

# From Co-loa to the Trung Sisters' Revolt:

VIET-NAM AS THE CHINESE FOUND IT

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STEPHEN O'HARROW

**H**ISTORIANS AND archaeologists ignore each other at their peril, but the peril is greater for the historian since concrete evidence which is at odds with a particular theory of historical development will simply not go away and eventually must be taken into consideration. In some areas of inquiry more than others, history and artifact must be at each other's service because neither alone can begin to suffice. Such is the case with the 300-year period in the area of the Red River delta and adjacent Thanh-hoa Province in northern Viet-Nam, the cradle of the Vietnamese nation, between the middle of the third century B.C. and the revolt of the Trung Sisters in A.D. 40. It is a period which poses a number of highly interesting theoretical problems for the historian and philologist, and recent developments in archaeology have contradicted older bibliocentric and sinocentric notions (the two often go hand in hand) to the extent that a thorough reexamination is in order. As a preliminary step in that direction, this article aims at outlining the sociohistorical situation of Viet-Nam when the first extensive imposition of Chinese power on the area began. The object of the exercise is threefold: first, to point out what I believe are certain important historical implications of recent archaeological activity; second, to suggest a few notions of a theoretical nature which might address those historical implications; and third, to set the stage for a more extensive exposition at a later date of the development of Viet-Nam under Chinese hegemony from the first to the tenth centuries.

I should like to indulge in a short digression before examining the specifics of the case. When dealing with the very early history of Southeast Asia and its links with outside civilizations, one is often led to wonder whether the term "Southeast Asian" has any in-

Stephen O'Harrow is an associate professor of Indo-Pacific languages, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu.

tegral validity. In other words, is it not merely a modern conceit, the result of recent geographical and political convenience? Working in today's world, one must always be alert to the dangers of playing up to modern nationalisms and the desire to maintain access to the sources of data which are controlled by those who do not share the scholar's concern for disinterested insight. If there is a qualitative reality which a term like "Southeast Asian" can usefully describe, however, then it merits serious consideration. It may turn out, for example, that there are features common to many of the early cultures of Southeast Asia that are sufficiently widespread and basic to allow us to speak about a Southeast Asian prehistory that can be meaningfully contrasted with, say, a northern nuclear Chinese prehistory in something more than obvious geographic locus. Without wishing to resurrect the theories of Ellsworth Huntington, I for one would still not be surprised if the early cultures of Southeast Asia could be shown to share some significant common responses to the environmental peculiarities of their area, climate being one of the determining factors. To bring this point to bear specifically on the case at hand, it has always been assumed, at least by traditional Chinese scholars and those like myself who read what they wrote, that Chinese agricultural technology was introduced *grosso modo* into Viet-Nam and that the economic development of the latter was due to the skillful adaptation of those techniques by the local inhabitants under Chinese tutelage (cf. Maspero 1918:9, Arousseau 1923:244, Le 1955:87, and Fairbank, Reischauer, and Craig 1973:262, all of whom ultimately depend for their assertions on sources such as the *Shih Chi*<sup>a</sup> and the *Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu*<sup>b</sup>. The latter, although part of the Vietnamese historiographic tradition, are mainly derivative when dealing with this period). Now it may eventually be possible to demonstrate that Chinese agricultural technology, born in the environment of China north of the Yangtse, moved south subsequent to changes in the climate of central and southern central China (a southward shift in the temperate zone after about 4000 B.C.) that rendered the more southerly environment increasingly susceptible to the application of that technology. But at the point where this investigation begins, the Chinese had yet to master the lands which lay between their secure northern domains and the Red River area, that is, the region now known as Kuang-tung and Kuang-hsi provinces. The question this leads to is: Did the Chinese encounter here and/or farther south populations whose cultural response to their environment was technologically inferior to or less appropriate than that which the Chinese possessed, and was the Chinese approach substituted for the indigenous one? Or was there a preexisting Southeast Asian technology, developed in and appropriate to the tropical environment, which was taken up by the Chinese and applied, *mutatis mutandis*, within the scope of their colonialization (as Maspero 1918:9, n3 implies and Davidson 1976:93, 96, n36 hints at)?

Contact between the Middle Kingdom and the dominant culture occupying the Red River delta and environs, where some of the distant ancestors of the modern-day Vietnamese have lived *in situ* for generations untold, must have already been taking place by the late Chou dynasty (second half of the first millennium B.C.), if not before. In Viet-Nam, this epoch is primarily the haunt of the archaeologist, although there is a rudimentary description of it in traditional histories. In the absence of contemporaneous records, such traditional histories are often taxed with being legendary and, in any event, appear for the moment to have been transcribed much later. Happily, however, the corrections made by Nguyen Phuc Long (1975) to the work of Bézacier (1972) and a handy survey by Davidson (1976) of recent archaeological work have made the general outlines of what is known about this period available to those for whom the original Vietnamese sources are inac-

cessible. The importance of the new findings is that they will enable us to appreciate much more clearly the state of the Red River civilization at the point in time at which it is impinged upon by Chinese political and military expansion. The old picture of a powerful, technologically advanced, and numerous Chinese force descending upon the Red River peoples, who are more or less swallowed whole, is not only misleading but partially inverted as well. We now have reason to believe that the Chinese encountered a stable, structured, productive, populous, and relatively sophisticated society of whose existence they had a knowledge, if not an appreciation, through intermediary sources of long standing.

Here I should like to propose the use of a particular term in the rest of this discussion: "Proto-Vietnamese," or PVN. By PVN will be meant the group or groups of people in the Red River delta and its environs, stretching northward into southern Kuang-tung and Kuang-hsi and southward through coastal Thanh-hoa Province, a people who shared the material culture illustrated by the Dong-son and related finds, a people who were heirs in the second half of the first millennium B.C. to the cultures illustrated by the finds at Go-bong, Dong-dau, and Go-mun, a people whose domain appears to have been congruent with the historical state of Van-Lang<sup>c</sup>. Though immigration to the area may have played a part in the earlier build-up of the population, by this time the inhabitants probably spoke one Austroasiatic language (Norman and Mei 1978:3-7, 23-24) or a variety of related dialects and possessed a social hierarchy responsible for regional concerns, hydraulic works, and, to some extent, military defense.

The salient facts which can be gleaned from a reading of Vietnamese archaeological work (and which the historian must retain) have to do with the technological level of the population. The economy of the PVN was based on wet riculture. Use was made of draught animals, metal ploughshares, axes and other implements, as well as irrigation complexes of considerable size. Irrigated rice cultivation in the area dates back to the early second millennium B.C., if not earlier, and the regular use of metal tools, while perhaps somewhat later in its inception, was already long established before any significant historical intercourse took place between PVN and Chinese (Davidson 1976). In other words, none of these developments can be held any longer to have been the result of Chinese occupation during the historical period; in this regard, the affirmations heretofore relied upon by historians and the authors of our standard textbooks will have to be seriously modified, if not dispensed with entirely (Maspero, Arousseau, Le, Fairbank et al., and others cited earlier).

One striking piece of evidence for the relatively advanced state of PVN activity in the third century B.C. is the citadel at Co-loa. Impressive as are its dimensions (the circumference of the outermost of its three ramparts is some 8 km), its real importance lies in the testimony that it bears to the ability of the PVN economy to produce the agricultural surplus and to release the manpower necessary for its accomplishment over a relatively short span of time. Reinforced with guard towers and defensive works, the walls attain a height of 3 to 4 m and are complemented by extensive moatlike ditches leading to the river Hoang that are apparently intended to facilitate coordination of land and waterborne defenses. The use of kiln-fired bricks and tile in its construction, as well as considerable finds of metal weapons in the surroundings, can only reinforce the impression one gains of a people quite dissimilar to those whom the Chinese describe in their meridional contacts, even allowing for the fact that Chinese ethnographic descriptions of the period are not noted for excessive charity.

I have alluded earlier to contact between the Chinese and the PVN through intermediary sources of long standing. These intermediaries were the Yüeh<sup>d</sup>, and before going further into the subject of Chinese expansion into the Red River area, I should clarify to the extent possible to whom I refer, since the imprecision of the term has confused historical discussion from the very beginning. In fact, I am not convinced that the early Chinese commentators on the period were themselves entirely clear about the various groups of people they called the Hundred Yüeh<sup>e</sup>, who these people really were, how they were related, or where they were located, and this fact compounds our problems today. It would appear that, of whatever racial stock they were (and this is so far unresolved), by the fourth to third centuries B.C. the Yüeh were a broadly related set of tribes and nations who had spread out considerably from previous points of concentration in southern coastal China. One of the reasons for distinguishing among the several divisions of the Yüeh is the existence of a much higher degree of sinicization among those people inhabiting the historical state of Yüeh, which is mentioned from the late Chou onward in the Chinese annals as the traditional rival of the state of Wu<sup>f</sup>. Heavily influenced by the thriving state of Ch'u<sup>g</sup>, which was itself long a center of sinicized, if not sinitic, southern culture, the state of Yüeh was located south of the Yangtse, in the area of modern Chekiang and Kiang-hsi provinces. Its inhabitants were accomplished sailors and were possibly responsible for some of the wide distribution of the bronze wares of the PVN through their control of the coastal trade. Serruys, in his impressive study of Han period dialectology (1959), accepts the dialect words representing Yüeh presented in the *Fang Yen*<sup>h</sup> as convincing evidence that there were a sufficient number of Chinese speakers among these northernmost Yüeh to constitute a separate Chinese dialect. But the term *Yüeh*, with various qualifiers, was applied to many other peoples in the realms farther south (thus the collective "Hundred Yüeh"), peoples who it is fair to assume were somehow related to the autochthons of the state of Yüeh but who did not share the latter's Chinese ways.

The PVN, through cross mixture or some element of early common ancestry, were almost surely related genetically and/or culturally and/or linguistically to the various tribes to the north who were called Yüeh by the Chinese, as the appellation *Yüeh* (whence the syllable *Viet* in Vietnamese) has been linked to the names for some of the early constituent PVN tribes found in the indigenous and in the Chinese historical traditions. But the PVN were nonetheless distinct from those Yüeh peoples best known to the first Chinese sources, both in their locale and in the level of their material culture.

The standard Chinese historical texts, when detailing the affairs of "China" south of the Yangtse at the time of the short-lived Ch'in dynasty (221-206 B.C.) and the early Han, describe a series of events which, in turn, misled early Vietnamese historians (and quite a few later ones, too). They reconstruct a situation in which the Red River area was brought under the direct control of the Ch'in and then of the secessionist Chinese-ruled kingdom of Nan-Yüeh<sup>i</sup>, centered near the modern city of Canton. This supposed Nan-Yüeh control over the PVN homeland led to the later acceptance of the ruling house of Nan-Yüeh by Vietnamese historians as a national dynasty (the so-called Trieu dynasty), proper successors to the house of Thuc<sup>j</sup>, ruling from 207 to 111 B.C. (*Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu: ngoai ky*, q. 2, among others). However, contemporary descriptions of the territory of the kingdom bear little resemblance to what we now know of the Red River delta. The region these early sources depict is not only low and damp but unsalubrious, thick with forest, and unproductive, as well as overrun with snakes, not a place of fertile cultivation and

long-standing habitation on a large scale. The inhabitants are not numerous; the Han envoy Lü Chia<sup>a</sup> notes to the founder of the independent Nan-Yüeh state, Chao T'ou' in the year 196 B.C.:

Now the peoples of [Your Majesty, the] King are no more than a hundred thousand, barbarians all of them, squeezed between mountain and sea. (*Shih Chi*: ch. 97)

As regards the defense capabilities of the Yüeh, a memorial to the Han throne in 135 B.C. holds that:

The Yüeh are both weak and lacking in talent; they do not know how to fight as infantry, are ignorant of horse [-drawn] vehicles, and cannot use [cross-] bows. (*Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu: ngoai ky*, q. 2)

The problem with a general description of this nature is that one does not know, in the absence of clear contextual reference points, to which part of the rather extended domains of Nan-Yüeh they refer, but I think a case can be made, particularly in view of the fact that the seat of the Nan-Yüeh government was located at P'an-yü<sup>m</sup> (that is modern Canton), that the picture they paint applies rather well to the region later to become the provinces of Kuang-tung and Kuang-hsi. The latter area was to remain inhospitable for many years to come, a situation I take up again below in connection with the famous census of the year A.D. 2. Suffice it to say that when one reads the commentaries of Chinese envoys and historians of the period, one cannot avoid the impression that the area with which they are best acquainted and most concerned was not the Red River delta or what later became Thanh-hoa Province.

I therefore suggest for purposes of analysis, based on material considerations irrespective of the old Chinese appellations, that it would be useful to think of the Yüeh as being divided into three general categories, reading from north to south: the sinicized Yüeh of the sub-Yangtse region; the so-called Min Yüeh<sup>n</sup> of Fukien, and the relatively unadvanced Yüeh, known sometimes to Chinese historians as slash-and-burn agriculturalists and occasional hunter-gatherers located in Kuang-tung/Kuang-hsi, who form the base population for the realm of Nan-Yüeh and who act as a kind of buffer between China proper and the Red River area; and finally the quite unsinicized Yüeh of advanced indigenous culture, living in an area centered on the Red River delta and Thanh-hoa (and perhaps slightly northward into southern Kuang-tung/Kuang-hsi), the same people I have chosen to call the Proto-Vietnamese. To use Sir Julian Huxley's zoological term, one might say that the Yüeh formed a "cline," with significant intraspecies variation from north to south.

I should next like to outline briefly some of the better-known work that has been done on the major historical events from the Ch'in dynasty up to the beginning of the first century A.D., relying on written sources, and examine it in the light of what we know about the PVN thanks to the diligence of the archaeologists, particularly our colleagues in Viet-Nam itself. The period prior to 111 B.C. was studied in some detail by Arousseau (1923), whose work has broadly influenced subsequent writing by others in Western language publications. Outstanding scholars such as Wang Gungwu, whose study of the Nan Hai trade (1958) has been seminal, Le Thanh Khoi, whose history (1955) is still required reading, and Fairbank, Reischauer, and Craig, whose *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation* (1973) is currently a standard text in introductory courses in many U.S. univer-

sities, all reflect Aourousseau's assessment of Ch'in and Former Han activities in the area. Aourousseau's work is highly—almost deceptively—detailed and his conclusions have, on the whole, been treated with little skepticism insofar as his reconstruction of the Ch'in and Nan-Yüeh "conquests" are concerned. A close reading of this major article, however, reveals a substantial number of qualifying phrases ("on peut imaginer que . . ." [p. 177], "Si cette supposition était fondée, on pourrait tracer . . ." [p. 177]; "Il faut penser que . . ." [p. 197], ". . . il est vraisemblable d'autre part que . . ." [p. 197], "Il semble donc que . . ." [p. 197], "Il est peu probable que . . ." [p. 197]) in nearly every instance before those very passages in which the author affirms the nature of the southward extent of Chinese domination prior to 111 B.C. Short of rehearsing his whole argument, Aourousseau can be said to maintain that the armies of the Ch'in, moving south through the "five passes" (which Aourousseau goes to some length to locate and with which I have, for the moment, no quarrel), subjugated the traditional homelands of the Yüeh peoples in their diverse variety, including the homeland of the Hsi (or Western) Ou-lo (or Tay Aulac)<sup>o</sup>, that is, the territory of the PVN in the Red River delta and Thanh-hoa. Aourousseau holds that the texts available on the period, particularly the *Huai-nan Tzu*<sup>o</sup>, which is about the oldest extant, justify his view that, after overcoming logistical obstacles and a prolonged struggle with what can only be described as local guerrilla forces, the Ch'in armies took and occupied these areas, although he does concede that the Chinese allowed for the local authority of native rulers. Wang Gungwu (1958:10) is even more specific as to the administrative machinery set in place. In each of the commanderies supposed to have been instituted after the Ch'in military sweep of the south, he posits the existence of a "governor and a garrison commander" and the fact that "both of these functionaries had secretarial staff." Although there is little or no doubt that arrangements of this sort existed in the areas nearer to the former limits of the Chinese domains and in the territories adjacent to centers of Chinese settlement such as P'an-yü, I do not think that the evidence warrants that these assumptions be applied across the board and specifically not in the case of the Red River delta and environs.

Given my reservations about this point, it would be profitable to reconsider the basis for Aourousseau's assertion that there was Ch'in occupation of the PVN homelands, that is, the *Huai-nan Tzu* (in all fairness, it must be added that Aourousseau's contention that the Ch'in administration was effectively in control of the Red River and Thanh-hoa areas rests on other texts as well, but those texts stand at a much greater temporal distance from the events, the strongest, for example, the *Chiao-chou Wai-yü Chi*<sup>o</sup> and the *Kuang-chou Chi*<sup>o</sup>, dating at best half a millennium hence [Aourousseau 1923:209-217]). In fact, the *Huai-nan Tzu* is highly uninformative. And how Aourousseau and others have been able to make so much out of it for lo these many years is something I fail to fathom. The *Huai-nan Tzu* does not say the Ch'in occupied or even that they fought in the Red River region, much less that they went still further south. What it does say, and all it says of direct relevance to the PVN, is that the soldiers of the Ch'in killed a "Lord of the Western Ou [named] I Hsü Sung" (a name which Karlgren 1940 would reconstruct as \**dīāk χīwo sōng*) in the course of making war on the Yüeh people following the construction of the Hsing-an<sup>o</sup> canal (located in northernmost modern Kuang-hsi, close to the Hu-nan border; cf. Lopicque 1911:426);

The Superintendent Lu, having been sent by the Ch'in and yet having no means of assuring the transport of supplies, had the troops dig a canal and the grain was sent by

this route. Thus was it possible to make war on the people of Yüeh. I Hsü Sung, a Lord of the Western Ou was killed. The people of Yüeh took to the maquis and, living with the animals, none would consent to become the slaves of the Chinese. (*Huai-nan Tzu*: ch. 18, *apud* Arousseau 1923:172)

A strict construction of this passage, particularly in view of the identity and location of the canal with which Arousseau is in complete accord (1923:149ff), can only support that the Western Ou took part in the resistance to the Chinese along with unspecified groups of Yüeh (to whom, few scholars would abjure, the Western Ou were related). This does not mean that the battles took place in, or even near, the Red River and Thanh-hoa regions, nor that they finally resulted in the occupation of the same by the Ch'in. My own view, and it is largely supposition for the moment, is that the PVN participated in battles taking place in areas rendered immediately accessible by the Hsing-an canal, probably northern and eastern Kuang-hsi, and perhaps western Kuang-tung along the course of the rivers Kuei' and Hsi". Whether they were engaged in these actions as a result of the need for direct defense because members of their group lived in these areas alongside related Yüeh tribesmen or rather, as I think more likely, they were called on as allies of such Yüeh, the armies of the Ch'in apparently won the set battles and the remnants of the defeated troops proceeded to harass the victors to good effect for several years thereafter. But my own view notwithstanding, what this passage in the *Huai-nan Tzu* cannot do is to provide a steady foundation for Arousseau's somewhat exuberant "Il s'agit donc bien du Tonkin . . ." (1923:176), given that the Western Ou are usually identified as early inhabitants of the aforementioned region, much less "C'est une preuve solide en faveur de la thèse selon laquelle, les pays annamites furent pour première fois conquis par une expédition chinoise qui partit de Chine en 221 et furent, quelques années plus tard, en 214, organisés en commanderies chinoises" (1923:176). If Wang Gungwu is basing himself on the same passage, or on Arousseau's airy flights originating thence, then some of his scenario for Ch'in period "Tongking," which includes the ubiquitous activities of the Chinese tax collector (1958:10), may require rethinking. This is because, in my opinion, the Chinese were not in "Tongking," either then or at any time in the following century, in any true administrative sense. Lest my affirmations on this point seem too direct, I should point out that Arousseau's localization of the activities of the Ch'in also includes a contention that the commandery of Hsiang", established following the Ch'in victories, occupied the Red River region and extended down to below modern Binh-dinh (about 13° N), and it is possible that Wang Gungwu found some merit in this theory as well. He was apparently unaware of Maspero's (1924) quite effective demolition of Arousseau's work on Hsiang commandery, given his statement that "There is more or less agreement now that Tongking was the likely place for the capital [of Hsiang] . . ." In point of fact, no one has ever effectively refuted Maspero's earlier (1916) placing of the commandery of Hsiang entirely within the confines of the southern border of modern China, although some Chinese map makers (e.g., Ch'eng and Hsü 1955:I, 13) may not know it. Nor, to judge from passages referring to the Red River delta's having been under "Chinese control . . . near the end of the third century B.C.," do Fairbank, Reischauer, and Craig (1973:262). Although Le Thanh Khoi may have been mistaken in accepting the Chinese introduction of the plow in the PVN areas (and may be forgiven for so doing, since the publication of the relevant archaeological finds postdate his work), he does not accept the Ch'in conquest of any place south of Nan-ning (1955:91-92). In sum, then, it can be said

that a proper reading of the texts of the period should not lead the historian to conclude that the Ch'in conquered the Red River delta and beyond. Although archaeological findings can never be predicted with complete safety (hence the appeal of the sport), the evidence published to date has not brought forth much if anything to support the thesis of Arousseau but, rather, tends to confirm the idea that the PVN were largely autonomous from a cultural and material standpoint. For the moment, the best cases that can be made by the two disciplines dovetail.

The Ch'in was a short-lived albeit important dynasty. As I mentioned earlier, one must also deal with the period of the secessionist state of Nan-Yüeh that came into being upon the fall of the Ch'in, in control precisely of those areas which the latter did conquer and hold in the next to last decade of the third century B.C. Since I have stated that the Ch'in did not achieve the conquest of the PVN heartlands, one might assume I will also maintain that, if Nan-Yüeh took over the areas of former Ch'in hegemony, then Nan-Yüeh did not control the Red River delta and farther south. And that is indeed the case. Archaeologically, we possess no more reason to assume Nan-Yüeh controlled the area in question than did Ch'in at any point between the end of the third century and 111 B.C., when Nan-Yüeh fell to the legions of the Han. The texts and the exegeses thereof present a confusing picture of the period as regards the southern border regions of Nan-Yüeh, and not the least of the confusion stems once again from the work of Arousseau. Henri Maspero (1924:380) characterized the part of Arousseau's article dealing with the geography of the commandery of Hsiang as "cet échafaudage ingénieux, mais quelque peu hasardeux d'hypothèses enchevêtrées." I would add that his subsequent highly interdependent assumptions all trace back to his proposition that the Ch'in conquered the Red River delta and that this region was part of Hsiang. And, of course, many other writers have followed this trail Arousseau blazed on into the desert. But here I must weaken the case for the prosecution to a degree, or at least not oppose a defense plea that Arousseau's thesis concerning the Nan-Yüeh period did not differ substantially from what was long held to be the case by traditional Vietnamese historians, that the events he describes, even if chronologically rearranged, were familiar and generally accepted. Perhaps so, but I also believe that they were essentially fictitious and, more importantly, misleading as to the nature of PVN society before the real, later imposition of full Chinese power.

The beginning of this period is fairly clear: with the death of Ch'in Shih Huang-ti in 210 B.C. and the accession of his weakling son, Erh Shih, the Ch'in empire, prey to internal dissent, started to crumble. In 207 B.C., General Chao T'o (or Trieu Da in Vietnamese), Commandant of Lung-chuan<sup>2</sup>, the man who was responsible for earlier victories over the Yüeh and Hsi-ou guerrillas harassing the Ch'in forces and who was probably something of a military strongman in these parts, received from Jen Ao<sup>3</sup>, the dying Governor-General of the southernmost realms of the Ch'in, a mandate to assume from him the reigns of power and, in effect, to break away from the empire. Up to this time, it had been Ch'in policy to deport to this area thousands upon thousands of ethnic Chinese—criminals and malcontents, and possibly simply the poor. Chao T'o may have relied on these elements and seems to have also been fairly astute in his relations with the indigenous population, though I do not know of any reason to suppose, as does Wang Gungwu (1958:7), that he was half Yüeh himself. (If, as Wang believes, Chao T'o was born in the area at about 228 B.C., then he led the Ch'in armies at about the age of 10 and took command of Nan-Yüeh at 21. To believe the traditional date for his death of 137 B.C., he would have lived 91 years. And if, as is more credible, he was somewhat older



when first made a general, then he would have had to have lived well past 100, all of which strains the imagination. Some of the dates must be in error somewhere and surmises based on them are necessarily suspect.) The question which occupies us here, however, is what effect did Chao T'o's taking the reins of power in Nan-Yüeh have on the PVN in the Red River delta? Arousseau, perched atop his frail theoretical scaffolding, has no option but to keep climbing, and so tells us that the Ch'in domains in Tongking [*sic*], temporarily expropriated by a lord of the land of (Pa-) Shu (i.e., the house of Thuc mentioned earlier), one An-duong Vuong<sup>9</sup>, were brought back into the fold by feats of Chao T'o's arms and so remained under (secessionist) Chinese suzerainty. At this point, his narrative fits partially into the events as described by the *Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu* (*ngoai ky*, q. 1-2) and other traditional Vietnamese historiography. These works generally say that, in or about 257 B.C., An-duong Vuong came from Pa-Shu<sup>2</sup> (usually thought to be in Sze-chuan) and imposed his rule by force over the kingdom of Van-Lang (mentioned earlier in connection with the PVN), changing its name to Au-Lac<sup>10</sup>. He is traditionally thought to have been the builder of Co-loa and to have ruled until his defeat through ruse, magic, and treachery at the hands of Chao T'o. Arousseau differs in that, having decided that the Ch'in were masters of the Red River delta at a time well after 257 B.C., An-duong Vuong must have only arrived on the scene during the confusion at the fall of the Ch'in and have ruled for a couple of years, whereupon Chao T'o did him in.

The story of An-duong Vuong is problematic, and the problem consists of deciding what in the story is possibly real and what part is myth, what part may tell us something of value about the PVN and their relations with their northern neighbors and what part is less significant detail. As far as Maspero is concerned, An-duong Vuong was the hero of a type of legend found in other cultures as well as elsewhere in Vietnamese mythology, and he is used mainly to explain away the fortifications at Co-loa (1924:393-394); Arousseau's use of him is capricious and pointless. It is a case where "la légende avait remplacé l'histoire" (1916:53). As T'eng Yüan-li (1967:28) has pointed out, there are some problems inherent in accepting the traditional view that An-duong Vuong was the son of the king of Shu, since the latter was brought under the power of the state of Ch'in in 316 B.C., well before Ch'in finished uniting China, making it somewhat difficult for An-duong Vuong to have lived over a century later. This does not, however, prevent T'eng from believing in the basic historicity of An-duong Vuong and, in fact, he seems to think it not unreasonable to suppose that our paladin was probably none other than the son of I Hsü Sung. All this appears to me to be like trying to reconstruct the skeleton of an extinct reptile by piecing together the few bits that we can find, a hip bone, a jawbone, and the odd tooth or two—one risks coming up with an animal bent permanently into an unnatural posture. And our documents on An-duong Vuong are little better than scattered bones, all of which just goes to point out a salient fact about working in this period in general: textual exegesis is good fun and, as long as one is dealing with matters of a higher order like religion, it can be quite harmless. But when one is attempting to make a meaningful statement about the grey area where prehistory meets up with earliest recorded history, it can no longer be regarded, in and of itself, as a sound way to proceed. We need more.

Here is where we wait for the archaeologist to come to the rescue. The question we would ask is: does one find evidence to suggest a material relationship between the finds in northern Viet-Nam and Sze-chuan? Is the relationship casual, peripheral, and incidental, or is it generic, basic, and coeval? What else is there that might serve to suggest a possible northwest-southeast axis of cultural intercourse? What come immediately to

mind are the objects unearthed at Shih-chai-shan<sup>ab</sup>. Admittedly, the site is in Yün-Nan, not Sze-chuan, but it is nonetheless northwest of the PVN homelands, and the degree of similarity with PVN finds is so striking as to lead some scholars to suggest very close links between the two (cf. Bunker 1974, von Dewall 1974). The significance of the story of An-duong Vuong at this stage in our knowledge of the period is simply that it implies some connection between the PVN and peoples living to the northwest. If An-duong Vuong did exist, he may have come at a much earlier time, say, a century or two previous to the date traditionally ascribed to him. The one question of importance that can be addressed at present by our colleagues in Viet-Nam would be to obtain a fairly reliable dating for the structure at Co-loa. If, in the future, material similarities are found to exist between Co-loa and sites to the northwest in China, then the question of the introduction of certain techniques from that direction will arise and the story of An-duong Vuong and his invasion will surely come up again, since his is the only name associated with Co-loa in the historical tradition. And if the historical tradition was rooted in many generations of oral history among the PVN prior to its having been transcribed, then I believe one is justified in looking somewhat farther afield than Sze-chuan for the ancestral home of An-duong Vuong, because the fact of his having come from Shu is one of those details that could have easily been based on later considerations that might have arisen during the course of the story's transmission or on an understandable ignorance of geography among those entrusted with the tradition. The reasons for the importance of a reliable date for Co-loa, apart from pure historical curiosity, are, first, that if similar sites show up to the northwest, we shall be able to say which came first and make some suggestions as to the primary direction of the flow of influence and, second, if we are ever to be able to clear up the question of the historicity of An-duong Vuong, it would be handy to have a date for Co-loa if only to be able to accept or reject a connection with what eventually turns up regarding him.

As I have stated earlier, I see no reason to believe that at the time he established the kingdom of Nan-Yüeh, Chao T'o had any control over the Red River delta or parts south, although the PVN living there may have previously had to defend themselves against outlying Chinese military forces on the northernmost frontiers of their territory and thus may have had a healthy respect for Chinese arms. They were at all odds aware of Chao T'o's activities from traders and from refugees fleeing south. I think these latter people, always a tragic result of man's unending warfare, must have included some ethnic Chinese as well as the more obvious non-Chinese elements, since the *Shui-ching Chu*<sup>ac</sup> (ch. 37) says that Chao T'o was quite ruthless in eliminating physically all those officials whose loyalty to him was questionable when he decided to secede. Chao T'o's relations with the Han throne, once the issue of Nan-Yüeh's recognition of Han suzerainty was resolved, were still not smooth. Fear and suspicion on both sides, notwithstanding the apparent success of the embassy of Lü Chia, were exacerbated by continual border clashes, principally at the expense of the inhabitants of the region of Ch'ang-sha. In about 183 B.C., the situation had deteriorated to the point of open warfare. A Han expedition sent south succumbed to the rigors of the Nan-Yüeh climate and what must have been a prodigious epidemic of malaria (which illustrates my contention that many Chinese at this time had difficulty in maintaining their health in the Nan-Yüeh region). Chao T'o, having triumphed in the event, decided to bestow the title "Emperor" upon himself. At the same time he made efforts to require the lesser lords among his neighbors to acknowledge his suzerainty. The *Shih Chi* (ch. 113) and the *Ch'ien Han Shu*<sup>ad</sup> (ch. 95) recount that Chao T'o, through gifts

and bribes, got the PVN lords to accept vassal status. We have no other direct testimony from the time. It can be said that, from Chao T'o's point of view, assuming suzerainty over the Red River region may have served to puff up his prestige vis-à-vis other powers, especially the Han. Arousseau (1923:196-199) makes the point, however, and it is a reasonable one, that one would have to suppose, as does Maspero (1916:53-54), that Chao T'o was able in effect to buy his way into a position of influence over the PVN lands where previously the Chinese could not triumph by force of arms. But perhaps this phenomenon is not inexplicable. If Arousseau is right in his assertion that I Hsü Sung met his end at the hands of a Chinese army while leading PVN troops into battle (the possibility of this having occurred does not, as I point out earlier, require acceptance of his thesis that they fought in "Tongking"), then it seems to me to follow that the PVN were aware of Chinese military prowess and preferred to accept a nominal vassal status which would probably include increased trade and de facto autonomy rather than to go to war. In the more modern history of Viet-Nam, it has often suited the purposes of an independent Vietnamese monarchy to allow the Chinese throne to maintain the pretense that Viet-Nam was a vassal of China, as long as the latter made no attempt to enforce anything other than the paying of a relatively light tribute. This did not stop the Vietnamese sovereigns from referring to themselves as Emperors (except in official correspondence with the Chinese throne), pursuing heterodox policies and customs, persecuting Chinese residents in Viet-Nam, or any other course of action that amused them. Just how long ago the Vietnamese or their predecessors realized that it was wiser to feed the Chinese dragon (as long as he did not get too hungry) rather than to bait him one cannot tell, but it is well within the bounds of probability that the lords of the Red River delta in the second century B.C. were already aware of the relative advantages of this strategem.

It is by the mid-second century B.C. that, almost all scholars agree, some form of nominal northern hegemony was installed over the lands of the PVN. From this point on, the Chinese refer to the Red River delta region as Chiao-chih<sup>ac</sup> and to the Thanh-hoa area as Chiu-chen<sup>af</sup>, although it remains to be seen if the local inhabitants concurred with this nomenclature or if, indeed, they were entirely aware of it. There passed what, for the history books at least, was a period of some seventy uneventful years. Little if anything is recorded of direct relevance to Chiao-chih and Chiu-chen in the Chinese histories, and their Vietnamese counterparts and derivatives have, as I indicated previously, made the mistake of considering the history of Nan-Yüeh to be the history of Viet-Nam and thus recount the happenings at the court of P'an-yü and suchlike irrelevancies. All we know is that legates of the Nan-Yüeh throne were sent to the two PVN provinces and that they were most likely entrusted with census matters and receiving certain levies in kind. Given both standard Chinese practice in border regions and the obvious exigencies of their duties, it would be logical to presume that they were accompanied by some sort of armed retinue, although I would doubt that these troops could have been detached to Chiao-chih and Chiu-chen in numbers considerable enough to constitute a significant military threat to the power of the indigenous nobility. I would speculate that their sole responsibility, other than "showing the flag," was to protect the few Nan-Yüeh officials and such ethnic Chinese residents and traders as may have been found so far south. Emphasis should be placed on the small-scale nature of these operations in all their phases, because to the best of our knowledge no archaeological remnants have come to light which would support any assumption of large-scale Chinese-style occupation or enterprise in northern Viet-Nam at this date. The most obvious kind of site one would expect to be present in north-

ern Viet-Nam, if there were a sizable Chinese presence during this period, would be tumulus-covered subterranean tombs constructed in brick, such as exist for later periods of Chinese occupation in Viet-Nam and as exist for the Western Han period (i.e., the period in question) in China proper. But so far none has come to light and I seriously doubt very many, if any, ever will. Objects found in PVN tombs from this period suggest a certain level of trade with the north, but most of the objects are of local manufacture, out of local materials, and in the local idiom. Whatever the Nan-Yüeh officials accomplished in the area at this time, it does not appear to have left any important material traces.

Another point on which nearly all investigators have agreed is that the PVN nobles continued to rule in a more or less unobstructed fashion at this time, leading one to wonder what economic interchange was taking place and what changes, if changes there were, took place in the demographic situation. I pose these questions here and take them up again later on because I believe they are crucial to the understanding of the impact China first had on the Vietnamese. The basis for the relationship between the PVN (and later the Vietnamese) on one hand and the Chinese government(s) on the other throughout the millennium which commences in the second century B.C. can be analyzed from the economic point of view in terms of the three T's: trade, tribute, and taxes. These three form a sort of continuum along which one can calculate fairly accurately the degree of Chinese control. During this first period of contact and encroachment, we witness the slow evolution of the relationship from one of a purely trading variety (probably by intermediaries at the outset, then more directly by Chinese merchants) to one of a tribute variety. It would be well to remember that the legates of Chao T'o to his new vassals in Chiao-chih and Chiu-chen were preceded by gifts, and I am skeptical of any idea that the state of Nan-Yüeh was in a position to enforce true taxation per se over a protracted period. What I believe was really taking place was a kind of enforced trade, verging on tribute. Nobles who wished to obtain certain Chinese goods, such as are found in small quantity in PVN tombs, probably had to see to it that the legates got some sort of indigenous goods in return, such as the pearls for which the region later became widely noted in China. Trade became tribute when the exchange became no longer discretionary, and I think the loss of discretion on the PVN side was not an overnight occurrence.

As regards the demographic situation, I have really only one point to make. I stated earlier that the Red River delta appears from all evidence to have been well populated prior to Chinese encroachment, a fact drawn not only from the number of sites but from the size of early hydraulic works, from the dimensions of Co-loa as well as the sizable area across which related sites are found (one would expect greater dissimilarities between sites as far apart as Thanh-hoa and the northern Red River delta if the interstices were thinly populated). There is really very little to make one think that this situation was changed by the events of the second century B.C. I have alluded previously to the unhealthy climate to be found in southern China at this period, a circumstance which still obtained as late as the sixth century, when, according to the *Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu* (*ngoai ky*, q. 4, for the year A.D. 542), a Chinese army sent south to punish upstart Vietnamese rebels lost between 60 and 70 percent of its troops to malaria by the time it had reached Ho-p'u<sup>as</sup> in southern Kuang-tung Province and had to retreat without having engaged the enemy. Now this does not mean that Kuang-tung was an undifferentiated sanitary horror, as can be seen from the apparent prosperity of such places as P'an-yü and Ho-p'u, but only that, relative to the Red River delta area, it was a much less desirable place to inhabit and far fewer people did so. And, though we have a great number of reports detailing the climatic

drawbacks of the South China area for the first eight centuries that the Chinese took up residence there, corresponding reports on northern Viet-Nam are curiously few. From Thai-nguyen to Thanh-hoa, the northern part of Viet-Nam is mostly open country with easy access from one place to another frequently provided by waterways, both natural and manmade. The Kuang-tung/Kuang-hsi region, although home to several powerful rivers, is much less easily traversed by premodern methods, laced as it is with defiles and what are still to this day some marvelously thick forests. How much more difficult it must have been two thousand years ago, particularly if the indigenous tribes were disinclined to cooperate! Malaria, which seems to have been a primary problem, tends to be more prevalent in the upland areas, to whose clear running streams the female *Anopheles* mosquito prefers to entrust the incubation of her young. These mountainous folds are precisely what separate one part of South China from another, and they discourage moving about unnecessarily. My contention is that the Chinese who made it as far as Nan-Yüeh and settled there successfully did not have much encouragement to leave for the Red River delta (apart from political refugees who fled the repercussions of Chao T'o's original coup d'état or later campaigns), having invested much effort to get as far as they did and having had the good luck to survive. Not only would it involve the hardships of yet another journey, it also meant living in a province where Chinese power was much less sure. There were most likely a few merchants for whom the prospect of new markets was a sufficient lure. To the average farmer, however, it was a much less attractive proposition for the moment. Land for cultivation in the Red River delta was already in the hands of PVN farmers who were using techniques as productive as or more productive than the ones which Chinese farmers would have brought down with them. There was potentially less competition for land in places such as the plain of Canton, and the Chinese cultivator held a greater technical advantage over the indigenous Yüeh farmer, who may not have been as feckless as the Chinese depicted him but who, to judge from the little archaeological evidence in hand, was not on a par with the PVN.

We know very little about specific individuals during this time. Local nobles continued in power, but we do not know who they were and no PVN names are recorded until the year 111 B.C. and the fall of the Nan-Yüeh kingdom. Actually, the fall of Nan-Yüeh was without much immediate effect inside Chiao-chih and Chiu-chen, although most modern historical surveys of Asia (Fairbank, Reischauer, and Craig 1973:262, Dudley 1973:143, for example) use the date 111 B.C. as the point in time when Viet-Nam was integrated into the Chinese Empire. This was true only in a formalistic sense, since the armies of the Han never actually set foot on PVN territory during the course of their campaign. Emperor Wu-ti of the Han, seizing upon the occasion of turmoil at the Nan-Yüeh court, sent forth a several-pronged military expedition which was designed to converge upon P'an-yü. The armies, their ranks swollen by "criminals"<sup>ah</sup> (*Ch'ien Han Shu*: ch. 6), who may well have included peasants down on their luck, set out in the autumn of 112 B.C. and were quite successful within the year. P'an-yü fell in flames and the rest of Nan-Yüeh either rallied to the Han or acquiesced at sword point. By the time Lu Po-te<sup>ai</sup> (commander of the main force) reached Ho-p'u, word of what was going on had reached the Red River delta and the legates in Chiao-chih and Chiu-chen quickly found that their sympathies lay with the Han. They forwarded to Ho-p'u gifts of 100 head of cattle and 1000 measures of wine (items and numbers that sound suspiciously like a regular tribute payment) along with the census rolls. This was the act of prudent men; it obviated the need for Chinese troops to enter the region, which was probably a relief to both sides. Had Lu Po-te's army gone

ahead and taken the delta by force, it is not possible to say what the consequences would have been, even for the rallied legates. Although the legates have always been presumed to have been ethnic Chinese, I think that in the course of their duties and prolonged residence in Chiao-chih and Chiu-chen, they may have come to identify their own interests with those of the local nobility, with whom they could have had a symbiotic relationship. At best, their arrangements would have been interfered with or could have been replaced, or if greed got the best of the Han commanders, they could have lost their heads as well as their purses.

It was the policy of the Han to bestow titles on rallied foreign enemies once their control was assured, and so one turns to chapter 20 of the *Shih Chi* to look at the list of those elevated to high honorary rank after the Nan-Yüeh campaign. Here we find some curious things. First, a certain Huang T'ung<sup>aj</sup> is raised to the rank of marquis in the spring of the year 110 B.C. It is said that he was a general<sup>ak</sup> in the army of the Ou-lo. Looking at the only other source one can find that mentions him, the *Ch'ien Han Shu* (ch. 17), we find that he had acquired the necessary merit for his elevation by cutting off the head of an individual called the King of Hsi-yü<sup>al</sup> (or Tay-vu Vuong in Vietnamese). What useful knowledge can we glean from this cursory summarization? To begin with, there was some sort of army in Chiao-chih at this time which Chinese historians designated the "Ou-lo" army. What kind of force it was is unstated, but it was apparently a force in being and *in situ*, not a constituent of the Han expeditionary army of 112 B.C. Its nominal loyalty would have been to Nan-Yüeh under the concept of PVN vassalage, but it may in reality have been a militia with a largely local sphere of action and influence, a regiment at the disposal of the local nobility and/or the Nan-Yüeh legates. My own theory is that at the time of the Han takeover of Nan-Yüeh, this Ou-lo army played some role in the determination of the established powers in Chiao-chih (and Chiu-chen) to rally to the Han rather than to resist. Who was Huang T'ung? Judging from his name, he may have been an ethnic Chinese or part Chinese, but that is far from sure since the traditionally Chinese family name Huang may only be a *nom de guerre* by which he was known to later historians in China. Who was his victim, the Hsi-yü King? Here we are on somewhat better ground, since at least we know from the *Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu* (*ngoai ky*, q. 3) that Hsi-yü was divided later into Feng-ch'i<sup>am</sup> (or Phong-khe in Vietnamese) and Wang-hai<sup>an</sup> (or Vong-hai), and the citadel of Co-loa is situated in Phong-khe. According to Maspero (1918:11, 15-16), the King of Hsi-yü was a lord with a considerable domain; if this was so and if his seat of power was at Co-loa, the most imposing site in the Viet-Nam of this period and traditionally the residence of An-duong Vuong, then he may well have been very high among the PVN nobility, if not paramount. His execution could have nipped in the bud any PVN inclination to take advantage of the situation and revolt or, as Maspero (1918) suggests, it could have been the result of a failed revolt. The reconstruction of such events is not mere idle conjecture inasmuch as the notation in the Chinese sources of the existence of an army in PVN territory, of the existence of the Hsi-yü King, and of the imposing of the will of the former on the latter implies very strongly that an autonomous monarchical tradition continued in Viet-Nam up to 111 B.C., and it acts independently to confirm the thesis that Nan-Yüeh had not taken firm control of PVN territory previously. The importance attached by the Chinese to the elimination of the King of Hsi-yü, attested to by their honoring Huang T'ung for its accomplishment, reinforces my belief that the continued existence of PVN kingship was more than theoretical in nature.

Two other observations à propos of the *Shih Chi*'s table of marquises are in order. Of

all the names listed of men who participated in the Han acquisition of Nan-Yüeh, the only name connected with the PVN area is that of Huang T'ung. This might signify either that official contact with the area on the part of the Han was still quite limited at the time of the composition of the *Shih Chi* (c. 90 B.C.) or that Huang T'ung was simply the most obvious choice to be named marquis in the PVN territories. I think it was probably a combination of these two factors, especially after comparing the circumstances with Han policy elsewhere. For instance, Hun (Hsiung-nu<sup>as</sup>) kings are listed in the same table as having received similar titles to confirm their positions of local authority. It would be reasonable to suspect that Huang T'ung was likewise thought by the Chinese to be the most powerful individual in Chiao-chih at the time. But several Hun chieftains are mentioned, whereas only one person is mentioned for the PVN area. Since the PVN were a fairly numerous and concentrated population, one would have expected more names from their area if the Chinese were in continual contact with them, as was the case with the Huns.

If the status quo *ante bellum* continued for a while in southern China and Chiao-chih and Chiu-chen, it becomes evident from a close reading of chapter 20 that the Han proceeded to do away with the legacy of the reconfirmed local lords. To wit, it is a most striking coincidence that every last one of the marquises created after the fall of Nan-Yüeh either died conveniently leaving no heirs, or else those unlucky men who bore their inheritance and succeeded to their ranks were soon put to death. It is obvious that what we are witnessing in the former Nan-Yüeh territories in the first century B.C. is not fortuitous happenstance but part of a deliberate policy of steadily tightened Han control which requires the eventual elimination of hereditary satraps and the substitution of loyal Chinese officials. I emphasize steady rather than immediate if for no other reason than because the total suppression of local authorities would have necessitated the stationing of a sizable military force in Nan-Yüeh over a period of time and at an expense greater than was probably feasible for the Han, who had other problems to deal with of a more pressing sort up north. At some point, this policy of tightened control began to make itself felt in Chiao-chih and Chiu-chen. I have yet to turn up any truly informative passages relative to the PVN in the standard Chinese sources for the period between 111 B.C. and the end of the following century, but it only makes sense to suppose that some increase in Chinese activity was taking place.

While the years between the events of 111 and the end of the first century B.C. may be among the most poorly documented in all Vietnamese history, from the archaeological as well as from the philological point of view, and while we cannot create nor seldom discover "new" first-century texts, we can still persist in digging in the literal rather than the figurative sense. Janse (1947, v. 1:xvi) says that archaeological evidence implies trade and perhaps settlers in the PVN area from China proper at or before this time but that only in the first century A.D. is there evidence for such settlers becoming important, and I think this surmise will be largely borne out by future finds. Some focusing of archaeological attention on this century would nonetheless be very useful. I am referring to the earliest location(s) for the seat of Han power in Chiao-chih. The *Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu* (*ngoai ky*, q. 3) would have us believe that a Chinese official named Shih Tai<sup>ap</sup> (the Vietnamese call him Thach Dai) was sent south to govern Nan-Yüeh from Chiao-chih and that he set up shop at Long-uyen<sup>aq</sup>, better known as Long-bien<sup>ar</sup>. The *Hou Han Shu* (ch. 33) gives the site of the original administrative center as Lei(?)-lou<sup>as</sup> (Vietnamese Luy-lau), which Madrole (1937:267ff) identified with the village of Lung-khe<sup>at</sup>, a location agreed upon by the *Kham Dinh Viet Su Thong Giam Cuong Muc*<sup>au</sup> (q. 2, a nineteenth-century compen-

dium usually thought to be well informed though, in this instance, admittedly somewhat too late in composition to have the weight of an original source) as well as a number of modern scholars like Tran Van Giap (1932:209). I entertain some doubts about the advisability of accepting any of the assertions at face value. For one thing, I hesitate to believe that the Chinese confirmed the old Nan-Yüeh legates in their positions (with the august title of *t'ai shou*<sup>av</sup>) and then appointed a single governor in their place the very next year; the difficulty is as much logistical as political. As I have outlined earlier, the real power seems to have lain in the hands of Huang T'ung at this time, and we know of his elevation to marquis in April of the same year as Shih Tai's supposed appointment. The *Kham Dinh Viet Su Thong Giam Cuong Muc* confuses the issue somewhat further by stating that Shih Tai was sent as governor of Chiao-chih only and that older histories were mistaken. If the *Hou Han Shu* or the *Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu* is correct in placing the Han capital for the whole of former Nan-Yüeh in PVN territory (be it Luy-lau or Long-bien), then I can only suppose that the Chinese were motivated by an odd sense of logic or by factors quite hidden from us today. Neither of these places makes any strategic sense for the governing of Nan-Yüeh, whose former capital and the preponderance of whose ethnic Chinese population were much farther to the northeast at P'an-yü. In fact, the *Hou Han Shu* goes on to say that the administrative seat was moved northeastward to Kuang-hsin<sup>av</sup> (in Ts'ang-wu<sup>av</sup>, about 100 miles up river from P'an-yü) some four years later. The texts are plainly too contradictory to lead us very far. It would therefore be useful to have some firmer idea of the physical age of such sites as Luy-lau and especially of any clearly identifiable Chinese artifacts that might be found there. Ultimately, one would like to be able to say something about the growth of possible early urban centers like Luy-lau and to tell whether the presence of Han administrative officials and their retinue was a primary impetus or whether urban genesis was a process already underway as a result of factors inherent in PVN society, only to be encouraged by the Chinese arrival on the scene.

If PVN society was already well enough developed to have manifested occupational specialization, social classes, private accumulations of wealth, regional waterworks, and so forth, I cannot help but conclude that the Chinese arrived after town centers arose and that they simply chose preexisting centers from which to operate, stimulating growth through increased commerce. If this is not heresy enough, I would go even further and say that, at least for a while following the full installation of Chinese hegemony after A.D. 43, Chinese rule and their establishment of plantations may have actually acted to slow down, if not curtail entirely, the growth of true urban centers (as opposed to simple market sites) in Chiao-chih and Chiu-chen.

Whether Shih Tai came to rule in 110 or somewhat later, whether Huang T'ung held military power behind the civil authority of the former Nan-Yüeh legates reconfirmed by the Han as *t'ai shou* of Chiao-chih and Chiu-chen, or whether some other sequence of events took place, events permanently hidden from modern view, the process of increasing Chinese control slowly took hold. Previously, during the Nan-Yüeh period, economic activity that once could have been qualified as "trade" seems to have become ritualized to the extent that it began to pass for "tribute." Historically, the most important fact of PVN economic life in the first century B.C. was that this tribute evolved into taxes. Exactly who was taxed and how, I cannot say, but the Chinese at first were obviously in a better position to tax their own kind than tax the semiautonomous PVN, still beholden to the indigenous nobility (called by the Chinese the *Lo*<sup>av</sup> lords). I would thus venture to suggest that Han taxes per se fell first on ethnic Chinese traders who began to operate more freely



and widely and then on whoever trickled into the Red River region in the way of Chinese agricultural settlers, though I still insist that this latter category was of limited numbers and, for the moment, the archaeological findings do not contradict me in this regard. There came a time, nonetheless, when the Han administration was bound to extend taxation to the original inhabitants of Chiao-chih and Chiu-chen. I think this was accomplished via the procedure of gradually converting a group assessment on the PVN, accompanied by Chinese tokens of ritual reciprocity, over to an assessment based on an estimate of the wealth of the constituent PVN clans or even individual families within the PVN group, an assessment with few reciprocal measures or none at all. This kind of taxation requires some means of enforcement and enforcement surely breeds resentment.

Taxation also means tax rolls and, in the Chinese case, a census. Such a census took place in A.D. 2 and its results are most instructive. The details of the great accounting are to be found in the *Ch'ien Han Shu* (ch. 28), but they have been cogently treated for the benefit of the nonspecialist by Bielenstein (1948); my brief comments will refer mainly to his analysis. Of relevance to our inquiry are not only the absolute numbers for population in the PVN areas but also the relative size of the PVN population when compared to other parts of the Han empire. A glance at Bielenstein's plate II illustrating population distribution and density in A.D. 2 tells much of the story: The Red River delta was the most densely populated area in the Empire south of the Yangtse. Only in Sze-chuan and in the North China plain did population densities equal that of the PVN heartland. The total population for the PVN territories in the Han documentation is given as 981,735 individuals in 143,643 households. This population figure is practically twice that of all the rest of the former Nan-Yüeh territory combined. All of which, I believe, bears out my contention that where the PVN lived was far and away more productive a region than the area that was later to become Kuang-tung/Kuang-hsi. PVN farming and irrigation techniques had to have been already relatively well developed in order to support such a dense population. Since it is only in the annals for the decades subsequent to the great census that one reads Chinese statements to the effect that they taught the PVN how to farm, even if archaeological evidence for advanced PVN agricultural techniques were lacking, which it is not, one would be obliged to treat such Chinese assertions with the greatest reserve.

A curious feature of the census is what it tells us about the size of the households involved (Bielenstein 1948: pl. VIII). While the average for all China is 4.7 members per household (something which tells the acute observer that we are dealing with a real census and not just tax rolls), the PVN figure is closer to 8, the highest figure in the Empire but approached by the figures in other areas with heavy non-Chinese populations, such as Yün-nan and Korea. The difference in the pattern of household size, especially between that of Chiao-chih and the rest of China, can be adequately accounted for, I think, by the fact that in the Red River delta we are dealing with an almost entirely non-Chinese ethnic group whose culture may well have included a greater degree of communal living (cf. houses illustrated on Dong-son bronzes in Bézacier 1972:201). All in all, then, the census of A.D. 2 provides interesting and independent information which tends to confirm several aspects of work in other texts as well as the findings of archaeological investigations to date.

However ill-informed they may have been about the PVN at earlier times, and however much that has misled scholars since, it is evident that, by the beginning of the first century A.D., the Chinese were not only much better and more accurately versed in general, they were in a position to profit from their knowledge. Better communications led to regular intercourse, and this in turn began to make larger-scale Chinese immigration a

more feasible proposition. While I do not believe that the southward deportations of the Ch'in resulted in a significant rise in the numbers of Chinese residents in the Red River delta and Thanh-hoa, as convenient as this explanation may have been for earlier writers, I believe that Chinese settlers came later on, repelled by conditions in China as much as attracted by the potential wealth of the delta region. Peasants do not as a rule migrate so much to find the good life as to flee the bad. And they do not seek pearls, rhinoceros horn, and kingfisher feathers, they seek land. At the beginning of the first century A.D., who came to Viet-Nam and what did they find?

If Han China of the early and mid-second century B.C. was something of a golden age for the national economy, giving large sections of the Chinese farming populace a respite from the interminable cycle of hunger and debt, it also resulted in the amassing of large caches of private wealth in merchant hands, and the wealth thus accumulated eventually found its way into land investments. As the taxation structure began to weigh more and more on the peasants and levies of one kind or another to finance imperial expansion (e.g., the expedition to Nan-Yüeh) grew heavier, the rate of tenancy rose. The stability of a largely freeholding peasantry was replaced by the precarious economic sensitivity of a class of renters who paid a dozen times over in rent what they had once paid in taxes. Officials with access to distressed fields became landlords as often as did the merchants, giving rise to a kind of de facto mixed gentry with a pivotal position of control over money and land at the local level and little interest in changing things, so there was often nowhere for the impoverished peasant to turn. In the middle of the first century B.C., Confucian scholars in government at the higher level made valiant efforts at economic reform, but the rot had set in too deeply to be exorcised from the court. A mark of the times was the increased rate of peasants, particularly women and children, being sold into bondage. It is thus possible that by this time the impetus had become great enough and that farmers had begun to move south, but it was really the events of the period A.D. 8-23, including attempts to remedy the situation, that set in motion the significant wave of Chinese migration to the PVN territories, an influx of people not shown in the census of the previous decade.

Usurpations are changes in control of dynasties from within the court which ultimately do not last—when they do last, they are simply not called usurpations. In A.D., 8, Wang Mang<sup>aa</sup> “usurped” the Han throne, after already having controlled it for a number of years from behind, and set about trying to stabilize the imperial economy. One objective of his measures was to reduce tenancy by limiting holdings and forcing divestiture on the part of powerful members of the entrenched gentry. One can imagine with what relish they received this fiat. Added to this was the natural opposition of all those clans and factions who had lost influence through Wang Mang's accession in the first place. And the result was civil strife, including six open revolts even before Wang Mang's official enthronement. If this were not enough, in the year A.D. 11, the Yellow River suddenly changed course and the entire mouth of this great waterway, central to all transport and irrigation in North China, shifted from north to south of the Shan-tung Peninsula. This event not only created catastrophic flooding and loss of life but, in an era given to overweening superstition and prophecy from natural occurrences, it was taken as a sure sign by those who wished to revolt anyway. The Red Eyebrow rebellion broke out accompanied by widespread banditry.

At this point, the flight south is documented. The governor of the former Nan-Yüeh region, now designated as Chiao-chou<sup>ba</sup>, one Teng Jang<sup>bb</sup>, sealed off the borders to his southern lands and remained loyal to the house of Han. Whether at the instigation of his

superior or out of natural inclination, the *t'ai shou* of Chiao-chih, since the beginning of the century a man named Hsi Kuang<sup>bc</sup>, opened his arms to welcome those fleeing from the north. We know of the arrival of many well-to-do Chinese, of scholars and the like not in sympathy with Wang Mang. What we do not know is the extent to which poorer Chinese also made the journey south. But apparently those who came for the most part stayed, because later men of note in Vietnamese history have claimed descent from these early refugees. If our knowledge of later history can be any guide, the ranks of these Chinese newcomers, particularly among the peasants, tended to be mainly adult males. Not only were women and children more likely to have ended up in bondage back north, but Chinese society at this period afforded men greater psychological freedom of movement. Once in a new land, they could take a local wife (sometimes several) and their offspring would still, by their lights, be Chinese, a form of sinicization and broadening of Chinese influence not to be discouraged by the government.

As we know from the census figures of A.D. 2, the population density in the Red River region was particularly high. The new arrivals were, therefore, in competition for space and arable land. While previous newcomers, fewer in number and strung out over a longer period, could probably have been absorbed by the ploughing of new land and the adaptation of local technology, a gradual approach, this latest group all coming at once must have proven highly disruptive. I think it is in the process of their attempted integration into the PVN context that we find the root cause of the next great event in Vietnamese history, the revolt of the sisters Trung.

The Trung sisters (by name Trung Trac<sup>bd</sup> and Trung Nhi<sup>bc</sup>) and their revolt against Chinese rule in the year A.D. 40 have been the subject of the attentions of many scholars, particularly in Viet-Nam itself. Their status as genuine national heroines has meant that their hagiographies play a prominent role in the pages of Vietnamese schoolbooks, and no major city in Viet-Nam is without a main thoroughfare bearing their name. The most complete discussion of their revolt and its antecedents available in a Western language is that by Henri Maspero (1918), which is still used as a standard reference. The best study I know of in Vietnamese is by Duy Hinh (1965) although the Trung sisters are dealt with at some length, and rarely with any originality, in most every history of Viet-Nam to be found in any language. I shall, therefore, refrain from going into long discussion of the revolt itself and stick to an analysis of the reasons for its outbreak since they are most germane to an understanding of PVN society in its final stages, before the imposition of complete Chinese control which took place once the rebellion was quelled. Many of the reasons for the uprising have been agreed upon by scholars; they can be summed up as, first, a rejection of forced sinicization and, second, a reaction on the part of the PVN nobility against their ever-increasing loss of political power and prestige. These were certainly important factors, but they have not been correctly understood as yet because, since they seem to go pretty far in explaining the revolt, no one has ever bothered to examine what lies beneath them. Duy Hinh comes close when he notes that:

The feudalist Han landlord clique immediately relied upon the political power of the Western Han to grab away the ricelands and the labor force in order to carry out economic enterprises according to the feudal manner of production. (1965:5)

Unfortunately, Duy Hinh never pursues this line of thinking quite far enough, paying primary attention to the labor aspects and seeing much of the bone of contention between the Chinese and the PVN lords as one of who finally got to control the "slave" elements

in the work force. Maspero (1918:12-13) speaks of a “. . . sorte de malaise général” which was due to the Chinese efforts to install a regular administration and to the loss of authority by the PVN nobility. As for Trung Trac herself (her sister seems to have played a much lesser role), Maspero rather patronizingly characterizes her as a woman whose “. . . caractère violent et altier se pliait mal aux restrictions que la politique chinoise s'efforçait d'imposer.” The direct cause of her revolt was that she was “. . . probablement humiliée par quelques observations ou quelque acte du préfet,” which sounds like something out of a novel about French provincial life in the nineteenth century. I submit that it is not possible in the current state of our knowledge about the period to make any valid judgments about the character of Trung Trac and those who surrounded her, much less attach any such judgments to reasons for their revolt. It is possible, however, and, I believe, necessary for a better understanding of PVN society at this time to look at what has been said about forced sinicization and interpret those statements in the light of what we know about the period from the various archaeological and philological data I touched upon previously.

It has been asserted that PVN society was very possibly matrilineal (e.g., Le 1955:73, *apud* Przyluski), and I am of a similar opinion. Though one cannot be certain about it, we do know that matrilineality is not uncommon in the Pacific area and theories which hold that the predecessors of today's Pacific societies once lived in eastern Southeast Asia are now reasonably well accepted. But, even without such comparative evidence, the role of women in Vietnamese society since the nation's emancipation from Chinese rule in the tenth century, in spite of intensive Confucianization, demonstrates that they did not find themselves in such a lowly position as that of their Chinese sisters, even from a legal standpoint. The right of Vietnamese women to share in family inheritances, found in the Le code (Huard and Durand 1954:50), is surely a holdover from times long past, a *de jure* recognition of a *de facto* situation among the Vietnamese peasantry, many of whose village customs such as lacquering teeth and chewing betel we know can be traced to pre-Chinese times. When large numbers of Chinese men came as immigrants to Chiao-chih and Chiu-chen in the first century A.D., I think they were looking for land. Marriage to local women, long a standard Chinese practice in frontier areas like Nan-Yüeh and still common today among Chinese in Southeast Asia, did not, however, procure for them the land they were seeking. This was because in a matrilineal society their wives' lands passed to their wives' female relatives. Even if PVN society was bilineal rather than exclusively matrilineal, the land would still have stayed largely in the wives' families in order to avoid losing it to the outsiders, who would then not respect local custom regarding its further disposition. Plainly stated, the patrilineal, nay, patriarchal, Chinese were denied legal access to the real estate. I should not be surprised if there existed no general provisions for land sales either, particularly if the PVN nobles (who seem to have received their general appellation *lo Chiang<sup>bf</sup>*, from their connection with the fields over which they had dominion, i.e., *lo tien<sup>bs</sup>*) were the *de jure* proprietors of all the rice lands which their subjects were allowed to till but not to transfer.

It is evident that in such a situation, in order for the Chinese to make a legal claim on the land, the marriage laws or customs among the PVN would have to be changed over to conform with Chinese practice and aims. When we look at what the Chinese sources say they did to introduce the Chinese idea of civilization into Chiao-chih and Chiu-chen, we find that they indeed obliged the PVN to conform to Chinese marriage rites (*T'ung Tien*: ch. 188, Maspero 1918:12). This was a measure attributed directly to Hsi Kuang, the same man who welcomed the refugees from the north, who is also said to have “trans-

formed the people by rites and justice" (*Hou Han Shu*: ch. 106, whence its repetition in most Vietnamese sources, e.g., *Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu*: q. 3). Both "rites" and "justice" can be interpreted in this context in terms of requiring the PVN to conform to proper Chinese notions of the natural order of things, such as patrilineality and exclusive male inheritance.

Just exactly what sequence of events took place prior to the Trung Sisters' rebellion is not reported. Without rehearsing in detail a story readily available to the interested reader in the sources I have mentioned, I will outline the important points as follows: Trung Trac was the daughter of a noble PVN family and her father was lord of the county of Me-linh<sup>ba</sup>. She was married to a man named Thi Sach<sup>bi</sup>, son of the lord of Chu-dien<sup>bj</sup> County. A successor to Hsi Kuang came to Chiao-chih in the person of Su Ting<sup>bk</sup> who, according to the *Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu*, was a cruel and avaricious individual of the first order. The *Hou Han Shu* (ch. 54) and the *Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu* are in accord with what happened between Su Ting and Trung Trac to begin with: "Su Ting used the laws with which to entangle her."<sup>bi</sup> The Vietnamese sources go on to say that Su Ting also killed Trung Trac's husband and, thus angered, she revolted. For the Chinese sources, this latter detail is missing, and it is Trung Trac's problem with the law that causes her to revolt and lead her still very much alive husband, Thi Sach, along with her (cf. *Chiao-chou Wai-yü Chi*, *apud Shui Ching Chu*, ch. 37). And here we are at the crux of the matter. The patriarchal Confucian precepts adhered to by the authors of the Vietnamese sources did not permit them to accept the fact that a woman could lead a national revolt while her husband was still drawing breath. It must have been that Su Ting killed Trung Trac's husband; how else could she have led the revolt? What could the law have to do with a mere woman? Why would men have followed her? In writing down the history of their country for a period prior to the instilling of the Confucian values which they themselves now shared more than a millennium later, Vietnamese scholars could not conceive of the fact that the society of their distant ancestors allowed such a prominent place to women, and so they rewrote history to follow what must have been the glorious truth (a practice which has yet to die out completely). The Chinese felt no such compunctions about describing the happenings in what was to them a society of barbarians which gave high honor to women. Chinese historians no doubt felt that the story of Trung Trac simply illustrated the pitiful state in which the poor PVN found themselves before they received the full benefits of Chinese enlightenment.

Trung Trac's entanglements with Chinese law, I believe, had something to do with her rights as a noblewoman over the lands within her family's domain, possibly with her rights to succeed to control of them once her parents died. Her alliance with Thi Sach would have united control in one couple over a considerable territory right in the heart of the most heavily populated and probably the most fertile region of Chiao-chih. If it was the aim of the Han governor to gain control over land to satisfy the needs of his ever-increasing Chinese constituency, especially the mandarin families who fled the peasant revolts and restrictions of Wang Mang up north and who must have been among his main supporters, then using Chinese law to strip Trung Trac of her lands in Me-linh would have served two purposes admirably. Su Ting could at one stroke break up a potentially troublesome concentration of indigenous power and also acquire control over lands which could be distributed to members of his own faction or to restive Chinese farmers.

That Trung Trac was recognized as a legitimate leader is amply attested to by the success of her revolt. One might be tempted to suppose that the presence of her sister in stories of the war could be taken as further proof both of her position as heir to the Me-

linh estates (no brothers are ever mentioned) and of the general importance of women. Together, she and her sister, at the head of an army that drew the broadest support of the nobility and of the peasants who filled the ranks, swept the Chinese military from the face of the land in rapid order. Su Ting fled north to Nan-hai<sup>bm</sup>. One can only imagine what fate awaited the Chinese residents who were left behind. Once in control of the countryside, Trung Trac was declared queen.

The story of Viet-Nam as the Chinese found it ends soon thereafter with the suppression of the short-lived reign of the heroine queen. For when the Chinese were finally able to put together an invasion force two years later under the capable and accomplished Ma Yüan<sup>bn</sup>, he descended upon the nation with determination and ruthlessness and 20,000 men under arms. The campaign was not an easy one and it took two years to come to the end of it, since PVN resistance still continued after the deaths of Trac and her younger sister and the Chinese were still not used to fighting in the tropics. Ma Yüan's final victory spelled the end for the power of the indigenous higher nobility. Sinicization and direct Chinese rule were imposed with the backing of a sufficient military presence to ensure respect for Han law. It is interesting to see that one of Ma Yüan's first measures during the short period that he acted as a sort of military consul, after having attended to defensive works such as the building of ramparts in all prefectural and subprefectural towns, was the revision of local law, which was made to conform to that in general force throughout the Empire, sometimes referred to as the "ten points" of law (*Hou Han Shu*: ch. 54). The legal basis for the economic as well as the politico-military domination of the country by the Chinese was now laid and, with periods of greater and lesser severity, it was to last a millennium.

I should only like to say one thing in conclusion. My reconstruction of the events of the 300-year period just under discussion is, of course, provisional, though I feel reasonably sure that further work will strengthen my theories rather than enfeeble them. I work entirely from textual sources and have tried to make sense of them now that I have in hand some of the published results of archaeological findings.<sup>1</sup> Nearly all of the conclusions I have reached depend upon those findings; they contribute to my interpretation of the texts in such a way and to such a degree that, without them, I could not have brought myself to make any new points about PVN society. This is not to say that philological work on the period is at a dead end and that one cannot go further with what already exists in the libraries, piecing together bits of evidence here and there. It is rather to say that, given the limits of time and resources to which all scholars are heir, it is far more productive to maintain a dialogue between the disciplines. This is a two-way road. Archaeologists are always potentially capable of digging up some object that blows all our pretty theories sky high, but, at the same time, when dealing with periods that bridge history and prehistory such as the one discussed here, it is occasionally helpful to know what is said in the odd text we have lying about. Sometimes an old poem can tell you where to dig.

#### NOTE

<sup>1</sup>In early 1978, when this piece was completed, I had not yet had the benefit of reading the most interesting work Dr. Keith Taylor did at Ann Arbor for his 1976 Ph.D. dissertation, entitled "The Birth of Vietnam: Sino-Vietnamese Relations to the Tenth Century and the Origins of Vietnamese Nationhood." I should also note the excellent 1980 publication by Dr. Jennifer Holmgren, *Chinese Colonisation of Northern Vietnam* (Canberra: Australian National University Press), which will be of interest to the reader in connection with the development of Vietnamese society following the expedition of Ma Yüan.

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- <sup>a</sup> 史記  
<sup>b</sup> 大越史記全書  
<sup>c</sup> 文郎  
<sup>d</sup> 越  
<sup>e</sup> 百越  
<sup>f</sup> 吳  
<sup>g</sup> 楚  
<sup>h</sup> 方言  
<sup>i</sup> 南越  
<sup>j</sup> 蜀  
<sup>k</sup> 呂嘉  
<sup>l</sup> 趙佗  
<sup>m</sup> 番禺  
<sup>n</sup> 閩越  
<sup>o</sup> 西甌貉  
<sup>p</sup> 淮南子  
<sup>q</sup> 交州外域記  
<sup>r</sup> 廣州記  
<sup>s</sup> 興安  
<sup>t</sup> 桂  
<sup>u</sup> 西  
<sup>v</sup> 象  
<sup>w</sup> 龍川  
<sup>x</sup> 任囂  
<sup>y</sup> 安陽王  
<sup>z</sup> 巴蜀  
<sup>aa</sup> 甌貉  
<sup>ab</sup> 石寨山  
<sup>ac</sup> 水經注  
<sup>ad</sup> 前漢書  
<sup>ae</sup> 交趾 [趾]  
<sup>af</sup> 九真  
<sup>ag</sup> 合浦  
<sup>ah</sup> 罪人  
<sup>ai</sup> 路博德  
<sup>aj</sup> 黃同  
<sup>ak</sup> 左將  
<sup>al</sup> 西干王  
<sup>am</sup> 封溪  
<sup>an</sup> 望海  
<sup>ao</sup> 胸奴  
<sup>ap</sup> 石戴  
<sup>aq</sup> 龍淵  
<sup>ar</sup> 龍編  
<sup>as</sup> 甌隩  
<sup>at</sup> 隴谿  
<sup>au</sup> 欽定越史通鑑綱目  
<sup>av</sup> 太守  
<sup>aw</sup> 廣信  
<sup>ax</sup> 蒼梧  
<sup>ay</sup> 駱 [貉]  
<sup>az</sup> 王莽  
<sup>ba</sup> 交州  
<sup>bb</sup> 鄧讓  
<sup>bc</sup> 錫光  
<sup>bd</sup> 徵側  
<sup>be</sup> 徵貳  
<sup>bf</sup> 駱將  
<sup>bg</sup> 駱田  
<sup>bh</sup> 菴冷  
<sup>bi</sup> 詩索  
<sup>bj</sup> 朱鳶  
<sup>bk</sup> 蘇定  
<sup>bl</sup> 蘇定以法繩之  
<sup>bm</sup> 南海  
<sup>bn</sup> 馬援