

Man of Prowess or Errant Vassal: Nang Ton Phuc's 11th century Bid for Autonomy Along the Sino-Vietnamese Frontier

By: James A. Anderson

Anderson, James. "Man of Prowess or Errant Vassal: Nùng Tôn Phúc's 11th century Bid for Autonomy along the Sino-Vietnamese Frontier" in *Southeast Review of Asian Studies* 22 (2002).

Made available courtesy of the Southeast Conference of the Association for Asian Studies:

<http://www.uky.edu/Centers/Asia/SECAAS/seras.html>

*****Reprinted with permission. No further reproduction is authorized without written permission from the Southeast Conference of the Association for Asian Studies. This version of the document is not the version of record. Figures and/or pictures may be missing from this format of the document.*****

Article:

Introduction

In late 1038, the Tai-speaking Sino-Vietnamese frontier chieftain Nùng Tôn Phúc (or Toàn Phúc)(? -1039) made his bid to be king.¹ Tôn Phúc's grab for power was as bloody as it was sudden when in late autumn he allegedly murdered both his brother and brother-in-law, and seized their lands. Tôn Phúc gave his newly amalgamated realm the hopeful name *Kingdom of Longevity* and took for himself the exalted title "*Luminous and Sage Emperor*."² He gave his eldest son Ming Ton Thông (? -?) the military title *King of the Southern Command* and his wife A Nung (? -1054) the title *Enlightened and Virtuous Empress Dowager*.³ Tôn Phúc then broke off all ties with the Vietnamese ruler Ly Phât Ma ((Thai Tang , r. 1028-1054), who was his principal patron and leader of the expanding ai Cô Viêt (968-1054) kingdom.

The suggestion that Tôn Phúc's family could be elevated in status to that of an imperial household brought the frontier chieftain into direct conflict with both the Chinese Song and Vietnamese Ly courts, and constituted a direct challenge to their rule. However, the Chinese authorities hesitated to take direct action. The Song statesman Sima Guang (1019-1086) would comment that when the local prefect at Tianzhou requested assistance to deal with Nùng Tôn Phúc's revolt, the officials from circuit seat of Yongzhou (modern-day Nanning) appeared afraid to become involved in the situation and declined to offer assistance.⁴ Quite the reverse of Chinese indecision, the response of Ly Phât Mã to Tôn Phúc's actions was swift and unwavering. In the spring of 1039 the Vietnamese ruler personally led an army into the northern highlands region to capture Tôn Phúc, his eldest son and his closest accomplices. The chieftain's wife and second son Nung Tri Cao (1025-1055) both managed to escape the manhunt by fleeing to the Song side of the border. However, the hapless captives were taken to the capital city of Than Long, modern-day Hà Nội, where the Vietnamese court soon beheaded them all in a public execution.

At first glance, this event appears to be no more than a minor disturbance along the Sino-Vietnamese frontier. Moreover, it is difficult to determine the motive behind the brash actions taken by Tôn Phúc and his followers. Did he act as a rebellious vassal who had abandoned his responsibilities to his direct superior, the Vietnamese ruler? Or did Tôn Phúc draw on political currents that found their origins beyond the court politics of Kaifeng or Thng Long? As events are described in the extant court chronicles, one could easily conclude that Tôn Phúc's behavior was influenced by the same forces that motivated many would-be founders of Chinese-style dynasties in the South, including even the early 10th century Vietnamese rulers. However, a careful examination of these same events from an indigenous perspective will reveal a more complex balancing of local and interregional concerns, targeting multiple audiences. To understand these differences, one must first examine how political relations were conducted under the Chinese imperial tribute system and its corollary frontier variant, the *jimi* or "loose rein" system.

View of the Frontier from the Chinese and Vietnamese Courts: a Tributary Gateway

When both the Song and Ly rulers sought to locate and interact with local chieftains inhabiting the peripheries of their realms, they did so through a political vocabulary developed by ancient Chinese scholars in their discussions of an ideal world order. This world order would be known in Western scholarship as the "tribute system," and tribute relations, or gift giving, as a court-centered activity, would eventually serve as a focal point around which imperial Chinese and Vietnamese political, economic and cultural exchanges with neighboring polities revolved. The pre-modern Chinese tribute system was based on an early Han (roughly 3rd century BCE) understanding of legendary ties fostered between the Zhou ruling house and its vassal states during the Spring and Autumn Period (771-480 BCE).

According to this ideal version of imperial administration presented in the ancient text *Rites of Zhou (Zhou Li)*, the ruler viewed his empire through the setting of the Nine Domains, emanating out from his personal residence. To maintain his realm of authority, the ruler awarded fiefs of land to all of his subordinates, according to their hierarchical rankings. In return, the ruler expected regular presentations of tribute from all quarters. Local resources from each region called native tribute (*tugong*) dictated the quality and quantity of these gifts. Several works in the Confucian canon, specifically *Rites of Zhou* and *Tribute of Yu (Yu Gong)*, described the spatial arrangement of tributary states beyond the Zhou royal house, as well as positioning of these states' emissaries in ceremonies involving the Zhou rulers.⁵

The successful reign of a Son of Heaven (*Tian Zi*), as envisioned by the Rites of Zhou authors, required political unity under the legitimate leadership of the royal house. This was a ruler whose every action would have a direct effect on his subjects. However, only when all peoples had recognized the legitimacy of the Son of Heaven would this designated ruler have the power to bring harmony to the forces governing Heaven and Earth. Early political treatises such as the *Tribute of Yu*, the *Record of the States (Guo Yu)*, the *Rites of Zhou*, and the *Xunzi*, all detailed how the Son of Heaven and his subjects, including non-Chinese subjects beyond the nine central provinces, ought to behave in encounters with one another.⁶

This pivotal role of the Chinese emperor was certainly not unique to the early Chinese imperial system. Considering early state development worldwide, Henri Claessen and Jarich Oosten have noted that in many societies "the central position of the ruler is usually based upon a mythical charter and a genealogy which connects him to gods, ancestors, or spirits."⁷ These researchers contend that the legitimacy of these early states were often "based upon a notion of reciprocity," by which subjects provided the sovereign with gifts and services and the ruler responded with promises of an orderly society and "the bestowal of benevolence."⁸ In the Chinese imperial practice, gift giving in increasingly elaborate ceremonies became an integral part of these encounters. Although these early descriptions of the tribute giving were highly idealized, the implied relationship between an absolute ruler from the Central Plains region of North China and his non-Chinese subjects continued to appeal to subsequent generations of Chinese emperors.

The tribute system worked well in managing relations with distant neighbors. However, a related system was eventually introduced to organize ties with China's border communities. The Tang dynasty brought the establishment of the "loose rein" (*jimi*) system of frontier prefectures and districts. The *jimi* system fit into the traditional Chinese frontier policy of "using barbarians to control barbarians (*yi man zhi man*)," although the general stability of the southwest frontier during the Tang certainly played a role in implementing such a lenient policy. Under this system the Tang court appointed leaders of local ethnic groups to exercise authority at the military prefecture (*fu*), civil prefecture (*zhou*), county (*xian*), and "mountain grotto" (*dong*) levels. The official rank of these local leaders varied; some were granted the title Area Commander-in-Chief (*dudu fu*), a military designation, while leaders at the *zhou* and *xian* levels would often receive irregular hereditary titles such as regional chief (*cishi*), commandery prince (*junwang*), principality administrator (*zhangshi*), and "equestrian sentinel" (*sima*). The Tang court charged these local leaders with the collection of native tribute, the organization of corvée labor, and the pacification of banditry. This system collapsed with the fall of the Tang.

However, the founders of the Song dynasty immediately restored the institutions as a part of their own border policy, even granting titles to clans that could provide evidence of their service to Tang rulers.

This system of employing local chieftains both to maintain regional stability and to supply a steady stream of "local products" to the Chinese court was by nature a delicate arrangement. The Chinese rulers encouraged strong leadership from their local representatives. However, they were well aware of instances in the past when powerful chieftains had chosen to establish independent kingdoms, challenging the Tang court's regional control and eluding Chinese sovereign might, as was the case with the founding of the Nanzhao kingdom in 750. As the Northern Song scholar Fan Zuyu (1014-1098) commented, "Since the founding of the Tang, in activities requiring leadership in the south, (Chinese) rulers all have turned to border officials who grab up positions with an eye toward personal gain. They begin by gathering together local *Man* people, and then come to our country to pillage and rob. This situation has become a great concern to the country."⁹ The Tang court's recourse was to maintain a centralized military force strong enough to quell such frontier disturbances quickly and decisively. However, by the late 8th century, in the aftermath of the An Lushan Rebellion, the Chinese court was seldom able to muster such a force.

The source of continuing conflict may actually be found in the frontier's own political order. Writing about the pre-modern "local commander" (*tusi*) system of China's northwest border, Owen Lattimore once noted: "The new character of authority (of border chiefdoms) seems to be directly related to the function of the chief as representative of his tribe, recognized by the Chinese in order to provide institutions and conventions for the coexistence of the Chinese community and the tribal communities... In this way the hereditary principle is strengthened and a family of chiefs may come to have a vested interest in perpetuating the subordination of the people as a whole, in order to sustain its own authority. A status of this kind is quite compatible with occasional leadership of tribal insurrections against the dominant people."¹⁰ These local hereditary positions were created to fit within a framework of Chinese institutional order, but these positions also produced opportunities for expanding and exploiting power by the same individuals charged with their administration.

It is likely that few officials, either Song or *ai Cô Viêt*, were surprised when border tensions erupted in the early 11th century. The Sino-Viêt frontier had long suffered from poverty and banditry, and the region was known to be unstable as the result of mass migrations, natural disasters, or local administrative weakness. During the latter Han dynasty (AD 162-178), several rebellions spread throughout the mountain valleys of Guangxi and Guizhou, effectively cutting off Giao Chi's administrative center, Thng Ngô, from the southern portion of the Han-Viêt territory. The Han court, weakened by internal dissent, was finally forced to send a new governor Jia Zong (? -?), who was said to display uncommon sympathy for the local people.¹¹ In a poem that circulated years after Jia's day, it was written, "Father Jia arrived late, allowing us first to rebel. (However) one sees this region at peace, a place where local officials dare not eat (at the expense of the local people)."¹² Local rebellions during the Tang dynasty led to permanent geopolitical and cultural changes. When an ill-prepared Tang army failed to pacify a local revolt by the "Yellow Grotto barbarians," other acts of rebellion destabilized the border region.¹³ Chinese efforts to regain local control were incomplete, and the regional unrest fed into wider conflicts among local chiefs. These tensions eventually played a part in igniting the war with the Nanzhao kingdom in 854.¹⁴ Moreover, the conflicts widened the gap between the Han-Viet officials and residents living around the Hang River delta and the local chieftains from the mountainous border region, who had rallied behind the anti-Tang banner.

The Chinese court during the early Song focused on the consolidation of civil authority, building on practices successfully implemented at the height of Tang dynastic power. To this end, the Song court followed the subjugation of its leading southern rival, the Nan Han court in 971 by recognizing and seeking the loyalty of local leaders along the Southwest frontier. Leaders who approached the court with requests for "Interior Dependency" (*neifu*) status were awarded with a variety of honorific titles from antiquity. The early Song court at this time offered specific titles to demonstrably loyal members of the Zhuang border community. Moreover, the Song's apparent military superiority inspired loyalty among these local chieftains. As Jeffery Barlow states, "The (Song) campaigns against southern Han were so swift and well-managed that they must have seemed, to the Zhuang, irresistible."¹⁵

The example of the Tai-speaking frontier chieftain Mo Hongyan (? -?) illustrates how the Song court desired to exercise control along its southwestern frontier. During the summer of 974, Mo Hongyan, an "uplands militia leader" of the Nandan Aboriginal Prefecture, sought "Interior Dependency" status from the Song court.¹⁶ Sources suggest that Mo first proclaimed himself Military Governor of his region, and then sent his lieutenant Chen Shaogui (? -?) to establish tribute relations with the Chinese court.¹⁷ As the first Song emperor Taizu, Zhao Kuangyin (928-976) reportedly granted Mo the title Regional Inspector (*cishi*).¹⁸ The Mo clan continued to receive this title for several generations, maintaining their position of leadership in the region. Leaders of the border region saw security and stability in the establishment of tributary ties with the Chinese court, placating a powerful potential adversary while securing support for their own local expansion. Meanwhile, Song officials measured the depth and breadth of the empire's influence by the number of tributary titles granted and number of tribute missions received at court.

In 976, at a time when the recalcitrant Southern Tang (937- 976) armies had just fallen to Song forces, the newly enthroned Song Taizong (r. 976-97) announced that the border policy would continue to follow ancient precedents.¹⁹ Mo sent another envoy with tribute and a request for an imperial seal to confirm Mo's appointment. The emperor ordered that this seal be carved and given to the tribute mission.²⁰ Mo's position was thus made hereditary, marking the beginning of the Mo clan's administration of Nandan Prefecture for future generations. With court patronage, the Mo clan expanded their territorial reach and economic control as cattle herders in their region, and even commanded a local militia of sixty men. While Mo gained stature and power through his appointment, he also was beholden to the Song court. Mo's indebtedness was clearly marked by his offering of one hundred *liang* of silver in 980, probably as a part of a group of 734 local leaders from the southwest brought tribute and prized horses to the Chinese on the eve of an attempted invasion of the ai Cô Việt kingdom. Ample textual evidence provides a clear picture of the Mo clan's rise to local prominence through Song court patronage in Guangxi; however, their case was not exceptional. The Nùng clan took a similar path to power.

Although the Vietnamese leadership described relations with their neighbors, particularly China, in tributary terms, the ai Cô Việt court's method of controlling the peoples along its northern border initially differed considerably from the Chinese model. First of all, the ai Cô Việt ruler maintained personal bonds with his border officials, all of whom were allied to the central court through yearly oaths of loyalty.²¹ Secondly, the Ly court leadership, after quelling the civil warfare that followed the collapse of the short-lived Former Lê Dynasty (980-1009), faced very little domestic unrest. The early Ly emperors could turn their attention to the direct control of Giao Chi's southern and northern frontiers.²² In the example of Ly Phât Mã, the ruler married his daughter the princess B"nh Dng (? -?) to a powerful border official to support good relations. Marriage alliances between emperors and foreign rulers were practiced in the past in China as well. However, the Việt court was not firming up ties with neighboring kingdoms. Rather, it was strengthening domestic stability by personalizing ties between the central court and its appointed border representatives. While the Chinese court granted titles and extended institutions as a way of laying claim to frontier authority, the ai Cô Việt court at the beginning of the Ly dynasty was elaborating on a more personal, more engaged policy of border relations.

Although the Vietnamese leadership often attempt to strengthen frontier relations through peaceful means, military excursions into border territory in the period prior to Nùng Tôn Phúc's revolt were also common. As Barlow writes, "Typical examples of Vietnamese raids include one ordered by Ly Công Uân (974-1028), the founder of the Ly dynasty in 1009, who, in 1017 dispatched his brother-in-law to raid into Yong prefecture. The local administrators ordered local militia (*tuding*) from the mountain grotto settlement to pursue them."²³ In early 1029, Phât Mã had attempted to pacify the border region with an arranged marriage between his daughter the princess B"nh Dng and the hereditary head of frontier Lang Châu Prefecture and the Thàn clan, Thàn Thiêu Thái (? -?)²⁴ Shortly after the marriage alliance was announced, Giáp ănh Nãi (? -?), leader of nearby A" Châu prefecture, revolted. Phât Mã personally led the expedition to put down the revolt and capture of its leader. When the frontier prefecture of Hoan Châu rebelled in early 1030, and in Nguyễn (? -?) and Trê Nguyễn (? -?) rose up in rebellion in 1033, Phât Mã launched punitive campaigns to suppress these revolts.

During this same period Ly Phât Mã began to express the nature of his regional authority increasingly often in imperial terms. In the spring of 1034, Phât Mã adopted a new reign title *thông thủy* to acknowledge both his military victories and the appearance of various auspicious signs around the palace compound. He then issued the edict that all officials should present memorials formally before his throne, and that they should convene in a hall he designated "the imperial court."²⁵ The Viêt ruler further tested his authority at court a year later by promoting a favorite concubine to imperial status as Empress Thiên Cam. When dissent over this change in the imperial household erupted in the form of yet another rebellion in A" Châu prefecture, Phât Mã swiftly crushed his opposition.

By late 1036, however, unrest in the vicinity of the ai Cô Viêt kingdom came to the attention of even Kaifeng when violence spilled over the border. In the fall of 1036 inhabitants of Giáp ông , Lng Châu , Tô Mu Quang Nguyễn an Ba B"nh Nguyễn ô Kim, and Thng Tân, all within the Lâm Tây administrative circuit, revolted. The insurrection eventually crossed into Song territory at Siling, Xiping and Shixi all sub-prefectures within Yongzhou Prefecture. Rebels reportedly robbed both indigenous inhabitants and Chinese settlers of horses and cattle, and burned their homes before returning to the Viêt side of the border. Upon hearing of these attacks, the Chinese court held the Viêt court responsible for a lack of regional supervision; the Song emperor officially admonished Ly Phât Mã, demanding that the perpetrators be attacked and captured.²⁶

The Viêt leader did not require much encouragement to reach his direct control into this border region. On February 17, 1037, Ly Phât Mã and his son the Phung Kiên prince personally led a military expedition to Lâm Tây. Phât Mã had left his other son and heir-apparent Ly Nhật Tôn, the Khai Hoàng prince, in charge of affairs at court. The court military quickly subdued the rebel force, and by the third month the troops had returned to the capital. The ai Cô Viêt ruler then ordered the imperial garrison at Nghê An prefecture to take control of fifty local storehouses, including T Thành, Li Nhân, and V"nh Phong.²⁷ In the process of responding to the Song edict, the Ly court did not hesitate to extend their direct control of the area's resources. This quest for power consolidation would directly influence the development of events in the next large-scale disturbance. Little more than a year would pass before Nùng Tôn Phúc would launch his bid for power in the face of the expanding Vietnamese authority.

In the wake of Nung Tôn Phuc's rebellion, Ly Phât Mã's harsh response to Tôn Phuc's act of defiance may be considered suitable, given his responsibilities as a tributary vassal of the Song court. Tributary protocol required that the Vietnamese leader be held accountable for all local disturbances in this Sino-centric world order. However, perhaps more importantly in the eyes of his own subjects, Ly Phât Mã chose to interpret Tôn Phúc's act as a threat to the harmony of a world order that he alone maintained. Shortly before killing his prisoners, Phât Mã expressed to his assembled court his anger, and restated the imperial scope of his own leadership in the short *Imperial Mandate to Pacify the Nùng*:

Once I had come to possess all under Heaven, all of my generals, ministers, and officials led a great celebration. From all foreign lands and special regions there was no one who did not attend. Furthermore, according to precedent, the Nang clan for generations has protected our frontier, and they have frequently come to court bearing tribute. Today Tôn Phúc is displaying a great arrogance by illicitly adopting a reign title and by issuing edicts. His followers are gathering like swarms of gadflies, and he has spread poisonous ideas among the border people. With Heaven's authority, I will strike out and punish him. I have made five members of that group, Tôn Phúc among them, outlaws, and I will have them beheaded at the capital.²⁸

This claim of heavenly right to resort to hegemonic action for greater good sounds much like the type of world order promoted by Chinese rulers. Since the founding of an independent Viêt state, the Ly rulers were the first local leaders to project this vision on their realm. Claiming universal authority and Heaven's sanction for his actions placed Ly Phât Mã at the same level of power as a Chinese emperor. To appeal to his own subjects, the Viêt ruler was prepared to reach beyond the Song's conferred tributary vassal status to claim imperial omnipotence.

Later Vietnamese histories became more ambiguous on the question of sovereignty, perhaps because the goal of these historians in the matter of settling the issue of regional responsibility was to delineate the outermost boundary of the Việt court's effective authority. By the 15th century, the events surrounding Nùng Tôn Phúc's rebellion found a place in the larger context of Sino-Việt relations. In the DVSKIT, the events are set in the context of the Việt emperor's greater responsibility to his realm. The entry for 1039 begins with a description of Ly Phât Mã's 2nd month performance of agricultural rites. The DVSKYT notes "Thái Tông (Ly Phât Mã) restored the ancient rites by performing the ritual plowing of the imperial fields in person. In this manner, he ruled 'All under Heaven' addressing (Heaven) above him by worshipping at the ancestral temple, and addressing (Man) below him by leading the myriad common people. Ruling in this manner led to riches and prosperity (for the realm). This was beneficial indeed!"²⁹ This reference to the practice of this ancient imperial ritual of Chinese origin is followed by a reference to the rebellion, dated 12/1039: "In Quang Nguyên, Nùng Tôn Phúc rebelled, and the Song granted (the Việt) emperor the title *King of Southern Pacified Region*." The next entry reads "in that same year the *Eastern Expedition King* used his power and authority to wipe out (the rebels)."³⁰ By linking the events of the ritual plowing of his own lands and the suppression of banditry at the command of the Song court, the DVSKTT account reveals the interesting overlapping of spheres of authority that the Ly ruler had established to insure the survival of his kingdom.

The significance of the joining of these two events would not be lost on a contemporary reader. The Việt emperor is first shown performing the universalistic role of linking the realm above (Heaven) to the realm below (Man). This is the very same position of authority claimed by the Chinese emperor, and any attempt to attribute this responsibility to both Chinese and Việt ruler anticipates the inherent tension in Sino-Việt relations. However, in a separate but related context, the Việt ruler is a *King of the Southern Pacified Region* within the Song political sphere, and he performs this duty with "kingly authority (*wang li*)." The Việt emperor, in the eyes of his people, is the universal ruler whose realm, "all under Heaven," is all that the Chinese notion also suggests. However, in contemporary Song political terms, the Việt ruler is a king among other kings, albeit one whose authority, granted by the Chinese court, extends to the pacification of regional conflict.

The Song court, in reacting to Vietnamese success in crushing the uprising, considered events specifically in terms of the two courts' tributary relationship. As noted above, in early 1039, Emperor Renzong granted Phât Mã the title *King of Southern Pacified Region*.³¹ The court likely regarded the title granted to Phât Mã as a reminder of the Việt ruler's position within the network of tributary relations and also as a request that the Viet leader keep a watchful eye on this weakened region and curtail the activities of any group who might wish to stir up trouble. Without a strong military presence along the southern frontier, the early Song court continued to turn defense and policing over to its local representative, presumed to be the vassal ruler in Thng Long.

However, one might also argue that the Chinese court's willingness to leave Việt authorities in charge of the border region revealed an imperial lack of concern for this frontier area. During the early Song, disturbances along China's northern border, generated by frayed relations with both the Liao and Xi Xia nomadic kingdoms, had occupied most of the court's attention. When Nùng Tôn Phúc led his uprising, the Song emperor Renzong showed little interest in taking direct action to quell the unrest. Instead, he relied on the historical precedent of delegating a frontier representative, in this case the ruler of Giao Chi, to perform such tasks. While threats to Song territory along the northern border involved militarily formidable foes and had a direct effect on Kaifeng's security, disturbances on the southern frontier were contained enough to be handled indirectly through the delegation of authority.

This decision was further conditioned by the hierarchical order at the heart of the tributary relationship that the Song court had fostered with the Việt rulers. As a practice underlining the Song court's claim to be the region's central authority, Chinese rulers retained the privilege to grant special titles to subordinates for their services. The Song's granting of the title *King of Southern Pacified Region* to Phât Mã signaled support for a defensive move against the Nùng clan rebels. The early Song court saw frontier stability as its prerogative, but saw the active policing of the Southwest as the responsibility of its tributary neighbor, the ai Cô Việt kingdom.

The balancing of roles and responsibilities between acting as a tributary king in the Chinese context and ruling with imperial authority in the Việt context is echoed in a Vietnamese account of Ly Phât Mã's capture and execution of Nùng Tôn Phúc. Chinese court scholars once argued that, in the process of imposing this order, the ai Cô Việt court's severe treatment of the border communities led to further unrest, and that the local situation only worsened.³² More likely, it was Ly Phât Mã's initial unwillingness to eliminate the Nùng clan completely, hoping that the court could retain their loyalty that contributed to the crisis. In any case, this episode was followed by a series of rebellions that left a lasting imprint on Sino-Viet relations for years to come.

Tai Clan Rivalry and Economic Competition

To understand fully the local balance of power in the southwest border region, we must picture a social order that predated the imposition of Chinese imperial institutions. The frontier region inhabited by Tai-speaking indigenous peoples in the 11th century extended from Bao Lac Prefecture to V"nh An Prefecture in the northern Việt region and the Qinzhou Prefecture on the South Chinese coast. Although both Việt and Chinese authorities labeled all of the local inhabitants as "barbarians of the South" (*man*), there were many distinct communities throughout this region. The majority of these communities belong to a single Tai-speaking ethnicity, the Chinese *Zhuang* or Vietnamese Nùng ethnic group.

During the 11th century, most of the Sino-Việt border region was controlled by a small number of surname-groups. In the easternmost area of the frontier, the Hoàng/Huang surname group was predominant. Although this group was relatively small, Viet rulers often assigned its members leadership positions in An V"nh.³³ By the early Song period, the Vi/Wei surname group had settled in the Tô Mậu Prefecture in the northern Việt region and in Siling, Luzhou, and Xiping regions on the Song side of the border. These two groups, along with the Nùng/Nong and Chu/Zhou surname groups, were the principal occupants of a region between the Viet and Han Chinese settlements. Leaders among these surname groups maintained strong personal, quasi-familial ties, through which they maintained their authority. Describing the indigenous border communities of 16th-century Guangxi, one historian writes, "while chieftains who shared the same family name did not necessarily share the same ancestry... they often invoked the real or imagined ties to form alliances or to assert their influence."³⁴ The practice of fashioning a network of kinship-like relations, joined by particular surnames, predates even this study. This custom accounts for the fact that following the Nang rebellion, the number of local inhabitants bearing the surname Nùng declined considerably, while an increased number of people from the same region used the surname Triêu (Zhao), which was the surname of the Song ruling family.

The Nang clan traditionally owed their loyalty to a Sino-Viet elite who had governed An Nam (or northernmost Vietnam) during the Tang dynasty. By the early Song dynasty, Nùng leaders were in charge of four administrative units (*duo*) once part of the Tang's "loose rein (*jimi*)" system; the prefectures of Anping and Zhongliang in modern-day China, as well as Vu Lc and Quang Nguyên Vietnam.³⁵ The Bng River region of steep mountains and valleys in which the Nùng clan lived was known for its gold and cinnabar, although the people lived primarily from agricultural production. Settlements were in villages along the Bng River, in connected valleys, and at higher altitudes along mountain slopes. Although the village settlements were secluded from one another, interaction with other native groups, and later with Han settlers, was common. Moreover, even with the decline of the Tang and the resulting dissolution of direct northern court control in the region, the Nang continued to accept the patronage of absent rulers, both from the north and from the Việt region, who claimed nominal control of border region.

Song Taizong also bestowed favor on the Nùng leadership, when this clan succeeded the Hoàng clan as the dominant political presence in the Left and Right Rivers Region. Given the strategic location of this region amid the mountains bordering on territory claimed by the ai Cô Việt kingdom, the Chinese emperor was wise to gain its leaders' loyalty. The first member of the clan to in official recognition was Nùng Tôn Phúc's father Nùng Dân Phu (? -?). In early 977, a memorial from the Yongzhou Garrison reported that the aboriginal chieftain of Quang Nguyên Prefecture, the "Peaceful and Generous" leader Nùng Dân Phu had already established himself as the leader of a *po* of ten neighboring villages, after gaining the support of the Southern Han (907-971)

court.³⁶ Authorities in Yongzhou recommended that the Song court ask for Dân Phú's lands by imperial decree, and grant the local leader "Interior Dependency" status in return for the payment of tribute and taxes.

The emperor decreed that Dân Phil receive the title of acting Minister of Works and "Grand Master of Splendid Happiness Bearing the Golden Pocket with Purple Trimming".³⁷ The court then assigned Xu Dao (? -?), Transport Commissioner of Guangzhou, the task of traveling to Dân Phú's home region to confer the title. These titles were much too grand to hold any specific meaning for this local leader. However, the Chinese court wished to make its mark in this far-flung territory. As mentioned earlier, the Song leadership granted nominal ranking to local leaders who joined Chinese forces in the ultimately unsuccessful assault on Lê Hoàn's forces in 980. Granting lofty titles to this local leader may well have been an effort to instill allegiance to the Song throne in those persons who actually wielded authority in this distant region.

Dân Phú would eventually pass his honors to his son, and Nùng Tôn Phúc had been granted the additional authority to rule Thang Do Prefecture, which was located to the northwest of Quang Nguyên. His younger brother Toàn Lộc (? -1039) controlled Van Nhai Prefecture, while his wife A Nùng's younger brother Nùng anh ao (? -1039) controlled Vu Lc Prefecture, his family's traditional seat of power.³⁸ Nùng Tôn Phúc's local prominence was bolstered by both wealth and political influence. Quang Nguyên Prefecture reportedly was a great source of gold, and that this natural wealth had made Nùng Tôn Phúc a rich man.³⁹

Moreover, Tôn Phúc augmented his existing riches through local trade.⁴⁰ His citadel's location on the banks of the Bng River suggests that he had managed to capitalize on a placement of his power base along the region's main trading artery. The control of river traffic was likely Tôn Phúc's method for extracting the greatest material benefit from his political command.⁴¹ Equally important was the fact that Tôn Phúc's Nung clan had gained a reputation in both courts of being a loyal and trusted vassal in a region that had seen considerable turmoil for over one hundred years. At the time of his rebellion he was the region's most powerful man. However, political authority coupled with military might, and not the accumulation of material wealth, was the measure for individual success in Tôn Phúc's day.

Nùng Tôn Phuc's "home region" along the Bang River consisted of nine semi-autonomous regions of various sizes, called *po* or *bu*.⁴² Historians of uplands Tai-speaking societies on the pre-modern Southeast Asian Mainland refer to these communities as *muang*.⁴³ However, as the anthropologist Ann Maxwell Hill notes, *muang* is not easily translated in English as "kingdom" or "state," because these terms suggest a unity that *muang* traditionally lacked.⁴⁴ The historian David Wyatt notes that the term "denotes as much personal as spatial relationships."⁴⁵ *Muang* would grow and contract through as the result of forced capture, marriage alliances and the cooperation of leaders from a single clan. As Hill writes, "such alliances created loose, shifting hierarchies of *muang* in which one domain and princely family would be recognized by the others as the political center."⁴⁶ However, under such circumstances, control from the center of a *muang* would depend heavily on the consensus of the leader's most powerful followers.

Regarding Nùng leadership's relations with both the Vietnamese and Chinese courts, one must consider that frontier chieftains likely accepted a flexible understanding of regional sovereignty and overlapping spheres of authority in the region. This system may not have adhered closely to the tributary model that the Song court believed provided a political framework for this part of the empire. The notion of sovereignty most familiar to Western readers is one that describes supreme and independent political authority. However, this definition does not fully describe the patterns of relations that existed between the pre-modern mainland Southeast Asian societies on China's southwestern frontier. A more accurate term might be "shared sovereignty," through which a less powerful kingdom might establish tributary relations with two overlords, without undermining the regional authority of either of these larger kingdoms.⁴⁷ Thongchai Winichakul writes that the sovereignty of premodern Southeast Asian states were "multiple and capable of being shared- one for its own ruler, another for its overlord- not in terms of a divided sovereignty but rather a sovereignty of hierarchical layers."⁴⁸ Such a model of relations could be applied to the kind of ties maintained by the Nùng and other frontier communities with the ai Cô Việt court at Thng Long. However, this model doesn't appear to extend north of the frontier

region. When Nùng Tr' Cao and his mother would later lead a revolt to establish the Great Succession Kingdom, Vietnamese records told how Tr' Cao was captured, pardoned by the emperor, and eventually placed in charge of Quang Nguyên Prefecture.⁴⁹ There was no mention of the Song presence in the region, nor was there any suggestion that the Chinese had any influence over this appointment.

Another important feature of political relations among the communities among the southwestern frontier was a nascent client-patron system of social intercourse. As Thongchai Winichakul writes, "in the indigenous Southeast Asian tradition, a subject was bound first and foremost to his lord rather than to a state."⁵⁰ This system has been described in the context of the early Thai kings, but it has applications to relations between leading Tai-speaking clans in the Left and Right Rivers Region and the Song and ai Cô Viet courts. This patron-client system involved the presentation of gifts as the central feature of a request for protection and patronage.⁵¹ David Wyatt writes, "Although *muang* society was hierarchical, it must be emphasized that the patron-client relationship, the ruler/ruled dichotomy, was not nearly as one-sided as it may appear."⁵² As another Thai historian notes, "when a 'Phu Noi (the Inferior)' gave gifts (to) or performed services (for) a 'Phu Yai (the Superior)' and the (latter) gave favor, protection or assistance to him in return, then the 'Phu Noi' kept on doing so. (However), if the 'Phu Yai' didn't do anything in return, the 'Thu Noi' could stop giving... services."⁵³ This system of reciprocity differed from the Chinese system of tribute relations in that it was based on actions taken by each party, and not relationship that existed between them. Song Taizu, by accepting the tribute of the Nùng leader Nùng Dân Phú, saw the established relationship as hereditary and unconditional. This relationship was regulated with each presentation of tribute to the Chinese court; however, its position within the overall tributary hierarchy was left unchanged. From the Nùng leadership's perspective, however, the presentation of tribute set up obligations for both parties. When the Nùng found themselves squeezed by an expanding Việt dominion to its south, and without the direct support of their Song "patron" to the north, they felt no obligation to temper their own bids for power.

Here we also see the possibility for multiple "Tai" meanings in the Chinese character political titles that Nùng Tôn Phúc adopted. Contained within Tôn Phúc's own chosen imperial title was the character *zhao*. *Zhao* was a term in common usage among the Tai-speaking peoples of South and Central Mainland Southeast Asia to denote "chief," "-king," or "prince" in the local political order.⁵⁴ The term is written as *chao* in the transliteration of modern Thai. This title was referred to the territory claimed by the local ruler, as well as the populations under his control. There are a number of variants in the Chinese historical record for this title *zhao*, including *zhao*, *zhao* and *zhao* incorporated into the name of the Nanzhao kingdom. Moreover the character for "king/prince" and "august one/emperor" are homophones (huông) in the modern Tai "Nùng" dialect spoken in Tôn Phúc's home region.

Leaders of *muang* were referred to in Tai-speaking communities as *caw* (alternate transliterations include the Thai *chao* and the Shan term *sao*), and they were lords of varying degrees of power who received tribute and corvée labor from villages that sought the regional stability these military strongmen promised to provide.⁵⁵ Moreover, when a *muang* (or *po*) lost its leader, the other regions would gather together in a "competition," from which a new strongman displaying leadership qualities would emerge.⁵⁶ While this position could be considered hereditary, the leading family had to maintain their stature as powerful and effective leaders, or they would face further challenges from their neighbors. One scholar studying the southwest border Chieftaincy system in place during the later Ming period has compared the network of relations between these regions to the feudal system of the Warring States period after examining the autonomous nature of the smaller political units and the harsh manner in which larger chiefdoms preyed on their smaller neighbors.⁵⁷ This competition between chiefdoms was recorded as early as the Tang dynasty, when the Wei, Huang, Zhou, and Nùng clans would often invade each other's territory. Even before the Song period, when Ming leaders perceived that the opportunity for affirming their local preeminence had arrived, they acted in a manner consistent with the prevailing system of indicators of political power. The Chinese system of titles and appointments wielded authority beyond the immediate region in which the Nùng lived, but the clan required local symbols of power to protect themselves at home.

One should also note that Nùng Tôn Phúc's actions were not without historical precedent. There were the examples of past kingdoms that had sprung up in South China during two major periods of dynastic disunion, the period of Northern and Southern Courts (222-589) and the Five Dynasties Period (907-979). Perhaps more importantly, there was the example of the southwestern Tai-speaking Nanzhao Kingdom (mid- 7th cent. -1253), founded by a local chieftain in the 7th century. The Nanzhao kingdom had managed to repel initial attacks by the Tang court, and it thrived in its position along the southwestern frontier of the Tang Empire. The kingdom continued to maintain its tributary status as the Dali kingdom in the Nùng leader's own day.

The successes of Nanzhao and Dali could certainly have encouraged Ton Phúc to assert his claim to local independence with the possibility that his frontier kingdom would be allowed to survive. George Condominas argued, not without controversy, that the robust survival of the Nanzhao kingdom contributed directly to the spread of Tai political culture in the region "to constitute a vast area of Thai principalities, extending from the southern confines of Nan-chao and covering the northern area of continental Southeast Asia in its wider sense from Hainan and Upper Tonkin to Assam" (p.40).⁵⁸ Tributary issues should not overshadow our consideration of this possible "Tai" path to power when we explore the reasons for this seemingly sudden outburst of violence along the Sino-Vietnamese frontier.

Conclusion:

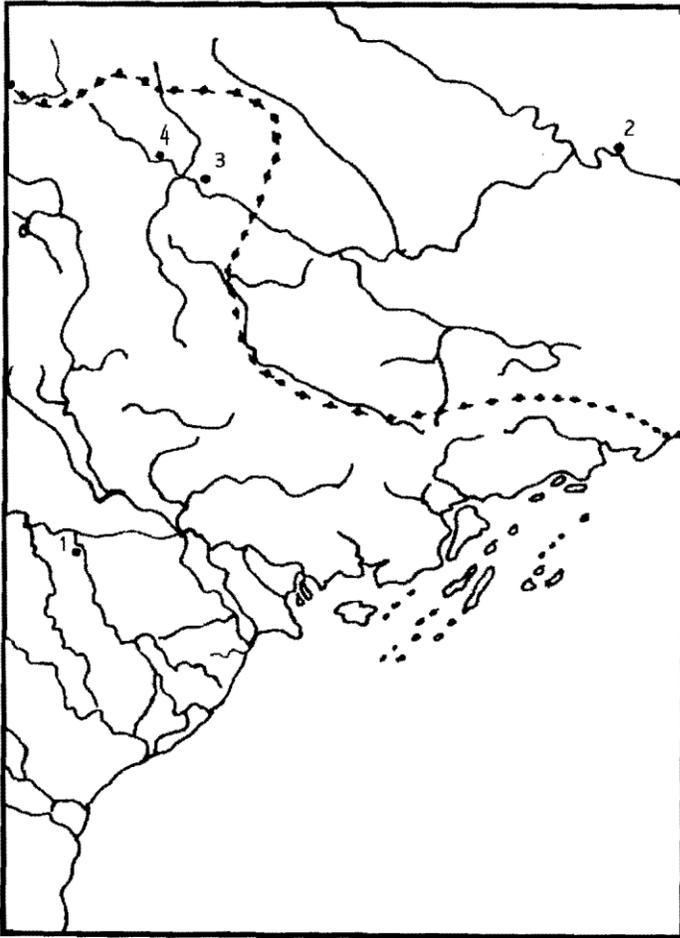
Given his flouting of tributary obligations enforced by the Vietnamese and the Chinese along their common frontier, Tôn Phúc's attempt to establish an independent kingdom between the Song Empire and the ai Cô Việt kingdom was almost doomed to failure. However, his efforts set the stage for the subsequent rebellions of his son Nung Tri Cao and wife A Nung, which would sweep across the South China coast to the horror of both Kaifeng and Thng Long. Moreover, Tôn Phúc's revolt marked the strongest expression to date of local political ambition that would be clearly understood by the Han Chinese and *Kinh* Vietnamese residents in this region.

In 1041, two years after his father and uncle's execution by ai Cô Việt troops, Nùng Tr' Cao and his mother led forces to regain Thng Do Prefecture. Thus began a series of attempts by Tr' Cao and his mother to carve out another semi-autonomous polity in the frontier region. Nung Tôn Phuc's effort could be understood as an attempt by a local chieftain to mix local and imperial political symbols to express his desire to increase his local power base. Moreover, the territory claimed by Tôn Phuc remained fairly limited. Despite the grandness of the titles he took, Tôn Phuc was primarily addressing his own followers as, in the words of O.W. Wolters, a "man of prowess." Had the Vietnamese ruler Ly Phât Mã allowed Tôn Phuc to retain the modest gains he had made in territory and power, while reviving the personal bonds between the Vietnamese ruler and his frontier vassal, further widespread upheaval may have been avoided.

Tôn Phuc's son Tri Cao, on the other hand, would lay claim to more territory and greater political stature. When the Song court left the response to Tri Cao's rebellion to their tributary vassal the Vietnamese court, the outcome was too limited and too tentative. From studying the different dimensions of the short-lived rebellion of Nung Ten Phuc, we might determine that the inability of both the Chinese and Vietnamese leadership to face Nung Tri Cao's revolt effectively in its early years began with their misunderstanding of his father's motives.

REFERENCE MAPS:

China-Vietnam Border Map (1988) from the Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection Web site at the University of Texas at Austin. Accessed on December 30th, 2001 at <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/china.html#detailed.html>



1. Thng Long
 2. Yongzhou
 3. Quang Nguyên Aboriginal Settlement
 4. Na L Site of Tôn Phúc's citadel now located a short distance to the west of the modern city of Cao Bng.
- Dotted line indicates the approximate border region between the Song and ai Viêt states by 1075.

The outline map was adapted from Hoàng Xuân Hãn. *Ly Thng Kiệt*. (1949), Map 3a.

Notes

1. There are references to both Nùng Tôn Phúc and Toàn Phúc . A comparison of relevant passages from a variety of sources leads me to conclude that these two names refer to the same individual, and that Tôn Phúc is the correct name.
2. Some Chinese sources record that Nang Ten Phúc gave his new state the title "Changqi Kingdom," and not "Kingdom of Longevity." This appears to be a transcription error.
3. Nei S" Lien, *ai Viêt s ky toàn th*, 1697 wood block edition, Vol. 4, 25b (Hà Nội: Nhà xuất ban khoa hoc xã hội, 1993), p. 121.
4. Sima Guang (1019-1086). *Sushui jiwén (Notes from Su River)* (Beijing: Xinhua, 1989), 3: 270. Concern in Kaifeng regarding the emergence of the powerful Xi Xia Kingdom along the western frontier in the same year could have been a factor as well.
5. For a short study of the significance of spatial arrangement in Ancient Chinese political thought, the reader may refer to the article by Véra Dorofeeva-Lichtmann "Political concept behind an interplay of spatial 'positions'" in *Extreme-Orient, Extreme-Occident* 18 (1996), pp. 9-33.

6. Pan, Yihong, *Son of Heaven and Heavenly Qaghan*, p. 21.
7. Henri J. M. Claessen and Jarich G. Oosten, *Ideology and the Formation of Early States* (New York: E. J. Brill, 1996), 3.
8. Claessen and Oosten, *Ideology and the Formation of Early States*, p. 3.
9. Fan Zuyu, *Mirror of Tang History*, (Shanghai: Guji, 1984), p. 312.
10. Owen Lattimore, *Studies in frontier History: Collected Papers 1928-1958*, (Paris: Mouton & Co., 1962), p. 476.
11. Taylor, *The Birth of Vietnam*, p. 68.
12. This poem, titled "Song of the Giao Chi People about Jia Zong" maybe also be found in Jia Zong's biography in the *History of the Latter Han*. Cited here from *juan* 6 of the *Gu Yao Yan* at the University of Virginia web site <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/chinese>, accessed on December 4, 2001.
13. Xu claims that the "Yellow Grotto Barbarians," as well as Nang Tr' Cao and his followers, all belonged to the modern-day *Zhuang* ethnic group. Cited in Xu Zongshi, *Song Jiang liu yu renmin shi*, (Hong Kong: Shijie, 1963), p. 72.
14. Taylor, *The Birth of Vietnam*, p. 70.
15. Jeffery Barlow, The *Zhuang* at the web site <http://mcel.pacificu.edu/as/resources/zhuang/zhuang8.htm>. Accessed on December 4th, 2001.
16. *Songshi* 3: 41. Nandan is located at the site of the modern-day city of Nandan in northern Guangxi.
17. *XZZTJCB* 15: 321.
18. Li Ganfen notes this fact in the *Zhuang Encyclopedic Dictionary* (Nanning: Nanning Renmin, 1993), P. 650.
19. In a court debate in his first days of rule, Song Taizong addressed his Grand Councilor Bi Juzheng (912-981) saying, "Border defense is important, and many issues have become increasingly grave. We ought to understand the matters according to the precept of former emperors, as these methods cannot be easily changes." *XZZTJCB* 17: 382.
20. *Songshi* 494: 14199.
21. Nguyễn Ngọc Huy, "Limits on State Power in Traditional China and Vietnam" in *Vietnam Form 6* (Summer-Fall 1985), p. 26. Hodgkin, Thomas, *Vietnam: The Revolutionary Path* (London: Macmillan Press, 1981), p. 35.
22. Differences between the two borders must also be noted. Hoang Xuân Han contends that the southern border between Giao Chi and Champa remained relatively calm for several reasons. First, the Viet and Cham people were the same ethnically, and both societies were primarily agricultural. Secondly, the border was clearly defined and was located on a broad plain. Thirdly, the intensive amount of trade between the two kingdoms mitigated tensions that might have led to greater border conflict. On the other hand, the northern frontier involved relations with many independent ethnic groups and these groups lived in the rugged mountain region that separated the flatlands on which the Viet and Song communities, on their respective sides of the imprecise borderline, were located. Cited in Hoàng Xuân Hãn, *Ly Thng Kiệt*, (Hà Nội, 1949) trans. by Li Guo in the periodical *South Asian and Southeast Asian materials (Nanya yu Dongnanya ziliao)* Vol. 79 (1988) No. 2, p. 183.
23. Xie Qikun, p.4950. Cited in Jeffery Barlow, *The Zhuang* at the web site <http://mcel.pacificu.edu/as/resources/zhuang/zhuang8.htm> Accessed on July 4th, 2001.
24. Anonymous, *Việt S Lc* (Shanghai: Shangwu, 1936), *Juan* 2: 29. Trần Thiệu Thái's father Thua Quy (char.) had also served as the head of Lang Châu. Cited at the Vietnamese official newspaper Nan Dan's website at www.nhandan.org/vn/english/history/20010428.html Accessed on December 16th, 2001.
25. *VSL* 2: 29.
26. Cited in Ngô Th" S", *A Preliminary Compilation of the History of ai Việt (ai Việt s ky tiên biên)* (cited hereafter as *DVSKTB*), Canh Thinh 8 (1800) from the Viên Hán Nôm holdings #A. 2/1-7, pp. 30A-30B. Interestingly, the *DVSKTT* (1993) account, based on the earliest available edition of the *ai Việt S Ky Toàn Th*, makes no comments on the Song emperor's response to the rebellion or the Việt acceptance of responsibility. This account moves directly from an account of the unrest to an account of the Viet emperor's expedition.
27. Ngô Th" S", *DVSKTB*, p. 30B. Also in *DVSKTT* (1993) 3: 121.

28. Cited in Tho Van Ly-Tran Vol. 1 (Hà Nội: Nhà xuất bản khoa học xã hội, 1977), p. 245. According to the Song statesman Sima Guang (1019-1086), Tôn Phúc owed his prosperity to China's benevolent rule, as did all the local people under him. Moreover, it was China's leadership and Nùng Tôn Phúc's prosperity that Giao Chi detested, and the reason why the Việt ruler sent troops to invade Tôn Phúc's territory and capture the chieftain. Sima Guang continues with his sharp criticism for the Việt leadership. He writes that "Giao Chi extracted taxes without satiation, and the people of the local prefectures (*zhou*) suffered for it." Cited in Sima Guang, *Sushui jiwen* 13: 256-57.
29. *DVSKTT* (1984) BK 2: 227
30. *DVSKTT* (1984) BK 2: 227.
31. *XZZTJCB* 122: 2887.
32. See Sima Guang's account of the rebellions in his personal collection *Sushui jiwen* (*Notes from Su River*), *juan* 13.
33. This information comes from the recent serial Chinese translation of Huang Xuân Hãn's notable work *Ly Thng Kiêl*, cited in *South and Southeast Asian Resources*, Vol. 79 (1988), No. 2 (Beijing: CASS South and Southeast Asian Research institute), p. 185.
34. Leo K. Shin made this point in his paper "Contracting Chieftaincy: Political Tribalization of the Southwest in Ming China" at the 1995 symposium "Empire, Nation, and Region: The Chinese World Order Reconsidered" at Berkeley, CA, p.16.
35. Kawahara, Masahiro, "Nong Zhigao de panluan he Jiaozhi de guanxi" in *Guoli piance kuan kan* Vol. 1 No. 4 December 1972, p. 136.
36. *XZZTJCB* 18: 395.
37. The *Songshi* account also includes the titles Censor-in-Chief (**check**) and "Supreme Pillar of the State". See *Songshi* 4: 55. The *Songhuiyao* account adds the honorific title "Grand Master of Splendid Happiness Bearing the Golden Pocket with Purple Trimming." Cited in Huang Xianfan, *Nong Zhigao*, p. 7.
38. VSL 1: 30. In the *Songshi* account, Van Nhai is referred to as Quang Nhai Prefecture. The *Xu Tongjian* account refers to the region as Van Nhai .
39. Sima Guang, *Sushui jiwen* 13: 256-57.
40. Vng Hùng, *Thái bao Nông Tr' Cao*, p. 13.
41. Tôn Phúc's behavior in this regard was not unique. Ann Maxwell Hill notes similar behavior in her work on Yunnanese Kachin and Haw Chinese traders. By the late Qing, "toll tribute" had become a regular feature of doing business along the caravan routes that reached from Burma into areas of northern Southeast Asia and southwestern China. See Ann Maxwell Hill, *Merchants And Migrants: Ethnicity and Trade Among Yunnanese Chinese in Southeast Asia*. (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1998), p. 54.
42. During the early 11th century, the names given these regions were Slóc, Ngàn, Dái, Lài, Nuông, Má, Héc, Nga, and Sng. This information was cited in a conference paper by Vng Wing, "The Grand Guardian Nùng Tr' Cao: Historical Texts, Public Opinion, Physical Evidence, and Thoughts (*Thái Bao Nông Tr' Cao: s sách, bia miêng, chng t'ch và suy ngh*)" presented In *Nùng Tr' Cao: the Annals of a Meeting for Scientific Study (Nùng Tr' Can: ky yêu hôi thao khoa hoc)*, (Cao Bng: S Vn hóa thông tin, 1995), pp. 12-13.
43. Please see David K. Wyatt, *Thailand: a Short History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 7-9
44. See Ann Maxwell Hill, *Merchants And Migrants: Ethnicity and Trade Among Yunnanese Chinese in Southeast Asia*. (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1998), p. 65.
45. See David Wyatt, *Thailand: a Short History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 7.
46. See Ann Maxwell Hill, *Merchants And Migrants*, p. 65.
47. For an interesting discussion of these alternative forms of inter-kingdom relations in Southeast Asia, the reader may refer to Thongchai Winichakul's *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1994), pp. 81-94.
48. Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped*, p. 88.
49. Lê, Tc, ANCL, p. 359.

50. Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped*, p. 164.
51. Piyanart Bunnag, "Kinship and Patron-Client Systems in Thai Politics During the Early Ratankosin Period" in *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Thai Studies* Vol. IV (Kunming: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1990). p. 309.
52. See David Wyatt, *Thailand*, p. 9.
53. Bunnag, "Kinship and Patron-Client Systems," p. 309.
54. Cited in Shen Jingfang, "Term Zhao and the Theories in Relation to It" in *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Thai Studies* Vol. 11 (Kunming: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1990), pp. 21113. For another very useful discussion of the kingly title, see Shihchung Hsieh, "On the Dynamics of Tai/Dai-Lue Ethnicity: an Ethnohistorical Analysis" in Stevan Harrell (ed.), *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995), pp. 303-07. As David Wyatt mentions in his survey history of Thailand, other premodern terms for royal authority include *khun*, *thao*, and the Shan tern *sao*, which is the Thai term *chao*. See David Wyatt, *Thailand: a Short History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), p. xvii.
55. See Ann Maxwell Hill, *Merchants And Migrants*, p. 65. Also see David Wyatt, *Thailand*, p. 7.
56. Vng Hung, *Thái bao Nông Tr' Cao*, p. 13.
57. Leo Shin, "Contracting Chieftaincy," p.16.
58. George Condominas, *From Lawa To Mon, From Saa' To Thai: Historical and Anthropological Aspects of Southeast Asian Spaces* (An Occasional Paper of the Department of Anthropology (in association with the Thai-Yunnan Project) (Canberra: ANU Research School of Pacific Studies 1990), P. 40.