

## Chapter Four

### **Establishment of Binh Thuan Phu and Thuan Thanh Tran**

The Nguyen strengthened its position in Cambodia by supporting Ang Non. Ang Non passed away in 1692 shortly after his retreat to Gia Dinh. He was succeeded by his son, Ang Im, who Nguyen Phuc Chu was hoping to put on the Cambodian throne. Such a policy was crucial in the overall Nguyen strategy of pacifying its distant neighbour. For the Nguyen, the southern frontiers not only had to be secured, its peaceful exploitation was crucial to the state coffer. But before anything could be carried out, Nguyen Phuc Chu was faced with a more immediate problem in the form of an attack by Champa in 1692.

#### **Victory Over Champa, 1693**

From 1658 until 1692, the Nguyen was preoccupied in the south with Cambodia. Their intervention in Cambodia resulted in the splitting of the Cambodian court into two, one supported by the Vietnamese and the other by the Siamese court at Ayudhya. Before 1692, Champa was trying to strengthen its position against the Nguyen through its dealings with other regional powers. In 1682, the French priest at the Court of Ayudhya reported that the King of Champa had submitted voluntarily to the King of Siam.<sup>1</sup> While no other information is available regarding this submission at the Court, the event suggests an attempt by the Chams to forge an alliance with Siam with the ultimate aim of resisting the Nguyen. During a stop at Pulo Ubi near the Gulf of Siam on 13 May 1687, William Dampier, the English traveller met a vessel of

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<sup>1</sup> "Father Duchesue to Directors of the Seminary in Paris", 13 November 1682, AMEP: Siam, Vol. 878, f. 202.

Champa origin anchored on the eastern side of the island. The vessel carried rice and lacquer and was on its way to Malacca. There were 40 crew members, and all were Chams. They carried broad swords, lances and some guns. Dampier wrote that the Chams were actively involved in trade with the Dutch at Malacca.<sup>2</sup>

In 1692, the Chams were once again feeling confident enough to challenge the Vietnamese. In September 1692, Po Saut (or Po Sau, 1660-1692) or Ba-tranh as mentioned in the Nguyen sources,<sup>3</sup> the King of Champa at Panduranga (Pho Hai-Phan Rang-Phan Ri region) began building fortifications and had his men attack the region of Dien Khanh (Dien Ninh prefecture and Binh Khang garrison).<sup>4</sup> It is interesting to note that the *Tien Bien* had used the term 'rebellion' for all Champa military action against the Nguyen since 1629, even though Champa was then still an independent state. Such interpretation reveals that the Nguyen perceived Champa as its tributary vassal.

To counter this problem, a Vietnamese force under Nguyen Huu Kinh, consisting of the main garrison (Chinh dinh) and the garrison from Binh Khang in Quang Nam was sent by Nguyen Phuc Chu to curb Cham raids. The sending of the main garrison was clearly an indication of the Nguyen's ability to turn their attention from their usually heavy defence commitment in the north towards the south. It is also a sign that the Nguyen were able to spare forces from the northern borders for the campaign against Champa.

The campaign ended with the defeat of the Chams in the first month of 1693. However, Po Saut and his followers were only captured seven months later. Po Saut was brought back to Phu Xuan, where he was interned at the village of Ngoc-tran Son in the district of Tra-huong.<sup>5</sup> During Po Saut's absence, the Cham

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<sup>2</sup> William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World*, London: 1697. This edition, The Argonaut Press, 1927, p. 272.

<sup>3</sup> The name Ba-tranh which is found in Vietnamese materials is the same person as Po Saut in the Cham Archives from Panduranga. See Po Dharma, *Le Panduranga (Campa) 1802-1835*, p. 67.

<sup>4</sup> *Tien Bien*, Vol. 7, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> *Tien Bien*, Vol. 7:4.

Court at Pho Hai-Phan Rang-Phan Ri, previously known as Chiem Thanh to the Vietnamese, was renamed Thuan Thanh Tran. It was occupied by three Nguyen garrisons led by Nguyen Tri Thang (at Pho Hai), Nguyen Thanh Le (at Phan Ri) and Chu Kiem Thang (at Phan Rang), all battalion commanders or Cai Doi. Their mission was to prevent attacks from the remnants of the Cham forces.<sup>6</sup> With the establishment of the garrisons, the Champa kingdom at Panduranga was finally subjugated. This led to the Nguyen attempts to exercise control over the newly annexed Chams territories.

The conquest of Champa can be related to *Nam Tien* or southward movement. The Chinese scholar, Yang Baoyun considers Champa a victim of the Nguyen's deliberate policy of subjugation, which stemmed from the principle of "maintaining good relations with countries of distance, and attack the neighbouring countries".<sup>7</sup> Title-inscriptions found on a cannon cast in 1670 by Joao da Cruz (Jean de la Croix), the Portuguese gun founder in the service of the Nguyen sheds light on the matter. The title-inscription on the cannon reads, "for the King and grand Lord of Cochinchina, Champa and of Cambodia".<sup>8</sup> It is most likely that Nguyen Phuc Tan had ordered Da Cruz to have the title inscribed as a testament to his victories over Champa in 1653 and the Cambodians in 1658 respectively.<sup>9</sup> Naming the Nguyen as grand lord over Cambodia and Champa supports the existence of such policy. It also symbolises the Nguyen as overlord over its immediate neighbours.

In September 1693, Nguyen Phuc Chu decided to place his nominee to rule over Champa in place of Po Saut, held captive

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<sup>6</sup> *Tien Bien*, Vol. 7, p. 5b.

<sup>7</sup> Yang Baoyun, *Contribution a l'histoire de la principaute des Nguyen au Vietnam meridional (1600-1775)*, Geneva: Editions Olizane, 1992, p. 151.

<sup>8</sup> Pierre Yves Manguin, *Les Portugais sur les Cotes du Vietnam et du Champa*, Paris: EFEO, 1972, pp. 206-207.

<sup>9</sup> The title which was written in Latin read, "por Eerei Ecas De Cochinchina Champa e Camboia Ioao Dacrusae Esen 1670". The two surviving cannons cast by Joao Da Cruz in 1670, presently kept at the Ministry of War of Thailand in Bangkok. See L. Cadiere, "Compte Rendu de 'Deux Canons Cochinchinois au Ministre de la Guerre de Bangkok', de G. Coedes", *BAVH*, 1919, pp. 528-532.

in Phu Xuan since August. Po Saktiraydaputih or Ke-ba-tu<sup>10</sup> who was Po Saut's lieutenant was sent back to Thuan Thanh, which was by now further elevated from a Tran (garrison town) to the status of a Phu (prefecture), and was renamed Binh Thuan Phu. Po Saktiraydaputih was given the rank of a Kham-ly (A Civil official) in the Nguyen bureaucracy. His three sons were given the military appointments of de-doc, de-lanh and cai-phu. The Chams were also ordered to change their costumes to that of the Han tradition which meant the costumes of the Vietnamese.<sup>11</sup> Thus began a process of Vietnamization in the Cham territories that was to continue throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The establishment of Binh Thuan Phu in the former Pho Hai-Phan Rang-Phan Ri area was followed by a series of battles between the Chams and the Vietnamese in 1693-94. This left the area in severe famine and led to the outbreak of the plagues.<sup>12</sup> Apart from the difficulties caused by the military clashes, the new Vietnamese administration was ill-prepared to govern the Chams. The main problem being the inability of the Nguyen at that point of time to establish an effective military presence in Champa. The problem was partly resolved when Nguyen Phuc Chu renamed the area Thuan Thanh Tran, and appointed Po Saktiraydaputih as the Ta Do Doc (governor) to administer the region on behalf of the Nguyen.<sup>13</sup>

While the Nguyen chronicles and sources are silent on Nguyen Phuc Chu's rationale in sending Po Saktiraydaputih back to Champa as ruler, several reasons could be suggested. First, Nguyen Phuc Chu who had just succeeded as ruler in 1691, was conscious of the difficulties of immediately extending Vietnamese rule over a newly defeated Champa with only Vietnamese officials. To do so would be tantamount to nothing less than an all-out suppression of the Cham people. He must have known that the Chams

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<sup>10</sup> Like the name of Po Saut, Po Saktiraydaputih was used in the Cham Chronicles of Panduranga, whereas Vietnamese sources used the name Ke-Ba-tu. See Po Dharma, *Le Panduranga(Campa), 1802-1835*, p. 68.

<sup>11</sup> *Tien Bien*, Vol. 7, p. 5b-6a.

<sup>12</sup> *Tien Bien*, Vol. 7, p. 9a.

<sup>13</sup> Another term for military base or garrison.

would resist this and try to regain their territories. Thus Nguyen Phu Chu could see the value of Champa being ruled by a Cham, though nominated by his court. On top of that, Po Saktiraydaputih was a sensible choice as not only was he the lieutenant of Po Saut, he was also a member of the Cham royal family, beholden to the Nguyen. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the Cham people attempted to regain their kingdom in late 1693.

At the end of 1693, remnants of the Cham forces rallied to the call of a Cham official, Oc-nha who had teamed up with a Chinese named A-Ban, who was also called Ngo Lang. The latter was reputed to have shamanistic powers including the ability of being invulnerable to arms. Thus he was able to attract the support of the Chams who wanted to resist the new culture and political domination of the Vietnamese. Initially, the attacking Chams caught the Nguyen garrisons at Phan Rang-Phan Ri by surprise. Nguyen Tri Thang, the garrison commander at Pho Hai was defeated. The advance of the Cham forces was only halted at Phan Rang when Chu Kiam Thang, the Nguyen commander threatened to execute Po Saktiraydaputih should the Cham forces advance any further. Fearing for the life of Po Saktiraydaputih, Oc-nha That and his Cham forces retreated. In his analysis of the event, Po Dharma interpreted Oc-nha That's effort as a manifestation of anti-Vietnamese sentiment among the Cham people.<sup>14</sup>

In the early part of 1694, Po Saut passed away. The Nguyen sent two hundred quan of money to ensure that the burial was carried out in a proper manner. Such action was an act of magnanimity by a ruler over his subject as understood in the Vietnamese realm. A month later, Ngo Lang and Oc-nha That, again led a group of armed Chams to attack Phan Rang. Reinforcements for the defense of Phan Rang arrived from Binh Khang, and Ngo Lang's forces were forced back into Khmer territory and the siege was lifted. These revolts led Nguyen Phu Chu to grant Champa autonomy.

Nguyen Phuc Chu appointed Po Saktiraydaputih as the native king (*Phien Vuong*) of Thuan Thanh Tran, and the latter was

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<sup>14</sup> Po Dharma, *Le Panduranga(Campa), 1802-1835*, p. 68.

obliged to pay tribute to the Nguyen. Thus the tributary relationship was resumed. Nguyen Phuc Chu also returned to Po Saktiraydaputih, the royal seal of Champa together with captured weapons, horses and his population. Thirty Vietnamese soldiers or Kinh Binh (soldiers of the Imperial City) were sent to protect the new Cham ruler. The presence of the 30 Vietnamese soldiers is evident. In a register of the orders of the King of Champa dated 1738, five ligatures of kay dan were loaned by the King of Thuan Thanh to pay the salaries of the Vietnamese soldiers.<sup>15</sup> It is obvious that Nguyen Phuc Chu, was acting the role of the benevolent ruler, pacifying and harmonizing from a distance. This elevated Nguyen's status in the region.

Nguyen Phuc Chu's decision to elevate Po Saktiraydaputih to the status of *phien vuong* (native king) marked the first of the Nguyen's ascendance as a separate state not unsimilar with the role of the Le. The Nguyen now had sufficient authority to accord a royal title to a subdued neighbour. If prior to this, Champa had been paying tribute to the Nguyen, these earlier instances of tribute was an extension of the Le-Champa tributary relations. The last Champa tribute mission to the Le Court took place in 1509. But the traditional link between the Champa court and the Le Court had been broken since the beginning of the Mac usurpation of the throne in 1529, to be followed by the Nguyen-Trinh confrontation in 1627. Since then, the Nguyen took over the role of the Le in dealing with Champa. This was because the Nguyen were the sole Vietnamese power that the Cham had come into contact with. The move to accord a royal title to the Cham ruler in 1694 reflected the Nguyen's objective of being rulers of a separate realm of their own. This objective was also being pursued later in the Nguyen's relationship with Cambodia, Ai Lao and the Uplanders who were treated in the same manner as Champa. To some

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<sup>15</sup> *Dai Nam Chinh Bien Liet Truyen, So Tap* or Biographical Records of the Eminent People of Dai Nam, Vol. I (hereafter *DNCBLT*), Chapter 33, p. 22b. See *Inventaire des Archives du Panduranga: du fonds de la Societe Asiatique de Paris*, Paris: Centre d'Histoire et Civilisations de la Peninsule Indochine, 1984, p. 75. See "Governor of Binh Thuan to the King of Champa", 1738, Collections Cam, Societe Asiatique de Paris, piece No. 6.

degree, the growing confidence of the Nguyen rule, was bolstered by its military capability and flourishing economy reflected in Nguyen Phuc Chu's order to have all the military establishments and shops to be roofed using tiles.<sup>16</sup>

The Cham people, now under the Nguyen-installed Po Saktiraydaputih, maintained tributary relations with the Nguyen. It is important at this point to determine the actual nature of this relationship, given the fact that the Kingdom of Champa no longer existed as an independent entity, but had been integrated as part of the Nguyen domains. The Cham people continued to exist in small pockets from the region of Quang Nam down to the Pho Hai-Phan Rang-Phan Ri region where the seat of the Cham Court under Po Saktiraydaputih was situated. Po Saktiraydaputih's actual palace was situated at Bal Chanar, not far from Phan Ri.<sup>17</sup>

Even though the Chams continued to refer to their Kingdom at Pho Hai-Phan Rang-Phan Ri region as Panduranga, it was actually occupied territory. The Cham court co-existed with a Vietnamese garrison based at Binh Khang. In the eyes of the Vietnamese, Thuan Thanh Tran was no more than another frontier garrison under the jurisdiction of Binh Khanh. In September 1697, the region west of the Phan Rang River was redesigned as the districts of An Phuoc and this included the villages at Ham Thuan (Phan Thiet) and the area west of Phan Rang River as well as of Hoa Da which was East of Phan Ri.<sup>18</sup> All these were placed under the jurisdiction of the new prefecture called Binh Thuan. The Chams were powerless to prevent such a move.

The actual Vietnamese-Cham relations after 1697 under Nguyen Phuc Chu was based on a central-regional relations where the rulers of the Cham were reduced to being no more than a governor of his own people. He became more of a cultural and economic leader than a political one. But it was probably due to such a relationship that the Cham people were able to co-exist with the

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<sup>16</sup> See *Tien Bien*, Vol. 7: 7.

<sup>17</sup> It was from here that he gave audience to officers of the French East India Company ship, *La Galatee* in 1720. See Le Thanh Khoi, *Viet-Nam Un Histoire*, pp. 264-265.

<sup>18</sup> *Tien Bien*, Vol. 7:12.

Vietnamese during the southward expansion of the Nguyen up to the early 19th Century.

The Nguyen-Champa tributary relationship provides an insight into the attitude of the Nguyen with regard to its new status as a suzerain. On one hand, the sending of the tribute had great economic and practical value to the Nguyen. More significantly, this self-created tributary relationship is a manifestation of Nguyen Phuc Chu's achievement of an independent state ruling over its newly acquired tributary state, Champa. The Nguyen court was now centre of a system of tributary states that were made up of weaker states and uplanders.

In terms of tribute, both the *Tien Bien* and *Phu Bien Tap Luc* [Miscellaneous Records of the Pacified Frontiers] list the goods sent by Po Saktiraydaputih to Nguyen Phuc Chu as tribute in 1694 and 1709 respectively<sup>19</sup> The following table provides a list of prized goods accompanying the Champa tribute:

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<sup>19</sup> *Phu Bien Tap Luc* (hereafter *PBTL*) or Miscellaneous Records of the Pacified Frontiers, written by Le Quy Don in 1776 provided a list of the tribute of 1709. The list bore similar items to that of the 1694 list except for an extra male elephant recorded for the 1709 tribute, see *PBTL*, Vol. 2, p. 30a. Li Tana in her 1993 translation of the excerpt made an error in reading the 60-year Chinese cycle of *Ky Suu* as 1769, see Li Tana, "Miscellaneous Nguyen Records Seized in 1775-6: *Phu Bien Tap Luc* by Le Quy Don", in *Southern Vietnam under the Nguyen: Documents on the Economic History of Cochinchina [Dang Trong] 1602-1777*, Li Tana and Anthony Reid (eds.), pp. 100-101. The same *Ky Suu* also means year 1709 when Po Saktiraydaputih sent a tribute to the Nguyen, see *Tien Bien*, Vol. 8, p. 7a for a correct corroboration.

**Table 4: Contents of Tribute Sent by Champa to Nguyen in 1694 and 1709**

Item	Quantity
Male elephants	2
Yellow Oxen	20
Elephants tusks	6
Rhinoceros horn	10
White scarves	500 pieces
Long boat <sup>20</sup>	One
Yellow wax	50 catties
Dark wood	200 trees
Fish skins	200 catties
Hot sand	400 pails
Leaves for weaving conical hats	500 pieces

Source: *Phu Bien Tap Luc*, Vol. 2: 30a.

The letter from Po Saktiraydaputih which accompanied his submission stated, “Chinh (Tran)-thon-ba-hu of Thuan Thanh tran (Thy Servant, Po Saktiraydaputih of Thuan Thanh), prostrate to present the annual gift of 1709<sup>21</sup> These goods were stored in the Nguyen’s central storage house, for the personal use or as gifts. Cash was also accepted in replacement for items undelivered. The *Phu Bien Tap Luc* records, mentioned three male elephants as part of the 1709 tribute, out of which, two were actually delivered at Binh Khang prefecture, and one was replaced by a payment of 150

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<sup>20</sup> The length of the boat was 7 tam or about 22.4 metres, see *PBTL*, Vol. 2, p. 30a.

<sup>21</sup> *PBTL*, Vol. 2, p. 30a.

quan tax-money.<sup>22</sup> In the same way, each of the oxen sent in 1709 could be redeemed by paying 60 quan in cash.<sup>23</sup>

No data is available to help determine if any other tribute was sent between 1694 and 1709. In any case, any irregularity in the sending of tribute was probably due to Po Saktiraydaputih's inability to raise a respectable tribute, given the fact that his people were still recovering from famine and disease that plagued the Cham territories in 1697. The other possibility was due to the Nguyen's appreciation of the neutrality offered by the Chams during the Nguyen's struggle against Cambodia during the period 1700 to 1709. Such neutrality was important for the Nguyen military campaign against Cambodia.

The cordial relationship between Po Saktiraydaputih and Nguyen Phuc Chu however, did not prevent friction from taking place in day-to-day affairs between the Cham people and the Vietnamese settlers. There was also dissatisfaction among the Cham people with the Vietnamese government administration of Binh Khanh prefecture whose jurisdiction covered the Cham territories at Pho Hai-Phan Rang-Phan Ri (Panduranga) region. Such friction involved the jurisdiction of law enforcement, the question of trade, trading taxes, slaves and labour contracts, and administrative boundaries.<sup>24</sup> The Chams were at a disadvantage when dealing with the Vietnamese in these matters.

An agreement was made in the ninth month of 1712 between Nguyen Phuc Chu and Po Saktiraydaputih under which five provisions were agreed upon to regulate or govern the Vietnamese-Cham relations in Binh Khang. Nguyen records mentioned

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<sup>22</sup> See *PBTL*, Vol. 2, p. 30a.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Both the *Tien Bien* and *PBTL* are silent on the problems faced by the two peoples residing at dinh Binh Khanh. However, later correspondence (between 1702 to 1810 from the Cham Archives of Panduranga (Societe Asiatique Collections) gives an idea of the nature of the friction. See also *Inventaire des Archives du Panduranga: du font de la Societe Asiatique de Paris*, Paris: Centre d'Histoire et Civilisations de la Peninsule Indochinoise, 1984. See also Yoshiaki Ishizawa, *Les Archives Cam Redigees en Caracteres Chinois au Fins de la Societe Asiatique avec Annotation Analyse*, Kagoshima: Historical Science Reports, Vol. 29, Kagoshima University, 1980.

that the agreement was made at the request of Po Saktiraydaputih, and that Nguyen Phuc Chu ‘granted’ a list of rules (and not agreement).<sup>25</sup> It is difficult to ascertain if Po Saktiraydaputih really requested such an agreement, but clearly, the agreement was an important one, at least to safeguard the interests of the Chams. Nevertheless, some of the articles were biased against the interests of the Chams:

- 1) Anyone who petitioned at the Royal palace (of Po Saktiraydaputih) has to pay 20 string of cash (quan) to each of the Left-Right Tra (court official), and 10 string of cash to each of the Left-right Phan dung; Whereas those who petitioned at dinh Binh Khanh has to pay 10 string of cash to the Left-Right Tra, and 2 string of cash to each of the Left-Right Phan dung.
- 2) All disputes among Han people (Vietnamese); or between Vietnamese and a resident of Thuan Thanh shall be judged by the Phien Vuong (Cham King) together with a *Cai ba* or treasurer and a *Ky Luc* or judicial official (both Vietnamese officials); Disputes among the people of Thuan Thanh shall be judged by the Cham King.
- 3) The two stations of Kien-kien and O-cam shall be defended more carefully against spies. The authorities shall have no power to arrest residents of the two stations.
- 4) All traders who wish to enter the land of the registered barbarians (Man de) must obtain a pass from the various relevant stations.
- 5) All Chams from Thuan Thanh who drifted to Phien Tran (borders with Cambodia) must be well treated.

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<sup>25</sup> *Tien Bien*, Vol. 8, p. 14a.

From the agreement, it is apparent that the Chams territories were well-penetrated by Vietnamese settlers and that there was no distinctive demarcation between a Cham and a Vietnamese area in the Binh Khang Garrison (Thuan Thanh area). The terms of the agreement also suggest that the Nguyen had conceded a great deal of authority in administering the Champa people to their sponsored-Cham king. However, the fact remained that such great influx of foreign culture and large numbers of people inevitably forced the Chams to accept the presence of the Viet people while at the same time adopting some of the latter's ways of life, including the wearing of Vietnamese costumes, and the usage of the Vietnamese language.

Nguyen-Champa relations between 1697 to 1728 was described by Vietnamese sources as amicable. In the seventh month of 1714 for instance, after the completion of the renovation of the Thien Mu Temple in Phu Xuan, Po Saktiraydaputih brought his three sons to attend a religious celebration hosted by Nguyen Phuc Chu. Chu, a devoted Buddhist, was "very pleased" with their presence. He appointed each of Po Saktiraydaputih's sons as Hau, or noble in-charge of a village.<sup>26</sup>

Three months later, Po Saktiraydaputih requested assistance from the Nguyen for the establishment of an official court. The *Tien Bien* recorded how Nguyen Phuc Chu ordered a plan to be drawn up for the Cham ruler where the respective positions of the military and civil officials in the court were specified.<sup>27</sup> Given the nature of the Nguyen chronicles, it is difficult to be sure if Po Saktiraydaputih had actually made such a request, or whether the whole system was imposed upon the Chams. Nevertheless, it represented another step towards the Vietnamization of the Chams.

Under Po Saktiraydaputih, the Cham people remained subordinate to Nguyen authority, between 1700 and 1728, during a period when the Nguyen expanded their power into Cambodian territories. However, even when the Nguyen were preoccupied

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<sup>26</sup> *Tien Bien*, Vol. 8, p. 18b.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 8, p. 20b.

with the situation in Cambodia, the Chams did not take the opportunity to free itself from the Nguyen.

No Cham ruler after the death of Po Saktiraydaputih ever developed a close relationship with the individual Nguyen ruler as that between Po Saktiraydaputih and Nguyen Phuc Chu. Nguyen-Champa relations underwent a shift after the death Po Saktiraydaputih's death in 1728. In that year, the Chams rose against the Vietnamese, but were swiftly defeated.<sup>28</sup> This led to further Vietnamization to the extent that subsequent Cham rulers adopted the Vietnamese family name of Nguyen.<sup>29</sup>

After 1728, Nguyen relations with Champa were downgraded to that of a prefecture. The Cham rulers continued to be from the line of Po Saktiraydaputih (of the Po Rome line), conducting their affairs with the prefects of Binh Thuan prefecture and rarely having any direct contact with the Nguyen capital at Phu Xuan. A survey of the the Cham Archives of Panduranga however, provide us with some information on post-1728 Nguyen-Champa relations. These relations were still governed by the regulations set by Nguyen Phuc Chu and Po Saktiraydaputih, and thus, there was a continuity of the pre-1728 relationship.

The process of Vietnamization continued, and soon, the position of the Chams became more and more vulnerable by the day. Po Dharma described the remnant areas of Champa as spots on a leopard skin.<sup>30</sup> The Vietnamese swamped the Cham area, and the autonomous rule of the Cham rulers became more untenable. At the same time, even though the Cham ruler was an autonomous ruler within the Nguyen domain, he had no access to the Nguyen. All transactions between Champa and the Nguyen were conducted through the local Vietnamese prefectures of Binh Khanh and Binh

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<sup>28</sup> This revolt is not found in other sources, see "De Flory to another Priest", 1728, AMEP: Cochinchine, Vol. 739, f. 600.

<sup>29</sup> It is not known when did the first Champa ruler first adopt or was given the family name of Nguyen. When Emperor Gia Long established his dynasty, he appointed Nguyen Van Hau, a chieftain from Thuan Thanh as Phien Vuong (Native King), and the successors of Nguyen Van Hau were using the name of Nguyen until 1835. See *Dai Nam Nhat Thong Chi*, Vol. 10: Binh Thuan, p. 19.

<sup>30</sup> Po Dharma, "Les Frontieres du Campa (derbier etat des recherches), in *Les Frontieres du Vietnam*, P. B. Lafont (ed.), Paris: L'Hamattan, 1989, p. 134.

Thuan, set up in the Phan Rang-Phan Ri-Phan Thiet region. Thus, in many ways, the autonomous Champa ruler as envisaged by Nguyen Phuc Chu was nothing more than a local chieftain under the jurisdiction of the prefecture administrators.

After 1728, there was no major Champa resistance against Nguyen rule. The last one was the attempt by Duong Bao Lai and Ye Ma Linh, two leaders of the 'barbarians of Thuan Thanh who led a gang of people attacking Tran Bien dinh.<sup>31</sup> The actual nature of this resistance is unknown, but it was defeated by the garrison force from *Tran Bien*.

Beyond state level relations, Champa's own cultural identity was threatened by the large number of Vietnamese in its territories. Not only did the Vietnamese people swamp Champa, they also began to break down the traditional economic positions of the Chams. The Vietnamese began to take over the Chams' role in the collection of jungle produce from the highlands. This included the direct collection of calambac (Gharu) and eaglewood. The Vietnamese also began to deal directly with the uplanders for jungle produce. In the process, they marginalized the Chams.<sup>32</sup> According to Po Dharma, many Chams became indebted to the Vietnamese through borrowing money from them at an exorbitant interest rate of 150%. This resulted in the the Chams losing their land, rice fields, slaves, their children and even their parents.<sup>33</sup>

## Conclusion

The need to secure its southern frontiers resulted in an aggressive foreign policy against Champa. Eventually this led to expansionism and the colonisation of the Phan Rang region. What began as attempts to secure its southern frontiers led to what became known as the Southward Movement (Nam Tien) of the Vietnamese people.

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<sup>31</sup> *Tien Bien*, Vol. 10: 13.

<sup>32</sup> Gerald Hickey, *Sons of the Mountain*, p. 160.

<sup>33</sup> Po Dharma, *Le Panduranga (Campa) 1802-1835*, p. 71.

Champa was the first and only state fully conquered by the Nguyen. Nonetheless, the Chams were allowed a certain degree of autonomy within the Nguyen realm. The accordance of the title of king on the Nguyen-installed Po Saktiraydaputih was an important act that helped boost the Nguyen's claim of being an independent political entity. The move was consistent with Nguyen Phuc Chu's policy of elevating his court vis-à-vis the Trinh position in the North.

In the case of Cambodia, Nguyen Phuc Nguyen took advantage of the peaceful overtures made by Cambodia in 1618 to begin interfering in the internal politics of the latter. He also began to eye the economic potential of the Mekong Delta. This is evident from the request for the setting up of custom houses to regulate the trade conducted by the Vietnamese in the region of Saigon and Ban Nhe in as early as 1621.

By the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century however, the Nguyen's position in Cambodia was threatened by the emergence of an anti-Vietnamese faction in the Cambodian court, which resulted in a direct intervention by the Nguyen in 1658. This intervention in Cambodia and the 1653 attack on Champa are two occasions where tribute were exacted by the Nguyen from an independent nations. This marked a watershed in the Nguyen's achievement of independent statehood in its foreign relations. The subject of the following chapter continues with further inroads into the south, more specifically the Mekong Delta.