

Ha Tien or Banteay Meas in the Time of the Fall of Ayutthaya

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Preface

The Fourteenth Conference of the International Association of Historians of Asia (IAHA 1994), held at Sophia University in Tokyo, included a long panel discussion titled “The Eighteenth Century in Southeast Asia.” Throughout the four days of discussion, the eighteenth century appeared to be the most splendid century for overseas Chinese political activity in Southeast Asia and for state consolidation in Burma, Siam, and Vietnam, while Dutch colonial expansion in the archipelago had started also.

Since the end of the seventeenth century, as the result of the Japanese and Dutch retreat from the South China Sea, the northern Vietnamese kingdom or Trinh government had made efforts to establish an agronomic state. Meanwhile, the central Vietnamese kingdom (Quang Nam), ruled by the Nguyen family, had begun its march toward the south (Nam Tien) and had established two centers for agronomic migration at Bien Hoa and Saigon by the end of the seventeenth century. But it had not yet reached the coast of the Gulf, including the west coast of the Camau peninsula, and it showed little interest in the trade of the Gulf or the South China Sea.¹

The history of Cambodia in the eighteenth century, after the “Age of Commerce,” has hitherto been little studied because of the shortage of historical materials. For the period spanning the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the Cambodian chronicles are filled with descriptions of several civil wars between the “Water Kings” (the Mekong power) and the “Land Kings” (the Tonlesap power).² These kings could not afford to pay attention to the Gulf trade. The Kram Srok (a Cambodian constitutional law dated 1693) stipulates that a foreigner could not be appointed as a governor (*cauvay srok*),³ because all foreigners were merchants and sought only their own profit (KS p. 9, art. 44–5). This text shows that Cambodian governors in the seventeenth century were not concerned with commercial affairs—as

illustrated by the official status of the governor of Banteay Meas, which was only 7 *hupoan*,⁴ even though this city was the most important port leading from the Gulf to the area of Udong and Longvek, as shown in the marching route of the Siamese army in 1621.⁵ In the nineteenth century, the governor of Kampot—the port town that provided the only outlet to the sea from the Udong area during the reign of King Ang Duong (Kitagawa 1992)—was Okña Senanucit, a high official of 9 *hupoan* status (KNg, p. 6).

The political vacuum along the eastern shores of the Gulf and the development of the Chinese market from the end of the century in China encouraged overseas Chinese activities. These Chinese established several semi-independent port polities such as Ha Tien and Chanthaburi, whose history will be mentioned in this chapter.

The Ha Tien⁶ port polity was established by a Cantonese adventurer, Mac Cuu, in the early eighteenth century at Banteay Meas in South Cambodia. It is said that he was allied with Cambodia and the Quang Nam kingdom and that Ha Tien confronted the kingdom of Siam in order to monopolize trade in the Gulf, especially during the rule of his son, Mac Thien Tu. After the conquest of King Taksin and the spread of the Tay Son insurrection in south Vietnam in the fourth quarter of the eighteenth century, however, this port polity disappeared from history. Its fate may be typical of the histories of the Chinese port polities of that century. This chapter seeks to understand the historical meaning of a Chinese port polity in the eighteenth century by analyzing the political evolution of the Ha Tien Chinese kingdom, from its rise to its fall, based on the Vietnamese and Cambodian chronicles.

Materials and Abbreviations

In this study, Sakurai uses the following Vietnamese materials:

Gia Dinh Thong Chi (Gia Dinh Gazetteer, cited as GDTC). The GDTC is a geography of the Mekong delta edited in the reign of Minh Mang (r. 1820–40) by Trinh Hoai Duc and written in Sino-Vietnamese characters. The fifth volume describes the history of Ha Tien, from the end of the seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century, and includes much information about the relations between Siam and Vietnam.⁷ There are many handwritten copies of this work. A manuscript preserved in the Toyo Bunko

(Oriental Library) in Tokyo was used for the present study. The Sino-Vietnamese text was published in 1956. A French translation by Gabriel Aubaret was published in 1863 and reprinted in 1969.

Dai Nam Thuc Luc (the Official Chronicle of the Nguyen Dynasty, cited as DNTL). The DNTL was published by the Quoc Su Quan (Royal Institute for National History) from 1844 to 1909. Copies have been preserved in several archives such as the Toyo Bunko, Toyo Bunka Kenkyujo (Institute of Oriental Culture) of the University of Tokyo, and elsewhere, based on royal documents such as the Nguyen Trieu Chau Bon (Vermilion Books of the Nguyen Dynasty), preserved in National Archive No. 1 in Hanoi. The DNTL was reedited by the Gengo Bunka Kenkyujo (Institute for Language and Culture) of Keio University and has been published by Yurindo Shuppan in Yokohama since 1961 under the series title *Dainanjitsuroku* (cited as the KODT). The following volumes include a great deal of information about Ha Tien and Siam (Xiem in Vietnamese).

(1) *Dai Nam Thuc Luc Tien Bien* (the Official Chronicle of the Pre-Gia-Long Nguyen Dynasty, cited as DTTB) comprises twelve volumes edited in 1844. It was reprinted in volume 1 of the KODT published in 1961.

(2) *Dai Nam Chinh Bien De Nhat Ky* (the Official Chronicle of the Reign of Gia Long, 1802–20, cited as DNCB) comprises sixty volumes edited in 1848. This work includes also the period 1778–1801, before Gia Long ascended the throne. Volume 1 provides some descriptions of the Ha Tien kingdom, which were reprinted in volume 2 of KODT published in 1963.

(3) *Dai Nam Liet Truyen Tien Bien* (Biographies of the Quang Nam Kingdom, cited as DLTB) was edited in 1852. Volume 6 includes a short history of Mac Cuu and Mac Thien Tu, which was reprinted in volume 1 of the KODT published in 1961.

(4) *Dai Nam Liet Truyen So Tap* (Biographies in the Reign of Gia Long, cited as DLTS) comprises thirty-three volumes and was edited in 1889. Volumes 32 and 33 record information about neighboring states such as Cambodia, Siam, Burma, Vientiane and Luang Prabang during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. They were reprinted in volume 4 of the KODT published in 1962.

Ha Tien Tran Hiep Tran Mac Thi Gia Pha (History of the Mac Family,

Governors-General of Ha Tien Division, cited as MTGP) was written in 1818 by Vu The Thuong. Chen Chingho (1956) edited and commented on it in his *He Hsien Chen Hsieh Chen Mo Shih Chia P'u Chu Ch'ih* (Note on the Ha Tien Tran Hiep Tran Mac Thi Gia Pha).

Chen Chingho collected the epitaphs from the Mac family cemetery in Ha Tien and published them with comments in his *He Hsien Mo Shih Shih His K'ao* (A Genealogical Study of the Macs of Ha Tien, cited as HMTK) in *Hua-Kang Hsieh Pao* (Hua-Kang Scholarly Journal, Taipei), no. 5, in 1969.

In this study, Kitagawa uses the following Cambodian materials:

The *Preah Reac Pongsavada* (cited as BK) is a Cambodian chronicle that was found in the National Library of Thailand. It was edited by Yasuyuki Sakamoto and published by the Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, in 1995. Probably it is a version of the Prince Nupparat chronicle edited in 1878, the text of which was translated into Thai and given the title *Ratcha phong-sawadan krung kamphuchia* (A Royal Chronicle of Cambodia). A copy of the National Library's manuscript was used for this study.

The *Preah Reac Pongsavada Mahakhsat Khmae* (cited as VJ) is a Cambodian chronicle that was edited by a commission organized by King Monivong, completed in 1929 and published in 1934. The text up to the year 1677 was translated into French by Khin Sok (1988) and Mak Phoen (1981). Materials for the present study are drawn from the manuscript (g. 53) in the Buddhist Institute (Institut Buddhique) of Phnom Penh, using a microfilm copy that is preserved in the Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies for Unesco in Tokyo.

The *Kram Srok* (cited as KS) is a Cambodian constitutional law dated 1693. Adhémard Leclère translated it into French and published it as a chapter of his *Les codes cambodgiens* (Leclère 1898: 89–122). The manuscript copy (P115) in the Ecole française d'Extrême-orient in Paris was used for the present study.

The *Korom Ngea Nung Tomrong Sak Sdec, Montrei Nung Sanama Sak* is a list of Cambodian mandarins during the reign of King Norodom (r. 1860–1904), compiled in 1943. The original manuscript was kept in the Buddhist Institute in Phnom Penh until 1975 but has now disappeared. Photographs of the manuscript were used for the present study.

The Rise of the Ha Tien Kingdom

Chinese Expansion in the South China Sea from the End of the Seventeenth Century

Shortly before the fall of the Cheng kingdom in Taiwan in 1683, a ship of the Dutch East India Company arrived at Nagasaki and reported to the Bakufu that the last Cheng king, Cheng Ke Sang, and his followers were planning to seek refuge in Cambodia (Chen 1977: 1). This report suggests that there was a tight network linking Taiwan with Cambodia at the end of the seventeenth century. Although that plan was not carried out, a great many anti-Manchu Chinese nonetheless went into exile in Cambodia after the fall of Taiwan. For example, two admirals of the Cheng navy—one known as Duong Ngan Dich in Vietnamese (Yang Yen Ti in Chinese) and another known as Tran Thuong Xuyen in Vietnamese (Chen Shang Chuan in Chinese)—arrived at Tourane (Da Nang) with about seventy war junks and 3,000 soldiers and submitted to the Quang Nam king in 1682 or 1683. Hien Vuong, the Quang Nam king, settled them in two colonies (*dong pho*), newly opened by the Nguyen government, in the eastern part of the Mekong delta. Dich went to My Tho and controlled transportation on the Mekong. Xuyen went to Bien Hoa and monopolized the Dong Nai River network. Later Xuyen's influence became prominent in the eastern part of the Mekong delta.

Unlike the overseas Chinese in earlier times, who worked as foreign merchants under the strictly administered control of local port polities, the Chinese who arrived from the end of the seventeenth century onward took great initiatives in international trade and also exercised military and political power. These characteristics are common to the cases of Wu Jang, who became powerful in Songkhla, and Lo Fang Pai in Pontianak on Borneo (Chen 1977: 3–5).

Mac Cuu Settles at Ha Tien

According to Fujiwara (1986: 219–20), the founder of the Ha Tien kingdom was Mac Cuu. He was born in 1655 in Lei Zhou, Guangdong Province, and migrated in 1671 to Phnom Penh (Fujiwara 1986: 222), where

the king of Cambodia entrusted him with commercial affairs. Then he was given an appointment with the official rank of an *okña*, and he moved to Vong Kham (Mong Hom in Cantonese) between 1687 and 1695 (MTGP, p. 84; Fujiwara 1986: 225). According to the GDTC (vol. 3) and the MTGP, Ha Tien was in the territory of Chan Lap (Chenla, the Chinese name for Cambodia) and was originally called Vong Kham or Mong Hom. Mong Hom in the GDTC can be identified as Muang Peam. The word *peam* in Khmer means a river mouth, and there are many examples of *peam* or *khaet*⁸ *peam* specifying a port of Banteay Meas in the Cambodian chronicles. Mac Cuu observed that a great many Chinese, Vietnamese, Khmer and Malay⁹ merchants gathered in Say Mat *phu* (Say Mat city in Vietnamese), and therefore he opened gambling dens for them. According to the DLTB (vol. 6), the place where Mac Cuu opened these establishments was called Phuong Thanh. Say Mat *phu* can be identified as Banteay Meas and Phuong Thanh (Phuong Fort in Vietnamese) as Peam in Khmer (Maybon 1919: 122, note). Fujiwara (1986: 226) concluded that Mac Cuu was appointed governor-general of Banteay Meas or Peam with the rank of an *okña*.

Two Banteay Meases

According to the KS (p. 26, art. 113), the governor (*cauvay srok*)¹⁰ of Banteay Meas had the rank not of an *okña* but of a *cau poñea*. The title of the governor of Banteay Meas also appears in the list of titles of officials during King Norodom's reign (KNG, p. 4). These records show that Banteay Meas was under the rule of a Cambodian governor from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. On the other hand, although the toponym Peam does not appear in the KS, both the BK and the VJ record a governor with the rank of *okña* and the title Reacea Sethei in Peam in 1756. Thus Peam, too, was a Cambodian region under the rule of *Okña* Reacea Sethei, although the governorship first appears in the records only in the late eighteenth century.

Alexander Hamilton (1930: 105–11), a famous adventurer who visited this area in 1720, reported that there were two ports—which he called Cupangsoap and Ponteamass—along the coast of the Gulf. Probably his Cupangsoap was Kampong Som, and Ponteamass was Banteay Meas. According to Hamilton, Cupangsoap had supplies of ivory, insect lac and

gum gamboge, but no free trade was allowed there without a license from the court of Cambodia. By contrast, Ponteamass was a place that offered good trade. There was a fairly deep but narrow river at Ponteamass which, during the rainy seasons of the southwest monsoon provided communication with the Bansack (the present-day Bassac River or Hau Giang, the western channel of the Mekong delta) or Cambodia River (the Mekong). Because the city of Cambodia (present-day Phnom Penh) was nearly 100 leagues up the river and navigation to the city was so long and difficult, foreign traders preferred to call at Ponteamass. Furthermore, Ponteamass also had contact with Phnom Penh by a land route,¹¹ and it was the best port in Cambodia from a European navigator's viewpoint.

Although Hamilton visited Banteay Meas during the time that Mac Cuu was ruling there, he makes no mention of a Chinese governor there. A local official who spoke a little Portuguese provided him with warm hospitality, and his arrival was reported not to the Quang Nam king but to the Cambodian king.

There seem to have been two "Banteay Meases" in 1720: first, Say Mat *phu* (or Phuong Thanh) ruled by Mac Cuu under the sovereignty of Quang Nam, and second, Ponteamass, which was the port of the Cambodian kingdom described in Hamilton's report. It is very difficult, however, to suppose the existence of a port called Ponteamass that was different from Say Mat Phu, because Vietnamese records never mention another Banteay Meas, and Hamilton does not mention the existence of a Chinese-ruled Say Mat *phu*. Most likely, the port city that was in the Banteay Meas region—or more precisely, Peam Banteay Meas in Cambodian—had two faces and two names, one known to the Chinese and the other known to westerners.

Banteay Meas and Ha Tien in the Colonial Period

According to French reports, Ha Tien was definitively Vietnamese territory in the colonial period. But even at that time, the names of Banteay Meas and Peam were still found in Cambodian territory. Even now, there is a small district (*srok*) called Banteay Meas in *khaet* Kampot. Aymonier (1900 i: 154) states that Peam remained within Cambodian territory after the Chinese and Vietnamese were expelled from Ha Tien. The center of Peam

was the port of Kampong Trach, where a governor with the title Okña Reacea Sethei (Raja Sesthi in French) resided. Aymonier (1900 i: 156) also mentions that there was a Banteay Meas region centered at Phum Tuk Meas, along the Prek Tuk Meas River at the confluence of the Prek Peam River, and that a Cambodian governor with the title Okña Preah Yuddhadhipati resided there.

Rousseau (1918: 11–2) reported in his geography on the Residency of Kampot in 1917 that there were three important ports on the eastern shores of the Gulf—Ha Tien, Kampot and Kampong Trach—but that only junks and coastal vessels called there, because none of the three ports could accommodate large ocean-going ships. The port of Kampong Trach was opened by the Chinese during the pre-colonial period. It could be reached from the sea by way of the Kampong Trach River, which small junks could navigate. It is near the seacoast, the port of Ha Tien and the Vinh Te¹² Canal. It developed as a center for the pepper trade, and restaurants and tailors' shops were built there, especially after the construction of the marketplace in 1907. Rousseau (1918: 13) also mentioned that Tuk Meas, the center of the Banteay Meas region, was a big town settled by Chinese, that big junks could enter the town by way of the Prek Tuk Meas River during the rainy season and that a land route led from there to Takeo, through a Chinese town called Tani.

The name “Peam” has now disappeared, but Kampong Trach is still a district (*srok*) name in *khaet* Kampot. It is clear that Ha Tien and Banteay Meas were different regions in both the French period and even at the present time. The latter (with its center at Kampong Trach) belongs to Cambodia and the former belongs to Vietnam.

These considerations suggest the following conclusions: There was a region called Banteay Meas under a governor (*cauvay srok*) in the seventeenth century, which encompassed present-day Ha Tien in Vietnam and *khaet* Banteay Meas in Cambodia. In the early eighteenth century, there was a port that had two names: Peam Banteay Meas (Hamilton's Ponteamass) under the control of Cambodian officials, and Say Mat *phu* (the Phuong Thanh of the Vietnamese) under the rule of the Cantonese residing there. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the port ceased to be Cambodian territory. The hinterland region of Ha Tien, however, did remain in Cambodia, was called Banteay Meas and was under the rule of Okña Reacea Sethei. This change must have taken place while Mac Thien Tu

(known in Khmer as Preah Sotoat) ruled Ha Tien *tran*, from 1735 to 1772.

Mac Cuu as the Leader of the Say Mat Phu Chinese

According to the GDTC, Mac Cuu managed gambling houses, opened silver mines and organized the overseas Chinese to establish seven villages (*xa*). These places can be identified as follows: Phu Quoc as Phu Quoc island (Koh Tral in Khmer), Can Bot as Kampot, Camau as Camau (Tuk Khmau), Lung Co maybe as Srei Ambel (in Ha Tien),¹³ Rach Gia as Rach Gia (Kramuon Sa) and Phung Tham as Vung Thom¹⁴ (Kampong Som). Ha Tien is not mentioned in the GDTC. According to Fujiwara (1986: 231), Ha Tien should be added to the six *xa*, making a total of seven.

Fujiwara (1986: 230–2) concluded that Mac Cuu ruled the region extending from southwest Cochinchina to south Cambodia in the early eighteenth century. But that interpretation cannot be believed for several reasons. First, according to the GDTB, the Cambodian king Ang Ton (Nac Ong Ton in Vietnamese) presented five prefectures—Chan Sam¹⁵ (Phum Tnaot Chong Srang), Say Mat¹⁶ (*phum* Banteay Meas), Linh Quynh¹⁷ (probably Tuk Meas), Can Bot (Kampot) and Phung Tham (Kampong Som)—to Mac Thien Tu as a reward for his support of Ang Ton's accession to the throne in 1757. Mac Thien Tu offered the five prefectures to the Quang Nam king, who then redistributed them to Ha Tien Tran. The names of two of these five prefectures appear among the seven villages that Mac Cuu is supposed to have established. Second, the Sino-Vietnamese names of these villages have their origins in Khmer names, except for Phu Quoc. This means that the Khmer had already established these administrative units. Third, the MTGP—the most reliable document—makes no mention of the seven villages or their establishment.

Thus the GDTC story, which claims that the seven villages were founded in Mac Cuu's time, must be based on the 1757 accomplishments of Mac Thien Tu, projecting them back in time to make it appear as though Mac Cuu was the founder of Greater Ha Tien. Probably the reference to "establishing seven villages" means that he founded seven Chinese villages in seven Khmer administrative areas. According to the GDTC (vol. 5), the area of Ha Tien city in the early nineteenth century included seven

Vietnamese villages, six Chinese quarters (*pho*), twenty-six Khmer villages (*suc* or *srok*) and one Malay group (*doi*). Thus Mac Cuu was not the governor of Banteay Meas but the leader of the Chinese settlements in the Banteay Meas region.

Establishment of Ha Tien

Ha Tien as a Subordinate State of Vietnam

According to the HMGP and GDTC, Mac Cuu greatly feared that the Cambodian kingdom would collapse, and therefore he submitted the area over which he had influence to the Quang Nam kingdom.¹⁸ Then the Quang Nam king appointed him General Commander of Ha Tien¹⁹ Division (Ha Tien *Tran Tong Binh*) in 1711. Cambodian records, however, do not describe Banteay Meas as belonging to Quang Nam. Probably, this discrepancy means that Mac Cuu and his Chinese followers in the port city of Banteay Meas (Say Mat *phu*) submitted themselves to Quang Nam. As mentioned below, the BK and VJ contain many descriptions of governors (*cauvay srok*) of *khaet* Peam or *khaet* Banteay Meas, who had the title Okña Reacea Sethei Phuv (or Okña Mno Sethei Phuv) and who supported Mac Thien Tu during the Cambodian-Siamese war from 1770 to 1772. The area of Banteay Meas, other than Ha Tien city, remained in Cambodian territory under the control of the Cambodian governor at that time. Even in Ha Tien itself, the local Khmer were called up by the governor (*cauvay srok* Peam), whose title was Okña Reacea Sethei. In a sense, it is difficult to regard Mac Cuu as the governor-general of all of Banteay Meas or as being appointed by the kings of Cambodia and Quang Nam in the early seventeenth century. Probably Mac Cuu's rank as an *okña* was a self-appointed one.

Mac Cuu died in 1735. His son, Mac Thien Tu,²⁰ was appointed by the Quang Nam king to succeed him as governor-general of Ha Tien Division in 1736, and Ha Tien was exempted from sending the customary local administration tax to the central government. Mac Cuu had been allowed to mint coins in Ha Tien for its trade. Mac Thien Tu established an autonomous government and army. He also invited Chinese literati to develop Chinese culture in Ha Tien. The entire lifestyle of his court seems to have been the

same as that of a court in China.²¹ Furthermore, he sent official missions to China and Japan to develop international trade, as a diplomatically independent state (MTGP, pp. 116–7). According to the letter he wrote in Cambodian to the Shogunate in 1742, Neak Somdec Preah Sotoat (the Cambodian name of Mac Thien Tu) called himself the *Reacea Krong Kampucea Tiptei* or “King of Cambodia” (Péri 1923: 131–2). Thus this polity can be called the “Ha Tien kingdom” from the 1730s, although it sent tribute to Quang Nam irregularly.²²

Vietnamese Expansion in the Eastern Part of the Mekong Delta

The following passage appears in the VJ (pp. 540–5). (This and all subsequent translations are by the authors.)

In the year of the serpent [1737], Preah Bat Somdec Preah Borom Reacea [King Satha (Ang Ci)] did not trust his queen Preah Srei Soccada, Preah Utei [a son of Ang Tong], Preah Srei Cei Cet or Preah Borom Reacea [sons of the ex-king Thoamma Reacea], and tried to kill them. Their armies fought against each other at Veal Russei Duoc in *srok* Phnom Penh. The army of Preah Borom Reacea was defeated, and he hastened away to Krong Anam [Quang Nam]. The Cambodian ex-king Thoamma Reacea [in Ayutthaya] and a prince, Preah Ang Tong, knew that an internal disturbance had occurred in Cambodia. King Thoamma Reacea asked King Thai Sreah [King Thai Sa] of Siam to send reinforcements. King Thai Sreah had King Thoamma Reacea escorted to *khaet* Kampot by sea with 2,000 soldiers and sent Preah Ang Tong with 10,000 soldiers to *khaet* Neang Rong [Nang Rong District in] Nokor Reac Seima [Nakhon Ratchasima]. He took the route from Ayutthaya to Phnom Penh through Can Borei [Chanthaburi],²³ Kompong Som and Kampot.

According to the DLTS (vol. 6), in the year *ky mui* (1739):

In the springtime [the first, second and third months of the Vietnamese calendar], a Chan Lap [Cambodian] person named Nac Bon invaded Ha Tien, because Chan Lap had a grudge against Mac Cuu, who had taken

away their land. But Mac Thien Tu defeated them. The Quang Nam king praised Mac Thien Tu and appointed him Do Doc Dai Thuong Quan [a title signifying a general commander]. Chan Lap never invaded Ha Tien again.

Comparing these descriptions, we may draw the following conclusions: King Thoamma Reacea was called Nac Tham in Vietnamese. He and Prince Tong were able to land at the ports of Kampot and Kampong Som with the Siamese army without encountering resistance. This provides further evidence that the Ha Tien kingdom did not control the region around Kampot and Kampong Som in 1738. In this context, Nac Bon's²⁴ invasion of Ha Tien in 1739, which is not mentioned in the Cambodian chronicles, could be regarded as an armed conflict between Ha Tien and the local Khmer chief in the Banteay Meas region, who may have been encouraged by Thoamma Reacea's victory with the support of Siam. Ha Tien took advantage of the Cambodian conflict to begin exercising its military influence and expanding its territory into the Khmer hinterland, with military support from Quang Nam.

According to the VJ (pp.555–7):

In 1748, knowing that there was an internal disturbance in Cambodia, the Vietnamese king had the Cambodian ex-king Somdec Preah Borom Reacea Ang Ci escorted to Cambodia with soldiers. The Vietnamese generals Ong Kham Say Ceay Neat and Ong Ba Hao defeated Okña Noren Tok, the *cauvay khaet* Basak.

According to the DNLS (vol. 31):

En [King Thoamma Reacea] died. His son Nac Tha ascended the throne. Tham [the ex-king who took refuge in Ayutthaya] returned to his country from Siam. Tha did not allow him to be received [at court]. Tham attacked him. Tha fled to Gia Dinh. Tham took power again.

According to the DNTB (vol. 10), in the tenth year of The Ton (1748):

Before then, Nac Tha of Chan Lap ascended the throne. Nac Tham came back to Cambodia from Siam, but Nac Tha would not accept him. Then Nac Tham raised an army against him. Nac Tha fled to Gia Dinh. Nac Tham ascended the throne.

...In the first month [January/February 1748] in the spring, [the Quang Nam king] dispatched Nguyen Huu Doan to attack Chan Lap to pacify it.... After Nac Tham died, his three sons—Don, Hien and Diep—fought each other for the throne. Their subject, Suu Lien Toc, made use of this conflict and then invaded My Tho. Nguyen Huu Doan led soldiers and marched out, defeating Suu Lien Toc, setting fire to his battleships and entering Phnom Penh. Don, Hien and Diep hastened away. Based on Huu Doan's report on his success, [the king] gave orders to send Nac Tha back to his country and to restore him to his throne. In the sixth month [June/July] during the summer, Nac Nguyen of Chan Lap, the second son of Nac Tham and Cao La Ham Dot Loc Man supported the army of Siam in attacking Nac Tha. Nac Tha fled to Gia Dinh and then died from a disease. Nac Nguyen ascended the throne of Cambodia.

According to the MTGP:

Then the Cambodian king died. His sons fought each other, [each] aiming to ascend the throne. Many hungry people took refuge in Mac Thien Tu's territory. Mac Thien Tu helped to supply them with food.

The information in these passages can be interpreted as follows: King Thoamma Reacea died in 1747. Taking advantage of the confusion surrounding the succession, the governor of Bassac Province, Okña Noren Tok (called Suu Lien Toc in the Vietnamese sources), attacked My Tho from the sea in 1748. This action suggests that the local Khmer with power in the Basak (Bassac) area of the Mekong maintained their loyalty to the anti-Vietnamese faction in Udong, although they were under the influence of Quang Nam.

Okña Noren Tok was defeated by a commander called Ong Kham Say Ceay Neat²⁵ in Khmer. He can be identified as Nguyen Huu Doan

(the commander who marched to Phnom Penh along the Bassac). After this expedition, the Bassac area came under the influence of Quang Nam. As a result of these military operations, the semi-independent status of the Ha Tien polity must have changed to that of a subordinate state under Quang Nam.

Nguyen Huu Doan escorted King Satha (Ang Ci, also known as King Borom Reacea) to Udong to restore him to the throne. But after the departure of the Quang Nam forces, the Siamese forces expelled him, and he went to Saigon again.

The new Cambodian ruler (called Nac Nguyen in the Vietnamese sources) can be identified as King Cei Cet (Ang Snguon), who ascended the throne in 1749 with the support of the Siamese king after the Quang Nam forces had departed.

According to the GDTC (vol. 4), in the year *giap tuat* (1754):

In the sixth month [July/August 1754] in the summer, two divisions of Gia Dinh marched to Cambodia along two routes. Nghia Bieu Hau (Nguyen Cuu Trinh) led the *co binh* [second army] along the Dong Giang [the Vam Co Tay River] to Tan Li Bac [the Tonle Bac?], where he arrived at the Dai Giang [Big River, meaning the Mekong] and joined the *chinh binh* [first army] of the Tien Giang [another channel of the Mekong and coming from My Tho according to the DNTB (vol. 10)] led by Thien Chinh Hau at Lu En Don [Lovea Em]. The entire Cambodian army in Xoi Lap [the river mouth of the Vam Co],²⁶ Tam Bon, Cau Nam [Kandal?] and Nam Vang [Phnom Penh] surrendered to them.

Then the Quang Nam army dispatched *cai doi* [commander] Tan Long Hau to Tam Phong Xiem [Kompong Xiem = Kompong Cham] to receive the Con Man²⁷ [Cham] people who were migrating from Thuan Thanh.²⁸ The Cambodian king, Nac Nguyen, fled to Tam Phong Thu or present-day La Biec [Longvek]. But in the autumn, a big flood occurred, so the Quang Nam army returned to their forts to rest.

According to the GDTC (vol. 4), in the year *at hoi* (1755):

The great division under Thien Chinh Hau returned to My Tho and ordered the Con Man [Cham] people in Thuan Thanh, who numbered around 10,000, to abandon Kha Tung²⁹ and move to Binh Thanh.³⁰ When they arrived at Vo Ta On [unidentified], more than 10,000 Khmer soldiers attacked them. The Con Man people were very tired and isolated. ...They asked Thien Chinh Hau for relief. But, it was very difficult to relieve them so quickly, because the forests were a hindrance. Nghia Bieu Hau (Nguyen Cuu Trinh) alone led five *doanh* [armies] to rescue them. ...He relieved more than 5,000 Con Man people and then returned to Ba Dinh Mountain [Mount Ba Den to the north of Tay Ninh City]....

Then the Quang Nam army led by the *cai doi* [commander] Du Chinh Hau [Duke of Du Chinh] Truong Phuoc Du, with Con Man people as guides, marched to Cau Nam and Nam Vang [Phnom Penh] and killed some *oc nha* [*okña*, Khmer officials]. The Cambodian king was so afraid that he fled to Ton Duc Hau [Mac Thien Tu] in Ha Tien. Mac Thien Tu offered excuses to the throne [to the king of Quang Nam] on his behalf, [stating] that he had not attacked the Con Man people but that a Khmer general, Chieu Nhuy Ech, [who was] stationed in the border area, had done so.

According to the GDTC (vol. 4), in the year *binh ty* (1756):

The Cambodian king, Nac Ong Nguyen, proposed to the Quang Nam king to cede two prefectures—Tan Don and Xoi Lap—as compensation for his offense, and he promised to pay unexcused tribute for three years.

These passages suggest the following pattern of political alignment and territorial change: The government of Quang Nam tried to move many Cham people from Thuan Thanh to Khmer areas such as Kampong Cham, and they passed through Tay Ninh. This migration caused a conflict between the local Khmer and the Cham.³¹

King Cei Cet (Ang Snguon) belonged to the pro-Siam and anti-Vietnam faction at the court of Udong. When he escaped from the Quang Nam army, however, he went not to Siam but to Ha Tien. Probably he regarded Ha Tien as neutral ground in the confrontation among Cambodia,

Siam and Quang Nam. Although Ha Tien had influence along the Bassac and in the coastal area of the eastern part of the Gulf, Ha Tien's relations with Cambodia must have been somewhat different from its relations with Quang Nam by way of the Mekong.³²

King Cei Cet (Ang Snguon) ceded two prefectures—Tan Bon and Loi Lap (Xoi Lap)—in the lower reaches of the Vam Co to the Quang Nam king through the intermediary of Mac Thien Tu in 1756.³³ But this affair is not mentioned in the Cambodian chronicles. Both prefectures are between My Tho and Saigon and, without first securing these areas, Quang Nam could not expand into other parts of the Mekong delta—such as Vinh Long, where it established a military base called Long Ho Doanh in 1732. These two prefectures must have been under the influence of Quang Nam before 1756. Furthermore, King Cei Cet died in 1755. The Cambodian king who fled to Ha Tien could not have been Cei Cet (called Nac Nguyen in the Vietnamese sources) but Moha Uphayoreac (“second king”) Ang Tong (Nac Tong in Vietnamese). It is difficult to believe the Vietnamese description of the 1756 affair. If the Vietnamese records are at least true in part, that means the Cambodian king recognized Vietnamese rule in the two prefectures.

Ha Tien under Mac Thien Tu can be regarded as an important vanguard of Vietnamese expansion in the Mekong delta from the Quang Nam viewpoint. Ha Tien was changing from a Chinese port polity into a dependency of a territorial state: Quang Nam. Furthermore, Mac Thien Tu led Ha Tien's expansion along the right bank of the Bassac.

The change must have been triggered by a problem with pirates at that time. According to the GDTC (vol. 5), in the eighth month of the year *dinh mao* (September/October 1747), a pirate, who called himself Vu Vuong Duc Vung, plundered a ship belonging to Mac Thien Tu while it was sailing to Hué across the Long Xuyen Sea. Mac Thien Tu dispatched his fleet to arrest Duc Vung, but he escaped to Ba Thac (the river mouth of the Hau Giang or Bassac) and was captured by Gia Dinh (Saigon) officials. Probably, Ha Tien needed the military support of Quang Nam to protect its maritime routes across the South China Sea.

This is the second reason why Mac Thien Tu wanted Ha Tien to be a territorial state with its own hinterland, like the exporting ports of Siam. In the “Age of Commerce,” many port polities, such as Aceh and Melaka,

tried to expand their territories into the hinterlands. In the eighteenth century, Pegu, Ayutthaya, Thonburi and Quang Nam also developed from port polities into territorial states, although some attempts failed. Among the Chinese port polities, Ha Tien is the only example in which there was active expansion.

The following passages describe the troubled events surrounding the succession, after the death of the Cambodian king, Cei Cet (Ang Snguon), in 1755. According to the GDTC (vol. 4), in the year *dinh suu* (1757), the nineteenth year of The Ton:

The Cao Man king, Nac Ong Nguyen [Cei Cet], died. His uncle, Nac Ong Nhuan, executed all affairs in the place of the king. Mandarins in Gia Dinh asked the throne [the king of Quang Nam] to permit Nac Ong Nhuan to be the king of Cambodia. The Quang Nam king responded that after ceding two provinces—Tra Vinh and Ba Thac [present-day Cua Bat Xac, at the mouth of the Bassac River, near Soc Trang city]—to Quang Nam, he would recognize him [Nac Nhuan] as king. But Nac Nhuan's son-in-law, Nac Hinh, killed Nac Nhuan and usurped. Nac Ton, a son of Nhuan, fled to Ha Tien. Du Chinh Hau [the Duke of Du Chinh, a general of Quang Nam] took advantage of this affair to attack Nac Hinh. Nac Hinh fled to Tan Phong Xoi [Kampong Svay?], and then his staff member, Oc Nha Uong, killed him. Mac Thien Tu petitioned the Quang Nam king to have Nac Ong Ton ascend the throne. [The Quang Nam king] ordered Mac Thien Tu to escort Nac Ong Ton to his country.

According to the MTGP:

The Cambodian king's first son, Chieu Ong Ton, heard that Mac Thien Tu was renowned for his virtue. He hoped that Mac Thien Tu would have pity for his isolated status and solve his urgent problem. He sent his followers to Mac Thien Tu to ask him to attack his enemy. Dinh Quoc Cong [Mac Thien Tu] pitied him because he was so isolated that he had lost his way. Mac Thien Tu reported to the throne about his urgent situation. The Quang Nam king, Hieu Vu Hoang De, ordered Mac Thien Tu to resolve the Cambodian problem and ordered the Governor-General of Gia Dinh to

command a Vietnamese army to help him. Mac Thien Tu had command of more than 10,000 Ha Tien soldiers to escort Chieu Ong Ton to ascend the throne.

According to the BK:

In 1757, Upareac Preah Srei Soriyopor attacked Preah Utey Reacea. Preah Utey Reacea fled to *srok* Peam along a land route. Preah Sotoat, living in *srok* Peam, was pleased to receive him into exile. Preah Utey Reacea requested Preah Sotoat, who was [his] *preah thoamabeida* [adoptive father], to order Okña Kosala, Okña Mno Sethei Phuv and Cau Poñea Yuos to raise an army to occupy *srok* Treang [in Takeo], Banteay Meas, Prei Krabas [in Takeo], Nokor Borei [in Takeo], Bati [in Takeo] and Samrong Tong. They fought Preah Srei Soriyopor at Banteay Pec. Then Preah Utey Reacea left Peam with his soldiers and went to Kampong Krasang, where he took boats. After joining his troops, he marched along Tonle Moat Cruk [the Chau Doc River] to Prek Ambel, Tuk Vil and Anlong San, and then arrived at *srok* Phnom Penh. He pursued Preah Srei Soriyopor's army and then entered the fortress to destroy the army.

According to the VJ (pp. 572–4):

Preah Utey Reacea was defeated by Preah Srei Soriyopor and fled to *khaet* Banteay Meas along a land route. Preah Sotoat, who was Preah Utey Reacea's adoptive father, ordered Okña Kosala, Okña Reacea Sethei Phuv and Cau Poñea Yuos to gather people of *khaet* Treang, Kampot, Banteay Meas, Prey Krabas and Bati to organize their soldiers. Those three ministers attacked Udong.

On the other side, Preah Utey Reacea took soldiers, left *khaet* Peam and marched from *srok* Kampong Krasang and *srok* Moat Cruk [Chau Doc] by boat. Gathering people of the [various] *khaet* along the Tonle [the Bassac River], he arrived at Phnom Penh and then moved to Kampong Luong [a river port near Udong].

Somdec Preah Srei Soriyopor Moha Upareac sent soldiers and fought with Preah Utey Reacea (Ang Ton) but was defeated at Phum Dombok Mean Leak in *khaet* Samrong Tong. After that, Somdec Moha Upareac hastened to *khaet* Prei Kdei. Somdec Preah Kaev Hva (Ang Duong) [a younger brother of Moha Upareac], who had conspired with Somdec Preah Srei Soriyopor Moha Upareac, was so afraid that he became a monk in Vat Sbaeng. Preah Ang Non Civ likewise became a *samaner* [Buddhist novice]. Knowing this, Preah Ang Ton sent soldiers to arrest Somdec Preah Srei Soriyopor Moha Upareac Ang Hing at Khet Prei Kdei and had him executed at *srok* Kampong Chnang. After that, Preah Utey Reacea Ang Ton had Somdec Preah Kaev Hva (Ang Duong) return to secular life and had him executed at Vat Prok Kda.

After a few months, Somdec Preah Anoceat Khsatrei, the queen of Somdec Preah Srei Soriyopor Moha Upareac, had some ministers attack Preah Utey Reacea. ...Preah Utey Reacea defeated Somdec Preah Anoceat Khsatrei's faction. Somdec Preah Reamea Thipdei Moha Uphayoreac Ang Tong became aware this, hastened to *khaet* Posat and died there in the year of the bull [1757/8]. Somdec Preah Anoceat Khsatrei hastened to Prei Rusei Sañ in *khaet* Posat with a prince, Preah Ang At, and the ministers. Preah Ang Non Preah Ream and Preah Ang Civ hastened to *khaet* Kampong Svay.

Preah Utey Reacea's soldiers apprehended Somdec Preah Anoceat Khsatrei, Preah Ang At and the ministers, and executed them at *srok* Kampong Chnang. Then Preah Utey Reacea ordered his soldiers to arrest Preah Ang Non Preah Ream and Preah Ang Civ. But Preah Ang Non Preah Ream managed to escape at Kampong Preah Sruv and hastened to Krong Srei Ayuthya [Ayutthaya] by land. Preah Ang Civ was executed at Udong. Preah Utey Reacea ascended the throne in 1758.

Comparisons of these passages provide several insights into the divisions within the Cambodian court, as well as political and economic characteristics of the Ha Tien polity. In 1756, the court was divided into two factions, led respectively by Utey Reacea (Ang Ton) and by Somdec Preah

Srei Soriyopor Moha Upareac (Ang Hing).

Nac Ong Ton (in the Vietnamese reports) can be identified as Utey Reacea, whose former name was Ang Ton. His father was Somdec Preah Utey Reacea Moha Upareac Ang So, who wielded great power at *srok* Moha Nokor Vat (Angkor) during the reign of King Cei Cet (Ang Snguon, known as Nac Nguyen in Vietnamese).

Nac Hinh (in the Vietnamese reports) must be Somdec Preah Srei Soriyopor Moha Upareac (Ang Hing). He inherited the position of *upareac* (“second king”) from Ang So after the latter died. Nac Hinh was a son-in-law of Nac Nhuan (the name given in the Vietnamese records). Thus, Nac Nhuan appears to have been Ang So.³⁴ According to the Vietnamese information, Nac Hinh killed Ang So.

Utey Reacea (Ang Ton) fled to *srok* Peam in *khaet* Banteay Meas, where his adoptive father (called Preah Sotoat in Khmer) had settled. Thus *srok* Peam and Preah Sotoat (the names given in the Cambodian records) must be Ha Tien City and Mac Thien Tu, respectively. The Vietnamese records likewise call Ang Ton an adopted son of Mac Thien Tu.

According to the BK, Preah Sotoat exercised strong influence over local Cambodian officials such as Okña Kosala, Okña Mno Sethei Phuv and Cau Poña Yuos. Probably they were governors of *khaet* Treang (in Takeo), Kampot, Banteay Meas, Prey Krabas (in Takeo) and Bati (in Takeo).³⁵ They were able to mobilize the local Cambodian people. Without the support of these Cambodian officials, Mac Thien Tu could not mobilize Khmer soldiers, not even in Ha Tien.

The Ha Tien army included Khmer people from the Chau Doc and Bassac area and Quang Nam. It marched by way of the Mekong River and defeated King Hinh’s army near Udong. Hinh fled to Kampong Chnang (Tan Phong Xoi in Vietnamese), where he was arrested and killed.³⁶ Ton then launched a purge at Udong, driving out the supporters and followers of Hinh. Tong fled to Posat and died there. Cei Cet (Nguyen’s son), Preah Ang Non Preah Ream (Ang Non), fled to Ayutthaya.

These events demonstrate the hegemony that Mac Thien Tu gained over the southern provinces along the Bassac River (the Hau Giang) and over the eastern shores of the Gulf in the 1750s, through the cooperation of local Cambodian officials and with military protection from Quang Nam. Mac

Thien Tu's polity thus had three distinctive features: first, its subordinate relationship with Quang Nam with regard to military affairs; second, the autonomy of Ha Tien Chinese residents in their trade and urban administration; and third, the influence exercised over local Khmer officials as a means of controlling the Khmer population.

Formation of Ha Tien Territory

Important territorial changes of concern to Ha Tien are reflected in the following extracts. According to the GDTC (vol. 4), in the year *dinh suu* (1757):

At that time, Mac Thien Tu recommended to the throne [the Quang Nam king] that Nac Ong Ton ascend the throne of Cambodia. The king [of Quang Nam] give orders for Mac Thien Tu and the generals of five [Quang Nam] armies to escort Nac Ong Ton on his return to his country. [Nac Ong Ton] presented Tam Phong Long [Kampong Long, present-day Long Xuyen City]³⁷ to Quang Nam.

The Quang Nam army returned to Gia Dinh. Du Chinh Hau and Nghia Bieu Hau reported to the throne the removal of Long Ho Dinh to Tam Bao, where the present Long Ho village is, and the establishment of Dong Khau Dao in Sadec, Tan Chau Dao in Tien Giang Cau Lao [Cu Lao Gieng, an island in the Mekong River near Cao Lanh] and Chau Doc Dao in Hau Giang Chau Doc, where soldiers of Long Ho Dinh were stationed.

After settling all the affairs, Nac Ong Ton ceded five prefectures—Phung Tham, Can Bot, Chan Sam, Say Mat and Linh Quynh—to Mac Thien Tu as the reward for his service. Mac Thien Tu established Kien Giang Dao at Rach Gia and Long Xuyen Dao at Ca Mau. He established local bureaucratic institutions, settled a population and built villages there. Ha Tien expanded very widely.

According to the MTGP:

After the problem was solved, the king [of Quang Nam] ordered his imperial subjects to carry the imperial message appointing him a *phien vuong* [a vassal king] and ordered *tham cong* [the three highest dukes] to take colored mandarin costumes, mandarin hoods, gold and silver to Mac Thien Tu in order to transfer the prince [Nac Ton]. The prince was very pleased to receive favor from the Quang Nam king and sent his followers to the capital to thank him.

...After ascending the throne, he wished to be under the umbrella of Mac Thien Tu, and then he ceded five provinces to Mac Thien Tu's domain to express his thanks: Vang Tham, Can Bot, Chan Sam, Say Mat and Ninh Quyinh. Mac Thien Tu developed Cambodian wilderness to populate [the newly settled areas of] Long Xuyen, Kien Giang, Tran Giang and Tran Di. He established administrative units and sent his officials there.

This Cambodian cession of land to Quang Nam is not mentioned in the Cambodian chronicles; nor is the Vietnamese expedition to Cambodia in 1757. According to the GDTC, however, the Vietnamese army maintained stations at Long Ho (near Tra Vinh), Sadec, Cu Lao Gieng and Chau Duc, from that time onward. Furthermore, the area from Rach Gia and Ca Mau to Long Xuyen (the area called Trans-Bassac or Mékong Occidentale during the French colonial period) belonged to the Ha Tien kingdom but was known as Long Xuyen, Kien Giang and Tran Giang. This evidence shows that the concept of a geo-body appeared for the first time in the Vietnamese part of the Mekong delta and that Quang Nam and Ha Tien shared that concept, based on the line formed by the Bassac.

Mac Thien Tu succeeded in ruling four important ports along the eastern shores of the Gulf, including Kampot, Ha Tien and Rach Gia. His rule must have been a big threat to other trading powers in the Gulf region, such as the Teochiu Chinese maritime merchants based at Chanthaburi and Trat.

Furthermore, his new domain—Say Mat (*phum* Banteay Meas), Linh Quynh (Tuk Meas) and Chan Sam (Tnaot Chong Srang)—belonged to the Banteay Meas region during the period of French colonial rule. He ruled the hinterland of Ha Tien along the Giang Thanh (Banteay River) system.

Fall of Ayutthaya and Ha Tien

Threat of Invasion from Ayutthaya in 1766

The Quang Nam kingdom received its first detailed information concerning the current affairs of Siam from the Ha Tien kingdom.³⁸ The following passages are from the GDTC (vol. 5) and refer to Ha Tien's fears of invasion in 1766 by Siamese forces.

In the tenth month of the year *binh tuat* (November 1766):

A spy sent to Siam by Ha Tien returned and reported that the Phong Vuong of Xiem [Siam]—who was a leper, and hence people called him Phong Vuong [Leper King]—had prepared a *chien dap*³⁹ [a battleship in Siam, a western-style large sampan on which the rowers sat toward the stern] and also soldiers to invade Ha Tien *tran*. At that time, the Phong Vuong wished to invade his neighbors. They [his subjects] had a grudge against him, because his rule was very cruel. Ton Duc Hau⁴⁰ [Mac Thien Tu] was so fearful of a Siamese invasion that he consolidated the defenses of Ha Tien.

In the ninth month of the year *binh tuat* (October 1766):

[Mac Thien Tu] sent a letter to Gia Dinh to ask Quang Nam for military support for Ha Tien.

On the eighteenth day of the tenth month of the year *binh tuat* (19 November 1766):

The *thong xuat* [general commander] of the *dieu khien quan* [mandarins of Saigon]—Khoi Khoa Hau [Duke of Khoi Khoa], whose name was Nguyen Phuoc Khoi [the same person as Nguyen Cuu Khoi in the DTTB]—and the *tam muu* [a general staff officer] Mien Truong Hau [Duke of Mien Truong], whose name was Nguyen Huu Mien [the same person as Nguyen Huu Minh in the DTTB], dispatched three commanders—[1] Khoi Nghia Hau, a *cai doi* [regimental commander], [2] Kinh Thien Hau, the *cai doi* of Tan Chau Dau [present-day Culao Giem] and [3]

Duy Tai Bac [Earl of Duy Tai], a *binh luan* [a mandarin title]—with a fleet of twenty battleships and 1,000 sailors to Ha Tien along three routes.

On the third day of the eleventh month of the year *binh tuat* (4 December 1766):

The Quang Nam navy arrived at Ha Tien *tran* and then strengthened its defenses against an invasion by Siam.

The Siamese king at that time was known as the “Phong King” in Ha Tien. Generally, *phong* in Vietnamese means an illness of the brain, madness or a headache. But the idiom *ma phong* has another meaning: a leper. It is well known that the last king of Ayutthaya, Suriyamarin (Ekathat, r. 1758–67), was called the leprous king in Ayutthaya, although he suffered from a kind of eczema and not from leprosy (Rong 1973: 90). The fact that the rumor about his skin disease was commonly known, in both Ayutthaya and Ha Tien, illustrates how well informed the Gulf network was during that period.

If this information is correct, King Ekathat planned to invade Ha Tien during the summer of 1766. This would have been the second attempt by a Siamese king to use military force to control the Gulf—the first attempt having ended in the destruction of Ha Tien in the 1710s. The Quang Nam army in Vinh Long responded instantly to the threat of invasion from Siam, and an army was sent to Ha Tien by ship. Thus the navies of two armed maritime powers—Ayutthaya versus the combined forces of Ha Tien and Quang Nam—were operating in the Gulf just before the fall of Ayutthaya.

Fall of Ayutthaya in 1767

The Vietnamese and Cambodian sources provide numerous details about the Burmese sack of the Thai capital in 1767. According to the GDTC (vol. 5), in the third month of the year *dinh hoi* (April 1767):

Mien Dien [Burma] invaded Xiem [Siam], taking advantage of the anger of the Xiem people [because of their king’s cruelty]. Mien Dien was a Southwest Barbarian land. It is presumed to be the Mien that Emperor

The To of the Nguyen [Shih Tsung of the Yuan dynasty, namely Khubilai Khan] conquered, and the Mien Dien Lang where Que Vuong of the Minh [Kuei Wang of the Ming dynasty] Du Lang took refuge. They tattoo their bellies, so their state was called Hoa Tho [Hua Du in Chinese] or O Tho [Wu Du in Chinese]. The local people called it Phu Ma [Burma].

Mien Dien set fire to the royal palace and plundered the royal treasures of Xiem. Furthermore, they carried off the Siamese king and his son, Chieu Doc, to Burma, with several thousand people, and devastated the land, [leaving it] to become wilderness. But the Siamese king's second son, Chieu Di Xoang, took refuge in Cao Man Quoc, and the third son, Chieu Chui, fled to Ha Tien.

According to the MTGP, in the ninth month of the year *dinh hoi* (October/November 1767):

Hoa Tho [Burma] raised an army to sack Xiem La [Siam]. [The king of] Xiem La, relying on his riches, had not organized his state well. No wars had taken place for sixty years. Once they were defeated, innumerable people were killed. But because Hoa Tho is a considerable distance from Siam, it could not defend [i.e., maintain occupation forces in] Ayutthaya for a long time. They plundered women and treasures, set palaces ablaze and then retreated to their country, with Prince Chieu Doc and many people.

Princes Chieu Hoa and Chieu Di Xoang alone fled to the coastal region, with more than 100 followers. Afterwards, they sought asylum under Mac Thien Tu. They asked Mac Thien Tu to restore their country and take revenge. Mac Thien Tu pitied them and permitted to stay in Ha Tien. He provided them with a house and clothing as fine as those of a king.

According to the DLTS (vol. 33):

His [the Siamese king's] first son Trieu Doc and second son Trieu Di Xoang took refuge in Chan Lap [Cambodia]. Trieu Chui fled to Vong Sat in Ha Tien.

According to the VJ (pp. 593–4):

In 1767, the Burmese army invaded Krung Srei Ayuthya [Ayutthaya] and sacked it. Preah Borom Reacea, namely Preah Bat Suriyeamarin [King Suriyamarin], managed to escape from the palace but died of anxiety. Some of the royal family fled to several provinces (*khaet*). Cau Si San and Cau Col [two princes] arrived in Cambodia in 1767. Preah Bat Somdec Preah Nreay Reacea (Nac Ton) had the kindness to build a house for them to stay in.

Ayutthaya was sacked on 7 April 1767, and news of this event reached Ha Tien between 9 April and 8 May. Hua Du (or Wu Du) can be identified as the *wadi* element in Han-tha-wadi (Pegu). Phu Ma (or Fu Ma) is the same as “Phama,” meaning Burma in Thai. According to the GDTC, the Burmese army captured the last Siamese king (called the “Leprous” or “Mad” King, namely Ekathat) and Prince Doc. But according to other reports, King Ekathat died while trying to escape (Turpin 1771: 318). Probably the GDTC compilers mistook Ex-King Uthumphon (who was taken away as a prisoner and died in Burma) for King Ekathat. Prince Doc has not been identified. Obviously, the information that reached Cambodia and Vietnam, concerning the Ayutthaya royal family, was still confused.

The Siamese princes⁴¹ who sought refuge in Ha Tien and Cambodia were also reported by Westerners.⁴² According to one western source, two princes passed through Ha Tien and arrived at Hon Dat (a place between Rach Gia and Ha Tien), where some French missionaries had gone in November 1767, after escaping from Ayutthaya. Within a month, one of the princes moved to Cambodia. Mac Thien Tu suspected that the missionaries helped him to escape to Cambodia and arrested three of them in January 1767, including Pigneau de Béhaine (later a bishop and Apostolic Vicar of Cochinchina). Vong Sat (mentioned in the DLTS) must be Hon Dat. Cau Si San (mentioned in the Cambodian chronicles) must be the same person as Trieu (Chieu) Di Xoang (mentioned in the DLTS). Cau Col, however, does not appear in materials other than the Cambodian chronicles.

The fall of Ayutthaya meant the temporary disappearance of Ha Tien’s rival. Furthermore, the refuge taken there by the Ayutthayan princes lent

legitimacy to Ha Tien as the heir to the Ayutthaya-China royal trading privileges.

Expansion of Ha Tien in the Gulf

The eclipse of Ayutthaya provided the setting in which Ha Tien began to assert its power along the eastern shores of the Gulf, as recorded by the Vietnamese. According to the GDTC (vol. 5), in the fifth month of the year *dinh hoi* (May/June 1767):

At that time [after receiving news of the fall of Ayutthaya], because the problem of the [threatened] invasion from Xiem [Siam] had been solved, Ton Duc Hau [Mac Tien Tu] thanked the Vietnamese generals for supporting Ha Tien and asked them to retreat with their soldiers. Gia Dinh recalled Xieu Nghia Hau from Ha Tien with his soldiers for a rest.

According to the DTTB, in the third month of the year *dinh hoi* (April 1767):

Mac Thien Tu reported those affairs to the *dieu khien* Nguyen Cuu Khoi at Gia Dinh and requested that he withdraw his troops for a rest.

Ha Tien declined military support from Quang Nam because of the disappearance of Ayutthaya's navy, which also gave Ha Tien a chance to be fully independent of Quang Nam.

According to the GDTC (vol. 5), in the year *dinh hoi* (1767):

[Mac Thien Tu] dispatched the *cai doi* [commander] Duc Nghiep with troops to patrol the islands, such as Co Cong [Kong Island], Co Cot [Kut Island] and Dan Kham [Kham Island].

This passage in the GDTC follows the description of the problem in Chanthaburi, which will be mentioned below. According to Chen Chingho's research, the Chanthaburi affair occurred not in 1767 but in 1769. Probably,

in 1767 the Ha Tien navy was sent on expeditions to several islands in the area from Kong Island to Khram Island. This Ha Tien military expedition provoked an armed response from the Teochiu Chinese in the Gulf, as shown in the following section.

Struggle against Teochiu Power

According to the GDTC, in the fifth month of the year *dinh hoi* (May/June 1767):

Previously, Hoac Nhiem, a Chinese originally from a gang of Trieu Chau [Teochiu], was so skilful in the martial arts that he succeeded in gathering many pirates at Co Cong [Kong Island]. It was a quite steep, mountainous island, but had good routes to the Cambodian mountains and to Chinese ports, and also there was a deep and long inlet where ships could lie calmly at anchor.

He built a fortress in order to settle there and established their [pirate] base, from which they sailed out to sea to plunder trading ships from south and north and to capture Xiem [Siamese] people. No residents in the coastal area escaped from them. He [Hoac Nhiem] was so skillful that he could shoot an arrow with a big iron head and split a halyard. Usually his body was clad with rattan [armor], and he wandered about on the sea in order to plunder merchant ships. Eventually, he intended to invade Ha Tien. But [news of] his plot leaked out.

Ton Duc Hau [Mac Thien Tu] sent the *cai doi* [commander] Khanh Thanh with a strong body of soldiers to arrest him in secret. One night, they made a surprise attack [on Hoac Nhiem's fortress] with a volley of fire, and they marched to the accompaniment of drums. The pirates were too surprised to put up a defense and scattered in confusion. Hoac Nhiem along took a small dagger and boarded a small boat to escape. But they shot him, and he dropped into the water. They thrust a spear into his body to kill him. His [severed] head was exposed to the people. All of his conspirators were scattered.

According to the GDTC (vol. 5), in the year *ky suu* (1769):

Tran Thai, a Trieu Chau [Toechiu] refugee, gathered robbers at Mount Bach Ma⁴³ in Ha Tien to try to attack the Ha Tien fort. He secretly contacted some of the Mac family, such as Mac Sung and Mac Khoan. They plotted to set fire to the fort on the thirteenth day of the sixth month [15 July 1769]. But [news of] this plot leaked out. Ton Duc Hau [Mac Thien Tu] ambushed and massacred them at Huong Son Tu or Chua That Huong [the Temple of Seven Perfumes]. Tran Thai took refuge in Chan Bon [Chanthaburi] in Xiem La [Siam].

According to the MTGP:

A Chinese man, Tran Nghiet, emigrated from Siam and gathered followers at Mount Bach Ma in Ha Tien. He led a big army in an attack on Ha Tien at night. Mac Thien Tu ordered the *Xa Ba* [Malay] general to defeat them. They scattered and returned to Trach Van [Chanthaburi]. After that, Taksin ordered them to guide him to Ha Tien.

The Teochiu, a Chinese group who had settled in the southeast of present-day Thailand, were confronting the armed expansion of Ha Tien in the waters of the Gulf. Hoac Nhiem at Kong Island, south of Trat, was the first Teochiu rival against Ha Tien's expansion, and the Ha Tien naval forces eliminated him and his base. Tran Thai was the second rival. Mac Thien Tu made a preemptive strike against him in 1769 but failed to kill him. Tran Thai fled to Chanthaburi. Subsequently, as discussed below, he accompanied the vanguard of the Siamese army in the attack on Ha Tien in 1771. These battles between Chinese rivals do not appear in the Thai or Cambodian chronicles.

Confrontation with King Taksin

Taksin's Occupation of Chanthaburi in 1767

Mac Thien Tu was unable to rule the eastern shores of the Gulf efficiently, because of resistance from Chinese settlers, such as Tran Thai,

who were based at Chanthaburi and Trat.

According to Jacqueline de Fels (1976 i: 109–15), after the fall of Ayutthaya, Taksin⁴⁴ fled to Phatthaya and then organized the resistance against the Burmese from a base at Rayong, with the support of Teochiu Chinese. He sent a mission—with a Vietnamese guide (Nai Phuak) and a Cambodian guide (Nak Ma)—to Phraya Chanthaburi (the governor of Chanthaburi) to ask the governor to submit to him, but the governor failed to respond. Taksin gained the support of Phutthai Mat (i.e., Banteay Meas, whose governor was called Phraya Ratcha Setthi by the Siamese)⁴⁵ and the support of Chonburi, and then he tried to attack Chanthaburi in 1767 with the support of Chiam, a Chinese man in Trat.⁴⁶ Phraya Chanthaburi fled to Phutthai Mat. This was the first victory of Taksin after he established his base in the southeast of Thailand, and it shows that the occupation of Chanthaburi was a very important step in establishing his power. No Vietnamese document, however, mentions the fall of Chanthaburi or the exile of Phraya Chanthaburi to Phutthai Mat in 1767.

Chiam was appointed deputy governor of Trat with the title Phra Phiphit. According to de Fels (1976 i: 113), he was the Chinese leader of a fleet of junks at Trat, and he and his soldiers surrendered to Taksin after a half day's resistance. He is also called Phokhakorn or Poñea Pipit in the Cambodian chronicles. Later he became governor of Trat with the title Phraya Aphai Phiphit. He appears to be the same person as Tran Lien in the Ha Tien report. As mentioned below, Tran Lien (a Teochiu Chinese) was a military adviser of Taksin. He attacked the Ha Tien army in Chanthaburi in 1769, sacked Ha Tien in 1770 and was appointed chief of Ha Tien in 1771.

According to the MTGP:

He [Taksin] knew that Chieu Hoa and Chieu Di Xoang [the two Siamese princes] had sought asylum in Ha Tien. Based on Tran Lien's advice to massacre the descendants of the previous dynasty, Taksin sent a flattering letter to Mac Thien Tu referring to himself as a *nghi tu* [adopted son] of Mac Thien Tu, asking the Siamese princes to return to Siam, and saying that if Mac Thien Tu agreed, he would cede part of his land and send tribute to Mac Thien Tu.

Taksin first contacted Mac Thien Tu in 1767. Taksin professed himself to be an adopted son (*nghi tu*) of Mac Thien Tu in his letter to Mac Thien Tu (Chen 1977: 8). According to the Siamese chronicles, Taksin sent a message to the governor of Banteay Meas—known as Ong Chien Chun⁴⁷ or Phraya Ratcha Setthi⁴⁸—to propose cooperation and assistance in 1767. Thus, during the early period of Taksin's rise to power, Taksin and Mac Tien Tu maintained a close relationship. By the end of 1767, however, that relationship began to break down, as shown in the following passage.

Breakdown at the End of 1767

According to the MTGP:

Mac Thien Tu knew about Taksin's conspiracy, and he planned his expansion policy [accordingly]. He pretended to accept Taksin's request and at the same time sent spies to collect information. Then he dispatched his son-in law, Ngo Nhung To Hau, with more than 100 battleships to the outside of Bac Lam [Paknam] port in Vong Cac [Bangkok] in secret. To Hau tried to send a messenger to Taksin to invite him on board his ship for discussions. But at the same time, Taksin sent a spy named A Ma to sneak into [the household of] Mac Thien Tu's sister as a servant. ...So, Taksin knew of Mac Thien Tu's plan, and he did not meet To Hau. To Hau waited for him for ten days and more, but had nothing to do. Moreover, a big typhoon struck his fleet during the night, damaging more than forty ships. To Hau perceived his failure and then returned to Phuc Thuyen Son [Bang Pla Soi = Chonburi], where he died of a disease.

According to the Thai chronicles, Taksin imported rice from Banteay Meas to Thonburi in 1768.⁴⁹ This was probably the rice that the Siamese plundered from a Ha Tien ship at the end of 1767. A French missionary, Jacques Corre, reported in 1769 that Mac Thien Tu ordered his son-in-law to pretend to export rice to Bangkok as a means of kidnapping Taksin. But Taksin became aware of this conspiracy. The Siamese plundered his rice and massacred his soldiers. The son-in-law died on the return voyage (HMTK, p. 190). According to Chen Chingho, the epitaph of To Dung (Ngo Nhung To

Hau) in Ha Tien was made in 1767 (HMTK, p. 189). Probably, To Dung was sent on this mission to Paknam after Taksin's reconquest of Ayutthaya in November 1767.

After Taksin succeeded in unifying central Thailand, he was tempted by Tran Lien, a representative of the Teochiu Chinese in the eastern part of the Gulf, into changing his strategy and confronting Ha Tien.

Sack of Chanthaburi by Ha Tien in 1769

Chinese rivalry along the eastern shores of the Gulf is documented also in the events of 1769-70 relating to Chanthaburi. According to the GDTC (vol. 5), in the year *dinh hoi* (1767):

Ton Duc Hau [Mac Thien Tu] was afraid that Mien Dien [Burma] would invade Ha Tien after the victory over Xiem [Siam]. He ordered his nephew [a son of his sister]—Thang Thuy Doi, a *cai doi* [admiral of the Thang Thuy fleet] named Chou Tai Hau and Tran Van Phuong—to go with battleships and sailors to Chan Bon [Chanthaburi] to patrol the border area. At that time, after the damages of the war, an epidemic was raging in Siam. Many Ha Tien soldiers and Xiem people were dying. Chou Tai Hau himself died in the epidemic. But because of the importance of the defense of the border area, it was impossible to slacken off. [Mac Thien Tu] ordered Ngo Nhung Ky [an army officer] to take his place; he, too, became sick, was returning to Ha Tien, but died on the way.

According to Chen Chingho, Tran Van Phuong went to Ha Tien and died there not in 1767 but in 1769. Also, as mentioned above, Ngo Nhung Ky (namely To Dung) died at the end of 1767, not in Chanthaburi but in Chonburi. Comparing this evidence with other materials, it is certain that Mac Thien Tu tried to attack Chanthaburi in 1769.

According to the MTGP, in the thirtieth year of Canh Hung (1769):

[Mac Thien Tu] ordered Thang Thuy Tran Hau, the son of his elder sister, to take command of more than 50,000 soldiers and sailors for an attack on Siam. ...The army arrived at Trach Van [Chanthaburi] and built a fence

[presumably a wooden stockade] to settle in. Tan [Taksin] sent his general, Tran Lai, to take 3,000 soldiers to relieve Trach Van. Tran Hau defeated and massacred his [Siamese] army with his big [Ha Tien] army. He [Tran Lai] was defeated and evacuated. Subsequently, they defended their fortresses on land and at sea and never marched out.

...Tran Hau was stationed at Trach Van for two months. But the land and water there were not suitable. Epidemics occurred every day. Tran Hau, too, became ill. Many soldiers were suffering from disease. More than 100 soldiers died every day. ...Mac Thien Tu ordered his subjects to call Tran Hau back. More than 10,000 soldiers among the original 50,000 were able to return to Ha Tien. Tan [Taksin] heard that the Ha Tien army was evacuating and followed with a big army. They arrived at Trach Van, realized that Ha Tien was firmly defended and then returned.

According to the BK:

Preah Sotoat of *srok Peam* [Mac Thien Tu of Ha Tien] gathered people of *khaet Banteay Meas* and *khaet Treang* [in Takeo] to attack *srok Can Bo* [Chanthaburi] and *srok Thung Yai* [Trat?]. But they were defeated by the Siamese army and retreated to *srok Peam* in 1770.

According to the VJ (pp. 601–2):

In 1770, Preah Sotoat at *khaet Peam*, the adopted father of the Cambodian king, conspired with Okña Reacea Sethei Phuv, the *cauvaysrok* [provincial governor] of *khaet Peam* and other *cauvay srok* of *khaet Treang*, Banteay Meas, Kampot and Kampong Som, and then mobilized 10,000 soldiers. They left *khaet Peam* and sacked *khaet Krat* [Trat] at the border between Cambodia and Siam, then they surrounded *srok Can Borei* [Chanthaburi] for three months. The Siamese commander, a minister of King Tak [Taksin] died in the battle. Preah Sotoat entered the fort to plunder its treasure and took 5,000 Siamese prisoners. But he could not afford to maintain a position there and thus retreated to *khaet Peam Banteay Meas*.

According to Chen Chingho (HMTK, p. 194), a French missionary, Jacques-Nicolas Morvan, stated that the governor (Mac Thien Tu) of Cang Khau (the Chinese name of Ha Tien) confronted Phraya Tak, the new Siamese king. Mac Thien Tu dispatched a fleet to attack Siam in September 1769. Moreover, the governor-general of Guangdong and Guangxi reported to Beijing on 30 August 1769 (*Ch'inh Kao Tsung Shih Lu*, vol. 839) that the chief of Ha Tien, Mac Si Lam (Mac Thien Tu), had dispatched an army to sack Chiem Trach (Chanthaburi) and had tried to attack Kan En Chih (Taksin) and the Siamese chiefs (HMTK, p. 194). Mac Thien Tu must therefore have attempted to send an expedition against Chanthaburi in September 1769 but postponed it until early 1770.

Tran Thai fled to Chanthaburi after he was defeated at Ha Tien. Chanthaburi was a center of Teochiu Chinese power in the Gulf, and the Teochiu Chinese opposed Ha Tien's hegemony. Probably Mac Thien Tu tried to conquer Chanthaburi in order to crush the power of the Teochiu, including Tran Thai. Thus Ha Tien's preemptive strike in 1769 against Tran Thai and the 1770 conquest of Chanthaburi should be regarded as two phases of the same military operations (Chen 1977: 10).

As mentioned above, a Chinese governor named Chiam (with the title Phraya Phiphit) had ruled Chanthaburi and Trat since 1767. Tran Lai must be the same person as Chiam. He would have been in the vanguard of the Siamese army that marched to Ha Tien in 1770 under the name of Tran Lien, as mentioned below. Tran Thai (Tran Nghiet in the MTGP) guided the Siamese army to Ha Tien in the same year. Probably, Tran Thai was also called Tran Lai, Tran Nghiet and Tran Lien in different source, and was the man known in Thai as Phraya Phiphit (Chiam), governor of Chanthaburi under Taksin.

Fall of Ha Tien

Taksin's Invasion of Cambodia from the Northern Route

According to the BK:

In 1771, Poñea Tak [Taksin] ordered Poñea Yomareac [Phraya Yommarat]

to conquer Cambodia. He invaded *srok* Posat [Pursat] by land, by way of *srok* Moha Nokor Vat [Angkor] and *srok* Battambang.

According to the VJ (pp. 602–3):

When Preah Sotoat sacked Chan Borei [Chanthaburi], King Tak [Taksin] was attacking the *srok lu* [northern states]. In 1771, he appointed Poñea Apheirunret Duong to be Cakrei [Phraya Chakkri (Duang)] and Poñea Anucit Pon Ma [Phraya Anuchit (Bun Ma)] to be Poñea So Sei [Phraya Surasi], to lead 10,000 soldiers with the Cambodian prince Preah Ang Non Preah Ream and march to Udong by way of Pascem Borei [Prachinburi].

According to the GDTC (vol. 5), in the year *ky suu* (1769):

At that time, the Xiem [Siamese] king, Phi Nya Tan [Phraya Taksin], dispatched a general—with the official name Phi Nha So Si [Phraya Surasi] and the personal name Bon Ma [Bun Ma]—with soldiers to subjugate the Cao Man [Cambodian] king Nac Ong Ton [Ang Ton], and sent the pretender-king of Cao Man, Nac Ong Non [Ang Non], back to his country. When his army marched to Lo Khu Vat Suc [*srok* Nokor Vat = Angkor Wat], they were defeated and then retreated to Xiem with many Cambodian people. Ha Tien Tran strengthened the defenses of the border area because of the confusion in the neighboring country.

According to the DNLS (vol. 32), in the year *ky suu* (1769):

the King of Xiem, Trinh Quoc Anh [Phraya Taksin] dispatched Bon Ma to send the pretender-king Nac Non back to his country. They marched to Lo Khu [Nokor = Angkor] and engaged in battle with Nac Ton there. They were defeated and then took many Cambodian people to Xiem.

According to the Vietnamese materials, the Cambodian king refused to send tribute to King Taksin, because Taksin was not a legitimate king of Siam. This story is well known in Thai and Cambodian historiography, as an

explanation for the Siamese invasion of Cambodia in 1771 (for example Khin Sok 1991: 37). It is very difficult to understand the reason why the exact same story was recorded in the three countries' chronicles. Mac Thien Tu may have urged King Utey (Ang Ton) to refuse Taksin's request for tribute.

According to the Thai chronicles, Taksin met the Cambodian king, Ang Non (called Ramathibodi in Thai), at Thonburi in early 1769, when Taksin was preparing to attack Nakhon Sithammarat. Non had been banished by his cousin, Utey Reacea (Ang Ton, known as Uthairacha in Thai), who ascended the throne and took the royal title Nreay Reacea (Narairacha in Thai). Learning of this change of reign, Taksin asked the new Cambodian king, as a vassal-state ruler, to send tribute to him, but the request was denied. Then he ordered Phraya Chakkri and Chakkri's brother, Phraya Surasi, to march through Prachinburi to Nakhon Ratchasima with 2,000 soldiers, intending to attack King Utey Reacea and conquer Udong (de Fels 1976 i: 171). At that time, however, Taksin was embroiled in the conquest of southern and northern Thai territories and could not afford to invade Cambodia. The operations were therefore postponed until 1771 (de Fels 1976 i: 149-50).⁵⁰

In 1771, the Siamese army commanded by Phraya Chakkri and his brother Phraya Surasi invaded Cambodia by way of Angkor. The account of this invasion is confused in the Vietnamese materials, which incorrectly place it in the year 1769.

Taksin's Expedition against Ha Tien

In late 1771 King Taksin led his forces by sea in an attack on Ha Tien, followed by an attack on the Cambodian capital. According to the VJ (p. 603):

King Tak himself went on an expedition [to Cambodia] from Krong Thon Borei Srei Ayuthya [Thonburi] by sea with 400 battleships and 15,000 *pol* [soldiers]. He ordered Poñea Kosa Thipadei [Phraya Kosa Thibodi] to go to *khaet* Kampong Som and Kampot. He landed at Kampong Tromaeng, entered *khaet* Peam Banteay Meas and then fortified his position by planting a thorny fence. Preah Sotoat and Okña Reacea Sethei Phuv levied the *pol* to protect their fort and moved to *khaet* Tuk Khmau to ask for the

support of Udong. But in the absence of support from Udong, they were defeated by the Siamese army and retreated to *srok* Tuk Khmau.

According to the BK:

The other side—Cambodian Prince Neak Ang Non Cea Somdec Preah Ream—invaded *srok* Peam by sea. Preah Sotoat fled from *srok* Peam to *srok* Tuk Khmau.

The Vietnamese chronicles provide more detailed information about Ha Tien. The following four extracts are from the GDTC.

In the eighth month of the year *tan mao* (September/October 1771):

Ha Tien received information that the Xiem king Phi Nha Tan [Phraya Taksin] had strengthened his forces to invade Ha Tien. Ton Duc Hau [Mac Thien Tu] sent an urgent message to Gia Dinh to ask for reinforcements. But the *dieu khien quan* [Vietnamese commanders] Khoi Khoa Hau and Mien Truong Hau⁵¹ replied [as follows]: When they sent soldiers to the border area the previous year, based on incorrect information from Ha Tien, nothing took place and then they had to retreat. It would be better way to wait until the time the Xiem army crosses the border.

In the ninth month (October/November 1771):

Phi Nha Tan was fearful about Chieu Chuy [Ayutthayan Prince Chui, who was] staying in Ha Tien. After defeating Luc Con [Nakhon Sithammarat], which was a dependency of Mien Dien [Burma], he took command of 2,000 soldiers for the invasion of Ha Tien, with Tran Thai of Bach Ma as a guide.

On the third day of the tenth month (9 November 1771):

The Xiem army invaded and besieged the Ha Tien fort, whose three sides were constructed of wood without stone or clay. At that time, there were few soldiers in the fort. They defended the fort and sent a message to

[the military base at] Long Ho Doanh to report the urgent situation. Unfortunately, the Xiem sailors occupied Mount To Chau and bombarded the fort from there. The situation was urgent.

On the tenth night of the tenth month (16 November 1771):

A powder magazine on Ngo Ho hill exploded. The fort was in great confusion. On the thirtieth night [sic, should be thirteenth, 19 December 1771], Xiem soldiers penetrated the fort through the back gate near the river mouth, where no wall had been built, and set fire to the buildings of the fort. The blaze illuminated the forests and valleys. The Xiem army broke into the fort, which was in turmoil. ...Although Ton Duc Hau [Mac Thien Tu] commanded the soldiers and tried to rally them, the people in the fort were forced to flee. At one o'clock during the night, the fort fell. ...the *cai doi* [commander] Duc Nghiep helped [Mac Thien Tu] to board a boat and go to Giang Thanh [the Banteay River]. Hiep *tran* Mac Tu Hoang, *thang thuy* Mac Tu Thuong and *tham tuong* Mac Tu Lac led their sailors in an escape from the siege and went down to Kien Giang [Rach Gia].

According to the MTGP:

In the year *tan mao* [1771], Trinh Tan [Taksin] conquered Luc Con [Nakhon Sithammarat]. His army became braver and mightier. He moved his army to Ha Tien. The information arrived at Ngo Doanh [the Quang Nam army] to ask for reinforcements to Ha Tien. But ... they could not reinforce Ha Tien. Since the war of Trach Van [Chanthaburi], many Ha Tien people had died. The number of soldiers protecting the Ha Tien fort had also decreased. But [Mac Thien Tu] prepared food and weapons in the fort and conscripted more than 1,000 soldiers. Cong [Mac Thien Tu] arranged for them to guard the fort.

The Siamese army surrounded the fort in three columns. Cong ordered Prince Dung to command the left-flank troops against the enemy. He ordered Prince Thuong to command the battleships to defend the port.

Dung fired cannons and guns at the enemy. They could not enter the fort. They confronted each other for more than ten days. Even though there were ten Siamese soldiers for each Ha Tien soldier, the [Siamese] soldiers were too few in number.

The Ha Tien soldiers were exhausted, but they did not want to evacuate the fort, and decided to die in battle. The Siamese soldiers penetrated the fort at night. The Ha Tien powder magazine exploded. The [Siamese] soldiers outside, seizing this favorable opportunity, tried to penetrate the fort. Cong himself led the soldiers to kill the enemy. They managed to stop the enemy attack a little. But the enemy fired Western-style cannons, and many Ha Tien soldiers were wounded.

At that time, Cong heard that the enemy had entered the fort through unguarded points, and then he tried to return to the fort. When it was dawn, they were surrounded by enemy gunfire. Cong called upon his followers to close the gates of the fort and die.

Huu Bo (a commander of the right wing) knew that Cong was quite courageous in upholding justice, and so he insisted on escaping. But Cong would not listen to this advice. Then Huu Bo deceived Cong into waiting on board a battleship in the basin and gathering together his followers to fight again. Cong embarked in accordance with his advice. Huu Bo then ordered the sailors to leave immediately for Chau Doc to escape from the enemy's gunfire.

Since Ha Tien is on the seacoast, no one could escape from the attack without ships. More than ten members of the Cong family and many other people drowned. Fortunately, [Mac Thien Tu's] sons—princes Tu Hoang, Tu Thuong and Tu Dung—managed to board a battleship, fought more than ten *dap* [Siamese battle ships] and escaped to the place where the Quang Nam army was stationed.

Taksin and the Cambodian prince Non landed at Kampong Som and Kampot with the Siamese army. The first objective was to arrest Prince Chui,

the Ayutthaya prince staying in Ha Tien. In the name of this prince, Mac Thien Tu had invaded Chanthaburi in 1769. The second objective was to remove the pro-Vietnamese king of Cambodia (Ang Ton), who had refused to send tribute to Taksin.

The naval forces sent to attack Ha Tien were commanded by a Teochiu Chinese: Hau Tran Lien (known to the Siamese as Phraya Phiphit and Chiam), who was called a *chieu khoa* by the Vietnamese. (This term might be the generic Thai term for a high-ranking official: *chao khun*). They were guided by Tran Thai (probably the same person as Tran Lien). These events could be regarded as a war between the Teochiu Chinese and the Ha Tien Cantonese, in a struggle for hegemony over the eastern part of the Gulf.

The Siamese army occupied To Chau hill to the south of Ha Tien city and bombed the fort. The GDTC's explanation for the fall of Ha Tien is that its defenses were too simple, with only wooden walls and few soldiers. According to the Cambodian chronicles, whenever Mac Thien Tu attempted a military expedition, he usually called upon three Cambodian governors to conscript their soldiers (*pol*). But when the city fell, according to the VJ, the only soldiers defending the fort were Chinese, and the MTGP states that there were a mere 1,000 defenders. The Chinese settlers alone could not protect the fort.

The Ha Tien war in November 1771 is described in considerable detail in a daily record of the campaign kept by the Siamese (FAD 1969b). Thai sources mention two commanders who attacked Banteay Meas (Ha Tien): Phraya Chakkri and Phraya Thip Kosa.⁵² Phraya Phiphit's name appears in this version, in the context of his bringing a daughter of Phraya Ratcha Setthi to Taksin. Taksin appointed Phraya Phiphit, the acting Kosa, to the position of Phraya Ratcha Setthi.

According to the GDTC, in the eighth month of the year *tan mao* (September/October 1771):

On the fifteenth day [23 September 1771], the fleet of Ton Duc Hau [Mac Thien Tu] arrived at Chau Duc Dao and encountered the army of the *chieu khoa* [Thai *chao khun*?] Lien [Tran Lien] following them. Ton Duc Hau ordered the *cai doi* Sa [Malay general] to intercept them, but he was defeated.

...Sa retreated to Tien Giang Tan Chau Dao [Cu Lao Gieng in Tien Giang], where he met the royal [Vietnamese] army led by Kinh Chan Hau ... sailing on the sea. They entered the Chau Doc Giang [Chau Doc River] and killed the *giac binh* [bandit soldiers, meaning the Siamese army]. The Xiem [Siamese] soldiers had little knowledge of the route and were forced onto the river bank. The Vietnamese army chased them and killed more than 300. Trieu Khoa Lien [*chao khun* (?) Lien] abandoned his ship, landed on the bank and then hastened away to Ha Tien by way of the route to Chan Sam. The Vietnamese army captured five *Xiem dap* [Siamese battleships] and their weapons.

...Part of the Vietnamese forces were left to hold Chau Doc, and the army retreated to Tan Chau [Kulao Gieng] to comfort Ton Duc Hau [Mac Thien Tu]. They sent ships to escort Ton Duc Hau to Long Ho Doanh [Vinh Long]. He stayed there.

According to the MTGP:

At that time, the local officials of Chau Doc were not yet prepared to guard their town. When the Siamese ships invaded there, they were too agitated to resist. More than six or seven hundred families in Chau Doc were killed. The division of Dong Khau Dao [Kulao Gieng in the Mekong River] was informed and then marched to Chau Doc to attack the enemy. The enemy ships lost their way and strayed into dangerous points. Dong Khau soldiers attacked and killed them. They abandoned their ships and landed on the river bank to run away. The Quang Nam army followed and massacred them. Then they gibbeted the dead bodies. The rear [Siamese] column was informed that their vanguard had failed and thus did not march out from Ha Tien.

After the fall of Ha Tien, Mac Thien Tu fled to Chau Doc along the present Vinh Te River (the Banteay River), where he met the Quang Nam army. Tran Lien's fleet followed him and sacked Chau Doc. But the Vietnamese Mekong Division arrived at Chau Doc and defeated the Siamese navy. Thus Mac Thien Tu lost his independence and came under the

protection of the Quang Nam army.

According to the Cambodian chronicles, Mac Thien Tu and Okña Reacea Sethei Phuv (the Cambodian governor of Peam) fled to Tuk Khmau (Ca Mau Province, on the right bank of the Bassac). But Vietnamese materials indicate that Mac Thien Tu fled to Chau Doc and met the Vietnamese army there. The Vietnamese forces defeated the Siamese army commanded by Lien. Then Mac Thien Tu moved to Kulao Gieng on the Mekong River. Subsequently, he moved to Can Tho. Tuk Khmau in that period was not the present-day Ca Mau Province but the area along the Bassac, including present-day Can Tho and Long Xuyen. Mac Thien Tu's base of operations thus changed from the coastal region to the inland Bassac region.

Neither the Vietnamese nor the Thai records mentions Okña Reacea Sethei Phuv as a person different from Mac Thien Tu. Probably Mac Thien Tu, representing himself as the ruler of Ha Tien territory, concealed from the Quang Nam court the existence of the Khmer governor, Okña Reacea Sethei Phuv.

Taksin's March to Udong

After capturing Ha Tien, Taksin deployed his occupying forces. According to the GDTC:

Phi Nha Tan [Taksin] left the *chieu khoa* Lien to hold Ha Tien and he returned to Cao Man [Cambodia] with his forces.

According to the MTGP:

Trinh Tan [Taksin] left his subject, Tran Lien, to defend Ha Tien and marched to Cao Man [Cambodia] with 60,000 soldiers. [Cambodia's king] Ton and his followers went into exile. Trinh Tan arrested Ong Non and his son but did not kill them. He was stationed at Nam Vang [Phnom Penh] with the aim of conquering Gia Dinh.

According to the VJ (p. 608):

After the victory [at Ha Tien], King Tak set up his base camp in the fort of the Khmer, appointed Poñea Pipit as Okña Reacea Sethei and stationed him at *khaet* Peam and *khaet* Banteay Meas.

Tran Lien was appointed magistrate in Ha Tian, with the Thai title Phraya Ratcha Setthi (Reacea Sethei in Khmer), which was the title of the former Khmer governor of *khaet* Peam before the fall of Ha Tien. At this juncture, therefore, a Teochiu-Siamese governor controlled the Chinese town of Ha Tien and the Cambodian prefecture of Banteay Meas.

The presence of Ang Non, who accompanied Taksin from Thonburi, was unknown in Ha Tien. Thus the MTGP recorded that Taksin captured him in Udong. This error means that the succession war in Cambodia between 1770 and 1772 was regarded, from the viewpoint of Ha Tien, as a struggle between Siam and Ha Tien, or more precisely as a struggle between the Teochiu Chinese on the Siam side and the Cantonese of Ha Tien on the Quang Nam side.

The Fall of Udong

The following passages describe events at the time of Taksin's capture of the Cambodian capital. According to the BK:

When it [the fall of Ha Tien] became known to the [Cambodian] king, he hastened away from Kampong Luong⁵³ by boat. After occupying *srok* Peam [Ha Tien], Poñea Tak [Taksin] and Neak Ang Non Cea Somdec Preah Ream [Ang Non] conquered *srok* Phnom Penh and sacked the Tonle Crap Cheam. A division of the Siamese army pursued the Cambodian royal family to Peam Bañcho,⁵⁴ where they fought with the army of Okña Yomareac Tol.

According to the VJ (pp. 610–1):

Afterwards, King Tak marched to Koh Sla Ket and *khaet* Phnom Penh, while subjugating several *khaet* along the Tonle [the Bassac River]. Preah Bat Somdec Preah Nreay Reacea [Ang Ton]—who knew that the Siamese

army had invaded Cambodia by sea and by land, and that Preah Sotoat [Mac Thien Tu] and Okña Reacea Sethei had been defeated [in Banteay Meas]—escaped along the waterway [from Udong] to *khaet* Ba Phnom and then fled through *srok* Trolong Khaos to *srok* Ba Rea Dong Nay [Baria, present-day Chau Thanh],⁵⁵ where he asked for the support of the Vietnamese king. The king sent a minister to welcome him and prepared a house for him to stay in. The Siamese army provided support for Preah Ang Non Preah Ream [Ang Non] to enter the palace in Udong.

According to the GDTC:

The king of Cao Man [Cambodia], Nac Ong Ton, sought refuge in Bat Long Khuyen Long Khuat.⁵⁶ Phi Nha Tan [Taksin] gave the throne to Nac Ong Non. The Xiem [Siamese] army occupied Nam Vang *phu* [Phnom Penh], seeking a chance to invade Gia Dinh.

After the fall of Ha Tien, Taksin and Ang Non proceeded along the Bassac River and occupied Phnom Penh. Ang Ton fled from Udong to *srok* Trolong Khaos and then moved to Baria, seeking Vietnamese protection. Ang Non entered the Udong palace and ascended the throne. Meanwhile, Okña Yomareac Tol (Okña Yomareac Toy in the VJ), together with the family of Ang Ton, resisted the Siamese army in the Prey Veng region, to the east of Phnom Penh.

Ang Ton asked the Quang Nam king for help. But the VJ says he asked for help from “Gia Long.” The future emperor, Gia Long (Nguyen Phuoc Anh), was born in 1762, so he was only nine years old at the time of Taksin’s invasion of Cambodia. Probably the editor of the Cambodian chronicles mistook the name of Due Ton, who was the Quang Nam king at that time, for the famous Gia Long.

Counter-offensive by the Vietnamese Army in 1772

Vietnamese and Cambodian source provide considerable detail concerning the preparations for the counter-offensive against the invading Siamese forces. According to the GDTC (vol. 5), in the twelfth month of the

year *tan mau* (January 1772):

[The Quang Nam king] supplied money and food to Mac Thien Tu and ordered *dieu khien* [mandarins] to escort him to Tran Giang Dao.⁵⁷ Mac Thien Tu based himself there and gathered scattered people to prepare to counter-attack the enemy.

According to the MTGP:

[The Quang Nam king] ordered the mandarins of *ngo doanh* [five regiments] to give 3,000 people of Gia Dinh and 3,000 guns to Cong and permitted Cong to prepare to take revenge by himself. Cong moved to Tran Giang and stayed there. People who had poured out of Ha Tien [during the conflict] gathered there.

According to the GDTC (vol. 5), in the sixth month of the year *nham thin* (July 1772):

Dieu Khien Quan [mandarins in Saigon] prepared to make expenditures. Dam On Hau [Nguyen Cuu Dam] marched along the Tien Giang [the Mekong River] route and Long Ho Doanh Cai Bo Hien Chuong Hau Nguyen Khoa Toan sailed from Kien Giang [Rach Gia] with Dong Khau [Sadec] soldiers. The *luu thu* Kinh Thin Hau went to Chau Doc along the Hau Giang [Bassac River] route.

Unfortunately, Nhan Tinh Hau [Dong Khau Dao Cai Doi Nguyen Huu Nhan] suffered from a serious illness, so Hien Chuong Hau alone fought the Xiem [Siamese] army with 1,000 soldiers and 50 ships. He was defeated and evacuated to Kien Giang [Can Tho].

Dam On Hau appointed a Cambodian, Nhan Rach [Okña Yomareac Tol], to be in the vanguard of the attack on Nam Vang [Phnom Penh]. They defeated the Xiem army and killed very many soldiers. Phi Nha Tan [Taksin] fled down to Ha Tien. Nac Ong Non fled to Kampot. The Vietnamese army occupied Cambodian cities such as Nam Vang and

La Biec [Longvek]. Nac Ong Ton ascended his throne again. Cao Man [Cambodia] was completely pacified.

According to the MTGP:

Cong [Mac Thien Tu] went to Gia Dinh to meet the mandarins of the Ngo Doanh. Then he reported to the throne [of Quang Nam] to request punishment for himself. But in that year, Nhac's brothers in Qui Nhon began a revolt against the Quang Nam court [the Tay Son insurrection, led by Nguyen Van Nhac], and transportation was therefore very difficult. Ngo Truong Nam Vanh [officer] Huan carried his letter to the capital [Hué].

The king ordered Doc Chien Dam Luan Hau and Tham Tan Hieu Hanh Hau to command the fleets in Binh Hoa and Binh Thuan and take more than 100 battleships to Gia Dinh. ...They mobilized more than 100,000 soldiers of two prefectures and five armies to recapture Ha Tien. Then the two commanders marched to Cambodia and attacked Trinh Tan and totally defeated him. Many Siamese soldiers were wounded and killed. Trinh Tan fled to Ha Tien.

According to the BK:

Sdec Tepda Yuon [the Vietnamese king] Yalong [sic, Gia Long] sent reinforcements to Okña Yomareac Tol. They defeated the Siamese army. Neak Ang Non Cea Somdec Preah Ream [Ang Non] retreated to Kampot with 500 Siamese soldiers and based himself there. Somdec Preah Ream gathered *pol* [soldiers] in *khaet* Treang and Banteay Meas and then led them to Peam Roka,⁵⁸ where they fought the army of Okña Yomareac Tol.

According to the VJ (p. 612):

Cau Krong Anam Sdec [the king of Annam] Yalong [Gia Long] dispatched a force of 10,000 soldiers to support Okña Yomareac Toy and defeated Poñea Cakrei [Phraya Chakkri] at Peam Pañca Peas [in Prey Veng]. At

that time, King Tak was based at Phnom Penh, had captured more than 20,000 Cambodians and had sent them to Krong Thon Borei [Thonburi]. After that, he ordered Preah Ang Non Preah Ream [Ang Non] to rule Krong Kampucea Thipadei [Cambodia] and stay in Udong, guarded by Poñea Cakrei Duon. Poñea Kosa Thipadei occupied *khaet* Kampong Som and Kampot, which a minister of Siam was defending.

The Quang Nam⁵⁹ forces began the counter-offensive against the Siamese army in July 1772. They marched to Cambodia along three routes: the first along the Mekong, the second by sea, and the third along the Bassac to the Chau Doc River. The third division had to retreat because of the commander's ill health. The second division was defeated by the Siamese army and had to evacuate to Rach Gia, probably by crossing Ha Tien Bay. Only the first division, which went along the Mekong and was joined by the forces of Okña Yomareac Toy [Nhan Lich],⁶⁰ was successful, defeating Phraya Chakkri in the Prey Veng region and occupying Phnom Penh. Taksin retreated from Udong to Ha Tien along either the Bassac or the Chau Doc River, which is an old canal flowing parallel to the Bassac.

Cambodia had become divided into four military commands. First, the western region, including Posat (Pursat), was under the Siamese army commanded by Phraya Chakkri. Second, the southern region, including Kampot, Kampong Som and Udong, was under Ang Non and his followers. Third, the southeastern region was under the influence of the Teochiu Chinese leader, Tran Lien, along the Bassac or Chau Doc River, and had its center at Banteay Meas. And fourth, the eastern region along the Mekong, including Prey Veng, was under the control of the Vietnamese army, supported by Ang Ton and his followers. The second, third and fourth of these forces confronted each other in the Kandar region.

Taksin's Return to Thonburi

Subsequent troop movements, defensive measures and Taksin's departure for Thonburi are described in several sources. According to the GDTC:

Phi Nha Tan [Taksin] returned to Ha Tien and sent a letter to Ton Duc Hau [Mac Thien Tu], but he [Mac] did not reply. Phi Nha Tan then reasoned [as follows]: that although he was gaining control of Xiem [Siam], his rule was not stable; that he had failed to expand outside [of Siam]; that if he continued the expansion policy, he would have to spend much time; and that he was very fearful of some conspiracy to steal power from him in Xiem, which would prevent him from returning home. He thus left the *chieu khoa* Lien to hold Ha Tien and returned to Siam by *dap* [battleship] with his main force, the captive Mac family and Chieu Chuy [Prince Chui]. The last-named was killed in Siam. In the eighth month [end of August or September 1772], he arrived at Vong Cac [Bangkok, meaning the Thonburi capital].

According to the MTGP:

Then he [Taksin] sent a Ha Tien subordinate official, who had previously been taken prisoner, to Cong [Mac Thien Tu] to negotiate for peace. Cong refused. Tan [Taksin] thought that, if the expedition to a distant land failed, an insurrection might take place at home. He stationed Tran Lien in Ha Tien and then hurried to return to his country by *dap* [Siamese battleship].

According to the VJ (p. 612):

King Tak [Taksin] retreated along the Tonle Moat Cruk [the Chau Doc River] to *khaet* Peam Banteay Meas and then returned to Krong Thon Borei Srei Ayuthya [Thonburi].

According to the VJ (p. 612):

After King Tak retreated, Preah Sotoat [Mac Thien Tu] and Okña Reacea Sethei marched to *khaet* Banteay Meas from *srok* Tuk Khmau and defeated the Siamese army. The Siamese ministers and the commander in charge of the defense of Banteay Meas retreated to *khaet* Kampot, where they gathered soldiers and succeeded in recapturing *khaet*

Banteay Meas. Preah Sotoat and Okña Reacea Sethei retreated to *srok* Tuk Khmau again.

According to the VJ (pp. 617–8):

At that time Preah Ang Non Preah Ream [Ang Non] was staying at Udong. He knew the difficulty of defending Udong without King Tak, so he retreated to *khaet* Kampot and Kampong Som. From there, he governed the people in *khaet* Bati, Kong Pisei, Phnom Sruoc, Treang, Banteay Meas, Peam, Kampot, Kampong Som and Thpong.

After returning to Ha Tien, Taksin tried to negotiate with Mac Thien Tu, but Mac Thien Tu refused to negotiate, probably at the suggestion of the Quang Nam side. Taksin sailed back to Thonburi with the people he held captive: the Ayutthayan Prince Chui, the former governor of Chanthaburi (de Fels 1976 i: 113), who had fled to Ha Tien in 1767, and Mac Thien Tu's family. Ang Non retreated from Udong and went to the Kampot and Kampong Som region.

Peace between the Two Cambodian Kings

While the opposing forces were still confronting each other, political negotiations began. According to the BK:

Preah Nreay Reacea Thireac [King Utey Reacea (Ang Ton)] in Bot Ancean Trolong Khos moved to Prek Moat Kondor [Kandar]. Sdec Tepda [the Quang Nam king] ordered Dong Doy Cin Cea Bao Ho⁶¹ to guard Preah Nreay Reacea Thireac.

According to the VJ (p. 620):

During the war, Preah Utey Reacea returned to Cambodia but stayed at Prek Moat Kondor, because Udong was near the battlefield. In 1772, the king moved to *phum* Khleang Sbaek and sent a mission to the Siamese commander in Roka in *khaet* Kandar. They retreated to *khaet* Kampot

and took the Cambodian mission to Krong Srei Ayuthya [Thonburi]. Preah Tak [King Taksin] was pleased to welcome them and sent them back to Cambodia with many gifts. Ang Ton sent a second mission to Thonburi to conclude a peace treaty in 1773.

Then the king met two *ong* Yuon [Vietnamese generals] at the Mekong to ask them to retreat to Vietnam. The two Vietnamese generals took their leave of the king and evacuated to Vietnam with their soldiers by boat.

After the peace, Preah Ang Non Preah Ream [Ang Non] continued to rule *khaet* Treang, Banteay Meas, Peam, Kampot, Kampong Som and Thpong. The people of those regions did not obey the *preah reac acña* [royal commands of Ang Ton]....

Both sources show that the war between the Siamese and Vietnamese continued into 1772 and that they were confronting each other at Roka in the Kandar region. Ang Ton started peace negotiations with the Siamese commander, who was in Roka. Also, he sent a mission to Thonburi in 1772. After Taksin agreed that his army would retreat from Cambodia, the Vietnamese army evacuated the area in 1773. Meanwhile, in the coastal area of Kampot and Kampong Som, Ang Non retained his influence and ruled there. According to the VJ, Ang Ton abdicated and gave the throne to Ang Non in 1775. Ang Ton then became Moha Uphayoreac, or “second king.”

The DNLS (vol. 32) states that Ang Ton was restored to the throne and then he abdicated in favor of his younger brother (called Nac Vinh in the Vietnamese records), for the sake of peace in his country. Then Ton became the “second king.” His second brother, Tham, became the “third king.” Probably the Vietnamese did not know that Non, who had been a principal adversary of Vietnam during the war, was the new monarch but ruling under the name Vinh.

According to the DNLS, King Vinh took advantage of the Tay Son insurrection in Vietnam, which began in the 1770s, and stopped sending tribute to the Quang Nam kingdom. This measure, as well as the change from the pro-Vietnamese king, Ang Ton, to the pro-Siamese king, Ang Non (also known as Vinh), can be attributed to the decline of the Quang Nam kingdom

(Khin Sok 1991: 39).

Tran Lien's Retreat from Ha Tien

The Siamese forces under Tran Lien's command remained in control of Ha Tien, while further negotiations were taking place. According to the DTTB (vol. 11), in the second month of the year *quy ty* (February/March 1773):

The king [of Quang Nam] ordered Mac Thien Tu to send a mission to Xiem [Siam] to negotiate peace between the two countries. But its main purpose was to investigate the real situation in Xiem. Mac Thien Tu sent a *xanhan* [follower], Mac Tu, to Xiem with his letter and gifts. Trinh Quoc Anh [Taksin] was very pleased to receive his mission, and so he released Mac Thien Tu's family captured in Ha Tien and sent them back home. Furthermore, Taksin recalled Tran Lien from Ha Tien.

According to the MTGP:

In the thirty-second year of Canh Hung, the year *quy ty* [1773], [the Quang Nam king] ordered Cong [Mac Thien Tu] to send a mission to Xiem, with the ostensible aim of negotiating for peace, but at the same time its main aim was to observe their real situation secretly. Cong ordered his *xanhan* [follower] Trinh Tu to carry his letter and presents to Xiem and to conclude a peace.

Tan [Taksin] was pleased to tell [the following to Tu:] that heaven had wanted to punish his master [Mac Thien Tu] because he had enjoyed wealth and peace for a long time; that Taksin had defeated him; that he [Mac Thien Tu] then regretted his past fault; and that Taksin therefore pitied and forgave him.

Taksin ordered his royal secretary to record his response [to Mac Thien Tu] and released the fourth wife and a four-year-old daughter of Mac Thien Tu as a mark of favor. He told Tu to report his real pity for Mac Thien Tu when Tu returned to his home country.

...He ordered Tran Lien to retreat from Ha Tien and give Ha Tien back to Mac Thien Tu.... In that year, Prince Tu Hoang entered Ha Tien to rule it. Tran Lien dissolved his army and retreated to Xiem.

According to the GDTC (vol. 5), in the second month of the year *quy ty* (February/March 1773):

Ton Duc Hau [Mac Thien Tu] in Tran Giang [Can Tho] sent a mission to Xiem, aiming to investigate the situation of Xiem in secret, and at the same time they negotiated to make peace with Phi Nha Tan [Taksin]. [Taksin] agreed to their proposal. Then he sent the fourth wife and a daughter [of Mac Thien Tu, captured in Ha Tien] back to Ha Tien to show his good faith. He also called the *chieu khoa* Lien back to Xiem.

But at that time Xiem soldiers had completely destroyed the fort of Ha Tien and plundered the treasures. The people of Ha Tien had scattered. Ha Tien seemed like a wild land. Ton Duc Hau [Mac Thien Tu] had to stay at Tran Giang [Can Tho] and sent Mac Tu Hoang to Ha Tien to put things in order.

Although Tran Lien retreated, Mac Thien Tu never went back to Ha Tien. During the 1770s, the Gulf trade declined rapidly because of the confused situation in all three countries: Vietnam, Siam and Cambodia. According to statistics in the *Phu Bien Tap Loc* (vol. 4)⁶² for the port of Hoi An, which was south of the city of Hué, sixteen ships from Siam arrived in 1771, and the amount of tax collected from them was 38,000 *ligatures* (a Vietnamese monetary unit). In 1772 twelve ships paid 14,300 *ligatures*, and in 1773 the number shrank to eight ships, which paid a mere 3,200 *ligatures*.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the historical role of Ha Tien, as an emporium for trade between the South China Sea and the Gulf, had disappeared completely. Probably Mac Thien Tu tried to change his polity from one based on transit trade to a port based on exports. (Saigon, My Tho and Can Tho, for example, were to develop dramatically as centers of paddy exports to China, based on Cantonese commercial activities after

the early nineteenth century.) Can Tho (Tran Giang), where Mac Thien Tu settled after the fall of Ha Tien, was his last capital—not of the “Ha Tien kingdom” but of the “Mac Thien Tu kingdom.” Probably, Ha Tien city was abandoned during this time. Banteay Meas was governed as a local port of the coastal polity under Ang Non, who regained the throne of Cambodia in 1775.

In the early nineteenth century, a Fukienese Chinese sailor, Xie Shi Gao, visited a place he called Ban Di Quoc, or the state of Banteay, and his observations are recorded in the *Hai Lu* as follows:

Ban Di state is situated to the south-southeast of Vietnam; another name for it is Kan Ming. Probably it was Champa in former times. Although the state is very small, it can mediate between two countries: Vietnam and Siam. The complexions of the people are blacker than those of the Vietnamese. The sound of their language is a little bit different from Vietnamese.

From this description, it is very difficult to imagine the prosperous and sophisticated Chinese kingdom that Ha Tien had been. By this time, it seems to have become a semi-independent region of the Khmer people.

John Crawford visited this area in 1823, after finishing his diplomatic and commercial mission to Siam. He reported that there was an important city called Kang Kao or Ha Tien, often written “Athien,” on the right bank of the river Kang Kao and about two miles upstream. It contained 5,000 inhabitants, consisting of Cambodians and southern Vietnamese, with a few Chinese and Malay (Crawford 1967: 458). This is a description of Ha Tien city during the early Minh Mang period, when its official Vietnamese name was Ha Chau *phu*. But in the same paragraph, Crawford mentions another place he called Ponteamas:

...there existed upon this river a town of considerable trade, called by Europeans, Ponteamas, where a considerable foreign trade existed for the supply of the old capital of Kamboja [Cambodia], between fifty and sixty leagues distant, and situated on the great river [the Mekong]. This place has, properly written, Po-tai-mat, is about a day’s journey up

the river, and has never been of any consequence, since destroyed in 1717 by the Siamese, in an attempt made by them, at that period, to conquer Kamboja.

Crawfurd was mistaken on two points. First, he confused *phum* Banteay Meas with old Ponteamas (Po-tai-mat, Phutthai Mat or Ha Tien). Second, he mistook the Siamese invasion of 1717, reported by Hamilton, for the one in 1771. His misunderstanding underlines the fact that Ha Tien—the international Chinese port known also as Phutthai Mat or Ponteamas—had long since disappeared before Crawfurd visited this region.

Epilogue: After the Fall of Ha Tien and Death of Mac Thien Tu

It is well known that the Tay Son revolt started in central Vietnam in 1771, while the Quang Nam army was fighting with Taksin in the Mekong delta. In 1773 the rebels occupied Qui Nhon, and in 1775 the Trinh army from northern Vietnam sacked Hué the capital of the Quang Nam kingdom. Due Ton (the king of Quang Nam) and the royal family fled to Gia Dinh by sea and then stayed at Ben Nguu.

Mac Thien Tu and his sons visited Ben Nguu to meet the king at his temporary palace. The king was pleased to receive him and awarded the following titles: (1) Do Doc Quan Cong to Mac Thien Tu, (2) Chuong Ky to Hoang, (3) Thang Thuy Cai Ky to Thuong and (4) Tham Thuong Cai Ky to Dien. Then he instructed them to return to Tran Giang (Can Tho) and defend it. These official titles had been used for local officials in Ha Tien Tran for a long time. This means that King Due Ton recognized the members of the Mac family only as Quang Nam mandarins. The king underestimated the military strength of Mac Thien Tu after the fall of Ha Tien, so he did not expect to rely on Mac Thien Tu. The Mac family must have felt isolated among the Quang Nam mandarins, and therefore they returned to Can Tho.

In the eleventh month of the year *binh than* (December 1776 or January 1777), King Due Ton abdicated in favor of the crown prince, Tan Chinh Vuong (literally, the “Renovation King”). In the fourth month of the year *dinh dau* (May or early June 1777), Nguyen Van Hue, the second of the Tay Son brothers, attacked Gia Dinh. The new king fought the Tay Son

forces in Dinh Tuong Province and was killed in the eighth month (September 1777). Meanwhile, the ex-king escaped to Can Tho in the fourth month, where he joined the army of Mac Thien Tu. Mac Thien Tu then ordered his son, Tham Tuong Dien, to take his soldiers, march to Dong Khau Dao (Sadec) and mobilize soldiers of any divisions who were loyal to the king, for an attack on the Tay Son army. But the Tay Son forces defeated Dien. Immediately after he returned to Tran Giang, the Tay Son army attacked him there.

Mac Thien Tu advised the ex-king to move to Kien Giang (Rach Gia) along the Can Tho River, because Tran Giang was not an unassailable position for resisting the enemy. In the autumn of the year *dinh dau* (1777), Mac Thien Tu escorted the king to Rach Gia, and then his son Dien cut large trees and let them fall into the river, to block the waterway. The king was so anxious that he summoned Mac Thien Tu and asked him how to restore the kingdom, considering that the enemy's power was increasing. Mac Thien Tu advised him to summon an ocean-going ship (*duong tang*) that belonged to one of his followers, Quach An, which could take the king to Guangdong Province in China, to ask for the support of the Chinese emperor. The king agreed to follow this advice.

Mac Thien Tu sent his follower, Ngo Nhung Ky Khoan, to escort the king to Long Xuyen. (This place was not present-day Long Xuyen city but present-day Ca Mau city.) Mac Thien Tu then waited for Quach An's ship at the port of Kien Giang (Rach Gia). But in the ninth month of the year *dinh dau* (October 1777), Nguyen Van Hue ordered an attack on Long Xuyen (Ca Mau) by Chuong Ky Thanh, who captured the ex-king, took him to Gia Dinh and killed him.

After the fall of Long Xuyen (Ca Mau), the Tay Son sent a mission to Mac Thien Tu and asked him to surrender. Mac Thien Tu refused and fled to Phu Quoc Dao, where he heard that the Tay Son had taken the ex-king to Gia Dinh. The records say he attempted to go into exile to Dong The Chau Phu in Xa Ba (the Malay-speaking world). At that time, King Taksin (Trinh Quoc Anh in the Vietnamese texts) sent four ships to invite him to Siam. Mac Thien Tu was so fearful of Taksin's anger, if he refused, that he fled to Chanthaburi and then to Thonburi in the twelfth month (at the end of December 1777 or in January 1778).

In the sixth month of the year *canh tý* (July 1780), Nguyen Phuoc Anh (a surviving prince of the Quang Nam royal family and the future Emperor Gia Long) sent his followers to Siam to establish friendly relations. While they were visiting Thonburi, a merchant ship belonging to Taksin sent a message that it had been plundered by some Vietnamese when it passed through Ha Tien waters. Taksin became so angry that he arrested the Vietnamese messengers and put them in prison. At that time, one of Taksin's Khmer subjects, Pho Ong Giao, came back from Cambodia and reported that he got a secret letter from Nguyen Phuoc Anh to order Prince Tong That Xuan (who was staying in Thonburi with Mac Thien Tu) to betray Taksin and to occupy the Thonburi fort.

On the fifth day of the tenth month (1 November 1780), Taksin arrested Mac Thien Tu and his family. Mac Thien Tu committed suicide. On the twenty-fourth day (20 November), fifty-three people were executed, including Prince Xuan, the envoys of Nguyen Phuoc Anh and Mac Thien Tu's sons and grandsons. But Tu Sinh, Tu Tuan and Tu Diem, along with Cong Binh, Cong Du and Cong Tai—who were sons of Tu Hoang and Cong Tai, respectively—were so young that a Siamese minister, the Kalahom (Kha La Ham in the Vietnamese records), took pity on them. They were thus sent to a distant place on the periphery of the kingdom.⁶³

In the year *nham dan* (1782), a retainer (called Mien San in the Vietnamese records) killed King Taksin. General Chakkri (called Trat Tri in Vietnamese records) ascended the throne as the Phat Vuong (literally, the “Buddha King”). He summoned Tu Sinh and the others back to Thonburi and made provisions to care for them.

According to the DNLS (vol. 6), some descendants of Mac Thien Tu became followers of the future Emperor Gia Long, while he was staying in Siam (1783/4 to 1787), and accompanied him on his return to Vietnam. In 1787, Gia Long appointed his son Tu Sinh to be acting governor (*luu thu*) of Ha Tien, but Tu Sinh died in 1788.⁶⁴ Cong Binh, a son of Tu Hoang and a grandson of Mac Thien Tu, became *luu thu* of Long Xuyen. After Cong Binh died, Mac Thien Tu's son, Mac Tu Diem, became *luu thu* of Ha Tien. In 1808, after Tu Diem went to Siam, his son, Cong Du, took his place and status. Cong Du was promoted to be governor (*hiep tran*) of Ha Tien in 1816 and governor-general (*tran thu*) in 1818. His younger brother, Cong Tai,

became Ha Tien Thu Quan Thu in 1830.

When Le Van Khoi rebelled against Emperor Minh Mang in 1833, Cong Du, Cong Tai and their followers supported him. Ultimately, Minh Mang arrested all of them. Cong Du and Cong Tai died in prison. One of Cong Tai's sons went to Siam, and another son disappeared in a mountainous area of Nghe An.

The Mac family did not manage to survive in the nineteenth century. Ha Tien and Mac Thien Tu's accomplishments there were finished by the time of Minh Mang, who unified the three parts of Vietnam and established the pre-modern centralized state called Dai Nam (literally, the "Great South"). In the new political order, Ha Tien was only a small province. Moreover, in the commercial order of the new century, Singapore was established as a major center for Chinese trade.

Conclusions

The period of florescence of Chinese port-polities in the region of the South China Sea in the eighteenth century can be regarded as a stage in the post-"Age of Commerce," which can be characterized as follows. (1) It belongs to a late stage of early modern administration of long-distance trade, based on the relationship between the Chinese tribute system and Southeast Asian statecraft. (2) The market in China for the main goods produced in mainland Southeast Asia was limited. (3) Shipping and capital, as well as market control, were monopolized by Chinese maritime merchants in this system. These three factors stimulated the establishment of the Chinese port polities in Southeast Asia, such as Pontianak, Songkhla and Ha Tien. The autonomy of the rulers of these Chinese polities was recognized by local kingdoms, in the sense of being governors-general of their respective port cities, exercising full independence and sending nominal tribute.

In the case of the Ha Tien kingdom, however, as shown in local records such as the Cambodian chronicles, the Cang Khau (Ha Tien) king was never appointed governor-general by the Cambodian sovereign. The local Khmer administrators regarded Ha Tien as a Chinese settlement, whose leader, Mac Thien Tu, was known to them by a Khmer title: Preah Sotoat. Though he was an influential person, he was a completely different person from the local

governor of the port city of Banteay Meas (Peam Banteay Meas), whose title was Okña Reacea Sethei.

In the neighboring countries, by contrast, Mac Thien Tu was called a “Regional Commander” and “Governor-General” of “Ha Tien Division” by the Vietnamese and was known as “Phraya Ratcha Setthi,” the “Governor of Phutthai Mat” by the Siamese. Neither of these neighbors was aware of the existence of the local Cambodian official, Okña Reacea Sethei. The Ha Tien government thus had two faces: one for the Khmer people and another for the Chinese, as well as two faces for internal and external affairs. This can be termed a dual political structure.

After the fall of Ayutthaya, because of the confused situation in the kingdoms along these coastlines, the port polities were able to assert greater independence and expand their territories. The progress of this trend was halted by the two big states that emerged at the end of eighteenth century as the result of state consolidation: the Siam of Thonburi and Bangkok, and the Vietnam of the Tay Son and Nguyen rulers. International trade in this period came under the control of the state in the form of royal monopolies. The history of Ha Tien should be regarded as a typical case of the rise and fall of Chinese port polities between the post- “Age of Commerce” and the pre-colonial stage of history.

Notes

- 1 The fifth chapter of the *Phu Bien Tap Loc* states that an official message written by *Chieu Phi Nha Khu Sa* (Thai title Chao Phraya Kosa) and sent to Hué in 1755 proposed friendship between Quang Nam and Siam, partly for the purpose of protecting Siamese ships proceeding homeward from China across the South China Sea. But the Vietnamese refused the request, deeming it unnecessary to develop diplomatic relations.
2. Kitagawa is preparing a paper on the confrontation between the Mekong and the Tonlesap powers.
3. The Khmer term *cauway srok* was usually translated as “governor” during the French colonial period (Kitagawa 1994: 54, n. 21).
4. *Hupoan* (also romanized *haupean*) means one thousand, which was used

as the indicator of relative status in official titles in the post-Angkor period. The highest official had a title with ten *hupoan*, whereas the lowest status was one *hupoan* (Kitagawa 1994: 48–9 and the KS, pp. 25–7, art.108–14). Even in the nineteenth century, the governor of Kampot played a minor role in the commercial sector. A Chinese lieutenant governor, *Sinky*, with the title Bandar Thaom, managed trading affairs, and a Malay merchant, Tuanku Tay, managed the shipment of royal trading cargoes to Singapore as supercargo.

5. According to Moura (1833 ii: 183), in 1621 the Siamese general Phraya Thai Nam occupied Pontey Meas (the French spelling) with 20,000 soldiers. This action shows that Pontey Meas was a very important and strategic port for entering Cambodia from the sea in the post-Angkor period.
6. The place name Ha Tien is preserved in the names of the province and provincial center in South Vietnam, in the northwest corner of the Mekong delta along the seacoast, abutting on Cambodia's Kampot District. The Ha Tien kingdom centered at present-day Ha Tien city. The city stands at the foot of a small hill called Loc Tri, on the west bank at the mouth of the Vinh Te Canal, where there are remains of many great graves of the Mac family. The name Ha Tien appeared for the first time in 1711 (in the GDTC, vol. 3): for example, the passage Ha Tien Tong Tran Cuu Ngoc Hau Mac Cuu, meaning "Mac Cuu, Governor-General of Ha Tien and Duke of Cuu Ngoc." Ha Tien must be a Chinese style eulogistic name for Banteay.
7. Aubaret (1893) translated most of this information into French.
8. A *khaet* is an administrative unit in traditional Cambodia. The term was translated as "province" during the French period.
9. The term *Xa Ba* may have been borrowed from *Cvea* in Cambodian, meaning Malay Muslim people.
10. *Cauvay srok* is the Cambodian term for the governor of a *khaet* or *srok* in the post-Angkor period.
11. Kampong Som (Sihanouk Ville) is the most important seaport in present-day Cambodia. Since the 1960s, it has had direct communications with Phnom Penh by a highway, built with American aid.
12. The Vinh Te Canal connected the Giang Thanh (Banteay River) with

Chau Doc. According to *Dai Nam Nhat Thong Chi* (1973), a geography of Viet Nam, it was constructed late in the reign of Gia Long. Crawford reported on the construction of the canal. But the Vietnamese name Vinh Te could be borrowed from the Khmer word *Banteay*, so this canal was the renovation of the natural river (mentioned by Hamilton) that connected the Bassac and Banteay Meas.

13. Leclère (1914: 373) and Fujiwara (1986: 231). Chen Chingho identified it as Koh Ream, a small island near Kampong Som (HMGP, p. 84). According to the *Dai Nam Nhat Tong Chi* (1973: 14a), the Lung Co River is in Ha Chau Huyen (Ha Tien). Probably Lung Co is near Mount Srei Ambel in Ha Tien.
14. According to Phan Khoang (1970: 445), Phung Tham could be Vung Thom, the Vietnamese name of Kampong Som.
15. Chen Chingho identified Chan Sam as Chen Don, a place name in Trang Province (MTGP, p. 99). According to the *Dai Nam Nhat Tong Chi* (1973: 14b), however, Mount Chan Sam is along the middle segment of the Vinh Te Canal, where Vietnamese, Chinese and Khmer settled to establish a town. There is now a small town named Phum Tnaot Chong Srang along the Cambodian bank of the Vinh Te River, which must be the Chan Sam mentioned in the GDTB.
16. According to the *Dai Nam Nhat Tong Chi* (1973: 9a), Mount Say Mat is 140 *li* to the north of Ha Tien. Probably present-day *phum* Banteay Meas is the Say Mat mentioned in this passage.
17. Chen Chingho identified Linh Quynh or Ninh Quynh (in the MTGP) as a place on the Prek Patasuy, on the left bank of the Giang Thanh. According to the *Dai Nam Nhat Tong Chi* (1973: 9a), Mount Linh Quynh is 120 *li* to the north of Ha Chau (Ha Tien) and is a site where Vietnamese and Khmer settled. The same source (1973: 13b) states that the Giang Thanh has three sources: the second is Mount Linh Quynh, which can be identified as Tuk Meas, the center of Banteay Meas Prefecture. There is a hill near Tuk Meas called Phnum Kuhea Luong, which might be Mount Linh Quynh.
18. The Vietnamese kingdom of Quang Nam encompassed the central part of Vietnam and, from the early seventeenth century to the end of eighteenth century, was ruled by the Nguyen family.

19. According to the DLTB (vol. 4), the name Ha Tien (which literally means the “Wizard’s River”) derives from the legend of a wizard associated with the upper segment of the Banteay Meas River. But probably the name was adapted from the name Ban Teay.
20. Mac Thien Tu, the eldest son of Mac Cuu, was born in Lung Co in 1718.
21. See the description of Kang Khau in *Wen Hsien Tong K’ao* (collection and notes of documents, vol. 297); see the MTGP (p. 97).
22. The Chinese called Ha Tien the “Port Mouth Kingdom” (Cang Khau in Vietnamese), and it was one of the states that sent tribute to China. The name Cang Khau was well known among Westerners as a semi-independent port state which they called Cancao or Cancar. See the MTGP (p. 84).
23. An inscription of 1747 in Angkor Wat states that a ruler of Cambodia left Ayutthaya and arrived at Chanthaburi. See Chandler (1971) and Khin Sok (1977: 225–41).
24. Chen Chingho identified Nac Bon as Thoamma Reacea Saur (King Sor), but there is no evidence. According to *Dai Nam Nhat Tong Chi* (1973: 9a), Mount Say Mat served as a base for Nac Bon. It is at present-day *phum* Banteay Meas.
25. Probably these terms can be identified as *Cam Sai Tran Ninh* and *Bao Ho*. But these titles do not appear in the Vietnamese chronicles.
26. Xoi Lap is identified as Tan Hoa Prefecture, Dinh Tuong Province, during the Nguyen period; see Aubaret (1863: 13). According to Phan Khoang (1970: 443), Tam Bon and Xoi Lap (Tam Don and Loi Lap) are present-day Go Cong and Tan An Districts, respectively. Even now, the mouth of the Vam Co River is called Cua Soi Lap.
27. The Cham were migrating to Chan Lap during that century. A footnote in the GDTC mentions that the old name of Con Man was Chien Thanh (Champa). They should be called Cham, though Aubaret (1893: 13–4) identified them as Moi.
28. According to the DNTB (vol. 10), twelfth year of The Ton, Con Man was the name of an ethnic minority who had settled in Thuan Thanh Tran (present-day Binh Thuan Province).
29. According to Phan Khoang (1970: 442), Kha Tung is present-day Katum, to the north of Tay Ninh.

30. According to Phan Khoang (1970: 442), Binh Thanh is present-day Go Vap, near Saigon, but his identification is not believable.
31. The history of the migrations of the Cham people in Cambodia has hitherto been unstudied. The authors think Quang Nam's policy of resettling the Cham in Cambodian territory was an important factor in this process.
32. Probably, Ha Tien kept a connection with the Land King, who was based in Udong, Longvek and Posat (Pursat).
33. According to the VJ, King Cei Cet died in 1755, and Moha Uphayoreac (the "second king") Ang Tong ascended the throne. The Vietnamese mistakenly recorded that Cei Cet died in 1756 and did not mention Tong. Ang Tong was 65 years old at the time of his accession in 1755. Even in the VJ, his accomplishments are not recorded, and they were probably not reported to Quang Nam. He died in 1757 in Posat (Pursat). Vietnamese reports state that Nac Nguyen (Cei Cet) died in 1757. Probably the Vietnamese confused Cei Cet with Ang Tong.
34. Two questions must be addressed here: first that Ang So died in 1753 (before Nac Nguyen's death in 1755) and second that Nhuan does not appear to be identified with any of the names by which Ang So is known. According to the VJ, King Ang Tong, successor of King Nac Nguyen, died in 1756. As mentioned in footnote 33, the Vietnamese confused Tong with Nguyen. At the same time, they must also have confused Ang Ton with Ang So.
35. According to the KS, the governor of Treang was Okña Pisanulok (an official of 10 *hupoan* status), the governor of Banteay Meas was Cau Poñea Yothea Thireac (7 *hupoan*), the governor of Prey Krabas was Preah Sorin (6 *hupoan*) and the governor of Bati was Poñea Thireac Vongsa (8 *hupoan*).
36. According to the Vietnamese, Okña Uong killed him. Uong can be identified as Srei Anucit Uong (later Somdec Cau Hva Uong), who was a loyal subject of Ang Ton, as shown in the VJ.
37. He presented An Giang (present-day Long Xuyen city), according to the *Dai Nam Nhat Tong Chi* (vol. 15).
38. Generally, the Vietnamese in the seventeenth century had little information about Ayutthaya, except affairs related to Cambodia.

The first part of the chapter on Siam in the *DNLS* (vol. 33) states that

Xiem La [Siam] was called Xich Tho in ancient times. Afterwards, it was divided into two states: namely, Xiem and La Hoc. The soil of Xiem was very poor for cultivating paddy, whereas that of La Hoc was rich and flat, suitable for getting a good harvest of paddy. Xiem had to import rice from La Hoc. The Chinese court in the Sui dynasty [which ruled from 581 to 618] sent a mission to a state called Xich Tho. The name of the king was known as Cu Dam. Xiem also sent tribute missions to the Yuan court many times. After that, La Hoc became stronger and annexed Xiem. For this reason, the new state called itself Xiem La. When it sent a tribute mission to the early Ming court, it received a royal seal with the title “King of Xiem La.” This is the first use of the name “Xiem La.”

During the years of Long Khanh [an era name, referring to 1567–72 during the Ming dynasty], a king of a neighboring state named Dong Man Nguu [literally “Toungoo barbarians”] asked to marry a Xiem La princess. Xiem La refused. Dong Man Nguu invaded Xiem La, defeated its king and took his crown prince to Dong Man Nguu. After that, Xiem La was under the rule of Dong Man Nguu. But its second prince succeeded to his father’s title and added great strength his army to take revenge against the enemy. During the years of Van Lich [1573–1619], Xiem La became stronger, defeated Dong Man Nguu and then invaded Chan Lap [Cambodia]. Chan Lap surrendered. At last he [the king of Xiem La] became head of the barbarian states.

This description is nothing more than an abridgement of the chapter on Siam in the *Ming Xu*, the Chinese history of the Ming dynasty edited in 1735. It is assumed that, up to the end of the eighteenth century, the Quang Nam government took little interest in the political situation of Siam, although the two countries had close economic relations in the form of maritime trade in the early eighteenth century. According to the fifth chapter, an official letter from Trieu Phi Nha Khu Sa (the Thai minister, Chao Phraya Kosa) was sent to Hué in 1755, requesting friendship with the Quang Nam kingdom, for the purpose of protecting

Siamese ships from pirates in the South China Sea, while sailing home from Chinese ports. But the Hué court refused the request, because it saw no reason to develop such interchange.

39. *Dap* in Vietnamese (*ta* or *da* in Chinese) could be identified as a *dhow* or *dow*, an Indian Ocean term designating a ship of western design.
40. *Ton Duc Hau* was a kind of peerage bestowed on Mac Thien Tu by the Quang Nam court in 1731 (GDTC).
41. According to information provided by Kennon Breazeale, Chao Chui is mentioned as a son of Somdet Chao Fa Aphai in Thai records.
42. MTGP (p. 100). Jacques-Nicholas Morvan's 1771 letter to the director of the Paris Seminary, cited in Maitre (1913: 168–9).
43. Mount Bach Ma is mentioned in the *Dai Nam Nhat Tong Chi* (vol. 16) as being 20 *li* to the west of Ha Tien city. Its Cambodian name is unknown.
44. The following biographical notes about King Taksin are recorded in the GDTC (vol. 5), in the year *mau tu* (1768):

Trinh Quoc Anh was originally from Trieu Chau Phu in Quang Dong Tinh and was called Phi Nha Tan [Pi Ya Hsin in Chinese, or Phraya Sin]. He accompanied his father, Yen, from China to Xiem [Siam] and succeeded to his father's status to become governor of Vong Sat, which is the name of a place in Xiem. Another name [for him] was Phi Nha [a mandarin's title] Sat.

When there was no master in Xiem [after the fall of Ayutthaya] and many robbers rose up, Xiem was in great confusion. He rose up to unify the country. Then, he called himself the King of Xiem and requested tribute of gold and silver flowers from Chan Lap [Cambodia]. The [Cambodian] king, Nac Ton, refused to send tribute to Phi Nha, because he was not a legitimate successor of the Xiem king.

This Vietnamese version of Phraya Taksin's background is quite peculiar. According to Chinese information about Taksin, his Chinese name was not Trinh Quoc Anh but Cheng Chao (Trinh Chieu in Vietnamese). His father's name was not Yen but Cheng Yung (Trinh

Dung in Vietnamese) or Jia, and his father was born in Huaifu village, Cheng Hai Prefecture, Choa Chow District, Guangdong Province. According to the GDTC, his father was the governor of Vong Sat in Siam. This is quite different from the information in Thai materials about Taksin. Vong Sat must be Muang Tak. Taksin was appointed a deputy governor (a position known as the Luang Yokkrabat) of Muang Tak in 1758, after he became an adopted son of Phraya Chakkri by the order of the king. Later he was promoted to the governorship of Muang Tak. Probably Ha Tien was misinformed about his adoptive father's status and thought he was the former governor of Muang Tak. This interpretation suggests that Taksin's background was unknown among the Cantonese group in the Gulf in 1768. The rise of Taksin thus must not have been anticipated by Ha Tien.

45. The Thai chronicles do not differentiate between Phraya Ratcha Setthi and Mac Thien Tu. But according to the Cambodian chronicles, Phraya Ratcha Setthi was the Khmer governor of Peam Banteay Meas and thus not the same person as Mac Thien Tu.
46. Trat is east of Chanthaburi, near the present border between Cambodia and Thailand. At that time, it was a center of Chinese trade in the eastern part of the Gulf.
47. Chien Chun can be identified as Jiang Jun (Tuong Quan in Vietnamese), according to the late Professor Chen (1977). According to the DLTB (vol. 6), the Quang Nam king gave Mac Thien Tu his appointment as Do Doc Dai Thuong Quan in 1737.
48. In Thai materials, Phraya Ratcha Setthi is the title of the governor of the town known in Thai as Phutthai Mat (i.e., Banteay Meas) and thus appears to be the same person as Mac Thien Tu. In fact, there was another Phraya Ratcha Setthi in Peam Banteay Meas, as mentioned above. In communications with Taksin, Mac Thien Tu called himself Phraya Ratcha Setthi.
49. According to information provided by Charnvit Kasetsiri in the Ha Tien Symposium in Kyoto, 1977.
50. According to Moura (1883), after occupying Chanthaburi in 1767, Taksin sent an army to Cambodia by way of the northern route, while he and the Cambodian princes Preah Ang Non and Preah Ream invaded by

the sea route. Taksin's army drove out the chief of Ha Tien, and he went to Tuk Khmau. Then they attacked Udong, and the Cambodian king (Utey) hastened away to Trolong Klos Bat Anchien. Taksin went back to Siam but left Prince Preah Ream with 500 soldiers at Compot (Kampot). The Siamese army that arrived from the north carried away 10,000 Cambodians to Siam. This story is quite similar to the Vietnamese description of the Siamese invasion in 1769. But, as will be seen later, these events took place in 1771 according to the Cambodian chronicles VJ and BK. Probably, the editors of the GDTC and the DNLS confused events in 1769 with those in 1771, judging from the Cambodian information on which Moura based his account.

51. Both *dieu khien quan* (Khoi Khoa Hau and Mien Truong Hau) were commanders in the 1767 expedition to Ha Tien.
52. Personal letter from Kennon Breazeale to Sakurai, 14 November 1998.
53. A royal port on the Tonlesap River near Udong.
54. Peam Bañicho was a place in Prey Veng to the east of Phnom Penh (de Fels 1976 i: 169).
55. According to the VJ, the Siamese prince Cau Si San (Ayutthaya Prince Chieu known as Trieu or Di Xoang in Vietnamese), who escaped from Ayutthaya to Cambodia and Cau Col, died in the third month of the year of the rabbit (4 February to 3 March 1772 in the Cambodian calendar).
56. According to Aubaret (1863: 35), Bat Long Khuyen Long is "Bat Kien sur le territoire de Long Quet" (Bat Kien in the territory of Long Quet). Bat Long Khuyen Long might be identified as *srok* Trolong Khaos, which is recorded as Trolong Klos Bat Anjien in Moura (1883: 86–90) and Bot Ancean Trolong Khos (in another part of VJ). This is Sralong Khos, a village on the border between Cambodia and Vietnam (de Fels 1976 i: 168).
57. According to the DNTB (vol. 12), under the fourth month of the year *dinh dau* (1777), Can Tho is the name of the place (Tran Giang Dao) where Mac Thien Tu had remained since the fall of Ha Tien.
58. Peam Roka was a village in *srok* Kandal Sting (de Fels 1976 i: 169).
59. As mentioned above, the Cambodian chronicle mistakes Due Ton for Gia Long.
60. According to the DTTB (vol. 11), his official title was Nhan Lich and his

personal name was Toi. Probably Nhan Lich was Yomareac, and Toi was Toy or Tol.

61. This is the Khmer rendering of a Vietnamese official title, which can be identified as the *dong khau dao cai doi* Chinh Che Bao Ho. At that time, the *dong khau cai doi* was Nguyen Huu Thin.
62. The *Phu Bien Tap Loc* was written in Hanoi in 1776 by Le Qui Don, after Trinh forces from the north captured Hué, the capital of the Nguyen-ruled part of Vietnam. It was a report to the Trinh government on socio-economic conditions in central Vietnam, based on documents preserved at the Nguyen court.
63. The VJ (pp. 700–2, 724–5) recounts a very strange story about Mac Thien Tu:

In 1782, the Yuon *cauvay srok* Koiyun [the Vietnamese ruler of Qui Nhon] named Kai Saun [Tay Son] attacked Krong Hve [Hué]. Sdec Yalong [Gia Long] was defeated. He abandoned Krong Hve and fled to Koh Tnaot in *khaet* Banteay Meas in Krong Kampucea by sea. He asked for help from Somdac Caufa Mu, a powerful minister in Cambodia. Somdac Caufa Mu sent Okña Krolahom Bang to attack Kai Saun, but he was defeated in Veal Ba Yang Ko. Okña Reacea Sethei Meas, who was *cauvay srok* of *khaet* Peam, and Preah Sotoat advised the Yuon [Vietnamese] king to give up Cambodia and to rely on Siam. Okña Reacea Sethei sent his son to escort the Yuon king to Krong Tep Srei Ayuthya [Bangkok].

It is very difficult to believe this story. By the time Nguyen Phuoc Anh (the future Emperor Gia Long) took refuge in Bangkok, Mac Thien Tu had already died in Thonburi. No Vietnamese chronicle states that Mac Thien Tu and the future emperor ever met in Vietnam. Thus, the person called Preah Sotoat in the 1782 events could not be Mac Thien Tu.

64. After the massacre of the Quang Nam royal family at Long Xuyen (Ca Mau) in 1776, Nguyen Phuoc Anh (the third son of the former Quang Nam king Hung To), who later came Emperor Gia Long, continued the resistance against the Tay Son in Ca Mau, Vinh Long and even in Saigon.

But Nguyen Van Hue attacked him in Saigon in 1783. He was defeated and fled by way of My Tho and Con Dao (Poulo Condor) to Phu Quoc island. Then he went into exile in Bangkok, where he came under the protection of King Rama I, from 1783/4 to 1787. He returned to Can Tho in the ninth month (October/November) of 1787 and recaptured Saigon in the eighth month (September) of 1788. By 1791 he had succeeded in pacifying all of the Mekong delta. Ultimately, in 1802, he unified all of Vietnam.

During Gia Long's first period of residence in Saigon, from 1777 to 1783, the diplomatic situation was complicated, because neither the Siamese nor the Tay Son had abandoned their efforts to expand into Cambodia and the Mekong delta. Gia Long had to enter into an alliance with Taksin to resist the Tay Son, but at the same time he also had to maintain a stand against Taksin to protect the Mekong delta. Diplomatic relations between Gia Long and Taksin, with regard to the Mekong delta and Cambodian affairs, will be discussed in another study.