. Multiple delta and highland populations, moving in many directions, created "hybrid" cultural patterns among

ethnically and linguistically diverse populations. A process of neo-Confucian standardization integrating the whole of lowland “Vietnam” was clearly at work in the mid-19th century, but was much more uneven in earlier periods.<sup>2</sup>

A final lesson from this study is the necessity of reframing the political narratives of Cochinchina in the context of a regional framework that is not limited to dynastic or nationalist history. One serious problem with the underlying assumption that indigenous peoples were displaced by a uniform Vietnamese migrant group is that for many times and places, migrant populations originated in South China, not Đông Kinh. The political unification of diverse immigrant populations under centralized rule was a late development and may not have been achieved before the 19th century.

James Kong Chin points out that the growth of Guangzhou as a trading center in the 1780s contributed to a decline of Hokkien and Teochiu shipping. Xiamen declined as a trading center, in part due to official corruption, contributing to a dramatic improvement in the fortunes of Hainanese and Cantonese traders in Gia Định. The commercial success of Cantonese merchants at the expense of Hokkien, who were dominant in Bangkok, may have contributed to friction between Nguyễn Ánh and Chakri. The 1780s saw the escalation of tensions between *Đông Sơn* forces allied with Nguyễn Ánh, and the Teochiu/Xiamen forces supporting the Chakri regime.<sup>3</sup>

The coalition that brought Nguyễn Ánh to power was eventually successful in dismantling militarist regimes in Tonkin, Cochinchina and Gia Định and laying the foundations for a civil government spanning those territories. This coalition was short-lived, however, and began to weaken soon after Ánh’s death in 1820, as allies of the *Minh Mạng* Emperor tightened control over other factions, contributing to the widespread revolts of the 1830s. A better understanding of Ánh’s supporters, and their collaboration and conflict, will help us to reassess the early decades of the Nguyễn Dynasty, which saw suppressed rebellions, continued struggles over Cambodia and Laos, and soon a loss of territory to the French.

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<sup>2</sup> Li Tana, *Nguyễn Cochinchina: Southern Vietnam in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Ithaca, NY.: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1998), 155-156.

<sup>3</sup> James Kong Chin, “The Junk Trade between South China and Nguyen Vietnam in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries,” in Nola Cooke and Li Tana, eds., *Water Frontier: Commerce and the Chinese in the Lower Mekong Region, 1750-1880* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), 53-70

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