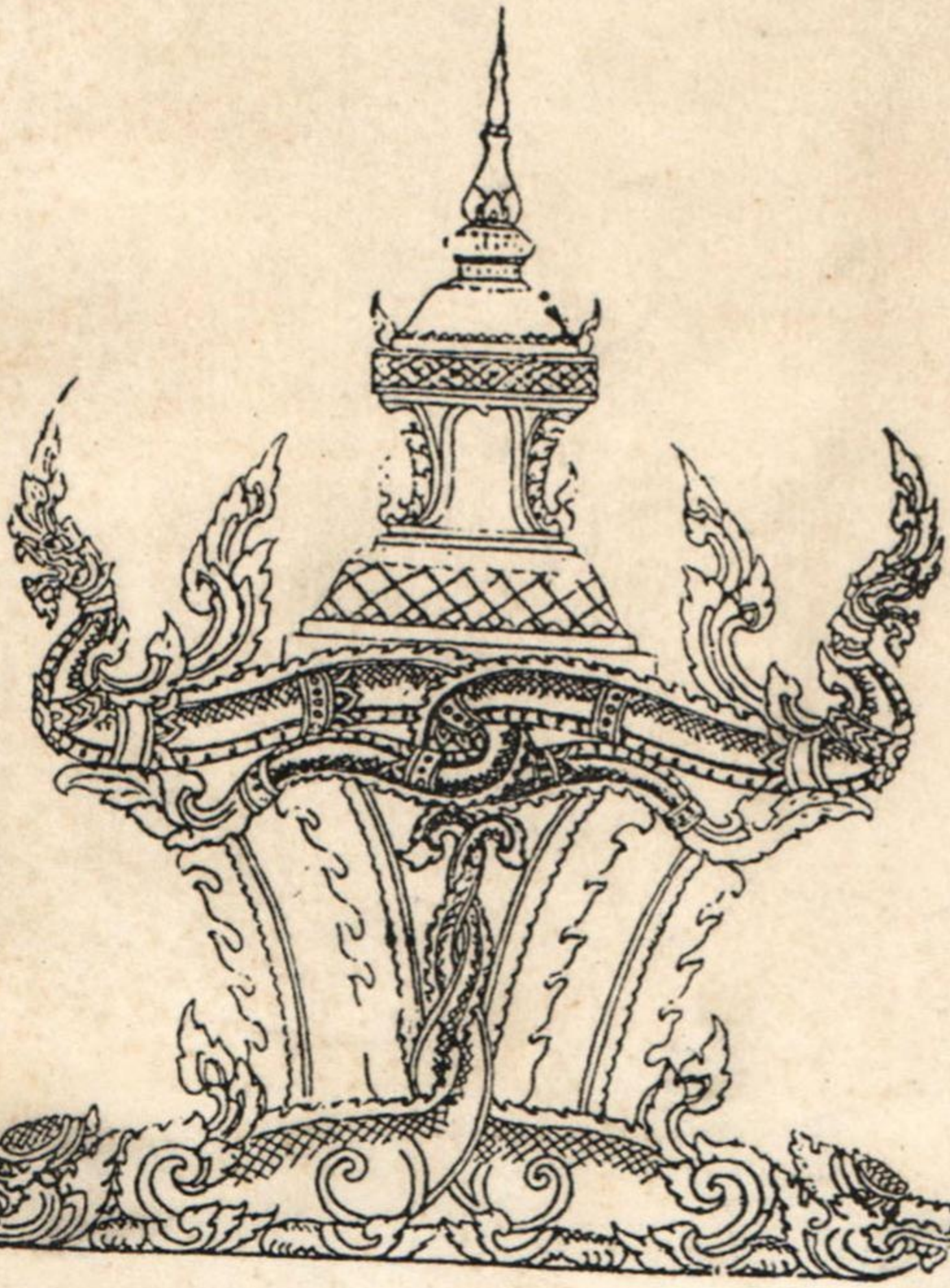
HISTORY

OF

LAOS

By

Maha Sila Viravong



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HISTORY OF LAOS

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HISTORY OF LAOS

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Maha Sila Viravong

History of the Lao Race

Chapter I

Muong Xieng Thong or Souvannaphoum Pathet

The area which constitutes today the territory of Laos included, 2500 years ago, parts of Burma, Malaya, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. It was called then Souvannaphoum Pathet or Laem Thong or Muong Xieng Thong (Thong meaning gold) for the reason that those same areas where known to be rich in gold ores. For this same reason, when the Lao people established themselves in this area they gave the name of Muong Xieng Thong to their capital city. (1) [Footnotes will be found at the end of each chapter].

The area which was known as Souvannaphoum Pathet was in fact a large peninsula which was situated in between the Indian Ocean and the China Sea and this was the reason why, at a later date, the Western world has given this part of land the name of Indochina.

Souvannaphoum Pathet or Indochina was first inhabited by people of Khmer and Le-va or Lua origin.

The Khmer Race

The Khmer race is of ancient indian descent. This race has nowadays given birth to various ethnic groups known as the Khmer, Mon, Meng, Kha, Khamu, Malay. The Khmer had established themselves in the south of Indochina before any other races thousands of years ago and has formed two large kingdoms of their own:

1. <u>The Thavaravadi Kingdom or the civilized Kingdom</u>. This Kingdom is situated in the west side, from the territory of Nakorn Pathom in Thailand and covering the Mon and Burmese territory of the east and down to the Malayan strait.

2. <u>The Gotapura Kingdom or Gotaburana</u> which occupied the eastern part of the present province of Vientiane down to the territory of Cambodia.

Gotapura is a Sanscrit word meaning the Kingdom of the East. This same word Gotapura has later become Gotaburana and the Lao people later called it Gotabong or Sigotabong. (The capital city of the Gotapura Kingdom, according to the story of That Phanom, which was at the estuary of the Sebangfai river, was called Gotaburana City. The capital was later transferred to a place west of That Phanom and was given the name of Marukra Nakorn. Later, in about the year B.E. 318 (225 B.C.), King Sumitra Dhamma Krasat Have transferred it again to Saket Nakorn, now Roi Et in Thailand. It was later transferred again from Saket Nakorn to Nakorn Thom while other groups have come to Vientiane).

The capital city of Marukra Nakorn had been at first governed by a Khmer King whose reign lasted to the year B.E. 500 (42 B.C.) and was later abandoned. Several hundred years later, when the Lao people had recovered all these territories, they have rebuilt the city of Marukra Nakorn on the left bank of the Mekong river which is now the site of Muong Kao Thakhek. In the year 1614 A.D. King No-Muong of Pichit-Totstits-Rajdhani had again changed the name of Marukra Nakorn to its former name of Sigotaburana. The Chinese called the Kingdom of Sigotaburana as Poh-Nam or Funan or Ponan which is Phanom itself.

These are the facts that led to the belief that the Khmer was the first that had come to inhabit the Indochinese peninsula before any other races:

1. The ancient ruins which can still be seen today in

the areas referred to, namely the stone stupas, the stone walls, the stone pools, all of these bear the marks and the workmanship of the ancient Khmer.

2. The letters and manuscripts which are found on the steles are those of the Khmer who inherited them from the ancient Indians.

3. The spoken languages of the ancient peoples namely the Suey, Kha, Khmer, Malay and Mon have, the same phonetics and tones as the language used today in the training of elephants and wherever you can find these peoples, they still continue to speak the same languages they had spoken in the ancient times.

Causes of the Khmer migration to Souvannaphoum

It is a historical fact that the Khmer have come to settle down in Souvannaphoum Pathet even before the advent of Buddha, 2500 years ago. But the largest migration occurred during the reign of King Asoka Raja who ruled Pataribud from the year 218 to 227 B.E. (325 - 316 B.C.).

The causes of the Khmer or ancient Indian migration to Souvannaphoum Pathet during the reign of King Asoka Raja are reported in the King's bible and on his own stele as follows:

"When Prince Asoka was enthroned as King of Pataibud for about one year, His Majesty's army has invaded and occupied Kalingarad in the south. In this battle, the people of Kalingarad have been killed by hundreds of thousands and as many made prisoners."

Because of this war, thousands of Indians have migrated from the southern part of India to live in Indochina. In the light of this mass migration, King Asoka Raja was so upset and decided to turn to Buddhism to find the solution to end it. In cooperation with a Buddhist priest named Mokkanlibud, King Asoka Raja sent out a number of capable priests to preach and spread Buddhism in many countries of the area in B.E. 236 (307 B.C.). Two Buddhist priests known as Sonakab and Utarah were sent to Souvannaphoum Pathet.

Later, in about the year B.E. 600 (57 A.D.) Brahmanism which was the ancient religion of India had also been practiced in Indochina and led by a Brahman by the name of Konthanya. This same Brahman was later wed to the daughter of

a Khmer king and later became king himself. Since then Brahmanism continued to flourish in Cambodia and when King Jayavarman III came to power, he built the stone temple at Nakorn Thom with Brahman designs in the year 857 A.D. Later, in the year 1057 A.D. another Khmer King built the temple known as Angkor Wat with the same Brahman style and designs. From the years 857 to 1057 A.D. which was exactly 200 years the Khmers reached the peak of their splendor and power in the Indochinese peninsula. In this same period, the Khmers had extended the limits of their territories up to Xieng Sen and Xieng Rai and in this same period, the Lao had started to migrate from the south of China and in their southward drive they had clashed with the Khmers as to be told in the part dealing with the Lao migration in the next chapter.

The Lwa or La-wa Race

After careful studies, we have grounds to believe that the Lwa or La-wa constitutes one major element of the ancient Lao people which had settled down in the northern part of Indochina before the Khmers. The part of land they occupied starts from Lopburi up to the kingdom of Xieng Sen touching the frontier of Yunan of the present Chinese mainland. The Lwa were not as civilized as the Khmers and when the latter pushed their influence toward the north they practically occupied the Lwa territory. As time went by, the Lwa have lost all their originality as well as their power and gradually became Khmer citizens and in turn, the Lao citizens of today known as the Kha.

[Footnotes]

(1) The area known as Souvannaphoum Pathet was precisely the area in which two priests, Phra Sonakab and Phra Utarah had first come to preach Buddhism in the year 236 B.E. (307 B.C.) during the reign of King Asoka Raja. This according to the compilation of a British professor Ris David who said that Souvannaphoum Pathet also included the land of the Mon from Burma down to the Malayan strait. Another version credited to a Thai philosopher Phra ya Damrong Raja Nupab, who said that Souvannaphoum Pathet was part of the territory of Thailand, precisely the province of Nakorn Pathom due to the fact that one can still find there a monastery and a Dhamma wheel of virtues which were built during the reign of King Asoka Raja. But in another document known as Urangadhat, it was said that Souvannaphoum Pathet was the country of Thao Kham

Bang, in the province of Vientiane and on the present site of the Kao Liu village (Thao Kham Bang who fled form Muong Nong Han is of Khmer origin). But the story book of the Legends of Khun Borom indicates that the frontiers of Laos starts from the province of Vientiane down to the territory of Cambodia. The part of the legends which deals with this particular phase of the story reads as follows:

"The stupas have been brought to Souvannaphoum Pathet at Lak Hin. King Sidhamma Asoka Raja ordered the astrologers to place them in this respective localities in the country: Phra Hang, Phra Narai, Phra Sakien and Phra Nathien at Muong Khouang, Loke Ban, Phra Nom at Phon Fing Dad south of the Pasak river estuary. These stupas were kept in crystal and sandalwood boxes for worship..."

Chapter II

The birth of the Lao race

Many historians agree that our universe has been inhabited by human beings for more than 100,000 years. They also believe that the part of land which was the birthplace of our human race was along and in the vicinity of Altai Mountains in Mongolia.

The human race which came to being then was of many groups but the largest groups of them all which lived in Asia are four in number:

1. The Chinese: who made their living on cattle raising along the southeastern coasts of the Caspian Sea.

2. The Tartars: who lived in the deserts and used horses a great deal in their banditry acts.

3. The Sinuijus: who lived in the part of land now known as Korea and up to Mongolia. Their main profession is also banditry.

4. The Ai-Lao: who established themselves in the valleys between the Hwang Ho and Yang Tse Kiang rivers in the heart of the present day mainland China. The Ai-Lao made their living mainly on agriculture.

The group of people known as the Lao have settled down along the Hwang Ho river valley before the advent of Buddha, 2500 years ago.

The birth of the word "Lao"

The word "Lao" or the Lao people has been recorded in various versions as follows:

a. In the book "History of Thailand" of Luang Vichit Vathakarn, it has been said that the word "Lao" came from the words Lwa or La-wa which were in fact the names of a certain ethnic group who lived in this part of the land long before. When the Thais migrated down to live with them, the Thais called them Lao.

b. In the story book of the legends of Khun Borom, it has been said that the Lao people came to being from two large gourds (which is Lawu in Pali), that was the reason why our people got the name of Lao according to that of the gourds.

c. According to another book on the history of Thailand by Phraya Anuman-rajdhon, it has been otherwise said that before we got the name "Lao", there was the following story:

Long before, there was a certain group of people who lived along the Mekong valley next to a chain of mountains which border the province of Tche-Chwan of the Chinese mainland today. Among this group of people, there was a woman who had nine sons Before she had her nineth son, it was told that she went fishing in the Mekong river. In the course of this fishing, rough floating trunk of wood hit her about the legs and from that day on she began her nineth pregnancy. When her nineth child grew up to a certain age, his mother took him along to her fishing trip in the Mekong river again. On this trip, while she was fishing, a Naga came by and asked her this question - Where is my son? Perplexed, she had time to say only a word "kao-long" before she ran away leaving her son behind. Then the Naga licked him once on the back. Later when all of her nine sons grew up and had their own family and home, the nineth son grew up to be the most intelligent of them all and became so the undisputable leader. Later, the nine sons of this woman lived to be the ancestors of the Lao people and were for that reason called the Ai-Lao meaning the Lao brothers.

According to the history book of China, these nine brothers are called the Lee brothers and their country was subsequently called Pathet Choke. In the year 2055 before Buddha the Lee brothers were engaged in a big war against the Chinese and so the words Long and Lee should have been the same word and later the tone of this word changed to Lung and to Luang and finally to Lao. The Chinese word Kao-Long or Kiu-Lung means precisely the nine Lao brothers.

d. Other sources said that the word Lao is the same word as Dao because the Lao people like to live on the highland and they have had an older civilization than that of the Chinese. The words Dao or Thieh, Then, Thai, mean the sky, thus the word Lao should also mean sky and in many cases the letter D could very well be L. And the reason for the Lao to worship the spirits of the sky in the ancient times could very well be the proof of this analogy.

The reasons as given in items c and d show enough trustworthy facts and here are why:

1. According to the history book of China, it has been

said that the territory of the ancient Lao people was in the vicinity of the Ai-Lao mountains which began at the level of the present Tche-Chwan province of the Chinese mainland and the part of the Mekong river where the Ai-Lao brothers lived was called "Kao-Long" which the Chinese have themselves later changed to "Kiu-Lung-Kiang, which means the river of the nine Nagas, thus leading to the belief that this was where the nine Lao brothers or the ancestors of the Lao people really lived. The same book goes on to say that because of the fact that the Lao people are the descendents of the Nagas they still like and worship the dragon, they tatoo dragons on their forearms (and if some Chinese of the Tche-Chwan province still bear the dragon tatoo on theirs, that should prove this historical relationship).

2. When the Lao people had migrated to Muong Then during the Khun Lo period the Chinese continued to call the then Muong Then as "Kao-Long" and the Mekong river at the level of Muong Xieng Hung as "Kiu-Lung-Kiang" as before.

3. In the story book of Thao Hung, Thao Chuong, the country of Khun-Lo was known as Muong Ka-Long (which in fact came from Kao-Long itself). This terminology has been found in an ancient poem which related the conquest by Khun-Lo of Muong Prakan (Xieng Khouang) in Laos today:

Lo, Prince of Princes Ruler of millions of Thens
Conquered and ruled Ka-Long Happily they lived
Together in unity, peace and prosperity.

4. In the story book of Khun Thung, it has been said that Thao Khun Thuong married Nang Ek Khai, the daughter of the King of the Dragons at Nong Ka-se-sen-Gnian and a boy was born to them. His name was Khun Thung and it was this same Khun Thung who built the city of Chien Mai in the north of Thailand today.

From this story book, it was believed that both Khun Thuong and Khun Thung are of Khmer descent and related to Nang Jamadevi who ruled over Muong Hariphounchai (now Lampoon in Thailand) in the year 1008 B.E. At that time the Lao people had already settled down in the principality of Nong Sae. These Lao were the descendents of those known as Long, Lee, Lung, Lwang, thus the word Nang Lwang and the word Lwang means Naga (Lwang is a Lao word and Naga is a Pali word) as found in the Xin-Xai story book:

"Like mad Nang Lwang lost her beauty
Thuong disgusted and beset sent her away."

And in the Vetsantra:

"Blindfolded I shall draw you Lwang
And the flower I shall put on your head."

This shows that the word Lao should have been derived from the word Lwang, Lee or Long as mentioned above.

5. The name of the capital city of the Lao at the time of the Ai-Lao was also Nakorn Lung or Muong Lung which was in the upper north part of the Hwang-Ho river.

6. And just because the Lao people owed their existence to the Lung, Lwang or Long they now still worship the Naga and use the Naga as their national emblem at present.

The meaning of the word "Lao"

The word "Lao" has the following meanings:

1. An American professor, Mr. Clifton Dodd said that the word Lao means big or a tall person, thus leading us to believe that the Lao race is a very large one and has had a great civilization with a high degree of moral virtues in the ancient times.

2. His Highness Thammathira-Rajamahamuni has indicated in his monthly newspaper that the word Lao might have derived from the word Dao which means sky or the highest point because the Lao had the preference for the highland in China to build their homes and considered themselves as highly civilized, drawing their roots from Then Thien, Thai etc... which also mean sky.

3. As far as I am concerned, the word Lao derived from the words Long, Lee, Lung or Lwang and the word Lwang itself could very well become Luang which, in turn, means big or civilized.

In any case, our Lao race had come to existence in the universe at the same time as the Chinese and can be considered on this ground as one of the most ancient races of the world which had known a wide range of splendor and progress no less than any other races of the same era.

Chapter III

The ancient Kingdom of the Lao

The ancient Lao people have at first established themselves in the valleys between the rivers Hwang-Ho and Yang-Tse (Yang-tse-Kiang) in the Tche-chwan province of the present Chinese mainland and have built two big cities:

1. The city of Muong Lung near the source of the Hwang-Ho river to the north.
2. The city of Muong Pah south of the Hwang-Ho river but north of Tche-chwan.

Later on, another city known as Muong Ngiao has been built. But of them all, the city of Muong Pah was the biggest and the most important at that time. Other groups of people called the Lao by the name of "Mung". The King of China had sent a goodwill mission to Muong Pah.

Later, in about the year 843 B.C. the Tartars invaded the territory of China and pushed their invasion up to Muong Lung. The people of Muong Lung, sensing the danger fled to Muong Pah and about 70 years later, the Chinese have themselves invaded the Lao cities of Muong Pah and Muong Ngiao. The Lao people fled downward to Muong Kui-Chiu, Kwang-Tung, Kwang Sai and Yunnan in a great number. At this time the Chinese called the Lao the Tai (which later changed to Thai). Nevertheless, the people who remained and fought the Chinese at Muong Pah were successful in beating back the invading Chinese and maintained their independence.

In the year 205 B.E. (338 B.C.) the Lao people at Muong Pah fought another Chinese invasion but were defeated this time and fled the city to join their friends in the south. In the year 297 B.E. (246 B.C.) a Chinese emperor known as Chin-Tse-Hong-Teh who built the huge, 10,000 li long Chinese Wall (one li equals 500 meters) had again invaded the Lao city of Muong Ngiao and again in their defeat the Lao people of Muong Ngiao abandoned the city and fled southward to join the others in the year 328 B.E. (215 B.C.). When all the Lao people were reunited again they built another capital city known as Nakorn Peh-Ngai (1) with Khun Meng or Khun Muong as king. At this time, another Chinese emperor known as Fu-Tee appointed an ambassadorial mission to inquire about Buddhism in India. This Chinese mission wanted to go through Nakorn

Peh-Ngai on their way to India but was refused the passing through by King Khun Meng. Infuriated, Emperor Wu-Tee invaded Nakorn Peh-Ngai. Khun-Meng fought stubbornly to defend his city for several years but capitulated and became vassal to the Chinese in the year 456 B.E. In the year 552 B.E. (9 A.D.) China was the scene of a bloody revolt. Khun Wang who succeeded Khun Meng in Nakorn Peh-Ngai profited of this disturbance in China to proclaim the independence of his kingdom and renounced the vassalage. The independent reign of Khun Wang lasted until the year 593 B.E. (50 A.D.) but was to become dependent of China again when the latter invaded the city.

At this point, the Lao people have split into two main groups:

1. Those who remained in Nakorn Peh-Ngai were called the Ai-Lao.

2. Those who were fatther south were called the Ngai-Lao.

In the year 600 B.E. (57A.D.) another Chinese emperor known as Ming-Tee had a strange dream. He dreamed of seeing a large white flash of light shooting up in the sky toward the west. The mandarins of the court predicted that the light the emperor saw in his dream was a sign of the birth of a new religion known as "Fo" which was spreading rapidly throughout India. Taking this prediction for granted, Emperor Ming-Tee appointed an ambassadorial mission which was sent to India with the purpose of collecting as much information as possible about the new religion. After having spent 7 years in India, the mission returned with statues of Buddha, his teaching (Dhamma) and a number of monks (the monk that came with the mission belonged to the Mahayana Sect of Buddhism). Emperor Ming-Tee made this religion the state religion of China and soon after many neighbouring countries had also adopted this new religion from India. At this time, the King of Laos, known as Khun Luang Lee Mau in the captial city of the Ngai-Lao, had also accepted this Mahayana sect of Buddhism in the year 612 B.E.

In the year 621 B.E. (78 A.D.) King Khun Luang Lee Mau died. Prince Khun Lai-Lao succeeded to his father's throne. At this point, the Chinese still considered the Ngai-Lao kingdom as their possessions and sent Chinese administrators and mandarins to supervise the Lao affairs. Khun Lai-Lao refused to accept the Chinese terms and Ngai-Lao was again

invaded by the Chinese and fell. Ngai-Lao again lost its independence and the Lao people was ordered to pay taxes to their Chinese masters. The taxes consisted of two shirts and about 100 pounds of salt per person. Unable to live in such dependence, the Lao again migrated southward every time.

/FOOTNOTES/

(1) This city was mentioned in the book dealing with the history of the Thai people as Muong Pah-Nhai and in others it was called Peh-Ngai, Pheh-Ngai, Pah-Nhai or Pah-Nhong; others yet by the name of Muong Pak-Ai, or Poh-Ngai and nowadays the Chinese call it Pu-Eh-Fu.

Chapter IV

The Lao Kingdom of Nong-Sae or Nan-Tchow

Nong Sae is a large lake situated in the east of the Me-kong river in the Yunnan province of the present mainland China. The ancient Lao called it Nong Sae or Nong-Ka-Sae-Sen-yan; the Chinese called it Ta-Lee-Fu.

At the time the kingdom of Ngai-Lao was dependent of China, the greater part of the Lao people migrated down to establish themselves along the Nong-Sae Lake. Luckily, at the same time, the Chinese had split into three main groups: The Cho-So, the Lao-Pi and the Sun-Kwan. Owing to this split among the Chinese and especially the dispute and war that had opposed them, the Lao availed themselves of this state of events to build up their unity and strength and had subsequently succeeded in building six new cities, namely:

1. Muong Mong-Sui (could be Muong Sui).
2. Muong Ia-Tse (no such name left nowadays).
3. Muong Lang-Kong (could be Muong Lane-Kung).
4. Muong Theng-Tsieng (could be Thong-Xang).
5. Muong Tse-Lang (could be Xieng-Lane).
6. Muong Mong-Tse)Muong Sae or Muong Nong-Sae).

Among these six cities, Muong Sae is the capital city of the kingdom. The country was subsequently called the Nong-Sae Kingdom or Nan-Tchow. The frontiers of this kingdom have been recorded in the Chinese history book as including the following areas:

1. The northwest ern borders touched Su-Lu-Fan (Tibet).
2. In the north the borders touched the city of Ngiu-Tchow (China).
3. In the southeastern the borders touched the Kao-Chi country (Vietnam).
4. In the east the borders touched Muong Sun, provinc. of Kwai-Tchow (China).
5. To the west the borders touched the city of Noh-Ka-Toh (Makatha country of India).
6. To the south the borders touched the city of Nui-Wong.
7. To the southwest the borders touched the city of Piu.
8. The northeastern tips touched the city of Chim-Mu.

The Lao who lived in the Nong-Sae independent kingdom

had known a period of tranquility and happiness until about one hundred years later and in 768 B.E. (225 A.D.) Kong-Beng, a capable general of Emperor Lao-Pi of China, invaded again the Nong-Sae Kingdom, the King of Nong-Sae put up a stiff resistance for several years but surrendered at the end and became again vassal to the Chinese emperor. Again, the Lao people lived in oppression and hardship and again they decided to migrate southward as in the past.

In the year 938 B.E. (395 A.D.) the Lao who remained in those six cities were able to regain their lost independence and lived happily until the year 1192 B.E. (649 A.D.) which marked the advent of a new Lao king known as Sihanara (1) or Sinulo (or Siu-Know-Loh according to the Chinese). King Sihanara succeeded in reuniting the six Lao principalities into one unique kingdom and administration, thus making the kingdom of Nong-Sae one of the most prosperous kingdoms of the time. King Sihanara wasted no time in sending a goodwill mission to China whose Emperor Kaw-Chong-Hong-Teh extended it the most cordial reception.

Later, in the year 1228 B.E. (685 A.D.) King Sihanara died and his son, Prince Lo-Seng succeeded to the throne of Nong-Sae. The new king followed his father's step in sending another goodwill mission to China in the year 1233 B.E. (690 A.D.). And to further his kingdom's ties with China, he went over himself to attend the wedding ceremony for the Chinese emperor's daughter, H.R.H. Pu-Sek-Thien.

The advent of Khun Borom Rajathiraj

At the end of the reign of King Lo-Seng, three other Lao kings have successively ruled over the Nong-Sae kingdom before the advent of King Khun Borom Rajathiraj whose name was recorded in the Chinese history book as Pi-Loh-Koh.

Khun Borom Rajathiraj or Pi-Loh-Koh was said to be a very valiant king, well developed and very experienced in the art of warfare. He was in fact the monarch who has added in his successive conquests, a large area of territories of the Nong-Sae kingdom. He was enthroned in the year 1272 B.E. (729 A.D.) and when he reached the age of 32, he sent another goodwill mission to China to renew his friendship with the then Chinese king known as Nguan-Chong-Neng-Hong-Teh who also gave him a heartwarming welcome.

Khun Borom Rajathiraj

built Muong Ka-Long or Muong Then (2)

Khun Borom Rajathiraj, the ruler of the Nong-Sae kingdom mindful of the power of China and its perpetual desire to invade the Kingdom of Nong-Sae was clever enough to never relax his vigilance over the ties of friendship he had had with China. His distrust of China prompted him in the year 1247 B.E. (731 A.D.) to build a new city in a locality known as Thong-Na-Oi-Nu.

Later, in the year1286 B.E. (743 A.D.) Khun Borom Rajathiraj again sent a goodwill mission to Emperor Hien-Chong of China and returned himself to the throne of Muong Nong-Sae and handed Muong Tah-Hoh over to his second son Thao Phalan. Khun Borom Rajathiraj continued to rule Muong Nong-Sae until the year 1293 B.E. (750 A.D.) and passed away at the age of 53.

A Chinese history book known as "Yi-Chap-Si-Su" contained the information that when Khun Borom Rajathiraj (or Pi-Loh-Koh) died, his first son Koh-Loh-Pong (Khun Lo himself) succeeded to the throne of Nong-Sae. But at the time Khun Lo was still ruling Muong Ka-Long. When informed of his father's death, he moved to Muong Nong-Sae and, as his father, hurried to send another goodwill mission to China. Later, Khun Lo made an extensive tour of the Chinese territory, up to Hunnan. But, to his great surprise, the mandarins of the localities he visited did not show much respect to his regard. Vexed, he sent his army to conquer these territories of China including the province of Hunnan and numbering in all 32 cities and set up his administrative capital at Hunnan.

Later, in the year 1294 B.E. the emperor of China sent down his armies to reconquer them. Khun Lo hurried to send an ambassador to negotiate with the Chinese general for the return of some of the cities he had previously taken away from China. The Chinese general not only refused to accept Khun Lo's terms but also arrested his ambassador and pushed his army in the direction of Hunnan. Khun Lo succeeded in beating off the Chinese invaders. But knowing that the Chinese would later attack him again, he wasted no time in sending a goodwill mission to the king of Tibet with the purpose of negotiating an alliance with him. Khun Lo's prediction was right for in the year 1297 B.E. (754 A.D.) the Chinese did invade Hunnan again. Using a great strategy, Khun Lo, with a small part of his troops, diverted the Chinese drive in the

direction of Tibet, then sent the bulk of his troops to check the rear of the Chinese army. In this long fought battle, the invading Chinese army exhausted all its food supplies and a severe cholera epidemic within the army forced the Chinese to retreat leaving behind thousands of hungry and dead soldiers. Khuh Lo went to their pursuit and almost exterminated the retreating Chinese invaders.

When peace returned to his lands Khun Lo handed the kingdom of Nong-Sae to I-Hau-Tsin his nephew and the son of Thao Phalan, and came back to rule over Muong Ka-Long.

Again, the Lao kingdom of Nong-Sae enjoyed a prosperous era for about 255 years under the rule of 13 kings, starting from King Sinulo, who have much contributed in the betterment of living conditions of the Lao people of the time, tradition wise or otherwise. But in the year 1797 B.E. (1254 A.D.) when the Mongols who belonged to the Nguan Dynasty achieved the conquest of all of China, they made their power felt in all the southwestern part of their territory and finally invaded and occupied the Lao kingdom of Nong-Sae which thereafter lost its independence and became, since then, a Chinese colony.

Terminology of the administrative bodies of the kingdom of Nong-Sae, its customs and traditions (3)

The King

The king was then called Nan-Chau-Ong. When the king went about his duties, he faced the east. When the mandarins wished to have the king's audience, they are requested to do it in writing - verbally, the king called himself Nhun or Nhuan and he called his mandarins Song.

The Mandarins

The high ranking mandarins were given in the decreasing order of merit, thenames of Tan-Chau, Pohw-Si, Kaow-Chan. These were the three highest ranks. The rank known as Seng-Peng-Kun was equivalent to that of the advisers. The ranks that followed were: Yaow-Maung, Ching-Yaow-Maung, Yun-Ngoi-Yaow-Maung, Tai-Kuan-Chiang, Yun-Ngoi. These five ranks were known under one unique rank name of Si-Kun (secondary). The other rank names of the various branches of the administration are nine in number:

1. Mauw Song (4) - miltary service.
2. Chung-Song - registry service.
3. Si-Song - religious affairs and traditions.
4. Fat-Song - justice.
5. Hin-Song - interior or home affairs.
6. Hit-Song - public works.
7. Man-Song - finances.
8. Yanh-Song - foreign affairs.
9. Woh-Song - commerce.

These nine official ranks were called under a unique name of Seng-Peng-Kun. There was another official rank known as Tuk-Song (could be Tuk-Sang) which was the rank of ministers or heads of departments which were the highest unit rank among the nine previous ranks. Listed under these nine ranks were:

1. Hat-Toh - Horses Division.
2. Loke-Toh - Oxen Division.
3. Kui-Toh - Rice Division.

As for the officials dealing with taxes, there were three groups:

1. Song-Yaow 2. Ni-Kan 3. Kan-Sai

There was another group of officials responsible for the internal security or secret police known as Ping-Si.

The following are the ranks of the officials in the provincial areas:

1. Chief of District first class or District of the Right .....Yin-Chab.
   His assistant .....Yin-Lam.

2. Chief of District second class or District of the Left .....Sin-Pui.
   His assistant .....Sin-Lam.

3. Chief of District third class or Pen District .....Tam-Paow.
   His assistant .....Tam-Lam.

4. Deputy Chief of District or Chief of the Pak District .....Mow-Fai.
   His assistant .....Mow-Lam.

In each district there was always an official known as Toh-Yaow who is the dispatcher and another known as Toh-Sai who is the archivist.

Administration of the rural areas

Each one hundred homes has a chief known as Chong-Cho (village chief).
Each one thousand homes has a chief known as Li-Yan-Kun (5) (sub-district chief).
Each ten thousand homes has a chief known as Tow-Tuk (chief of district).

The high ranking officials were selected in proportion with the size of land they control about 40 Song each (6) 30 Song each for the lower ranks and so on.

The military service was compulsory for every physically fit male of Nong-Sae. Those who own horses formed together a cavalry corps. A leather belt and clothing were distributed to them once a year.

Each locality must have a military unit of 4 Kun (7). Each Kun has 100 flags and there was one general for every four Kun with four Kun flags in four colors. In addition to this there were also the king's body guards known as Chu-Now-Hoi-Chui. These guards wore red jackets armed with bows and wearing a large leather belt around the waist.

The recruiting methods

All physically fit males are drafted in any of the four Kun assigned to their respective areas. The soldiers of the four Kun are divided in companies known as Pak-Nhanh meaning one hundred men, with one commander called Hua-Pak meaning officer in command. There was also a certain group of soldiers with red helmets but shoeless who could run very fast in in rough terrains.

The soldiers of the Nong-Chui-Nan area included both men and women. Nong-Chui-Nan is in the vicinity of the Lan-Song river to the west (8). They were known to be very brave and very fast in the handling of spears and sabres. They rode on horses without the need for saddles. They also wore thick leather straps about their chest and waist to protect themselves and on top of their helmets they attached either cat or oxtail. The soldiers of Nong-Chui-Nan are crack units and always proceeded the others in battles.

The King's bodyguards

It has been said that eight of the sons of the highest ranking mandarins were selected as the king's bodyguards. When in the king's audience, none of the high ranking mandarins are allowed to carry their sabres, except the eight bodyguards of the king.

The Tai-Kuan-Chiang rank

There were six mandarins in the rank of Sow-Chiang. If and when they have satisfactorily assumed their duties they are promoted to the rank of Tai-Kuan-Chiang. The mandarins in the rank of Tai-Kuan-Chiang are 12 in number. Their degree of authority and power is equal to that of the Seng-Peng-Kun rank. Besides being the King's advisers, the Tai-Kuan-Chiang mandarins are entitled to become generals of the army and can be promoted to the rank of Seng-Peng-Kun.

The King's advisers

There was still another mandarin rank known as Ngoi-Sin-Kun which consisted of the king's closest advisers. The mandarins in the Ngoi-Sin-Kun rank are those who issued and filed the king's orders and transmitted them for further actions to the mandarins in the Sow-Chiang rank.

The Mandarins of the Front Court

There was another category of mandarins known as Chit-Tow. They are six in number. They belonged to the Front Court: 1. Long-Tung, 2. Veng-Chiang (Vientiane), 3. Ngua-Sang, 4. Kim-Sun, 5. Siek-Tung, 6. Lai-Sui. There were two others in the Tow-Tuk rank namely Wui-Sun and Tung-Hoi.

Administrative land units

The kingdom of Nong-Sae or Nan-Tchow was divided into 10 lim (9): 1. Huan-Nam (Yunnan), 2. Pak-Ngai or Pot-Long, 3. Pan-tam, 4. Teng-Sun, 5. Nong-Sae (Nong-Sae), 6. Tai-Li (Tah-Li-Fu), 7. Chui-Meh, 8. Nong-Sin (Muong Sin), 9. Tai-Nhoh, 10. Chiu-Sun.

Manufacture of silk fabrics

The terrain of the Nong-Sae kingdom in the vicinity of the Li-Kin (Kiri) mountain in the west was infested with Ma-

laria; green vegetation vanished in winter and life was unpleasant. But from Kuk-Ching-Tchow to Tin-Si, the land was more cultivable. The people of the area grew mulberry trees and raised silkworms and produced beautiful silk fabrics for their own use. The people of Tai-Woh and Ki-Lin did not do so well in producing silk but used instead the fibers of a certain kind of fruit known as Poh-Loh-Su (10).

Salt

There was plenty of salt in the city of Lam-Nim. It is one of the whitest and the purest kinds of salt that could then be found and produced. The royal family of Nong-Sae used this daily. When salt had been produced in sufficient quantity, the operation was stopped. Salt was also found at the city of Kuan-Meng-Tsiang. There was no taxation on salt and the people were free to operate and produce at will.

The bow wood

At Muong Veng-Chiang to the west, there was a certain varity of mulberry trees which grew on rocks. The stem of this tree is curved in such a natural way that one needed only to cut it and made a perfect bow out of it without much additional work. This kind of bow was called Neng-Kong.

Gold ores

In almost every mountain site in the vicinity of the city of Tsiang-Sun, gold ores could be found and processed. Gold was also found and processed in the form of sand along the stream but it was not of a good quality.

Good horses

In the vicinity of the city of Yit-Yim, farther to the west there was a large pasture land for cattle raising. Horses that were bred and raised here were such of a high standard that they called them Yit-Yim-Chan (meaning the fast horses of Yit-Yim). When the horses were first born, they are very small in size. When they are one year old, people attached them with a species of grass and fed them with rice soup, and when they reached the age of seven years, they are ready for use and at this age they can run very fast and can cover several hundred li of ground.

The king's exit

Wherever the King of Nan-Tchow (Nong-Sae) was set to go, eight red and yellow or white banners must first be raised on the top of the poles and there were two chicken's feather fans, one banner made animal's skin, one axe with a long handle, one umbrella made of bird's feathers in red and yellow colors protecting his person. The king's daughter was called Sun-Moh or Naow-Moh, the queen was called Chan-Mo-Sun-Moh. When the queen or her daughter was set to go out, there must also be eight red banners raised on their way.

The uniforms of the mandarins

The mandarins from the rank of Sow-Chiang down tied their waist with a red band of cloth; the mandarins higher than the Sow-Chiang with a red and yellow band of cloth around their waist. The mandarins who had accomplished a certain merit and were being promoted to higher positions wore gilded or silvered bands of cloth, according to their ranks around the waist and those who rendered exceptional services to His Majesty wore the same gilded or silvered bands with special inscriptions on them. Those who had not accomplished much wore a sleeveless jacket and those who had not done nothing but routine jobs wore the same jackets as far as the front part is concerned but the back would be of an ordinary material.

Features of the Nong-Sae women

The Lao women of Nong-Sae do not use make-up or painted brows. They used only hair oil which was extracted from a certain kind of mulberry tree. The women of high standing and family wore silk skirts, their hair in braids hanging on the sides and rolling them up to the level of the ears showing pearl or other precious stones earrings.

The wedding

The customs and laws of the time did not forbid girls, divorcees or widows to associate with men. On the night of the wedding, the presents or marriage settlement are passed in secret. Acts of adultery were considered as crimes and liable to death sentences.

The seasons and the months

The word Nhan was commonly used by the people to designate the first month of the year. The four seasons do not differ from those of the Chinese (the word Nhan was in fact the name of the first month of the year of the Chinese calendar).

Food prepared with fish

The fish was cut in small pieces about one inch in length and was cooked together with the pumpkin or gourd, pepper and white spinach. This kind of dish was called Ngoh-Kid.

Music and reception

The people of Nong-Sae used a sort of fruit of the gourd family which they blow to produce sound and a bamboo-like sort of flute with four holes which they called Piu-Sung. When they offer liquors to their guests, they set the glass on their flute and invite them to drink.

Goods sold in the market

Silk fabrics of ordinary quality or pure white genuine silk fabrics were traded for rare oyster shells known as Hak-Bia about the size of the thumb. Sixteen of these make a bunch.

Military discipline

In battle, one soldier received the "Yat-Taow-I-Sung" food ration. One army has then 2500 men. Soldiers wounded in the front lines received medical treatment and care while those wounded in the rear are executed for cowardice.

Works in rice fields

The Lao people of Nong-Sae used oxen or buffaloes to plough the land. Oxen or buffaloes, which ever was the case, are attached to the harrow, then, three men would pull them forward with the help of a cord. The people lived mainly on agriculture. Every citizen, regardless of his social standing, grew rice as one of his main duties toward the nation. In so doing, they were not drafted for regular public works. Once every year, each rice-growing citizen contributes rice, in the quantity of two "taow" to the administration, both as part of his obligations and as representing taxes on his land. The administration, in turn, is responsible in securing cultivable lands for the farmers.

[FOOTNOTES]

(1) In the history book of Thailand, it has been said that King

Sihanara was born in Muong Weng-Tsiang in 1159 B.E. became king and built Muong Nong-Sae in 1192 B.E.

(2)

Muong Then was formerly the name of the Nong-Sae kingdom which was also known as the Then kingdom or Muong Then in short. Muong Then itself could thus very well be a twin city: the old Muong Then situated in an area north of the Ka-Sae lake. Its real name was Muong Pak-Ai which was built in about 289 B.E. The old Muong Then was invaded and occupied by the Chinese in the year 456 B.E. and thereafter the Chinese changed its name to Muong Nhi-Tchow or Yik-Tchow (meaning the city of two kings) the Ngai-Lao and the Ai-Lao; the Ai-Lao territory south of the Ka-Sae lake was to become the present province of Yunnan of the Chinese mainland. Later, in the year 733 B.E. the Ai-Lao recovered their independence and have had Lao rulers down to Khun Borom Rajathiraj who, in turn, built Muong Then at the site of Thong-Na-Oi-Nu as the Then kingdom. The real capital city of the kingdom was Muong Ka-Long which is Muong Xieng-Hung of today. But according to the annals of the history o f Thailand by Phra Boriharn Thep Thani, it has been said that the city of Muong Ka-Long was built in the Fai village, district of Vieng-Pa-Pao in the province of Lanna, Thailand. This city was very old and could have been built in about 570 B.E. and was very renowned for its chinawares. So when we spoke of Muong Then, it could very well be Muong Ka-Long (or Kao-Long in Chinese). Today, it is known as Muong Hung in which Khun Borom Rajathiraj resided for eight years. It was from this city that Khun Borom Rajathiraj waged a war of conquest of part of China in the region of Tibet. In these newly conquered lands Khun Borom Rajathiraj built a new city known as Muong Tah-Hoh (Muong Tah-Hoh was successively known as Hoh-Tae or Hoh-Tai or Hoh-Nhai) about 40 Li (one Li equals 500 meters and 40 Li equals 20 kilometers) north of Muong Nong-Sae. Khun Borom Rajathiraj came to stay in this new city of Tah-Hoh in the year 1283 B.E. (740 A.D.).

Khun Borom Rajathiraj had seven sons from his first wife Nang Nhompala and his second wife Nang Et-Keng:

1. Khun Lo, who went to rule Muong Ka-Long when Khun Borom Rajathiraj went to rule in Muong Tah-Hoh.
2. Thao Phalan.
3. Thao Chu-Song.
4. Thao Khamphong or Khamfong.
5. Thao Inh.
6. Thao Kom.
7. Thao Chuong.

In the story book of Muong Lan-Xang, it has been said that the seven sons of Khun Borom Kajathiraj have each ruled over these seven kingdoms:

1. Khun Lo over Muong Lan-Xang.
2. Thao Phalan over Muong Tah-Hoh or Hoh Tae.
3. Thao Chu-Song over Muong Chulni or Vietnam.
4. Thao Khamphong over Muong Yo-noke or Lanna.
5. Thao Inh over Muong Lan-Pya or Ayudhaya.
6. Thao Kom over Muong La-Khammuane.
7. Thao Chuong over Muong Prakan or Xieng Khuang.

(3) From the Chinese history and in the history book of the Thai.

(4) Song was a Lao word of the Nong-Sae era which read Sang, meaning office; the Chinese pronounced it Song.

(5) Kun (should be Kuan in our language).

(6) One song equals 10,000 feet.

(7) The soldiers in four kun numbered to 12,500 men.

(8) The Lan-Song river is the Lan-Xang river which is the Mekong river itself.

(9) The word Lim is a Lao word of the Nan-Tchow period which has the same meaning as the word Tchow in Chinese (Tae-Chiu) which in turn means city or province. For example, the group of words 12 Tchow means precisely 12 provinces.

(10) It cannot be known for sure which was the Poh-Loh-Su tree, but it has been said that they grew wild in the province of Nam-Hoi in the vicinity of Kwang-Tung. Later, people tried to grow them in the temple grounds. In the time of Rajawong-Liang, between 1045-1100 B.E., a certain mandarin named Tat-Kai from the city of Sai-Wick tried to grow it domestically and was successfully followed by others.

Chapter V

The Lan-Xang Kingdom

Khun-Lo - The first king of the Lan-Xang dynasty

According to reliable historical documents about the migration of the Khmers to Souvannaphoum Pathet, as told in Chapter I, it has been said that between the sixth and seventh centuries after Christ, the Khmers had made their influence felt in Souvannaphoum Pathet and farther to Xieng-Sen. During this particular period, there was a Khmer monarch by the name of Khun Chuong-Fah-Thammaraj or otherwise known as Khun Hung (1) whom the Khmers called Phra-Huang and who ruled over the city of Ngeun-Yang now Muong Xieng-Sen. Khun Chuong had victoriously fought a war against the Vietnamese and succeeded in occupying the Vietnamese city of Muong Prakan now Xieng-Khuang. King Aeng-Ka, then the ruler of Muong Prakan was killed in this battle. Having occupied Muong Prakan, Khun Chuong celebrated his victory there for seven long months. In this celebration Khun Chuong offerdd his troops and the people a great many jars of rice wine. These same jars can still be seen today in the vicinity of Xieng Khuang which is being called the "Thong-Laow-Hai-Chuong" (meaning the plains of the wine jars of Khun Chuong).

When the victory celebration was over, Khun Chuong appointed Khun Khuang to run the city and returned thereafter to Xieng-Sen. At the same time, a Vietnamese general known as Hun-Bang launched an attack against the city of Prakan. Khun Chuong came to the rescue of Khun-Khuang and drove back Hun Bang's army. Hun Bang fled with his army but went to ask Thao Fah-Huan of Muong Tum-Wang for help. Khun Chuong went after him to Muong Tum-Wang. Chao-Fah-Huan of Tum-Wang, unable to defend his city sent an ambassador to ask Khun-Lo in Muong Ka-Long for help. Khun-Lo who was no longer worried about the Chinese threat of invasion at the time, and having also the desire to make his influence felt in the south, headed his army to the rescue of Chao Fah-Huan in Muong Tum-Wang. Khun-Lo met Khun Chuong in person and finally slew him. Then the Khmer army of Khun Chuong retreated. Khun-Lo sent his army after it down to Muong Swa (Luang Prabang of today in Laos), occupied Muong Swa then under Khun-Hang. Khun-Lo later made Muong Swa the capital city of the Lao Kingdom of Lan-Xang in the year 1300 B.E. (757 A.D.) and later changed its name to Muong Xieng Thong. Soon after, the Lao people migrated to settle down in the Lan-Xang kingdom, built up their

strength and drove the Khmers away in the direction of Muong Nan while other Lao elements pushed downward in the direction of Vientiane.

The less civilized Khmer elements which could not flee in time, remained over in Lan-Xang and are known nowadays as the Khum, Kha or the Upper Lao people (because they now live only on the hills).

The Lao people, as from the day of Khun-Lo, have consolidated their positions and made their power felt in the whole area with a long line of 22 kings (2) ruling over them down to the reign of Chao Fah-Ngum for a period of more than 500 years in all.

The reign of Chao Fah-Ngum (Phragna Fah-La Thorani)

The Lao people have come to establish themselves in Souvannaphoum Pathet, the part of territory which is the site of the province of Luang-Prabang of today. As from the time of Khun-Lo, when the city was known as Xieng-Thong, there were 22 kings who succeeded to the throne (as told above). The 22nd king, was Chao Fah-Ngiao or otherwise known as Khun-Phi-Fah (3). Chao Fah-Ngiao was the son of Chao Fah-Luang-Ngom or Phragna Souvanna-Khamphong. After the death of Chao Fah-Luang-Ngom, Chao Fah-Ngiao succeeded to his father. Chao Fah-Ngiao had four children in all, of them two sons and two daughters. The youngest son's name was Chao Fah-Ngum.

Chao Fah-Ngum was born in the year of the Naga (the fifth in the 12 year circuit of the Lao calendar) 1316 A.D.(4). He was the son of Chao Fah-Ngiao or Khun Phi-Fah. At birth, he had had a complete set of 33 teeth. This unusual and unprecedented feature of the newly born prince led the mandarins and advisers of the king to the conclusion of it being a bad omen. When grown up, he would do much harm to the kingdom. So, they suggested that the prince be destituted by floating him on a raft along the stream. Chao Fah-Ngiao had no choice and agreed. On the same raft with prince Fah-Ngum were two nursing mothers, two attendants, six servants named Babo, Bakhum, Basien, Bachikae, Bachim, Balu and a suite of 33 other persons.

The raft of prince Fah-Ngum floated along the Mekong river for one year before it arrived at one spot known as Li-Phi. At this time a Khmer monk known as Phra Maha Pa-sman who was there saw the raft and when he knew that the Lao

prince was aboard, he picked him up, raised him and brought him up with all the necessary education. When Prince Fah-Ngum reached the age of six or seven, the monk brought the prince to the Khmer king who then ruled over the city of Nakorn Luang (Nakorn Thom in Cambodia today).

Prince Fah-Ngum grew up in the palace of the Khmer king. He had the same kindof education as any other Khmer prince of his time and proved to be a very clever and intelligent student. When he reached maturity and thanks to his intelligence, he received from his step-father king the hand of the latter's daughter, Princess Nang Keo-Keng-Ya, inorder to tighten the bond of friendship between the Lao and the Khmer kingdoms. Thao Fah-Ngum lived happily there with his bride until he reached the age of 33 (5). In about the year 1343 A.D. Chao Fah-Ngiao, his father in the Lao kingdom died. The mandarins there put Chao Fah Kham-Hiao, his uncle on the throne. In light of the events that took place in the Lao kingdom, Thao Fah-Ngum asked his father-in-law for permission to head a Khmer army to conquer the Lao kingdom. This was granted.

The kindness and generosity of the Khmer king toward Prince Thao Fah-Ngum were not without purpose. In fact, at that time, the Khmer kingdom experienced a great setback and was under heavy pressure. The King of Sukkhothai, the then capital city of the Thai kingdom, which used to be under the control of the Khmer kingdom, had renounced his dependence to the Khmer kingdom, while successive acts of dissidence occurred during the reign of Khun Pha-Muong and Khun Bang-Kang-Thao, the ruler of Muong Bang-Yang, in the year 1227 A.C. Later, in the year 1282 A.C., King Khun Ramkhamhaeng of Sukkhothai had further extended the limits of the Thai kingdom so as to include many localities of the Khmer kingdom itself in the east, from Muong Sra-Luang or Muong Nong-Han down to Muong Roi-Et and Korat. On the other hand, the Khmers had gradually fallen down to the point where they were unable to defend themselves.

With these facts in mind, the Khmer king had a strong desire to retaliate against the Thais or, at least, to check their advance. Hence the Khmer king's kindness to Prince Fah-Ngum so that he could use him to stop the Thai expansion.

Prince Fah-Ngum's return to the Lao kingdom

In the year 1892 B.E. (1349 A.D.) Prince Fah-Ngum and his Khmer wife bid good-bye to the king of the Khmer kingdom and

headed an army in the direction of the Lao kingdom. When he arrived at Muong Pak-Kop (6) he attacked this city which fell to his army. Phragna Phommathad, its ruler, was killed in the same battle. Prince Fah-Ngum then appointed Phragna Phommathad's nephew to succeed his uncle, and appointed other heads of other localities of the region, namely Phragna Done-Daeng, Phragna Soke, Phragna Chan-Hom, Phragna Khong-Thong and Phragna Ai, issuing to each of them orders to supply him with elephants, gold and manpower.

After having a firm control over Muong Pak-Kop, Prince Fah-Ngum marched on Muong Kabong (7) and again occupied it. Phragna Nanthasen (8) the ruler of Muong Kabong fled on his elephant but was later caught at Pak-Thok (9) and executed. After the fall of Muong Kabong, Prince Fah-Ngum appointed Phragna Nanthasen's brother to rule it and again ordered him also to supply him with one hundred elephants together with two hundred mahouts and two hundred men and women, two thousand bahts of gold and two hundred rolls of various materials. While setting camp at Muong Kabong, his army went about conquering many other localities, namely Muong Phragna Champa, Muong Phragna Chim, Muong Phragna Cham, Muong Phragna Don Sakkae or Don Sa-Kae, Muong Phragna Sanang, Muong Phragna Sung and Muong Phragna Soke (10) and, as before, ordered them to supply him with silk curtains, gold, elephants and manpower. After this victorious drive, he headed his army across the Nam Hin-Boon river in the direction of Muong Vieng (11), arrested and executed its ruler and appointed His own brother to succeed him. He appointed other heads, namely Phragna Kuang-Siem, Phragna Kuang-Thong, Phragna Muong Luang, Phragna Muong Man, Phragna Muong Vang, Phragna Katark, Phragna Chumphone and Phragna Sapone and ordered them all to supply him with cotton and silk materials, curtains, ceiling carpets and manpower. When all this was done, Prince Fah-Ngum set camp on the bank of Nam Kading river. Here, Phragna Samkhom, the ruler of Nam-Hung (12) set out to fight him. Prince Fah-Ngum appointed Ba-Chi-Kae as his army's commander to fight Phragna Samkhom. Ba-Chi-Kae captured Phragna Samkhom and drowned him at the mouth of the Bang-bath stream (13). The bulk of the army marched into the city under the prince's own command.

The ruler of Muong Phuan surrendered

When Phragna Ched-Chuong, the ruler of Muong Phuan (Xieng-Khuang) learned about the fall of Muong Phra Nam-Hung to Prince Fah-Ngum's army, he was very fightened. He wasted no time in appointing Luang Phan and Mun-Kham (14) to offer

his surrender and alliance to the prince. The wording of the surrender terms is as follows: "I am but the direct descendent of Khun Borom Rajathiraj and Khun-Lo. If you should wish to conquer any territory in the future, my men and I are ready to help Your Highness to the best of our ability..." When Prince Fah-Ngum read this message, he felt so touched that he was compelled to send him a reply as follows: "The fact that our brothers in Muong Phuan think so sympathetically about us is indeed very congratulating. Whichever part of lands belongs to our brothers shall remain theirs. War supplies and other things that I need, I shall send for. The territories I have so far conquered shall be asked to come and pay respect to our brothers as well..." After having sent such a message, Prince Fah-Ngum ordered the ruler of Muong Phuan to raise an army, marched from two directions to the territory of the Vietnamese kingdom and occupied three of its cities in the year 1894 B.E. (1351 A.D.).

When informed of the rapid advance of Prince Fah-Ngum's troops, the Vietnamese king, fearful of the loss of all of his kingdom, hurried to send a delegation to meet him with precious gifts and a proposal to make the following concessions in his favor:

1. The people dwelling in houses on stilts shall be recognized as those of the Lao kingdom.
2. The territory of the Lao kingsom shall include the areas from Ton-San-Sam-Nga to Nam-Ma-Sam-Kheo or from Hin-Sam-Sao to Nam-Taow-Sam-Kheo.
3. The limitation procedures shall take into account the flow of the rain water from the mountains, that is to say that when it rains, the part of lands covered by the rain water running in the direction of Lao territory shall be recognized as part of Lao territory, and the part of lands on which rain water flows in the direction of the Vietnamese territory shall be recognized as part of the Vietnamese kingdom.

After the limitation of the said territories, Prince Fah-Ngum went on to invade and annex several cities in the north, namely Muong Then, Muong Sai, Muong Lai, Muong Kuang, Muong Hom, Muong Kang-Lan, Muong Sing-Thao, Muong Hum and Muong Kaat, again ordering them to supply him with gold, silver, curtains, silk, ceiling carpets, equipment, war supplies and manpower. Thereafter, Prince Fah-Ngum occupied both Muong Bun-Tai and Bun-Neua. As his army approached the territory of Muong Xieng-Hung, its ruler decided to send him

gifts which consisted of 100,[illegible]00 units of the country's currency, 100 horses together with gold and silver saddles and a great quantity of other materials.

Having completed his conquest of the northern territories, Prince Fah-Ngum appointed one of his lieutenants named Ba-Chim as his immediate deputy to control all the northern territories while he pushed his victorious army downward to Muong Noi. The ruler of Muong Noi offered him his allegiance with a bright welcome ceremony and Prince Fah-Ngum was very pleased. He then gave the new name of Muong Kang-Yao to Muong Noi and continued his march to Pak-Ou, where he camped for some time. In the meantime, Chai Fah-Kham-Hiao, his uncle, informed of the presence of Prince Fah-Ngum at Pak-Ou, sent out his army to fight him three times, but was driven back every time by Prince Fah-Ngum's army. Feeling ashamed of his defeats, King Chao Fah Kham-Hiao committed suicide by poisoning himself and his wife. King Chao Fah Kham-Hiao had no sons but two daughters known as Nang Kel-Mahari and Nang Keo-Nong-Hiao.

The advent of Prince Fah-Ngum

After the death of King Chao Fah-Kham-Hiao, the same mandarins and ministers that had previously abandoned Prince Fah-Ngum lost no time in inviting the Prince to the throne of Nakorn Xieng-Thong. Prince Fah-Ngum was enthroned in the year 1353 A.D. When he reached the age of 37 he was given the name of "Phragna Fah-La-Thorani Sisatanakanahud". After Prince Fah-Ngum officially became king, he reorganized the kingdom's administration, giving the most important posts to those who were abandoned with him to the Khmer kingdom and who had fought by his side in his long conquest: His step-father became Sen-Muong (Post equivalent to that of Maha Ouparaj or Prime Minister); his other step-father became Mun-Luang; his step-uncle became Chao Phun-Neua; his other step-uncle became Chao Phun-Tai; his step-brother became Phragna Ka-Sak (17).

The invasion of Muong Xieng-Sen

One year after his enthronement, in 1897 B.E. (1354 A.D.) King Fah-Ngum left the kingdom's affairs to the charge of his wife Nang Keo-Keng-Ya, who at that time was three months pregnant, while he sailed off to invade Muong Xieng-Sen. When he arrived at a point known as Muong Leuak, Thao U-Long the ruler of the city came to meet him and told him that he was the son of Nang Keo-Mahari who, in turn, was the daughter of Chao Fah

Khan-Kiao. "We therefore belong to your own family." King Fah-Ngum said to him that if this was the truth, "then let Muong Leuak remain yours as my ally." Thereafter, he pushed farther on to Pak-Baeng, captured its ruler and occupied Pak-Tha. From Muong Pak-Tha he later occupied Muong Xieng-Khong, Muong Khoke-Ham, Muong Xieng-Thong and Muong Xieng-Tun, and formed these four cities into one unit known as the "Four Cities on the Water", under the control of the ruler of Muong Xieng-Tun. Four other cities, namely Muong Pha, Muong Phua, Muong Phu-Khun and Muong Haeng were also occupied and formed into one single unit known as the "Four Cities on Land". While he rested at Pak-Tha, King Fah-Ngum proceeded to take a census of all the physically fit males of the area he had thus far conquered. They totalled 400,000 Lao and 100,000 Yaos and Vietnamese; there were also 600 elephants. After checking his military might, King Fah-Ngum pushed his drive for conquest further and this time captured both Muong Hin and Muong Ngao, and rested at Muong Don-Koon (Muong Xieng-Rai today).

On his arrival, King Sam-Phaya, the ruler of Lan-Na who established his headquarters in Muong Xieng-Sen, sent out an army totalling 400,000 men under the command of Phragna Sen-Muong, to fight King Fah-Ngum's army. Ba-Chim, King Fah-Ngum's immediate deputy was pitted against Phragna Sen-Muong and slew him. The Xieng-Sen army fled in panic, the Lao army of Lan-Xang pursued it down to Muong Pheo, Muong Lem, Muong Hai, Ban Nhu, Muong Nhuang, Hua Phuang, Hua Fai and Muong Xieng-Khaeng. King Sam-Phaya (or otherwise known as Thao Pha-Nhu) realizing his imminent defeat, changed his mind and appointed his lieutenants Mun Phuham, Mun Sum and Mun Kang-Muong to surrender and offer his allegiance, agreeing to make available to King Fah-Ngum, 1000 Habs of rice; 20,000 of gold; 200,000 of money; one sapphire ring known as Yot Xieng-Sen; one diamond ring known as Yot Xieng-Rai and one ruby ring known as Mani-Fah-Luang. There were also other precious gifts for the rest of the army. Then the two kings decided to set the frontiers of their respective kingdoms as follows: The territory south of Pha-Dai was added to that of the Lan-Xang Kingdom of King Fah-Ngum. Thereafter King Fah-Ngum ordered the transfer of 100,000 Khmers, then living in Hua Namtha, Muong La and Muong Koh up to the territory of the Lu, to Muong Xieng-Thong, leaving only 20 families at Phu-Khun, 20 families at Phu-Chom-Chaeng and 20 families at Phu-Kha together with the following rules to abide by: "You shall not resist the Lao people, you shall not take away any of the Lao properties. Should you be engaged in any dispute, should you want to fight one

against another, you shall remember this: Mubab, Muhab, Muhuai, Mumeung, Mupeuk are the five fighting days in which you shall be free to fight; Mukat, Mukot, Muhong, Mutauw, Muka are the five days in which you shall not fight or shall not take away each other's properties. Those of you who fail to comply to these rules, this rock which I have brought over from Sop-Khan-Xieng-Dong-Xieng-Thong and which weighs 2500 bahts shall be recognized as the weighing unit for your silver to be offered to me together with a buffalo, etc..."

King Fah-Ngum spent two years in conquering the northern territories. Upon his return to his capital, a son had already been born to his wife. The mandarins of his palace gave the child thename of Thao Oun-Muong (or Thao Oun-Heuan in other books).

The invasion of Vientiane

In the year 1898 B.E. (1356 A.D.) King Fah-Ngum invaded Vientiane. For this battle he appointed Ba-Bo and Ba-Chi-Khae as his front line commanders with instructions to deploy to Muong Sai (Muong Dan-Sai). Thao Khai, the ruler of Muong Dan-Sai, offered stiff resistance but was later captured by Ba-Bo and executed at Xieng-Som (on the Huei-Som river). King Fah-Ngum appointed Ba-Bo to rule over Muong-Sai while he headed his army to Khoh-Kaeng and later to Tha-Neua (west of Si-Khai village of today in Vientiane). When Thao Xieng-Kung, the ruler of Vientiane, and Phragna Phao, his son and ruler of Muong Vieng-Kham 06, learned about this invasion, they raised an army of 20,000 strong and 500 elephants to defend their territories. It is told that Phragna Phao was riding a big elephant named Nang Khoi, measuring nine elbows in height, (approximately 4½ meters) while Thao Xieng-Kung rode another named Vangburi, measuring eight elbows in height (four meters). King Fah-Ngum was riding an elephant named the Four Kingdoms of Xieng-Thong while Phragna Muong Sai (Ba-Bo) rode another named Pheo Chakkavan and Ba-Chi-Khae rode another named Khuan-Luang-Fah. They clashed first at Thin-Champi. Ba-Chi-Khae was opposed to Thao Xieng-Muong, slew him and then turned to Phragna Phao's elephant. Upon the death of his father, Phragna Phao retreated with his army to his capital of Vieng-Kham, thus enabling King Fah-Ngum's army to enter Vientiane. Thereafter, King Fah-Ngum ordered Ba-Chim, Ba-Siem and Ba-Chi-Khae to go after Phragna Phao at Vieng-Kham. But, in spite of their ability, these three generals of King Fah-Ngum were unable to capture the city of Vient-Kham because it had a thick, live bamboo rampart around it. The three gen-

erals brought the matter to the attention of King Fah-Ngum, a mastermind of all strategies in ancient warfare. King Fah-Ngum did not take long to come out with a brilliant idea. He quickly ordered his Finance Department to make available a great quantity of gold and silver with which to manufacture arrows. When the necessary number of gold and silver arrows had been produced, he ordered them sent to his fighting generals with secret instruction to shoot them into the bamboo rampart, pretend that a final charge was imminent, and then retire and wait to see what would happen next.

King Fah-Ngum's orders had been strictly observed and carried through. In the meantime, King Fah-Ngum rested and entertained his troops in Vientiane. But before long, he marched across the Mekong river to capture Muong Ken-Thao and Muong Nakorn Thai (17); then, to the Thai capital city of Si-Ayudhaya. He then appointed Ba-Chi-Khae as Mun-Kae to rule over the territories adjacent to Si-Ayudhaya, and returned to Vientiane.

When the people of Vieng-Kham learned that King Fah-Ngum's army had retreated, they resumed their normal occupations. But to their surprise, they saw gold arrows about the bamboo rampart. Not knowing the danger that awaited them and their city, they started clearing the rampart in order to collect more gold arrows. As the clearing of the rampart progressed, large holes appeared in many sections. The watching troops of King Fah-Ngum wasted no time in resuming the attack and set the rampart afire which ultimately overwhelmed its occupants who were powerless in fighting the blaze. It did not take long for the rampart to fall apart and make way to a rather easy victory for King Fah-Ngum's troops.

Phragna Phao himself was made prisoner and brought to Muong Xieng-Thong in a cage (18). When the troops arrived at Ban Thin-Haeng, Phragna Phao died right there. Ban Thin-Haeng was later elevated to become Muong Song. After the fall of Muong Vieng-Kham, King Fah-Ngum Maharaj returned to his palace in Vientiane. Again, he made another census of his mighty army and the people he had thus far controlled from Muong Pah-Huei-Luang (19) to Muong Pha-Dai. The census showed 600,000 strong, 2000 elephants and 1000 horses. To the south, his conquered empire stretched from Muong Phra Nam-Hung Xieng-Sa (20) down to touch the territories of the Cham-Khmer and those of the Vietnamese, including Muong Pa-Kuang (21) with 4000,000 men, 1000 elephants and 500 horses. His actual might was thus 1,000,000 strong of which 700,000 were Lao and 300,000 were Thai.

When the Vientiane-Vieng-Kham battle was over, King Fah-Ngum appointed Ba-Khum to be Mun-Chan to rule over Vientiane, and Ba-Siem to become Mun-Kabong to rule over the territories in the south from Muong Phra Nam-Hung-Xieng-Sa down to the Cham territories. He ordered Phragna Muong Khua (Ba-Chim) to transfer 10,000 families of his citizens to an area outside Vientiane known as Kadae-Fateb (32), and another 10,000 families to Nong Han-Noi Nong Han-Luang and the Wan-Pao mountain (33) and Suong-Sai region (34). That was the reason why a great number of Lao people established themselves in the Khmer territories.

The invasion and fall of Muong Roi-Et

The territories of the northeastern part of Thailand today from Muong Nong-Han to Muong Roi-Et were formerly the possessions of the Khmer kingdom. Later, they were to become Thai possessions. During the reign of King Khun Rama-Khamhaeng in about 1294 A.D., as previously related, it was said that during the Sukkhothai period the power of King Khun Rama-Khamhaeng greatly declined. King U-Thong built the city of Ayudhaya in 1350 A.D. (three years before the enthronement of King Fah-Ngum) and subsequently the city of Roi-Et became a possession of the ruler of Ayudhaya. This led King Fah-Ngum to reconquer Roi-Et. Here is how it happened:

At that time, King Fah-Ngum Maharaj was said to have rested and entertained his troops in Vientiane and thereafter moved on to conquer Pathet Lan-Phya (25) or Si-Ayudhaya itself. The deployment of his troops was known to be as follows: Front or crack troops under the command of Mun-Kae and Mun Kabong; the right wing under Phragna Muong Khua; the left wing under Phragna Muong Sai; Mun Chan was in charge of the rear. The total strength was 48,000 men and 500 elephants. These troops moved first in the direction of Phra Ngam lake (26), captured the city of Phra-Ngam and then marched on Roi-Et, captured the city and its ruler, and thereafter sent part of the army to capture several small cities of the area, namely Muong Phrased, Muong Phra Sakhien, Muong Phra-Ling, Muong Phra Narai, Muong Phra Mathien, Muong Sekhamad (27), Muong Saphang-Sichac (28) and Muong Phone Ping-dead. They put the rulers of these cities in detention in Muong Roi-Et and then sent a message to King Rama-Thibodi Uthong of Si-Ayudhaya, saying "Let us know whether you are prepared to fight or not to fight." Upon receipt of the message, King Rama-Thibodi Uthong was frightened and sent the reply saying, "We are brothers since the time of Khun Borom; may it be known, should

it be your desire, the territories from Dong-Sam-Sao (Dong Phragna Fai) to the Phragna Poh mountains and Muong Nakorn Thai shall be yours. Besides, I shall bring you sugar every year and my own daughter, Nang Keo-Lot-Fah shall be sent to care for you..." His terms having been accepted, the ruler of Si-Ayudhaya sent along many other gifts consisting of 51 male elephants, 50 female elephants, 20,000 worth of gold, 20,000 worth of silver, 100,000 pieces of rare horns and many hundreds of other things. All this had actually refrained King Fah-Ngum from attacking Si-Ayudhaya.

At this juncture, King Fah-Ngum had intended to execute the imprisoned rulers of the many cities he had captured in the form of a sacrifice and ceremony and in honor of his victories. When the word of his intentions spread and reached His Venerable Phra Maha Pasman, his one time tutor and professor, the latter solicited the King's clemency and pardon which were granted. The prisoners were sent back to their respective cities with specific instructions as to their future behavior, and King Fah-Ngum returned to Vientiane.

Victory celebration in Vientiane

After he had returned to Vientiane, King Fah-Ngum proceeded to the promotion and appointment of his valiant generals and troops as well as the reorganization of his kingdom's administration.

1. Promoted Sen-Muong and Mun Kabong to the rank of Field-Marshal-in-Chief.
2. Promoted Mun Luang, Phragna Muong Khua, Phragna Muong Sai, Chao Phoum-Neua and Chao Phoum-Tai to the ranks of Generals of the Five Armies.
3. Promoted Phragna Mun-Na and Phragna Phen to the ranks of Chief of Police for the front palace.
4. Promoted Mun-Naneua and Mun-Natai to the ranks of Chief of Police for the rear palace.
5. Promoted Nai Luang-Neua to the rank of Chief of Justice for the front palace, including the dignitaries.
6. Promoted Nai Luang-Tai to the rank of Chief of Justice for the rear palace, including all the other personnel of the palace.

As for the other cities and territories, he divided them into units known as Kheuan-Muong, Kaeng Muong and Muong Dan (Main City, Supporting City and Outpost City in that order). Among the cities to become the Main or Capital cities were:

1. Vientiane, with Mun-Chan (or Ba-Khum) as ruler.
2. Vieng-Kham, with Phragna Phao (the new one) as ruler.
3. Vieng-Kae, with Mun-Kae (or Ba-Ch-Khae) as ruler.
4. Vieng-Phra Nam Hung, with Mun Nam Hung as ruler.
5. Vieng Pak-Huei-Luang, with Phragna Pak-Huei-Luang as ruler.
6. Vieng Xieng-Sa, with Phragna Xieng-Sa as ruler.

There were four outpost cities (Muong Dan): 1. Muong Ken-Thao, 2. Muong Nong-Bua, 3. Muong Sai-Khao, 4. Muong Sam-Mun.

Having completed the reorganization of his kingdom, King Fah-Ngum and his mandarins observed another victory celebration in Vientiane, a celebration of unprecedented splendor which lasted for seven days and seven nights. Ten elephants, 1000 oxen and 2000 buffaloes were killed on this occasion.

Key-note of the internal policy of King Fah-Ngum

After the victory celebration, King Fah-Ngum made known to his subjects the key-note of his internal policy:

There shall be no thieves and no acts of banditry in our territory. There shall be no fighting and no unnecessary bloodshed among us all. Disputes shall be thoroughly examined and fairly judged. Life sentences shall be pronounced only as a last resort. Those found guilty shall be jailed and released after they have served their terms in prison, so they can resume their normal activities. There must be people in our land before we can produce the things we need.

2. Our people shall try at all times to avoid disputes and bloodshed and shall cooperate to the best of our ability to defend our territory against aggression from without.

3. Once every two months our people shall be given an audience with me, and our people shall report to me their sufferings and successes. Once every three years our people shall come to me at Muong Xieng-Dong-Xieng-Thong and we shall together pray to all the guardian spirits of our lands for protection and benedictions. Those who fail in doing so shall be considered as unfaithful and undesirable and shall be punished according to the rules set forth by our great grandfather Chao Fah-Luang-Ngom.

4. Our people shall not make use of any of our subjects against the others for their own purposes, nor commit acts of adultery which are liable to heavy sanctions, and fines (five bahts worth). Those found guilty of murder shall receive life

sentences.

5. Ransoms shall not be asked from our prisoners of war. The mandarins shall not fine anyone for more than one hundred units, for if they did they themselves should be asked to pay such fines.

Having issued all these orders to his mandarins and subjects, King Fah-Ngum returned to Muong Xieng-Thong and arrived there on Tuesday, the third of the new moon of the year 1901 B.E. (1357 A.D.).

The introduction of Buddhism of the Hinayan Sect as practiced in Ceylon from the Khmer kingdom to the Lao kingdom

The Lao people of the ancient times worshipped the spirits of heaven or practiced the cult of their ancestors as did the Chinese. They were close to the Chinese territory and had close contact with them for a long period of time. Though the Lao people of the time of King Khun Luang-Li-Maow of Nakorn Ngai-Lao (69 A.D.) had practiced Buddhism, it was then another type of Buddhism, known as the Mahayan Sect, that was observed. But several hundred years later, when the Lao people migrated to the Kan-Xang kingdom, this type of Buddhism had greatly declined. The people again resumed the worship of spirits until the advent of King Fah-Ngum. With the advent of King Fah-Ngum, his wife, Queen Nang Keo-Keng-Ya noticed to her dislike that her people, mandarins as well as common citizens, practiced the cult of spirits, killing, now and then, elephants and buffaloes for sacrifice to the spirits. Since the Queen was a fervent Buddhist from the time she had lived in her native Khmer kingdom, she could not, as Queen of the Lao kingdom, allow this practice of sacrifice by her subjects to go on. With this in mind, she gracefully requested her husband to introduce Buddhism into the Lao kingdom, otherwise, she would ask to return to her father's land of the Khmer kingdom.

Upon this request from his beloved wife, King Fah-Ngum dispatched a mission to his father-in-law- king, requesting that Buddhist monks be sent to the Lao kingdom to teach his subjects about Buddhism. The request was gracefully heeded by the king of the Khmer kingdom. He invited Phra Maha Pasman, King Fah-Ngum's own tutor and Phra Maha Thep-Langka, together with 20 Buddhist monks and three other experts named Norasing, Noradeth and Norasad to preach Buddhism in the Lao

Kingdom. At the same time, a Gold Buddha statue known as Phrabang was brought along, together with a Buddhist bible, the Tripikate. In addition to this, engineers and craftsmen were sent along with musical instruments, such as flutes, xylophones and others. And to complete his technical assistance to his daughter and son-in-law king, the Khmer king sent another contingent of 5000 ordinary people, 1000 helpers for the monks, 2000 helpers for the experts and 1000 attendants for his daughter Keo-Keng-Ya. In their long walk to the Lao kingdom, these people arrived in 1559 A.D. at a point called Muong Kae (29) and many of the queen's attendants became ill and remained there for two months. When King Feh-Ngum learned about the arrival of his one time tutor at Muong Kae, he sent thousands of his people to meet him and escort him to the city of Vientiane, where an enthusiatic religious ceremony was held for three days and three nights. They then moved further to Vieng-Kham where the mission met with the same enthusiatic welcome.

The statue of Phrabang was installed at Vieng-Kham

After various welcome ceremonies throughout the kingdom, the statue of Phrabang was to be brought to Muong Xieng-Thong. Here, some unexpected miracle occurred. The usual number of people who were assigned to carry this statue from the Khmer kingdom to this point was eight in all. But this time, eight people were unable to lift the same statue. So eight more people were added to lift it. But the statue did not move a single inch from the ground. So eight more, making 24 in all, were added but the statue still remained on the ground. This miracle prompted the monks to find out the reason for it. Through various operations and ceremonies it was found that the guardian spirit of the Phrabang statue wished to have the statue installed at Vieng-Kham first. His Venerable Phra Maha Pasman decided to leave the statue for the worship and veneration of the people of Vieng-Kham as told, and led the mission in the direction of Muong Xieng-Thong. Upon his arrival in Xieng-Thong, His Venerable Phra Maha Pasman told King Fah-Ngum all that had happened at Vieng-Kham. Thereafter, a monastery was built north of the estuary of the Huei-Hope river for His Venerable Phra Maha Pasman and a Bodhi Tree was also planted there. His Venerable Phra Maha Pasman, under the gracious auspices of Queen Keo-Keng-Ya, started preaching the Buddhist religion which rapidly spread throughout the kingdom.

In the year 1904 B.E. (1361 A.D.), King Fah-Ngum Maharaj sent his army to the conquest of the Kha-Kan-Hang people of

Muong Pha and Muong Louak. After successive conquests the territories of the Lao kingdom were extended in all directions and its power prevailed beyond its own territories, over neighboring kingdoms which, from fear of invasion, had constantly sent King Fah-Ngum annual gifts of great value. Areawise, the kingdom of the Lao people then touched in the east with that of the Vietnamese, in the southeast with that of the Cham and Khmer, in the west and southwest with that of the Thai kingdom of Ayudhaya, in the northwest with that of the Kan-Na kingdom and in the north with that of China.

King Fah-Ngum Maharaj resided at Nakorn Xieng-Thong. Three children were born to him in his marriage with Queen Nang Keo-Keng-Ya. They were two sons and one daughter - Thao Un-Muong, Thao Khamkong and Nang Keo-Ketkesy.

Queen Keo-Keng-Ya died in the year 1911 B.E. (1368 A.D.). Parted from his beloved wife, King Fah-Ngum showed signs of great disinterest and tolerance in the administration of his once very well organized kingdom. The kingdom's affairs were handed over, without much attention on his part, to the mandarins of the palace who availed themselves of the opportunities to indulge in vice and acts of dishonesty. Taxes and levies once collected were no longer credited in full to the kingdom's finances and many other properties of the kingdom went astray, thus causing unrest and disturbances among the population of his vast empire. The high ranking mandarins he had previously appointed no longer recognized his supreme authority and acted as they pleased; the fundamental institutions of the kingdom were violated and the kingdom's very existence was greatly endangered. His subjects and some uncommitted mandarins were compelled, under these circumstances, to force his abdication and deported him to Muong Nan in the year 1915 B.E. (1371 A.D.). King Fah-Ngum died there two years later in 1373 A.D., at the age of 57 (60). The ruler of Muong Nan erected a stupa containing his ashes in a monastery called Wat Xieng-Ngam in the same city.

The advent of Phracna Sam-Sen-Thai Taiphouvanath

Upon the deportation of King Fah-Ngum at Muong Nan, Thao Un-Muong, his eldest son, was crowned King of Nakorn Xieng-Thong. Thao Un-Muong was born in the year of the Monkey (1356 A.D.). He was enthroned on the third day of the sixth month of the year 1374 A.D., at the age of 18, and took the name of King Sam-Sen-Thai.

Three years after his enthronement, he ordered a new

census of his army and population and reorganized his own administration. His new army was divided into five fighting units and totalled 500,000 men, of which 300,000 of Lao nationality formed the bulk of his forces. The remaining 400,000 men consisted mainly of Kha people. The 300,000 men of his Lao forces were organized as follows: Each fighting unit or army was composed of 30,000 armed soldiers and 20,000 unarmed helpers, totalling 250,000 for all five units. The remaining 50,000 men were assigned for the defense of his capital city. Because of the fact that Thao Un-Muong, the new king, had an army of 300,000 men of Lao nationality, his full king-name of "Phragna Sam-Sen Thai Taiphouvanatha-Thipat-Sisatanakanahud" was offered to him (Sam-Sen means 300,000).

At the same time King Sam-Sen-Thai was married to Nang-Noi-Nong-Hiao, the daughter of Chao Fah-Kham-Hiao (31). She took the queen-name of Queen Then-Fah. Thao Khamkong, the king's brother, was subsequently appointed to the rank of Sen-Muong.

Having completed the reorganization of his kingdom's administration, King Sam-Sen-Thai proceeded to transfer his father's ashes from Muong Nan and install them at Phu-Ku-Tai, which was called the Ku-Tai stupa for that reason. In addition, King Sam-Sen-Thai ordered the erection of the king's monastery, called Wat Keo, and appointed Phra Thep-Langka and Phra Maha Pasman to the ranks of Chief Monks of the kingdom with residence in the monastery. He assigned the Khmer people who had previously come with them to help and care for them in Wat Keo. When all this was achieved, King Sam-Sen-Thai graciously pardoned all those who had failed in their duties and who took refuge in Wat Keo, asking all of them to pray and denounce their past mistakes and request the blessing of the Chief Monks before they resumed their customary occupations.

During his reign, King Sam-Sen-Thai sent his Muong-Phuan army to capture Muong Sa and Muong Sien. As for the ruler of Muong Xieng-Sen, when he learned of the death of King Fah-Ngum and the enthronement of his son (Sam-Sen-Thai), he refused to recognize the suzerainty of Muong Xieng-Thong. This refusal prompted King Sam-Sen-Thai to send an army under the command of Mun-Hok and Sen-Un to invade Muong Xieng-Sen, which fell after a short battle. The ruler of Muong Sen again recognized King Sam-Sen-Thai as his suzerain and agreed to send him flowers made of gold and silver along with his own daughter named Nang-Noi-On-Soh. After the surrender of the ruler of Muong Xieng-Sen, the Lao kingdom of King Sam-Sen-Thai knew another

long period of prosperity and happiness. His power and authority again spread throughout the area of Khanthasima, and as they did to his father in the past, the rulers of the neighboring states offered him their annual gifts:

1. The ruler of Lan-Na sent him his daughter, Nang Noi-On-Soh and 1000 attendants. King Sam-Sen-Thai built a palace for her called the Xieng-Kang palace and living quarters for her attendants at the foot of Khaoka mountain.

2. The ruler of Ayudhaya sent him his own daughter, Nang Keo-Yot-Fah, whom the king accepted and built a palace for her called the Xieng-Tai palace north of Sop-Dong.

3. The ruler of Xieng-Hung also sent him his daughter Nang Keo-Sida, whom he assigned part of Xieng-Thorn palace to accommodate her.

From his union with the daughters of these various rulers, King Sam-Sen-Thai was known to have five sons: 1. Thao Lan-Khamdaeng from Nang Noi-Nong-Hiao, his first wife and queen, 2. Thao Lusai (mother unknown), 3. Thao Khamtemsa from Nang Keo-Sida, 4. Thao Vang-Buri from Nang Keo-Yot-Fah, 5. Thao Kon-Kham from Nang Noi-On-Soh. He was also known to have five daughters - Nang Keo-Kumari, Nang Anosa, Nang Manora, Nang Suphatthat, Nang Mahakai (Nang Mahakai, who was born to him from Nang Keo-Yot-Fah, died at the age of five. Thao Vang-Buri erected a stupa for her at Vientiane known as Wat Sihom).

When all of his sons reached maturity, King Sam-Sen-Thai appointed them to rule over the following cities: Thao Kon-Kham to rule over Muong Xieng-Sa and took the new name of Phragna Chikkham. Thao Vang-Buri to rule over Muong Vientiane and took the name of Phragna Khua-Pasak. Thao Khamtemsa to rule over Muong Pak-Huei-Luang with the ruling name of Phragna Pak-Huei-Luang. Thao Lusai to rule over Muong Kabong with the ruling name of Phragna Mun-Ban. As for Thao Lan-Khamdaeng, he was appointed to the rank of Sen-Muong. After a successful reign of 43 years, King Sam-Sen-Thai died in 1417 A.D., at the age of 60.

3. The advent of Phragna Lan-Khamdaeng

After the death of King Sam-Sen-Thai, Thao Lan-Khamdaeng was enthroned to succeed to the rule of his father. He was 30 years of age. Upon his enthronement as King of Xieng-Thong, he ordered the erection of two monasteries: Wat Suan-Then with Phra Maha Samud as Chief Monk, and Wat Both with Phra Maha Satthathiko as Chief Monk. Wat Suan-Then was belie-

ved to have been erected over the ashes of his father, King Sam-Sen-Thai.

After 11 years of reign, Phragna Lan-Khamdaeng had two sons born to him - Thao Phommathat and Thao Yukorn. In the year 1428, Phragna Lan-Khamdaeng died at the age of 41. After the cremation of his body, another monastery was erected over his ashes known as Wat Manorom.

A princess caused disturbances

At this point, the ruling family of the Kan-Xang kingdom experienced an unprecedented internal disturbance due to the tyranny and perfidy of a princess (Nang Maha-Thevi). This princess, formerly known as Nang Keo-Ketkesy, was the sister of King Sam-Sen-Thai (32). She was known to have married one grand-nephew who held the post of Sen-Muong under the reign of Phragna Lan-Khamdaeng, and she wished him to become king of Xieng-Thong. So, when King Phragna Lan-Khamdaeng died, she managed to run the kingdon's affairs as she pleased. In fact, she first requested that her young husband be appointed Sen-Luang-Xieng-Lo, the highest and the most powerful post of the kingdom, but her aims were not fulfilled as planned. On the contrary, after the death of King Phragna Lan-Khamdaeng, the mandarins and palace advisers enthroned Thao Phommathad to succeed his father. The new king, Thao Phommathad had reigned over the kingdom for only ten months before he was killed by Nang Maha-Thevi in a preselected spot at Pha-Phan. She then arbitrarily appointed Thao Yukorn to become king only to find out eight months later, that he also, was supposed to be killed. King Thao Yukorn knew of the plot beforehand and fled. But Nang Maha-Thevi sent her men after him, captured him at Pha-Dao and killed him.

Thereafter, Nang Maha-Thevi sent for Thao Kon-Kham, one of King Sam-Sen-Thai's sons, who ruled over Muong Xieng-Sa, and made him king under the king-name of Phragna Xieng-Sa. After having reigned for a period of one year and six months, Nang Maha-Thevi set up another trap and killed him at Khoke-Heua. After the death of Phragna Xieng-Sa, the mandarins and advisers of the palace took the initiative and put Thao Khamtemsa, the ruler of Muong Pak-Huei-Luang, on the throne. Phragna Pak-Huei-Luang (Thao Khamtemsa) ruled for five months, managed to unmask another attempt of Nang Maha-Thevi to kill him and fled to his own city of Pak-Huei-Luang. He died there the following year. A stupa was erected over his ashes in a monastery at Ban Bo-Nhang on the banks of the Huei-Luang river.

But right after Phragna Pak-Huei-Luong had fled, Nang Maha-Thevi wasted no time in sending for another son of King Phragna Lan-Khamdaeng, Thao Lusai, who ruled over Muong Kabong, and made him king under the king-name of Phragna Mun-Ban. After six months of uneasy reign, another attempt to take his life by Nang Maha-Thevi was unveiled, but instead of fleeing Phragna Mun-Ban took his own life. After the death of Phragna Mun-Ban, the mandarins and advisers of the palace again took the initiative and sent for Thao Khai-Buaban (nephew of King Sam-Sen-Thai), who ruled over Muong Xieng-Khai, and made him king under the king-name of Phragna Muong-Khai. After three years of rule, Phragna Muong-Khai met with the same fate as his predecessors at the hands of Nang Maha-Thevi at Sop-Khan. After the death of King Phragna Xieng-Khai, the mandarins sent for another son of King Sam-Sen-Thai, Thao Vang-Buri, who ruled over Muong Vientiane, to succeed to the late king. But being well aware of his own end at the hands of Nang-Maha-Thevi, Thao Vang-Buri refused the offer. At this point, there was a young man named Thao Khamkeut who was also a son of King Sam-Sen-Thai, but from an ordinary mother (one of his servants). Thao Khamkeut said he was the reborn King Sam-Sen-Thai himself. Because he could remember the names of all the people in the palace, including those of the horses and other animals that belonged to his father, he was able to convince the palace authorities, and because they loved and respected the late King Sam-Sen-Thai so much, they agreed to crown him as their legitimate king. Thao Khamkeut ruled over Muong Xieng-Thong for a period of over two years and then died.

The tyranny and perfidy of Nang Maha-Thevi subdued and terrorized the royal family of the Lan-Xang kingdom for a long time. Short lived reigns and other acts of cruelty plunged the kingdom into the darkest period of its existence. But as all things have an end, the tyranny of Nang Maha-Thevi was to end too. Unable to put up with Nang Maha-Thevi's terror, the Lao people turned against her and succeeded in capturing her and her young husband Sen-Luang-Xieng-Lo, and executed both of them at Pha-Dieo in the most horrible way. They tied them together and laid them on the rocks with their feet in water and left them there without food or water until they expired by themselves (53). Thereafter the Lan-Xang kingdom was without a king for three full years.

In this period of terror, it was said that the two Chief Monks, Phra Maha Pasman and Phra Maha Thep-Langka also died. Dead also were the three experts that came from the Khmer kingdom. Only their sons lived, Norasing, Noradeth and Nora-

rath, who were at the time the highest ranking army officers. Norasing was known to have had two sons, Norasing and Noranarai. Noradeth and Norarath were known to have had one son each. All four of their sons served as advisers in the king's palace. Because the kingdom had exhausted the rightful successors to the throne, the four advisers, in agreement with others, took upon themselves the responsibility for appointing Phra Maha Satthathiko, the Chief Monk at Wat Keo, to become the spiritual ruler of the kingdom and Phra Maha Samudhakhote to succeed the former as Chief Mong. They set up a provisional ruling body under the guidance of the two monks to carry on the kingdom's affairs for three years.

4. The advent of King Phra Chao Saya-Chakkaphat Phenpheo

When the kingdom returned to its normal mood, Phra Maha Satthathiko, Phra Maha Samudhakhote and the four advisers came down to Muong Vientiane to invite its ruler, Thao Vang-Buri, whose ruling name was at the time Phragna Khua-Pasak (his palace was at the estuary of the Pasak river), to rule over the kingdom of Xieng-Thong. Thao Vang-Buri, as previously indicated, was the son of King Sam-Sen-Thai and the daughter of the King of Si-Ayudhaya. He was born in 1416 A.D. and was enthroned in 1456 A.D., at the age of 40 and given the king-name of "Phra Chao Saya-Chakkaphat Phenpheo".

At the coronation ceremony of Phra Chao Saya-Chakkaphat Phenpheo, it was said that King Phra Inh-Raja of Si-Ayudhaya sent a large contribution of gifts and other valuables.

Following the principles of his father, King Saya-Chakkaphat Phenpheo proceeded to raise Phra Maha Samudhakhote to the post of Chief Monk to head Wat Manorom and Phra Maha Yan-Khamphi to the post of Chief Monk to head Wat Both-Kangmuong. He offered his gracious pardon to those of his mandarins and citizens who had failed in the fulfilment of their respective duties or committed certain crimes and violations and now sought refuge and blessing in the two monasteries.

The rebellion of Prince Mui

Upon his enthronement to rule over Nakorn Xieng-Thong, the city of Vientiane went to Prince Mui (34. On the assumption that the kingdom Xieng-Thong would face certain difficulties and troubles, the advisers of Prince Mui in Vientiane incited the prince to proclaim the independence of Vientiane. When King Saya-Chakkaphat learned about this rebellion, he

skillfully disguised his men and sent them to Vientiane with a mission to kidnap Prince Mui. The mission was successfully carried out and Prince Mui was thereafter executed at Done-Chan. The king later appointed his own nephew named Phragna Chan-Ngok (Ngok meaning white when it applies to hair - he was given this name because he had had white hair from infancy) to rule over Vientiane.

King Saya-Chakkaphat was said to have six sons and two daughters (25). The six sons were:

1. Thao Konkeo, who was offered the post of Sen-Luang-Xieng-Lo (Prime Minister) by his father.
2. Thao Thenkham, who ruled over Muong Dansae.
3. Thao Mun-Luang, who ruled over Muong Kabong.
4. Thao La-Sentai, who ruled over Muong Vieng-Kham.
5. Thao Visulraj, who ruled Muong Vieng-Kae.
6. Thao Thepha, who ruled over Muong Khua.

The Lao-Vietnamese War

In the 23rd year of the reign of King Saya-Chakkaphat and in the year 1479 A.D., Phragna Patalibud, the ruler of Muong Ken-Thao, caught a white elephant measuring 3.5 meters high. He felt honored to offer it to King Saya-Chakkaphat. The acquisition of this rare white elephant by King Saya-Chakkaphat was later known everywhere. When King Bua-Luang of the Vietnamese kingdom heard this news, he became so interested that he decided to send an ambassadorial mission to ask that permission be granted to take the unusual white elephant to the Vietnamese kingdom for some time so that the people could have a good look at it. This Vietnamese mission was not very welcome and for some unknown reason the Prime Minister of the Lao kingdom was vexed by the unexpected demand. Infuriated, he put the elephant's stool in a container, attached a sealed tag to it and sent it with the ambassador to his king. When King Bua-Luang of the Vietnamese kingdom unpacked the container and saw nothing but elephant's stool, he burst with anger and ordered his army to march on the Lao kingdom of Xieng-Thong in 1483 A.D. The invading Vietnamese army was divided into five fighting fronts:

1. The right front under the command of Khoke-Kong, to attack from the right.
2. The left front under the command of Kang-Kong to attack from the left.
3. The central front under the command of Tai-Ning, the

king's nephew, to strike in the direction of Vientiane.

4. The crack unit or the front army under the command of Kong-Lemak to strike in the direction of Muong Nam-Bung-Xieng-Sa.

5. The army protecting the rear under the command of Kong-Phu-Set to strike in the direction Muong Kabong (36).

The news of the Vietnamese invasion came as a surprise or King Saya-Chakkaphat who did not seem to understand the reason that motivated such an invasion. However, being placed in a position to act, King Saya-Chakkaphat gave full authority to his Prime Minister to defend th kingdom. Before the invading Vietnamese army reached his kingdom's borders, Sen-Luang-Xieng-Lo was able to assemble an army of 200,000 men with 2000 elephants. This army was immediately sent to meet the invaders at Thongna-Khao-Chao (now the site of Wat Visul-Viharn). Sen-Luang-Xieng-Lo headed part of this army himself, with 500 elephants and 50,000 men in his command. Mun-Luang headed another unit with 700 elephants and 70,000 men in his command. Another fighting unit of the Lao army was under the command of Phragna Khua-Thepha with 800 elephants and 80,000 men. After having completed the disposition of his troops, Sen-Luang-Xieng-Lo ordered his four top lieutenants, namely Norasing, Noranarai, Noradeth and Norarath to lead 4000 soldiers to set up an ambush near the Mung mountain. The plan was most successful as the marching Vietnamese troops fell into the ambush and in the battle that followed for three full days, thousands of Vietnamese soldiers were killed. They fought and fought until they could hardly lift their arms. After this first clash, the Lao troops pulled back to join the bulk of the army on the rear at Thong-Na-Khao-Caho. The next morning, the Vietnamese army marched forward, as did the Lao and they clashed at Thong-Na-Mung-Khun and Na-Hai-Dieo. The battle raged, thousands of dead soldiers lay all over the blood covered battle ground. In spite of heavy casualties the Vietnamese army did not retreat, instead they charged on the defending Lao army of Chao Mun-Luang and Phragna Khua-Thepha. At this point Phragna Khua-Thepha was surrounded by four Vietnamese commanders. Mun-Luang and Mun-Bun charged to his rescue and slew all four of them. When six other Vietnamese commanders saw the action they turned their elephants against Mun-Luang and Phragna Khua-Thepha, but the latter succeeded in killing all six of them. This continous clash exhausted the two commanders, who fell from the back of their elephants and were slain by the enemy. From this point on, the defending Lao army was overwhelmingly outnumbered and the invading Vietnamese army

continued to gain ground and pushed their advance further until they met with the army of Sen-Luang-Xieng-Lo. Sen-Luang-Xieng-Lo, supported by Mun-Luang, Mun-Bun and his four lieutenants fought valiantly to check the enemy advance, but were unable to overcome the streaming hords or enemy soldiers. Mun-Luang and Mun-Bun were killed in this scuffle, the four lieutenants were captured and later executed at Thong-Na-Khao-Chao, Sen-Luang-Xieng-Lo himself was seriously wounded but managed to escape. As he headed for his capital city of Xieng-Thong, he changed from his elephant's back to canoe, called Phe-Laow-Ka, and as soon as he sailed away, the canoe sank and he was drowned. When King Saya-Chakkaphat learned about his army's defeat, he fled from his city with his family by river, down to Muong Xieng-Khan and the Vietnamese entered the city. Before the Vietnamese army had time to rest in its newly conquered city, a Lao prince, known as Chao Then -Kham, the very son of King Saya-Chakkaphat, who ruled over Muong Dan-Sai, sent his own army to attack the tired Vietnamese at Muong Xieng-Thong and almost exterminated them. The remaining Vietnamese troops fled but were followed and harrassed all the way to their own territory of Muong Phuan. Very few Vietnamese survived and among their 4000 officers, only 600 survived.

When Chao Then-Kham had chased the invaders out of the Lao kingdom territory, he returned to Nakorn Xieng-Thong, reassembled his people and mandarins and sent a group of twenty monks and mandarins to invite his father at Xieng-Khan to return to power. But his father graciously refused to go back and instead asked his son to succeed him at Xieng-Thong while he himself remained at Xieng-Khan. One year later, in 1497 A.D., King Saya-Chakkaphat died at Xieng-Khan at the age of 64 (83 in another book). The mandarins and his subjects lay his body in state in a silver coffin, and sent word of his death to Phragna Ramathibodi, the ruler of Si-Ayudhaya. Phragna Ramathibodi sent an ambassadorial mission headed by Khun Sirat-Kosa, with two other coffins made of gold and sandalwood and 500 rolls of materials as contribution to his funeral.

5. <u>The reign of King Souvannabanlang (Thao Then-Kham)</u>

In the year 1478 A.D., Prince Thao Then-Kham was crowned king of Xieng-Thong to succeed his father and given the king-name of Chao Souvannabanlang. One year after his coronation he presided over the cremation ceremony of his father, and erected a stupa over the ashes of his father at Muong

Xieng-Khan itself. King Souvannabanlang was a valiant king. It was he who saved the kingdom from the domination of the enemy. In the seventh year of his reign he died at the age of 41.

6. The advent of Phragna La-Sentai-Phuvanad

After the death of King Souvannabanlang in the year 1485 A.D., the mandarins crowned Thao La-Sentai as their king (Thao La-Sentai was the third son of King Saya-Chakkaphat, who at the time ruled over Nakorn Vieng-Kae) on Monday the 13th day of the new moon of the fifth month of the year of the Buil (1491 A.D. in other versions), and took the king-name of "Phragna La-Sentai-Phuvanad". On the day of the coronation of Thao La-Sentai, the King of Ayudhaya sent Khun Inh, Khun Phom and Khun Siraj-Kosa to represent him with a great quantity of valuable gifts. After he became king, Thao La-Sentai sent for his brother, who ruled over Nakorn Vieng-Kham and appointed him to the rank of Sen-Muong under him. Phragna La-Sentai-Phuvanad, like his great father, was a great admirer of Buddhism and a capable monarch in foreign affairs. His accomplishments in the field of religion were the appointment by him of His Venerable Khamphira-Mahathera to the Chairmanship of the Wat Keo, to replace the late Phra Sangkha-Sena; that of Phra Satthammavongsa-Thera to the Chairmanship of Wat Pasman, and the promotion of Phra Maha Thera Thepluang to the rank of Chief Monk at Wat Manorom. He also graciously pardoned those who failed in the fulfilment of their duties and who now sought refuge in those wats.

In the field of foreign affairs, he signed an alliance treaty with the king of Si-Ayudhaya and chose a place known as Na-Song-Hak in the territory of Muong Dan-Sai as the site of their meeting place.

King Phragna La-Sentai-Phuvanad died in 1495, after having reigned for ten years. He had a son named Prince Somphu who was only seven at the time of his father's death. His uncle, Chao Visulrad acted as regent for a period of two years. During the two year period of his regency Chao Visulrad built a monastery named Wat Pupharam to be the site of the tomb of Phragna La-Sentai and also promoted Phra Sumethachan to the rank of Chief Monk and spiritual adviser, with residence at Wat Pupharam. He also appointed Professor ThamChula to teach the monks and nuns with a monthly salary of six Hoi (60 kips), and a food allowance of six sen of rice and other foodstuffs.

7. The reign of Chao Somphu

Chao Somphu was crowned king in the year 1497 A.D. at the age of nine. Chao Visulrad remained at the post of Sen-Muong under him but died after reigning three years.

8. The reign of Chao Visulrad

In the year1500 A.D., with the consent of all the mandarins and advisers of the palace, Chao Visulrad was crowned king and given the king-name of Phra Visul-Raja Taiphuvanadhipad-Sisatanakhanahud at the age of 34.

During his reign, King Visul-Raja graciously offered one of his sisters named Princess Mun-Na to be wed to Chao Sai and appointed the latter to rule over Muong Phum-Neua; another sister named Princess Phen was wed to Thao Kon-Kham, the son of the ruler of Muong Pak-Huei-Luang, who was appointed to rule over Muong Kabong; finally, he appointed his uncle to the rank of Mun-Luang to rule over Muong Khua.

In the year 1502 A.D., King Visul-Raja sent his mandarins to Vieng-Kham to bring to Muong Xieng-Thong the statue of Phrabang, which had been temporarily installed at Wat Manorom. Later, in the year 1503 A.D., precisely on Saturday, the second day of the sixth month (new moon) of the year of the Monkey, he ordered the erection of Wat Visul Maha Viharn, which was completed in 1504 A.D. He built a temple measuring 23 va in height (about 40 meters) on the same spot where the statue of Phrabang was installed and, in a splendid ceremony, gave away a large amount of money and other gifts.

In the years that followed, Thao Kon-Kham, his brother-in-law, whom he had appointed to rule over Muong Kabong, showed signs of splitting with King Visul-Raja. When informed of the truth of the facts, King Visul-Raja ordered Chao Phum-Neua to subdue him, but the latter was without success. King Visul-Raja again ordered the ruler of Muong-Khua to do the job. Following a fierce battle with Thao Kon-Kham at the La-Ngoke rapids, the latter gave up and fled to Muong Ka-Long, but was captured soon after. Before any sanction could be inflicted upon him, Thao Kon-Kham requested that an amnesty be granted him, and finally decided to enter priesthood. King Visul-Raja granted him his pardon and Thao Kon-Kham became a monk at Wat Keo. For his success in putting down the rebellion, the ruler of Muong Khua was promoted to the rank of Sen-Muong with the honorific name and title of Phragna

Sen-Surind-Lusai.

During the reign of King Visul-Raja, Buddhism had developed to such an extent that there were at the time many outstanding thinkers and philosophers in the art of Tripikata, who successfully translated the old Buddhist bible from the original Sanscrit into the Lao language, and set up the rules of writing poetry known as the Visumali rules, which continued to flourish from this time on. The first authentic book of the legends of Khun Borom was also completed under his reign by the Chief Monk Phra Maha Thep-Luang, as proved by the following script recorded for the purpose, "This story book of the legends of Khun Borom was compiled and completed by His Venerable Phra Maha Thep-Luang, the Chief Monk of Wat Visul with the help of experts and approved by His Majesty King Visul-Raja..."

After reigning twenty years, a son was born to King Visul-Raja named Prince Phothisara, and in the year 1520 A.D. King Visul-Raja died at the age of 55 (77 in certain versions).

9. The reign of King Phothisara-Raja

In the year 1520 A.D. the mandarins and advisers of the palace, led by Phragna Sen-Surind-Lusai unanimously enthroned Prince Phothisara and gave him the king-name of "His Majesty Phra Phothisara-Raja Maha Thammikathasa-Lakhanakun Maharajathipati-Chakkaphatphumin-Norintharaj." He was 19 (15 in certain other versions). In the year 1522 A.D., the newly crowned King appointed Mun-Luang, the son of Phragna Khamsattha, the ruler of Muong Phuan, to rule over Muong Xieng-Khuang and subsequently appointed Mun-Luang's uncle to the rank of Sen-Muong. He graciously gave away a great quantity of gifts, including horses and elephants. In the following year 1523 A.D. King Phothisara sent an ambassadorial mission to Nakorn Xieng-Mai to secure the Buddhist Tripikata and monks. Phra Muong Koo, the ruler of Xieng-Mai at the time, graciously offered the mission 60 Tripikata bibles together with the service of His Venerable Phra Thep-Mongkhol Thera and a suite of other monks. In the year 1526 A.D., a prince from the Vietnamese kingdom by name of Bua-Kuan-Sieo, accompanied by an aide named Kongkang and 3000 of their followers sought asylum in the Lao kingdom of Sisatanakhanahud. In the year 1525 A.D., King Phothisara was himself ordained in a ceremony in Wat Visul Mahavihara under the chairmanship of the Chief Monk Maha Sichantho, while Phra Maha Samudhakhote, Chief Monk of Wat Ascharam acted as ordinant. Chief Monk Maha Sichantho

was a native of Muong Phitsanulike. He completed his study in Tripikata at Wat Sibunheuang in Muong Nan. Phra Maha Samudhakhote was educated in Muong Xieng-Mai. These two monks were entrusted with the religious education of King Phothisara-Raja. After he had served the required period in the priesthood, King Phothisara-Raja defrocked and continued to rule as king.

In the year 1527 A.D., King Phothisara-Raja issued a royal decree ordering his people to give up the worship of spirits and subsequently, the shrines, altars and others built for any such worship were destroyed and Buddhist temples and shrines were built in their places. One of the temples which was built was called Wat Swankhaloke. This royal decree made King Phothisara very famous and earned much respect for him, not only within his own territory, but also all the neighboring kingdoms. As a matter of fact, Phragna Ongkan and Phragna Champathirad (37), rulers of the kingdoms east of his, respectfully sent in their gifts, as did the ruler of the Vietnamese kingdom. In the north of his kingdom, Phragna Ho-Wong, ruler of Muong Xosamphi (38), as well as those of Muong Khem, Muong Laep, Muong Sen-Vi and Muong Xieng-Hung also congratulated him by sending their own gifts.

In the year 1532 A.D., the ruler of Muong Xieng-Khuang and his uncle, who was his Sen-Muong, were not on good terms. The Sen-Muong of Xieng-Khuang left his post for Nakorn Xieng-Thong. Displeased with this decision of his closest assistant, the ruler of Xieng-Khuang split with King Phothisara, who tried to settle their dispute. King Phothisara, irritated by the rebellion ordered three of his assistants, namely the rulers of Pak-Huei-Luang, Phum-Neua and Phum-Tai to march on Xieng-Khuang. It took them two years of continuous action to overcome the rebellious ruler of Xieng-Khuang. Thereafter, in the year 1533 A.D., King Phothisara changed his permanent residence to Nakorn Vientiane. At this time, the ruler of Si-Ayudhaya of the Thai kingdom was Phra Chao Athityaraj, who was engaged in a dispute with another Thai prince named Phra Sayaraja. The latter fled to seek asylum in the Lao kingdom, and, in the year 1539 A.D., requested King Phothisara-Raja to invade Nakorn Si-Ayudhaya. King Phothisara considered the request with great sympathy. The Lao army thus marched in the direction of Nakorn Si-Ayudhaya. When it arrived at a place called Vieng-Phrangam (39) the Lao army set camp there for ten days waiting for the King of Si-Ayudhaya to send out his army. When the Lao army learned that the people of Si-Ayudhaya refused to accept the challenge, the army was ordered

to pull back.

In the course of the same year, King Phothisara went to Phrathat-Phanom on another religious mission and ordered the erection of a monastery thereabouts. The roof of this monastery was all covered with tin plates. Two servant brothers who used to serve him in his priesthood were assigned to the monastery with the duty of supervising the maintenance. They were given 3000 helpers. At the end of each Buddhist Lent, the monastery was to become a pilgrimage center for his people.

But in the year 1540 A.D., it was the turn of the ruler of Nakorn Si-Ayudhaya to invade Nakorn Vientiane of the Lao kingdom. The army of Ayudhaya was at first successful in capturing the city of Vieng-Khuk and camped afterward at Thong Salakham for five days. King Phothisara-Raja ordered Phragna Sen-Kuang Lanxang, the ruler of Nakorn Thakhek and his son, named Phra Xang-Nam, to lead the Lao army against the invaders. After a fierce battle the army of Ayudhaya fled, leaving thousands of casualties and equipment behind a nd the Lao army made a triumphal return to the capital city.

King Phothisara-Raja had three sons and three daughters in all - 1. Prince Sethavangso, born to him from Phra Nang Nhot-Kham, who was herself the daughter of the ruler of Xieng-Mai, 2. Prince Phra Lan-Xang, born to him from one of his wives of the left-wing palace, who was herself a daughter of the ruler of Ayudhaya, 3. Prince Tha-Heua or Phra Voravangso, born to him from the head of the lady attendants of his palace, who was herself the daughter of Chao Khua-Thepha, 4. Princess Keo-Kumari, 5. Princess Khamlao or Princess Then-Kham, 6. Princess Khamkhai.

In the year 1548 A.D., King Phra Muong Kate-Keo of Xieng-Mai died without a son to succeed to the throne. The mandarins and advisers of the palace of Xieng-Mai, led by Phragna Sen-Luang, Phragna Samlan and Phragna Xieng-Sen came to request King Phothisara-Raja that his eldest son, Prince Sethavangso who was then 14 years of age (40), be permitted to rule over Xieng-Mai as their king. King Phothisara was much delighted and immediately ordered the preparation of the procession ceremony of his son to Xieng-Mai. Three hundred thousand people and 2000 elephants and nine high ranking mandarins, namely Phragna Kongkangrad (the prince's uncle), Phragna Sisat-Thammatailoke, Phragna Orasun (these are the three

highest in rank), Phragna Nakorn, Phragna Visit-Songkhram, Phragna Suradeth, Phragna Thakkhin, Phragna Nhote-Lukien, Phragna Phansai took part in the royal procession. At the same time, a powerful army of 200,000 men and 2000 elephants, under the command of Phragna Vieng and Sen-Nakorn was to capture the city of Vieng-Phrabung (41).

The procession left the Lao capital city by road and reached Nakorn Xieng-Sen on the tenth day of the new moon of the ninth month in 1548 A.D. During a much needed rest in this city, King Phothisara observed a number of religious ceremonies, the most important of which was the ordination of many of the sons of the city's mandarins. On the seventh day of the waning moon of the ninth month, the procession arrived at Nakorn Xieng-Rai, remained there for nine full days to observe the same rites and ceremonies as before. The next stop was on Thursday the fifth day of the waning moon of the tenth month, at a reception quarter built especially for this purpose by Mun-Khom and the people of Xieng-Mai. The mandarins and dignitaries of the Xieng-Mai palace on hand to welcome the procession were: Sen Phingsaikeo, Mun Samlan, Chao Senkhao-Monthakhiri, Chao Mun-Luang-Phan, Chao Mun-Luang Chaban, Chao Mun-Luang-Phuttha, Chao Mun-Luang-Lamkhek, Chao Yanakitti. There was a joyful celebration and entertainment. From this point, Prince Setthavangso was brought for blessing in Wat Xieng-Mhun. In the blessing ceremony, the prince took off his royal costume and was dressed in white, his hands held flowers and incense sticks while receiving the blessing. Blessing ceremonies were also held for the Prince at Wat Phrakeo and at the That-Luang Shrine on the seventh day of the waning moon of the tenth month. On Wednesday noon, the fourth day of the new moon of the 11th month another blessing ceremony was held and the prince was bathed with holy water. On this very same day the two daughters of the late ruler of Xieng-Mai, named Nang Tonthip and Nang Tonkham, were officially recognized as his wives (left and right in position respectively). (42).

On the fifth day of the waning moon of the 11th month a similar blessing ceremony was held at the Shrine of Doi-Suthep, and on the tenth day of the same moon of the same month the prince proceeded to the appointment of mandarins for Nakorn Xieng-Mai:

1. Sen-Phing-Saideo was appointed Phragna Sen-Luang Sitthirajapakorn.
2. Mun Samlan was appointed Phragna Samlan-Lusai-Senabodi, to rule over Muong Xieng-Rai.
3. Mun Keomano became Phragna Sathit-Smnat.

4. Mun Luang-Phan became Phragna Vasira-Ammat, to rule over Muong Phan.

5. Mun Phing-Yi became Phragna Suthatsa-Ammat, to rule over Xieng-Sen.

6. Mun Luang-Pankhek became Sen-Khek-Saimongkhol.

7. Mun Khao became Sen-Khao-Pheri, to rule over Muong Lamphoon.

As to his uncle, Phragna Kongkangrad, he was appointed to the rank of Sen-Muong. Thereafter, King Phothisara Thammikarad the prince's father and king of Xieng-Thong distributed gifts and other tokens of appreciation to monks and the poor people of the kingdom.

During the stay of King Phothisara-Raj at Nakorn Xieng-Mai, His Majesty Burengnong (or Manthatured), king of Muong Tong-U (Burma) sent an ambassadorial mission to sign an alliance pact with him together with a message urging King Phothisara to join him in invading the kingdom of Ayudhaya. While considering the proposal of the king of Burma, King Phothisara ordered Mun-Khua and Nai Patheip-Visul to accompany the Burmese ambassador for further clarifications on the proposed alliance.

Having spent some time in Nakorn Xieng-Mai, King Phothisara returned to his capital city of Xieng-Thong and brought along the statue of the Emerald Buddha and another Buddha statue called Phra Saekkham which were installed at Wat Buphram. When he arrived at Muong Sai (45) he camped there. During this camping period, he ordered his men to capture wild elephants in the areas of Don-Kang and Phu-Nheui, including those of Ban-Moh-Xiengkhan. In this outing 2000 elephants were captured.

Going back to Phragna Vieng and Sen-Nakorn, who were ordered to capture the city of Vieng Phrabung, it was a fact that the city of Phrabung fell to the generals. Its ruler was captured together with 1000 elephants. Twenty thousand families were taken as hostages. All this action was achieved before King Phothisara left Xieng-Mai and the captured people and properties were also brought to him before he left. King Phothisara and his suite left Xieng-Mai by water while his wife and her suite left by land. When the king arrived at his capital city, he stayed in a new palace called "Xieng-Mai Nhotnakorn palace". Soon after his return, King Manthaturad of Burma sent another ambassadorial mission led by Noi-Mangchia, Rajathimand, Sikaboon and Nhi-Khamsi with

gifts and another message to resume the alliance talk that was left pending when King Phothisara had sent some of his aides to investigate it in Burma. At this time, there were missions from 15 different countries asking King Phothisara for an audience. King Phothisara decided to receive all of them at one time in a large field where the capture of wild elephants usually took place. The ambassadors would have the opportunity to enjoy the skill of the Lao people in the art of capturing wild elephants, he said. The ambassadors were thus asked to wait until the time wild elephants were chased into this field. When the wild elephants dashed into the field, King Phothisara rode on his preferred elephant named Nang Kai and dashed out to the center of the field. At this time Phragna Orasun and Phragna Sisat-Thammatailoke invited his guests to take a seat in the field. After having greeted all of them, King Phothisara set out to capture the elephants. He threw his lasso about and caught one of them but the elephant he caught was excited and ran madly about. His elepha nt (Nang Kai) lost its grip and fell on top of the king. The mandarins and the mahouts rushed out to his rescue and carried him to his palace for treatment. Hurt but still conscious, King Phothisara asked Phra Orasun and Phragna Sisat-Thammatailoke to return to their respective countries. Seven days later, in the year 1550 A.D. at the age of 43, King Phothisara died from this accident.

10. The reign of Phra Saya-Setthathirath

King Phra Saya-Setthathirath who was formerly known, when he was a prince, as Setthavangso, was the eldest son of King Phothisara. His mother was the daughter of the ruler of Xieng-Mai. He was born at noon on Sunday the ninth day of the waning moon of the first month of the year of the "Goat", in 1534 A.D. His horoscope was recorded as follows:

When he was 14 years of age (44) his father had agreed to his becoming king of Xieng-Mai, as solicited by the court of Xieng-Mai in the year 1547 A.D. Later, in the year 1550 A.D,, upon the death of his father, the mandarins and dignitaries of Xieng-Thong entrusted Phragna Nhote-Lukien with the mission to invite him back to Xieng-Thong.

Upon receiving the news of his father's death, King Saya-Setthathirath felt very upset and decided to hand over the responsibility of ruling Nakorn Xieng-Mai to his uncle, Phragna Kongkangrad, and headed for Xieng-Thong to pay his last respects to his dead father before the cremation took place.

At the same time, there was another group of mandarins assigned to the left-wing palace, namely Phragna Vieng, Sen-Marong, the mother of Phra Lan-Xang and Kuan Dampha, who tried to put another prince named Phra Lan-Xang on the throne of Xieng-Thong. But this maneuver was soon discovered. King Saya-Setthathirath immediately ordered Phragna Sisat-Thammat-ailoke to head an army to subdue the rebellious prince. Phra Chao Lan-Xang and Phragna Sisat-Thammatailoke clashed at the Kaengsa rapids. Sensing the defeat, Phragna Vieng, Kuan Dam-pha and Sen-Marong fled with Phra Lan-Xang to seek asylum with Phragna Nakorn at Muong Kabong (Thakhek). Phragna Nakorn of Muong Kabong refused to give them asylum and arrested the three conspirators and sent them to Phragna Sisat-Thammatai-loke; they were executed by the latter soon after. Phra Lan-Xang and his father were brought back to Xieng-Tnong, but when they arrived at Kaeng-Ping rapids, Phra Lan-Xang's mother was executed. Phra Lan-Xang and one of his step-mothers, Nang Kong-Soi, were brought to Xieng-Thong where they were graci-ously pardoned by King Saya-Setthathirath and later sent to live with Phragna Sen-Muong. After this short lived rebell-ion was put down, King Saya-Setthathirath proceeded to the funeral of his father, and thereafter was crowned king of Na-korn Xieng-Thong to succeed his father. He was given the king-name of "Phra Uthai-Phuthorn-Bovorn-Saya-Settha-Phuvana-thathipat-SisatanakhanaHud". Because he already reigned over two kingdoms, Xieng-Thong and Xieng-Mai, King Saya-Settha graciously appointed Phragna Sisat-Thammatailoke to rule over Vientiane under a new name, "Phragna Chanthaburi", with juri-sdication over the following cities: Xieng-Khan, Ken-Thao, Muong Kae, Muong Phra Namhung, Xieng Sa, Muong Huei-Luang and Viengkham. In Vientiane, Phragna Chanthaburi built two im-portant monasteries (wat), Wat Phragna in the east section (Wat Phya-Wat of today), and Wat Chanthaburi-Sisat-Thammatai-loke in the west side 'Wat-Chan of today).

Later, there was a man named Seromna, a native of the Khmer kingdom who was very well known for his magic and supernatural power. Seromna had come to incite Phragna Surathep, the Mahout in Chief, Thao Xieng-Mai (Phra Lan-Xang's uncle), to rebellion with the plan to take Phra Lan-Xang to Ayudhaya. Phragna Sen-Muong discovered the plot, arrested all of them and executed them. Thereafter, the kingdom knew another period of peace and prosperity.

King Saya-Setthathirath subdued Nakorn Xieng-Mai

In the year 1551 A.D., King Saya-Setthathirath had informed his palace at Xieng-Mai of his inability to return to Xieng-Mai and his need to stay permanently in Xieng-Thong. He also ordered that the affairs of the Xieng-Mai kingdom be entrusted to Princess Chirapapha. Upon this appointment, the high ranking mandarins of Xieng-Mai saw a golden opportunity to wrest the power from the appointed princess and a bloody struggle followed. When informed about this internal dispute, King Saya-Setthathirath ordered Phragna Muong Phae or Phragna Samlan, Phragna Nakorn Lan-Xang and Phragna Hua Vieng to put an end to it.

Not very long after the end of this struggle for power, in the year 1553 A.D., the angry mandarins of Xieng-Mai turned to another strategy. They went secretly to invite Chao Mekuti, a direct descendent of Phra Chao Meng-Rai and who was at the time in the priesthood, to defrock so they could put him on the throne of Xieng-Mai. When informed about this new attempt to overthrow his appointee, King Saya-Setthathirath was infuriated and considering that the kingdom of Xieng-Mai was still his, he headed an army to restore order in Xieng-Mai in the year 1555 A.D. During his absence, he entrusted his kingdom's affairs to Phragna Nakorn. When he arrived at Namtha, he spread his army's position in the following way: Phragna Khao-Dok-Mark at Don-Hat-Soi, Phragna Nhote-Lukien (who later became Phragna Sen-Surind) at Ban-Dan. To oppose the forces of King Saya-Setthathirath, Phra Chao Mekuti of Nakorn Xieng-Mai ordered Phragna Sayasen and Sen-Noi to raise an army from Muong Fang, Muong Xieng-Rai and Xieng-Sen and rushed out to meet King Saya-Setthathirath's forces at Pha-Dai. Phragna Sayasen, headed in the direction of Ban—Dan, clashed with Phragna Nhote-Lukien, but was slain by the latter in a brief hand to hand battle. Phragna Sayasen's army took no chance and fled. When Sen-Noi was informed of the death of his co-commander, he headed for Muong Xieng-Sen.

At this stage, King Saya-Setthathirath moved the bulk of his forces to Muong-Thin and ordered Phragna Chanthaburi and Phragna Sen-Lung to go after Sen-Noi at Muong Xieng-Sen and take the city. Before the army of Phragna Chanthaburi reached Muong Xieng-Sen, there was yet another important mandarin named Phragna Thakkhin, a long time enemy of Phragna Chantha-- buri, who emerged to report to King Saya-Setthathirath that Phragna Chanthaburi was about to betray him by siding with Sen-Noi. Having made such an allegation, he hurried to meet Phragna Chanthaburi, telling him that he was facing defeat if he should try to take Xieng-Sen at this time because Sen-Noi, to his knowledge, had set up a stiff defense and this would make Phragna Chanthaburi's attempt to take the city a costly and unnecessary move, and finally, suggested that he withdraw. Ignoring the reasons behind all this information, Phragna Chanthaburi headed his army back to report the conversation he had had with Phragna Thakkhin to King Saya-Setthathirath, only to make the latter furious.

The mistake of Phragna Chanthaburi cost him his life, as he was ordered to be arrested and executed for treason. At this point, Phragna Sen-Lung his co-commander assigned with the job to take Xieng-Sen fell suddenly very ill and requested that he be permitted to return to Xieng-Thong for treatment. Permission was granted but he died upon his arrival at the capital city. Thereafter, King Saya-Setthathirath ordered Phragna Muong Kang to launch the attack against Xieng-Sen. The city of Xieng-Sen fell to Phragna Muong Kang but Sen-Noi succeeded in escaping and sought asylum in Muong Tong-U (Hongsawadi of Burma). King Saya-Setthathirath entered Xieng-Sen and made it the port city of Xieng-Thong. King Saya-Setthathirath stayed here for nine full months (nine years and three years in other versions) to reorganize and supply his army before marching on Xieng-Mai, his ultimate goal. In the meantime Sen-Noi, who had previously fled to Tong-U, succeeded in convincing its King Burengnong to send the Burmese army to occupy Xieng-Mai. So even before King Saya-Setthathirath had started to move his army out of Sieng-Sen he received a message from Xieng-Mai, in which the Tong-U king explained to him that the city of Xieng-Mai had become, with the consent of its ruler, an ally to the kingdom of Tong-U. He therefore urged King Saya-Setthathirath to recognize it as such and to give up his plan to reconquer it, avoiding unnecessary bloodshed between brothers. Upon receipt of this message, King Saya-Setthathirath ordered Sen-Khaek to carry his reply to Xieng-Mai. In his message, King Saya-Setthathirath pointed out the facts that had brought about the rebellion there, the

illegal enthronement of Phra Uexuti against his will, but did not insist in maintaining his jurisdiction over Xieng-Mai. But that was only a trick on the part of the King of Tong-U, who later sent his own envoy, Noi-Mang-Chia, to accompany Sen-Khaek to Xieng-Sen with another message, this time inviting King Saya-Satthathirath to come to Xieng-Mai for a visit.

This sudden reversal of opinion on the part of the Burmese king led King Saya-Setthathirath to believe that a trap was intended for him in Xieng-Mai. Therefore he decided to hold the Burmese envoy (Noi-Mang-Chia) in hostage and headed back to his capital city of Xieng-Thong. When the king of Tong-U learned about the capture of his envoy, he immediately sent Imme with an army to deliver Noi-Mang-Chia. The Burmese army caught up with the Lao army of King Saya-Setthathirath at the city limits. They attacked the units guarding the rear of the Lao army and succeeded in capturing Phragna Kang Sivisai, Sen-Xang-Thao and Sen Sayasote, as well as Noi-Mang-Chia, his envoy.

Vientiane was made capital city

In the year 1560 A.D. (1564 A.D. in the Phra Keo history book) King Saya-Setthathirath realized that Nakorn Xieng-Thong was rather too small a city and moreover located on the invasion route of the Burmese, who were now an open enemy of Nakorn Xieng-Thong. Due to the fact that Vientiane was a bigger city with a large area of cultivable land and an abundant supply of foodstuffs, King Saya-Setthathirath thought it was an ideal place to set up his capital city. With this in mind, he consulted his advisers who fully agreed with him. So, he handed over the administration of Nakorn Xieng-Thong to his spiritual leaders and left the Phrabang statue there for their worship. Then he moved his men and properties including the statue of the Emerald Buddha and Phra Saek down to Vientiane and gave it a new capital name of "Phra Nakorn Chanthaburi-Sisathanakhanahud-Uttama-Rajadhani" in 1560 A.D. Nakorn Xieng-Thong's name was also changed to Nakorn Luang-Phrabang after the staute of Phrabang. A new palace was built in the new capital and a new and sumptuous temple was also built to house the statue of the Emerald Buddha and Phra Saek-Kham.

At this time, Phragna Khamkhone, the ruler of Muong Phuan (Xieng-Khuang) brought the king an elephant name Khuan -Luang and in return begged him to be permitted to remove the Phuan families, who were living then in Vientiane, to Muong

Phuan where they belonged.

King Saya-Setthathirath asked for the hand of Nang Thep-Kasatti

In the year 1562 A.D. (1550 A.D. in the history book of Ayudhaya), King Saya-Setthathirath was informed of the existence of a very beautiful princess named Nang Thep-Kasatti, who was the daughter of the King of Ayudhaya. Her beauty and her belonging to a very reputable and brave family prompted King Saya-Setthathirath to send a message to Ayudhaya which read as follows:

"We, the king and ruler of Sisattanakhanahud respectfully announce to His Majesty the king and ruler of Si-Ayudhaya the very fact that we are still without a queen to help us rule and produce successors for the throne of Sisattanakhanahud, and therefore have the honor to ask Your Majesty to kindly consider with favor and sympathy the union with us of your charming daughter Nang Thep-Kasatti which, if consented to, would enhance and further the friendship which had existed between our two great kingdoms to last forever."

Upon the receipt of this message, His Majesty, the king of Si-Ayudhaya, convened an important meeting of the mandarins and advisers of the palace to study the request, and at the same time explore the advantages which would stem from such a union. They all arrived at the conclusion that the kingdom of Si-Ayudhaya and that of Hongsavadi (Burma) were in a state of perpetual war and dispute comparable to one having a chronic disease almost impossible to cure. They also agreed that the king of Sisattanakhanahud was at any rate the ruler of a great kingdom with a strong army which, in the event of war, would be of great help. Considering the facts from all angles, the king of Si-Ayudhaya found it to be a golden opportunity to heed the request andgraciously made public his agreement. At the news of the approval of his future father-in-law, King Saya-Setthathirath dispatched an ambassadorial mission with 500 dignitaries and notables to escort his future bride. When the mission arrived at Si-Ayudhaya, the least unexpected thing happened. Nang Thep-Kasatti, his bride-to-be was striken with a chronic disease and was unable to support a long trip to Sisattanakhanahud. The king of Ayudhaya wanted to inform King Saya-Setthathirath of the sudden illness of his daughter but was afraid to do so for fear of being misunderstood, and wrongly accused of illwill. In

order to ward off such an eventuality, the king of Ayudhaya thought it would be wise to send him, as a substitute for the sick princess, another daughter of his named Nang Keo-Yot-Fah with a suite of 1000 attendants of both sexes, together with other gifts and wedding presents. Nang-Keo-Yot-Fah was thus escorted to Sisattanakhanahud. But King-Saya-Setthathirath was very upset when he learned about this substitution. So when the substituted princess arrived with her escort at his palace, he angrily declared, "We want Princess Nang Thep-Kasatti, the daughter of Queen Suriyothai who offered to die in battle to save her husband. We want a princess that belongs to this valiant and faithful family..." Having made this declaration, he ordered Phragna Sen, Phragna Nakorn and Phragna Thipmunti as his representatives to return Princess Nang Keo-Yot-Fah and the presents that were brought along with another message which read as follows:

"Your majesty had first promised to give us Princess Nang Thep-Kasatti; your word of honor has been made public throughout my kingdom. Should Princess Nang Keo-Yot-Fah be a thousand times more beautiful than Princess Nang Thep-Kasatti, this would not change our mind and our desire for her. If we should accept the substitution, our honor would be soiled and it would bring shame to our people. We therefore return Princess Nang Keo-Yot-Fah to Your Majesty and renew hereby our request for Princess Nang Thep-Kasatti, a request which had been previously granted by Your Majesty."

The second message of the king of Sisattanakhanahud was written in such a determined manner that the king of Ayudhaya was forced to comply. Later when Princess Nang Thep-Kasatti had recovered from her illness, she was sent to him with 1000 attendants under the direction of Phragna Men, his envoy.

The first invasion of Vientiane by the Burmese

In the year 1563 A.D., when Princess Nang Thep-Kasatti and her escort were on their way to the kingdom of Sasattanakhanahud, King Saya-Satthathirath and his dignitaries went to meet her at Muong Nong-Han and a celebration was held there for some time, At the same time, back in the kingdom of Xieng-Mai, Sen Noi and Phragna Samlan, whom the Burmese had put in power, now split with their former ally. The Burmese ordered one of their generals named Imme to capture them. Sen Noi escaped to Muong Xieng-Khaeng, while Phragna Samlan and his family and followers escaped to Muong Lan-Xang. The escape of these two most-wanted personalities forced the Bur-

nese to their pursuit down to Muong Lan-Xang-Vientiane. When informed of this sudden invasion of his kingdom, King Saya-Setthathirath hurried back to his palace, only to find that his capital had fallen to the Burmese invaders. In the face of this undeclared invasion, King Saya-Setthathirath acted promptly to save his kingdom from the Burmese domination. He ordered Phragna Sai-Khen-Hak to launch an attack against the Burmese troops, which was successful. The invaders were driven back to Muong Nan. He then graciously appointed Phragna Sai-Khen-Hak to the post of Sen-Muong, and Sen-Xang-Thao to be Phragna Nakorn. Upon his re-entry into his liberated capital city, he ordered the arrest of Phragna Pha-Khao of Muong Phuan and all his most responsible mandarins including Phragna Phumtai who were later executed for treason.

The erection of That-Luang Shrine

In the year 1566 A.D., King Saya-Setthathirath ordered the erection of the great Shrine of That-Luang on top of an old one (45), in one of the palace gardens east of the city. The work began on the full moon day of the first month of the year 1566 A.D. Upon completion the shrine was baptized with the name "Phra That-Chedi-Loka-Chulamani", and the king assigned a great number of attendants and large areas of land for their subsistance. Built at the same time with this great shrine were: Wat Pa-Rusisanghorn (46), a tunnel leading to Phra Orahan shrine at the Maha Phuthavong woods (47), Wat Pa-Xanthong, another wat at Nong-Nhang-Kham, the Shrine of That Hua-Nao at the Khao-Luang Mountain (48), and another wat at Phon-Nong-Kok (49). Having completed this series of shrines or wats in the vicinity of Vientiane, he sent to Muong Maru-Kha-Nakorn, the old city of Thakhek of today, to build another shrine known as Phra That-Sikhotabun (50). Thereafter, he went to pay his respects to the Shrine of Phra That-Phanom, whereby he ordered the attendants to remodel and repair the parts of this shrine that had deteriorated. Finally, he returned to the capital city.

During the reign of King Saya-Setthathirath, Buddhism had developed to the greatest extent throughout the country. The capital city itself was the site of a great many temples and shrines, enhanced by highly developed structures and designs (51). Besides the reconstruction of the city and the erection of temples and shrines, King Saya-Setthathriath proved his devotion toward religion by ordering the casting of many well-known Buddha statues, namely Phra Ong-Tu, Phra Suk, Phra Serm, and Phra Sai (52).

The first attempt to take Muong Phitsanuloke

In Nakorn Si-Ayudhaya, the old king who was the father of Nang Thep-Kasatti entered the priesthood and his son Phra Mahintharaja was crowned king to succeed him. The new king of Si-Ayudhaya still felt somewhat displeased with Phra Maha-Thammaraja (53), the ruler of Phitsanuloke, who he believed had shown much sympathy and allegiance toward the king of Hongsavadi (Burma). With this idea in mind, King Phra Mahintharaja of Ayudhaya dispatched a message to King Saya-Setthathirath, urging him to attack Muong Phitsanuloke. King Saya-Setthathirath was glad to comply and subsequently ordered Phragna Chan-Kongnang, Phragna Khao-Dok-Mark, Phragna Rajwad and Phragna Nhote-Lukien to raise an army of 100,000 men equipped with 1000 elephants and lead the attack on Muong Khom (54). King Saya-Setthathirath was himself able to raise an army of 280,000 men equipped with 2500 elephants and led this main army to the attack of Muong Phitsanuloke. He marched in the direction of Muong Nakorn-Thai and reached Muong Phitsanuloke on the 13th day of the waning moon of the second month of the year 1567 A.D.

He set up camp at the district of Pho-Hieng about two kilometers from the main gate of Muong Phitsanuloke. The army under the command of Phragna Sen-Surind was poised at Ban Tao-Hai village; the army under the command of Phragna Mu-Fai at Wat Khao-Pham; the army under the command of Phragna Nakorn was poised at Ban Sa-Keo village; and the army under the command of Phragna Mu-Leck, at Bang-Sakae village. A total of five armies in all.

Before the Lao armies reached the borders of Phitsanuloke, King Phra Maha-Thammaraja, its ruler, was completely unaware of the intention of King Phra Mahintharaja of Ayudhaya to invade his kingdom. Ironically enough, when he learned that the Lao armies had marched on his kingdom, he sent for help from King Phra Mahintharaja. King Phra Mahintharaja of Ayudhaya sent a small advanced army under the command of Phragna Sihorajteso and Phra Thai-Nam, with a secret mission to capture Phra Maha-Thammaraja when the Lao armies had entered the city of Phitsanuloke. But the order was not kept secret. Instead, Phragna Sihorajteso rushed to Phitsanuloke and revealed the order to the ruler of Phitsnauloke who, in turn, hurried to send for help from Burma.

At this juncture, when Phra Mahintharaja of Ayudhaya learned that the Lao armies were nearing the city of Phit-

sanuloke, he himself headed a naval unit up the river, not knowing that his general had disobeyed him. While sailing along, he dispatched a message to the ruler of Phitsanuloke, telling him that he was coming to his rescue. Phra Maha-Thammaraja of Phitsanuloke who already knew all about his intention, sent him a reply message, telling him not to enter the city. At the same time, the Lao armies of King Saya-Setthathirath had already completely encircled Phitsanuloke and thereafter were ordered to the attack of the city. The people and soldiers of Phitsanuloke fought back with all their might. King Saya-Setthathirath dashed out in the clear in front of his troops, next to a wat, and ordered his men to build a small fortress around him, while others dug in to demolish the city's defensive walls. The besieged city was on the point of falling when suddenly, the Burmese troops of about 10,000 came to the rescue under the command of Phragna Sua-Han and Phragna Phukam. The Burmese troops cut across the lines of Phragna Mu-Leck and succeeded in reaching the inside of Phitsanuloke to help bolster its defense. As to the naval unit of Phra MaMintharaja of Ayudhaya, it was destroyed and its occupants fled.

King Saya-Setthathirath maintained the encircling pressure on the city for 20 days. When he realized that his troops were unable to occupy the city he ordered his armies to retreat to Ban Mung-Don-Somphu; but he was right in his prediction that in any event, the Burmese army would come after him. So, he quickly ordered Phragna Sen-Surind, Phragna Phet, Phragna Park and Phragna Surasen to stand by and fight a delaying action while he prepared to outsmart them. His generals selected a narrow pass overlooking the district of Vari to set up a deadly ambush while one of them, Phragna Sen-Surind sent back to attract them. The plan worked successfully. When the Burmese troops learned about the retreat of the Lao armies they thought the latter had given up their attack and thus went to their pursuit. They fell into the ambush and suffered heavy losses in men and equipment. The casualty toll numbered three Burmese generals killed, two others wounded, 13 officers from Phitsanuloke killed, the nephew of the king of Burma captured, 25 elephants killed and 35 others captured. The remaining troops who survived this ambush fled back to Burma. King Saya-Setthathirath also headed his army back to his capital city. As for Phrugna Chan-Kong-Nang, who had been ordered to take Muong Khom, he successfully carried out his mission, for he was able to capture the Sen-Muong with 20 elephants, 200 horses and other valuables. He also succeeded in capturing a princess of

Muong Khem named Nang Kham. All this was brought along with him when he returned to the capital city of Vientiane.

Second attempt to take Muong Phitsanuloke

In the year 1569 A.D., the king of Burma renewed his armed attack against the kingdom of Si-Ayudhaya. Phra Mahin—tharaja, the king of Ayudhaya needed help to drive off the invaders. So he sent Phragna Ram as his envoy to King Saya-Setthathirath with a message which read as follows:

"Our kingdom is threatened by a greedy enemy in the person of the king of Burma, who repeatedly invaded our territory, causing losses of lives and property to our people. The war we are fighting is one that concerns you as our ally. Should my kingdom fall to the Burmese, needless to say that the war would be carried on to Your Majesty's land. We therefore urge Your Majesty to send your army to Ayudhaya to help us defeat the invaders and our common enemy."

This message from Ayudhaya not only reminded King Saya-Setthathirath of his duty toward an aggrieved ally, but also provoked in him a deep feeling of anger toward the Burmese. He felt that the war-like attitude of the Burmese was a threat to the peace and security of the area and not worthy of a civilized people. Infuriated by this act of repeated aggression, King Saya-Setthathirath took immediate action by raising an army of 50,000 men equipped with 300 elephants and 3000 horses and headed his forces to the rescue of Ayudhaya.

When he and his troops arrived at Muong Phra-Ngam, the people of the city dispatched a messenger to notify Phra Maha Thammaraja of Phitsanuloke of the movement of the Lao troops. King Phra Maha Thammaraja of Phitsanuloke carried forward this news to the Burma king, who had his troops surrounding Ayudhaya. The King of Burma immediately thought of a stratagem to outsmart the Lao king. While setting up his plan, he succeeded in capturing the same Ayudhayan envoy who had previously been sent for help to the Lao kingdom. He ordered him under threat of death, to carry another message to King Saya-Setthathirath saying, "...Now the Burmese army is running short of supplies and is about to pull back. Your Majesty is requested to launch the attack against Muong Saraburi. This is most urgent." Having sent this false message, the king of Burma simultaneously ordered Phra Maha Uparaja to set an ambush for them. Upon receipt of the message, and not knowing the truth behind it, King Saya-Setthathirath

ordered Phragna Chan-Kong-Nang with 30,000 men to take Saraburi as requested. When Phragna Chan-Kong-Nang arrived at Saraburi he found the Burmese troops waiting for him. But before being caught in the deadly ambush, he took the initiative and attacked first. The battle lasted for two days and two nights. Phragna Chan-Kong-Nang successfully outfought the Burmese who, after losing their commander, fled in panic leaving behind a great number of horses and elephants. These were later brought to King Saya-Setthathirath at Muong Phra-Ngam (55).

After this initial victory, one of the king's generals named Phragna Nakorn suggested to King Saya-Setthathirath to rush his troops to Ayudhaya and attack the Burmese troops there by surprise. This would achieve an ultimate victory. But another of his generals, Phragna Sen-Surind did not quite agree with the idea. His reasoning was that the king of Burma was a very capable warrior and therefore would not be easily defeated. He proposed to remain at Phra-Ngam until they would have a better chance of success. Phragna Nakorn insisted and finally got the approval of King Saya-Setthathirath. So Phragna Nakorn and son, Phragna Phet headed part of the army by way of Thep-Chan, in the direction of Ayudhaya. As soon as he emerged in the flat land of Ayudhaya, he met with the troops of Phra Maha Uparaja of Burma and clashed with them. But being outnumbered Phragna Nakorn had to retreat to save his army. In his retreat, he was chased and harrassed by the Burmese up to Phra-Ngam. Phragna Sen-Surind, Phragna Chan-Kong-Nang, Phragna Pholthep, Phragna Muong Sai, Phragna Ken-Thao and Phragna Sinakornloke sent out the Lao troops to stop the enemy's advance and to enable King Saya-Setthathirath to retreat with his own army. The enemy's advance was stopped but the Lao army suffered heavy casualties in this action.

The second invasion of Vientiane by the Burmese

In the year 1570 A.D. (56), the kingdom of Si-Ayudhaya fell to the Burmese and the war was simultaneously brought to the kingdom of Vientiane. While the Burmese marched on Vientiane, King Saya-Setthathirath had time to discuss war strategy with his generals. Again, Phragna Sen-Surind told King Saya-Setthathirath about the merit of the Burmese king in warfare. He suggested that the king not merely oppose his troops to the advancing Burmese, for fear of being exterminated. Instead, he urged that the king use all the stratagems he could think of to try to outsmart the Burmese king. In

doing so, he further suggested that the king order the evacuation of all the civilians out of the limits of the city. The king's family and those of the high ranking mandarins would be evacuated to Vieng-Surind (57). Should the Burmese attack Vientiane, the troops would have all latitudes to act without having to worry about the lives of the civilians. King Saya-Setthathirath agreed to the proposal and ordered it. After the proposed evacuation was completed as planned, Phragna Sen-Surind appointed Phragna Han-Keo, Phragna Han-Phab, Phragna Thammakhun to head each a guerilla unit with instructions to hide their respective troops in the woods around the city proper. At the approach of the advancing Burmese army, Phragna Nakorn acted as though he were fleeing the enemy in the direction of the estuary of the Nam Ngum river.

When the king of Burma saw the people fleeing he understood that the Lao had abandoned their city. So he went to their pursuit, occupied Muong Tha-Bo, Vieng-Khuk and Nong-Khai and ordered his men to build a bridge across the Mekong river at a point south of Don Sangkhi and set up camp at the northern strip of the estuary of the Nam-Ngum river. King Saya-Setthathirath, at the approach of the enemy moved further down to Nong-Han-Noi without resistance. After having set up camp at the northern strip of the estuary of Nam-Ngum river, and for some time, having met no opposition from the Lao people, the Burmese pulled back to the city of Vientiane. King Saya-Setthathirath moved his army back to the southern strip of the estuary of the Nam Ngum river, and from this point sent his men out in small groups to harrass the Burmese. The Burmese turned in strength to King Saya-Setthathirath's troops and after a stiff resistance which lasted for three days, King Saya-Setthathirath retreated to Vieng-Surind. The victorious Burmese could no longer stay there for the rainy season had come and with it the diseases that would considerably cut down the Burmese fighting power. So they decided to return to Vientiane for the second time. In Vientiane itself the Burmese had now to worry about their own supplies, for they had been away from home for quite a long time. As the result of a mass evacuation, there was nothing left in Vientiane for them in the way of needed supplies. This situation forced them to look for them somewhere outside the city. Their hunt for supplies, mostly of foodstuffs, was not made easy for them.. As soon as they went about the woods, the guerilla units of Phragna Han-Keo, Phragna Phab and Phragna Thammakhun were there to pin them down.

As this continuous slaughter went on and on, the victorious Burmese troops were unable to feed themselves and disease

and epidemics gave them a finishing blow, so that in the long run thousands of them died and the rest were not fit to fight. Sensing an imminent extermination, the king of Burma ordered his troops to pull out and headed back to Burma. But to their surprise, they found the troops of Phragna Sen-Surind waiting for them everywhere. The Laocounter-attacked heavily at Ban Anosom (could be Paksom) inflicting heavy losses on the enemy in men and equipment. More than 100 elephants were also captured and 2,300 ivories were picked, presumably from dead elephants. Thirty thousand troops of Burmese, Nan Meng, Yuan, Lu, Khon, Muong Khong, Muong Nhang and Muong Ayuchaya origin were taken prisoner. When the Burmese tropps had been completely driven out of the kingdom, King Saya-Setthathirath headed back to his capital city of Vientiane.

The battle for Muong Ong-Kan (58)

During all the time King Saya-Setthathirath was tied up in his struggle to save his kingdom from Burmese domination, two of his former, disgraced aides were planning a plot against him at Muong Nakorn.. They were Phragna Nakorn and a former Chief Monk. Their first attempt was to send King Saya-Setthathirath a false note telling him that "the ruler of
ng Ong-Kan had died. He was survived by two daughters
ed Nang Thep-Kaya and Nang Uthumphon who would like very
h to offer King Saya-Setthathirath their services in any
they can..." The note was entrusted to a mission delib-
ely composed of two monks and ten laymen. When this mis-
arrived at Muong Sai (59) on its way to Vientiane, the
r of Muong Sai refused them free passage, but the two
s succeeded in passing through anyway and the note finally
ched King Saya-Setthathirath.

Upon the receipt of the note from Phragna Nakorn, King Saya-Setthathirath believed it. Subsequently, he appointed Phragna Somphamit, Phragna Chan, Thao Khe and Phan-Khon-Sai as his envoys to Muong Ong-Kan with Khun-Luang Upakan as their guide. When they arrived at Muong Ong-Kan and after the ruler of Muong Ong-Kan had been informed of the false news he was so infuriated that he sent away the Lao envoys without further discussion.

Phragna Somphamit and his colleagues went to see Phragna Nakorn, the author of the note, and told him all about the treatment they had received at Muong Ong-Kan. Upon hearing this, Phragna Nakorn acted as though he were really vexed and urged King Saya-Setthathirath, through his envoys, to attack

Muong Ong-Kan, offering himself to heed the king's army to the attack. Again, King Saya-Setthathirath believed the Phragna Nokorn proposal and offer and agreed. And in the year 1572 A.D., King Saya-Setthathirath sent his army under the command of Phragna Nakorn to the attack of Muong Ong-Kan, without the slightest idea of the plot behind the pretended good offices of Phragna Nakorn.

When the Lao army was nearing the limits of Muong Ong-Kan, Phragna Nakorn put his plans in action by directing King Saya-Setthathirath's army into a trap he had previously set up. Before the men in his command were aware of his duplicity they had been almost annihilated. Phragna Nakorn hurried back to report the defeat of his army to King Saya-Setthathirath and again allegedly urged him to flee with him to an unknown destination (61) while the rest of the ambushed army fought for their lives, returning completely exhausted to the capital city of Vientiane with two of their commanders Phragner Sen-Surind and Phragna Chan-Kong-Nang.

King Saya-Setthathirath was born in the year of the Horse 1545 A.D. He had reigned for 24 consecutive years and died somewhere in Muong Ong-Kan at the age of 38. At the time of his death, King Saya-Setthathirath had a son named Phra Nu-Muong born to him from his wife and queen, who was the daughter of Phragna Sen-Surind.

11. The reign of Phra Sumangkhala-Ayako-Phothisad or Phragna Sen-Surindhalusai

(first part)

The former name of Phra Sumangkhala-Ayako-Phothisad was Chan. He was the son of a chief of the Nong-Khai village (province of Nong-Khai in Thailand today). He was born in 1511 A.D. in this very same village. In his childhood, he studied in Nakorn Xieng-Thong, where he was the pupil of the Chief Monk Sichantho, who was also the Chief Instructor for King Phothisarad. He grew up in Xieng-Thong and later was made mandarin of Nakorn Xieng-Thong (Luang-Phrabang). Thanks to his exceptional intelligence and farsightedness in carrying out his duties, he had been successively promoted to higher positions. He was appointed to the rank of Principal Aide under the name of Phragna Nhote-Lukien during the reign of King Phothisarad, and was graciously given the governorship of Muong Pak-Huei-Luang (or Ban Huei-Luang) in the district of Phonphisai (province of Nong-Khai in Thailand), his hometown.

In the year 1555 A.D., Phragna Nhote-Lukien had been the master-mind of King Saya-Setthathirath in the battle of Xieng -Sen and was subsequently promoted to an even higher rank with the new title name of Phragna Sen-Surindhalusai. In this position he had been the greatest of help to King Saya-Setthathirath in the reconstruction of the capital city of Vientiane and other historical shrines and monuments, as was in other wars which followed through the reign of King Saya-Setthrathirath. He had also offered his own daughter to become the first lady attendant of the palace. For this long and valuable contribution to the success of his king he was,,after the death of King Saya-Setthathirath, the most qualified and justified to carry on the affairs of the kingdom during the infancy of Phra No-Muong, the crown prince, who was, in fact, his own nephew.

Soon after, Phragna Chantha-Siharad (51), one of the highest ranking mandarins at the time, expressed the desire to crown Phra No-Muong as king by tradition. Phragna Sen-Surindhalusai did not agree and a dispute followed between the two of them that nearly plunged the kingdom into civil war. The Buddhist clergy of the palace managed to settle their dispute and ward off bloodshed. The situation calmed down for only three months and the same dispute was renewed with an even greater intensity and became this time out of control, and a civil war was to follow.

Phragna Sen-Surindhalusai ordered Sen-Munthien to clash with Phragna Chantha-Siharad and slew him. The death of Phragna Chantha-Siharad brought tranquillity, respect and discipline in the kingdom of Phragna Sen-Surindhalusai, who proclaimed himself king in the year 1572 A.D., with the new king-name of Phra Sumangkhala-Ayako-Phothisad. But he was commonly called Phra Chao Pu-Lan because of the fact that he was the grand-father of Phra No-Muong, his crown prince nephew. He was 65 when he became king.

The third invasion of Vientiane by the Burmese

Upon the self-proclaimed rule of King Phra Sumangkhala-Ayako-Phothisad, the various subordinate cities of Vientiane began to show signs of unwillingness to cooperate with him. His orders had not been complied with in full. His closest associates and aides could hardly live up to their respective duties. What caused this ill-will toward him was simply the fact that he did not belong to the royal family by birth. This feeling of repugance for him prompted the people of

Vientiane to migrate in great number to the south. This was in fact the third time in the history of the Lao people that they had migrated down to the Cham and Khmer territories in the south, from the province of Roi-Et down to the province of Champassak.

Two years after the reign of Phra Sumangkhala-Ayako-Phothisad, exactly in 1574 A.D. (1572 A.D. in the Yo-Noke history book), the King of Hongsavadi (Burma) launched another attack against Vientiane. King Phra Sumangkhala-Ayako-Phothisad defended his kingdom against the Burmese with all his might and usual courage, but his men didn't give full support as they had before. They were no longer eager to fight and moreover they disliked what they believed they were fighting for. Most of them ran away and his defense lines crumbled, enabling the Burmese to capture the city without much effort on their part. They took Phra Sumangkhala-Ayako-Phothisad and his nephew Phra No-Muong as their hostages to Burma. For some time, the Lao kingdom of Vientiane became a vassal to the Burmese kingdom.

12. The reign of Phra Maha-Uparaja-Voravangso

In the year 1575 A.D. the king of Burma reinstated Phra Maha Uparaja-Voravangso (the son of King Saya-Setthathirath, who had been held in captivity in Burma) to the throne of the Lao kingdom of Vientiane. Four years after, in 1579 A.D., there was a native of the province of Attopeu who was said to be endowed with supernatural powers. This person pretended he was a reborn King Saya-Setthathirath who mysteriously disappeared long ago. He had now come back to rule over Vientiane. The people were quite superstitious at the time and believed in the pretended reincarnation of their once most respected king. This belief enabled this person to raise an important army among the Kha-Suei people of Muong Soke Muong Sung with which he succeeded in capturing Attopeu, Muong Manh and Muong Kham-Thong and threatened the rule of Phra Maha Upraja-Voravangso itself. In the face of this threat, King Phra Maha Uparaja-Voravangso ordered Phragna Xieng-Tai, Phragna Xieng-Neua, and Phragna Nakorn to put down the rebellion. But they were unable to defeat them and headed their troops back to the city. The rebels went to their pursuit up to the city of Vieng-Khuk, and pushed forward from here in the direction of Vientiane itself. Phra Maha Uparaja-Voravangso was unable to defend his capital city and fled with his wife and two daughters aboard the royal barge to seek refuge in Burma. But they were victims of a fatal accident when their

barge hit the rocks and was destroyed in a rapid along the river. The rebel army entered the city and took it over.

Second reign of Phra Sumangkhala-Ayako-Phothisad

When the king of Hongsavadi (Burma) learned about the success of the rebellion in the Lao kingdom, he ordered his general named Insae-Nankhu to reconquer Vientiane form the rebels with a Burmese army. At Vientiane, the Burmese general was able to defeat the rebels and capture their chief, who was brought back alive to Burma. The king of Burma appointed Phra Sumangkhala-Ayako-Phothisad to rule over Vientiane for the second time in 1580 A.D. Two years later, in1582 A.D., King Phra Sumangkhala-Ayako-Phothisad died in Vientiane at the age of 75.

13. The reign of Phragna Nakorn-Noi

After the death of Phra Sumangkhala-Ayako-Phothisad, his son, Phragna Nakorn-Noi was enthroned to succeed his father in Vientiane. Less than a year after his enthronement, Phragna Nakorn-Noi was to meet with the same feeling of repugnance from his people as did his father in the first part of his reign - and for the same reason. He was not a direct descendent of the ruling royal family. Phragna Nakorn-Noi was arrested by his own subjects and sent back to Burma, and from this time on, the Lao kingdom lived another long period of seven years without a king - until 1590 A.D.

14. The reign of Phra No-Muong

In the year 1591 A.D., the mandarins and dignitaries of the Vientiane palace went to Burma to request the king of Burma that Phra No-Muong, the son of King Saya-Setthathirath, who had been held in captivity there, be crowned as their king. The request was granted and Phra No-Muong left Hongsavadi (Burma) on Wednesday the tenth day of the new moon of the sixth month and arrived at Vientinne on the fifth day of the new moon of the seventh month of the year 1591 A.D. He was crowned king of the Lao kingdom of Vientiane on the ninth day of the new moon of the eighth month of the same year at the age of 20.

Upon the advent of Phra No-Muong, the Lao kingdom of Vientiane enjoyed another period of peace and prosperity. Those of the various subordinate cities which had previously disobeyed King Phra Sumangkhala-Ayako-Phothisad came forward

to assure him of their loyalty and cooperction (62). Seven years after, King Phra No-Muong died at the age of 27 without leaving a successor to the throne.

15. The reign of Phra Voravongso-Thammikarad

After the death of Phra No-Muong in 1598 A.D., the mandarins and dignitaries of the palace agreed to invite Phra Voravongsa, his cousin (he was the son of his aunt) (63) to the throne of Vientiane. With this in mind, they went to solicit the approval of the king of Burma who, in turn, told them that Phra Voravongsa, who was then only 13, was too young to be able to rule and suggested instead that his father (64), commonly known as Phra Vorapita, be accepted as their provisional ruler. At this point, the kingdom of Burma itself was plunged into internal trouble, following the death of King Burengnong and the subsequent enthroncment of his son Asae-Nankaya or Nantha-Burnegnong, who proved to be incapable in the fulfillment of his duties.

In the face of this situation, Phra Naresuan, the ruler of Nakorn Si-Ayudhara at the time, whose kingdom was still vassal to the kingdom of Burma, solemnly proclaimed the independence of his kingdom and set out to attack Burma itself. And at this very same period, the Lao families whom the Burmese had forced to come to Burma during the latters' dominaton of the Lao kingdom of Vientiane dealt the Burmese another blow by deciding to return en masse to Vientiane. But the ruler of Xieng-Mai, another subordinate of the kingdom of Burma, for some reason set out to recapture the returning Lao families on the r way back to their kingdom. In the light of this situation, Phra Vorapita, who then ruled over Vientiane, sent the Lao army in his control to wrest them from the Xieng-Mai troops. In doing so, the Lao army successively captured the cities of Muong Phra-Nhao, Muong Serng, Muong Lo, Muong Xieng-Sen, Muong Hang and Muong Xieng-Rai and was about to attack Xieng-Mai itself when it met with disaster from lack of food supplies. They were therefore forced to pull back without even trying to attack Xieng-Mai. But when the Lao army, in its retreat, approached its own city, its ruler was so infuriated that he ordered his army to stay out of the city and threatened to execute all the commanding officers. Being refused admittance to their own city, the Lao army asked Phra Voravongsa, his son, to join them, which he did. They all camped in the Phalansai field not far from the city. Thereafter, they attacked their own capital, thus putting the father and son in opposition. The battle between the Lao

armies of Phra Vorapita and Phra Voravongsa lasted for four months without any decisive victory for either of the two. The number of casualties increased on both sides and the people were suffering from the long, drawn-out battle. Thereupon, the Buddhist clergymen, with all their wisdom and patience, tried in every possible way to reconcile them. Finally, they set up a big rally at Don-Chan which was supposed to go on until the two sides were reconciled. At one point, Phra Voravongsa surrendered to the monks there and through them offered his apologies to his father as well as asking for his pardon. Phra Vorapita graciously forgave his son and abdicated in his favor, taking his own family down to Nakorn-Phanom in 1603 A.D. (65).

Phra Voravongsa proclaimed his kingdom's independence

Upon the abdication of his father, Phra Voravongsa took the initiative in renouncing his vassalage to Burma and proclaiming his independence. A coronation ceremony was subsequently held and Phra Voravongsa was officially crowned king of the Lao kingdom of Vientiane under the new king-name of Phra Voravongsa-Thammikarad-Chao. His enthronement ended the 24 years of vassalage to Burma, and from this time on the Lao kingdom of Vientiane enjoyed a peaceful and prosperous era for many years to come.

King Phra Voravongsa-Thammikarad had two sons named Phra Upayuvarad and Phra Mom-Keo. In the year 1621 A.D., King Voravongsa-Thammikarad in company of his wife and his son Phra Mom-Keo went on a religious mission to pay their respects to the statue of Phrabang in Nakorn Luang-Phrabang. In this city, rumours spread around that Phra Upayuvarad, who had been left behind in Vientiane, was about to usurp the throne. Without questioning, King Voravongsa ordered from Luang-Phrabang that his son be arrested and executed. This order was not kept secret and when Prince Upayuvarad knew about it, he fled with a small army. His father ordered Mom-Sai to go after him. Mom-Sai caught up with him at Ban-Khuang and both were engaged in a violent combat. But the advantage was with Prince Upayuvarad, who fought and ran to consolidate his defense lines at Wat Nam-Mong. Mom-Sai followed him through to Wat Nam-Mong, but was again unable to penetrate into the wat, for Ptince Upayuvarad had already closed its gate. Mom-Sai's troops stampeded through the wat from other sides but by the time he gained access to the wat, Prince Upayuvarad had al-

ready fled to Vieng-Khuk and at this point, some people had put the city of Vientiane itself to fire. In Luang-Phrabang, King Voravongsa succeeded in raising an army and headed it to the attack of his son. During his march, he first set camp at Ban Thakhok (66). But at this point, the mandarins and other officials in his capital city turned against him in favor of Prince Upyuvarad. The news of this sudden change deeply upset King Voravongsa. He pulled back his troops to the same Phalansai field near the city and there proceeded to a paternal ceremony of the time, by which he invoked God Almighty to punish his son for his bad behaviour toward his own father. Thereafter he took his wife, and in the company of Mom-Sai, Phragna Anusit and other people of his suite headed off for Xieng-Daeng. Prince Upayuvarad ordered Phragna Vieng after his father with the mission to kill him if found. Phragna Vieng found him right in Xieng-Daeng and by order of the prince Killed King Voravongsa and the rest of the family.

16. The reign of Phra Upayuvarad

In the year 1622 A.D., Prince Upayuvarad was crowned king of Vientiane but died soon afterward at the age of only 25. He had reigned for only nine months.

17. The reign of Phra Bandit-Phothisan

After the death of Phra Upayuvarad, the mandarins and dignitaries of the palace sent for Phragna Mahanam (67) who was then ruling over Muong Sikhotabong and crowned him king of Vientiane under the king-name of Phra Bandit-Phothisan. He was 71 years old. Two years later, in 1624 A.D., during the reign of Phra Bandit-Phothisarad, Phragna Vieng, in another act of rebellion, set the king's palace afire. A new one was later built at the Phalansai field. King Phra Bandit-Phothisarad ruled for four years and died in 1627 A.D., on the fourth day of the new moon of the fifth month.

18. The reign of Phra Nom-Keo

After the death of King Phra Bandit-Phothisarad, the king's Domestic Council enthroned Chao Nom-Keo, the second son of Phra Voravongsa Thamikarad, in the year 1627 A.D., with the king-name of Phra Nom-Keo. King Phra Nom-Keo had two sons named Chao Ton-Kham and Chao Visai. Within this period the Lao kingdom was again faced with an internal struggle for power. Each high ranking mandarin was trying to form his own party and recruit his own army to the others. This bloody struggle for power brought considerable misery to the people.

They decided to flee the capital city of Vientiane to the territory on the right side of the Mekong river. It is not known how long King Phra Won-Keo ruled over Vientiane, but it is believed that he died after a relatively short rule.

19. The reign of Chao Ton-Kham

After the death of his father, Chao Ton-Kham succeeded him to the throne of Vientiane. He was reported to have had two sons named Chao Pu and Chao Soi.

20. The reign of King Suryavongsa-Thammikarad

It is not known either as to how long King Chao Ton-Kham ruled over Vientiane. But following his death, the kingdom was the scene of dispute and quarrel among the various branches of the royal family. It is a known fact, however, that at this particular time, the people and relatives of Prince Surya-Kumman outnumbered the others. So they crowned him king of Vientiane in 1633 A.D. at the age of 25, and gave him the king-name of Phra Chao Suryavongsa-Thammikarad. Soon after his enthronement, he deported his other two brothers and their relatives and followers for his own security:

1. Chao Sumphu, his wife and Sen Thipnabua to Muong Ve (Annam). Chao Sumphu had one son named Phra Sai-Ong-Ve and later, when Chao Sumphu died, his wife married Sen Thipnabua and had another son named Thao Long or Nong.

2. Chao Bun-Xu, his second brother went to enter the priesthood at Phuho-Phuhong.

3. Chao Pu, the son of Chao Visai went to live with his family at Muong Xieng-Khan.

4. Chao Soi, Chao Pu's brother went to Saphu.

After he had dealt in such a way with his probable internal enemies, King Suryavongsa proceeded to reorganize his kingsom to a more normal basis. Owing to the fact that his kingdom was at the time without internal enemies and external threat of invasion, he was able to avail himself of the opportunity, and make of his kingdom one of the most developed in the era. His main accomplishments were:

In the field of religious affairs, he encouraged and developed the teaching of Buddhism and all its virtues to the greatest extent, thus enabling the kingdom to produce many

outstanding thinkers, writers and poets who have written valuable bibles, poems and commandments, such as the legends of Sin-Sai, Pu-Son-Lan, Lan-Son-Fu and many others. In the field of social affairs, he set forth worthy legislation and rules that benefited all of his citizens, regardless of their standing, by observing a just and fair procedure for all alike. He did not hesitate, for example, to order the execution of his own son for the crimes he had committed upon others. In the field of foreign affairs, he was the first king to have received foreign visitors and to have had any real foreign relations with other countries of the world. For instance, in 1641 A.D. he received in his reception grounds at That-Luang, a Dutch ambassadorial, religious and trade mission. In 1670 A.D., he sent a goodwill mission to renew his kingdom's friendship with that of Si-Ayudhaya and also built the Phra Chedi-Song-Hak at Muong Dan-Sai as the demarcation line between the Thai and the Lao kingdoms. In the building of this friendship shrine between the two countries, King Suryavongsa assigned many of his high ranking mandarins to represent him, namely his chief minister Ong Chanthapa-Sithiraj-Phakdi and Mun Upali with other high ranking monks, namely His Venerable Upali-Thera, His Venerable Arya-Kadsapa, His Venerable Phra Maha Thammasenabodi, Phra Bhuddha-Vilasmaha-Thera, Phra Satthammarangsi-Maha-Thera, Phra Viriyathikunani. The kingdom of Si-Ayudhaya was represented by an equal number of officials and dignitaries, namely Phragna Phonthep-Nayoke, head of the delegation, and the following venerable monks: Phra Khu Borohacharya, Phra Aryamuni, Phra Silavisudhi-Utama, Phra Khu Sumethachan, Phra Maha Satthammatula, Phra Maha Phommasan and Phra Maha Rajamuni. In addition to these personalities, each delegation was adjoined with 70 monks. In this most important ceremony of friendship an official royal communique was read and issued as follows:

"We, the kings of Sisatanak (Laos) and Si-Ayudhaya hereby declare to the people of the two kingdoms here represented that we are now considered as one and only one nation by this symbolic ceremony of friendship. Our two royal families shall be as one and shall share our countries' destinies with the same feeling of affection. There shall be no dispute between us, no aggression against each other and no attempt of taking advantage of each other until the time the sun has disappeared from our universe or fallen upon our land." Thereafter another symbolic ceremony invoking the gods of the sky and the earth to be their witnesses took place, whereby they all swore to live up to their pledges.

In 1670 A.D., work began on the Shrine of Phra-That-Si-song-Hak (or the Shrine of the Two Friendships or Love). It was completed in 1673 A.D. and was recognized as the starting point of the limitation of the two kingdoms' respective territories up to the Nam-Nan river for Si-Ayudhaya, and down to the Mekong river for Sisatanak.

King Suryavongsa-Thammikarad had one son and two daughters born to him from his principal queen. They were Chao Rajbud, Princess Kummari and Princess Sumangkhala. About this time, the Ho came to loot Muong Xieng-Hung. Chao Intha-Kumman, its ruler fled with his sister, Nang Chantha-Kummari, to Vientiane to seek asylum with King Suryavongsa. Chao Rajbud later was married to Nang Chantha-Kummari and they had two sons born to them. They were Chao King-Kidsarad and Chao Inthasom.

As to Chao Intha-Kumman, the ruler of Nakorn Xieng-Hung, he was married for the second time to Nang Kam and had another son named Chao Mom-Noi or Chao Ong-Noi, who was later called Chao Ong-Noke.

In the years that followed, Chao Rajbud, the son of King Suryavongsa-Thammikarad committed an act of adultery with the wife of Thao Ko, an attendant of his father's palace. Thao ko lodged a complaint against him. When King Suryavongsa, in the capacity of Chief Justice, found his son guilty, he ordered his son to be executed at Pha-Lang so that no precedent could be created for the future.

King Suryavongsa reigned through the year 1690 A.D. (1695 A.D. in one other version) and died at the age of 82 after 57 years of uninterrupted reign. His only son having been executed, King Suryavongsa did not leave any heir to the throne.

/FOOTNOTES/

(1)

According to the Yo-Noke history book, it has been said that Thao Chuong or Khun Chuong was born in the year 99 A.D. At the age of 35, he invaded and occupied the Vietnamese city of Muong Prakan; in the year 134 A.D., at the age of 70, he invaded Muong Man and was killed on the back of his commanding elephant. It has been also said that Khun Chuong was

a Thai king. I should like to say that Khun Chuong was a Khmer king instead, due to the fact that in the legends of Khun Chuong, it has been precisely stated that he was among the Meng people. The Meng, Mon or Khmer are in fact of the same origin. The battle that opposed Khun Chuong to the people of Muong Men was in fact a battle between his troops and the Lao people of Nong-Sae themselves (as recorded in one of the poems in the life of Khun Chuong as saying, "Our brothers have slain the people of Nong-Sae who disbanded and fled..."). The Yo-Noke history book did not, however, mention his nationality of origin and the dates therin were 400 years apart.

(2)

The 22 Lao kings have had their names listed in a popular manuscript as follows: 1. Khun-Swa, 2. Khun-Swai, 3. Khun-Sung, 4. Khun-Khet, 5. Khun-Khum, 6. Khun-Khim, 7. Khun-Kwa, 8. Khun-Khang, 9. Khun-Khem, 10. Khun-Maeng, 11. Khuh-Meung, 12. Khun-Mi, 13. Khun-Kham, 14. Khun-Hung, 15. Thao Then, 16. Thao Yerk, 17, Thao Pinh, 18. Thao Phat, 19 Thao Wang, 20. Phragna Lang, 21. Phragna Khamphong, 22. Chao Fah-Ngiao.

But another version of the legends of Khun-Borom listed the kings who succeeded to Khun-Lo as follows: 1. Khun Swa, 2. Khun-Yi-Ba, 3. Khun Lu-Li, 4. Thao Long, 5. Thao Lu, 6. Thao Fah-Nhan, 7. Thao Fah-Pan, 8. Thao Fah-Kam, 9. Thao U-Naung, 10. Thao Pong-Kom, 11. Thao Fah-Ngom, 12. Thao Fah-Ngiao of Thao Phi-Fah.

Book II of the legends of Khun Borom (as found in the library of Wat Sisaket in Vientiane listed the family of King Fah-Ngum as follows:

King Chao Fah-Luang-Ngom (or otherwise known as Phragna Souvanna Khamphong) had two sons: Chao Fah-Ngiao (or Khun Phi-Fah) and Chao Fah-Kham-Hiao. Chao Fah-Ngiao, in turn, had four children, two boys and two girls. It was told that the youngest son, Chao Fah-Ngum, had a complete set of teeth at birth.

Another version of the legends of Khun Borom at the Thai National Library in Bangkok listed the royal family of Chao Fah-Ngum in its 70th chapter as follows:

"Luang Ngom who became King had nine children, four of them were girls. We would not talk about them all..We would only talk about those who have succeeded to Luang Ngom. Thao Kham-Hiao was to become king first. He had four children, two girls and two boys. The youngest son had 33 teeth at birth.

The mandarins and advisers to the king thought this was a bad omen. He would not be good to his kingdom and so they put him on a raft and sent him wandering away..."

(3)

The word Phi-Fah was used by the Lao people to designate the Khmer kingdom (the Phi-Fah kingdom), as recorded in the legends of Khun Borom, in the part dealing with the destitution of Thao Fah-Ngum:

"These servants are to be destituted and floated together with Chao Fah-Ngum. The raft ran aground in the land of Maha Thera, king Pa-sman of the Phi-Fah kingdom as such..."

(4)

Another version of the story ruled that he was born in the year 1328 A.D.

(5)

Some documents said until he was 21 years old.

(6)

It is not known for sure today which city was Muong Pak-Kop. But it could be a city on the estuary of Nam-Si river which today is a tributary of Nam-Moon river in the west of the Ubon province in Thailand. In the past, this area had been one in thich the Khmers and the Lao traveled about.

(7)

Muong Kabong is Muong Kotabul which formerly was located on the bank of the Se-Bang-Fai river. Later, it was transferred to the west of That-Phanom and known as Muong Marukra-Nakorn. In the year 1257 A.D. Chao Sikhote, the son of Chao Rama-Bandit, later transferred it to the left bank of the same river and today it is known as Muong Kao Thakhek.

(8)

In the legends of Khun Borom, Phragna Nanthasen was known as Phragna Pad-Bo and in another story book as Phragna Sam-Lan.

(9)

Where Pak-Thok was cannot be known.

(10)

These cities are not to be identified with any cities of today.

(11)
Muong Vieng was located on the west side of the Hin-boc river. During the reign of Phra-Sai-Setthariraj, this city was known as Muong Surind or Vieng Surind.

(12)
Muong Phra Nam-Hung was located on the bank of the Nam Kading river. This same city, according to the story of That Phanom, was built at the same time as Muong Vieng Khuke and Muong Souvannaphoum.

(13)
The Bang-Bath stream was near the Mekong river in the district of Bung-karn, province of Nong-Khai (Thailand).

(14)
These two persons are supposed to have been Phragna Phao and Thao Thiem-Kham-Yoh. Certain history books said they committed adultery with their father's wife and fled to ask asylum from Prince Fah-Ngum.

(15)
Phragna Ka-Sak was master of the Upper-Lao people.

(16)
Many of the history books dealing with this episode have accounted the reasons behind the name of this city (Vieng-Kham) as due to the fact that King Fah-Ngum used golden arrows as part of his strategy to attack it. But, in reality, the name Vieng-Kham existed before the advent of King Fah-Ngum, as indicated in the stele of King Khun Rama-Khamhaeng of Sukkhothai, which was engraved from the year 1284 A.D. Exactly 73 years before King Fah-Ngum invaded Vieng-Kham, it was told that the territories of the Sukkhothai kingdom included such as Muong Sah-Luang, Muong Sah-Kha along the Mekong river and down to Vientiane, Vieng-Kham, and in the legends of Khun Borom it was known as Muong Kham.

(17)
As of today, there is a district in Thailand which is known as the Nakorn Thai district in the province of Phejabun.

(18)
With regard to the battle of Vieng-Kham, some story books of Muong Lan-Xang stated that King Fah-Ngum greatly appreciated the ability of Phragna Phao when the two of them were engaged in a hand to hand fight. He then made him his ally and

gave Muong Vieng-Kham back to him.

(19)

Muong Pak Huei-Luang is in the district of Phonphisai, province of Nongkhai in Thailand today.

(20)

Muong Phra Nam-Hung is in the district of Paksane in Laos today.

(21)

The actual location of Muong Pa-Kuang today is not known.

(22)

Kadae-Fateb is Nong Khanthae-Suanam according to the Urangkhathad history book, which is today the area around Hong-Kae.

(23)

The Wan-Pao mountain is located in the province of Kalasin in Thailand.

(24)

The actual location of Suong-Sai cannot be known.

(25)

In the legends of Khun Borom, the three countries of Lao, and Xieng-Mai were called under the terminology of Lan. the Lao country was called Lan-Xang; Xieng-Mai as Lan- and the Thai capital of Si-Ayudhaya as Lan-Phya.

(26)

The present name of Phra-Ngam lake and Buakong is not known.

(27)

These cities are in the provinces of Roi-Et, Surind, Buriram and Sisaket in Thailand.

(28)

Muong Saphang-Sichae is believed to be Muong Sasilien in the district of Souvannaphoum, province of Roi-Et, Thailand.

(29)

It is not known which present city was formerly Muong-Kae. It could very well be in the district of Muong Kae in the province of Sakol-Nakorn in Thailand today.

(30)
Another book stated that King Fah-Ngum died at the age o. 46.

(31)
In book II of the legends of Khun Borom at Wat Sisaket in Vientiane, it has been said that Chao Fah-Kham-Hiao was the brother of King Fah-Ngum and Nang Noi-Nong-Hiao the daughter of Chao Fah-Kham-Hiao. This could be true because in the legends of Khun Borom in the Thai National Library in Bangkok this part was also to be found:

"They married Nang Noi-Nong-Hiao, daughter of Chao Fah-Kham-Hiao, who was in turn Phragna Sam-Sen-Thai's uncle, to King Sam-Sen-Thai and became known under her queen-name of Then-Fah or Bua-Then as it was told..."

(32)
It has been said in some other books dealing with the same part of the history, that the daughter of King Sam-Sen-Thai was formerly known as Nang Phimpha. But in the one in the Bangkok library, it was said that Nang Maha-Thevi was Nang Noi-Nong-Hiao, the wife of King Sam-Sen-Thai himself. It was said that after the death of her husband she fell in love with her grand-nephew. But in this book, Nang Maha-Thevi was the sister of King Sam-Sen-Thai.

(33)
It has been said in many history books that she was 95 when she was executed.

(34)
Prince Mui was the son of Phragna Pak-Huei-Luang and was also known under the name of Prince Tonkham.

(35)
Another version of the story said he had nine sons: Thao Konkeo, Thao Thonkham, Thao Nhuan, Thao Khuan-Nha-On, Thao Suang, Thao La-Sentai, Thao Saya-Kumman, Thao Nhuang-Pha and Thao Phai and seven daughters: Nang Sithai, Nang Inhphat, Nang Khan, Nang Kook, Nang Khao, Nang Thammara and Nang Tonkham.

(36)
In another part of the story it was said that the invading Vietnamese army numbered up to two million, including 4000 officers. I find that this number was much exaggerated. If one takes the number of the units in one army at the time, 1,600,000 is more likely to be the total number.

(37)
Could be the territories of Nakorn Champassak and Nakorn Thom of the Khmers.

(38)
Muong Ho-Hong Kosamphi is the present Yunnan province of mainland China. Muong Khem was in the territroy of the 12 Phanna-Lu.

(39)
Vieng-Phrangam could be Muong Khao-Phrangam north of Muong Lopburi in Thailand today.

(40)
In the Yo-noke history book, it has been said that the prince was only 12.

(41)
In the Yo-noke history book the city of Vieng-Phrabung was recorded as Muong Phrabang which is the district of Swangkhaburi in Thailand today.

(42)
These two princesses of Xieng-Mai were the daughters of Phra Muong Ketkao and were very young at the time of this ceremony.

(43)
Muong Sai could have been Muong Dan-Sai and as far as the bringing of the statue of the Emerald Buddha was concerned, many believed that it was Prince Setthavangso who became king under the name of Saya-Setthathirath, who brought the statue over.

(44)
In the Phrasaek version it has been said that he was 12, while in the other version known as Phra Keo he was said to have been 18. But many others dealing with the same subject said he was 14.

(45)
According to the Urangathat history book, it has been said that the old shrine was built by Phragna Asokaraj in the year 307 A.D.

(46)
Its present actual location is not known.

(47)
The Maha Phuthavong woods are understood to be That-Fun of today.

(48)
That Hua-Nao is That Bang-Phuan in the vicinity of the Huei-Bang-Phuan village of the province of Nong-Khai in Thailand today.

(49)
Wat Phon Nong-Kok is located near the That Bang-Phuan.

(50)
That Sikhotabun is That Phon in the province of Thakhek.

(51)
In the journal of Mr. Kamfle, a German who came to Thailand and Laos at that time, it has been said that the capital city of Vientiane had 120 wats in all.

(52)
Phra Serm is now housed in Wat Pathumvanaram in Bangkok, Phra Suk was said to have been submerged in front of Ban Vern -Suk when the Thais were taking it to Bangkok.

(53)
King Phra Maha-Thammaraja was the brother-in-law of King Phra Mahinthraraja.

(54)
Muong Khem is the territory of the 12 Phanna-Lu.

(55)
Muong Phra-Ngam is north of the city of Lopburi in Thailand today.

(56)
In the To-noke history book the year was 1568 A.D.

(57)
Vieng-Surind is understood to be Nong-Khu-Vieng in the district of Ban Nasone-Tai in Laos today.

(58)
According to many documents, Muong Ong-Kan is understood to be the province of Attopeu of Laos today. But I personally believe it is Angkor for the reason that the phonetics of the

(59)

Muong Sai is understood to be Ban Khon-Sai in the district of Nong-Han, province of Sorn in Thailand today. The reason is that Ban Khon-Sai had long existed as such in history and has had more than 1000 houses, or else it could be another Ban Khon-Sai in the province of Saravane in Laos today.

(60)

In many documents dealing with the mysterious death of King Setthathirath there is no exact account given as to how and where he died. But I believe that Phragna Nakorn was the one that killed him.

(61)

He was also called Phragna Chan-Kong-Nang because he had his residence at Ban Kong-Nang.

(62)

In the That-Phon and Phra Sack-kham documents, it has been said that Phra No-Muong was the Lao king that built a shrine known as Phra That Sisong-Hak-Muong-Dan-Sai, and the wall around the city of Vientiane.

(63)

The aunt of Phra No-Muong was Princess Nang Kham-Khai, who was herself the youngest sister of King Saya-Setthathirath.

(64)

The father of Phra Voravongsa might not have belonged to the royal family. If they called him Phra Vorapita that was because he was the father of Phra Voravongsa.

(65)

In another version dealing with the same period of history, it has been said that Phra Vorapita took his family to Muong Niek (Paksane) instead and then moved on to stay in Xieng-Wang and died there in 1604 A.D. But in another document, it has been reported that Phra Vorapita went to Serk-Vieng-Khuk in 1602 A.D. and entered the priesthood there.

(66)

Ban Thakhek is located north of Ban Saifong in Laos today.

(67)

He was called in the That-Phon document Phragna Sen-Luang-Nakorn, and in the That-Phanom document as Phra Chao Nakorn Luang Phichit-Thotsthit-Rajdhani-Sikhotabun-Luang. His real former name was Chao Ong-Lo; his parents are not known.

Chapter VI

The division of the Lao kingdom into three kingdoms

In the year 1698 A.D., eight years after the death of King Suryavongsa, the great kingdom of Laos was divided into three smaller kihgdoms: the Lan-Xang kingdom of Luang-Phra-bang, the Lan-Xang kingdom of Vientiane and the kingdom of Champassak. This was done for the following reasons:

1. The Lan-Xang kingdom of Vientiane

(1) The reign of Phra Chao Ong-Lo

Though the late King Suryavongsa did not leave any heir to the throne, it is a known fact, however, that he had two nephewsnamed Chao King-Kidskumman and Chao Inthasom. But they were both very young thus not ready to perform the duties of a king. Phragna Nuong Chan, then the highest ranking mandarin of the palace after the king's death, took over and proclaimed himself king in the same year (1690 A.D.). He wanted to marry Princess Sumangkhala, King Suryavongsa's daughter, who was then a widow with a son named Chao Ong-Lo, and was also pregnant (1). The princess refused to become his wife for this reason. Infuriated, Phragna Nuong Chan planned to kill her and her son in order to save face. One of the mandarins of the palace who remained loyal to Chao Ong-Lo overheard the plot and secretly helped him escape to Muong Phan-Phuson (2), while on the sixth day of the waning moon of the third month of the same year (1690 A.D.) his mother, Princess Nang Sumangkhala, escaped to seek refuge with the relatives of Phra Khu Nhot-Keo at Wat Phon-Saneck.

When Phragna Nuong Chan realized that the people had more respect for Phra-Khu Nhot-Keo than they had for him, he planned another attempt to assassinate him. Again, Phra Khu Nhot-Keo was informed by the people who loved him about the plot and he fled the city with 3000 of his followers, including Princess Nang Sumangkhala herself. He sailed from Vientiane along the Mekong river and when his party arrived at Ban Ngiu-Phan-Lan-Somsanuk they stopped there for rest. Princess Sumangkhala was sheltered in Phu-Sango-Hokhan and gave birth to another son named Chao No-Kasat.

As to Phragna Nuong Chan himself, his kingdom was attacked by the forces loyal to Chao Ong-Lo after he had reigned

illegally for only six months. He was captured, executed and Chao Ong-Lo was officially enthroned thereafter; but he was himself in turn a victim of assassination after four years in power. He was killed by Chao Nantharath.

(2) The reign of Chao Nantharath

Chao Nantharath was the son of Chao Pu and came to power in 1695 A.D. after a successful coup against Chao Ong-Lo. He was assassinated in 1698 A.D. by Chao Sai-Ongve.

(3) The reign of Phra Sai-Ongve or

Phra Saya-Setthathirath the second

When Chao Sai-Ongve (the son of Thao Somphu), who grew up in Annam, learned about the internal disturbances in his kingdom, he found that the time had come for him to invade the kingdom of Vientiane. In the battle for Vientiane, he succeeded in capturing Chao Nantharath, executed him and took over the throne in 1698 A.D. under the king-name of Phra Saya -Setthathirath II. Subsequently, he appointed Thao Long, his brother, to the rank of Viceroy to rule over the kingdom of Luang-Phrabang.

In the year 1705 A.D., King Phra Saya-Setthathirath II ordered the transfer of the statue of Phrabang to Vientiane. The statue of Phrabang was removed from Wat Visul in Luang-Phrabang on Thursday, the full-moon day of the third month and brought down to Vientiane by boat. It arrived there on Tuesday, the fourth day of the waning moon of the fourth month and was installed at Wat Pasak-Luang.

During the reign of Phra Saya-Setthathirath II, Chao King-Kitsarad, Chao Inthason and Chao Ong-Kham, the nephews of King Suryavongsa-Thammikarad, feared that he would do them harm and fled with their followers to Muong Phong. Chao Inthamat to Muong Phae.

In the year 1706 A.D., Chao King-Kitsarad and Chao Ong-Kham launched an attack against the kingdom of Luang-Phrabang. Thao Long, then its ruler, was unable to defend the city and fled to Vientiane. Upon their victory in Luang-Phrabang, Chao King-Kitsarad and Ong-Khan went further to attack Vientiane. Sensing defeat, Phra Saya-Setthathirath II sent for help from Phra Phetharaja, the ruler of Si-Ayudhaya.

In the year 1707 A.D., Phra Phetharaja of Si-Ayudhaya

headed a big army to Vientiane as a show of strength and succeeded in reconciling the rulers of the two brother kingdoms. The reconciliation, when consented to by both sides, brought about the partition of the Lao kingdom into two distinct parts for the first time - the Lan-Xang kingdom of Luang-Phrabang, north of the Nam Thuong river, and the Lan-Xang kingdom of Vientiane, south of it. Later, in 1713 A.D., Nakorn Champassak formed a third kingdom as will be told later in the section dealing with the kingdom Champassak.

King Phra Saya-Setthathirath II continued to role over the kingdom of Vientiane until 1709 A.D. At this point, Phra Borom-Raja, the ruler of Muong Nakorn split with Vientiane and later attacked it. But as his army progressed and overran Muong Vieng-Khuk and Muong Sai-Fong, the Vientiane army of Phra Saya-Setthathirath II counter-attacked vigorously and drove off the invaders. Phra Borom-Raja of Muong Nakorn died in 1715 A.D. King Saya-Setthathirath extended his rule over Muong Nakorn Phanom and appointed Thao Khamsing, Phra Borom-Raja's son-in-law to succeed him. Thao Kukeo, Phra Borom-Raja's own son fled to the kingdom of Champassak. Phra Saya-Setthathirath II continued to reign over Vientiane until 1730 A.D. and died in the same year.

(4) The reign of Phra Chao Siribunyasan

On the full-moon day of the sixth month of the year of the Dog, 1730 A.D., the royal Domestic Council unanimously crowned Chao Ong-Bun, son of the late King Phra Saya-Setthathirath II, to rule over Vientiane and gave him the king-name of "Phra Maha Bunya-Saya-Setthathirath" but he was commonly called Phra Chao Siribunyasan. At the same time, Chao Khuang-Na, his brother, was officially elevated to the rank of Viceroy.

The rebellion of Thao Kukeo

Thao Kukeo, the son of Phra Borom-Raja, who had fled Muong Nakorn to Champassak, could no longer accept the idea that his brother-in-law was made ruler of Muong Nakorn instead of himself. He left Champassak, went up along the Se-bang-Fai river and incited the people of Muong Se-Katark, Se-Kabong, Muong Vang, Xieng-Hom, Pha-Bang, Khankeut, and Khammuane to join his ranks and staged a rebellion to regain the power due him.

At first, Thao Khamsing tried to settle the dispute an-

icably with Thao Kukeo, but was unsuccessful. Then, Thao Khamsing ordered Thao Kahasai as his envoy to ask for help for help from Chao Pha-Phusun (Viethan), offering him in return precious recompense consisting of two elephants, two rhinoceros horns and 40 Men of silver. The Vietnamese ruler of Muong Phusun dispatched 6,000 men to help Thao Khamsing put down the rebellion. When the Vietnamese unit arrived at Khamkeut, Thao Kukeo ordered one of his officials to go with 100 men, one elephant and other things to meet and welcome them as though the order to do so had been given to them by Thao Kahasai. Thereafter, the 6000 Vietnamese troops were led to the control of the rebel Thao Kukeo. Then, at the head of 6,000 Vietnamese and 3,000 Lao troops, Thao Kukeo set out to attack Muong Nakorn (Old Thakhek). Thao Khamsing, the ruler of Nakorn was unable to defend his city and fled with his troops to the Seka woods, west of the city. Thereafter, in 1764 A.D., he dispatched a messenger to ask for help from King Siri-Bunyasan in order to reconquer Muong Nakorn. Upon the fall of Muong Nakorn, the Vietnamese troops under Thao Kukeo's command crossed the river to attack the Lao residing on the other side of it. In face of this threat, Phragna Xieng Xa rushed his troops to a point south of Hat-Kong and when the Vietnamese troops were crossing the river they fell into a trap and suffered heavy losses. On account of this historic event, Hat-Kong is today called Hat-Keo-Kong (Keo meaing Vietnamese). The Vietnamese soldiers who survived fled for their lives. Thao Kukeo was himself captured by Phragna Xieng-Xa but was appointed by the latter to rule over Muong Nakorn while Phragna Xieng-Xa, Thao Khamsing and about 3,500 followers headed for Vientiane.

The rebellion of Phra Vorarad

In 1766 A.D., Phra Vorarad-Vongsa, a high official in Vientiane, split with King Siri-Bunyasan for some unknown reasons and left Vientiane with his followers for Nong Bualumphy (the district of Nong Bualamphu, province of Udorn in Thailand today). He built the city into a capital called Muong Khuan-Khankab-Keo-Nong Bua Ban and proclaimed himself independent ruler of the newly built city. King Siri-Bunyasan tried in vain for two years to bring Phra Vorarad to terms with him. Unable to carry on his duties with a "state within a state", King Siri-Bunyasan sent for help from the ruler of Nakorn Rajasima. This time Phra Vorarad was unable to defend his city and fled with his family to Don-Mote-Daeng (Province of Ubol in Thailand today), and voluntarily accepted the suzerainty of Phra Chao Sayakumman, the ruler of

Nakorn Champassak. So with the help of the ruler of Nakorn Rajasima, King Siri-Bunyasan succeeded in putting down the rebellion of Phra Veararad in 1763 A.D., and subsequently recorded this rebellion as"Serk-Kha-Kabote".

In 1770 A.D. (3), when King Siri-Bunyasan realized that Phra Chao Tark-Sin of Siam had emerged as a powerful ruler due to his consecutive victories over the Burmese, he thought it well-advised for him to sign a treaty of friendship with him. With this in mind, he appointed Phragna Sai-Songnhote-Thotesburi and Phragna Si-Ratanathideth as his ambassadors to negotiate with Phra Chao Tark-Sin on Monday the full-moon day of the second month of the year 1770 A.D., with the following message for his consideration:

First communique

To His Majesty the king of Sisatanakhanahud:

It is with much regret for me to tell you that at certain times in history the relationship between our two kingdoms has been stained by undue misunderstanding due to personal feelings and misbehaviour, as in the case of the rebellion of Khanthasima against Sisatanakhanahud. But there were also times when we have lived up to our alliance, such as the time when the ruler of Nakorn Rajasima helped your kingdom put down another rebellion that had plagued your kingdom. From that point to the present our friendship was enhanced. Considering this historic and happy alliance, I feel much obliged to renew with Your Majesty the feeling of friendship and brotherhood which had so happily bound us together. It is with this spirit in mind that I have sent today my ambassadors, Phragna Saisongnhote-Thotesburi and Phragna Sisatana-Thidetnaitri, to renew in my behalf our traditional alliance and to further our mutual cooperation, and to contribute in so doing to the happiness of our people. With best regards and best wishes.

Reply of His Majesty the king of Sisatanakhanahud to His Majesty the king of Siam at Krung Thep Phra Nahk Nakorn (Bangkok)

First communique

To His Majesty the king of the Great Kingdom of Siam:

I am much honored and much gratified by Your Majesty's message. I take this opportunity to inform Your Majesty that we in the kingdom of Sisatanakhanahud are now living in peace and happiness. Thanks for the offer of help from our brothers in Siam and to the well wishes Your Majesty cared to make in our favor. I am fully aware that our two kingdoms have been tied as one by the symbolic ceremony of friendship performed in the past. It was in accordance with this traditional friendship that my kingdom, in the face of rebellion, had solicited help from our brothers in Siam to bring about the peace and happiness we are enjoying today. It is with a deep feeling of gratitude and unconditional friendship that I have ordered my ambassadors, Phragna Sucharit-Mongkhol and Thao Kee-Phela, to act in my behalf in accepting your gracious proposal. Should we, in the future, face any threat to our throne, we feel assured that Your Majesty would kindly consider it as your own concern, and should any threat occur in in Krung Thep Phra Maha Nakorn, we shall be obliged to do our utmost to be of service to Your Majesty. In addition, regarding those of the brilliant officers and officials who are helping us in our administration, we should like to beg your indulgence to let them continue their service with us, and they shall be returned immediately after we have found that their precious help is no longer necessary. In return, please accept, Your Majesty, our best wishes for the prosperity of your kingdom and the happiness of all the people under your protection.

Upon receipt of the message from the kingdom of Sisatanakhanahud, His Majesty King Tark-Sin of Siam replied in the following words on Tuesday, the third day of the new moon of the sixth month of the year 1871 A.D.:

First communique

To His Majesty of Sisatanakhanahud:

I cannot tell you how happy I was in receiving your ambassadors and your message, and how much I appreciated all the presents you sent along as a token of our friendship. My happiness is justified by the fact that Your Majesty, a son of a great dynasty and the ruler of a great kingdom such as yours, has responded so enthusiastically to our proposal. The union of our two great kingdoms now stands as a strong deterrent to any aggression or threat of aggression, and our authority shall reflect far beyond our respective territories. Please feel assured, Your Majesty, that your enemies shall be considered as our own. As to your request to keep the offic-

ials provided Your Majesty by the ruler of Nakorn Rajasima, you are free to make your own decision as to when you deem would be the right time to dispose of them, and should there be any further works to accomplish that would require additional help, please feel assured that you can count on us for help. It is my duty to tell Your Majesty that we have had a message from Li-Pu-Ta-Thang in the name of King Tah-Sing of China asking us to cooperate with him in mapping the area leading to Krung Ang-Wah and giving the following reason: The Burmese army has invaded Muong Sri-Tchwan, Muong Huei-Lan on the Chinese frontiers. The Chinese army has dispersed them and moved close to the territory of Krung Ang-Wah. The Chinese have requested free passage through Si-Ayudhaya with the purpose to get some food supplies. On the other hand, the fleeing Burmese army has spread troubles in our own territory at Muong Thlang, Muong Kanburi, Muong Siswat, Muong Uthaithani, Muong Swankhaloke, Muong Phisai under the jurisdiction of Si-Ayudhaya. Our forces in Ayudhaya succeeded in driving off the invaders but they do not know whether or not the Burmese army will return again. In order to meet with any surprise attacks, we have decided to send our forces to Xieng-Mai. We have enough food supplies and we plan to send the words to Li-Pu-Ta-Thang to the attention of King Tah-Sing of China, to make known our agreement with his request to pass through Si-Ayudhaya, which is itself prepared to raise an army to march at Krung Ang-Wah. But we do not have sufficient number of horses. These are the very true facts. I submit it to the consideration of Your Majesty as our friend and ally and beg your indulgence to give it your attention and act as Your Majesty deems it necessary. With my best regards.

The Burmese incited King Siri-Bunyasan

Upon receipt of the message of the king of Siam, King Siri-Bunyasan of Sisatanakhanahiddidnot give full consideration to the former's request. Two years elapsed and in 1773 A.D. (1770 A.D. in the historical document of Vientiane) King Surya-Vongsa, the ruler of Luang-Phrabang, launched an attack against Vientiane. King Surya-Vongsa's troops surrounded the city for two months and maintained a strong pressure on it. King Siri-Bunyasan of Vientiane was unable to drive off the assailants and sensing the imminent fall of his city, he secretly dispatched his envoys to solicit Burmese help at Nakorn Xieng-Mai. Poh-Suphala, the Burmese commanding general at Xieng-Mai led his army to the attack of Luang-Phrabang. At the news of the Burmese attack, King Surya-Vongsa pulled his army back to Luang-Phrabang and offered to negotiate with

the Burmese. At this particular period, the ultimate purpose of the Burmese was to attack Siam, and with this aim in mind, the Burmese accepted the terms of negotiation of King Surya-Vongsa of Luang-Phrabang. They refrained from attacking the city so that they could use the Luang-Phrabang army to fight the Siamese. King Siri-Bunyasan himself, realising the power of the Burmese and their capability to successfully attack the Siamese, offered his allegiance to the Burmese. The Burmese were reluctant to believe King Siri-Bunyasan, who had signed a friendship treaty with the king of Siam. And before accepting King Siri-Bunyasan terms, Poh-Suphala decided to take the king's son and daughter and a number of his mandarins to Burma as a guarantee.

Later, in the year 1774 A.D., Poh-Suphala, the Burmese commanding general at Mieng-Mai issued a secret order to Phagna-Ngwan who, accompanied by 300 soldiers, delivered it to the attention of King Siri-Bunyasan. The secret order urged King Siri-Bunyasan to send his army to Thonburi in Siam via Nakorn Rajasima; simultaneously, the Burmese army struck at Muong Tark and Barahaeng. Upon receipt of this secret order from the Burmese general, King Siri-Bunyasan did not comply in the true meaning of the order. His intentions were rather to try to lure the Burmese army out of his kingdom. But the secret order of the Burmese to the king of Vientiane had not been kept secret. In fact, word of this joint attack was spread around and heard by King Tark-Sin of Siam through King Surya-Vongsa of Luang-Phrabang. The Siamese also succeeded in capturing the Burmese soldiers who brought the order over to Vientiane. This prompted King Tark-Sin to send a message of protest to King Siri-Bunyasan, delivered to him by Phragna Luang-Muong-Sen in 1774 A.D.

Text of the protest message from the king of Siam

Second communique

To His Majesty the king of Sisatanakhanahud:

We have been informed that the Burmese army has caused much trouble in our cities of Muong Tark, Ban-Rahaeng, province of Muong Kamphengphet in the north, on the one hand, and of Lanteh-Thadinhdaeng, province of Muong Kanburi and Muong Siswat in the west on the other. We have also learned that the Lao and the Mon people of the areas have offered stiff resistance and have inflicted heavy casualties and losses on the Burmese. But there were still a great number of cowardly people, namely Phragna Chaban, Phragna Lamphoon and

the Lao people of Xieng-Mai who voluntarily surrendered to the Burmese invaders without opposition. In view of the situation prevailing in these areas, we are determined to march on them and they shall pay with their lives for their treason. Your Majesty in Sisatanakhanahud shall soon hear about our power and ability to subdue the enemy so that our skill and excellence in warfare shall leave no doubt to those who refused us their cooperation. It is now in our intentions to take Krung Ang-Wah from the Burmese and because our ally in Sisatanakhalahud has not lived up to his pledges, and has furthermore given military assistance to Poh-Suphala and Poh-Mangu-Ngwan of Xieng-Mai, we feel compelled, under the circumstances, to attack Sisatanakhanahud. The only way Your Majesty can save Sisatanakhanahud is to comply with our present order which is to stock for our army all the food supplies that may be required and raise a Lao army to serve with us. Only in this way Sisatanakhanahud can expect to continue to live in peace and prosperity. Your Majesty's cooperation with the Burmese shall not pay.

The message from the king of Siam was brought to Sisatanakhanahud by Phragna Luang Muong-Sen, Phragna Han-Asa, Phragna Chanthong, Phragna Khote, Phragna Butakhote, Waeng-Baoburapha and a suite of 64 officials. They reached Sisatanakhanahud in 1804 A.D.

Upon receipt of this message of protest and threat from the king of Siam, King Siri-Bunyasan of Sisatanakhanahud replied in the following manner:

Second communique

To His Majesty the king of Siam:

We wish to acknowledge receipt of Your Majesty's message and at the same time wish to bring to the attention of Your Majesty that we in Sisatanakhanahud were honoring the ties of friendship we have had with Your Majesty. At no time were we trying to infringe on the treaty of friendship which we treasured above all until the year 1773 A.D., when Poh-Suphala under threat of force deliberately obliged our kingdom to comply with his demands, thus creating undue misery upon our people. We have also been obliged by means of force to agree to our own children and officials being sent to Burma. Had we not agreed to his terms, Poh-Suphala would never have left our palace. Furthermore, orders have been issued from Xieng-Mai to the effect that Poh-Suphala planned to attact Krung-Thep and that we sent, against our will, our forces in the direction of Nakorn Rajasima. I beg Your Majesty to know how

unhappy we felt to have acted against our own will and in violation of our treaty of friendship. The fact that we were unable, at the time, to resist the Burmese order was thus to be considered as a regrettable misfortune, which we were not in a position to avoid. However, we did not fail to advise the ruler of Nakorn Rajasima on our decision, to as to enable him to take necessary measures. It was in the spirit of our action that the ruler of Nakorn Rajasima sent Phragna Luang Muong-Sen to assure us of his goodwill which continues to prevail. I beg to assure Your Majesty that at no time have we in Sisatanakhanahud voluntarily overlooked our obligations and commitments. When our children and officials who had been deliberately taken away to Burma have returned safely to our land, we shall do our utmost to show Your Majesty our allegiance to the kingdom of Siam. At the same time, manpower, as well as all the materials required in your proposed undertaking, shall be assembled for your disposal. Furthermore, should our children and officials succeed in breaking away from Burma and should they happen to head, in their escape, in the direction of Krung-Thep, we shall be most grateful to Your Majesty to give them aid and assistance for the sake of our friendship and mutual cooperation.

Written in our palace this Wednesday the sixth day of the waning moon of the fourth month of the year 1774 A.D.

Aide-Memoire accompanying the message of King Siri-Bunyasan to the king of Siam

Second communique

In accordance with the treaty of friendship entered upon in the year 1770 A.D. His Majesty the king of Sisatanakhanahud has maintained good faith in the spirit of the treaty. To prove this, His Majesty the king of Sisatanakhanahud has graciously appointed Phragna Saisongnhote-Thotesburi and Phragna Srisatanathideth as bearers of the king's message and gifts to His Majesty the king of Siam in Krung-Thep. Amicable relations have always continued to prevail between the two countries.

Furthermore, the ruler of Nakorn Rajasima has, on his part, honored this same treaty in the same spirit. In 1772 A.D., Poh-Suphala, the commanding general of the Burmese army in Xieng-Mai deliberately invaded Sisatanakhanahud by sending

a large army into it with the view to partition the kingdom and to split public opinion. The Man, acting on the order of the Burmese, simultaneously harrassed the population of the rural areas of the kingdom, thus causing misery and threatening the very existence of the kingdom as a whole. In the face of this undue threat to the existence of his kingdom, His Majesty King Siri-Bunyasan has acted promptly to save his kingdom by sending his own son to negotiate peace terms with the Burmese at Krung Ang-Wah. This has contributed to a certain extent to the easing of the situation. Later, in 1774 A.D., Poh-Suphala sent along 300 Man people with a message from Krung Ang-Wah to the ruler of Muong Chanthaburi, urging the latter to send his troops to the attack of Nakorn Rajasima while the bulk of the Burmese army would strike at Muong Tark Ban-Rahaeng and move afterwards and together toward Si-Ayudhaya. At this point, the king of Sisatanakhanahud immediately thought of the traditional ties of fricndship with the kingdom of Siam before taking any step to this effect. But he was under heavy pressure and against unfavorable odds. The truth of this fact was confirmed by Phragna Luang Muong-Sen, who later brought it to the attention of His Majesty the king of Siam. This was the reason why the ruler of Nakorn Rajasima, acting on the order of the king of Siam, has graciously sent Phragna Luang Muong-Sen back to Sisatanakhanahud to renew the traditional friendship between the two kingdoms. Phragna Luang Muong-Sen was heartily welcomed. Gratified by the words of goodwill from the king of Siam, King Siri-Bunyasan of Sisatanakhanahud promptly appointed Phragna Sisutha-Raja Chaban-Panya-Mongkhol and Phragna Maha-Ammat-Sunthorn-Maitri as the bearers of the king's congratulatory message and gifts to the king of Siam in Krung-Thep. Pragna Supat-Mongkhol, Phragna Suphanthamit-Maitri and Thao Tang have been subsequently appointed to pay respects to the various religious chiefs to prove their devotion to the Buddhist religion. As for the Siamese people who have come to live in Sisatanakhanahud, they have been given free choice to remain or to return to Siam as they please. Later, the ruler of Nakorn Rajasima expressed his desire to ask for the return of Siamese officials and people who had served in the Lao kingdom's administration. The request was graciously heeded. There remain only a small number of poor people who wished to remain in Sisatanakhanahud to carry on their ordinary life. At the present time, the king of Sisatanakhanahud is waiting for the release or expecting the escape of his own children and officials who were kept in custody in Krung Ang-Wah. When their return comes about, the king of Sisatanakhanahud shall do his utmost to enhance the existing friend-

ship and to live up to his pledges and obligations as agreed upon in the past and shall send the king of Siam the traditional state gifts to confirm his faith and to make the union of the two countries felt far beyond their respective borders. Furthermore, should, at any time in the future, the king's children now in captivity at Krung Ang-Kah happen to show up in Krung-Thep we beg the authorities of the city to give them aid and assistance and facilitate their return home to Sisatanakhanahud. Finally, as for the Lao people who, in fear, have fled the country to live in Siam, we beg your indulgence to arrange for their return in accordance with the spirit of our traditional friendship. May the friendship which existed between our two great kingdoms last forever.

Written in our palace on this Wednesday, the third day of the waning Moon of the fourth month of the year 1774 A.D.

At this time, Pragna Lunag Muong-Sen, who had fled the Burmese and whom the king of Siam had graciously escorted up to Vientiane, sent a personal message to the Royal Household of the Siamese palace. The Chief Monk of Vientiane at Wat-Kang had also communicated with his Siamese counterpart in Krung-Thep to express their thanks and mutual cooperation, as shown in the following messages:

Text of the personal message of Phragna Luang Muong-Sen

To the Chief of the Royal Household of the palace of Krung-Thep:

Thanks to your precious help and to the protection of Buddha, I have returned safely to again serve my king and my kingdom. His Majesty the king was highly gratified when he learned, through my own report, of the kind of help you have altogether contributed to my safe return. As a man who has lived through the crucial period of the Burmese-Lao intrigue, may I be permitted to bring to your knowledge that the allegations made upon our kingdom concerning our voluntary allegiance with the Burmese were unfounded and untrue. The actual number of officials and people from Siam who had voluntarily or otherwise come to live in Sisatanakhanahud has not been omitted or incorrectly reported. I beg your indulgence to report to His Majesty your king on the very true fact of all that had been said in previous messages. This message was written on palm leaves in Lao language and secured in a red pouch sealed with an official seal representing a five petal lotus flower.

Text of the Message of the Chief Monk of Vientiane

to the Chief Monk of Krung-Thep

On behalf of all the Buddhist clergy in Sisatanakhanahud, I avail myself of this opportunity to pay my homage to the great work you have done, not only in carrying out so successfully the high ideals and principles of our religion in our two kingdoms, but also in promoting through the very same principles and ideals, understanding and the spirit of tolerance in the various walks of life of our respective people. Please feel assured of our full cooperation and may all the good wishes as to the eternal prosperity and grandeur of our common religious concepts be ours.

May our great Lord Buddha bless us all.

In delivering these messages to Krung-Thep, His Majesty King Siri-Bunyasan appointed Phragna Sisutha-Raja Chaban Panya -Mongkhol and Phragna Maha Ammat Sunthorn-Maitri as his ambassadors, accompanied by Phragna Suvanna-Pathamongkhol and Phragna Suphanthamit-Maitri. The mission left Vientiane on Wednesday the sixth day of the waning moon of the fourth month of the year 1775 A.D. The mission reached Krung-Thep and presented the messages to the king of Siam on the 15th day of the waning moon of the sixth month of the year 1776 A.D.

Upon receipt of these messages, King Tark-Sin of Siam replied on Tuesday the first day of the new moon of the eigth month of the same year in the following words:

Second communique

To His Majesty the king of Sisatanakhanahud:

The messages brought to us from Sisatanakhanahud by Phragna Sunthorn-Raja Chaban-Panya-Mongkhol and Phragna Maha Ammat-Sunthorn-Maitri as well as the state gifts brought therewith have been duly received. The information contained in these messages concurred with the testimony made by a Burmese officer that we have captured. We are much disturbed to learn that Your Majesty and your people have been forced in the most brutal manner to give up your beloved children and to supply the Burmese with silver flowers. Thanks to your patience and endurance, you have overcome your difficulties and subsequently lured away the enemy. In view of the circumstances, we feel it our duty to avenge the brutality

made upon your kingdom. Therefore, we volunteer for such undertaking but we beg you to supply us with money, elephants, horses and manpower that might be required. We promise Your Majesty to retake Krung Ang-Wah and to return your beloved children. Should this proposal meet Your Majesty's approval, we urge you to ready your forces and we shall march together with determination on Krung Ang-Wah without notice. Our offer is made to Your Majesty in the spirit of our traditional friendship and without any other pruposes of our own. At this time when our honor and our very own existence are at stake, we cannot afford to remain passive and let the Burmese take the initiative. We leave the matter to the full discretion of Your Majesty and we trust that Your Majesty will take proper measures as deemed necessary to destroy our common enemy before we are destroyed ourselves.

Aide-Memoire of the Royal Household of Siam

accompanying the message of the king

Third communique

The Royal Household of the kingdom of Siam felt highly gratified by the sending from the kingdom Sisatanakhanahud of Phragna Srisutha-Raja Chaban Panya-Mongkhol, Phragna Maha Ammat Sunthorn-Maitri, Phragna Suvanna-Pathamongkhol and Phragna Suphanthamit-Maitri Thao Tang as the bearers of the king's message of renewal of His Majesty's heartfelt friendship for the kingdom of Siam. We feel it our duty to inform the Royal Household of Sisatanakhanahud that His Majesty's envoys have been received in our palace with highest honor and with much appreciation.

Upon acknowledging the ruling as contained in the message with regard to the alleged violation by His Majesty the king of Sisatanakhanahud and upon hearing our Burmese prisoner to this effect, we felt very deeply moved by the difficulties that have beset your kingdom at this time, as proved by our sending Luang Phakdi-Vacha with our traditional gifts to His Majesty the king of Sisatanakhanahud as the symbol of our understanding and appreciation. May we be also permitted to express our congratulation and admiration for the very high ideals and great courage shown by His Majesty your king in coping with the difficult situation which has resulted in the maintenance of your kingdom's integrity. However, the fact that your children are still being held in captivity in Krung Ang-Wah remains a case of great concern to us. We still feel it a duty of our kingdom to liberate them and return them

safely to where they belong. This was the reason behind our request for troops, elephants and horses from His Majesty the king of Sisatanakhanahud as additional means to wage a war against Krung Ang-Wah. We cannot afford to remain passive in the face of the Burmese deliberate and indecent act.

In this undertaking, we feel assured we shall be supported by the divine indulgence of our Lord, and Krung Ang-Wah shall fall unmistakably into our hands and our two kingdoms shall once again enjoy the peace and prosperity we have had in the past. We trust that the Royal Household of the kingdom of Sisatanakhanahud will agree with us as proposed.

Respectfully yours.

A great quantity of state gifts together with this message was sent to the kingdom of Sisatanakhanahud. They are listed as follows:

Two rifles, 12 rolls of fabrics with artistic designs in silver background, seven rolls of fabrics of golden lamb on white background, two pieces of tapistry, one piece of genuine tapistry embroided with the picture of a bird, two pieces of genuine white fabrics, one roll of religious fabrics.

Following are the gifts to the household of the palace:

One roll of genuine silk fabrics on violet and gold background, one roll of fabrics on blue background with golden stripes, one roll of fabrics on violet background and golden stripes and one roll of embroided fabrics on violet background. Phragna Luang Muong-Sen himself received one roll of genuine golden stripes fabrics. These gifts were offered as a symbol of renewed and everlasting friendship between the two kingdoms so that it may shine with all the splendor of the finest precious stone.

The message and the above gifts were presented to His Majesty the king of Sisatanakhanahud on Tuesday the first day of the new moon of the seventh month of the year 1775 A.D. The message was said to be worded by Nai Dej Alaksana in Siamese and contained in 117 lines covering a total of eight pages.

Text of the messare of the Chief Monk of Krung-Thep to his counterpart in Sisatanakhanahud

To His Eminence, the Chief Monk of Sisatanakhanahud:

We, the Chief Monk and the Buddhist clergy of Krung-Thep felt highly gratified by the message we have received from our colleagues from Sisatanakhanahud which told us about the very successful manner in which Your Eminence, with the help of your most able clergymen, has carried out your holy duty in maintaining a high standard of practice and worship of the teaching of our Lord in your very own kingdom. It is with great pleasure that we wish to inform you that your gratifying message has been brought to the attention of His Majesty our king who, upon reading, felt so deeply pleased. Your message has, in fact, lifted all our Majesty's worries and fears that existed before the receipt of the message, when His Majesty in Krung-Thep learned with great sorrow that the invading Burmese had caused much misery and troubles of all kinds in Sisatanakhanahud. We felt then as though the misfortune you had encountered befell upon ourselves. Now that the good news has been received from you, we feel much relieved and we have further brought the happy news to the knowledge of all our people, and once again we have activated our practice and renewed our faith in our great religion. We called upon our followers to memorize the four great virtues, namely to be ashamed of sin, to be afraid of sin, to despise sin and to refrain from sin as being the most effective weapons against evil and for true happiness in life. Our people are being further reminded of the four matters, namely the earth, the water, the fire and the wind. Those who know how to use them in the proper manner, shall find them most useful and those who do not know how to use them so shall find them to be of the utmost harm to them. In view of this renewed faith in Buddhism in Sisatanakhanahud, as well as in Siam, and in view of our common strong desire to promote friendship through religion, our two kingdoms shall experience even better political unity. Whereas our rulers are committed in their respective actions to the high spirit of our religion, they shall inevitably be endowed with power and intelligence. Animated by the same spirit, our armed forces shall fulfil their respective duties in defending their countries against the aggressors and we shall all live happily through the 5000 years of Buddhism.

Upon the receipt of the second message from King Tark-Sin of Siam, King Siri-Bunyasan appointed Phragna Srisutha-Raja

Chaban Panya-Mongkhol, Phragna Maha Ammat Sunthorn-Matri and Thao Tang as his ambassadors and bearers of his third message of reply which contained the three following subjects:

1. King Siri-Bunyasan shall offer to King Tark-Sin his own daughter named Princess Nang Keo-Nhot-Fah-Kanlayani-Srikasatr (commonly known as Nang Khier-Khom), but she must be sent for and escorted to Krung-Thep.
2. The kingdom of Sisatanakhanahud is ready to offer to Siam 500 oxcart loads of rice but shall be transported to Siam by the Siamese themselves.
3. The kingdom of Sisatanakhanahud does not have rifles in sufficient number as needed for the defense of the kingdom and requests that 2000 rifles be sent there from Krung-Thep. (The copy of the text of this third message cannot be found).

The three Lao ambassadors arrived at Krung-Thep on the ninth day of the waning moon of the tenth month of the year 1776 A.D. King Tark-Sin of Siam sent back his reply to the third message of King Siri-Bunyasan which reads as follows:

Fourth communique

To the Royal Household of His Majesty the king of Sisatanakhanahud:

It is our duty and pleasure to inform you that the Lao ambassadorial mission led by Phragna Srisutha-Raja Chaban Panya-Mongkhol, Phragna Maha Ammat Sunthorn-Maitri and Thao Tang has been received in our palace on the ninth day of the waning moon of the tenth month of the year 1776 A.D. The message which they have brought to our attention has been read to His Majesty our king who was very pleased by His Majesty your king's proposals which confirmed the spirit of cooperation as provided for in our treaty of friendship. It has been decided here at Krung-Thep that we shall prepare ourselves to escort Her Highness Princess Keo-Nhot-Fah Kanlayani to Siam in the ensuing second month and to arrange for the transportation of 500 oxcart loads of rice your kingdom has kindly granted us. His Majesty our king appreciated your king's request for rifles, for it showed once again that His Majesty your king is determined to liberate his children and ready to wage a war against Krung Ang-Wah to this end.

His Majesty our king is not only prepared to accede to your king's request for arms but shall do much more by sending capable instructors to train your king's soldiers in the use of these arms, so as to enable them to protect the territor-

ial integrity of Sisatanakhanahud. As for the members of the royal family who do not possess aptitude in warfare, they shall be reserved for high administration posts as was the case before. Furthermore, upon the fall of Krung Ang-Wah, the soldiers and civilians of the areas other than those of Krung Ang-Wah itself shall be returned to their respective homelands. Prior to the attack on Krung Ang-Wah, the soldiers, officers and leaders of our two kingdoms shall take the oath of friendship and allegiance. Whenever we are ready to march on Krung Ang-Wah, the ruling circles of Krung Ang-Wah shall be notified of such undertaking so that the latter may have the choice to come our and fight. Should they not decide to do so, we shall strike the city itself, and we shall see to it that your king's beloved children which were being held in captivity there be liberated without harm and be returned safely to where they belong.

This message reached Sisatanakhanahud on Wednesday the tenth day of the waning moon of the tenth month of the year 1776 A.D.

The war between the Lao and the Siamese

The exchange of letters of friendship between the Lao and the Siamese kingdoms under the reign of King Siri-Bunyasan first began in the year 1769 A.D. and went on through the year 1774 A.D., covering a period of five years. Thereafter, no other exchange of letters took place. The reasons behind the interruption of the exchange of letters and the consequent breaking off of friendly relations between the two kingdoms were that King Siri-Bunyasan of the Lao kingdom of Sisatanakhanahud did not fully and heartily cooperate with the king of Siam in their common struggle against the Burmese threat of domination, and that the ruler of the kingdom of Luang-Phrabang had told the Siamese that King Siri-Bunyasan had sided with the Burmese. These were the reasons that accounted for the distrust the ruling circles of Siam had in their relations with the Lao of Vientiane. The Lao themselves had never really trusted the Siamese more than the latter did them. Thus, these were the reasons that prompted the Siamese to attack the Lao kingdom on a later date.

When Phra Vorarad was defeated and forced by the Vientiane army to leave Muong Nong Bua Lumphu to establish his headquarters at Ban Don-Mot-Daeng, province of Muong Ubol, he voluntarily went to Chao Saya-Kuman, who then ruled over Nakorn Champassak. In 1770 A.D., King Siri-Bunyasan ordered

Phragna Akkharad to the prrsuit of Phra Vorarad. At this point, Chao Saya-Kuman of Nakorn Champassak sent his own army under the command of Phragna Phon-Xieng-Sa to oppose the forces of Phragna Akkharad. At the same time, he sent a message to King Siri-Bunyasan to apologize on behalf of Phra Vorarad. Upon receipt of this message, King Siri-Bunyasan ordered Phragna Akkharad to pull his forces back to Vientiane. Later, in 1777 A.D., Phra Vorarad split with Chao Saya-Kuman and headed back to His former headquarters at Ban Don-Mot-Daeng and thereafter sent his son, named Thao Kam, with gifts to pledge his allegiance to the kingdom of Siam.

In this undertaking, Thao Kam had been instructed by his father to advise the king of Siam of the fact that King Siri-Bunyasan had cooperated with the Burmese. In this very same year (1777 A.D.) when King Siri-Bunyasan had learned about the split between Phra Vorarad and Chao Saya-Kuman, and the former's return to Ban Don-Mot-Daeng, he immediately ordered Phragna Supho to attack him. Phra Vorarad was unable to resist and fled to Vieng-Don-Kong. He sent for help from Chao Saya-Kuman but was refused. Phragna Supho went after Phra Vorarad to Vieng-Don-Kong, succeeded in capturing him and executed him there. Thao Kam, Phra Vorarad's son, managed to escape and sent a message to Nakorn Rajasima, to be forwarded to Krung-Thep, asking for help.

King Tark-Sin of Siam who was at the time still very much displeased with King Siri-Bunyasan found it a great opportunity and made it a motive to attack the Lao kingdom. King Tark-Sin ordered Phragna Maha Kasatsuk (who later became the first king of Siam of the Chakri dynasty of today) to head an army of more than 20,000 men and Chao Phragna Surasiha (Phragna Maha Kasatsuk's brother) to lead a naval unit to Cambodia. Chao Phragna Surasiha succeeded in raising a naval fighting unit of 10,000 men in Cambodia itself and came up the Mekong river in 1778 A.D.

The land forces in the command of Phragna Kasatsuk passed through Nakorn Rajasima, Muong Surind, Muong Sisaket and met with the naval forces of his brother in the vicinity of Muong Champassak. The combined land and naval forces of Siam easily occupied Muong Champassak. Chao Saya-Kuman, the ruler of Champassak did not even put up any resistance and fled to Don-Sai. He was captured anyway, and surrendered unconditionally to the Siamese forces.

When Phragna Supho, the field commander of King Siri-

Bunyasan, who had, at the time, stationed his troops at Don-Kong, province of Champassak, learned about the advance of a powerful Siamese force, he pulled his troops back to Vientiane in a hurry to confer with King Bunyasan for the defense of the capital city. The defending Lao army spread its lines to Muong Phan-Phao, Muong Phakho, Muong Khuk, Muong Nong-Khai and up to Muong Nakorn Phanom. The Siamese forces struck first at Muong Nakorn Phanom which fell. Phra Borom-Raja (Kukeo), the ruler of Muong Nakorn Phanom, fled with his family and his men to Ban Don-Nu, but died there five months later. The Siamese forces moved up to Muong Nong-Khai and took it.

After the fall of Muong Nong-Khai, they moved upward and surrounded Muong Phakho and Vieng Khuk. The people of these two cities put up a stiff resistance and brought the invading Siamese forces to a standstill. The Siamese field commander later thought of a stratagem. He decapitated a great number of the people of the fallen Muong Nong-Khai, put their heads aboard a raft and ordered the women of Muong Nong-Khai to paddle it up stream along piers of Muong Phakho and Vieng-Khuk. The stratagem worked, for the sight of such a horrible scene discouraged the defenders and resulted in the fall of the two cities. Thereafter, the Siamese forces moved up to surround Muong Phan-Phao. The Lao troops defending this city fought courageously and held the enemies to a mere surrounding action until 1779 A.D.

At this juncture, Chao Surya-Vongsa, the ruler of Luang-Phrabang learned to his great enjoyment of the successful attack of the Siamese forces against the Lao kingdom of Vientiane. He saw this success of the Siamese forces as a revenge for the previous attack by the Burmese forces, assisted by King Siri-Bunyasan of Vientiane against his kingdom of Luang-Phrabang. King Surya-Vongsa of Luang-Phrabang wasted no time in sending a message to the attention of the Siamese field commander, telling him that he was prepared to attack Vientiane form the north. Thereafter, he headed an army of 3000 men to surround Vientiane on the rear.

Being caught between two invading forces and unable to hold the outposts, King Siri-Bunyasan pulled his forces out of Muong Phan-Phao for the defense of the capital city of Vientiane alone. The Siamese forces thus occupied the abandoned Muong Phan-Phao. As for the defense of the capital city of Vientiane, King Siri-Bunyasan ordered his own son, Chao Nanthasen, to lead the counter-attack. The battle for the

capital city lasted four months without success for the Siamese invaders. But being surrounded, and sensing defeat in the long run, King Bunyasan fled secretly in th night with his two other sons and a few troops to Khamkeut. The news of his father's flight caught Chao Nanthasen off balance and had a strong demoralizing effect on him. He deliberately opened the gate of the capital city and Siamese forces entered the city on Monday the third day of the waning moon of the tenth month of the year 1779 A.D.

Upon the fall of the capital city, the victorious Siamese forces proceeded to a mass arrest of all the high officials, the members of the royal family including Chao Nanthasen and Princess Nang Keo-Nhot-Fah Kanlayani, the king's daughter, and looted the city as they pleased. Among the most valuable properties looted and taken away by the Siamese were the statue of the Emerald Buddha and that of Phra-Bang, the most treasured and respected statue of the Laos people.

The looted properties were first brought across the Mekong river to Muong Phan-Phao together with a great number of Lao families. A temporary shrine was built to house the Emerald Buddha. With the fall of Vientiane, King Chao Surya-Vongsa of Luang-Phrabang not only was not given any credit for his help to the Siamese invading forces, but was also forced to accept the suzerainty of Siam over his kingdom. Later, the Siamese field commander appointed Phragna Supho to the military governership of the city of Vientiane and brought the looted properties and captured persons to Bangkok. In the waning moon of the second month, the field commander arrived at Muong Sraburi and ordered the several ten thousand Lao families to establish themselves there, taking with him to Bangkok only members of the royal family and high ranking officials.

The three Lao kingdoms, namely the kingdom of Champassak of King Chao Saya-Kuman, the kingdom of Vientiane of King Siri-Bunyasan and the kingdom of Luang-Phrabang of King Surya-Vongsa lost their independence and from 1779 A.D. became colonies of Siam. As a result of their illwill toward one another they lost their independence more than 1000 years from the time the Lao people had come to settle down along the Mekong river.

2. The Lan-Xang kingdom of Luang-Phrabang

(1) The reign of King Kingkitsarad

As told earlier, the Lao kingdom of Lan-Xang Luang-Phrabang became an independent kingdom when it split with the kingdom of Vientiane in 1707 A.D., in the reign of King Phra Saya-Setthathirath II (commonly known as Sai-Ong-Ve). This happendd for the following reasons:

During the time King Phra Saya-Setthathirath II ruled over Vientiane, he had appointed Thao Long, his brother, to rule over Luang-Phrabang. At this time, Chao Kingkitsarad, Chao Inthasom and Chao Ongkham feared that harm was done to them and fled to Muong Phong, and Chao Inthasom fled to Muong Phae. Later, Chao Kingkitsarad and Chao Ongkham brought the Muong Phong army to the attack of Luang-Phrabang. Thao Long, its ruler then, was defeated and fled down to Vientiane with the statue of Phra-Bang. After the fall of Luang-Phrabang, Chao Kingkitsarad and Ongkham marched on Vientiane itself and surrounded it. Sensing the defeat, King Saya-Setthathirath II of Vientiane sent for help from King Phra Thepha-Raja of Ayudhaya. King Phra Thepha-Raja tried instead to reconcile them and thereafter divided their respective kingdoms in 1707 A.D. in the following way: The territory north of the Nam Heuang river was recognized as the kingdom of Luang-Phrabang and the territory south of it as constituting the kingdom of Vientiane. Ever since this date the two kingdoms emerged as two seperate and independent kingdoms, and Chao Kingkitsarad ruled over Luang-Phrabang until the year 1713 A.D., when he died. King Kingkitsarad had two daughters and one son known respectively as Chao Then-Sao, Chao Then-Kham and Chao Akkharad.

(2) The reign of Phra Borom-Khatigna-Vongsa (Chao Ongkham)

After the death of King Kingkitsarad, Chao Ong-Kham ascended the throne under a new king-name of Phra Borom-Khatigna-Vongsa. It was under his reign that Chao Inthasom, who had fled into Muong Phae, brought the troops from Muong La and Muong Phong to the attack of Luang-Phrabang. Keeping mind the fact that they belong to the same family, King Phra Borom-Khatigna-Vongsa tried to avoid bloodshed among brothers and instead of fighting them, invited them to join him in the ruling of the kingdom, an invitation which Chao Inthasom accepted.

(3) The reign of Chao Inthasom

Ten years later, in 1723 A.D., Chao Inthasom and Phragnn Muong-Sai led a rebellion against King Phra Borom-Khatigna-Vongsa by refusing him entry to the city when the latter returned from a bird-hunting trip outside his palace. In the face of the new situation which had arisen, King Phra Borom Khatigna-Vongsa knew that he was the victim of a conspiracy from within, and that Chao Inthasom had therefore usurped his throne. He then headed for Xieng-Mai to seek asylum there. Chao Inthasom proclaimed himself king in the same year. After 26 years of rule, King Inthasom had 15 children - nine sons and six daughters. The nine sons were respectively known as Chao Sotika, Chao Anurutha, Chao Mark, Chao Naratha, Chao Sethavong, Chao Ong-Ek, Chao Suryavong, Chao Suravong, Chao Inthaphom and the six daughters were Chao Nang Keorata-na-Phimpha, Chao Sikhamkong, Chao Nang Suseda, Chao Nang Su-thamma, Chao Nang Maad and Chao Nang Venkeo. King Inthasom died in 1749 A.D.

(4) The reign of Chao Sotika

After the death of King Inthasom, the Royal Household enthroned Chao Inthaphom, the king's ninth son, but after only eight months of reign Chao Inthaphom abdicated in favor of Chao Sotika, his eldest brother. Chao Sotika reigned for 22 years. In 1771 A.D., Chao Suryavong, his sixth brother led a Burmese army from Xieng-Mai to the attack of Luang-Phrabang. King Chao Sotika abdicated in favor of Chao Surya-vong.

(5) The reign of King Suryavong

Only one year after his ascent to the throne of Luang-Phrabang, King Suryavong invaded the kingdom of Vientiane to settle a family feud. King Suryavong surrounded Vientiane for two months and was still unable to capture it. King Siri-Bunyasan of Vientiane, while defending his city, sent for help from the Burmese. Responding favorably to King Siri-Bunyasan's request, the Burmese troops attacked Luang-Phrabang, thus forcing King Suryavong to pull back and negotiate peace with the Burmese. Under the terms of this peace treaty, King Suryavong agreed to send the Burmese the traditional state gifts of a vassal state, consisting mainly of gold and silver in the form of flowers. Later, when the Burmese and the Siamese were engaged in a long dispute and war, King Suryavong renounced his vassalage to the Burmese, and

in 1778 A.D., when the Siamese army attacked Vientiane, he pledged allegiance to the Siamese and led an army of 3000 to help the latter defeat Vientiane. But when Vientiane fell to the Siamese army, thekingdom of Luang-Phrabang of King Suyravong also became a vassal state of Siam, in 1779 A.D. This brought us to the conclusion that the Lan-Xang kingdom of Luang-Phrabang became a separate independent kingdom in 1707 A.D. and lost its independence in 1779 A.D., the same time as the kingdom of Vientiane. The independence of the Kuang-Phrabang kingdom had lasted for 72 years in all with only five independent kings in power.

3. The kingdom of Champassak

(1) The reign of Phra Chao Soi-Srisamudh-Phuthangdun

The city of Nakorn Champassak was formerly a city inhabited by the Cham people and was then called Muong Champa-Nakorn. The first ruler of this city was Thao Khajanam, followed by Phragna Kamahtha. When the latter died there was no member of the royal family to succeed him to the throne. Nearby there was a Khmer king who led his people and army to Muong Champa-Nakorn and changed the name of the city to Nakorn Kalah-Champa-Kanakhaburi. The ruler of this city had a a son called Chao Suthatsam-Raja who succeeded him upon his death and ruled over it up to the year 1628 A.D., the year of his death.

Upon the death of Chao Suthatsan-Raja, there was again no successor and in 1639 A.D. the people of the city appointed a common man to be their ruler. This ruler, whose name has not been recorded, had a daughter called Nang Phao. After the death of her father, Nang Phao ruled the city through the year 1641 A.D. At this point, a man called Thao Pang-Kham and a native of Muong Nong-Bua-Lumphu (who wrote the Legends of Sin-Sai during the reign of King Surya-Vongsa-Thammikarad) went elephant hunting in the vicinity of Muong Champassak and fell secretly in love with Nang Phao. Apparently, they were married and a daughter was born to them known as Nang Pheng. Thereafter, Thao Pang-Kham came back to Nong-Bua-Lumphu and when Nang Phao died, Nang Pheng, her daughter, ruled over the city.

Later, in 1690 A.D., when King Surya-Vongsa-Thammikarad of Vientiane died, Chao Phragna Muong Chan usurped the Vientiane throne and insisted that Princess Nang Sumangkhala, King Surya-Vongsa's daughter, become his wife. But the prin-

cess refused and fled to seek refuge with Phra Khu Nhot-Keo, the Chief Monk of Wat Phonsaneck Monastery. At the time, the princess was pregnant and Chief Monk Phra Khu Nhot-Keo housed her at Phu Sango-Hokham, where she gave birth to a son named Chao Nokasad. When Phragna Muong Chan learned about the growing popularity of Chief Monk Phra Khu Nhot-Keo, he planned to kill him. But his plans were discovered before they were carried out, thus enabling the Chief Monk to leave the city with about 3000 families for Ban Ngiu-Phanlam-Somsanuk in the province of Nakorn-Phanom. Later, he sent for Chao Nokasad's mother to live temporarily among them. Some time later, the Chief Monk led his followers down to Nakorn Champassak where he was welcomed by Nang Pheng, the city's ruler at the time.

Nang Pheng not only provided the best care she could afford at the time for the Chief Monk, but, for the simple reason of being a woman, she also handed over to him the affairs of the city. Later, in 1714 A.D., the Chief Monk ordered Chan Keo, Chan Sieng and a few men to invite Chao Nokasad at Ban Ngiu Phanlam-Somsanuk and his mother to come to Nakorn Champassak. Thereafter, the Chief Monk, in agreement with Nang Pheng and other officials of the city, enthroned Chao Nokasad under the king-name of Chao Soi-Srisamudh-Phuthangkun and changed the name of the city to Nakorn Champa-Nakhaburisri.

After his enthronement as king of Champassak, Chao Soi-Sisamudh-Phuthangkun proceeded to the appointment of the heads of the various branches of his administrative bodies according to the royal procedures in use in the kingdom of Vientiane and built a new city on Don-Khong, with Chan-Ruad as its appointed ruler. Thao Sud became Phra Saya-Settha, to rule over Muong Xieng-Teng; Chan Sieng, to rule over Muong Sri-Nakorn-Taow (in the province of Sisaket); Chan Keo, to rule over Muong Thong (District of Suvannaphum, province of Roi-Et); Thao Chantha-Suryavong, to rule over Muong Tah-Pone; Nai Manh, former adviser to Nang Pheng, received the title of Luang Ek-Raksa. Ban Phon was also rebuilt during the same period and became Muong Manh (Muong Saravane in Laos today). Thao Phom was also promoted, he received the title of Rajabutakhote and was assigned with the mission to build Ban Attopeu, to be named Muong Attopeu. Thao Luang, the son of Phra Langum, was promoted and received the title of Khun Nak-Thaow, to rule over Muong Khong-Chieng.

Phra Chao Soi-Srisamudh-Phuthangkun ruled the city through

the year 1738 A.D. and then died. He was survived by three sons: Chao Saya-Kuman, Chao Thammathevo and Chao Sury-Nho. Upon the death of Chao Soi-Srisamudh-Phutangkun, the Household of the palace enthroned Chao Saya-Kuman who, in turn, appointed Chao Thammathevo as his Chief Minister and adviser.

(2) The reign of Chao Saya-Kuman

In the year 1778 A.D., the kingdom of Chao Saya-Kuman was invaded by the Siamese troops and became ever after a vassal state of Siam. Chao Saya-Kuman himself was made prisoner and brought to Krung-Thep in 1779 A.D. In 1780 A.D., however, the Siamese brought him back to rule over Nakorn Champassak.

The kingdom of Champassak existed as an independent kingdom from 1713 A.D., through 1778 A.D., when it lost its independence and became a vassal state of Siam. The independence of the kingdom of Champassak had thus lasted for 65 years in all, the full reign of only one king and part of that of another.

[FOOTNOTES]

(1)
The name of Princess Sumangkhala's husband is not known, but whoever he was, he was believed to have been assassinated at the time Phragna Muong Chan took over.

(2)
Muong Phan-Phuson is located in the district of Ban-Phu, province of Udorn-Thani in Thailand today.

(3)
In the annals of the history of Viehtiane, it has been said that King Suryavongsa of Luang-Phrabang attacked Vientiane in this very same year.

Chapter VII

The kingdom of Laos after the loss of its independence

The Lan-Xang kingdom of Vientiane

The kingdom of Laos split into three separate kingdoms from the year 1707 A.D. The three kingdoms which emerged fell simultaneously under the domination of Siam in 1779 A.D. but continued to be ruled by monarchs of Lao descent. As for the kingdom of Vientiane which was the largest of them all the line of succession of its rulers was recorded as follows:

1. The reign of King Phra Chao Nanthasen

King Siri-Bunyasan, the last ruling monarch of the kingdom of Vientiane lost his power and became a vassal state of Siam. Upon his death he was survived by five children - four sons and one daughter: Chao Nanthasen, Chao Inthavong, Chao Anuvong, Chao Phomvong and Nang Keo-Nhot-Fah-Kanlayani. Upon the fall of his kingdom to the Siamese, King Siri-Bunyasan fled with two of his sons, Chao Inthavong and Chao Phomvong to Muong Khamkeut. The Siamese field commander brought the three others, namely Chao Nanthasen, Chao Anuvong and Nang Keo-Nhot-Fah-Kanlayani over to Krung-Thep. When the Siamese army withdrew in the first month of the year 1780 A.D. King Siri-Bunyasan returned to Vientiane, but died there in the following year. Then, in 1781 A.D., the king of Siam released Chao Nanthasen and made him king of Vientiane, succeeding his father. Chao Nanthasen was enthroned as king of Vientiane on Thursday, the 14th day of the new moon of the first month of the year 1781 A.D. (2324 B.E.) and took the kingname of King Nanthasen-Phongmalao. His brother Chao Inthavong was his appointed Chief Minister. As to Chao Phomvong and Chao Anutong, they were sent to Krung-Thep. With his return as ruling monarch of Vientiane, Chao Nanthasen, with the consent of the Siamese, brought along also the Buddha statue of Phra-Bang and within the same year the king of Siam named Chao Saya-Kuman and Chao Suryavong as respective rulers of the kingdoms of Champassak and Luang-Phrabang.

In 1787 A.D., King Nanthasen of Vientiane attacked Muong Xieng-Khuang because Chao Kai-Sern, the ruler of Tonkin at the time, who resided at Muong Nge-An, had deliberately occupied Muong Sieng-Khuang and forced Chao Sumphu, the ruler of Xieng-Khuang, to send him state gifts of vassalage. In his attack on Xieng-Khuang, Chao Nanthasen succeeded in cap-

turing Chao Sumphu and brought him down to Vientiane. Then, in 1788 A.D., King Chao Kai-Sern of Tonkin ordered Ong Chieng-Ba and Ong Chieng-Vien to lead an army of 3000 Vietnamese and 3000 natives of Xieng-Khuang to the attack of Vientiane. Chao Nanthasen, who then thought that his action would result in an all-out war with Tonkin agreed to reinstate Chao Sumphu as the ruler of Xieng-Khuang, as requested by the Vietnamese ultimatum, under the condition, which was also agreed upon, that Chao Sumphu of Xieng-Khuang send state gifts, in equal quantity to both Tonkin and Vientiane. Under the agreement and condition as set forth the Vietnamese troops refrained from attacking Vientiane.

In 1789 A.D., King Nanthasen requested permission from Siam to attack the kingdom of Luang-Phrabang because its ruler had voluntarily cooperated with the Burmese and the ruler of Xieng-Hung was at the time in open rebellion against Siam. The request was granted and Chao Nanthasen deployed his troops around the city and fought a 15 day battle before the city fell to his troops. With the fall of Luang-Phrabang, Chao Nanthasen captured Chao Anuruthah, king of Luang-Phrabang, Chao Upahat-Nark, Chao Kanthaturad and their families and sent them to Krung-Thep, where they were held in captivity for four years. At the same time, the king of Siam recruited several tens of thousands of Lao citizens and used them to dig a canal in Bangkok. These Lao people were engaged in a sort of hard labor, having to work almost constantly and with very little time for rest. The digging of the canal in Bangkok thus resulted in loss of life among those recruited to do the job and only a few of them survived.

In 1793 A.D., Chao Anuruthah was returned to rule over Luang-Phrabang and in the following year filed a complaint against King Nanthasen, accusing him of cooperating with Phra Borom-Raja of Nakorn Phanom and the Vietnamese to form a conspiracy. As a result of this complaint, the king of Siam summoned Chao Nanthasen and Phra Borom-Raja to Bangkok where they stood trial for two years, during which King Nanthasen died.

2. The reign of Chao Inthavong

In 1795 A.D., Chao Inthavong, Chao Nanthasen's brother ascended to the throne of Vientiane. He appointed his brother, Chao Anuvong, as his Chief Minister. Upon his assumption of power he immediately attacked Muong Phaeng. In 1793 A.D. and again in 1799 A.D. he appointed Chao Anuvong as field command-

er of the Lao army to join with the Siamese against the Burmese. In 1803 A.D., he ordered Chao Anuvong to fight the Burmese again at Muong Xieng-Sen. King Inthavong ruled over Vientiane through the year 1803 A.D. and died on the seventh day of the new moon of the third month of the same year. He was survived by two daughters, one of which later became very well-known in the Siamese palace during the reign of the first king of Siam. The other was promoted to the title of High Princess Chao-Fah, that is Chao-Fah Kunthon-Thiphyavadi.

3. The reign of Chao Anuvong

After the death of Chao Inthavong, Chao Anuvong ascended to the throne of Vientiane in 1804 A.D. King Anuvong (otherwise called King Saya-Setthathirath III in the Vientiane history documents) was reputed for his bravery and experience in warfare. During the time he served under his brother he had led a Lao army of 20,000 men to the attack of the Burmese at Muong Xieng-Mai. In 1803 A.D., he attacked Xieng-Mai once again and went on to defeat Muong Xieng-Sen in 1804 A.D. It was upon his return from his victorious campaign against Xieng-Sen that he ascended the throng of Vientiane. During his reign, King Anuvong endeavoured and persevered in the reorganization of his kingdom to the highest and most effective level of the time:

In 1807 he built a new palace in Vientiane.
In 1808 he presided over the inaugural ceremony of a new bridge at That-Phanom.
In 1808 he built Wat Sibunheuang Monastery in Nong-Khai.
In 1812 he presided over the inaugural ceremony of Wat That-Phanom Monastery and upon his return built a bridge across the Mekong river at the pier of Wat Xang-Pheuak Monastery (near Ban Sisiengmai in Thailand today).
In 1816 he officially opened the inaugural celebration ceremony of the completion of the Temple of Emerald Buddha and its library.
In 1818 he put down the rebellion of Ai Saket-Ngong in Muong Champassak.
In 1821 he requested the approval of the king of Siam for the appointment of Chao Rajabud-Yoh, his son as the ruler of Nakorn Champassak, as a replacement for Chao Manoi, who had died in Krung-Thep. He also requested approval to appoint Chao Khampom (his nephew) as his son's Chief Minister in Champassak.

Upon his nomination to the throne of Champassak, Chao Rajabud-Yoh began the reconstruction work of his city. He

began with the erection of a wall around the city of Champassak as well as the erection of an inner wall to protect his palace. He also built another temple of the Emerald Buddha for the ceremony of oath taking. He reorganized the methods of taxation and built Muong Khan-Keung as an outpost and fort to stall attack from an enemy.

As for King Anuvong, who had courageously fought along side the Siamese on many occasions, the second king of Siam known as Phra Phuthalert-Lannaphalai, had shown toward him the highest esteem ever shown to any of the ruling monarchs then under Siamese suzerainty. For instance, in 1820 A.D., the king of Siam built a man-made lake as a pleasure site for his family in Krung-Thep. Because of his esteem for King Anuvong of Vientiane, he ordered Phragna Chakki to design a similar lake and offered to build it for him. The design of the lake was attached to a message which Phragna Chakki was asked to deliver in person to Chao Anuvong in Vientiane. The message reads as follows:

To Chao Anuvong in Vientiane:

It is my pleasure to inform Your Majesty that we have decided to rebuild and enlarge the existing pool, which we found rather too small for your resting pleasure. As the southern side of the palace wall has been extended, we feel it our duty and pleasure to enlarge the existing pool and build additional islands for the site of Your Majesty's rest palace, to be erected in the Chinese and European style. Flowers shall be planted to decorate the site between the pool and the palace, and fruit-trees shall be grown to provide cooling shades for Your Majesty's comfort. The water in the pool shall be kept clean and clear at all times and a great variety of Lotus flowers shall be planted therein; various specimens of fish shall be bred in the pool to complete the relaxing beauty of Your Majesty's dream pool. In the morning as in the evening, Your Majesty shall be able to relax in the cooling shades of the trees while feeding the fish and while Your Majesty's eyes catch the flying birds which fill the air with music and song, as well as the carefree ones which swim happily on the water. Other specimens of birds shall be raised in the vicinity so as to enhance the relaxing atmosphere of the pool. In planning the building of this dream pool, it was our intention to enable Your Majesty not only to relax your mind, but also to witness and admire with your own eyes the workmanship and craftmanship of the artists and engineers to whom the job was assigned. The pool, once complete, shall bear the mark of our esteem as well as that of our talent. The pool with its fruit

trees shall also be of a great charity to the people as a whole, for then they bear tasty fruits during the various seasons of the year the whole population shall be invited to enjoy themselves and shall have free access to the pool where they can as much as we have fun and a good time in the event of a particular feast, such as the New Year Day and the Buddhist Lents. Statues of Buddha shall be installed in the shrines built therein for the purpose of worship and others. The place shall be kept illuminated on nights of special festivities. It is our pleasure to inform you that on the full moon day of the twelvth month of the year of the Rabbit, the ruler of Nakorn Lampang and Muong Nan had some to Krung-Thep and had been entertained in a pool of this kind of pool which we have built in our palace. Every time we have had guests to entertain, we have always thought of you and regretted that you could not come and enjoy the festivities with us here. We have made a sketch of such festivities which have been held here in the past and feel much obliged to transmit it to Your Majesty so as to enable you to have a rough idea of what it was like. Should Your Majesty feel free some time in the future, and should the burden of the affairs of your kingdom permit you to come to Krung-Thep for a visit, we should like to advise you to bring along your family, musicians and artists and, if possible, rare kinds of birds to enrich our existing collection. We can assure you, Your Majesty, that you shall enjoy yourself.

The message reached Vientiane on the first day of the new moon of the second month of the year 1809 A.D.

In 1824 A.D., King Anuvong completed the erection of the Wat-Sen Monastery which was given the name of Wat Satasahadsaram which is Wat Sisaket of today. An imposing celebration marked the event.

On the third day of the new moon of the fifth month of the year 1825 A.D. a violent storm broke the summit of the temple of Phra-Bang; on the first day of the new moon of the sixth month of the same year, another storm almost destroyed the royal palace, and on the 14th day of the new moon of the eighth month of the same year an earthquake shook the capital city. In this same year, the second king of Siam, who had had such esteem for Chao Anuvong, died. Phra Nang-Kaow succeeded him as the third king of Siam. King Anuvong, accompanied by several hundreds of his officials, attended in person the funeral of the late king of Siam in Bangkok. After the funeral, the new king of Siam ordered the Lao people who had followed King Anuvong to the Siamese king's funeral to cut down palm

trees at Muong Suphanburi and transport them to Muong Samud-Pakan. As the rainy season drew near, King Anuvong bid goodbye to the king of Siam but requested, prior to his departure, that the following be granted to him: that he be allowed to take with him to Vientiane the women artists and dancers of the palace, the Princess Duang-Kham of Lao origin and the Lao families living in Muong Sraburi. To his disappointment, none of these requests were granted to him by the king of Siam.

King Anuvong had quite a number of sons and daughters. Among those known and recorded were Chao Suthisan (Poh), Chao Rajavong (Ngaow), Chao Rajabud (Yoh), Chao Teh, Chao Banh, Chao Duang-Chanh, Chao Khampheng, Chao Nu-Chine, Chao Pane, Chao Suvannachak, Chao Nang Khamvanh, Chao Nang Xieng-Kham, Chao Sayasan, Chao Sua, Chao Menh, Chao Xang, Chao Ung-Kham, Chao Khattinhah, Chao Phuthasad, Chao Disaphong.

King Anuvong acted to regain independence

In 1826 A.D., upon King Anuvong's return from Siam, he convened a meeting of all his advisers and officials in order to discuss with them ways and means to fight for freedom and independence from Siam. Among those of the members of the royal household and high ranking officials who attended the meeting were: 1. The Chief Minister (Titsah), 2. Chao Suthisan (Poh), 3. Chao Rajavong (Nhaow), 4. Chao Rajabud (Yoh), 5. Phragna Muong Chan, 6. Phragna Muong-Sen, 7. Phragna Muong-Lang, 8. Phragna Muong-Sai, 9. Plat Muong-Sen (Phragna Muong-Sen assistant), 10. Plat Muong Chan (Phragna Muong Chan assistant), 11. Phra Sanon, Director of the king's registrar office.

The kingdom of Vientiane at the time counted 79 principalities under its jurisdiction. King Anuvong reported to the meeting the fact that at this time the ruling circles of Krung-Thep consisted of young middle-ranking officials. There were only a few experienced high-ranking leaders. This led to the assumption that their fighting capability and spirit had been greatly reduced and was not as good as before. The ruler of Nakorn Rajasima was also absent. The princedoms along the invasion route were reported not very keen about resisting any invasion. Furthermore, the British had come to the southern part of Siam and had caused much concern to the ruling circles in Bangkok. If they should strike at Krung-Thep then, victory might be on their side. The Chief Minister (Titsah), a half-brother of Chao Anuvong objected to the plan and told the meeting that Krung-Thep was a large city, that even if the city fell into their hands, it was feared they could not hold it for long, that the people of the city would resist their action and they would be in great difficulty, as though they were

sitting on top of thrones. King Anuvong, in reply to his brother's objections, gave the meeting his own version of the future action to be taken after the fall of the city. He said that if the fallen city proved to be untenable, they would take with them all the people of Lao origin to Vientiane and set ambushes along the route, especially on narrow passes. The Siamese would not dare to follow, for the march was a long and dangerous one and the supply of food quite difficult on such rough terrain. He thought they could succeed in this undertaking.

After an arduous deliberation in the meeting, King Anuvong appointed the Chief Minister (Titsah) as one of the field commanders to head an army by way of Muong Kalasin, Muong Roi-Et, Muong Suvannaphum, Muong Khone-ken and Muong Sonabot. Chao Rajabud (Yoh) was given the command of another unit from Champassak and headed his forces down to Muong Khemmarad, Muong Ubol, Muong Nhasothorn, Muong Deth-Udom to recruit as many men as possible in these cities, bring them to Vientiane and then march to meet the Chief Minister's unit at Muong Rajasima. Simultaneously, King Anuvong sent a message and state gifts in the care of 50 officials to King Manthaturad in Luang-Phrabang with the instructions to incite him and his people to cooperate with Vientiane for national liberation. He urged King Manthaturad to forget and forgive the misgiving of the past. Upon the receipt of the message from King Anuvong of Vientiane, King Manthaturad acted as though he were willing to cooperate fully with him. But as soon as King Anuvong's messenger had left his city, King Manthaturad of Luang-Phrabang hurriedly ordered his eldest son, Chao Sukhaserm, to report to the king of Siam in Bangkok on the liberation movement sponsered by King Anuvong of Vientiane. Thus, this enabled the Siamese to set up the defense of Bangkok. King Manthaturad of Luang-Phrabang went further in making available a small army of 5000 men for eventual use by the Siamese.

During all the time King Anuvong was preparing and planning the attack of Bangkok, many signs of bad omen occurred in his kingdom, signs that would inevitably lead to the downfall of his kingdom. They were a violent storm which swept through the city of Vientiane in the sixth month of the year 1826 A.D., causing heavy damage to the palace, the temple of Emerald Buddha and scores of other houses in the heart of the city; on the full moon day of the 11th month of the same year an unusual earthquake shook the city and destroyed the city walls.

King Anuvong's army moved out of Vientiane

Upon completion of his military might, King Anuvong led the main army across the Mekong river to Ban Phan-Phao, where a big maneuver was held to test the strength and the readiness of his troops. In the waning moon of the second month of the year 1827 A.D., King Anuvong ordered his son Chao Rajavong with 3000 men in his command to spear-head the long march to Bangkok. On the third day of the waning moon of the third month Chao Rajavong and his unit reached Nakorn Rajasima and asked Phragna Nhokkabad, the supply minister of the city, that rice be given to him in compliance with the order he pretended he had received from the king of Siam, who had instructed him to fight the British in the south. Believing the argument advanced by Chao Rajavong, Phragna Nhokkabad gave him the quantity of rice he said he needed for the operation. Having secured this, Chao Rajavong ordered Phragna Muong-Khua and Phragna Xieng-Tai to head toward Muong Sraburi to be followed by him. On his next move, Chao Rajavong camped at Ban Khone-Khuang to await further instructions. On the ninth day of the waning moon of the third month (February 20, 1827 A.D.), Phragna Muong-Khua brought Phragna Sura-Rajavong of Muong Sraburi with Luang Phon King-Khan, Kong-Xieng and King-Sing to see Chao Rajavong for a meeting at Ban Khone-Khuang. At this meeting, Chao Rajavong informed his audience that the British had planned to attack Bangkok, and in view of this it was advisable to evacuate the Lao people of Muong Sraburi to Vientiane. Again, Chao Rajavong's argument convinced his audience and everything was done to his satisfaction.

When the day was found propitious in Ban Phan-Phao, Chao Anuvong and Chao Suthisan, one of his sons, moved after Chao Rajavong and reached Nakorn Rajasima on the sixth day of the waning moon of the third month (February 17, 1827 A.D.) and set camp at Bung-Thale, east of the city. King Anuvong had 8000 men in his command. The ruler of Nakorn Rajasima was absent from the city, having gone to put down a Khmer rebellion at Muong Khukhan. King Anuvong took over Nakorn Rajasima without opposition and immediately ordered Phragna Phom-Nhokkabad to evacuate the people of the city to Vientiane. The evacuation was completed in four days.

The Chief Minister (Titsah) betrayed King Anuvong

The Chief Minister (Titsah), who had been ordered to head an army to Muong Suvannaphum, met with Phra Surya-Phakdi (Pom), a Siamese official who came to take the population census at

at Muong Nhasothorn. He told him all about the proposed in-
vasion of Bangkok. He also told him that he had objected to
this undertaking, but was unable to resist King Anuvong's de-
cision. He thus asked Phra Surya-Phakdi to transuit the news
to Bangkok. The reasons behind the Chief Minister's about-
face lay in the fact that he wished to become ruler of Vient-
iane at a later date. In carrying out his act of disloyalty
to his king, the Chief Minister issued a pass to Phra Surya-
Phakdi in which it was indicated that the bearer was a man of
great integrity, a man who had voluntarily surrendered to
their forces. He was now going to Bangkok to pick up his fam-
ily and take them to Vientiane. Upon his arrival at Nakorn
Rajasima, Phra Suyya-Phakdi asked to be seen by King Anuvong,
to whom he showed the pass issued him by the Chief Minister
(Titsah). King Anuvong had no choice but to believe in the
validity of a document issued by one of his field commanders.
So travel facilities were given to Phra Surya-Phakdi. He was
also instructed by King Anuvong to tell His Majesty, the king
of Siam in Bangkok that the former had not planned to attack
Bangkok as it had been reported or rumored. His presence in
Nakorn Rajasima was justified by the complaints of the people
here to the effect that they were being oppressed by the rul-
ing circles of the city and wished to go and live in Vient-
iane. It was thus his duty to come over and see to it that
the migration take place in an orderly manner. As to Phra
Anuchid-Phithak, the brother of Chao Phragna Aphai-Phuthorn,
he considered him as his closest friend and should have liked
to keep him in his army.

Thereafter, Phra Surya-Phakdi left Nakorn Rajasima on
his way to Bangkok. Upon his arrival at Dong Phragna-Fai, he
met with the army of Chao Rajavong which was busily ordering
the people of Muong Sraburi to leave the city. There were
about ten Siamese families, 20 Chinese families and 10,000
Lao people ready to leave at the time. Phra Surya-Phakdi a-
gain asked to be seen by Chao Rajavong and, as before, showed
him the pass issued to him by the Chief Minister. Unlike his
father, Chao Rajavong wanted to arrest Phra Surya-Phakdi and
keep him under surveillance. But this was objected to by
Phragna Xieng-Tai and several others, who argued that this
would be just like ignoring the authority of his father, who
had already granted him free passage. Chao Rajavong gave in
and Phra Surya-Phakdi was set free to continue his journey
home.

In the meantime, when the assistant ruler of Nakorn Ra-
jasima, Nang Moh's husband, who went to Muong Khukhan with the

ruler of Nakorn Rajasima to put down the rebellion there, learned about the removal by King Anuvong of the population living in the city, he returned in a hurry to Nakorn Rajasima. Thereupon, he begged King Anuvong to let him go to Vientiane. King Anuvong decided so without further question and entrusted the vice-ruler and Phragna Phom-Nhokkabad with the duty to supervise the evacuated people so that they should reach Vientiane safely. This decision of King Anuvong proved to be another big mistake and a costly one too, for along the route, at a point called the Samrid Plains, the two supervisors from Nakorn Rajasima ordered a halt for rest and thereupon put their plan to work. They cleverly organized a reception to entertain the evacuees and their escorts, whereby the Lao armed escorts were put to sleep by an overdose of drinks and subsequently slaughtered. They then armed themselves and decided to flee. A few Lao soldiers managed nevertheless to escape the massacre and rushed to report the coup to King Anuvong. King Anuvong first ordered 50 of his men to investigate on the spot, but these were also killed and never returned. The the king ordered his son, Chao Suthisan, with Chao Pan, Chao Kamphah and 3000 men to the attack. But the resistance put up by the mutineers was so effective that Chao Suthisan thought they were being supported by the army of the ruler of Nakorn Rajasima, who had come there in time to back them up. This assumption on the part of Chao Suthisan led him to pull back and report to his father.

King Anuvong's retreat

At this juncture, Chao Rajavong had come to Muong Korat with the evacuees from Muong Sraburi and went straight to see his father. At this very same time, news had been spread around that the Bangkok ruling circles had already moved up a big army to put down King Anuvong's rebellion. King Anuvong acted immediately by holding a meeting whereby the advisibility of meeting the Siamese forces in Nakorn Rajasima or Nong-Bua-Lumphu was discussed. It was decided that Nong-Bua-Lumphu would be the site of the main defense line, while Chao Rajavong was ordered to divert to Muong Lom for future action, pending the development of the battle.

King Anuvong and the bulk of his army reached Muong Nong-Bua-Lumphu on the 11th day of the waning moon of the fourth month of the same year (March 23, 1827 A.D.). His forces were deployed in the following manner: a unit of 20,000 men in the command of Phragna Supho and Sanon was to occupy the Phu-Khaow-San hill overlooking the preselected battlefield, while Phragna Narind with 3000 men in his command was ordered to line up

his troops at Nong-Bua-Khai, Phragna Xieng-Sa's troops were at Snon. Kongkhan's troops were at Ngua-Tack pass and the Chief Minister's (Titsah) troops were at Muong Suvannaphum.

The Siamese army marched forward

Upon the news reported to him by Phra Surya-Phakdi, the king of Siam could not help feeling somewhat perplexed. But he immediately ordered preparations for the defense of Bangkok. A long defense disposition was established from the Ngua-Lamphong (Bua-Lamphong) plains up to Bang-Kapi and all the forces under his jurisdiction were alerted to stand ready. When the preparation for the defense of the capital was completed, then the king of Siam, on March 3, 1827 A.D., appointed Krom Phra Rajavang Bovon-Sathammongkhol to lead the Siamese army in the direction of Muong Sraburi and station his troops at Phra Phuthabad hill to await the troops from other localities to join him. When all was done as planned, Krom Phra Rajavong Bovon appointed Phragna Cha-Senyakorn, Phragna Kalahom-Rajasena, Phragna Visaya-Rinthara and Phragna Norong-Visai as commanders of the first crack unit; Krom Mun-Narethothi and Krom Mun Seni-Borirak as the commanders of the second crack unit; Krom Mun Seni-Thep was given command of the center unit; Krom Mun Naranusit and Krom Mun Swatvisai were given command of the left and right wings respectively; Krom Mun Rama-Issareth and Krom Mun Thibet-Bovon were in charge of supply; Krom Mun Thep-Phonphakdi was in charge of inter-units supply and Phra Narenthorn-Raja was given command of the unit covering the rear, headed in the direction of Dong-Phragna-Fai. Furthermore, orders were issued to the effect that Phragna Mahayotha move up a Mon army in the direction of Dong Phragna-Kangthap; Phragna Aphai-Phuthorn move a unit of 5000 men from Bangkok up in the direction of Muong Phetsboon; Phragna Phetphisai and Phragna Kaikose take command of 3000 men from the localities of the north and move them in the direction of Muong Phitsanuloke. All these were to strike at Chao Rajavong's army at Muong Lom. Phragna Rajnikul, Phragna Ramkamhaeng, Phragna Rong-Muong and Phragna Chanthaburi were to move the unit in their command from Muong Phratabong up to Muong Surind. Four other units were instructed to move up in the direction of Muong Pachin and Muong Pachantakham. They were the units of Phragna Raja-Suphawadi, Chao Phragna Phrakhang, Krom Mun Phichit-Phuben and Krom Mun Surind-Thararak. These were to strike at the Chief Minister's army at Muong Suvannaphum.

In the waning moon of the fifth month of the year 1827 A.D., the main army of Siam reached Nakorn Rajasima. From this point, Krom Phra-Rajavang-Bovon, the Siamese commander-in-

chief ordered Phragna Raja-Suphawadi to head a unit of 6000 men in the direction of Nakorn Chaupassak. When this unit reached Muong Phimai (in the province of Nakorn Rajasima) it met and clashed with Chao Thong's troops. They fought there for several days without any decisive gain for either side. But feeling that he was outnumbered, Chao Thong abandoned his post and pulled back his troops to Muong Suvannaphum, the bastion of the Chief Minister (Titsah). Thereafter, Phragna Raja-Suphawadi was able to move his troops to Muong Khonken and sent a message to the Chief Minister in Muong Suvannaphum telling him the following:

"At one time, when your were in Bangkok, you told us that King Anuvong was preparing to wage a war against Siam. Your report of that time has now been confirmed. Taking your allegiance for granted, we urge you to march on Vientiane to pave the way for our easy advance and we shall follow you thorugh."

Upon receipt of this message, the Chief Minister sent it on to King Anuvong at Phu-Khaow-San hill in Muong Nong-Bua-Lumphu. Having taken note of the contents of the message, King Anuvong could not help feeling somewhat confused. He could not figure out exactly what was behind the correspondence. Could it be a trick or had it been agreed upon by Phra Raja-Suphawadi and the Chief Minister to perplex him with such a message. In any case, it was clear that the Siamese intended to use their usual tactics to create disunity among the Lao.

As to the Chief Minister, after having sent his King the message, he pulled his army back to Muong Nong-Han leaving the Lao troops at Muong Nhasothorn exposed. Phragna Raja-Suphawadi went to the attack of Muong Nhasothorn which fell after a short lived resistance.

The Siamese army attacked Muong Nong-Bua-Lumphu

The main army of Siam appointed Phragna Senyakorn, Phragna Kalahom-Rajasena, Phragna Visaya-Burinthara, Phragna Narongha-Vissi and Mom Chao Khun-Nen to lead a unit of 8400 war prisoners to the attack of Nong-Bua-Lumphu, while five other Siamese armies stormed the defense line of Phragna Narind on the sixth day of the new moon of the sixth month (May 1, 1827 A.D.). Phragna Narind, the Lao commander put up a stiff resistance, causing heavy casualties to the attackers. A Siamese commander called Phragna Kiet was killed at the hands of Phragna Narind himself. But because the Siamese outnumbered the Lao, and continuous reinforcements stormed in without

interruption, the defense line of Phragna Narind was overwhelmed and fell apart on Friday the ninth day of the new moon of the sixth month (May 4, 1827 A.D.). Phragna Narind himself was captured and sent to the Siamese commander-in-cheif. Because of his skill in warfare, he deserved a certain respect from the Siamese commander-in-chief, who asked him whether or not he was ready to surrender. If he accepted the surrender terms, he would be well treated according to his standing. But, to the commander's surprise, Phragna Narind rejected the surrender terms. Instead, he told the commander that a soldiers blood flowed in his veins, and being a brave soldier as he was, he was ready to die rather than surrender. He was killed by an elephant which crushed him underfoot.

After the fall of the defense line of Phragna Narind, the Siamese troops moved up to the Soupoi plains about ten kilometers away from the Khaow-San pass. Three other Siamese armies, namely those of Phragna Aphai-Phuthor, Phragna Phet-Phisai and Phragna Kaikosa went to the attack of Chao Rajavong's defense line at Muong Lom. Chao Rajavong held back the enemy for several days but being overwhelmed and sensing the fall of his fort, he pulled back to join his father at the Khaow-San pass in Muong Nong-Bua-Lumphu. When King Anuvong learned about the fall of Phragna Narind's defense line, he ordered Phragna Supho and Phragna Sanon to defend the last bastion of the Khaow-San pass while he and two of his sons, Chao Rajavong and Chao Suthisan hurried back to his capital city of Vientiane to organize its defense.

The Siamese armies pressed their attacks

Entrusted with the command of the Lao troops for the defense of Nong-Bua-Lumphu after the fall of the fort at Phragna Narind, Phragna Supho and Phragna Sanon sent a message to Phragna Xieng-Sa and Phragna Kongkham to counter-attack against the Siamese troops stationed at the Soupoi plains. Acting in perfect coordination, the three Lao armies converged to the Soupoi plains and surrounded the Siamese from all directions. The besieged Siamese troops tried desperately to break through the encirclement, but were pushed back every time. The Siamese troops were kept prisoners in their own fort for seven days and many of them died of starvation. The fort was about to surrender when another Siamese army in command of Krom Mun Naret-Yothi came to its rescue. The newly arrived Siamese army was also surrounded by the Lao forces but yet another Siamese army in the command of Krom Mun Sena-Borirak came just in time and struck at the rear of the Lao forces. The Lao

armies were forced, under the circumstances, to turn against the Siamese forces attacking their rear, thus enabling the Siamese troops imprisoned in the Soupoi plains fort to break out. On Sunday, the third day of the waning moon of the sixth month (May 13, 1827 A.D.), the Lao armies were caught in between the Siamese armies and fought a losing battle. The Lao troops then scattered and ran for their lives. The troops in command of Phragna Sieng-Sa regrouped and stationed themselves at Ban Phon-Xieng-Wang, on the banks of the Huei-Laung river in the province of Muong Phonphisai.

The Siamese armies stampeded through Vientiane

When the Lao troops who had guarded the Khaow-San pass pulled out, the Siamese armies marched over the hills to the plains. When King Anuvong learned about the fall of the defense line at Khaow-San pass, he sailed down the Mekong river with his family and went ashore to Muong Mahasai-Kongkeo, and went further to Muong Nhe-Anh (in Tonkin) to take a long rest. He was accompanied by his sons Chao Rajavong, Chao Suthisan, Chao Sayasan, Chao Sua, Chao Thuan, Chao Menh, Chao Xang, Chao Ung-Khan Chao Khattiyah, Chao Phutsasad, Chao Ditsaphong, Chao Teh, Chao Nu-Chine and Chao Suphan and the sons of the Chief Minister, Chao Eb, Chao Pane, Chao Suphom, Chao Ong and the Chief Minister's mother.

Five days after the flight of King Anuvong, the Siamese armies reached Muong Phan-Phao and from here the Siamese generals Krom Mun Naret-Yothi and Krom Mun Seni-Borirak led their troops into Vientiane. They ransacked the city, cut down all the trees that bore edible fruits, set fire to the city and forced the people there to wreck all the city walls and monuments. The capital city of Vientiane which was once renown for its beauty, was turned into a city of death with only burning ashes after the Siamese left.

The Chief Minister (Titsch) met the Siamese commander-in-chief

With regard to the Chief Minister (Titsah) of King Anuvong, who had pulled out of Muong Suvannaphum to Station himself at Muong Nong-Han, it was reported that upon the news of the flight of King Anuvong and the subsequent fall of Vientiane to the Siamese, he hurriedly led his troops to meet the Siamese commander-in-chief at Muong Phan-Phao. The commander-in-chief ordered him to take the oath of allegiance and assign-

ed him with the duty of regrouping all the Lao families. In carrying out this assignment, the Lao armies from the north which had fought along side the Siamese, namely those of Luang-Phrabang, Muong Nan, Muong Phae, Muong Xieng-Mai and Muong Lampang whose troops totalled 20,000 men in all, were ordered to reassemble at Muong Phan-Phao.

The Siamese commander-in-chief reported on the battle for Vientiane

The following report was established by Krom Phra Rajavong-Bovon-Sathan-Mongkhol, the Siamese commander-in-chief after the fall of Vientiane and as addressed to His Majesty, the king of Siam in Bangkok:

"Our forces which were brought under my command to the attack of Vientiane had not fought the war to my entire satisfaction. Only a small number of them had fully carried out the duties assigned to them. For instance, when I ordered them to destroy the war supplies of the enemy, only a small number of them had enough courage to carry out my orders. I cannot give full credit to all of them, especially our Lao allies from the north, our victory was made possible by Your Majesty's power and guidance. To keep them all in our service in the future is not advisable.

"As for the armies of the five princedoms and the princedom of Muang-Phrabang, it was doubtful whether they would have come to pledge their allegiance to us in Vientiane had we not succeeded in capturing the city. They only waited to see the turn of events, and their actions greatly depended on the outcome of the war. Now all of them have come to pledge allegiance to us. I shall act very carefully, sometimes sternly and sometimes indulgently as the circumstances dictate. I am exploring the reaction of the six princedoms and I can now inform Your Majesty that the princedom of Luang-Phrabang is very weak; the princedoms of Xieng-Mai and Pauphoon are to be judged upon the princedom of Muong Lakorn; the princedom of Muong Phae is fair; to judge from the past, Muong Nan is worth our trust. I am inclined to believe that its ruler is a man of great virtue, he deserves our attention and care and he can be kept in our service for long.

"As for Your Majesty's order, entrusted in the hands of Phragna Narisa-Yawari, only part of it could be fulfilled. The present task that confronts us in the reorganization of

our empire is one of the most painstaking ones. It would be much earier for me to conquer two or three cities the size of Vientiane than to embark upon this task of reorganizing our empire. I shall endeavour to the best of my ability to deal with the conquered people in the best interest of our kingdom. I have planned to transfer the people of the area to cities near Bangkok and as many as I can to Bangkok itself. I know one thing for sure, that the people of the Lao and Khmer princedoms and the same goes for the rulers' families, the officials' families, etc. have either died or been separated from each other to the extent that it would be difficult to determine who is who and where they are. On the other hand, the lack of communication facilities made our work even slower and more difficult than we had antitipated. And the advent of the rainy season has greatly hampered our efforts.

"With your Majesty's permission I should like to ask Phragna Raja-Suphawadi to stay in permanence at least for one year in Nakorn Chaupassak, the Lao princedoms and the Khmer princedoms of Muong Lomsak and Muong Lom-Leui, and to have Phragna Phet-Phisai and Phragna Sombatthiban assist him in his work. But again, this should wait until the dry season to be safe. As for the city of Vientiane itself, the Traitor Anuvong has escaped capture because on the day our forces took the fort of Ban Soupoi, it took us five full days to reach Vientiane from there. The five day march to Vientiane had given ample time to Anuvong to escape with all his family and associates, and when we entered the city of Vientiane we found it almost deserted.

"The various families have been mixed with those in Muong Nakorn Rajasima, Muong Sraburi, Muong Lomsak, Muong Lao and Muong Khmer in the east. To make a quick round-up is almost impossible and most impracticable. If we sent only a few of our troops to do the round-up they might meet with an armed resistance. But if we sent too many, they people would most likely flee before we could put our hands on them. Among a group of 200 to 300 men we have rounded up at one place we were not able to select more than nine or ten physically fit persons. I have envisaged sending the Lao themselves in small groups to slowly and patiently work them in. Only in this way, slow but most efficient, shall we be able to get successful results. To ask the people of Vientiane to do the job is even more inconvenient, for there is no one here who could be trusted; and to ask the people of Luang-Phrabang to do it would be detrimental, for the traitors Anuvong, Passak, Rajavong,

Suthisan and Thong are still at large. For this reason, we decided to reduce the city of Vientiane to ashes. The people of Vientiane have fled to Muong Lakorn, Muong Xieng-Mai, Muong Lamphoon, Muong Phae, Muong Nan and Muong Luang-Phrabang in great number. To round them up would lead us to use brutal force which would be unpopular. The number of physically fit males in Vientiane and the cities under its jurisdiction is estimated to amount to about 20,000 men. When peace has returned and the area is settled, It is believed that over eight to nine thousand men can be recruited for our army. It is also feared that, even if we succeed in recruiting ten thousand of them, we shall be faced with food problems for, for sometime now, the people of Nakorn Rajasima and the conquered areas have not begun to grow rice and their previous stocks are running short. Some areas along the route already face starvation. It is for this reason that I do not deem it advisable to make a move during the rainy season. When circumstances permit such an undertaking, I shall endeavour to get 10,000 physically fit males from Vientiane to Bangkok. As for the eventual uprising on the part of the traitors Anuvong and his sons, now at large, I shall exercise heavy pressure upon the six princedoms of Lampang, Xieng-Mai, Pamphoon, Muong Phae, Muong Nan and Luang-Phrabang, whereby I shall call up their failure for not having come to our help in time when we attacked Vientiane. They shall be advised of their guiltiness and they shall be thus willing to cooperate with us in our endeavour to recapture the traitors at large as well as their families. Even if this endeavour should prove unsuccessful, at least they shall be able to prevent their return to create unrest in our conquered lands. When all this is arranged, then I shall proceed to the round-up of about 10,000 men and their families which shall total to about 50,000 in all. Five hundred to 1000 officials shall be left here to run the affairs and to prevent any possible dispute among the various princedoms. After all the necessary arrangements have been made so as to secure order in the areas, we shall start the preparation for the destruction of resistance nests, and when the forces of Phragna Xieng-Sa and Muong Sakon-Nakorn have been brought under control, our main army shall be given the order to leave Vientiane for Bangkok around the middle of the eighth month.

"I dare assure Your Majesty that the plans I have the honor to report to Your Majesty shall end in complete success and in our best interest.

"As for the properties and wealth we have so far collected, it is hard to give Your Majesty an exact account, but what-

ever they are, they shall all be offered Your Majesty upon my return and it rests entirely upon Your Majesty as to whom the collected properties shall be awarded. Furthermore, the 110 elephants which I had the honor to send to Bangkok on a previous occasion, are not quite acceptable for our palace's use. They are merely used for transportation of materials. I shall, at the end, endeavour to secure at least 2,000 of them. As for the horses, there are too few of them here at this time and they are not worth being offered to Your Majesty. With regard to cannons and guns we have thus far captured, they are of the most obsolete types and are not worth the effort to carry them to our capital; I shall endeavour to make new ones for Your Majesty. These are the few facts I have the honor to report to Your Majesty and I stand ready to receive your appreciation and/or your blame for what I believe I have done in the best of my ability.

As for the various statues of Buddha known to have existed in Vientiane prior to its fall and reported later as having been buried, I cannot as yet find any evidence to this effect. I am thus far in possession of only the statues of Phra Sera, Phra Sai, Phra Suk, Phra Saek-Khao, Phra Kenchan, Phra Sang-Nam, Phra Ngern-Lo and Phra Ngern-Bun. Of these, I believe only the Phra Saek-Khao statue is worth taking to Bangkok. There are also other hugh statues of Buddha which are too heavy to be removed. I have thus decided to build shrines at Muong Phan-Phao to house all those statues which are left behind for the worship of the people. The main shrine shall be baptised the "The Shrine of the Quelling of the Vientiane Rebellion". The shrine shall bear the inscription depicting the defection and the flaws of the traitor Anuvong so that the people can read and draw an example and the consequences of such a treason.

After the report has been sent, the work for the erection of the shrine began and upon its completion, the Buddha statue of Phra Sera which was previously at Wat Nhot-Khaow-Keo, was installed in the "Shrine of the Quelling of the Vientiane Rebellion".

Phragna Xieng-Sa forces staged a comeback

When the victorious Siamese forces were busy with the re-establishment of normal living conditions in the conquered areas, Phragna Xieng-Khang after the fall of Vientiane, had not surrendered to the Siamese conquerors. The Siamese commander-in-chief ordered Phragna Kaikosa to his pursuit, but

unsuccessfully, for Phragna Xieng-Sa succeeded in driving back every attempt made by the Siamese forces. The Siamese troops in the command of Phragna Kaikosa suffered heavy casualties, but he himself managed to escape and report his unsuccessful attempts to his commander-in-chief. For his failure, Phragna Kaikosa was relieved from his command, tortured and imprisoned. Then the Siamese commander-in-chief appointed Phragna Phet-Phisai, Phragna Kaset and Phragna Atsada-Ruangdej to renew the attack against Phragna Xieng-Sa. At the news of the renewed Siamese attack, another Lao commander, Phragna Xong-Khan who stationed his troops at Muong Pheng (The Pheng district of the province of Udorn) rushed his troops to Phragna Xieng-Sa's help by attacking the Siamese in their rear. Again the Siamese forces suffered heavy losses and were about to disband when suddenly Phragna Xong-Khan was killed in the battle and the forces in his command retreated. Phragna Xieng-Sa then pulled out to stand in a fort near the Huei-Luang river in the province of Phonphisai. The Siamese forces went after him, Phragna Xieng-Sa offered a stiff resistance but being badly outnumbered, was compelled to retreat further along the Mekong river.

Chao Bui of Champassak joined the Siamese forces

When Phragna Suphawadi, the Siamese general who stationed his troops at Muong Nhasothorn, was moving his men to the attack of Nakorn Champassak, Chao Rajabud Yoh, the then ruler of Champassak had gone with his troops to Muong Sisaket and upon the news of the Siamese attack, pushed further to Muong Ubol. Here, Chao Rajabud Yoh ordered Chao Pane and Chao Suvan to lead a fighting unit to intercept the enemy at Muong Nhasothorn. But before they had time to set up their dis-position there, they were attacked by the Siamese troops, which forced them to flee for their lives thus opening the way for the Siamese to continue their march on Ubol. At this point, the people of Ubol where Chao Rajabud Yoh and his troops were stationed refused to cooperate with him and in view of the situation prevailing there at the time, Chao Rajabud Yoh decided to move out and went to Champassak.

But in Champassak, Chao Bui (the son of Chao O and the nephew of Chao Thammathevo), had already put his plans to work. Upon the news of the fall of Ubol to the Siamese, Chao Bui incited the people of Champassak to sabotage, and ordered the troops loyal to him to guard the gate of the city. Chao Rajabud, Chao Pane and Chao Suvan were thus unable to

enter the city as had been their intention. They then crossed the Mekong river to the east of the city with only 40 men. Chao Hui immediately ordered the opening of the city wall so as to let in the Siamese forces, and sent his men to capture Chao Rajabud, Chao Pane and Chao Suvan, turning them over to Phragna Suphawadi, the Siamese general. After having secured the city of Champassak, the Siamese moved up to Muong Nakorn Phanom.

The Vietnamese general sent a message to Phragna Suphawadi

In the course of this action, a Vietnamese general called Sai-Khun-Tien-Yinh sent a message to Phragna Suphawadi in Nakorn Phanom, whereby he told the Siamese general about his surprise to see two friendly kingdoms, Siam and Laos engaged in a destructive war which brought about the annihilation of the city of Vientiane, which had caused incalculable loss of property and which had made thousands of people homeless. The Vietnamese general also pointed out that the city of Vientiane was, in some respects, part of the territory of the kingdom of Vietnam. "Incidentally", said he, "the commander-in-chief of the Vietnamese forces called Ong-Kin-Luak, has ordered me to take position at Muong Tan-Dong with 20,000 men in my command. I therefore request that you pull your forces back to your own territory and return any number of the population you have so far removed from the area. This is the only way to maintain good relations between our two countries. If you do not heed our present request, we shall be compelled to protect our people and our interest and believe me, if there shall be a fight between us I can assure you that we shall throw in all the forces at our disposal. The battlefield shall be inundated with blood and no grass shall ever grow again on the premises. I bid you to comply."

Phragna Xieng-Sa met with Phragna Raja-Suphawadi

Upon receipt of the message from the Vietnamese general, Phragna Raja-Suphawadi did not even care to reply. Instead, he rushed his troops to Muong Phan-Phao and met with Phragna Xieng-Sa on his way. Phragna Xieng-Sa was said to have known Phragna Raja-Suphawadi before and when he realised that the armies of the Lao people had been defeated elsewhere and dispersed, Phragna Xieng-Sa offered him his surrender. Phragna Raja-Suphawadi then escorted him to Muong Phan-Phao to meet with the Siamese commander-in-chief. Owing to his voluntary surrender, Phragna Xieng-Sa was kept in service in the army of Phragna Raja-Suphawadi. As for Chao Rajabud Yoh, Chao

Pane and Chao Suvan who were turned over to the Siamese authorities, they were brought to Bangkok. Phragna Raja-Suphawadi and Phragna Xieng-Sa were assigned the duty of rounding up the Lao families for Siam, while Krom Phra Rjavang-Bovorn, the Siamese commander-in-chief headed his armies back to Siam in July 1827 A. D.

Having secured a large number of Lao families, Phya Muong Chan was assigned by Phragna Raja-Suphawadi with the duty to rule over Vientiane with only a few families of poor Lao peasants left for him to govern. The Buddha statue of Phrabang was said to have been taken away at this time. The Chief Minister Titsah was among the people taken to Siam. When the contingent of hostages arrived at Muong Nhasothorn, Thao Butrajvong of Muong Nhasothorn reported to Phragna Raja-Suphawadi that Thao Kham, the brother of the chief minister of Nhasothorn had kept a few Vientiane families in secret custody. This information led to the immediate execution of Thao Kham, but the Chief Minister of Nhasothorn intervened in favor of his brother, who he said, was of a great service to him, and if his his brother should be executed, he asked that he also be executed. Upon this intervention, Phragan Raja-Suphawadi ordered the arrest of all the members of the Chief Minister's family, including the children who numbered over 100, then put them in a common cage and burned them all alive.

In February 1827 A. D., Phragna Raja-Suphawadi reached Bangkok and when he was received by the king of Siam, the latter said in anger "Chao Anuvong has not been captured. No one knows when he will return and reorganize his resistance. The city of Vientiane should not remain as a city. You are ordered to return to Vientiane and reduce the city to ashes so that Chao Anuvong cannot make use of it." When the order had been issued to Phragna Raja-Suphawadi, the Chief Minister Titsah was housed in a prison-like palace, built for Chao Anuvong, should he be captured, at Beng-Nhikhan. As for the statue of Phrabang, Phragna Raja-Suphawadi enshrined it in Wat Chakkawat monastery, and the Lao families of Vientiane who were brought as hostages and were sent to Muong Lopburi, Muong Sraburi, Muong Suphanburi and Muong Nakorn-Saisi, while the families brought over from Muong Nakorn Phanom were transfered to Muong Phanatnikhom.

King Chao Anuvong recaptured Vientiane

Upon the issuance of the new order whereby he was instructed to return to demolish the city of Vientiane, Phragna Raja-Suphawadi led his troops back in July 1828 A. D. and stopped first at Muong Nong-Bua-Lumphu. From this city he ordered Phragna Rong-Muong, Phragna Phisai-Songgram, Phragna Thukkharaj of Muong Nakorn Rajasima and Luang Surenthara-Visit to reoccupy Muong Phan-Phao with 500 men from which Phragna Rong-Muong ordered Phragna Phisai-Songgram, Phragna Thukkharaj and Luang Surenthara-Visit to cross the Mekong river with 300 men and establish their headquarters at Wat Kang monastery.

On the 27th of July 1828 A. D., Chao Rajavong sent a message to Muong Vientiane and Muong Sai telling the people there that the king of Vietnam had ordered his men to escort Chao Anuvong to Vientiane. That at that moment they had already reached Tha-Khan-Xang within a five day march from Vientiane. Phragna Muong Chan and Phragna Muong-Sai forwarded the message to the attention of Phragna Phisai-Songgram who, in turn, forwarded it to Phragna Rong-Muong and the latter to Phragna Raja-Suphawadi, the top Siamese general at this time.

Upon acknowledging the content of the message, Phragna Raja-Suphawadi hurriedly led his troops to Muong Phan-Phao, Starting from Muong Nong-Bua-Lumphu on the fifth day of the waning moon of the eighth month (July 31, 1828), and reaching Muong Phan-Phao on the next day. On this very same day, Chao Anuvong also reached Vientiane with about 1000 men including 80 Vietnamese and two Vietnamese interpreters. From Vientiane, word had been sent immediately to Phragna Phisai-Songgram at Muong Phan-Phao, informing him that Chao Anuvong would come to meet them to-morrow, for a peaceful talk with the Siamese general. As it has been said, Chao Anuvong accompanied by his Vietnamese interpreters, went to Muong Phan-Phao on August 2nd 1828 A. D. In his meeting with the Siamese general, his interpreters did the talking. They told the Siamese general that Chao Anuvong might have been guilty in his flight to the Vietnamese kingdom. But the Vietnamese kingdom was like a mother to him, while the kingdom of Siam could well be his father. When the father reproaches his son, it is only natural that the mother brings him to apologize to his father, and when your commanding general arrived, Chao Anuvong and Chao Rajavong came to see him again and asked him to take them with him to Bangkok. Furthermore, the king of Vietnam had already addressed a message of apology to His Majesty the king of Siam on behalf of Chao Anuvong..

We do not wish to interfere with or discuss, at this stage, any aspects of the relationship which prevailed between the king of Siam and Chao Anuvong prior to our present intervention. But from now on and for the reasons stated earlier, we feel duty bound to take whatever steps we deem necessary. After the talk and after having reached agreement in principle, Chao Anuvong and Chao Rajavong returned to Vientiane. But at Phan-Phao, Chao Anuvong had come to know that the Siamese commander-in-chief had erected the shrine of the "Quelling of the Vientiane revolt" with an inflaming and insulting inscription upon his person. Unable to contain his furor and his burning desire for revenge, Chao Anuvong decided to make the last attempt to safeguard his honor and, if successful, to save his country. He immediately ordered the troops at his disposal to surround the Siamese troops stationed at Wat Kang monastery on the seventh day of the waning moon of the eighth month (August 2nd). Out of the 300 Siamese troops, only 40 managed to escape and report the coup to Phragna Raja-Suphawadi. Surprised by the new situation which had arisen in Vientiane, Phragna Raja-Suphawadi held an emergency meeting with his lieutenants, in which he told them his concern as to how best he would be able to cope with the situation. He told his audience that in his view, it did not seem practicable to retreat and make a stand at Nakorn Rajasima which was too far a distance. It was, however, not advisable to make a stand right at Muong Phan-Phao either, for they did not dispose at the time the necessary forces to make such a stand. Upon these remarks by the Siamese general, the rallied Lao general, Phragna Xieng-Sa, suggested that Muong Nhaso-thorn be chosen. It was agreed upon and the immediate withdrawal from Muong Phan-Phao took place on the night of the same day.

Text of the message of the king of Vietnam to the king of Siam soliciting pardon, on behalf of and for Chao Anuvong

At the time of the return of Chao Anuvong to Vientiane, the king of Vietnam dispatched, through his ambassadors, a message of apology on behalf of Chao Anuvong. The ambassadors reached Bangkok on the third day of the new moon of the tenth month (September 11) and the message reads as follows:

"King Chao Anuvong of Vientiane escaped capture by the Siamese troops and went to Muong Ngo-Anh. He told the ruler of this Vietnamese princedom that the Siamese armies were

brought up expressly to drive them out of his kingdom. King Chao Anuvong did not recall having done anything wrong or harmful to the kingdom of Siam. We, in Vietnam, realize how unhappy and how miserable it is for Chao Anuvong to have been forced to stay away from his people. This feeling of ours motivated our sympathy in granting him asylum at Muong Nge-Anh. One year later, Chao Anuvong expressed the desire to return to his kingdom and again, we acceeded to his demand and ordered our officials to escort him home. We did so because we thought he deserved understanding and protection. But as soon as we passed the frontiers of the Vientiane kingdom, we suggested that, upon his arrival at his capital, he promptly arrange for the sending of the members of his own family with traditional gifts of friendship to His Majesty the king at Bangkok, so as to normalise the situation and recreate an atmosphere of cooperation and trust between the two kingdoms. In asking Chao Anuvong to do so, we therefore believed that His Majesty the king of Siam would graciously pardon his alleged past mistakes and allow him to continue to rule over Vientiane in the same framework which had so happily prevailed in the past."

Eight days after the arrival of the Vietnamese ambassadors in the Siamese capital city, Ong-Le-Bo handed another message to the Siamese minister of Finances drafted in the following terms: The king of Vietnam has arranged for the return of Chao Anuvong to his kingdom and upon passing the frontiers, His Majesty the king of Siam has been notified accordingly. Now, Ong-Aim-Luck-Bien-Bu has sent a note to Le-Bo telling him of the fact, as reported, that the Siamese troops in charge of the control and the distribution of rice in Vientiane refused to supply Chao Anuvong with the quantity of rice he was entitled to receive. When Chao Anuvong sent his son, Chao Rajavong to protest such decision and to renew his demand for rice, the Siamese soldiers started regrettable incidents by opening fire on the Lao soldiers. The latter reacted by shooting back at the Siamese and as the shooting went on, the Siamese soldiers abandoned their position and fled. Because of the fact that this incident was nothing else but self-defense on the part of the Lao, Chao Anuvong did not order his men to go after the fleeing Siamese soldiers. Conscious of the maintenance of peace in the area, we dispatched our officials to ask Chao Anuvong to refrain from taking any further action but instead to send a delegation to Bangkok to explain the causes of the incident, and as usual to present His Majesty the king at Bangkok with the traditional gifts of friendship and reconciliation. We feel in this way that we have nothing to lose but much to gain in

terms of peace and friendship.

Chao Rajavong went after the Siamese

Upon the news of the withdrawal of the Siamese forces in the command of Phragna Raja-Suphawadi from Muong Phan-Phao, Chao Anuvong ordered his men across the Mekong to wreck the shrine of the "Quelling of the Vientiane revolt" which was erected in Muong Phan-Phao and transfered the Buddha statue of Phra-Serm therein (1) to Vientiane as before.

As for his son, Chao Rajavong, he led his men to the pursuit of the Siamese forces and caught up with them at Ban-Boke-Wan, province of Nong-Khai on the tenth day of the new moon of the eleventh month (October 18), and pitted his men in a hand to hand clash with the Siamese. In this raging battle, Chao Rajavong was particularily active. On the back of his horse, he dashed on Phragna Raja-Suphawadi and wounded him in the stomach with his spear. Before he had time to apply a finishing stroke on his fallen opponent, Luang Phisit, Phragna Raja-Suphawadi's brother moved in but was slain at the hands of Chao Rajavong. Chao Rajavong turned again to charge on Phragna Raja-Suphawadi but was again intercepted by a Siamese lieutenant. At this point, Chao Rajavong was hit on the knee by a bullet and fell on the ground. With Chao Rajavong wounded and being outnumbered, the Lao soldiers broke up the battle in order to save Chao Rajavong and returned to Vientiane to report to Chao Anuvong. Upon the recommendation of Chao Rajavong, who told his father that the Lao forces were outnumbered, and the chances of victory were very slim, Chao Anuvong again decided to leave Vientiane with his family on the very next day (October 19). The wounded Chao Rajavong was put aboard a boat to Muong Mahasai-Kongkeo.

Though out of combat, Phragna Raja-Suphawadi, the Siamese general was not badly wounded. After having received medical care, he ordered his men to the pursuit of Chao Rajavong in Vientiane. 600 Siamese soldiers were rushed from Muong Phan-Phao to Vientiane before any attempt of escape could be made on the part of Chao Anuvong and his family. But Chao Anuvong beat the Siamese soldiers and was able to leave the city before. Nevertheless, an important number of his family was taken prisoners. Among them were his sons, Chao Suthisan, Chao Teh, Chao Ban, Chao Duang-Chan, his daughter Chao Nang Khamvan, his nephew Chao Lot and his sisters, Chao Nang Malai, Chao Nang Vone and many others, namely Thao Phom, Thao Pem, Chao Hup and Chao Bud. These prisoners were taken

to Bangkok on October 23. Then Phraya-Raja-Suphawadi re-entered Vientiane with his troops and proceeded, as previously instructed, to the complete demolition of the city of Vientiane, and to the subsequent round-up of most, if not all, of its inhabitants.

The Siamese captured Chao Anuvong

On the full moon day of the twelfth month (November 12) a narrow-minded and irresponsible prince by the name of Chao Noi of Muong Phuan instructed his officials, Phya Kang-Muong and Phya Mahasai, to report to the Siamese general in Vientiane his willingness to help capture Chao Anuvong and turn him over to the Siamese authorities, if the Siamese general promised not to march on Muong Phuan. The proposal was accepted, and Chao Noi sent out his men to hunt for Chao Anuvong, found him at the foot of the Khaow-Kai mountain and surrounded him with 50 soldiers. In the meantime, Chao Noi dispatched Phya Nan-Khote and Phya Uthum to report to the Siamese general in Vientiane. Phraya-Raja-Suphawadi immediately ordered Phra Intharadeth, Phra Suphan-Xiengsa and Phya Kang-Muong with 300 men to the ultimate capture of Chao Anuvong. Simultaneously, King Manthaturad of Luang Phrabang also volunteered for the same mission by assigning Thao Mahaphom and Nan-Khattignah of Muong Nan with the job of helping capture Chao Anuvong. In their joint endeavor, they succeeded not only in helping capture Chao Anuvong, but also in capturing Princess Khampong, Princess Thongdy, Princess Khamsai and Princess Butsba, Chao Anuvong's sisters, as well as Princess Khampheng and Princess Nu, Chao Anuvong's daughters, and another niece of his. These prisoners were escorted by Thao Mahaphom to Nat-Duei and turned over to Phra Intharadeth who, in turn, brought them over to Vientiane on the 21st of December. Phraya Raja-Suphawadi then ordered 300 soldiers to escort Chao Anuvong and the members of his family to Bangkok. Upon arrival of the group at Muong Saraburi, Phraya Saivari put Chao Anuvong in a cage on which disgracing words and slogans were posted. Phraya Anurak-Yotha and Phra Yotha-Songgram were ordered to put the cage aboard a boat with the instructions to sail slowly along the river to Bangkok, calling upon the people to see the imprisoned king, and stopping whereever there was a village or city so that the people could take note of his evils and condemn him so. The contigent of prisoners reached Bangkok on January 15, 1828 A. D. In Bangkok the same measures were taken. The prisoners were locked in iron-bar cells decorated with insulting posters and slogans while orders and word

were sent about the city, urging people to come and see the human-beast prisoners. In each cage locking the prisoners, there was hardly any room for them to move around without being hurt for all sorts of torturing devices that one can imagine, such as mortars, hooks, boiling water, heated sand, spears, saws and other sharp and cutting blades, were placed within the cages to prevent free movement. In the early morning of each day, Chao Anuvong (2) and all the imprisoned members of his family were removed momentarily from their respective cages to be fed like animals in the presence of the delighted onlookers. This torturous and insulting way of life went on and on, every day stiffer than the last for eight consecutive days. Chao Anuvong died of exhaustion and in the most pitiful way a king ever had to face. After his death, the body of Chao Anuvong was perched atop a pole on a public place for further observation. The slow and torturous death imposed on Chao Anuvong seemed to have satisfied the ruling circles of Siam, for after his death, none of the surviving members of his family went through the same fate.

King Anuvong was born in 1767 A. D. He died in February 1829 A. D. at the age of 62. His death spelled the end of the once prosperous kingdom of the area, the kingdom of Vientiane-Chanthaburi-Srisatanakhanahut. His death also marked the annihilation of the royal family of Vientiane and the subsequent mass deportation of hundreds of thousands of Lao people to Siam, the very same people which today forus the bulk of the inhabitants of Thailand.

As for the king of Vietnam, when he learned that Chao Noi of Muong Phuan was the one who contributed to the capture and the insulting death of Chao Anuvong, a kind of death which horrified all kings alike, he took the drastic decision which led to the arrest of Chao Noi of Muong Phuan and his subsequent execution in Vietnam. Later, the king of Vietnam appointed Ban-Sun-Vien as his ambassador to hand his messages, twice, to the king of Siam concerning the sad history of Vientiane, the first time, on the tenth day of the new moon of the fourth month, and the second time, on the sixth day of the new moon of the twelfth month of the year 1829 A. D.: The act of banditry and pitiless sanctions imposed on the royal family and the people of Vientiane had stirred the feelings of the king of Vietnam to the extent that the two kingdoms, Vietnam and Siam, were pitted in a long war which lasted over many years before a new period of tranquility prevailed again in the area.

The Lan-Xang kingdom of Luang-Phrabang after the loss of its independence

(1) The reign of king Anurutha

After the three Lao kingdoms had all become colonies of Siam, the first king to rule over the Lan-Xang kingdom of Luang-Phrabang was King Surya-Vong whose reign lasted through 1791 A. D. After the death of King Surya-Vong, the king's household went to Bangkok to ask for the permission to enthrone Chao Anurutha, the second son of Chao Inthason, as king of Luang Phrabang, with Chao Nark and Chao Manthaturad, respectively as the two highest officials of the kingdom.

One year after the enthronement of Chao Anurutha, in 1792 A. D., the kingdom of Luang-Phrabang was the victim of an attack by Chao Nanthasen of Vientiane. The reason given to the king of Siam was that Chao Anurutha had a secret pact with the Burmese. In this particular attack on the kingdom of Luang-Phrabang, the Vientiane army lost its Chief Minister, but in the end, Chao Nanthasen succeeded in capturing Chao Anurutha as well as Chao Nark and Chao Manthaturad and their families, who were later taken to Bangkok. Chao Anurutha and his associates and family lived in captivity in Bangkok for four years, until 1796 A. D., before being released and authorized to rule again over Luang-Phrabang. At the same time, the Siamese government appointed Chao Aphai, the son of Chao Nark to the rank of Chief Advisor to the Household. Chao Anurutha reigned through the year 1817 A. D. and died at the age of 82. He was survived by six sons and three daughters. The six sons were: Chao Manthaturad, Chao Sutharad, Chao Sayarad, Chao Rajaphai, Chao Unkeo and Chao Xang. The three daughters were: Princess Pathuma, Princess La and Princess Vayaka.

(2) The reign of Chao Manthaturad

After the death of Chao Anurutha, Chao Manthaturad ascended to the throne of Luang-Phrabang with Chao Sutharad, his brother, and Chao Aphai, the son of Chao Nark, as the two highest officials in his government. Later, in 1825 A.D., the second king of Siam died. Thereupon, King Manthaturad handed over the administration of the kingdom to his Household and attended in person the king of Siam's funeral in Bangkok. To pay his last homage to the late-king of Siam, he even asked to be ordained in front of the king's body.

The third king of Siam agreed, and the newly ordained king-priest made Wat Phrakeo his permanent residence, but went at Lent to Wat Mahathat. It was only in 1826 that he returned to Luang-Phrabang, leaving behind his son, Chao Pho-Nuan-Thong, to serve in the Siamese administration in Bangkok.

King Manthaturad had nine sons and six daughters in all. The nine sons were: Chao Suksema, Chao Nantharad, Chao Pho-Nua-Thong, Chao Unkham, Chao Buakham, Chao Buaraphan, Chao Suthisan, Chao Phothisan and Chao Suphan. The six daughters were: Princess Nang Nhot-Kham, Princess Nang Bimba, Princess Nang Thong-Thip, Princess Nang Meng-Kham, Princess Nang Sim-phali and Princess Nang Thong-Suk.

Later, in 1827 A. D. King Chao Anuvong of Vientiane started a movement of liberation from Siamese domination and urged Chao Manthaturad to join him in the struggle for independence. Chao Manthaturad acted as though he was very impressed by the idea and prepared to cooperate. But as soon as the Vientiane ambassadors had left his city, he immediately dispatched his son, Chao Suk-Serm, to Bangkok to report the proposed war of liberation by Chao Anuvong to the king of Siam. He also sent 5000 men to help the Siamese attack the kingdom of Vientiane, with Chao Sutharad as commanding officer. When Chao Anuvong was defeated, Chao Sutharad was himself object of a complaint to have omitted or falsified the actual number of the Lao families of Vientiane and was for this reason brought to trial in Bangkok, where he died. King Manthaturad then promoted Phra Rajaphai to the rank of Chief minister and Chao Suk-Serm as his assistant, and Chao Chantharad as the third ranking official. King Manthaturad reigned for a period of twenty years and died in 1836 A. D., at the age of 64.

(3) The reign of Chao Suk-Serm

After the death of King Manthaturad, the Siamese government in Bangkok first appointed Chao Unkeo, King Manthaturad's brother, as acting King of Luang-Phrabang and it wasn't until 1838 A. D. that Chao Suk-Serm was crowned king of Luang Phra-bang, with Chao Unkeo, Chao Chantharad and Chao Kemkham (the son of Chao Sutharad) as the three highest officials. Chao Rajaphai was elevated to the honorific title of Chao Aphai-Suryavongsa. It was reported later that Chao Aphai-Suryavong-sa was involved in a rebellion in favor of the Vietnamese. He was thur arrested and taken to Bangkok, where he died afterward. King Chao Suk-Sern had six sons and seven daughters.

The six sons were: Chao Khan-Ngeow, Chao Bun-Phet, Chao Phommachak, Chao Khamsong, Chao Phomma and Chao Inthachak. The seven daughters were: Nang Kanlaya, Nang Khan-Onh, Nang Butsdi, Nang Babha, Nang Khamsorn, Nang Unkham and Nang Khampong.

The first minister Unkeo had four sons and three daughters. The four sons were: Chao Sirisa, Chao Suvanna-phomma, Chao Thong-Kham and Chao Khammao. The three daughters were: Nang Suphan, Nang Khampine and Nang Khamsao.

Later in 1847 A. D. there were uprisings in Muong Xieng-Hung, Muong Phong and Muong La. King Suk-Serm sent out his men to suppress the rebellion and, at the same time, brought the First Minister of Muong Xieng-Hung and a great number of families there over to Luang-Phrabang.

King Suk-Serm reigned for a period of twelve years and died in 1850 A. D., at the age of 53.

(4) The reign of Chao Chantharad

In 1852 A. D. Chao Chantharad, the second son of Chao Kanthaturad, ascended the throne of Luang-Phrabang, with his brother Chao Unkham and Chao Buakham as his highest executive officers. In 1853 A. D. the Siamese government sent the Siamese army to the attack of Muong Xieng-Tung. King Chantharad appointed Chao Sirisa and Chao Khamsao to head a small army of 3000 men to support the Siamese attack. Chao Sirisa died in action and Chao Khamsao disappeared mysteriously.

During the reign of King Chantharad, a popular uprising occured in Muong Xieng-Hung. As recorded, the uprising started as follows: King Chantharad ordered Phragna Si-Mahanari and Phragna Kuan-Lock to escort the First Minister of Muong Xieng-Hung home. When they arrived at Muong Boen, they were informed about the disturbances shaping up at Muong Xieng-Hung. The First Minister of Xieng-Hung then requested the two officials who had escorted him so far to wait in Muong Boon, while he pushed as far as he could in quest of further information. When he arrived at Muong Phong, he asked Thao Mahasai of Muong Phong to take him to Muong Ham. The request was heeded, but Thao Mahasai did not want to go into the city. So he waited at a one day walk's distance from the city. Upon his arrival at Muong Ham, the First Minister of Xieng-

Hung sent a message to the acting chief executive of the city to inform him of his intention to continue to live peacefully in Muong Xieng-Hung, but because he was not alone on this trip and because he had been escorted all along the way by military forces, the terms as put forth in his message were not favorably interpreted. Instead, the acting chief executive ordered Atgna Noi of Muong Ban to attack the escort units of Thao Mahasai. Thao Mahasai was thus forced to pull back to Muong Phong but not without misgivings. The surprise attack, launched by Atgna Noi of Muong Ban against his men, was considered by Thao Mahasai as the deliberate trickery of the First Minister whom, he assumed, had double-crossed him. In anger, Thao Mahasai regrouped his forces and led them to the attack of Muong La, Muong Long and Muong Ban. The First Minister was himself captured in this drive and executed. In the light of the belligerence of Thao Mahasai, the acting chief executive of Xieng-Hung stepped up his fighting power by recruiting a new army from Muong Sip-Song-Phanna and pitted it against the Thao Mahasai forces. Thao Mahasai was unable to hold the cities he had thus far occupied and, hard-pressed on all sides, he retreated to the province of Luang-Phrabang to regroup his forces and fight back. But Thao Mahasai was killed in his desparate attempt to counter-attack. His son, Thao Nhong managed to regroup quite an important number of his father's forces and tried in vain to take position in the Luang-Phrabang province. At the same time, King Chantharad of Luang-Phrabang had ordered his men to oppose Thao Nhong's attempt. Having no other choice, Thao Nhong decided to strike at the Luang-Phrabang army itself, but was overwhelmed. So ended this short-lived period of belligerency of Thao Mahasai.

In 1866 A. D. King Chantharad managed to obtain the return of the Buddha statue of Phra-Bang from Siam and continued to reign until 1872 A. D., the year of his death.

(5) The reign of King Unkham

After the death of King Chantharad, his brother, Chao Unkham ascended to the throne of Luang-Phrabang in the same year (1872). King Unkham had five sons. They were: Chao Khamsuk, Chao Sisuphan, Chao Khan-Ngaow, Chao Khampane and Chao Son-Sai. During the reign of King Unkham, his eldest son, Chao Khamsuk held an important post in the administration. It was also in the reign of King Unkham that the northern part of Laos was repeatedly attacked and looted by the Ho (people of Chinese extraction).

In 1872 A. D. there were three groups of Ho known by the color of their banners as The Stripe and Yellow Banners, The Red Banners and the Black Banners. These three main groups of Ho spread death and horror in the northern part of Laos and looted the area of all its properties, wealth and resources. The Ho of the "Stripe Banners" were about 3000 strong. They were led by two fearless and blood-thirsty chieftains called Sam-Koh-Piu and Koh-Yinh-Tai. After having ransacked and occupied the Sip-Song-Chau-Thai territory, they marched on the province of Hua-Phan. The people of the province fought them for two years (1874) but were forced to abandon their homes at the end to seek refuge in Muong Sop-Siu on Vietnamese territory. Having occupied Muong Hua-Phan, the Ho split themselves into three units, stationed, respectively, at Muong Hang with Ta-Yat as leader, at Ban-Tang with Sap-Sui as leader and at Ban Sop-San with Sam-Koh-Piu as leader. The latter later moved downward to Thong Xieng-Khan in the province of the Phuan.

Simultaneously the Ho of the "Red Banners" led by Lo-Lee and Lo-Kai marched on Muong-Then and, if successful, to Luang-Phrabang itself. At this stage, King Unkhan realized that his very own safety was at stake. So, he ordered his son Chao Khamsuk to attack the Ho at Muong-Then, while Thao Maow headed another unit in the direction of Muong Son. At the same time, the King reported the situation to Bangkok.

Chao Khamsuk's forces handed the first defeat to the Ho at Muong-Then, as they successfully destroyed their camp and sent them fleeing unfortunately enough for them in the direction of Muong Son, where Thao Maow and his men were waiting for them. The Ho bandits fled in panic but managed to regroup at Thong Xieng-Khon from which they went on to occupy Muong Khang-Lat-Buak. Muong Xieng-Khuang was next on their list. As they moved to the attack of Xieng-Khuang, they met with stiff resistance from Chao Ung, the ruler of Xieng-Khuang. But the latter was soon to be killed in the battle and Xieng-Khuang fell into the hands of the Ho. Phra Phanomsan-Norind, Chao Ung's nephew managed to escape with Chao Ung's family to Muong Nong-Khai.

After the fall of Xieng-Khuang, Sam-Koh-Piu, the Ho's chieftain ordered his lieutenants Ong-van and Kuan-Lan to lead 1000 men to the attack of Vientiane in 1874 A. D. Vientiane which had been systematically destroyed by the

Siamese, was almost deserted, with scarcely any officials or troops to run and defend the city. The Siamese authorities who carried the responsibility had their office at Muong Nong-Khai instead. So, when the Ho entered the city of Vientiane, the few families who lived there at the time, fled for their lives to Muong Nong-Khai. Those who could not flee in time were forced against their lives to give up whatever properties or belongings they had. The Ho stayed over in Vientiane for four full months in their desperate search for hidden treasure in the already emptied city. While the Ho were busy with their search in Vientiane, a Siamese governor of Muong Ubol named Phragna Maha Amnat Sun received a report from Muong Nong-Khai with regard to the Ho occupation of Vientiane. He immediately ordered his army to surround Vientiane and in a one-sided battle which followed, only six Ho bandits managed to escape alive. Encouraged by this initial success, the Siamese soldiers of Phragna Maha Amnat went on to attack the Ho's main bastion at Thong Xieng-Khan, and drove the intruders out of the area. When the situation returned to normal, Phra Phanomsan-Norind was sworn in as the provisional ruler of Xieng-Khuang to be succeeded later by Chao Khanthi, the son of the late ruler Chao Ung.

As for the situation in Luang-Phrabang, the Siamese government had appointed Phragna Phutharaphai and Phragna Sithammathiraj to lead an army to help Chao Unkham fight the Ho in his own area. The combined forces of Chao Unkham and the Siamese stormed the Ho position at Ban Na-Bua and when Luang-Phrabang was freed from the Ho, the Siamese forces sent in for this purpose were recalled to Bangkok. But the Ho, who at first seemed to have headed for South China from which they came, did not really leave the country. Instead, they took position at Muong Ven, Muong La and Muong Hang and effectively reoccupied Thong Xieng-Khan for the second time in 1877 A. D.

In the same year, the ruler of Muong Lai hired the Ho of the "Black Banners" from Muong Lao-Kai to fight the "stripe Banners" Ho at Muong La. They fought for over a year without any decisive victory for either side. The stalemate prompted the ruler of Muong Lai to send for help from Muong Lao-Kai. The ruler of Muong Lao-Kai ordered Pak-Peng-Kaow with 800 men to the attack of Muong La. Pak-Peng-Kaow, also sent a message to the Ho in which he told them that the Emperor of China had written the ruler of Lao-Kai, instructing him to arrest all the Ho who had invaded and looted Laos.

If the mission was not successfully carried out, the ruler of Lao-Kai would be held responsible for the failure. Koh-Yip-Tai, the Ho chieftain at Muong La, responded to the spirit of the message and surrendered to Pak-Peng-Kaow. He was taken with his men to Muong Lao-Kai. But his Lieutenants, Kuan-Koh-Yi, Kuan-Koh-Wang, Kuan-Koh-Su, Kuan-Koh-Chuong refused to surrender and led another 200 men to seek refuge in the territory of Phragna Kha-Chuong at Muong Pern in 1879 A. D. Later, these same Ho incited Phragna Kha-Chuong to help them capture Muong Sop-Et and, in return, they helped him capture Muong Son. The agreement led to a rebellion, recorded in our history as the "Kha-Chuong rebellion", a rebellion which forced the ruler of Sop-Et with a little more than one hundred followers to seek asylum in Luang,Phrabang.

Another group of Ho which numbered about 100 in the command of Kuan-Ko-Tai, who was formerly a lieutenant of Koh-Yip-Tai, escaped from Muong Lao-Kai to take position at Muong Sop-Khop. The ruler of Lao-Kai sent Ong-Ba with 300 men in his pursuit. In a hit and run battle with the men of Ong-Ba, Kuan-Ko-Tai moved in the direction of Huei-Sui and occupied Muong Son. Ong-Ba followed his men to Muong-Son but Kuan-Ko-Tai had already moved to Thong Xiwng-Khan, where he met with the other groups of Ho who had taken up positions here before him. The newly arrived group of Ho under Kuan-Ko-Tai finally moved further to take up position at Ban-Huei-Sai and from here, they set out to loot every part of the territories they were able to reach. In 1885 A. D. the Ho who were at Thong Xieng-Khan invaded Vientiane for the second time, while those at Ban Huei-Sai moved toward Luang-Phrabang. Caught unaware, King Unkham of Luang-Phrabang fled the Ho down to Muong Pak-Lai, while many of his associates who could not flee in time were killed by the merciless bandits.

When the Ho invasion was over, the Siamese Government retired King Unkham and then handed over the kingship of Luang-Phrabang to his son, Chao Khamsuk, who took the new kingname of King Sakkarin, the ruler of the "kingdom of the Million Elephants and the White Parasol of Luang-Phrabang". The old, retired King Unkham died in 1895 A. D. at the age of 84. He reigned for a period of 23 years.

(6) The reign of Chao Khamsuk (king Sakkarin)

In 1889 A. D. the Siamese Government retired King Unkham because of his old age and handed the power to his son, Chao Khamsuk, who ascended the throne of Luang-Phrabang under

the kingname of Sakkarin, the ryler of the "Kingdom of the Million Elephant and the White Parasol". They made his brother, Chao Sisuphan, the crown Prince.

After having reigned three years, from 1889 to 1892, the Siamese government signed a treaty with France, whereby all the territories of Laos on the left side of the Mekong river were placed under the control and jurisdiction of the French authorities. From this date on, the territories on the left side of the Mekong river which constitutes the present kingdom of Laos became a French Protectorate.

The Kingdom of Champassak

after the loss of its independence

(1) The reign of Chao Saya-Kuman

The kingdom of Champassak became an independent kingdom in 1713 A. D. and became dependent on Siam in 1778 A.D., during the reign of Chao Soi-Sisamud-Phuthangkun and the first part of the reign of his son, Chao Saya-Kuman. The existence of the kingdom of Champassak as an independent entity covered thus a period of 65 years. When the kingdom became dependent of Siam, Chao Saya-Kuman continued to reign with his brother, Chao Thammathevo, as his First Minister, and Chao Suryo, his third brother, as crown prince.

Chao Saya-Kuman had one son named Chao No-Muong and two daughters named Chao Ponhau-Kumari and Chao Thone-Keo.

In 1791 A. D., a person named Xieng-Keo of Ban-Khaow-Ong led a rebel movement and marched on Nakorn Champassak. Chao Saya-Kuman who was then already 81 years of age died of a stroke upon hearing the news of the rebellion, thus enabling Xieng-Keo to enter the city. Xieng-Keo hardly set up his rule when he was attacked by loyal forces stationed at Ban Sing-Tha (the district of Nhasothorn in Thailand today) led by Thao Fai-Na, and at Ban Huei Chelamae (Muong Ubol in Thailand today) led by Phra Pathu-Surahra. Xieng-Keo was captured and executed.

(2) The rule by Chao Phra Visayaraj-Khattigna-Vongsa

For the merit that led the loyal forces to the suppression of the rebellion led by Xieng-Keo, the Siamese government appointed Thao Fai-Na to rule over Nakorn Champassak,

under the ruling name of "Chao Phra Visayaraj-Khattigna-Vongsa". Chao Phra Visayaraj-Khattigna-Vongsa then transfered his headquarters to the north, which is the site of Muong Kao-Khan-Koung of today. In 1805 he rebuilt Ban Na-Nhan and elevated it to the rank of a city called Muong Saphat, and handed over the administration of the city to Phragna Si-Akkharaj, the son of Chane-Huad formerly of Muong Khong.

Chao Phra Visayaraj had one son named Chao Bud and three daughters named Nang Daeng, Nang Thai and Nang Kone-Keo. In 1807 A. D., upon the death of Chao Phra Visayaraj, the Siamese government appointed Chao No-Muong, the son of Chao Saya-Kuman, to rule over Nakorn Champassak. But Chao No-Muong, the Muong died after only three days in power, and in 1808 A. D. Phragna Kalahon-Rajsena, the Siamese governor who came to Champassak for the funeral of Phra Visayaraj returned to Bangkok, taking with him the Buddha statue of Phra Keo-Phluk, which the late Chao Soi-Sisamud had found at Ban Sompoi-Na-Nhone, to be offered to the king of Siam.

This Buddha statue of Phra Keo-Phluk is over five meters tall. The king of Siam gave it a new name of "Phra Phuthabudsagnaratana-Chakkaphat-Phimon-Maninai" and it is still kept in the royal palace in Bangkok up to this date.

(3) The rule of Chao Manoi

In 1813 A. D., the Siamese government appointed Chao Manoi, the son of Chao Suryo and the nephew of Chao Soi-Sisamud, to rule over Champassak, and Chao Thammakittika, the son of Chao Thammathevo, to serve under him as his First Minister. Later on, Chao Manoi and his first Minister were involved in a dispute following which the Siamese government jailed Chao Thammakittika in Bangkok.

In 1815 A. D. there was a monk called Sa who made his residence at the Kiet-Ngong Mountain. He claimed a supernatural power by showing the people that he could initiate electric power from the sun through a crystal lens. He said that he could burn the whole city with the electric power he was thus able to produce. By making such a claim to a rather ignorant mass, he succeeded in aligning with him a great number of believers whom he later organized in fighting units and led them to the attack of Nakorn Champassak. Chao Manoi was unable to hold his position and fled into the jungle. The monk Sa thus entered the city and set it on fire. When

the news of the flight of Chao Manoi and the subsequent destruction of Champassak reached Bangkok, the Siamese government ordered Phragna Maha Amat (Pon) and Phragna Son-Sauk-aeng to put down the rebellion. The monk Sa, instead of putting up a fight which could have justified his quest for power, fled secretly to the Yapu mountain in the province of Attopeu. The Siamese generals then took Chao Manoi with them to Bangkok, where he died soon after. Chao Manoi was survived by six sons: Chao Un, Chao Nuc, Chao Saeng, Chao Bun, Chao Chun, and Chao Chu. At the same time, Chao Rajabud-Yok (the son of Chao Anuveng) went with his men to the pursuit of the monk "Sa" in his retreat, captured him and sent him to Bangkok. Chao Rajabud-Yoh soon became the ruler of Champassak.

(4) The rule of Chao Rajabud-Yoh

In 1819 A. D., King Anuvong of Vientiane requested that his son Chao Rajabud-Yoh be appointed the ruler of Champassak in replacement of Chao Manoi, with Chao Khampon as his First Minister. Chao Rajabud-Yoh was credited with the reconstruction of Champassak including the erection of the city walls and forts. He was also credited with the improvement of the administrative reorganization, particularily the new taxation procedures. Later, in 1825 A. D., when Chao Anuvong of Vientiane carried out his war of liberation against Siam, Chao Rajabud-Yoh greatly contributed to his father's effort by sending his forces to occupy Muong Sangkha, Muong Khukhan, Muong Surind. Subsequently he regrouped the population of those cities in Champassak, ready to be used whenever needed. But when Vientiane fell to the Siamese armies, Chao Hui (who was the son of Chao O and the nephew of Chao Thammathevo) captured Cao Rajabud-Yoh and turned him over to the Siamese authorities, while his First Minister fled and died in the jungle.

(5) The rule of Chao Hui

When the Siamese conquest of Vientiane was completed, the Siamese government appointed Chao Hui to the head of Champassak, with Chao Nark as his First Minister. They ordered Chao Hui to send annual taxes equivalent to 8.000 Baht to Bangkok. And once every three years state gifts of rare specimens must be offered to the palace in Bangkok. Later, in 1837, the city of Champassak was accidentally destroyed in a blaze. Chao Hui then led his people to build a new city at Ban Hin-Hot.

Chao Hui ruled over Champassak through the year 1841 A. D., when he died at the age of 61. He was survived by seven sons: Chao Sone, Chao Inh, Chao Khan-Nhai, Chao Khamsuk, Chao Khamsui, Chao Noi, Chao Phomrach and seven daughters: Nang Phim, Nang Khem, Nang Thum, Nang Phansing, Nang Khai, Nang Khampheng and Nang Duang-Chan.

(6) Rule by Chao Nark

After the death of Chao Hui, his first minister, Chao Nark, succeeded him to the throne of Champassak in the same year (1841). He was assisted in his duty by Chao Sua (the son of Chao Sinh), Chao Sen and Chao Sa (Chao Narks' sons).

In 1851 A. D. Chao Nark went to Bangkok. He was stricken by cholera and died there. He was 76. He was survived by six sons: Chao Rajavong-Sen, Chao Rajabud-Sa, Chao Phothisan, Chao Inthasit, Chao Phansing and Chao Phanmoi, and by four daughters: Chao Nung Duang-Chan, Chao Siw, Chao Chieng and Chao Khem.

In 1853 A. D. the Siamese government appointed Chao Bua to rule over Champassak. But before he could hold his new post, he was stricken with a sudden illness and died in Bangkok.

(7) Rule by Chao Nhutithamthorn (Khan-Nhai)

In 1855 A. D. the Siamese government appointed Chao Khan-Nhai (the son of Chao Hui) to rule over Champassak. He took the name of Chao Nhutithamthorn. Chao U, Chao Ni (the son of Chao Net) Chao Inthasit, Chao Surya (Bong), Chao Hui's brother were respectively appointed to run Chao Nhutithamthorn's government. Chao Nhutithamthorn (Khan-Nhai) ruled for only two years and died. He was 27. He was survived by only two daughters: Chao Phanphiu and Chao Nala.

(8) Rule by Chao Nhutithamthorn (Khamsuk)

In 1862 A. D. Chao Khamsuk took over the leadership of Champassak, retaining the same official name of Chao Phutithamthorn. He appointed Chao Saeng (the son of Chao Manoi), and Chao No-Khan (the son of Chao Sua, the nephew of Chao Anuvong) as his assistants. In 1863 A. D. Chao Khutithamthorn (Khamsuk) transfered his headquarters from the old site at Muong Kao-Hin-Hot to a place in between Phon-Boke and Pat Lakorn, on the bank of the Mekong river to the west, a place which was to become as Nakorn Champassak today.

[FOOTNOTES]

(1)
Phra-Serm was one of the most beautiful and most perfectly cast statues of Buddha. At present, the Statue of Buddha Phra Serm is enshrined at Wat Pathum Wanaram in Bangkok.

(2)
In the history book of Siam, it was recorded that depreciatory words such as "Ai" and "ee" have been applied respectively to the princes and princesses to show the despicableness od their prisoners: "In the early morning, the prinoners, Ai Anu, Ai Yob-Pasak, Ai Suthisan...ee Khampong, Ai Surya... are removed from their cage to be fed..."

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