

## **Securing and Developing the Southwestern Region: The Role of the Cham and Malay Colonies in Vietnam (18th-19th centuries)**

**Nicolas Weber\***

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### **Abstract**

This article traces the history of the Cham and Malay military colonies in the southwestern provinces of Vietnam, from their creation in the eighteenth century to their dismantling during the last decades of the nineteenth century. The colonies were meant to protect the Khmero-Vietnamese border and secure Vietnamese positions in the southwestern regions (formerly part of Cambodia), as well as in eastern Cambodia. The study of the Chams and Malays in southern Vietnam sheds new light on the dynamics of power, the struggles for supremacy, and inter-ethnic associations during the process of state-building in Southeast Asia.

Cet article retrace l'histoire des colonies militaires cham et malaises des provinces du sud-ouest du Vietnam, de leur création au cours du dix-huitième siècle à leur démembrement au cours des dernières décennies du dix-neuvième siècle. Ces colonies avaient pour but de protéger la frontière khméro-vietnamienne et renforcer les positions des Vietnamiens dans les régions du sud-ouest (appartenant précédemment au Cambodge) ainsi que dans l'est du Cambodge. L'étude des Chams et des Malais du sud Vietnam apporte de nouveaux éclaircissements sur la dynamique des forces, les luttes pour la suprématie ainsi que sur les associations interethniques au cours de la construction des états en Asie du sud-est.

### **Keywords**

Chams, Malays, southwestern Vietnam, Cambodia, Vietnamese colonization

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\*) Nicolas Weber, Visiting Lecturer, Department of Southeast Asian Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: nicolasweb@yahoo.com.

## Introduction

The use of foreigners for the development and defence of newly conquered lands in southern Vietnam began in the seventeenth century, when the Nguyễn Lords (1558-1776) expanded their domain by incorporating the territories of the kingdoms of Champa<sup>1</sup> and Cambodia. Vietnamese historical records describe in detail how non-Việt peoples were encouraged to found military plantations (*đồn điền* 屯田) or military colonies in the Mekong Delta (which were part of the kingdom of Cambodia at that time) at the end of the seventeenth century. Vietnamese historical documents record, for instance, the appointment in 1679 of Chinese political refugees Dương Ngạn Địch (in Chinese, Yang Yuandi), Hoàng Tiến (Huang Jin), Trần Thượng Xuyên (Chen Shangchuan), and Trần An Bình (Chen Anping) as heads of military colonies. Hoàng Tiến and Dương Ngạn Địch were sent to Lôi Lạp,<sup>2</sup> at the mouth of the Mekong, whereas Trần Thượng Xuyên and Trần An Bình were sent to Bàn Lân, in the Biên Hòa region (*DNTL* 1:91). One should also keep in mind that Hà Tiên, formerly known as Peam in Khmer, fell under Vietnamese control, with the help of Chinese immigrants. In 1714, a Chinese refugee from Leizhou (Guangdong), called Mặc Cửu (in Chinese: Mo Jiu), was given the title of commander of troops (*thống binh*) of Hà Tiên province by Lord Nguyễn Phúc Chu (1675-1725) and was given the task of developing the region for the benefit of the Nguyễn Lords.

The first settlements of Chams<sup>3</sup> in areas controlled by the Vietnamese occurred in the second half of the eighteenth century. The movements of Cham, and later Malay, groups continued throughout the nineteenth century. Chams and Malays were channeled into two specific areas of the southwestern region: Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc. Both the Chams and the Malays, who migrated or were displaced to Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc, originate from Cambodia and not directly from Champa and the

<sup>1</sup> The kingdom of Champa was located in present-day central Vietnam. Its territory included the coastal plains and the highlands, from today's Hoàn Sơn to Biên Hòa.

<sup>2</sup> Present-day Gò Công.

<sup>3</sup> According to the transcription system adopted here for the Cham language, "Cham" and "Champa" should be written "Cam" and "Campā." However, the spellings "Cham" and "Champa" being the forms most commonly adopted for publications in English, I have chosen to use them in this article.

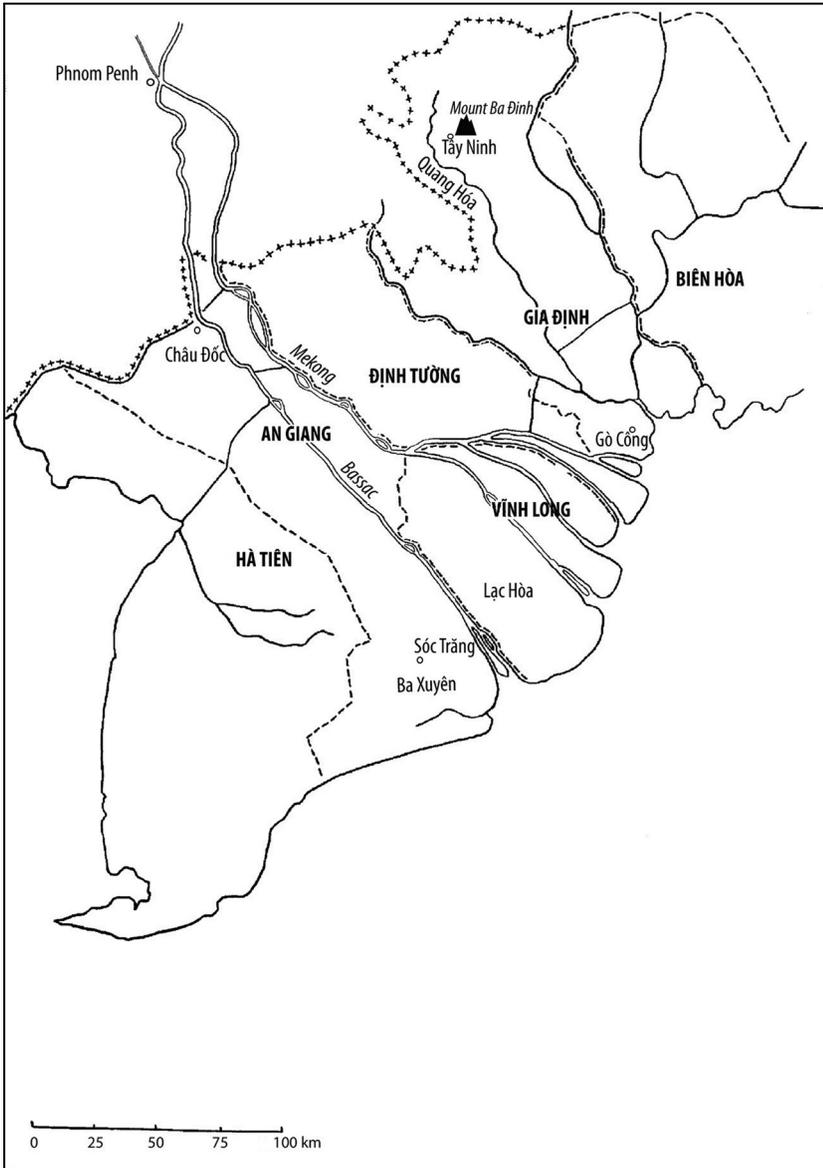


Figure 1: Southern Vietnam or the Six Provinces. Map adapted from Langlet, Philippe and Quach Thanh Tâm, 2001.

Malay world.<sup>4</sup> Linking the roots of the Chams of Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc with the kingdom of Champa is fruitless: Vietnamese historical sources clearly differentiate the Chams in Cambodia from the Chams in Champa. The Chams from Cambodia were called “Chàm” (藍) (*DNTL* 2:650), a designation that is never used in the imperial annals for the Chams in Champa.<sup>5</sup> An official source explains that the “Chàm” were originally from Chiêm Thành (Champa) but fled to Cambodia due to the “chaos” in their country (*HM* 2164:26). Some historical sources also use “Chàm Chà Và” (藍爪哇) (*DNTL* 29:86-7) or “Chàm Đờ Bà” (藍閩婆) (*MMCY* 6:clxxxv), pointing out that the Cham and Malay communities in Cambodia were closely related and had, in some cases, merged.<sup>6</sup> This designation seems to be a translation of the Khmer expression “Cham-Chvéa”<sup>7</sup> (“Cham-Malays”). There was no attempt to differentiate among the Malays of Cambodia, the Malay Peninsula, and/or the Indonesian Archipelago: they are simply labelled “Đờ Bà” (閩婆).<sup>8</sup>

The presence of the Chams and Malays in southern Vietnam has to be understood in the context of the colonial policies of Vietnam. Vietnamese sources make clear that the Chams were treated by the government (whether the Nguyễn Lords or the Nguyễn dynasty) as potential settlers. The foundation and growth of the colonies were linked directly to the foreign policy of the Huế court, particularly the policy towards Cambodia. During the nineteenth century, the Chams and the Malays were called

<sup>4</sup> The Chams have a long history in Cambodia. The first testimonies of the Cham migrations from Champa to Cambodia date to the tenth century. Historical records make clear that the migrations have often been linked to politics and were caused by the conflicts between Champa and the Việt kingdom.

<sup>5</sup> The Chams in Champa are more commonly referred as *man* (barbarian) and *thổ* (native, aboriginal). I have, however, found the name “Chàm” in one *châu bản*, or official report annotated by the emperor, written by Nguyễn Văn Tài, official of Bình Thuận province, and sent to the Court in 1826 (*MLCBTN*, 571-2).

Some translators of Sino-Vietnamese documents in *quốc ngữ* considered 藍 a Chinese character and therefore transcribed it *lam* (see, for instance, *MMCY* 6:141-2; *MLCBTN* 571-2); this character should be read not as a Chinese character but as a *nôm* character and should be written *chàm*.

<sup>6</sup> This is probably because Chams and Malays shared an Austronesian heritage and practiced the same religion (Islam).

<sup>7</sup> Strictly speaking “Chvéa” means “Javanese, but in the context of Cambodian history, it designates the Malays.

<sup>8</sup> Just like the Khmer label “Chvéa,” “Đờ Bà” means “Javanese.” In this context, it designates the Malays who had migrated to Cambodia and southern Vietnam.

upon to play a key role, as the Vietnamese authorities settled them into military colonies of two of the six southern provinces, Gia Định and An Giang, in areas known as Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc. With the settlement of the Chams and Malays here, the Vietnamese were able to defend their frontier and administrative centres, while simultaneously increasing Vietnamese-controlled settlements in areas populated by Khmers and other ethnic groups. These military colonies supplied men and were thus indispensable in consolidating the Vietnamese positions in eastern Cambodia. According to Vietnamese historical sources, the Tây Ninh region was populated by the Chams as early as the eighteenth century. The Cham and Malay settlements in Châu Đốc were founded during the 1840s. Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc had been populated by the Chams and the Malays during different time periods, but some common characteristics are apparent. From the end of the Nguyễn Lords' period to the reign of Emperor Gia Long (1801-20), the Vietnamese settled Cham refugees from Cambodia in the Tây Ninh region. From the reign of Minh Mạng (1820-41), the Huế court not only relied on the entry of refugees but ordered forced migrations of Cham and Malay population from Cambodia to Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc. The forced migrations occurred when the Vietnamese protectorate of Cambodia was firmly established,<sup>9</sup> as Vietnamese forces controlled Phnom Penh and the eastern regions. Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc were located on strategic routes, and the Cham and Malay colonies not only provided soldiers in the event of upheavals or armed confrontations but also served to consolidate the Vietnamese position in Cambodia. Between the reigns of Thiệu Trị (1841-7) and Tự Đức (1847-83), the Huế court stopped the forced migrations but resumed the tradition of giving shelter to Cham and Malay refugees.

The first two detailed accounts of Cham and Malay colonies in southern Vietnam, particularly in Châu Đốc, were written by A. Labussière, Inspector of Indigenous Affairs,<sup>10</sup> in 1880, and George Dürrewell, in 1898.<sup>11</sup> These two accounts were based mainly on their own observations. Mak Phœun was the first scholar who attempted to go beyond these observations and use historical documents to write the history of Cham and Malay

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<sup>9</sup> The Protectorate was established in 1820. Vietnamese sources state that King Ang Chan "implored" the Huế court's protection, and Nguyễn Văn Thoại was appointed Protector (*bảo hộ*) of Cambodia. (*DNLT* 2:577)

<sup>10</sup> Labussière 1880: 373-80.

<sup>11</sup> Dürrewell 1898: 4-29.

settlements.<sup>12</sup> This article takes the works mentioned above as a starting point and builds upon them, through a systematic study of Vietnamese and Cham historical sources. It aims to relocate the creation of the Cham and Malay colonies of southwestern Vietnam in the framework of Vietnam foreign and colonial policy, a study that has been largely neglected. This study also considers the patterns of settlement and integration.

My goals in this article are threefold: first, to examine the origins of the Chams and the Malays of today's southwestern Vietnam; second, to reassess the relationships between the Vietnamese government and the non-Việt peoples, particularly the Chams and the Malays, from the eighteenth century to the second half of the nineteenth century; and third, to contribute to the history of the development of southern Vietnam. I have made extensive use of Vietnam official documents to recount the history of the formation and growth of the Cham and Malay settlements in southern Vietnam, mainly in Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc, and the various measures taken by the Vietnamese authorities (welcoming of refugees, forced migrations, etc.) to populate them. They include the *Veritable Records of Đại Nam* (*Đại Nam Thực Lục* 大南實錄), *Abstract of the Policies of Minh Mệnh* (*Minh Mệnh Chính Yếu* 明命政要), *Official Compendium of Institutions and Usages of Đại Nam* (*Khâm Định Đại Nam Hội Điển Sử Lệ* 欽定大南大南會典事例), *Primary Compilation of the National Dynasties* (*Quốc Triều Chánh Biên* 國朝正編), *Gazetteer of the Gia Định Thành* (*Gia Định Thành Thông Chí* 嘉定城通志), and *Biographies of Đại Nam* (*Đại Nam Liệt Truyện* 大南列傳). All these documents have been translated from Sino-Vietnamese into modern Vietnamese (*quốc ngữ*). Although the official discourse remains largely ethnocentric, tending to legitimize the colonization of southern Vietnam and Cambodia, the official sources demonstrate that the Vietnamese military occupation and establishment of colonies and economic development established an intricate web of associations between the government and the colonized peoples. For a version of the events from a Cham point of view, five unpublished manuscripts originating from the Cham diaspora in Cambodia and the Chams in Champa have been used. The manuscripts CM38 (8) and CM39 (37),<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Mak 2003: 75-98.

<sup>13</sup> Traditionally, Cham texts do not bear titles. Sometimes the so-called title or the main theme of the text appears in the first sentence, for instance, *ni dalukal patao di anak hu o* ("This is the story of the king without children"). The two Cham texts from Cambodia used in this study bear no title, and no indication of the content can be derived from the first sentences. The manuscript CM38 (8) begins *di thun nan nasak tipai karia gap bai cam kur*

written in verse and in the Cambodian Cham script, deal with historical events that took place in 1843-4 and 1862-7. These manuscripts contain invaluable details regarding the migration of Chams and Malays to southern Vietnam and their participation in the anti-French war. These unofficial and personal accounts illustrate the life of the Chams and the Malays settled in Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc, their activities, and their relationships with the Vietnamese authorities.

### 1. The Foundation and Development of the Cham and Malay Colonies of Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc

Chams and Malays populated the Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc regions, two highly strategic areas, for over one hundred years. Historical records show that these two areas were a haven for political dissidents and refugees. In addition, the Vietnamese authorities used the Chams and Malays as settlers in military colonies. At times, they used forced migration to speed up the process of populating the colonies and thus reinforce their positions. From the third decade of the nineteenth century, the Chams and Malays played an active role in the Vietnamese military occupation of Cambodia. In 1834, generals in charge of the colonization of Cambodia, including Trương Minh Giảng, insisted on the necessity of “gathering” (*chiêu tập*) the Chams and Malays (*MMCY* 6:147-8.) to join the Vietnamese army of occupation. At times when the Vietnamese forces of occupation faced difficulties, the Chams and the Malays working with them were transferred to southern Vietnam, especially Châu Đốc.

For the Vietnamese, control of the Tây Ninh region was vital. It meant, firstly, securing Vietnamese military posts and later administrative centres of the south, and secondly, establishing an outpost of Vietnamese influence in eastern Cambodia (today’s Kompong Cham province). According to the Khmer Royal Chronicles, the Tây Ninh region (called Rong Damrei by the Khmers) fell under Việt control as early as 1738 (Mak 2003: 139).

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*abih* (“In the year of the Rabbit, the Cham of Cambodia were thinking”) and CM39 (37) begins *ni yal baruna pagap pakrang ngap jieng ka-mbuan* (“Here is the poem that is about to be composed in order to create a treaty”). Cham manuscripts seldom contain only one text: a manuscript may contain several texts dealing with various subjects, such as history, magic, or moral treaties. In order to catalogue the manuscripts, a group of French scholars assigned a class-mark to each manuscript and a number to each text (Lafont, Po, and Nara 1977). I have retained these class-marks in this study.

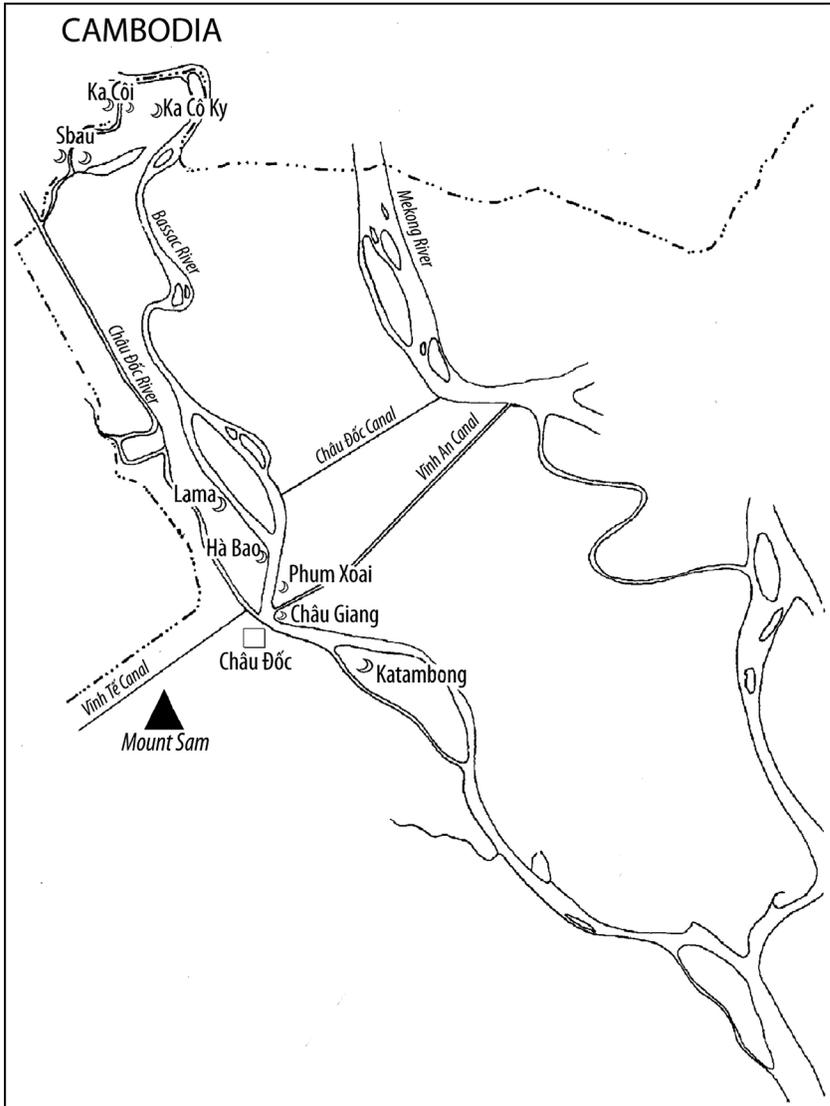


Figure 2: Cham settlements on Châu Đốc region. Map adapted from Nguyễn Văn Luận, 1974.

Apart from its obviously strategic location, the Tây Ninh region provided ample natural resources, and the Vietnamese saw great economic potential in its forests. According to the official gazetteers, the forests were planted with “immense trees that touched the sky” (*GDTTC* 1:47). The Vietnamese used the wood for boatbuilding and for the production of coal and resin<sup>14</sup> (*GDTTC* 1:47-8; *HDSL* 4:318). Historical documents confirm that from 1790, Vietnamese authorities established colonies dedicated to woodcutting and log (*sài*) production. People from the lands conquered by the Nguyễn lords were incorporated into these colonies then called “Regiments of the Carpenters” (*đội mộc đình*).

The first Cham settlement established by the Vietnamese was founded during the reign of Nguyễn Phúc Khoát (1738-65). Historical sources record that in 1750 a group of Chams fled from Cambodia to seek asylum in the Tây Ninh region (*DNTL* 1:164). The reasons for the flight of the Chams are unknown, although the records leave no doubt that the Vietnamese saw an opportunity to intervene in Cambodian affairs. The Chams were first established in Kha Kham, but they were reassigned to the Bình Thạnh fortress in 1755, by order of General Thiện Chính.<sup>15</sup> While passing through Vô Tà Ôn,<sup>16</sup> the Chams were attacked by the Khmers. Nguyễn Cư Trinh, staff officer of the Gia Định fortress, managed to defeat the Khmers and then ordered the Chams to take up residence at Mount Ba Đình (*DNTL* 1:165; *GDTTC* 2:14-5).<sup>17</sup> In 1756, Nguyễn Cư Trinh explained to the court the benefits of establishing Cham settlements: “I have observed that the Côn Man [i.e., the Chams] are pugnacious and the Cambodians fear them. If we give them this land while encouraging them to defend it [against the Cambodians], then the adequate policy would be ‘to use the barbarians against the barbarians’” (*DNTL* 1:165-6).

<sup>14</sup> The Vietnamese used to extract an oleoresin from a tree called *rái* (*GDTTC* 1:47-8; *HDSL* 4:318), or *Dipterocarpus alatus*, which is found in Cambodia, Laos, and the Philippines. The oleoresin was used by the local inhabitants for waterproofing baskets and boats.

<sup>15</sup> According to Phan Khoang, Kha Kham corresponds to Katum, north of Tây Ninh, and Bình Thạnh corresponds to Gò Vấp, one of the districts of Hồ Chí Minh City. Sakurai and Kitagawa reject this hypothesis, asserting that it is more likely that Bình Thạnh was located in the Tây Ninh region. According to the earliest gazetteers of the region, such as the *Gia Định Thành Thông Chí*, translated by Aubaret, Bình Thạnh was a canton (*tổng*) dependent on the district (*huyện*) of Bình Long, a prefecture (*phủ*) of Tây Ninh (Phan 1969: 442; Sakurai and Kitagawa 1999: 211; Aubaret 1863: Appendixes).

<sup>16</sup> Vô Tà Ôn has not been identified.

<sup>17</sup> “Ba Đình” is the Vietnamese adaptation of the Khmer “Phnom Chœung Ba Dêng.”

The second Cham settlement in the Tây Ninh region was established in Quang Hóa district, in 1812-3, after the arrival of Prince Po Cei Brei, formal ruler of Pāṇḍuraṅga, the last Champa principality in the south.<sup>18</sup> Po Cei Brei had fled to Rokapopram (Kompong Cham province) in Cambodia in 1795-6, after the appointment of Po Ladhuanpaghuh.<sup>19</sup> According to Cham sources, Po Cei Brei and his followers fled Rokapopram in 1812-3, because of the Siamese invasion of Cambodia. Po Cei Brei attempted unsuccessfully to join the Khmer king Ang Chan<sup>20</sup> in Phnom Penh. When Po Cei Brei reached Kien Svay (in Kandal province), King Ang Chan had already left Phnom Penh (Mohamad 1990: 202) and was on his way to Gia Định.<sup>21</sup> Po Cei Brei proceeded to Gia Định, where he became reacquainted with his old ally Nguyễn Phúc Ánh, who was then Emperor Gia Long. He sought the latter's protection and asked for permission to settle there. Lê Văn Duyệt, governor general of the Gia Định Thành (i.e., the southern provinces) and one of Gia Long's most faithful allies, granted him permission to stay in a place within the limits of Gia Định Thành (Mohamad 1990: 206), and Po Cei Brei chose Tây Ninh (Mohamad 1990: 234-5); Vietnamese historical sources confirm the installation of Po Cei Brei there. According to these sources, Sơn Cối (Po Cei Brei) and a hundred men of his "tribe" left Cambodia to settle in Xí Khê<sup>22</sup> garrison, within the *đạo* (circuit) of Quang Hóa, and were granted five hundred *tiền* (mace) by Gia Long for their subsistence (*MMCY* 5:141). Cham manuscripts state that the Vietnamese authorities of the region exempted Po Cei Brei and his fol-

<sup>18</sup> The territory of Pāṇḍuraṅga extended over the modern Vietnamese provinces of Bình Thuận and Ninh Thuận. Po Cei Brei was put on the throne of Pāṇḍuraṅga by the Tây Sơn in 1783. In spite of the Tây Sơn's protection, Pāṇḍuraṅga was repeatedly attacked by the Nguyễn forces, and in 1786, Po Cei Brei, with his family as well as some dignitaries and a small army, fled to the mountainous area of upper Donnai (Vietnamese: Đồng Nai). The Tây Sơn put Po Tisuntiraydapuran (Chưởng Cơ Tà in the Vietnamese annals) on the throne of Pāṇḍuraṅga, and Po Cei Brei pleaded for Nguyễn Phúc Ánh's assistance to expel the Tây Sơn from Pāṇḍuraṅga. In 1790, Nguyễn Phúc Ánh bestowed on Po Cei Brei the title of "captain of battalion" (*chưởng cơ*). For some unknown reason, the parties fell out, and Nguyễn Phúc Ánh stripped Po Cei Brei of his title (Po 1983: 263).

<sup>19</sup> See Po 1983; Po 1987, vol. 1; Mohamad 1990. Po Ladhuanpaghuh is known as Nguyễn Văn Hảo in the Vietnamese documents.

<sup>20</sup> Ang Chan reigned from 1797 to 1835.

<sup>21</sup> According to the Vietnamese sources, Ang Chan (Vietnamese: Nặc Ông Chân) sought the help of the Vietnamese in Phnom Penh. Nguyễn Văn Thoại sent soldiers to escort him to Gia Định. Ang Chan was then escorted back to Cambodia by Lê Văn Duyệt and 13,000 soldiers (*DNLT* 2:577; *DNTL* 1:835 and 860; *HDSL* 9:404; Woodside 1971: 248).

<sup>22</sup> Xí Khê is a river north of Quang Hóa district (*LTNV* 1:78).

lowers from *corvée* (Mohamad 1990: 206). Taking into consideration the Vietnamese policy of settling foreigners in frontier areas, it is reasonable to think that Po Cei Brei was not actually given a choice by the Vietnamese authorities. The exemptions from *corvée* and taxes were not special favours but a privilege enjoyed by all founders of new colonies. Po Cei Brei's heirs remained in Quang Hóa, and, together with the local Vietnamese authorities, Po Cei Brei's son and nephew, Phủ Vi and Phủ Nộn,<sup>23</sup> administered the colony (*DNTL* 10:398). In 1831, the Quang Hóa area included thirty-two Cham settlements (*MMCY* 6:141-2).

The development of the Cham colony of Tây Ninh was a highly sensitive issue closely monitored by the Vietnamese. In 1831, Emperor Minh Mạng's high-ranking officials reported that the Cham colony in the Quang Hóa district was paying taxes to the Lê Văn Duyệt administration and not directly to the Huế court (*DNTL* 10:398). Minh Mạng had to be very cautious in asserting his power in the region and in carrying out his policy of political and cultural homogenization of his kingdom.<sup>24</sup> First, as the Cham colony was under Lê Văn Duyệt's influence, there was no guarantee that the Chams would support him. Second, the Chams newly settled in strategic and sensitive places on the Vietnam-Cambodia border could go back to Cambodia, or, worse, revolt against the Huế court, if the pressure from the authorities became too obvious. Emperor Minh Mạng recommended to his officials, "It is necessary to remain vigilant and reassure the savages [i.e., the Chams]" (*DNTL* 10:398). In order to win the support of the Chams, Minh Mạng exempted them from taxes.

In 1834, the Vietnamese authorities relocated numerous Chams from Cambodia to the Tây Ninh region. Lê Đại Cương, touring surveillance commissioner (*tuần sát*) of the An Giang province, asked for Minh Mạng's permission to relocate the Chams, stating that, "On the road from Quang Hóa to Cự Giang, much land has not been cleared and is not suitable [yet] for cultivation. It is necessary to order the Cham exiles of Ân Khu and Xam Bô<sup>25</sup> to come to this place to farm the lands" (*QTCB* 177; *MMCY*

<sup>23</sup> The name "Phủ" is apparently the Vietnamese transcription of the Cham title *po* (lord), although Vietnamese consider it a personal name and not a title.

<sup>24</sup> Minh Mạng was not popular, and one of his strongest opponents was Lê Văn Duyệt. For the competition between Lê Văn Duyệt and Minh Mạng, see Choi 2004: 45-81.

<sup>25</sup> Both places are located in the Kompong Cham province. It is reasonable to consider "Ân Khu" the Vietnamese transcription of the Khmer *angkor*. Because there are several places in Kompong Cham with names beginning with *angkor*, including, for example, Angkor Ban and Angkor Chei, the place the Vietnamese texts refer to cannot, unfortunately, be identified. "Xam Bô" is the Vietnamese transcription of "Sambôr."

6:154). Emperor Minh Mạng agreed to Lê Đại Cương's request and ordered his high-ranking officials Nguyễn Xuân, Trương Minh Giảng, and Trương Phúc Đình to proceed:

You will carefully observe this region and each time [you see] a place where trees can be planted and people be settled, send the Chams there. In order to avoid unused lands, the people will have to work on it. You will establish the registers of population and the cadastres; you will establish the limits for the creation of hamlets, districts, and prefectures with clear borders based on the resources [land and men]. Then you will appoint [the men] who will be in charge of [the community], in order to let them administer themselves (*MMCY* 6:154).

In 1849, the Cham chiefs Ôn and Núi and their followers, "pursued" by the Khmers, requested to be settled in the district (*châu*) of Quang Hóa. The commander of the troops of the Tây Ninh garrison, Phan Khắc Thận, reported the request to the Court. The emperor granted them permission, and land was granted to them (*DNTL* 27:185). Less than ten years later, in 1857, the Cham chiefs A' and Ôn created new hamlets in Đông Tác and Tây Thành, in Tây Ninh district. They were exempted from taxes and military obligations for five years (*DNTL* 28:335). The fact that A' and Ôn were allowed to found new hamlets is not surprising, in light of the policy of Emperor Tự Đức that sanctioned the formation of military colonies by individuals. If someone could establish fifty families (a platoon, or *đội*), he would be appointed the chief of detachment (*đội trưởng*); if he could establish one hundred families (a battalion, or *cơ*), he would be appointed chief of the battalion (*cai cơ*). Over time, the *đội* and *cơ* were converted to hamlets (*ấp*) and cantons (*tổng*) (Choi 2004: 190).

Châu Đốc, called Moat Chrouk by the Khmers, was another key area that had to be firmly controlled by the Vietnamese authorities. According to Vietnamese sources, this region, known originally as Tầm Phong Long, was "offered" in 1757 to the Nguyễn Lords by the Khmer king Nặc Tôn.<sup>26</sup> The circuit (*đạo*) of Châu Đốc was established several months later (*LITNV* 3:2; *DNTL* 1:166). Châu Đốc was located on the banks of the Bassac River (Vietnamese: Hậu Giang), and its location was particularly important to the Vietnamese. By creating and settling military outposts and colonies, the Vietnamese could ensure that they controlled the lower part of the river and in turn protected the Mekong Delta for their benefit, by denying access to the delta to any foreign ships. Located on the

<sup>26</sup> Ang Tàn, 1758-60, second reign (Mak 2002: 159).

banks of the Bassac River, Châu Đốc was well placed to enable the rapid dispatch of Vietnamese troops to Cambodia in case of uprisings and also provide protection in case of military withdrawal. During the course of the nineteenth century, the Vietnamese authorities made clear that the Cham and Malay settlements of Châu Đốc were meant to send troops promptly to areas controlled by the Vietnamese, specifically Nam Vang (i.e., Phnom Penh) and Hà Tiên, in case of an emergency (*DNTL* 1:917; Nguyễn 1999: 232).

Some scholars consider the first Cham and Malay settlements to have been founded by General Trương Minh Giảng's soldiers and followers on the left bank of the Bassac river and Katambong island (Labussière 1880: 373) and on the banks on the river connecting the Bassac to the Châu Đốc River. They were evacuees from Phnom Penh in 1840-1 (Mak 2003: 92), following the internment of the young queen, Ang Mei (1835-47).

Several historical events are closely intertwined with the relocation of the Chams and Malays. Ang Mei was one of the daughters of King Ang Chan. In 1835, after the death of her father, the Vietnamese put her on the throne of Cambodia, ignoring Khmer traditional laws of succession, which forbade a woman from ruling the country. The Vietnamese supported the new government, appointing Ang Mei<sup>27</sup> ruler of the country (*DNTL* 22:137 and 145).<sup>28</sup> To the Vietnamese, Ang Mei was a puppet ruler, and her coronation was a way to undermine the Khmer monarchy and eliminate the influence of the traditional Khmer elites and political families. In spite of their hold on the royal family, the Vietnamese feared that some of its members had pro-Siam sympathies; in fact, a few members of the royal family had relatives residing in Siam. The mother of Princess Ang Pèn, one of Ang Mei's three sisters, lived in Battambang<sup>29</sup> (Chandler 1973: 133). In 1840, an incident involving Princess Ang Pèn gave the Vietnamese the perfect opportunity to reaffirm their control over the Queen and her relatives and neutralize the pro-Siamese elements. The Vietnamese intercepted a letter written by Princess Ang Pèn to her mother, begging for help. Because of the "correspondence with the invaders" (i.e., the Siamese) of Princess Ang Pèn (*DNTL* 22:178), the Queen and her sisters were arrested

<sup>27</sup>) Ang Mei is named Ngọc Vân in the Vietnamese sources.

<sup>28</sup>) Ang Mei was granted the title of *quận chúa* (commandery princess) (*MMCY* 6:262). In 1840, she was granted the title *Mỹ Lâm quận chúa* (Tạ and Bửu 2:25; *DNTL* 22:137); "Mỹ Lâm" was the name of a prefecture (*CMST*, 10). The title *quận chúa* is of Chinese origin and was granted to daughters of imperial princes (Hucker 1985, 201).

<sup>29</sup>) Battambang was at that time under the rule of the Siamese court.

and interned in Vietnam. Queen Ang Mei and her two other sisters, Ang Peou and Ang Snguon, were held under close surveillance (*DNTL* 22:179), while Ang Pèn was tortured and put to death (Chandler 1973: 152).<sup>30</sup> In Cambodia, the antipathy of the population towards the Vietnamese mounted, as rumours of the imminent execution of Queen Ang Mei and her sisters spread, and a massive revolt broke out. Later, the Siamese general Bodin<sup>31</sup> and Prince Ang Duong led armies against the Vietnamese.<sup>32</sup>

The Vietnamese had no choice but to retreat to Châu Đốc. In 1841, Emperor Thiệu Trị restored Ang Mei to Phnom Penh but, sensing that the Vietnamese would not be able to regain their hold over Cambodia, Trương Minh Giảng decided to withdraw his forces from Phnom Penh and settle in Châu Đốc.<sup>33</sup> The Khmer Royal Chronicles record that General Trương Minh Giảng removed about two thousand Chams and Malays from Phnom Penh and transferred them to the fortress of Châu Đốc (Chandler 1973: 164). Historical sources are unclear as to the nature and methods of the relocation of the Cham and Malay population; they do not note whether it was because of a forced migration or a voluntary one. It is possible that some Chams and Malays rejoined General Trương Minh Giảng. Vietnamese historical documents state that Trương Minh Giảng had from 1834 expressed the need of “gathering” the Chams and the Malays of Cambodia (*MMCY* 6:147-8) and putting them under Vietnamese control. Some other Chams and Malays might also have been members of Queen Ang Mei’s retinue or clientele. It is certain that the Vietnamese had no intentions of putting the Cham and Malay population to death. Instead, the Chams and Malays were sent to Châu Đốc to be integrated into the

<sup>30</sup> The three princesses are named Ngọc Biện (Ang Pèn), Ngọc Thu (Ang Peou), and Ngọc Nguyễn (Ang Snguon) in the Vietnamese sources. They were granted the title of *huyện quân* (district mistress) (*MMCY* 6:262). In 1840, Ngọc Biện was given the title *Lư An huyện quân*, Ngọc Thu the title *Thâu Trung huyện quân*, and Ngọc Nguyễn the title *Tạp Ninh huyện quân* (Tạ and Bửu 2:25; *DNTL* 22:137). Lư An was a district of Trấn Tây prefecture, Thâu Trung a district of Hải Tây prefecture, and Tạp Ninh a district of Hải Đông prefecture (*CMST*: 10). It is impossible to locate precisely these districts and prefectures, but they were all certainly in eastern Cambodia and the Phnom Penh region.

<sup>31</sup> The full title of this famous general is Chaophraya Bodindecha (Sing Singhaseni). He played a vital role throughout the reign of King Rama III (Phra Nang Klao, 1824-51) and had a decisive influence during the wars between Siam and Vietnam (1833-47) (Vella 1957; Terwiel 2005).

<sup>32</sup> For details of the battles, see Chandler 1973: 150-63.

<sup>33</sup> See Chandler 1973: 159-64.

military colonies, in order to help the Vietnamese in counter-attacks against the Khmer-Siamese coalition.

The Vietnamese transferred to Châu Đốc members of their colonial army, which was composed of Vietnamese and Khmers as well as Chams and Malays. Official sources state that in 1841, Cham soldiers and their leaders, belonging to the Regiment of Pacified Barbarians (*an man cơ*) were moved to Châu Đốc with their families (*DNTL* 23:343-4). This regiment was created in 1834 in Phnom Penh by the officials responsible for Cambodian affairs, Trương Minh Giảng and Lê Đại Cương. It was composed of Chams and Malays from Cambodia. The regiment was meant to be used “in case of an event” (*MMCY* 6:147-8), that is, in case of upheavals, internal unrest, or Khmer anti-Vietnamese revolts. The regiment was originally composed of two corps. In 1835, another corps was established, and Chams and Malays were reassigned: the Chams, numbering 823, would compose the first and second corps, while the Malays, numbering 223, would be incorporated into the third corps (*DNTL* 4:800). The transfer to Châu Đốc occurred after the outbreak of the anti-Vietnamese revolt in Cambodia. It seems that, at that time, Vietnamese authorities in Cambodia were afraid of losing the support of their Cham and Malay soldiers. As the mandarin of the judiciary services (*án sát*), Nguyễn Thế Trị, pointed out, they might “under a submissive appearance nourish anti-Vietnamese feelings” (*DNTL* 23:354-5). The Vietnamese could not afford to lose the support of the Chams and Malays, who were native to the area and whose understanding and knowledge of eastern Cambodia were vital to the Vietnamese. The Chams and Malays had also developed wide networks (family, trade, and political alliances, and allegiances), which proved to be of great benefit to the Vietnamese administration in Cambodia.

In 1843-4, another forced migration of more than a thousand Cham and Malay civilians to Châu Đốc was carried out (*CM38* (8); Mak 2003: 89). This occurred while the Vietnamese still controlled the eastern side of the Mekong and were trying to win back their positions in Cambodia (Chandler 1973: 168). According to Vietnamese and Cham sources, the Chams and Malays came from the Phnom Penh region (*CM38* (8): 49; *HDSL* 4:108-9).<sup>34</sup> Cham sources add that Vietnamese soldiers (*nday*) and

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<sup>34</sup> The Cham manuscript *CM38* (8) clearly states the name “Na Mbin”, which is a transcription of both the Khmer name Phnom Penh and the Vietnamese Nam Vinh (Nam Vang).

high-ranking officials, such as the *eng nduk mbu*<sup>35</sup> (commander of the infantry) and the *eng teng kuin*<sup>36</sup> (marshal of the left wing), escorted the Chams and Malays to southwestern Vietnam (CM38 (8): 49 and 82-3). Cham manuscripts provide invaluable information regarding the transfer and the feelings of the population:

We did not know if we had to leave the country. [If we were leaving] we would never see our village again. Listen to what I say: everything was destroyed. We had to leave the village in single file. We were leaving the village tripping [on our own feet]. . . . Listen carefully: we all had to leave the village, and we were moving forward in an endless single line on the roads. . . . Some [of us] were cowering as we were leaving the country. Others were weeping, calling [the names of] their children and grandchildren. Some ran away to hide in the plain. Others had forgotten that their boats were pierced [but still wanted to use them to escape]. Others were pulling them [out] to flee (CM38 (8): 49-50).

Once they arrived in Vietnam, the Chams were posted to the existing settlements of Kapu and Lam Ma (CM38 (8): 81 and 84),<sup>37</sup> which were located in ethnic Việt-populated villages, and were given weapons by the Vietnamese authorities (CM38 (8): 83 and 87).

In addition to the forced emigration from Cambodia, the Vietnamese also ordered migrations within southern Vietnam. In 1843, provincial officials asked for permission to relocate 2,383 Chams and Malays who were from Trấn Tây (i.e., the Vietnamese Protectorate of Cambodia);<sup>38</sup> they were first settled at the mouth of the Châu Giang river, at Ba Xuyên.<sup>39</sup> According to these officials, the land was too muddy and therefore unsuitable for agriculture (*HDSL* 4:108-9). Although Vietnamese documents do not mention other motives, it is more likely that the transfer was ordered for political and strategic reasons. Ba Xuyên was densely populated by

<sup>35</sup> *eng nduk mbu* is the Cham transcription of the Vietnamese *ông đốc bộ*. According to the correspondence between Queen Ang Mei and her uncle Ang Duong between 1843 and 1844, this high-ranking official was in charge of the Châu Đốc citadel (Khin 1985: 410).

<sup>36</sup> *eng teng kuin* is the Cham transcription of *ông tướng quân* (general).

<sup>37</sup> Kapu (Koh Kapou) is the Khmer name of the hamlet of Hà Bao. "Lam Ma" is the Cham transcription of the Vietnamese "La Ma," the name of a Cham hamlet.

<sup>38</sup> Vietnamese sources do not indicate when the Cham and Malays were actually brought to Vietnam; the transfer could have occurred in 1843-4 or earlier.

<sup>39</sup> Ba Xuyên was originally called Ba Thắc (from the Khmer: Bassac). This region fell under Vietnamese control in 1792. It became a prefecture in 1835 and was divided into three districts: Phong Nhiêu, Phong Thạnh, and Vĩnh Định (*HM* 2129: 7; *QTCB*: 198; Langlet and Quach 2001: 168-9).

Khmers, and the Vietnamization of the region was difficult (Langlet and Quach 2001: 168). The inadequate number of Vietnamese military colonies<sup>40</sup> jeopardized Vietnamese control over the region. Because of events in Cambodia (the outbreak of an anti-Vietnamese revolt and the retreat of the Vietnamese forces of occupation), the government had reason to fear that the Khmers of the region would turn against the Vietnamese authorities. The establishment of a new military colony, populated by non-Việt, was proved necessary. Strangely, the Chams did not stay in Ba Xuyên; the same year, the Vietnamese encouraged them to migrate to Tây Ninh, whereas the Malays would remain in Ba Xuyên (*HDSL* 4:108-9).

In 1846, the Châu Đốc region welcomed Chams and Malays who had been prisoners of war in Siam. After the return of Ang Duong to Cambodia<sup>41</sup> and the beginning of normalization of relations between the Khmers and the Vietnamese, negotiations began (Mak 2003: 89). Võ Văn Giải, representing the Huế court's interests, asked for the return of the people held hostage in Siam (*QTCB*: 273). The king of Siam, Rama III (1824-51), agreed, and the Chams and Malays were transferred, with their families, to Châu Đốc (Mak 2003: 90).

In 1859, more than a thousand Chams and Malays, led by Ốc Nha Bồn Nha Hiên (Khmer: Oknha Ponghóa Him), sought refuge in Châu Đốc (*DNTL* 29:85). This prominent and influential person, known as Tuan Him in both Khmer and Cham sources, rose in rebellion against King Ang Duong in 1858-9. Tuan Him was followed by his brothers<sup>42</sup> and numerous men from Cham and Malay villages in Thbaung Khmum (Kompong Cham) province. Scholars have considered the revolt of Tuan Him, his brothers, and his followers an attempt to withdraw the Chams and Malays from the domination of the Khmer authorities and establish an autonomous Muslim principality in Thbaung Khmum region. Neither Khmer, Cham, nor contemporary foreign sources mention any religious motive. It is more likely that the cause of the revolt was the struggle for political dominance by high-ranking Cham and Malay officials and King Ang

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<sup>40</sup> In 1840, according to an official report addressed to Emperor Minh Mạng, the Việt population numbered only eighty (*DNTL*22:68).

<sup>41</sup> Ang Duong was considered king of Cambodia as early as 1841, even if, at that time, Queen Ang Mei was still on the throne. After the arrest of Ang Mei and her internment in Châu Đốc, Ang Duong took charge of the Cambodian affairs. His coronation took place only in 1848 (Mak 2002: 147).

<sup>42</sup> Contemporary Vietnamese and Thai sources state that he had nine brothers (*DNTL* 29: 85 and Chaophraya 1967: 169).

Duong. The leaders of the rebellion took refuge in Châu Đốc. There is little doubt that the Vietnamese saw in Tuan Him's arrival another opportunity to intervene in Cambodian political affairs and put Ang Duong under pressure. After the arrival of Tuan Him and his faction in Châu Đốc, Nguyễn Công Nhân, governor-general (*tổng đốc*) of An Giang and Hà Tiên provinces, agreed to settle the Chams and Malays in the Thất Sơn, Ba Xuyên, and Lạc Hóa districts (*DNTL* 29:85). Meanwhile, the Vietnamese officials in Châu Đốc, particularly Lê Văn Chiếu, sent men and boats to free the Chams and Malays captured by the Khmer royal armies and escort them to Châu Đốc (*DNTL* 29:97). Nguyễn Công Nhân was summoned by King Ang Duong to return the Cham and Malay chiefs and their families and followers to Cambodia,<sup>43</sup> but he rejected the request (Moura 1883: 133; Leclère 1914: 446; Mak 2003: 91). Towards the end of 1859, Ang Duong chose to take the Chams and Malays by force, leading to an armed confrontation with the Vietnamese (Moura 1883: 133; Mak 1988: 91; Lamant 1990: 72). The king's sudden death in 1860 ended the operations, and the Cham and Malay leaders remained in Châu Đốc until 1863.<sup>44</sup>

## 2. Patterns of Settlement and Integration

The Chams and Malays were restricted to areas chosen by the authorities, unlike the Việt settlers, who were allowed to settle anywhere (*Monographie* 1902: 37). The establishment of Cham and Malay settlements in Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc remained strictly under Vietnamese control. The Vietnamese authorities had also set out clear rules on integrating Cham and Malay settlements into Việt-populated areas. The authorities strongly encouraged ethnic heterogeneity in the south and especially in provinces inhabited by large non-Việt communities, such as Biên Hòa, Gia Định, Vĩnh Long, and An Giang.<sup>45</sup> Non-Việt villages were systematically incorporated into Việt villages in order to form a Việt district. From 1830 to 1840, the Huế court reorganized the regions inhabited by the Khmers of the Mekong Delta, the Stiengs in Biên Hòa, and the Chams in Pāṇḍuraṅga (Champa). In various areas of the Mekong Delta, the authorities combined Khmer and Việt villages to create new Việt administrative units, such as cantons. To disrupt the ethnic homogeneity of areas like Vĩnh Long, they attached Khmer

<sup>43</sup> See the letter of Chao Phya Phraklang, Siamese minister of foreign affairs, to Sir Robert Schomburg of British Council, dated 6 July 1860, published in Manich 2001: 151-3.

<sup>44</sup> See Chaophraya 1967: 250; Manich 2001: 195.

<sup>45</sup> See Choi 2004: 138-9 and 142-4.

villages to Việt districts or attached Việt villages to Khmer districts. They also supported the establishment of Việt villages in Khmer villages (Choi 2004: 138-9). The Stiengs in Biên Hòa were also subject to these administrative reforms. For a decade, the imperial authorities encouraged the formation of mixed Việt-Stieng districts in which the Việt villages were to absorb the surrounding Stieng villages (Choi 2004: 144). In Pāṇḍuraṅga (Champa), after the revolts of Katip Sumat in 1834, Ja Thak Wa in 1835,<sup>46</sup> and Thị Tiết and Thị Càn Oa in 1836 (*MMCY* 6:160-1), the Huế court ordered the systematic breaking up of Cham villages and their incorporation into Việt villages (*DNNTC* 12:42). The Huế court made it clear to its provincial officials that “It is necessary to scatter [the Chams] and settle them in all localities. It is crucial not to let them gather in one place but mix them with the Kinh, in order to maintain our control over them and avoid further troubles in the future” (*MMCY* 6:161). Chams and Malays from the Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc regions were no exception: the Vietnamese authorities never supported the formation of big Cham and Malay settlements but always scattered them in small units. The administrative distribution of Cham (or non-Việt peoples) settlements and their systematic inclusion into a purely Việt administrative unit enabled the Huế court to break the network of ties and alliances between the Chams and put them under strict surveillance. The organization of Cham and Malay settlements was still obvious, even after the French conquest of the southern provinces. According to Labussière’s report, in 1880, there were fifteen Cham and Malay hamlets (Ka Côi, Sbau, Ka Cô Ky, La-Ma, Phum Xoai, Châu Giang, and Katambong)<sup>47</sup> incorporated into seven Việt villages (Nhơn Hội, Khánh Bình, Khánh An, Vĩnh Trường, Vĩnh Lạc, Hào Lạc, and Khánh Hòa). The Cham hamlet Hà Bao was incorporated into the Khmer village bearing the same name. The largest hamlets (like Phum Xoai) were divided into several groups of houses and separated from each other by Việt households. The Cham and the Malay hamlets of Châu Giang were also separated from each other by Việt households (Labussière 1880: 377-8; Nguyễn 1974: 35).

The issue of the integration or assimilation of the non-Việt peoples was taken seriously by Emperor Minh Mạng. While neither the Nguyễn lords nor even Emperor Gia Long seemed to see a threat in the cultural diversity

<sup>46</sup> For details of the two revolts, see Po 1987 1:142-4 and 154.

<sup>47</sup> Some large hamlets were divided into smaller units: Sbau consisted of two units, Châu Giang of a Cham unit and a Malay unit, and Phum Xoai of four units. Strangely, the units did not each have a name but were called collectively by the name of the main hamlet.

of the ethnic peoples living in Việt territory, Minh Mạng was convinced that the cultural homogenization of the country and the disappearance of all regional peculiarities were essential. It seems, however, that the assimilation was carried out differently for the various ethnic groups. Generally speaking, in places where the local people were strongly opposed to this assimilation—as in Pāṇḍuraṅga, some Khmer areas of the Mekong Delta (Ba Xuyên, Sóc Trăng, etc.), and Cambodia—brutal measures were used to implement the assimilation policy. In Pāṇḍuraṅga, for instance, several Cham documents record the harsh measures employed by Vietnamese officials, such as the destruction of places of worship and cemeteries (CM35 (2): 21; 24-5); restrictions on religious ceremonies (CM35 (2): 21; Po 1987: 2.67-8); the remaking of ethnic dress (CAM 29 (2): 37-8; 77; Cornell Reel 4, MS38: 215-6);<sup>48</sup> forced instruction in the Vietnamese language (CM23: 19-20; CM35 (2): 22; CAM 60 (3): R5); and the forced adoption of Việt family names (MMCY6:144).<sup>49</sup> By 1832, Emperor Minh Mạng was proud to declare that the people in Thuận Thành (i.e., Pāṇḍuraṅga) would bear the name “new people” (*tân dân*), as they had completely assimilated the “new customs” (i.e., the Việt traditions) (MMCY 6:187-8). In 1838, the Khmers of the province of Vĩnh Long, in the Mekong Delta, were explicitly forbidden to follow their traditional temple education and were compelled to learn the Vietnamese language and customs (DNTL 5:284). In Cambodia, Minh Mạng in 1840 ordered that the Khmer population, formerly from Battambang, that had “allied” themselves with the Vietnamese and settled in Trấn Tây (i.e., the Vietnamese Protectorate or the Cambodian territories under the Vietnamese domination) were to be called “new people,” and he declared that its members “do not any longer know their native traditions, [and] day after day become more familiar with the Kinh’s [traditions]” (DNTL 22:9-10). There is no evidence that the Cham and the Malay settlers in Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc were considered “new people,” but there is no doubt that the government

<sup>48</sup> Two of the main reforms were the imposition of the wearing of Vietnamese trousers (*quần*, or *tarapha* in Cham manuscripts), and the Vietnamese long tunic, with buttons down the front (Vietnamese: *áo*; Cham: *au*). Until the reign of Emperor Minh Mạng, the Cham men used to wear a tunic and a loincloth; women used to wear a tight-fitting long tunic, often dark green, worn over a piece of cloth folded around the waist (Baudesson 1932: 177).

<sup>49</sup> The names were not, however, typical Vietnamese family names (such as Lê, Lý, Trần, and Ngô) but names of trees: Tùng (pine), Mai (plum tree), Liễu (willow), Đào (peach tree).

expected them to assimilate rapidly and become Vietnamese. The breakup of Cham and Malay communities and their integration into Việt administrative units enabled the imperial administration to put the non-Việt peoples under close surveillance, so as to monitor their assimilation. The authorities were convinced that, with time, the cultural and religious differences of the scattered non-Việt community villages would fade away: the non-Việt would emulate Việt customs and slowly adopt their customs and culture, with or without the help of local authorities. It was hoped that the Việt environment would lead to the “transformation of the customs” of the non-Việt peoples (*HDSL* 9:659). Vietnamese official documents do not record the use of brutal measures to accelerate the assimilation of the Chams and the Malays in Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc, but there is no doubt that a policy of vigorous assimilation was implemented. In 1831, for instance, Emperor Minh Mạng advised his officers, “It is thought necessary to remain vigilant in order to reassure the savages. [You must] day after day, encourage them to become saturated with the Kinh’s customs” (*DNTL* 10:398). The policy may have been tempered by military concerns. The Chams and the Malays were settled in strategic areas, and the administration was forced to concern itself with their feelings.

In spite of the Vietnamese authorities’ efforts to integrate and slowly assimilate the Chams and the Malays, it seems that adaptation was difficult in some cases. According to a Cham manuscript, the Chams who had been relocated from Phnom Penh to Châu Đốc in 1844-5 were thrown into confusion. They were penniless and, perhaps for the first time of their lives, had to rely on the authorities for their survival:

We had not kept any of our possessions. We were thinking that we would be able to buy [things by selling our properties]. Unfortunately, nothing was left. [We were not able] to buy paddy. We began to [suffer from] starvation. Nobody had a penny to buy [paddy]. We were deprived of rice. The Việt had rice in abundance. We were on the verge of going back, as without money, we could not buy the rice that was in abundance for the Việt (*CM38* (8): 83).

The issue was particularly serious, as the Chams considered secretly leaving the areas where the Vietnamese authorities had settled them (*CM38* (8): 87), probably with the aim of returning to Cambodia. The chiefs of the community may have been aware that leaving was extremely difficult, as, from 1833, Emperor Minh Mạng had expressly ordered his officials to seek out all individuals who had left their villages and force them to return (*MMCY* 5:48). The chiefs of the community had to ask the An Giang

authorities to release the men temporarily from their military duties, in order that they might cultivate the fields for their survival (CM38 (8): 87). This was a difficult request to make, because the Vietnamese needed all their military resources during hostilities with Cambodia and Siam. The population was suffering: “Some said that they would prefer death to starvation. They said that they could not stand to be deprived of rice” (CM38 (8): 88-9). The notables and chiefs of the community had to intercede with the authorities and ask for rice. Vietnamese authorities seemed to have responded positively, as Cham sources state that,

The Great Mandarin<sup>50</sup> pitied us. He asked that rice to be put in front of [our communal] granary [every] Monday. It was not easy. [Rice] was put in front of the [communal] granary on Mondays, three times a month. Listen to what I say: each [of us] was given four measures of rice (CM38 (8): 87).

Cham manuscripts show the paradox of the integration of the Chams and Malays. While the authorities made efforts to integrate these newly displaced communities, the local population was not prepared for the arrival of immigrants. It is true that the authorities were convinced that the Chams and Malays would assimilate with the Việt over time, but they did not take into account the threat of serious ethnic conflicts arising from the difficulties of living together. In Tây Ninh, the attention and privileges granted by the Vietnamese authorities to the new Cham settlers (1812-3) under the leadership of Po Cei Brei led to the development of vehement jealousy among the other settlers. These settlers demonstrated their anger clearly, and the tension provoked by their attitude led Po Cei Brei to consider leaving the place where he had settled to choose another village, Braik Mak (Mohamad 1990: 240). In Châu Đốc, too, problems arose from cohabitation with the Việt settlers. Cham manuscripts are more detailed regarding the disputes and enmities between these communities. According to the texts, Vietnamese settlers stole goods and agricultural produce from the Chams who were cultivating *lapuec* (or *lapuan*).<sup>51</sup> According to the Cham sources, after collecting the *lapuec*, they left it unwatched for a while, and, when they returned, everything was gone (CM38 (8): 87-8). After these incidents, the Chams and Malays were extremely wary of the Việt settlers.

<sup>50</sup> *ong praong* in the Cham text. It is not known whom the text refers to, but he must have been an important representative of the Vietnamese authorities in the Châu Đốc region.

<sup>51</sup> According to Aymonier and Cabaton (1906: 435), *lapuec* is a kind of water convolvulus.

Most of them believed that the Việt settlers deliberately tried to “starve [them] to death” (CM38 (8): 88). During the hard times following the migration to Cambodia and the settlement in Châu Đốc, the poorest members of the Cham and Malay communities had no choice but to beg. It is possible that the Chams and Malays were expecting to be helped, as they would have been by the members of their own communities. The Việt settlers apparently showed little sympathy towards the Chams and the Malays. As Cham sources state, “They were not ashamed of asking the Việt for rice. But now the Việt were stingy. They were not like [that] in the past, as [our] ancestors said. These damn stingy Việt<sup>52</sup> had plenty of rice but said they did not have any anymore” (CM38 (8): 89). It is true that these accounts cannot be accepted at face value, as they could have been influenced by the author’s own feelings and frustrations, but they do show that there was serious dissension among the various ethnic communities. Official Vietnamese documents provide little information regarding the relationships among the Chams, the Malays, and the Việt settlers but confirm that conflicts between the Việt and non-Việt communities were recurrent (LTNV 3:9).

### 3. Military Duties and Civilian Activities of the Chams and Malays

Cham and Malay men were considered reserve soldiers and were expected to take part in military operations. In Châu Đốc, their uniform differed from that of the regular Vietnamese army, in that the Chams and Malays wore red turbans (Schreiner 1902: 77). The Chams and Malays were expected to defend their colonies against any threat. According to Cham manuscripts, Po Cei Brei, in Tây Ninh, successfully suppressed a rebellion against the Vietnamese authorities, led by a man named Sulutan (Mohamad 1990: 244-5). It is not known if Po Cei Brei and his men were required to protect the district against Khmer attacks, but according to Cham sources they were prepared for any eventuality (Mohamad 1990: 236).

In the Châu Đốc region, the Chams and the Malays were grouped in nine military companies (*đội*) and placed under the leadership of a high-ranking military official based in Châu Giang.<sup>53</sup> Oral history keeps alive

<sup>52</sup> The author of the text uses the profanity *jaraong yuen*, which means literally “drowned Việt.”

<sup>53</sup> According to George Dürrwell, this official bore the title of *hiệp quân*. Schreiner and Sơn give him the title of *quân cơ* (Dürrwell 1898: 23; Schreiner 1902: 76-7; Sơn 1997: 145).

the story of the nine companies, and the Cham and Malay settlements of the province of An Giang are sometimes called the “nine villages” (Taylor 2007: 84). Historical sources show that, in 1840-1, the Chams and Malays took part in the suppression of the Khmer revolts in Sóc Trăng, Trà Tâm, Tượng Sơn, Ba Xuyên, and Lạc Hóa, under the leadership of Nguyễn Tri Phương (*QTCB*: 244; Labussière 1880: 374).<sup>54</sup> In 1860, after King Ang Duong had ordered military operations to capture the Cham and Malay chiefs who had taken refuge in An Giang province, the Chams and Malays in Châu Đốc were “volunteers” (*tình nguyện*) in the effort to ward off the Khmers. Under the leadership of Nguyễn Công Nhân, the military officials recruited eight hundred Chams and Malays and ordered them to build a fortress. When the conflict was over, they were rewarded and allowed to return to non-military activities (*DNTL* 29:136). According to Cham sources, between 1862 and 1867, after the outbreak of anti-French uprisings in the southern provinces,<sup>55</sup> Chams and Malays from Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc were asked to fight against the invading French and Spanish armies (*CM39* (37): 536).<sup>56</sup>

Apart from their military duties, Cham and Malay settlers were engaged in trade and agriculture. In Tây Ninh, many Chams were involved in wood-cutting and other exploitation of forest resources. It is possible that some Chams were enrolled in the “Regiment of the Carpenters,” and there were still many Cham woodcutters in the twentieth century. The Madrolle tourist guides describe them as “admirably energetic” but having an “austere lifestyle” (Cochinchine 1926: 35). According to Cham sources, the Chams in Tây Ninh also planted fruit trees such as jackfruit (Cham: *panat*), banana (*patei*), guava (*kadrum*), jujube (*madar*), and tangerine (*kruaic kuic*), as well as farming paddy (*padai*) and corn (*tangaiy*). Those who did not farm the fields worked in the forest collecting resin (*cai*) (Mohamad 1990: 238-9). Vietnamese sources corroborate that the collection of resin was performed mainly by non-Việt peoples (*HDSL* 4:318-9). The Chams

<sup>54</sup> They were many Khmer uprisings in the Mekong delta in 1840 and 1841. One of the most famous was led by Lâm Sâm in Ba Xuyên in 1841 (*DNTL* 23:188). The high-ranking generals Nguyễn Tri Phương and Nguyễn Tiến Lâm crushed the revolt in a few months (*DNTL* 3:492). The same year, revolts also broke out in Trà Tâm, Sóc Trăng, Ba Xuyên, and Lạc Hóa. All were suppressed by imperial forces (*DNTL* 23:225 and 256).

<sup>55</sup> These uprisings were led by high-ranking military officials, including Nguyễn Tri Phương and Trương Định (Fourniau 2002: 136).

<sup>56</sup> For a translation of this account of the Chams’ participation in the battles with the French and the Spanish, see Weber 2008: 39-57.

and Malays in Châu Đốc were involved in trading tobacco (Cham: *bukao*), fabric (*khan putih*), and various sorts of water convolvulus (CM38 (8): 84-7). Until the first half of the twentieth century, the Chams of Châu Giang commonly took part in the tobacco trade; they bought tobacco and resold it to people in other places in the Mekong Delta, such as Ba Chiêu, Sóc Trăng, and Rạch Giá. (Ner 1941: 160) They also manufactured terra-cotta pots (*gaok*), shrimp nets (*janyaok*), and small boats (*gaiy*) (CM 38 (8): 84). Vietnamese authorities made efforts to integrate the Chams and the Malays into the trade network of the southern provinces. In 1844, for instance, the Vietnamese government approved the opening of trading posts in order to facilitate exchanges between Cambodia and the southern provinces. Like the Việt and the Chinese, the Chams were allowed to trade for two days, twice a month. (QTCB: 259)

#### 4. The End of the Cham and Malay Colonies

The extension of French rule in Indochina put an end to the Cham and Malay colonies. On 20 September 1867, Admiral de La Grandière officially abolished the military colony system and dismantled the existing network. From then on, the settlements of each company and regiment (*đội* and *cơ*) would have their own village names (Schreiner 1902: 106). The military role of the Chams and Malays was also terminated, as the French administration considered that “auxiliary troops” were not needed (Labussière 1880: 374). The French also attempted to isolate Cham, Malay, and non-Việt communities from their Việt environment. According to Cham sources, soon after the conquest of the southern provinces and the imposition of the French rule the French ordered the establishment of the Khe Dol hamlet by the Chams in Tây Ninh and the appointment of chiefs of the commune chosen from the Cham population (CM39 (37): 536), but the task was not as easy as supposed. As Labussière pointed out in his report, “the real difficulty that we will face in the formation of Cham and Malay communes is to assign a territory to each of them. We will not be able to do it without taking this territory from the Annamese commune in which they are [presently] established” (Labussière 1880: 379). Labussière noticed that several Cham hamlets were scattered through the territory of a commune and separated from each other by Vietnamese hamlets. He suggested leaving the Cham hamlets where they were and granting the Chams and Malays communal responsibilities. Aware of the necessity of keeping the Chams and the Malays in Cochinchina, Labussière finally

suggested selling to the Chams and the Malays the land on which their houses are built (Labussière 1880: 380). The French made other attempts to isolate the Cham and Malay settlements from their Vietnamese environment; in Tây Ninh, for instance, Đông Tác was turned into a canton, at least temporarily (Langlet and Quach 2001: 82).

In order to assert their power over Vietnam by using the divide-and-rule policy, the French tried to isolate the ethnic minorities from their Việt environment and later strictly controlled Vietnamese influence on the ethnic minorities. In the case of the Mekong Delta territories and Cambodian border areas, however, the restrictions imposed on the Vietnamese influence did not apply. The territories colonized by the Vietnamese and where the Chams and Malays were established remained attached to Vietnam despite the claims of Cambodia.

### **Conclusion**

The Cham and Malay communities of southern Vietnam differ from other migrant communities, in that their members were called upon to play both a military and a political role. Just like ethnic Việt settlers, Chams and Malays have been part of a trend of migration that transformed southern Vietnam. By establishing the Chams and Malays in Tây Ninh and Châu Đốc, the Vietnamese pushed their frontier further into Cambodian territory and extended their influence. Cham and Malay identities had to disappear as identifiable groups within an ideal, culturally homogenous empire. The imperial government managed the Chams and the Malays carefully, with clearly established goals. By dispersing Chams and Malays into ethnic-Việt-populated villages, Vietnamese central authorities hoped they would become acculturated to the Việt, but the true extent of the Vietnamese imperial court's plan could never be realized because of the French conquests in Indochina. Once the south fell into French hands, Vietnamese military colonies were made redundant, thus causing Chams and Malays to lose their military role.

APPENDIX:  
GLOSSARY OF SINO-VIETNAMESE TERMS

- An Giang 安江  
 An Khê 安濟  
*an man cơ* 安蠻奇  
*áo* 襖  
 Ân Khu 恩區  
*áp* 邑  
 Ba Đình 婆丁  
 Ba Thắc 巴忒 or 波忒  
 Ba Xuyên 巴川  
*bảo hộ* 保護  
 Bàn Lân 槃隣  
 Biên Hòa 邊和  
 Bình Thạnh 平盛  
 Bình Long 平隆  
 Bình Thuận 平順  
*cai cơ* 該奇  
 Côn Man 昆蠻  
*cơ* 奇  
 Cự Giang 巨江  
*châu* 州  
*chiêu tập* 招集  
 Châu Đốc 朱篤  
 Châu Giang 朱江  
 Chiêm Thành 占城  
*chưởng cơ* 掌奇  
 Chương Cơ Ta 掌奇佐  
 Dương Ngạn Địch/Yang Yuandi 楊彥迪  
*đào* 桃  
*đạo* 道  
 Đồ Bà 闍婆  
*đội* 隊  
*đội mộc đình* 隊木丁  
*đội trưởng* 隊長  
 Đồng Nai 同狴 or 仝狴  
 Đông Tác 東作  
 Gia Long 嘉隆

Gia Định 嘉定  
 Gia Định Thành 嘉定城  
 Hà Bao 何包  
 Hà Tiên 河仙 or 河檣  
 Hải Đông 海東  
 Hải Tây 海西  
 Hào Lạc 豪樂  
 Hậu Giang 後江  
*hiệp quản* 協管  
 Hoàng Tiến/Huang Jin 黃晶  
 Huế 化  
*huyện* 縣  
*huyện quân* 縣君  
 Ka Cô Ky 歌狐棋  
 Katambong 歌尋奔  
 Kha Kham 歌衾  
 Khánh An 慶安  
 Khánh Bình 慶平  
 Khánh Hòa 慶和  
 Lạc Hóa 樂化  
 Lâm Sâm 林森  
 Leizhou 雷州  
 Lê Đại Cương 黎太綱  
 Lê Văn Chiêu 黎文炤  
 Lê Văn Duyệt 黎文悅  
*liêu* 柳  
 Lư An Huyện Quân 閩安縣君  
 Mạc Cửu/Mo Jiu 莫玖  
*mai* 梅  
*man* 蠻  
 Minh Mạng 明命  
 Mỹ Lâm Quận Chúa 美林郡主  
 Nam Vang/Nam Vinh 南營  
 Nặc Ông Chân 匿螭禎  
 Nặc Tôn 匿尊  
 Ninh Thuận 寧順  
 Ngọc Biện 玉卞  
 Ngọc Nguyên 玉源

Ngọc Thu 玉秋  
 Ngọc Vân 玉雲  
 Nguyễn Công Nhàn 阮公間  
 Nguyễn Cư Trinh 阮居貞  
 Nguyễn Phúc Ánh 阮福瑛 or 阮福映  
 Nguyễn Phúc Chu 阮福濶  
 Nguyễn Phúc Khoát 阮福濶  
 Nguyễn Tiến Lâm 阮進林  
 Nguyễn Tri Phương 阮知方  
 Nguyễn Văn Chiêu 阮文召 or 阮文昭  
 Nguyễn Văn Hào 阮文豪  
 Nguyễn Văn Tài 阮文才  
 Nguyễn Văn Thoại 阮文瑞  
 Nguyễn Xuân 阮春  
 Nhơn Hội 仁會  
*ông tướng quân* 翁將軍  
 Ốc Nha Bồn Nha Hiên 屋牙盆牙軒  
 Phong Nhiêu 豐饒  
 Phong Thạnh 豐盛  
*phủ* 府  
 Phủ Nộn 撫嫩  
 Phủ Vi 撫圍  
 Phum Xoai 品枚  
*quản cơ* 管奇  
*quần* 裙  
*quận chúa* 郡主  
 Quang Hóa 光化  
 Rạch Giá 迪石  
*sách* 柵  
*sài* 柴  
 Sbau 沙包  
 Sóc Trăng 塑莊  
 Sơn Cố 山固  
 Táp Ninh Huyện Quận 輯寧縣君  
 Tâm Phong Long 尋楓龍  
*tân dân* 新民  
 Tây Ninh 西寧  
 Tây Sơn 西山

Tây Thành 西城  
 Thâu Trung Huyện Quân 輸忠縣君  
 thổ 土  
 thống binh 統兵  
 tiền 錢  
 tình nguyện 情願  
 tổng 總  
 tuần sát 巡察  
 tổng đốc 總督  
 tùng 松  
 Tự Đức 嗣德  
 Tượng Sơn 襄山  
 Thất Sơn 七山  
 Thị Cán Oa 氏巾鍋  
 Thị Tiết 氏節  
 Thiện Chính 善政  
 Thiệu Trị 紹治  
 Thuận Thành 順城  
 Trần An Bình/Chen Anping 陳安平  
 Trần Thượng Xuyên/Chen Shangchuan 陳上川  
 Trấn Tây 鎮西  
 Trương Định 張定  
 Trương Minh Giảng 張明講  
 Trương Phúc Đình 張福頌  
 Vĩnh Định 永定  
 Vĩnh Lạc 永樂  
 Vĩnh Long 永隆  
 Vĩnh Trường 永長  
 Võ Văn Giải 武文解  
 Vô Tà Ớn 無邪恩  
 Xam Bô 參補  
 Xỉ Khê 齒溪

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### Abbreviations

CMKL: Cao Man Kỷ Lục

CMST: Cao Man Sự Tích

DNLT: Đại Nam Liệt Truyện  
 DNNTC: Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí  
 LTNV: Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí Lục Tỉnh Nam Việt  
 DNLT: Đại Nam Thực Lục  
 GDTTC: Gia Định Thành Thông Chí  
 HDSL: Khâm Định Đại Nam Hội Điển Sử Lệ  
 MMCY: Minh Mệnh Chính Yếu  
 MLCBTN: Mục Lục Châu Bản Triều Nguyễn  
 QTCB: Quốc Triều Chánh Biên

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