

## CHAPTER SIX

## LÝ BÍ : THE UPRISING OF THE COLONS

The dynasties of the Tống and the Tê were short-lived. This intensified the atmosphere of irresponsibility on the part of the officials towards the population of Giao-châu. The dynasty of the Lương<sup>1</sup>, which came in 502 and expired in 557 did not fare better, and more irresponsibility generated more insecurity in this far-south area.

Right in 503, only a year after the accession of the Lương into imperial power, the governor of Giao-châu, Lý Khải<sup>2</sup>, tried to be independent. One of Khải's officers seeing in the illegal action of his superior a good opportunity for advancement, killed him and replaced him. This was Lý Tắc<sup>3</sup>, who was not better than any other governor, even worse, but he held tight his governorship. In 516, when Nguyễn Tông Hiếu<sup>4</sup> revolted he killed this man, and sent his head to Kiến-Khang<sup>5</sup>.

This was a sign of intense unrest. Uneasiness against the government filled the air. Unfortunately those

---

1. The Lương 梁 : The 5th and the 6th centuries saw a series of short-lived dynasties on the throne of China.

2. Lý Khải 李凱 : See Lương-thư 梁書 book 2, in the edition Nhi Thập Ngũ Sử, page 1770; Tư Tri, book 146, page 969, and book 148, page 986. These documents gave the name Lý Khải, but Complete History (book 4, page 13) wrote Lý Nguyên Khải. May be there was a confusion in the mind of Ngô Sĩ Liên, because at that time, there was an

who capitalized on the situation did so on behalf of their own, not of the public, and they failed. The people was keen enough to know their worth. But if someone would have the boldness to stand up for the people's interest, he could have the support of the inhabitants, both colons and autochthons. This was the case of Lý Bí.

Was Lý Bí really a colon? It seemed that he was not if we read only the Lương-thứ<sup>6</sup>. In this history of the Lương, there was this introduction: "Giao-chỉ tho dân Lý Bí công thứ-sử Tiêu Tư" (Lý Bí, native of Giao-chỉ, attacked the governor Tiêu Tư). In Tứ Trị, the tone was not so affirmative regarding his origin. It said: "Lý Bí of Giao-chỉ...". According to what we have seen about this kind of appellation, at this stage of population shifting growth, phrases like those of Lương-thứ and Tứ trị should be construed as "colon born in Giao-chỉ".

And this was exactly what Ngô Sĩ Liên tried to say. An author who up to now did his best to direct the spotlight on the aborigine elements, this time Ngô Sĩ Liên

---

official named Đặng Nguyên Khải, who held the prefecture of Ích-châu.

3. Lý Tắc 李 夔: Type of strongly selfish profiteer.

4. Nguyễn Tông Hiếu 阮 宗 孝: Tứ trị, book 148, page 986, said that he was native of Giao-châu. "Giao-châu phân giá Nguyễn Tông Hiếu..."

5. Kiên-khang 建 康 was the capitol of China.

6. Lương-thứ, book 3, page 1773: Giao-châu thổ dân Lý Bí công thứ-sử Tiêu Tư 交州土民李 夔 功 刺史 詔

seemed to want to emphasize the contrary. Depicting the origin of his hero, he wrote: " The family name of the emperor was Lý, his name Bí, native of Long-hung<sup>8</sup>, Thái-binh<sup>9</sup>. The ancestor of the emperor were people of the North who suffered from wars during the decline of the Han Anterior,<sup>and</sup> escaped to the south. After seven generations, they became southern people"<sup>10</sup> This unexpected but full explanation left no doubt about the meaning of the phrase "native of Giao-chi"<sup>11</sup> mentioned above.

The case of Lý Bí clarified many other cases. A great many people who came from central China to Giao-châu, came to stay. After settling down in their new habitat, they had no other homeland than the department in which they lived. Gradually, a sense of community developed. They took care of their common interest. They defended the good reputation of their common name.<sup>11</sup> They were proud of the accomplishments of their neighbors and were infuriated at the injustice imposed on them. In certain fields, and

7. Tứ tri, book 158, page 1047: Giao-chi Lý Bí thế vi hào hựu 交趾李賁世為豪右.

8. Long-hung 龍興 was a village of the district of Thái-binh.

9. Thái-binh 太平: The region that has the same name now in North Vietnam.

10. Complete History, book 4, page 15: Đế tính Lý, húy Bí, Long-hung, Thái-binh nhân dã. Ný tiên Bắc nhân, Tây Hán mạt, khò ư chính phạt, tì cư Nam thồ, thất thế, toai vi Nam nhân: 帝姓李賁, 龍興太平人也. 其先北人, 西漢末, 苦於征伐, 避居南土, 七世, 遂為南人.

to a certain extent, for example in the attitude to be taken against the irresponsible governors, they made common cause between themselves, and even with the autochthons. At this stage, considering the colons as people of the soil (thổ-dân), was just an accurate expression, because they belonged to the soil as much as the soil belonged to them.

Lý Bí was furthermore a colon well-educated. His family enjoyed prosperity since many generations. He himself had a position in the government. What was particular was that he had dismissed his function, because things did not please him. There was much discrimination between officials coming from central China<sup>12</sup>, and officials native of the departments of the outskirts. The condition of his friend, Tịnh Thiệu,<sup>13</sup> intensified his dissatisfaction. Tịnh Thiệu was a man very versed in literature. He was applying for a job in the government. But considering his case, the Minister of Interior Sái Tôn<sup>14</sup> refused to admit him. According to the minister, Thiệu was dismissed only on the ground that he had had no mandarins in his family. The only job available to the ap-

---

11. These names are mostly geographical names.

12. Central China, here, is meant belonging to proper Chinese territory, not to the colonies in the outskirts.

13. Tịnh Thiệu 并詔 : Native of the same village as Lý Bí and his close friend.

14. Sái Tôn 蔡樽 : He was Lại-Bộ Thượng-thư 吏部尚書, and very conservative in his selection of officials.

plicant was to be guardian at Quảng-đông. Ashamed, Tịnh Thiều went back to his native village and deplored his fate with Lý Bí.<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile, Giao-châu was governed by Tiều Tư, an official of the worst type. Tư was both cruel and demanding. Everybody in the area hated him. For Lý Bí, he was doubly condemned. Not only Tư made his contrymen miserable, he was also the representative of a government which upheld unjust inequality and discrimination, and let down talented people as Tịnh Thiều just because this man had no ancestor mandarin. Was it a golden opportunity to initiate a change, be it as big as a life or death adventure ? Lý Bí thought that it was.

Time for an uprising was ripe. On one hand, Lý Bí had to stand up to make it known that people of the far-south departments were victims all the time of injustice and exploitation; that governors and prefects appointed by the Central Government did not work for the people, but only for their own interest; that the people of Giao-châu should take care of themselves and of their security. On the other hand, the population was ready to support such an uprising. Both colons and aborigenes were waiting for some leader to rise up in order that they might manifest their dissatisfaction

---

15. In Vietnamese, there was a saying: con vua thì lại làm vua, con sãi giữ chùa thì quét lá đa: the son of the king will become king, and the son of the pagoda guardian will sweep the fallen leaves of the fig-tree.

with the government, and contribute their efforts and blood in building a better society. So, ideals prompting, and circumstance) concurring, Lý Bí opened his fight for independence.

Of course, such intreprising should have been well-prepared. While commander in Cửu-đức, he had organized his movement. His contact with the commanders of other departments and districts gave favorable response. The case of Tĩnh Thiệu made a good occasion for propaganda against the government and the bad conduct of Governor Tiêu Tú was stressed on in all conversations. Then came the big moment, the spring of 542, when the up-rising broke out. Its spreading was so general and rapid that Tiêu Tú had to bribe his way out of Giao-châu.

Almost immediately, the emperor formed a team of three governors to cope with the situation: namely Tiêu Tú governor of Giao-châu, Tôn Quýnh,<sup>16</sup> governor of Cao-châu, and Lữ Tử Hùng,<sup>17</sup> governor of Tân-châu. But Tôn Quýnh and Lữ Tử Hùng were so terrified that they tried by all means to postpone the expedition.<sup>18</sup> Governor Hoàn and Tiêu Tú strongly insisted. But when the governors of Cao-châu and Tân-châu ventured to Hợp-phố, they were badly defeated.

16. Tôn Quýnh 孫 固 : Tứ Trị, book 158, page 1048.

17. Lữ Tử Hùng 盧 子雄: They took the pretext that in Giao-châu, the weather was bad in spring and tried to postpone the expedition until autumn.

18. Tứ trị said simply that when the governors came to Hợp-phố, the death toll was six or seven out of ten: chí Hợp-phố tử gia thập lục thất. 至合浦死者什六七.

On the report of Tiều Tư that Quỳnh and Tử Hùng connived with the enemies, the emperor ordered to these governors to die<sup>19</sup>.

When this happened, a revolt took place in the army. The brothers of Tử Hùng, named Tử Luộc<sup>20</sup> and Tử Liệt<sup>21</sup> and their friends took up weapons and assaulted Quảng-châu. Their intention was to kill Hóan and Tư. Fortunately, the great general Trần Bá Tiên, prefect of Cao yêu,<sup>22</sup> appeared in time to rescue them. Thanks to all this confusion, Lý Bí had a respite of some years.

After the departure of Tiều Tư, Lý Bí occupied<sup>23</sup> the residence of the governor in Long-biên, and sent his vanguard to Hợp-phô to meet Quỳnh and Tử Hùng as seen above. In the summer of 543, the king of Lâm-ấp wanted to kill two birds in one shot. To help China on one hand, and to revenge Giao-châu on the other, he profited the time when Lý Bí had to defend against China to attack Nhật-nam and Cửu-đức.<sup>24</sup> As ruler of all the territory of Giao-châu, Lý Bí sent his general Phạm Tú<sup>25</sup> to the battlefield. The two sides met in Cửu-đức and the Lâm-ấp army was crushed.

19. In the words of Tư Trì, (book 158, page 1048) Sách u' Quang-châu, tứ tử: 殺於廣州賜死。

20. Tử Luộc 子略.

21. Tử Liệt 子烈.

22. Cao-yêu 高要 : The department of Thương-ngô, under the Hán.

Victorious on both sides and unchallenged master of the whole area, Lý Bí proclaimed himself emperor in the spring of 544. He gave to his country the name Vạn-xuân<sup>27</sup>, to his residence the name Vạn-thọ<sup>28</sup> and to his reign Đại-đức<sup>29</sup>. In his court, Phạm Tú was at the head of the military rank and Tĩnh Thiệu of the civil rank.

But what was glorious to Lý Bí was shameful to China. The revolt lasted already two years and there was no reaction as yet. The emperor of the Lương then chose Dương Phiêu<sup>30</sup> as new governor of Giao-châu, and Trần Bá Tiên as commander of the army to punish Lý Bí. The governor of Định-châu, Lưu Bột<sup>31</sup>, got also the mandate to join the expedition at the West River<sup>32</sup>. The half-hearted Lưu Bột suggested to Dương Phiêu a new postponement in order to please the soldiers, who did not want to fight a far-away war. But Trần Bá Tiên was adamant.

23. Long-biên, 龍邊 : The town of Thuận-thành in the province of Bắc-hà, North Vietnam.

24. Cửu-đức, 九德 : A department between Cuu chan and Nhật-nam.

25. Phạm Tú, 范矩 : Toàn-thư called this general Triệu Túc so' to introduce the imaginary reign of Triệu Quang Phục.

26. Lý Bí made himself Emperor of the Việt or Việt-đế Vạn-xuân, 萬春 : This name can not be found in older documents. Only Complete History mentioned it.



He reminded to Dương Phiêu the imperial mandate and threw his army to the vanguard.

The Emperor of the Việt headed his 30,000 men army to Châu-diên, where he met the Chinese army. Defeated, he pulled back to Tô-<sup>33</sup>lịch River; defeated again, he fled to Gia-ninh<sup>34</sup>. Trần Bá Tiên besieged him then captured Gia-ninh in the spring of 546. Lý Bý had no other choice than to seek refuge among the montagards in Tân-xuông.<sup>35</sup> The Chinese army waited for him at the mouth of Gia-ninh River. In autumn of 546, Lý Bí appeared in the lake Điền-triệt with a force of 20,000 men and a multitude of boats for a new challenge.

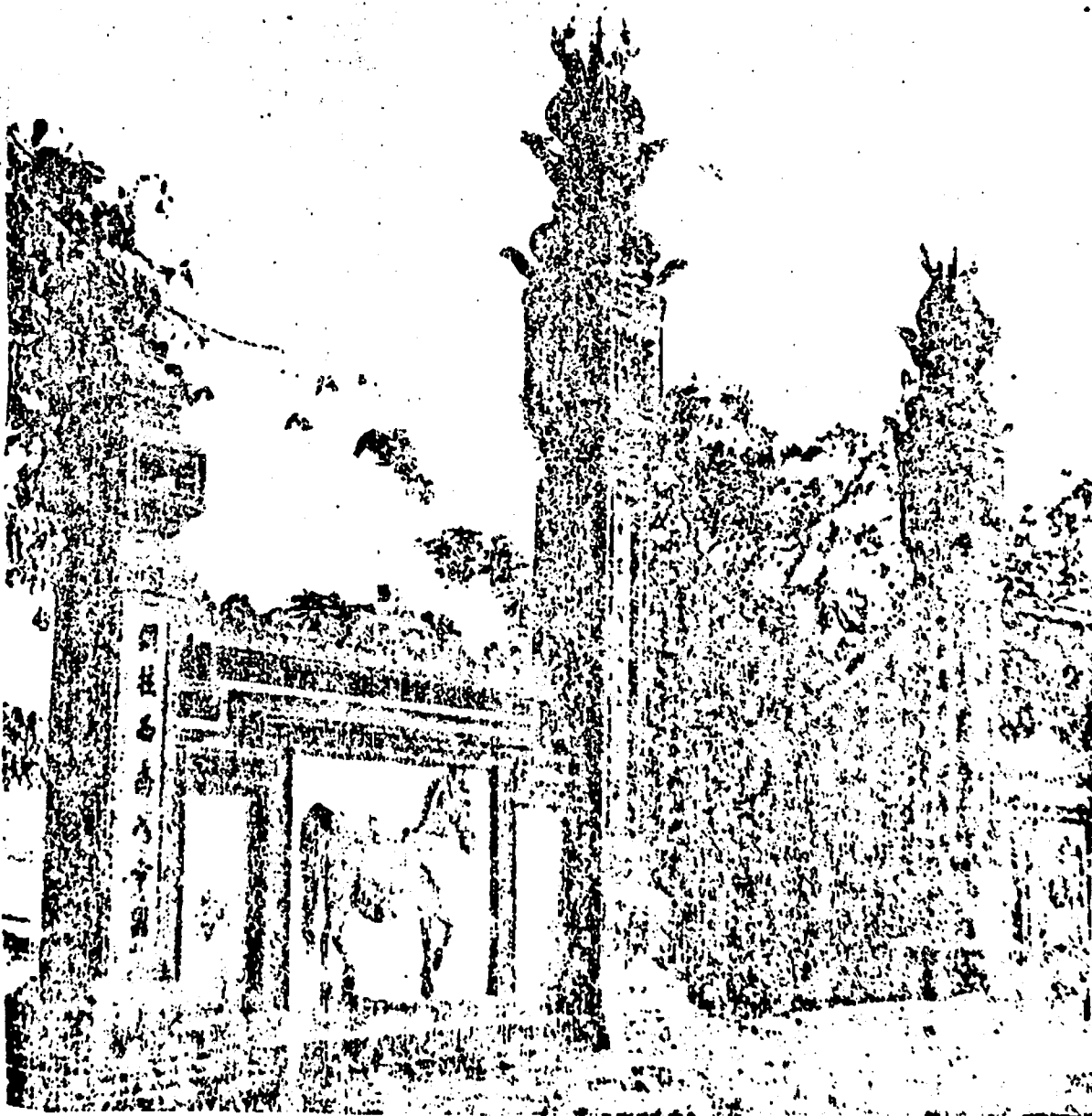
Điền-triệt was rather a swamp, shallow and mysterious. For a month, both sides did not advanced. Waiting was advantageous to Lý Bí, whose men were people of the neighborhood and consequently easily supplied. But waiting was very disastrous<sup>^</sup> to the Chinese soldiers, unaccustomed to the climate and homesick. So, while other generals hesitated, Trần Bá Tiên was ready to fight. If his colleagues did not co-operate, he intended to do it

28. Vạn-thọ 萬壽 : This name is found only in Vietnamese documents.

29. Đại-đức 大德 : The Complete History gave Thiên-đức 天德 .but Đại-đức has the chance to have been the real name, not only because it appeared in Lương-thư and Tư trị, but also because Lý Bí might have been influenced by the name Đại-đông of the Lương.

30. Dương Phiêu 楊驃 :

31. Tiêu Bột 蕭勃



The Outer Gate  
Of The Sisters Trưng's Temple  
in Hát-môn, Hả-tây

alone. That night, he took advantage of the unusual high tide, made an unexpected attack on the still untrained troops of Lý Bí. The latter's forces were annihilated. Lý Bí fled to Khuất-liêu<sup>36</sup> for a long retreat.

Thanks to Trần Bá Tiên, Giao-châu was restored to China. Dương Phiêu stayed as governor, watching for any new move of Lý Bí, and spying his whereabouts. In the spring of 548, the hide-place of Lý Bí was discovered. The Emperor of the Việt was caught and was beheaded on the day kỷ-vị<sup>37</sup> of the 3rd lunar month of the 2nd year of Thái-thanh. As usual, his head was sent to Kiên-khang.

---

32. The West River or Tây-giang 西江 : A China river nearest to Giao-châu.

33. River Tô-lich 蘇歷 : This little river went through the area of Hanội today.

34. Gia-ninh 嘉寧 : This is Việt-trì to-day.

35. Tân-xương 新昌 : In 271 Tôn Hạo of the Ngô created the department of Tân-hung out of Giao-chi, and made Gia-ninh a district of Tân-hung. Under the Tân, Tân-hung was changed into Tân-xương. This was the area inhabited by the Lạc-viet in the 1st century.

36. Khuất-liêu 屈獠 : This was a place in an area inhabited by the autochthons, in Vinh-phủ today. This fact that Lý Bí fled in Khuất-liêu showed that his uprising was willingly shared by the ethnic groups other than the colons. And the fact that Ly Bí could hide himself among these tribal elements for almost two years a time longer than Trưng Trắc in Cầm-kê, showed that the montagnards were very good to him.

37. Thái-thanh 太清 was a period in the reign of Emperor Cao-tổ (502-549) of the Lương that lasted from 547 to 549. The day kỷ-vị of the 3rd lunar month of Thái-Thanh corresponds to the 21st of April, 548.

To compare the uprising of Lý Bí to that of Trưng Trắc, happened five centuries earlier, some differences can be noted. Trưng Trắc fought, not against the Chinese authorities only, but against all the Chinese, whom she considered as intruders in her tribal life. Lý Bí fought only against the Chinese authorities, who personified corruption, injustice, cruelty and irresponsibility. Trưng Trắc, once becoming ruler, established her residence in Mê-linh, her home district. Once becoming master of Giao-châu, Lý Bí established his residence in the residence of the Chinese governor itself, meaning that he was reigning both on the colons and the autochthons. Defeated, Trưng Trắc was captured easily in Cẩm Khê. When Lý Bí, a colon, was defeated, he made appeal to the autochthons who came to fight with him, and defeated again, he took refuge among these autochthons for more than a year.

The truth of all this becomes clearer when <sup>we</sup> consider the attitude of the Chinese emperor in both cases. When Trưng Trắc revolted, the prefects, including that of Giao-chí, stayed in their departments. The emperor gave order, even to Giao-chí, the arena of war, to repair

---

38. Tư trị, book 161, page 1062. In Lương thư, book 3, page 1773, we read: "That day, Lý Bí was beheaded in Khuất-liêu; his head was sent to the Capitol" or Thị nhật, khuất liêu động, trảm Lý Bí, chuyên thủ kinh sư 是日属獠洞斩李贲传首京師. But the Complete History said that Lý Bí died of fever in Khuất liêu. Lịch sử Việt-nam, published by North Viet-nam repeated the same thing, saying: Sau ông bị bệnh chết (Afterward he died of illness). page 115.

roads, bridges, and get supplies ready for the imperial army. But in the uprising of Lý Bí, the emperor did not make any mention of Giao-chí or Giao-châu at all in the participation with China, because all the population had risen against it.

These remarks justified the great cause of Lý Bí's uprising. They pointed to the legitimate aspiration of the people for creating a new nation out of the colonies in this far-south part of China. And the success, though temporary of Lý Bí, coupled with the solidarity of his people with his cause, was a constant appeal to the concerned inhabitants of Giao-châu that some day, in the future, their dream would be materialized.

There was no significant disturbance during the period when the victor of Lý Bí, namely Trần Bá Tiên, held the scepter of China. But the Trần dynasty was one of the shortest. Founded in 557, it ceded the empire to the Tù<sup>39</sup> in 589. The Tù<sup>39</sup>, however, had a still shorter life. This meant that the imperial power went into powerlessness rapidly. But that meant also that local authorities went into full power rapidly. In 590, many men declared them-

---

39. The Tù 隋 : From 590 to 617.

40. Many men, for example in Vũ-châu there was Vương Văn Tiên, in Việt-châu, Cao Trí Hội, in Tô-châu, Khuông Huyền Tạng. All these men and other proclaimed themselves emperors.

selves emperors.<sup>41</sup> Even in Giao-châu, that same year, a man called Lý Xuân thought that he was generalissimo,<sup>42</sup> and behaved consequently<sup>42</sup>. Just in these circumstances, Lý Phật Tử, former general of Lý Bí, opened a new challenge after decades of deep retreat.

The uprising of Lý Phật Tử looked very well-planned initially. He himself occupied in 602, the capital of the former kings of Lạc-việt,<sup>43</sup> Lý Đại Quyền,<sup>44</sup> son of Phật Tử's brother, occupied Long-biên; General Lý Phổ<sup>45</sup> Đình occupied Ô-diên.<sup>46</sup> The Tùy emperor sent to Giao-châu the governor of Qua-châu, Lưu Phương<sup>47</sup>, a very capable general. He was entitled Commander of 27 Divisions For the Operation in Giao-châu.<sup>48</sup> Good organizer as well as humane leader, Lưu Phương commanded his troops in serious discipline. In Ô-long,<sup>49</sup> he routed the vanguard of Lý Phật Tử. When he came to the latter's camp, first he

41. Tư Trị, book 177, page 1177: Many men "tự xưng thiên tử" 自稱天子 (made themselves emperors).

42. Lý Xuân 李春: He proclaimed himself đại đô đốc 大都督.

43. The capitol of the former kings of Lạc việt: or Việt-vương-cố thành 越王故城. Tư Trị (book 179, page 1192) explained that "This town was the residence of the kings of Lạc-việt in the period of the Tần and the Hán"

44. Lý Đại Quyền 李大權: He was the son of Lý Phật tử's brother: Kỳ huynh tử 其兄子.

Lý Phổ Đình 李普鼎: He took Long-biên which was no more the residence of the governor. The governor, in the

showed the intention to negotiate instead of fighting. Realizing the futility of a resistance, Lý Phật Tử surrendered to the Chinese general and was deported to Trường-an.<sup>50</sup>

While the Lý family made another attempt for independence, China made also another attempt to invade Lâm-ấp. This time there was no cause for the Chinese action, but the emperor wanted to make a good use of his army already in Giao-châu. Under the Tùy, the former Cửu-đức and Nhật-nam were changed into Hoan-châu.<sup>51</sup> Lưu Phương got another title: Commander of the Operation in Hoan-châu.<sup>52</sup> While his aide, Ninh Trường Chân, led a troop of 10,000 men, composed of infantry and cavalry, from Việt-thường to Lâm-ấp,<sup>53</sup> Lưu Phương departed with his fleet from Bắc-cảnh.<sup>54</sup> They arrived in the kingdom of Phàn Chí<sup>55</sup> at the end of spring 605.

Phàn Chí had placed his men in all the vulnerable positions of his country. Lưu Phương broke easily through the front line. When he arrived in River Đô-lê<sup>56</sup> Lâm-ấp elephants surrounded him almost from every direction. In no time, Lưu Phương had holes made in the ground, covered up with green grass. This work done, he ordered

46. Ô-diên 息延 : Now Tử-liêm, near Hanoi.

47. Lưu Phương 劉方 : See Tứ Trị book 179, page 1192; Tùy Thư 隋書 written by Ngụy Trưng under the Đường, in the edition Nhi Thập Ngũ Sử, book 53, page 2483.

48. Commander of 27 Divisions for the Operation in Giao-châu: Giao châu Hành quân Tổng quản thông nhĩ thập thất dinh : 交州通行軍總管統二十七營

his army to make a seeming retreat. The Lâm-ấp elephants, pursuing the Chinese, got their feet heavily stuck in the holes. While these large animals tried to draw back and crushed Lâm-ấp soldiers, Lưu Phương launched his assault. The Chinese won a smashing victory. Phàn-Chí fled by sea to the south. The scene of 446 was repeated. The capitol of Lâm-ấp was sacked. The 18 gold tablets on the altars of the 18 monarchs of Lâm-ấp were taken away. Lưu Phương erected a stone inscription to commemorate his accomplishment then led his men home. Unfortunately, on the way back, the general and more than the half of his army died of dropsy.<sup>57</sup>

So, before the accession into power of the great dynasty of the Đuống, two things were set : No contemplation of further expansion on the part of China; and positive vision of independence on the part of the inhabitants of Giao-châu.

49. Đô-long-lĩnh 都隆嶺 : Formerly belonged to Giao-châu, now in Chinese territory and called Tụ long.

50. Trường-an 長安 ; Capitol of the Tùy. Tứ Trị, book 179, page 1192.

51. Hoan-châu 驩州 : This name existed since 598. Commander of the Operation in Hoan châu: Hoan-châu-đạo Hành-quản Tổng-quản 驩州道行軍總管

52. Ninh Trường Chân 寧長真 : He was governor of Khâm-châu 欽州.

53. Việt-thường 越裳 : A district of Nhật-nam.

54. Bắc-cảnh 北景 : A district of Nhật-nam.

55. Phàn Chí 梵志 : King of Lâm-ấp.



56. Đô-lê-giang 黎江 黎江: A river of Lâm-ấp, Quảng-nam today.

57.

57. Tùy thư, book 2, page 2350; and biography of Lưu Phương, book 53, page 2483.

58. Lịch-Sử Việt-Nam followed the version of Ngô Sĩ Liên in the Complete History, and wrote (page 116): In 603, the Tùy asked Lý Phật Tử to see the emperor in the capitol. But to go to China meant to surrender. Lý Phật Tử resisted to that order.... Năm 603, nhà Tùy gọi Lý Phật Tử về kinh đô châu hoàng đế. Về châu có nghĩa là đầu hàng mất nước. Lý Phật Tử chống lại lệnh đó...

## CHAPTER SEVEN

## THE ĐƯỜNG :

THE ACCEPTANCE OF A POLITICAL CHANGE  
IN THE FAR-SOUTH

When Lý Uyên<sup>1</sup> founded the Đường dynasty in Trường-an in 617, the Chinese empire was still in turmoil. In the South, two strong men still proclaimed themselves sovereigns. They were Lâm Sĩ Hăng<sup>2</sup> in Phần-duong<sup>3</sup> and Tiêu Tiên<sup>4</sup> in Giang-lăng<sup>5</sup>. Both rulers were looking for supporters. When Ninh Trường Chân, governor of Khâm-châu sided with Tiêu Tiên, he brought to him the territories of Uất-lâm<sup>6</sup> and Thủy-an<sup>7</sup>. Phùng Áng<sup>7</sup>, when he became follower of Lâm Sĩ Hăng, brought also to this man<sup>8</sup> the prefects of Thượng-ngô, of Cao-lương, of Châu-nhai and of Phiên-ngung. So what about Giao-châu ?

Giao-chỉ<sup>7</sup> was then under the leadership of Khâu Hòa. Some years after Dương-đế<sup>9</sup> of the Tùy came into power, he named Khâu Hòa<sup>10</sup> to this department. Faithful to the Tùy, Khâu Hòa preferred to stay neutral while

1. Lý Uyên 李淵 : The founder of the Đường, who reigned from 617 to 626.

2. Lâm Sĩ Hăng 林士弘 : Fed up with the cruel and extravagant conduct of Tùy emperors, he rose up at the same time with Lý Uyên.

3. Phần-duong 番陽 : Head-quarter of Lâm Sĩ Hăng.

4. Tiêu Tiên 蕭銑 : Rival of Lâm Sĩ Hăng.

5. Giang lăng 江陵 : Head-quarter of Tiêu Tiên.

all contact was cut off with his superiors. Tiêu Tiên and Lâm Sĩ Hăng courted him insistantly, but in vain. Tiêu Tiên decided to use force against him. He sent Nịnh Trưởng Chân to Giao-chỉ<sup>2</sup> with a big army. Khâu Hòa<sup>11</sup> was terrified, but one of his officers, Cao Sĩ Liêm, valianly fought back, drowned almost entirely the troops sent by Tiêu Tiên. After this victory, not only the prefect of Giao-chỉ<sup>2</sup>, but even Lê Ngọc,<sup>12</sup> prefect of Cửu-chân,<sup>13</sup> and Lý Giao,<sup>14</sup> prefect of Nhật-nam, were no more disturb-ed.

In 621, a friend of Khâu Hòa came from Giang-lăng to Giao-chỉ<sup>2</sup> and brought to him the sad news that the Tỳ was replaced by the Đường. Khâu Hòa intended to surrender to Tiêu-Tiên, but when he came to Giang-lăng, Tiêu Tiên himself lost his last battle. So, Khâu Hòa and Cao

6. Thủy-an 始安 : former Quê-lâm

7. Phùng Áng 馮盎 : Prefect of Hán-dương, faithful follower of Lâm Sĩ Hăng.

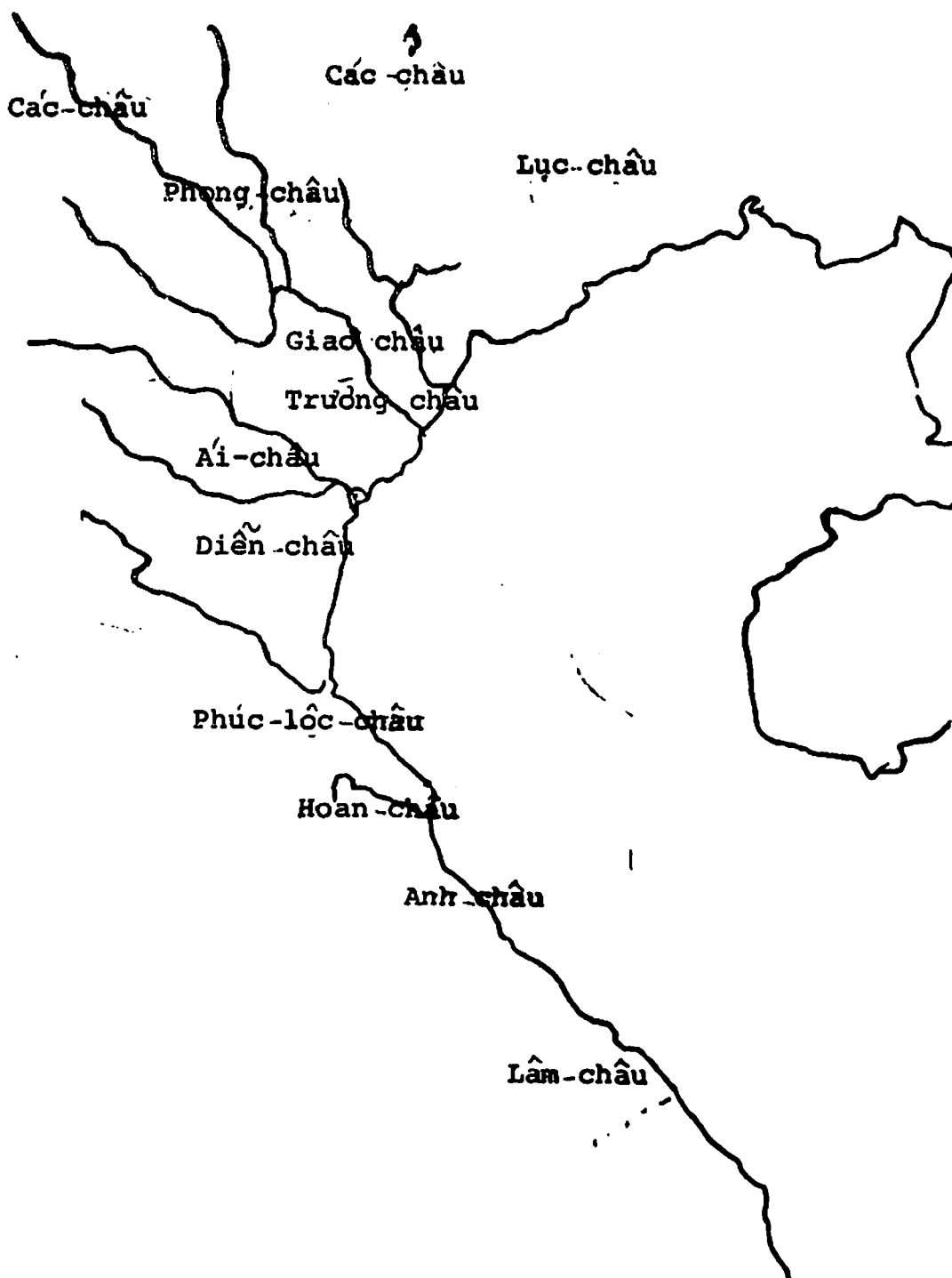
8. Cao-lương 高凉 : Former Cao-châu, changed to this name by Đường-đê of the Tỳ.

9. Đường-đê 楊帝 : The founder of the Tỳ dynasty (590-604). He was known for his cruelty.

10. Khâu Hòa 丘和 : A good prefect of Giao-chỉ. The Complete History said that he was prefect in Giao-chỉ for more than "60 years".

11. Cao Sĩ Liêm 高士廉: He had his biography in Đường thư 唐書 written by Lưu Hú, under the Đường Posterior (926-933), in the edition Nhi Thập Ngũ Sử, book 65, page 3309.

The Protectorate of An-nam



Các-châu 各州 Phong-châu 封州 Lục-châu 陸州 Giao-châu 交州  
 Trương-châu 長州 Ai-châu 愛州 Diên-châu 演州 Phúc-lộc-  
 châu 福祿州 Hoan-châu 馬驛州 Anh-châu 英州 Lâm-châu 林州

15

Sĩ Liêm made their submission to Hiều Cung, the victorious general of the Đương. The next year, Đương Cao-tổ<sup>2</sup> granted to Khâu Hòa the title of Commander of Giao-châu.<sup>16</sup> As a gesture of gratitude, Khâu Hòa asked and obtained an audience with the emperor. Following the example of Khâu Hòa, the prefects of Cửu-chân and Nhật-nam surrendered, too, to the Đương.<sup>17</sup>

With this surrender of the far-south, the Chinese empire was unified once again. But military titles lingered for a while in the government of the areas. The Đương<sup>18</sup> called the governors Commanders, then Commanders General.<sup>19</sup> Some of the commanding generals of Giao-châu were mentioned for their accomplishment: in 624 Commander Vương Chí Viên<sup>20</sup> punished a colon, rebel in Nhật-nam, named Cương Tử Lô;<sup>21</sup> in 628, Commander Lý Thọ<sup>22</sup> was stripped of his function<sup>20</sup> because of his exorbitant ambition.

---

12. Lê Ngọc 黎玉 : Lịch sử Việt nam introduces this prefect in eulogious terms. . It said! 'The prefect of Cửu-chân, Lê Ngọc, whose wife was a Viet woman, with the members of his family divided troops between themselves fortified remparts to fight against the Đương, later he was defeated by the Đương!' According to what we have seen, these sentences carry not much sense.

13. Lý Giao 李俊 : Tứ Tri, book 190, page 1269.

14. Tứ tri, book 185, page 1234; 1235; book 189, page 1265.

15 Hiều Cung 孝恭 : The general who defeated Tiêu Tiên and consequently gained the far-south to the Đương.

16. See the biography of Khâu Hòa in Đương-thứ, book 59, page 3296.

17. There was no fighting between Cửu-chân and Nhật-nam with the Đương, nor with Lâm Sĩ Hăng and Tiêu Tiên.

In the occasion of the dismissal of Lý Thọ,<sup>21</sup> history recorded a detail, that disclosed the general opinion of Chinese officials on Giao-châu, and the special character of Đổng Thái-tông,<sup>21</sup> whose private name was Lý Thế Dân.<sup>22</sup> Thế Dân, second son of Lý Uyên, had taken over the imperial power from his father. When Lý Thọ, a member of the imperial family, was destituted of his function, Thế Dân wanted the former governor of Doanh-châu,<sup>23</sup> Lữ Tổ Thượng, to take Thọ's place. The emperor insisted: "For a long time, Giao-châu did not have a good governor. Up to now, the governors were not fit to their position. You have the capability of calming the frontiers. In my name, please take the place. Don't pretext the distance and decline my request"<sup>24</sup>.

Tổ Thượng accepted the offer of the emperor, then had a second thought. He refused the job on the account of poor health. The emperor asked a mandarin, named Đỗ Như

---

18. Commanders or đô đốc 都督:

19. Commanders general 總管

20. Vương Chí Viễn 王志遠: See Tứ Trị, book 191, page 1278.

21. Cường Tử Lộ 姜子路.

22. Lý Thọ 李壽: See Tứ Trị, book 193, page 1291.

23. Lữ Tổ Thượng 盧祖尚: This was a man of bold character.

24. The imploring tone of the emperor showed that he paid attention to the plight of the far-south departments.

<sup>25</sup>  
 Hôi, to induce Tô Thượng to change his mind, but in  
 vain. Again, the emperor told his brother-in-law, Chu  
<sup>26</sup>  
 Phạm, to convey to Tô Thượng his command, saying: "E-  
 ven wicked men are faithful to what they have promised.  
 You have accepted my request in my presence, why now do  
 you repudiate it? Please depart in haste and take your  
 charge. After three years, I will call you back. I swear  
 not to forget what I am saying". Tô Thượng quietly answer:  
 "The south is too much unhealthy. Once gone, there is  
 no hope for return". And he refused. Furious, the emperor  
<sup>27</sup>  
 ordered Lữ Tử Thượng to be beheaded in the audience hall.

The next day, in the palace hall, when the conver-  
 sation ran over the appreciation of the cruel Văn Tuyên  
 of the Tê,<sup>28</sup> the scholar cited a case similar to that of  
 Tô Thượng, but Văn Tuyên did not kill the recalcitrant.  
 Upon that, Đường Thái-tông confessed that he was much  
 more cruel than Văn Tuyên, and immediately restored to  
<sup>29</sup>  
 Tô Thượng all his former honorific titles"

25. Đỗ Như Hôi 杜如晦

26. Chu Phạm 朱范

27. Lý Thế Dân was a young man very audacious and ambi-  
 tious. In 627, when he saw his father hesitate between him  
 and his older brother to be chosen as his successor, he  
 killed his older brother. Such a man now implored a  
 subject to go to Giao-châu to be governor.

28. Văn Tuyên of the Tê was one of the most cruel em-  
 perors.

29. Tứ trị, book 193, page 1291.

Thanks to this story, it is easy to understand the bad behavior of those who agreed to be governors and prefects in this far-south region. They thought - and the emperor who sent them thought the same - that to accept these functions was to make a big sacrifice. So, what they were going to do, once in their posts, was to get compensation in material<sup>things</sup> for all the risk they shouldered. It is also easy to understand that any responsible emperor would try to devise a change in the administrative scheme for this part of China. The urge for this, came not only from the bad conduct of the officials serving Giao-châu, but basically from its great distance from the Central Government.

To illustrate the reasoning of Lữ Tổ Thượng, or of the explanation given above, let us look at a fact taken from the life of ĐỖ Toại Lương<sup>30</sup>. In 656, as a punishment, the emperor sent Toại Lương to be prefect of Ái-châu<sup>31</sup>. Conscious of his past condition, he was trying to be good. Unfortunately, before he had enough time for any serious work of redemption, he died in 660, only more than two years in his exile.<sup>32</sup>

But a big change was coming. Đường Cao-tông<sup>33</sup>, a man of great vision and an emperor of great compassion, decided to initiate a new type of government he thought

30. ĐỖ Toại Lương 褚遂良 : Tứ Trị, book 200, pages 1343, 1345.

31. Ái-châu 愛州 : One of the 12 châu erected by the



becoming to Giao-châu: The Pacifying Protectorate. This was a general policy applied to specific regions in the outskirts of China. The first to have been instituted was the Eastern Pacifying Protectorate in the region of Liêu-dông, in 676. Three years later, the emperor did the same to the Northern and the Western regions. But the boldest step he ever made was to create the Southern Pacifying Protectorate for the three departments of the far-south, namely Giao-chí, Cửu-chân and Nhật-nam. This was in 680. The name An-nam was given, englobing 12 châu.

If the name An-nam was there to stay, the Pacifying Protectorate was not a permanent institution, even under the Đường. Changes in appellation and area would occur. The importance was that China had made a delimitation between the far-south departments and the rest of Chi-

Đường. There were two Các-châu instead of one.

32. Đỗ Toại Lương came to Ai-châu as to a place for penance. And he died before reaching three years limit as Đường Thế-tông promised to Lư Tô Thượng.

33. Đường Cao-tông 唐高宗 : A very brilliant emperor reigning from 650 to 683.

34. The Protectorate or Đô-Hộ-Phủ 都護府.

35. An-dông Đô Hộ Phủ 安東都護府. Tư trị, book 202, page 1359.

36. Liêu-dông 遼東 : Chinese peninsula near Korea.

37. Đan-vu Đô-Hộ-Phủ 單于都護府 Protectorate for the Mongols. Tư Trị, book 202, page 1362.

38. An-tây Đô-Hộ Phủ 安西都護府: Chinese territory in Central Asia.

na. This delimitation, along with the new regime and the new name would have left a deep impression in the mind of the people, and would have bound them in a special feeling of togetherness.

Especially the word An-nam. It appeared casual-<sup>41</sup>ly in 263 to honor Lữ Hùng, from now on, it would be connected with a definite territory. It replaced the words Giao-chỉ or Giao-châu with a clear-cut meaning. Giao-chỉ of the Hán was composed of 7 or 9 departments, Giao-châu of the Ngô sometimes included Quảng-châu, sometimes excluded it. An-nam, now, had the natural boundaries of mountains and seas and defined well the new political unit.

Was this reform beneficial to China, in the sense that it helped China to govern An-nam more efficiently? Definitely not. The reason was that the governor<sup>42</sup> and other high officials were still Chinese and appointed by the Central Government. The outcome was therefore the same, even worse: same exploitation, same discrimination, same irresponsibility on the part of the ruling class, and on the part of the inhabitants, same dissatisfaction, . . . same uneasiness, same willingness of up-rising.

---

39. Khâm-định Việt-sử Thông-giám Cương-mục of the Nguyễn dynasty (Tien biên, book 4, page 18) said that: "Đường Cao-tô, on the first year of the reign Châu-lô..established An nam đồ hộ phủ for the first time. That was 679. Lịch Sử Việt-nam repeated the same date. But Đường-thứ said: Châu lô nhị niên bát nguyệt, cải Giao-châu vi An nam đồ hộ phủ 調露二年, 八月, 交州為安南都護府. That was 680.

43

There was Lưu Diên Hựu with his typical extortion on taxes. Up to then, the autochthons enjoyed some privileges because of their social texture. They had to pay only the half tax. When Diên Hựu came to be protector, he drove them to pay the whole portion. Sensing a rebellion coming, he killed their leader Lý Tử Tiên. The followers of Tử Tiên, led by Đinh Kiến be-seiged the residence of Diên-Hựu. The governor of Quảng châu, who knew what happened in An-nam, did not want to do anything. Diên-Hựu was killed by the insurgents. Then the Commander of Quế-châu, named Tào Huyền Tĩnh, got the mandate from the emperor to rescue An-nam. He captured Đinh-Kiến and put him to death. The autochthons surrendered, but no less dissatisfied.

---

40. An-nam 安南 meant the 'pacified south', but since that time has become a proper noun.

41. In the year 263, the Ngô emperor gave to Lữ Hùng the title of An-nam tướng-quân 安南將軍 when this general had killed two high officials of the Ngô. Lịch Sử Việt Nam emphatically says that the name An-nam appeared the first time in 679.

42. It appeared that the intention of the Đường was only to appease the inhabitants of An-nam by changing the name of the organization of Giao-châu.

43. Lưu Diên Hựu 劉延祐: has his biography in Tân Đường thư written by Âu Dương Tu under the Tông, in the edition Nhi Thập Ngũ Sử, book 201, page 4099. See also Tứ Trị, book 204, page 1373.

44. Lý Tử Tiên 李嗣仙 He fought for the survival of the 'ky mi' policy of the Đường. 'Ky mi' means flexible, for example the 'di liêu' had to pay only the half tax.

45. Đinh Kiến 丁見: He revolted in 687. with Lý Tư Thận.

In 722, occurred another revolt. The leader, this time, was a black man, known as Mai Thúc Loan of Hắc-đế<sup>49</sup>, Hắc-đế<sup>50</sup> had a large number of followers, vaunted to be 400,000 men. The Đường dispatched a general from the imperial guard, named Dương Tư Húc<sup>51</sup>, to help the An-nam governor Quang Sở Khách<sup>52</sup>. Tư Húc and Sở Khách defeated Thúc Loan and killed him.<sup>53</sup>

In the above example, Tào Huyền Tĩnh and Dương Tư Húc defeated the rebels by the same way as almost all Chinese generals did before them, that is, by armed oppression. This could not appease the inhabitants of Giao-chí, nor of An-nam. This would rather arouse people to look for a better way to fight against the governors.

The trouble caused by heavy taxes came back in 791. when Governor Cao Chính Bình<sup>54</sup> renewed the policy of Lưu Diên Hựu. The leader of the autochthons was a native of Đường-lâm<sup>55</sup> named Phùng Hùng. With the help of his brother Phùng Hải<sup>56</sup> he fought many times against the gover-

46. The governor of Quảng-châu was Phùng Nguyên Thường

47. Tào Huyền Tĩnh 曹玄靜 : Tứ Trị, book 204, page 1373 said that

48. The đô-hộ 都護 used oppressive policy towards the autochthons maybe more than ever before.

49. Mai Thúc Loan 梅叔蒙. Lịch sử Việt nam says that he was native of the village Thạch-hà, province Hà-tĩnh.

50. Hắc-đế 黑帝 : Black emperor.

51. Dương Tư Húc 楊思勗 : His biography is in Đường-thư book 150, page 3482; Tứ Trị, book 212, page 1438.

nor, but in vain. Then they asked a man, by name **Đỗ Anh Hãn**, to be their king, to whom they constructed a royal mansion and organized a court. At this news, Cao Chính Bình worried to death. The uprising died down for lack of motive. When **Triệu Xương** replaced Cao Chính Bình, he did not repeat the error of the latter. The montagnards also did not repeat their manifestations.

But agitation broke in 821, provoked by the conduct of Governor **Lý Trọng Cổ**. Cruel and ambitious as the majority of the governors, **Trọng Cổ** committed a political mistake. He recalled **Dương Thanh** from his post of administrator of the montagnards to general of the governor's guard. This displeased both **Dương Thanh** and his followers. Meanwhile in **Hoàng-động**, tribal unrest grew in dimension. **Trọng Cổ** sent **Dương Thanh** to repress it. Taking advantage of the unpopularity of the governor, instead of going to **Hoàng-động**, **Dương Thanh** attacked the governor's residence.

52. Quang Sở Khách 光所客: Tân-Đường-thư, book 207, page 4111.

53. Tứ Trị, book 212, page 1438.

54. Cao Chính Bình 高正平: Tân-Đường-thư, book 170, page 4042; Tứ Trị, book 233, page 1604.

55. Đường-lâm 唐林 New, Cam-lâm in the district of Ba-vĩ, province of Hà-tây.

56. Phùng Hưng 逢興 and Phùng Hai 逢海 were two brothers.

57. **Triệu Xương** 趙昌: He came to An-nam two months after the establishment of **Nhu-viên-quân** 牙遠軍 in An-nam (791).

At the same time, the governor of Quê-châu, Bùi  
 62  
 Hành Lập, and the supervisor of Dung-châu, Dương Mân,  
 asked the emperor to punish Hoảng-động. Unfortunately, they  
 were defeated by the tribal leader Hoàng Thiệu Hưởng  
 63  
 and Dương Thanh killed Tướng Cỗ.  
 64

Something unexpected happened. In order to calm  
 the population, while transferring the prefect of Dương-  
 châu to An-nam, the emperor forgave to Dương Thanh and  
 made him prefect of Quỳnh-châu.  
 65  
 This, of course, was construed a sign of weakness of the emperor. The rebel wanted  
 66  
 to be governor himself. He tried to block Trọng Võ from  
 taking charge of his governorship. But the skillful Trọng  
 Võ sowed dissidence into the faction of Dương Thanh, who  
 had to make concession.

Because of these happenings, it took Trọng Võ a  
 certain time before assuming his function. Information  
 came to the emperor that Trọng Võ took unnecessary delay.  
 Hành Lập was named Governor of An-nam, while Trọng Võ pre-  
 67  
 fect of An-châu. But Hành Lập died before coming to An-  
 nam and Trọng Võ got back his governorship. Once in his  
 function, and before further rebellious activities of  
 Dương Thanh, Trọng Võ killed him. So difficulties were  
 increased by local manoeuverings and misunderstandings.  
 Complications were spiraling up.

---

58. Tư Trị said that all the montagnards surrendered.  
 book 234, page 1604.

59. Lý Tượng Cỗ 李象古: Tư trị, book 241, page 2656.

In this period, troubles came not only from the autochthons, but also from the household of the governor. In 804, a Chinese general, named Vương Lý Nguyên<sup>68</sup>, chased his governor Bùi Nghiệp<sup>69</sup> out of Tống-bình.<sup>70</sup> But, the next day, another general, Triệu Tuân killed Lý Nguyên. The governor came back from Châu-nhai where he took refuge.

In 828, the prefect of Phong-châu revolted. His name was Vương Thăng Triều<sup>71</sup>. The governor of An-nam, Hàn Ước<sup>72</sup>, put the revolt down and Thăng Triều was killed. But a couple of months later, the soldiers of Hàn Ước threw him out of An-nam. The same thing happened in 843. At this date, the title of the governor was changed into kinh-luộc-sứ<sup>73</sup>. The kinh-luộc-sứ of An-nam, Võ Huân<sup>74</sup> ordered his men to repair the rempart of Tống-bình. Generals and soldiers rose against him, compelling him to flee to Quảng-châu. Commander Đoàn Sĩ Tắc appeased the rioters afterwards.

60. Dương Thanh 楊清 : Tứ Trị, book 241, pages 1657-1658.

61. Hoàng-động 黃洞 : Name of the autochthons Tày, Nùng...

62. Bùi Hành Lập 裴行立 : He was quan-sát-sứ (inspector) of Quê-quân, former Quê-lâm. Dương Mân 楊旻 was kinh-luộc-sứ (Military Commander) of Dung-quân.

63. Hoàng Thiệu Hương 黃少香 : Leader of an autochthons revolt in Quê-quân and Dung-quân.

64. Dương Thanh killed Tuồng (Ô) and a thousand people of his household.

And still another source of trouble: the Lâm-  
 'ap kingdom. This kingdom, since 756, changed its name  
 into Hoàn-v<sup>76</sup>u<sup>76</sup>ng. It kept itself quiet since its defeat  
 by general L<sup>76</sup>u Ph<sup>76</sup>u<sup>76</sup>ng. But in the 9th century, the Đ<sup>76</sup>u<sup>76</sup>ng  
 dynasty weakened. The king of Hoàn-v<sup>76</sup>u<sup>76</sup>ng came and at-  
 tacked from time to time the department of Nhật-nam. From  
 803 to 809, it invaded this department, until Governor  
 Tr<sup>77</sup>u<sup>77</sup>ng Ch<sup>77</sup>au chased its 300,000 army out.

In the first half of the 9th century, An-nam felt  
 more deeply insecure and derelicted. The picture of ex-  
 ploitation and irresponsability uglily unfolded itself  
 without any perspective of an efficient change. Even  
 Hoàn-v<sup>76</sup>u<sup>76</sup>ng could rule over a Chinese department for 6 years.  
 Internally corrupted, externally threatened, could An-  
 nam survive, being with China? Or would it have to  
 provide for itself both security and defense? Future  
 events would help it to decide on an answer.

65. Qu<sup>76</sup>ynh-ch<sup>76</sup>au 瓊州 :

66. Qu<sup>76</sup>e Tr<sup>76</sup>ng V<sup>76</sup> 桂仲武 : Former governor of Đ<sup>76</sup>u<sup>76</sup>ng-ch<sup>76</sup>au.

67. An-ch<sup>76</sup>au 安州

68. Vu<sup>76</sup>ng Lý Nguyên 王李元 : His title was An-nam nha-  
 t<sup>76</sup>u<sup>76</sup>ng (general subaltern). T<sup>76</sup> Tr<sup>76</sup>, book 236, page 1620.

69. B<sup>76</sup>u Ngh<sup>76</sup>i<sup>76</sup>ep 裴業

70. Tri<sup>76</sup>eu Tu<sup>76</sup>ân 趙勻 killed Vu<sup>76</sup>ng Lý Nguyên and all his  
 followers.

71. Vu<sup>76</sup>ng Th<sup>76</sup>ng Tri<sup>76</sup>eu 王升朝 T<sup>76</sup> Tr<sup>76</sup>, book 243, page  
 1675. See also Complete History, book 5, page 8.

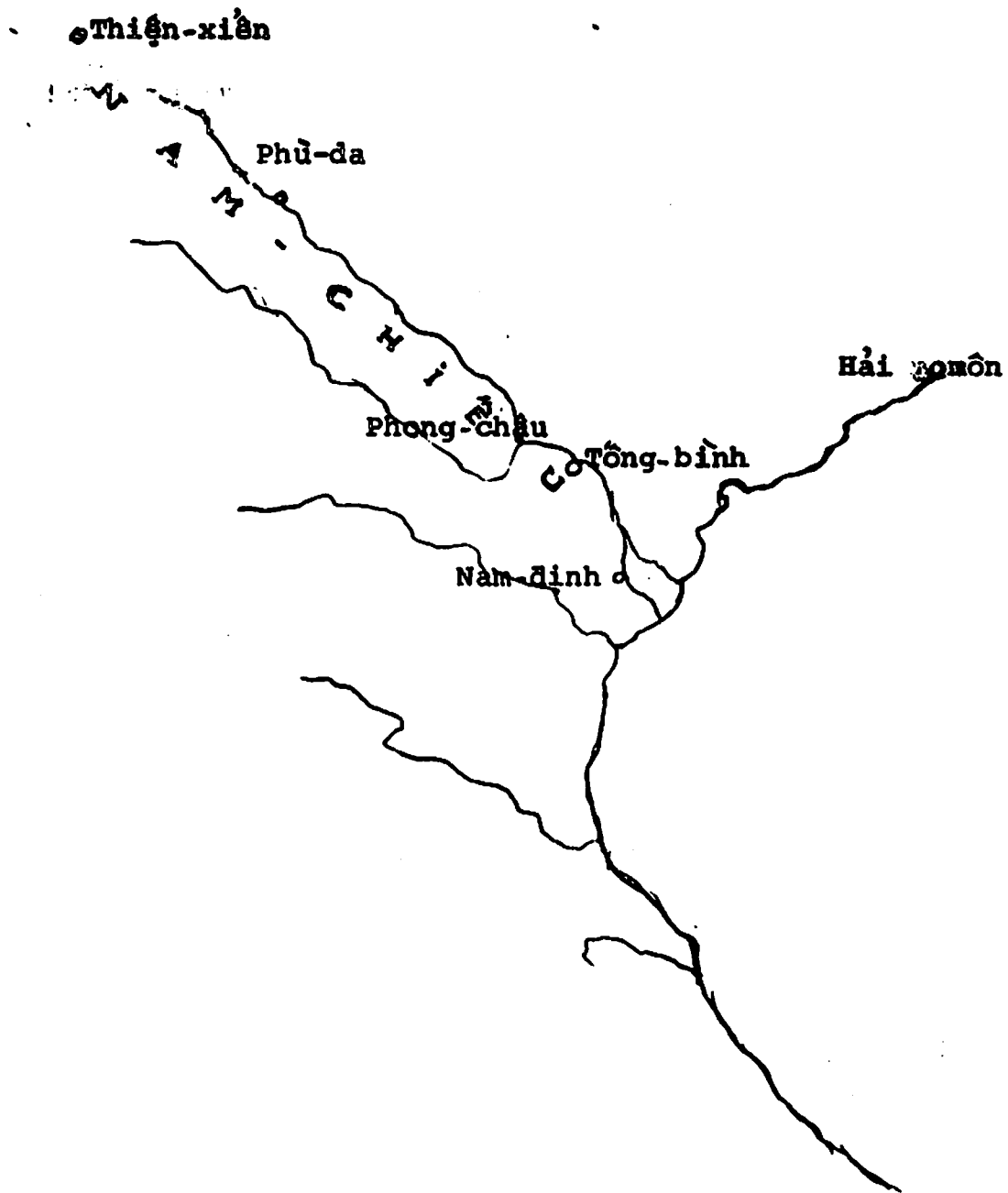
72. Hàn Ư<sup>76</sup>oc 韓約 : native of V<sup>76</sup>o-l<sup>76</sup>ng, T<sup>76</sup> Tr<sup>76</sup>, book 244,  
 page 1675.



- 
73. Kinh-lược-sứ 經略使: A military commander.
74. Võ Huân 武 渾 Tư Tri, book 247, page 1703
75. Đoàn Sĩ Tác 段士則 He was giám-quân at that time.
76. Hoàn-vương 環王: The people of Hoàn-vương were invited to occupy Nhật-nam by the autochthons of Giao-chi.
77. Trương Châu 張舟: Tư Tri, book 238, page 1634

THE NAM-CHIÊU DOMINATION

862-866



Nam-chiêu 南詔 Thiên-xiên 善闍 Phù-da 扶邪  
 Hải-môn 海門 Phong-châu 封州 Tống-bình 宋平  
 Nam-định 南定