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Quái 嶺南摭怪 (Wonders Selected from South of the Passes)

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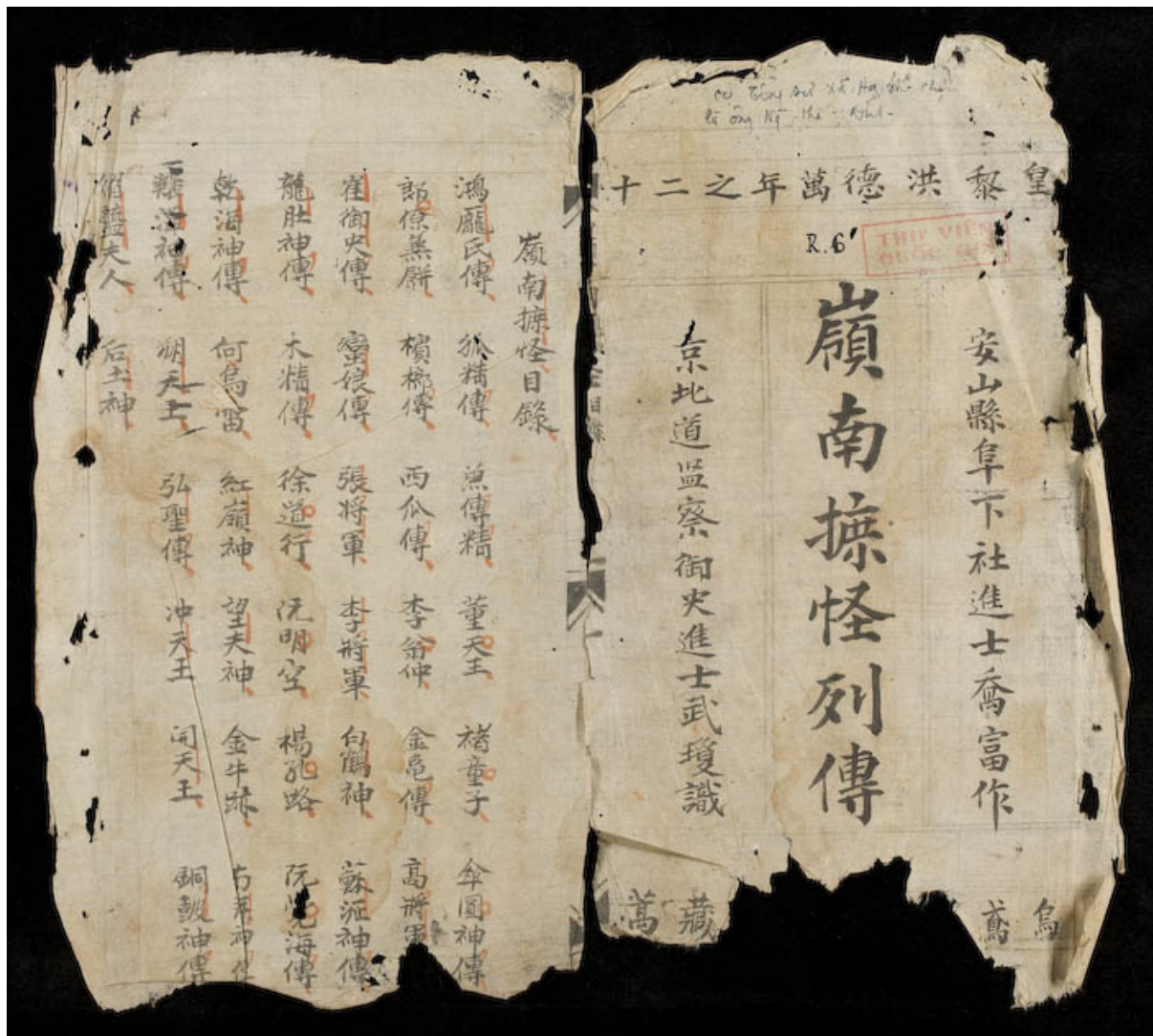
By

Jenkin Leung

A thesis submitted in satisfaction  
of the Honors Program option in pursuit of the  
BACHELOR OF ARTS  
in  
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in the  
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Thesis advisor: Professor Penny Edwards

May 13, 2022



Cover and content page of *Linh Nam chích quái liệt truyện* 嶺南摭怪列傳<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vũ Quỳnh and Kiều Phú, *Linh Nam chích quái liệt truyện* [Arrayed Tales of Selected Oddities from South of the Passes], (1492), Digital collections of the Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation, <https://lib.nomfoundation.org/collection/1/volume/820/page/1/> [accessed May 13, 2022].

The page on the right gives some basic information about this handwritten Hán manuscript. The title of this work is the *Arrayed Tales of Selected Oddities from South of the Passes* (middle vertical row: 嶺南摭怪列傳 *Linh Nam chích quái liệt truyện*). It dates back to 1480 (upper horizontal row: 皇黎洪德萬年之二十 *Hoàng Lê Hồng Đức vạn niên chi nhị thập*) and is collected from Ô Diên 烏鳶 (lower horizontal row: 烏鳶... 藏蒿 Ô Diên... *tàng kao*). It is 'created by Scholar Kiều Phú from the commune Yên Sơn Phụ Hạ' (left vertical row: 安山阜下社進士喬富作 *Yên Sơn Phụ Hạ xã tiến sĩ Kiều Phú tác*) and 'recorded by Scholar Vũ Quyên, the imperial censor from Kinh Bắc Road' (right vertical row: 京北道監察御史進士武瓊識 *Kinh Bắc đạo Giám sát ngự sử tiến sĩ Vũ Quyên chí*). It is part of the Hán-Nôm national heritage treasure of the National Library of Vietnam, as per the red property stamp at the upper right corner with the call number 'R.6' next to it.

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## ABSTRACT

*Lĩnh Nam chích quái* 嶺南摭怪 (*LNCQ*, or the *Wonders Selected from South of the Passes*) is an anthology of stories compiled, edited, and annotated by various Vietnamese scholars in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, an era when Neo-Confucianism pervaded Vietnam. Under the influence of this ideology and specifically the Sino-barbarian/civilized-barbarian dichotomy that was part of the Neo-Confucian doctrine, the Vietnamese literati considered Southeast Asian and Vietnamese vernacular cultures to be ‘barbarian’. Paradoxically, a number of stories from these cultures made their way into the Vietnamese literary scene and inspired several entries in *LNCQ*. However, there appears to be careful manipulation of these stories when they were incorporated into the anthology. In particular, the author created a Chinese façade for these stories through Confucian storytelling frameworks, Chinese literary references, and even the Chinese language itself. Analyzing three entries from *LNCQ* – the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan*, the *Tale of the Yaksha King*, and the *Tale of Areca Nut*, this thesis argues that the author of *LNCQ* crafted a Chinese façade for narratives of ‘barbarian’ origins to reconcile them with the Neo-Confucian weltanschauung of the Vietnamese literati, with the ultimate goal to publish and circulate these stories in the Vietnamese literary scene. Through looking at and reading beyond this Chinese façade, this thesis encourages readers to acknowledge non-Chinese elements of Sino-Vietnamese literature and critically analyze the motives behind the literary maneuvers of the Vietnamese literati.

Keywords: *Lĩnh Nam chích quái*, Sino-Vietnamese literature, 15<sup>th</sup>-century Vietnam, Neo-Confucianism, *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan*, *Tale of the Yaksha King*, *Tale of Areca Nut*, *Tale of Betel Nut*, *Rāmāyaṇa* in Southeast Asia

關鍵詞：嶺南摭怪，越南漢文文學，十五世紀越南，宋明理學，鴻龐氏傳，夜叉王傳，檳榔傳，東南亞的羅摩衍那

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## INTRODUCTION



Preface of *Lĩnh Nam chích quái liệt truyện* 嶺南摭怪列傳<sup>2</sup>

You see this manuscript at a museum, and the docent challenges you to identify its origin<sup>3</sup>. At a cursory glance, you notice Chinese characters written in a graceful longhand. You are almost certain that this text is from China, but you want to make sure. You read several lines from the preface,

<sup>2</sup> Vũ Quỳnh and Kiều Phú, *Lĩnh Nam chích quái liệt truyện* [Arrayed Tales of Selected Oddities from South of the Passes], (1492), Digital collections of the Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation, <https://lib.nomfoundation.org/collection/1/volume/820/page/2/> [accessed May 13, 2022].

<sup>3</sup> This imaginary exercise is inspired by my conversation with Virginia Shih. She shared with me her experience in the Hán-Nôm digitization project at the National Library of Vietnam, during which she had to identify whether a text was of Vietnamese or Chinese origin and catalogue it accordingly.

...自春秋戰國以前，去古未遠，南俗猶多簡略，未有史冊，以記其寔... 逮兩漢之間，東西晉，南北朝。暨唐宋元明，始有史傳以載之。

Before the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States, not far from antiquity, southern customs were mostly simple, hence the lack of histories to record affairs... Later during the two Han dynasties, the Eastern and Western Jin dynasties, the Northern and Southern dynasties, and into the dynasties of Tang, Song, Yuan, and Ming, there began to be histories to document affairs.

The enumeration of Chinese dynasties seems to corroborate your guess, and you are even able to narrow it down to southern China with the mention of ‘southern customs’. For just one more reality check, you keep on reading,

然我越乃古要荒之地，故記載者又略之也。我越有國始於雄王，而文明之漸，則始於丁黎而盛於李陳，至今則尾閭矣，故國史之載，特加詳矣。

Nevertheless, my Viet is a distant land in the ancient past, hence the scarce records about it. My Viet first had its state established with the Hùng kings. As for the growth of its civilization, it began in the dynasties of Đinh and Lê, flourished in the dynasties of Lý and Trần, and today reached the confluence of seawater. Therefore, historical records of the country have become even more detailed.

‘My Viet’ (我越 *ngã việt*) – now this changes the whole picture. ‘Southern customs’ was the correct key phrase to pick up, but you were simply not expecting it to be further south than southern China. You carry on with your perusal, and you exclaim at how brilliantly the author manipulates parallelism, an exalted rhetorical device in Chinese writing. While the diction and structure of the text bear resemblance to those of a Chinese bard, you notice that the same cannot be said for the contents – betel chewing, *bánh chưng*<sup>4</sup>, *yakshas*, and more. You begin to wonder,

‘How can something seem Chinese when it is not Chinese?’

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<sup>4</sup> *Bánh chưng* is a traditional Vietnamese delicacy made of glutinous rice, mung beans, pork, and other ingredients.



This is the magic of *Lĩnh Nam chích quái* (嶺南摭怪) (*LNCQ*), or the *Wonders Selected from South of the Passes*, an anthology of stories produced in Vietnam during the late 15<sup>th</sup> century<sup>5</sup>. According to the preface of the earliest edition of *LNCQ*, the Vietnamese literati of the Lý dynasty (1009–1225) and the Trần dynasty (1225-1400) were the first to draft the stories now found in the anthology (Kelley 2015, 162). On the other hand, Vietnamese scholars of later centuries claimed that the tales in *LNCQ* were authored by Trần Thế Pháp (陳世法), whose personal particulars remain unknown (Ren 2010, 81-82). In addition to its authorship, the editing history of *LNCQ* is also subject to debate (Yang 1994, 54-56). However, there exists a consensus that the scholar-officials Vũ Quỳnh (武瓊) (1415-1516) and Kiêu Phú (喬富) (1447-?) edited and compiled a version of *LNCQ* respectively in 1492 and 1493, and the copies of *LNCQ* that exist today are based on the recensions of these two editors (Ren 2010, 82; Taylor 2012, 131). Because of complications in determining its authorship and editing history, *LNCQ* is considered a collective work by the Vietnamese literati in this thesis, and the term ‘author’ is used in a generic sense to represent everyone who has contributed to this anthology.

Even though the exact authorship of *LNCQ* is contested, whoever composed or compiled the anthology was most likely a member of the Vietnamese literati, for the text was written in Classical Chinese. For almost the entirety of the first millennium, Vietnam was under Chinese rule, which essentially established Chinese as the language of scholarship and administration. Even after the country gained independence from China in the year 939, Chinese remained the official language of Vietnam (Ren 2010, 19). Like many societies in the Sinosphere, only members of the elite class had access to Chinese education. Therefore, in the context of medieval Vietnam, *LNCQ* and other works composed in Classical Chinese must be ascribed to the literati.

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<sup>5</sup> Kelley (2015, 161) dates *LNCQ* back to the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, but it should be noted that the dating of the anthology is highly contested. See Truong (2012, 140-144).

*The Neo-Confucian weltanschauung of the Vietnamese literati in the 15<sup>th</sup> century*

During the 15<sup>th</sup> century, some members of the Vietnamese literati developed a specific weltanschauung with respect to the non-Chinese, which was embodied in *LNCQ* as this thesis shall argue. At the beginning of the century (1407-1427), Ming China invaded and occupied Vietnam, but was soon overthrown by Lê Lợi (黎利) (r. 1428-1433) who became the ruler of the new Lê dynasty (1428-1527) (Duiker and Lockhart 2006, xxii). The Lê state inherited prominent elements of the Ming colonial system, which included the moral orthodoxy and legal code of Neo-Confucianism, the ruling philosophy of Ming China (Whitmore 1997, 666). Under the patronage of the emperor Lê Thánh Tông (黎聖宗) (r. 1460-1497), a new class of Neo-Confucian intellectuals assumed high positions at court and further promoted a literati culture rooted in this school of thought (Whitmore 1997, 675). The Neo-Confucian zeitgeist engendered changes to not only the country's social and bureaucratic organization (Whitmore 1984), but also the ruling elite's attitude towards Vietnam's neighbors. While cultural differences between Vietnam and neighboring states meant little before the 15<sup>th</sup> century, this was a major issue when the Vietnamese adopted the Neo-Confucian dichotomy of 'civilized' versus 'barbarian' (Whitmore 1997, 673), which is also known as the 'Sino-barbarian dichotomy' (華夷之辨 *huá yí zhī biàn*). Inhabiting the Central Plains (中原 *zhōng yuán*), which refers to the lower and middle reaches of the Yellow River, the Huaxia (華夏 *huá xià*) people, or the 'Chinese' in popular imagination, are 'civilized' according to this age-old Sinic division. On the other hand, non-Huaxia people are commonly labelled *Yí* (夷) and *Mán* (蠻), characters that denote a lack of civilization and are often translated as 'savage' or 'barbarian' (Li 2018, 32). This ideology encouraged the Vietnamese to differentiate themselves from those inhabiting the southern lowlands and the western mountains, for these peoples were now conceptualized as 'barbarians' (Whitmore 1997, 669). One manifestation of this Neo-Confucian worldview is Lê Thánh Tông's pretext for a punitive expedition against Champa,

which was situated to the south of Lê's kingdom and influenced by Indian rather than Chinese civilization. According to historian Tana Li (2010, 86), when the Cham king Trà Toán referred to Lê as his nephew, Lê deemed it a capital crime. However, such a relationship was probably not unlikely, for intermarriage among Southeast Asian polities was very common. In addition, Vietnamese rulers before Lê did not take offence at such statement. What motivated Lê to react strongly was his earnest attempt to sever ties with the rest of Southeast Asia (Li 2010, 86), or rather 'barbarians' in his conception, owing to the Sino-barbarian dichotomy.

Within this Neo-Confucian *weltanschauung*, the Vietnamese literati readily categorized the Cham and other neighboring ethnic groups as 'barbarians', for these peoples were not Chinese, and the 'barbarian' label provided an excuse for the Vietnamese to subjugate and 'civilize' them. On the other hand, it was more difficult and even awkward to position the Vietnamese themselves in relation to the Sino-barbarian dichotomy. By definition, the Vietnamese were not inhabitants of the Central Plains and should be classified as 'barbarians'. However, the Vietnamese literati could not have been happy if they had to degrade themselves with this derogatory denomination. To navigate through this dilemma, the literati had a simple solution – to speak little or nothing of it. In the prefaces to the Sino-Vietnamese dictionary titled the *Explication of the Guide to Jeweled Sounds* (指南玉音解義 *Chi nam ngọc âm giải nghĩa*), China is claimed to have civilizational advantage over the 'barbarians' because of semantossyllabic writing, one of the six principles to form a Chinese logograph (Phan 2012, 16). While the Sino-barbarian dichotomy is extensively elaborated, 'the position of the Vietnamese with regard to this civilized versus barbarian division is left deliberately ambiguous' (Phan 2012, 18). Linguist John Phan (2012, 18) argues that the Vietnamese literati did not see themselves as intellectually untamed, but viewed 'unorthodox (and for all intents and purposes 'vernacular') elements of their own social landscape as potentially uncivilized'. In the context

of Phan's study, the 'unorthodox' and the 'uncivilized' refers to *chữ Nôm*<sup>6</sup>, the writing system that renders native Vietnamese vocabulary. In other words, the literati might have correlated the Vietnamese vernacular with the uncivilized, a concept that shall prove to be important in Chapter 1.

Characterized by the notion of a Sino-barbarian dichotomy, this Neo-Confucian *weltanschauung* prompted the Vietnamese literati to actively distance themselves from Southeast Asian and Vietnamese vernacular cultures. However, cutting ties with the 'barbarians' did not necessarily imply the literati's desire to align themselves with the 'civilized' Chinese. Since the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, according to historian John Whitmore (1997, 673), some literati attempted 'to redefine Vietnamese culture so as to distinguish it more clearly from that of their Southeast Asian neighbors *as well as* from Chinese traditions'. This may explain why the literati remained silent or ambiguous regarding the position of the Vietnamese in the Sino-barbarian division, just as they did in the prefaces of the aforementioned dictionary – the literati definitely did not identify themselves with the 'barbarians', but nor did they see themselves as Chinese. However, the Vietnamese literati were not reluctant to import governing apparatuses or traditions from China. Neo-Confucianism itself is a Chinese ideology, but the Vietnamese literati adopted it all the same, for it provided a moral basis to Vietnam's expansionism. With the Neo-Confucian division between the 'civilized' and the 'barbarian', the Cham people were placed in the latter category. While Vietnamese leaders used to leave a Cham vassal in place after a victory, the Neo-Confucian moral pretext now encouraged them to directly conquer and annex most of the Cham territory (Whitmore 1997, 669). Another example comes from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, an era when Buddhist monks were offering desperate peasants with forms of leadership and social structure alternative to the status quo. To restore what they thought the

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<sup>6</sup> *Chữ* is a common noun and is not capitalized unless it is used at the beginning of a sentence. By contrast, *Nôm* and *Hán*, which will appear in a later subsection, are proper nouns and must be capitalized everywhere.

Vietnamese way of life should be, and more importantly their vested interest, the literati referenced Confucian ideals to create a state that was ‘well-ordered’, one with an immobile social structure and only obedient servants (Wolters 1980, 81-87). We can surmise, therefore, that the Vietnamese literati wished to differentiate themselves from the Chinese, but such desire did not prevent them from introducing Chinese materials into the Vietnamese society, especially if these materials could be appropriated to accommodate their own agenda.

### *Research question*

The socio-political implications of Neo-Confucianism in Vietnam have been extensively studied, as the aforementioned scholarly works have demonstrated, but what about the ideology’s significance to Vietnam’s literary scene? More specifically, how does literature reflect the Neo-Confucian *weltanschauung* of the literati in 15<sup>th</sup>-century Vietnam? To answer this central question to my thesis, I will analyze several entries from *LNCQ*, for this anthology is one of the most representative works composed by the literati of that era. Through this inquiry, I hope to explore literature as an approach to understand the Vietnamese literati, as opposed to official records that concern the society and economy of medieval Vietnam.

I argue that a Neo-Confucian *weltanschauung* motivated the author of *LNCQ* to create a Chinese façade for stories of ‘barbarian’ origin. As made evident in the prior exposition on the Sino-barbarian dichotomy, the Neo-Confucian literati of Vietnam considered Southeast Asian and Vietnamese vernacular cultures to be ‘barbarian’. Naturally, one would expect them to disregard and even detest anything derived from these cultures. A close reading, however, reveals the contrary. A number of entries in *LNCQ* have their origins in narratives belonging to these ‘barbarian’ cultures. A brilliant example is the *Tale of Man Nuong* (蠻娘傳 *Man Nuong Truyen*)<sup>7</sup> from *LNCQ*. In an iconic scene of the story, a hibiscus tree fell into the river,

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<sup>7</sup> Kelley (2012) translates the title of this story as the *Tale of the Savage Maiden*. However, Taylor (2017, 111) argues that the translation of *man* 蠻 as ‘savage’ contradicts the portrayal of the protagonist Man Nuong as a civilized girl. In addition, Taylor (2017, 118-119) suggests that *man* is a transliteration

after which the old lady Man Nuong dragged it up the bank. The craftsmen then carved four Buddha images out of that tree, at the core of which they discovered a rock. Finally, the Buddha images were placed in a temple. This is strikingly similar to the founding story of Phnom Penh. A woman named Penh saw a large koki tree floating down the Mekong River, and she requested some boatmen to pull it ashore. To everyone's surprise, four bronze images of the Buddha and a stone statue of Viṣṇu were caught in between the tree branches<sup>8</sup>. The Buddha images were then installed in a shrine (Cœdès 1913, 6-11; Khin 1988, 102-105; Mak 1988, 283; Osborne 2008, 21-22; Stuart-Fox and Reeve 2011, 126; Jacobsen 2013; 81). The parallels between the two accounts suggest that the *Tale of Man Nuong* had a Cambodian story as its blueprint, and that it is perfectly possible for the author of *LNCQ* to have referenced 'barbarian' stories.

However, when these stories were incorporated into *LNCQ*, they were carefully manipulated. Rather than translating these narratives directly from the source language into Classical Chinese, the author redacted them to a certain extent, which I attribute to 'barbarian' elements that contradicted the *weltanschauung* of the Vietnamese literati. For example, while the founding tale of Phnom Penh and the *Tale of Man Nuong* both featured a stone, the stone in the latter story was an ossified form of Man Nuong's daughter rather than the statue of Viṣṇu in the Cambodian tale. This change is likely the author's attempt to remove vestiges of Hinduism, a belief system that the Vietnamese literati would classify as 'barbarian'.

To qualify for publication and circulation in a literary scene that was increasingly Neo-Confucian, these 'barbarian' stories had to be actively 'domesticated'. Because Chinese corresponds to the 'civilized' in the Sino-barbarian dichotomy, virtually any kind of Chinese

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of the Tamil goddess *Amman*. Therefore, I decide to keep the name of Man Nuong untranslated in the title.

<sup>8</sup> To emphasize only the parallels between the two stories, the founding story of Phnom Penh is truncated in the main text. For readers who are interested, the story continues as follows. Having exhorted the locals to construct a mound near her house, Penh used the timber from the tree to erect a shrine in which the four Buddha statues were installed. As for the image of Viṣṇu, it was placed at the base of the hill, which after this series of events earned the name of Phnom Penh, literally meaning the 'hill of Penh'.

material could serve as a tool for ‘domestication’. As I shall demonstrate, the author of *LNCQ* ‘domesticated’ narratives of ‘barbarian’ origin through appropriating Chinese materials, such as Confucian storytelling frameworks, Chinese literary references, and even the Chinese language itself. Together, these materials constitute what I construe as a ‘Chinese façade’, for they were applied to deliberately conceal the ‘barbarian’ roots of a story. I contend that the author created a Chinese façade for ‘barbarian’ tales in order to elevate their literary status and make them compatible with the Neo-Confucian *weltanschauung* of the Vietnamese literati.

It is important to note that the author of *LNCQ* in crafting the façade did not interpret Chinese materials in the same manner as the literati from China. This is especially evident in Chapter 1 which discusses the recontextualization of many Chinese accounts. An example of a non-Chinese interpretation of Chinese material is found in the *Tale of Watermelon* (西瓜傳 *Tây Qua Truyện*), a *LNCQ* entry that offers an interesting etymology of the Chinese word for ‘watermelon’. During his exile on an island, the protagonist An Tiêm (安暹) saw a white pheasant spitting out seeds from above. With time, the seeds grew into watermelons. Not knowing what the fruit was called, An Tiêm decided to name it *tây qua* (西瓜), which literally means ‘western melon/gourd’, because the pheasant carrying the seeds flew in from the west. A later edition of this story writes <sup>9</sup>,

乃以鳥從西過海而來。因號「西瓜」，乃「過」字之訛也。

Given that the bird crossed the sea from the west, [the fruit] is called *tây qua* (西瓜) [i.e. ‘western melon’], [the second character of which] is a misnomer of the word *qua* (過) [i.e. ‘to cross’].

Predicating on the identical pronunciations in Sino-Vietnamese of *qua* (瓜), i.e. ‘melon’, and *qua* (過), i.e. ‘to cross’, the author reads *tây qua* as a fruit that has ‘crossed [the sea from] the

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<sup>9</sup> This edition is titled the *Records of Clouds from the Heavenly South* (天南雲籙 *Thiên nam vân lục*). A later footnote explains why it is considered a later edition.



west'. It is important to recognize this kind of reinterpretation of Chinese materials, for it reflects local agency of the Vietnamese literati, an aspect that is sometimes overlooked in modern Chinese scholarship concerning *LNCQ*. Disregarding these localization efforts can be problematic since it encourages the simplification and over-generalization of *LNCQ* and similar texts. Specifically, these texts are more likely subsumed under the umbrella term of 'Chinese literature' rather than a more nuanced, dual categorization of 'Sino-Vietnamese literature' or 'Classical Chinese literature in Vietnam', which leaves non-Chinese elements in these works at stake. It is the goal of this thesis to uncover such elements, which include the Southeast Asian and Vietnamese vernacular origins of certain *LNCQ* entries. In so doing, I hope to encourage readers of *LNCQ* to appreciate what lies beyond the Chinese façade of Sino-Vietnamese legends, and to illustrate that *LNCQ* is so much more than just a work written in Classical Chinese.

### *Genre of LNCQ*

In addition to the Chinese façade created by the author, which makes *LNCQ* seem as though it is a product of the Chinese literati, the genre of this anthology may account for its frequent classification as 'Chinese literature' and the scarcity of critical analyses hitherto. As suggested through the word 'strange' (怪 *quái*) in its title, *LNCQ* falls under the genre of *zhiquai* (誌怪 *zhì guài*), which roughly translates to 'anomaly account'. This categorization is supported by Vũ in his preface, where he likened *LNCQ* to two renowned *zhiquai* works from China, namely the *Records of Searching for Spirits* (搜神序 *sōu shén xù*) and the *Records of Ghosts and Anomalies* (幽怪錄 *yōu guài lù*)<sup>10</sup>. In addition to *zhiquai*, *LNCQ* is sometimes categorized within the genre of *chuanqi* (傳奇 *chuán qí*), which literally means the

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<sup>10</sup> The *Records of Searching for Spirits* by Gàn Bǎo 干寶 (?-336) and the *Records of Ghosts and Anomalies* composed by Niú Sēng Rú 牛僧孺 (779-848) are more commonly known in Chinese as 搜神記 *sōu shén jì* and 玄怪錄 *xuán guài lù*.

‘transmission of the strange’ (Engelbert 2011, 272; Ren 2010, 79). The distinction between *zhiquai* and *chuanqi* is sometimes blurry (Kelley 2015, 164). In general, however, the former refers to fictional accounts related to the nature, animals, and spirits, while the latter concerns human figures (Ren 2010, 4). Comprising both types of stories, *LNCQ* can be characterized as either genre. Regardless of the differences between *zhiquai* and *chuanqi*, they are both genre denominations traditionally applied to describe Chinese creative works that feature spiritual and supernatural elements. Therefore, no matter which genre label among these two is applied to *LNCQ*, there is still a tendency to classify *LNCQ* as a work of ‘Chinese literature’.

Nevertheless, it would be impetuous to regard *LNCQ* as a *zhiquai* text written by the Chinese literati, for the two differ in terms of storytelling technique and purpose. To illustrate such differences, it is useful to compare the *Tale of the Fox Spirit* (狐精傳 *Hồ Tinh Truyện*) from *LNCQ* with an exemplar of Chinese *zhiquai* account about fox. In *The Tale of the Fox Spirit*, a nine-tailed fox abducted members of the ethnic group *Bạch Y Man* (白衣蠻) and hid them in caverns. To save the people, Lord Lạc Long (貉龍君 *Lạc Long Quân*), the legendary king of the Vietnamese, dispatched his forces to destroy the cavern and devour the fox. Turning into a reservoir due to the destruction, the cavern was known as the lake of the fox’s corpse (狐屍潭 *Hồ Thi Đàm*). The fields to the west of the lake was named the grotto of the fox (狐洞 *Hồ Động*), and the higher lands where people lived was called the village of the fox (狐村 *Hồ Thôn*). I now contrast this with a typical *zhiquai* narrative from China, which can be found in the eighteenth fascicle of the *Records of Searching for Spirits*. A thousand-year old fox wanted to disguise itself as a scholar and visit Zhāng Huá (張華), the Minister of Works of the Jin dynasty. In the form of a piece of ceremonial wood, another thousand-year old spirit dissuaded the fox, suggesting that Zhāng would be wise enough to see through his guise and bring harm to both the fox and the wood itself. Not heeding the wood’s advice, the fox visited Zhāng in

the form of a teenage scholar and flaunted his mastery of poetry and philosophy. Suspecting that the scholar was a fox in disguise, for only spirits with a lifetime long enough could acquire knowledge so extensive, Zhāng ordered his servants to acquire a piece of thousand-year wood, lighting up which would reveal the true identity of any spirits. The servants thus chopped off the piece of wood that previously advised the fox. Rendering the fox's disguise futile by burning the wood, Zhāng cooked the fox. The use of dialogue and pronounced portrayal of characters in this tale are essential ingredients in many Chinese *zhiquai* tales. Lacking these very elements, the *LNCQ* story gives the impression of a historical account, which might well be intentional to make the story sound more objective and therefore credible. Furthermore, there is usually a moral lesson behind Chinese *zhiquai* stories. In the aforementioned tale, the fox's demise admonishes readers to take heed of sage advice and always be modest. However, the *LNCQ* story does not have a didactic purpose. Instead, its goal is to glorify Lord Lạc Long by recounting his heroic deeds and to provide etymologies for place names, even though they may be fictitious (Kelley 2015, 175-176). These departures from Chinese *zhiquai* should be recognized as genre-specific inventions of the Vietnamese literati, and should even warrant a more distinct categorization of *LNCQ*.

However, some Chinese scholars do not appreciate these inventions. Returning to the tales about fox spirits, for instance, Chinese historians Dai Kelai (戴可來) and Yang Baoyun (楊保筠) (1991, 265) claim that the *Tale of the Fox Spirit* was based on Chinese folktales depicting fox spirits as malicious figures, such as the nine-tailed fox disguised as the royal consort Dá Jǐ (妲己) in the 16<sup>th</sup>-century work titled the *Investiture of the Gods* (封神演義 *fēng shén yǎn yì*). Along with other examples, they conclude that numerous accounts in *LNCQ* were influenced by or derived from Chinese stories. While it is hard to deny the Chinese influence on *LNCQ*, such conclusion forgoes the opportunity to explore how Chinese and even non-Chinese stories were refashioned in *LNCQ*. As noted earlier, this is a research gap that this

thesis attempts to fill, particularly through emphasizing the author's efforts in transforming these stories.

### *Sources*

This thesis involves a close textual analysis of primary sources, which include selected entries from *LNCQ* and Chinese accounts that were incorporated within. For the *LNCQ* entries, I examine two distinct editions of the anthology titled the *Arrayed Tales of Selected Oddities from South of the Passes* (嶺南摭怪列傳 *Lĩnh Nam chích quái liệt truyện*) and the *Records of Clouds from the Heavenly South* (天南雲籙 *Thiên nam vân lục*). Out of thirteen extant editions of *LNCQ*<sup>11</sup>, these two are specifically chosen since they respectively represent earlier and later recensions of the anthology<sup>12</sup>. Both of them are included in the critical edition of *LNCQ* published by Chan, Cheng, and Trân (1992)<sup>13</sup>. As for accounts of Chinese mythology or history, they are accessed through the *Chinese Text Project* (中國哲學書電子化計劃 *zhōng guó zhé xué shū diàn zǐ huà jì huà*), an online database of Classical Chinese resources. A Chinese text that I will frequently reference is the *Records of the Grand Historian* (史記 *shǐ jì*), a history of China covering a period of 2500 years beginning from the reign of the legendary Yellow Emperor (黃帝 *huáng dì*) to that of Emperor Wǔ of Hàn (漢武帝 *hàn wǔ dì*). Composed by the Grand Historian (太史 *tài shǐ*) Sīmǎ Qiān (司馬遷) (c. 145 BCE – c. 86 BCE), this is

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<sup>11</sup> Most versions contain the words *Lĩnh Nam chích quái* (嶺南摭怪) in their title except the *Lost History of Mã Lân* (馬麟逸史 *Mã Lân dật sử*) and the *Records of Clouds from the Heavenly South* (天南雲籙 *Thiên nam vân lục*) (Ren 2010, 80). In general, unless the discussion pertains to specific wordings or interpolated content, this thesis does not refer to a particular version of *LNCQ*, for the content of stories in every version is more or less the same.

<sup>12</sup> The author and dating of *Records of Clouds from the Heavenly South* are unknown (Chan, Cheng, and Trân 1992, 189). However, it is definitely composed at a time later than the original *LNCQ* since it explicitly cites *LNCQ* as the source of several entries. There is also a number of original poems and odes interpolated into the stories, suggesting that it was composed after the first version of *LNCQ*.

<sup>13</sup> Because of the decreased accessibility to library resources due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this is the only copy of *LNCQ* that can be borrowed from UC Berkeley libraries. A more recent and more comprehensive critical edition is the *Collection of Chinese Novels in Vietnam* (越南漢文小說集成 *yùè nán hàn wén xiǎo shuō jí chéng*) published by the Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House (上海古籍出版社 *shàng hǎi gǔ jí chū bǎn shè*) in 2011.

arguably the most monumental work of Chinese and even East Asian historiography. In writing histories of later dynasties, the Chinese literati attempted to emulate its organization and literary style (Hardy 1999, 14), which can be attributed to the work's significance to official record-keeping in China.

The secondary sources of this thesis are from the fields of Southeast Asian studies and Chinese studies, with a disciplinary focus on history and literature. Liam Kelley, in particular, has written extensively on *LNCQ* and several of his works will be referenced. Regarding the language focus, academic works in both English and Chinese are referenced <sup>14</sup>.

### *Translation and transliteration*

With much of the relevant information in Classical Chinese/Sino-Vietnamese, translation and transliteration are essential components of this study. All translations in this paper are my own unless otherwise specified. To accurately represent the original text, I have translated excerpts of primary sources as literally as possible. When a Vietnamese or Chinese term is introduced, it is rendered in the order of English translation, original orthography, and transliteration, the latter two of which are in parentheses. For titles of Chinese texts, an original translation is used only when a conventional translation does not exist.

The original orthography of Vietnamese terms is in either *chữ Hán* (字漢) or *chữ Nôm* (字喃), also known as *Hán* and *Nôm* for short. *Hán*, more commonly known as 'Chinese characters', renders Sino-Vietnamese vocabulary, i.e. words borrowed from the Chinese language but pronounced with Vietnamese phonology, while *Nôm* is a script modified from *Hán* to render native Vietnamese vocabulary. Since *Hán* and *Nôm* were historically used in Vietnam, an accurate representation of Vietnamese terms necessitates these scripts to be

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<sup>14</sup> While Vietnamese and French scholarship exists, I am unable to access them due to my linguistic constraints. However, I plan to learn these two languages soon in graduate school to conduct more comprehensive research on *LNCQ*.

included<sup>15</sup>. The original orthography of Chinese terms is in traditional *Hanzi* (漢字 *hàn zì*), i.e. the writing system to historically render Chinese, rather than simplified *Hanzi*, because all the primary texts are rendered in the traditional script.

The transliteration of Vietnamese terms is in *chữ quốc ngữ* (字國語), i.e. the Latin-based script used in modern Vietnam. On the other hand, Chinese terms are transliterated in *Hanyu Pinyin* (漢語拼音 *hàn yǔ pīn yīn*), i.e. the official romanization system for Mandarin Chinese. Although they follow the syntax of Chinese, titles of Vietnamese works are considered Vietnamese terms and thus are transliterated in *chữ quốc ngữ*. To keep the term intact, I have chosen not to convert the syntax from Chinese to Vietnamese. Therefore, the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* (鴻龐氏傳) is rendered as *Hồng Bàng Thị Truyện* rather than *Truyện Hồng Bàng Thị* which fits the syntax of Vietnamese. In later occurrences, unless the discussion pertains to the etymology of a term, only the English translation is given.

### *Scope of discussion*

This thesis focuses on three stories from *LNCQ*, namely the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* (鴻龐氏傳 *Hồng Bàng Thị Truyện*), the *Tale of the Yaksha King* (夜叉王傳 *Dạ Xoa Vương Truyện*), and the *Tale of Areca Nut* (檳榔傳 *Tân Lang Truyện*)<sup>16</sup>. There are many more stories in *LNCQ*<sup>17</sup>, and these three are by no means representative of them all. I have selected these three tales for my analysis because they provide clear examples of a Chinese façade crafted for stories of ‘barbarian’ origin.

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<sup>15</sup> For Vietnamese terms in *Nôm*, I consult the online *Nôm Lookup Tool* created by the Vietnamese *Nôm Preservation Foundation*, <http://www.nomfoundation.org/nom-tools/Nom-Lookup-Tool/Nom-Lookup-Tool?uiLang=en> [accessed May 13, 2022].

<sup>16</sup> For the full Chinese text and English translation of these three stories, see Appendix A and Appendix B respectively.

<sup>17</sup> The number of entries in different editions of *LNCQ* ranges from twenty-one to seventy-three (Ren 2010, 80). There are twenty-two stories that recur in almost all of them, beginning with the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* (鴻龐氏傳 *Hồng Bàng Thị Truyện*) and ending with the *Tale of Hà Ô Lôi* (何烏雷傳 *Hà Ô Lôi Truyện*).

There are altogether three chapters in this thesis, each focusing on a specific story. In Chapter 1 – *The Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan*, I propose that the author of *LNCQ* elevated the literary status of a Vietnamese folktale by incorporating Chinese accounts into it. In Chapter 2 – *The Tale of the Yaksha King*, I argue that the author ‘domesticated’ a story of Cham/Indian origin by interpreting all of the proper names under Sino-Vietnamese philology. Finally, in Chapter 3 – *The Tale of Areca Nut*, I demonstrate that the author sanitized a Tai story involving premarital sex and modified it based on Confucian ideals. For each *LNCQ* entry, I first provide a general background and synopsis, which is followed by the narrative of ‘barbarian’ origin that served as its blueprint. I then interpret how the author concocted a Chinese façade for the ‘barbarian’ story in accord with the Neo-Confucian weltanschauung of the literati.



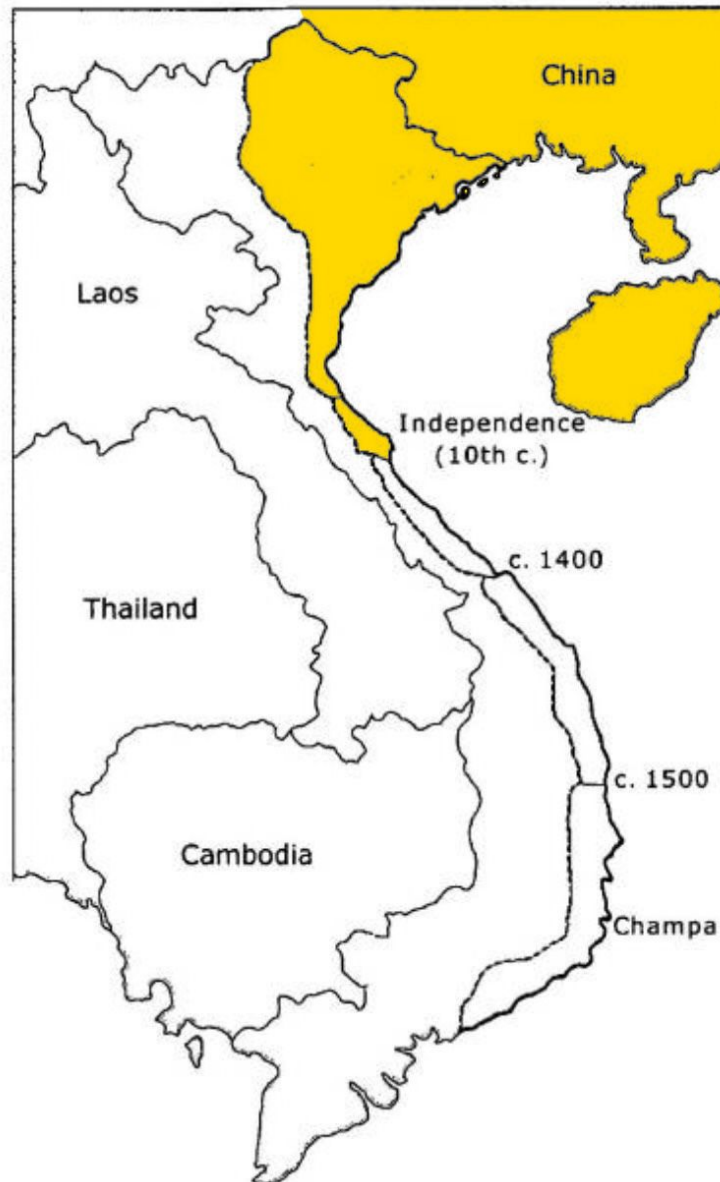
## CHAPTER 1 THE TALE OF THE HỒNG BÀNG CLAN

The first story analyzed in this thesis, the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* (鴻龐氏傳 *Hồng Bàng Thị Truyện*), is one that opens all extant editions of *LNCQ*. The primary positioning of this tale in the anthology suggests the compiler's intention to establish it as the 'history among legends' (傳中之史 *truyện trung chi sử*) (Zhou 2014, 26). Tracing the founding of Vietnam back to the union between the chief among the dragons and the scion of an immortal nymph, this legend is the cultural basis of how the Vietnamese people proudly address themselves – descendants of the dragon and the nymph (媧蠱招仙 *con rồng cháu tiên*).

Before proceeding to the synopsis, a brief introduction of the term 'Lĩnh Nam' (嶺南) is necessary for a geographical orientation of the story. Lĩnh Nam, the first two words in the title of *Lĩnh Nam chích quái*<sup>18</sup>, refers to the region of what is now southern China and northern Vietnam. Composed of *lĩnh* (嶺), i.e. 'mountain peak', and *nam* (南), i.e. 'south', the term literally means 'south of the mountains', and is sometimes translated as 'south of the passes'. The 'mountains' here refer to the Five Mountains (五嶺 *wǔ lǐng*), a mountain range that spans four modern Chinese provinces, namely Guangdong, Guangxi, Hunan, and Jiangxi. Therefore, it is not surprising that the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* makes reference to Lake Dòng Tíng (洞庭湖 *dòng tíng hú*), which is situated in contemporary Hunan. A map is provided below, with the area of Lĩnh Nam colored in yellow.

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<sup>18</sup> Given that *LNCQ* is a Vietnamese work, readers may wonder why it is not titled *Việt Nam chích quái*. A simple reason is that 'Vietnam' did not become the official denomination for the country until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. According to the 553<sup>rd</sup> fascicle of the *Record of Unification [of Great Qing] Edited by Emperor Jiaqing* (嘉慶重修一統志 *jiā qìng chóng xiū yī tǒng zhì*), Emperor Gia Long (嘉隆) of the Nguyễn dynasty requested in 1802 that Emperor Jiaqing (嘉慶) of the Qing dynasty install him as the king of Nam Việt 南越. However, Nam Việt had the same orthography as Nán Yuè (南越), the name of an ancient kingdom with territories in Guangdong and Guangxi, regions that were ruled by the Qing at the time of Gia Long's request. Jiaqing thus reversed the order of the Nam Việt and established Gia Long as the emperor of Việt Nam. Therefore, it would be anachronistic for the Vietnamese literati in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century to title *LNCQ* as *Việt Nam chích quái*.



### Lĩnh Nam <sup>19</sup>

#### *Synopsis*

The *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* relates the genealogy of the Hùng kings (雄王 *Hùng Vương*) <sup>20</sup>, who were the putative rulers of Văn Lang (文郎), a Vietnamese polity purportedly situated in the Red River Delta during the first millennium BCE (Kelley 2015, 165-166). The

<sup>19</sup> Bruce M. Lockhart, and William J. Duiker, *Historical Dictionary of Vietnam* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 20.

<sup>20</sup> The regime of Hùng kings had the denomination of Hồng Bàng (鴻龐) (Pelley et al. 2002, 151), hence the title of this tale. Interestingly, the term Hồng Bàng was never explained (Kelley 2012, 96), and only appeared in the title but not even once in the content of the tale.

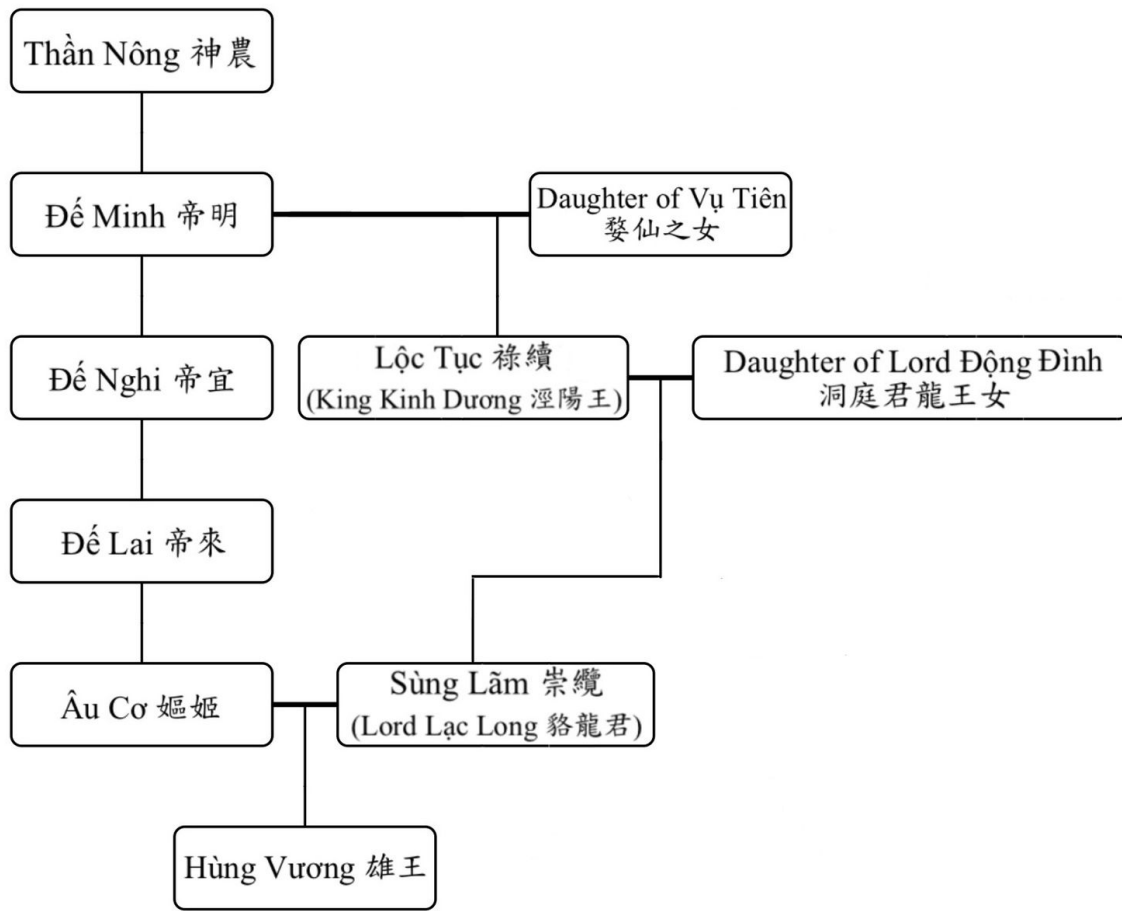
Hùng kings were traced back to Thần Nông (神農), one of the legendary Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors (三皇五帝 *sān huáng wǔ dì*)<sup>21</sup>. Đế Minh (帝明), the third-generation descendant of Thần Nông, had a son called Đế Nghi (帝宜). When Đế Minh later travelled to the south of the Five Mountains, he obtained as his wife the daughter of Vụ Tiên (婺仙)<sup>22</sup>. She gave birth to Lộc Tục (祿續), now a half-brother of Đế Nghi and later invested as King Kinh Dương (涇陽王 *Kinh Dương Vương*). Lộc Tục married the daughter of the dragon king Lord Động Đình (洞庭君 *Động Đình Quân*). They had a son called Sùng Lãm (崇纘), who was given the title of Lord Lạc Long (貉龍君 *Lạc Long Quân*) and lived in a palace under water. Lord Lạc Long married Âu Cơ (媼姬), the granddaughter of Đế Nghi. Together, they had one hundred sons, fifty of whom followed their father to the water palace. The other fifty who stayed on land with their mother established themselves as the rulers of Văn Lang and called themselves the Hùng kings. The story proceeds to discuss the court titles and customs of Văn Lang, and concludes that the Hùng kings were the ancestors of Bách Việt (百越)<sup>23</sup>, the various ethnic groups that historically inhabited Lĩnh Nam. Given the plethora of proper names and the complexity of relationships between characters, the genealogical chart below should prove very helpful to the following discussion.

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<sup>21</sup> The Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors was a group of rulers in northern China believed to have lived some five thousand years ago. Thần Nông is more commonly known with the transliteration of Shén Nóng, which is how the name is pronounced in Mandarin Chinese. In general, the names of Chinese characters are transliterated in Chinese pinyin, but this thesis makes an exception for Thần Nông as he is mentioned in the main text of *LNCQ*.

<sup>22</sup> Composed of vụ (婺), i.e. one of the twenty-eight constellations (二十八宿 *èr shí bā xiù*) in Chinese cosmology, and tiên (仙), i.e. ‘nymph, fairy, immortal’, Vụ Tiên is a nymph related to the constellation Vụ, perhaps a guardian or an anthropomorphic form of it.

<sup>23</sup> Composed of bách 百, i.e. ‘hundred’, and việt 越, i.e. the Yue people, Bách Việt is literally the ‘hundred Yue’. However, bách in Chinese can also denote a large, unspecified number instead of exactly one hundred, and this is the Chinese reading of the term Bách Việt, which comes to mean the ‘many tribes of Yue’. Nevertheless, associating the one hundred sons of the Dragon Lord and Âu Cơ to one hundred Yue tribes, this story most definitely interpreted Bách Việt literally. Deviating from the Chinese interpretation, the author localized the Chinese term and demonstrated linguistic genius.



Genealogical chart of the Hùng kings

*Beyond the Chinese façade – A Vietnamese vernacular story*

Certain aspects in the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* suggest that a Vietnamese vernacular story served as its blueprint. To begin with, instead of living with and taking care of his wife and children, Lord Lạc Long chose to reside in his water palace. This was a departure from what a Confucian society expects of a patriarch. Noting this, historian Keith Taylor (2012, 134) suggests the protagonist's behavior was rooted in maritime cultures of Southeast Asia. In a later scene, Lord Lạc Long and his wife Âu Cơ each led fifty children to their respective realms. Citing the work of historian Yamamoto Tatsuro (1970, 83), Taylor (2012, 134) points out that the division of children between parents resembles a bilateral family system more so than the Chinese patriarchal system. As Taylor (2012, 134-135) further proposes, non-elite stories contributed to the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* alongside elite narratives, which was his main

argument against Kelley's (2012) assertion that the *LNCQ* story was solely an invention of the literati<sup>24</sup>. The two scenes from the *LNCQ* narrative, therefore, may be vestiges of non-elite, vernacular stories from a Vietnam prior to contact with Chinese culture, especially Confucianism. It is uncertain what the exact folktale inspiring the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* looked like. Nevertheless, given that the content concerning the Hùng kings and Thần Nông's lineage were inventions of the literati in medieval Vietnam, as Kelley (2012) has argued and other historians have concurred (Trường 2012, 142; Taylor 2012, 135), we can assume that the original folktale was much simpler and might have only included Lord Lạc Long, Âu Cơ, and their one hundred sons<sup>25</sup>.

Because of their Neo-Confucian weltanschauung, the literati considered Vietnamese vernacular culture and thus popular lore to be 'barbarian', as noted earlier in the introduction to this thesis. Why then did they incorporate this Vietnamese folktale into *LNCQ* and even preserve certain 'barbarian' elements of it, such as Lord Lạc Long's separation from his wife and children? The inclusion of this folktale in the anthology is probably attributed to its significance to the national psyche. In particular, the terrestrial-aquatic interaction captured in this story defines the Vietnamese as a people. Separating from Âu Cơ, Lord Lạc Long says,

我是龍種，水族之長，你是仙屬，地上之人... 今為分別，吾將五十男歸水府，分治各處。五十男從汝居地上，分國而治。登山入水，有事相關，無得相廢。

Of the dragon race, I am the chief of the water tribes. Of the nymphal stock, you are an earthly being... As we part ways today, I shall lead fifty sons to the water palace and have them govern different places. Fifty sons shall follow you to live on the land and rule over different kingdoms. Even as you ascend the mountains and we enter the water, we shall care for but never abandon one another.

<sup>24</sup> Specifically, Taylor (2012, 134) argues that 'what is missing from [Kelley's] essay is an appreciation for the way that culture is produced by interaction between non-elite and elite stories'.

<sup>25</sup> In fact, Lord Lạc Long, Âu Cơ, and their one hundred sons are the focuses in the titles through which the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* is circulated among the Vietnamese, namely the *Tale of Lord Lạc Long and Lady Âu Cơ* (傳貉龍君吧婆媪姬 *Truyện Lạc Long Quân và Bà Âu Cơ*) and the *Tale of One Hundred Eggs* (傳艾霖茆 *Truyện một trăm trứng*) (T. Đ. Nguyễn 2013, 315).



Lord Lạc Long separating from Âu Cơ<sup>26</sup>

This passage speaks of an interaction between people from the water realm and the earthly realm, which many modern scholars have seen as ‘symbolizing the interaction of a maritime culture with a continental culture at some distant point in the past’ (Kelley 2012, 103)<sup>27</sup>. For example, Taylor (1983, 1) interprets this passage as reflective of ‘a maritime cultural base with political accretions from continental influences’. In other words, Vietnam is an amalgamation between a culture based in the water realm and a regime derived from the earthly realm. This

<sup>26</sup> “Trăm trứng [Hundred eggs],” Làng Mai, <https://langmai.org/tang-kinh-cac/vien-sach/tap-truyen/huong-vi-cua-dat-van-lang-di-su/tram-trung/> [accessed May 13, 2022].

<sup>27</sup> Note that Kelley himself challenges this view. Believing that this passage is not necessarily impregnated with the deep cultural meaning claimed by modern scholars, Kelley (2012, 104) cites a local story about crocodiles, which is found in the *Treatise on Annam* (安南志原 *An Nam chí nguyên*). ‘Each time a crocodile gives birth, it produces some several tens of eggs. When they hatch, those that descend into the water become crocodiles while those that ascend onto the shore become peculiar snakes and worms. Sometimes the mother will eat them to prevent them from multiplying.’ Kelley argues that the passage from the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* may be inspired by a prosaic written source like this one rather than the cultural memory of the Vietnamese.

argument is all the more convincing when one considers the word *đất nước* (埶諾), which is the native Vietnamese term for ‘country’<sup>28</sup>. Composed of the words for ‘land’ (*đất* 埶) and ‘water’ (*nước* 諾), *đất nước* reflects what the Vietnamese perceive their country to be – the interaction between land and water, and they themselves as the product of this interaction. Perhaps not coincidentally, the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* traces the lineage of the Vietnamese back to the union between Âu Cơ and Lord Lạc Long, who respectively represent the terrestrial and aquatic realms.

Given the cultural significance of this Vietnamese folktale, it was included in *LNCQ* despite its vernacular origins. Nevertheless, perhaps to neutralize the ‘barbarian’ flavor of the aforementioned scenes and to elevate the literary status of a tale fundamental to the national psyche, the author referenced many Chinese myths and historical accounts in the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan*, creating a Chinese façade for the original folktale. This chapter explores how this façade is created, while also highlighting the local genius of the Vietnamese literati in appropriating Chinese materials, especially those that help make specific cultural and political statements.

#### *Creating the Chinese façade – References to Thần Nông*

By beginning the story with Thần Nông, a legendary emperor of ancient China, the author sets a Chinese tone for the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan*. As historian T. Đ. Nguyễn (2013, 318) argues, connecting the Hồng Bàng lineage with Thần Nông gives this tale and its protagonist Lord Lạc Long ‘a genealogy as ancient as, if not older than, that of its Chinese counterpart’. A later episode in the narrative portrays the conflict between Thần Nông’s clan and Chī Yóu (蚩尤), the leader of another Chinese tribe. Situated between the search of Âu Cơ

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<sup>28</sup> This is as opposed to the Sino-Vietnamese term for ‘country’, *quốc gia* 國家. Composed of *quốc* 國, i.e. the fief of a feudal lord (諸侯 *zhū hóu*), and *gia* 家, i.e. the fief of a senior officer (大夫 *dà fū*), *quốc gia* has a greater political and hierarchical connotation than and is completely unrelated to *đất nước*.



and the birth of the Hùng kings, this episode seems largely out of place in the story. One possible explanation for its inclusion is that it gives the tale some verisimilitude in addition to antiquity. In *Records of the Grand Historian*, this military conflict between Thần Nông's clan and Chī Yóu is documented<sup>29</sup>. As described in the introduction to this thesis, this Chinese work is considered to be the paragon of historiography. Bearing resemblance with its accounts, the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* appeared to be legitimate to readers, thus elevating the literary status of the original folktale from the Vietnamese vernacular.

*Creating the Chinese façade – References to the Tale of Liǔ Yì*

Another attempt to infuse Chinese-ness into the tale is the marriage between King Kinh Dương and Lord Động Đình's daughter, who is more commonly known as the dragon princess, for her father is the king of the dragons. According to modern Chinese scholars (Dai and Yang 1991, 265; Chan et al. 1992, 2; Chen 2012, 117), this scene referenced the *Tale of Liǔ Yì* (柳毅傳 *liǔ yì zhuàn*)<sup>30</sup>, a folktale from China. In the Chinese story, the dragon princess was abused by her husband, King Kinh Dương, and she pleaded Liǔ Yì who happened to witness this to find help. Liǔ Yì visited the dragon palace, and the princess's uncle killed King Kinh Dương to rescue his niece. After a series of events, Liǔ Yì married the dragon princess. This legend was clearly known among the Vietnamese literati, who even corroborated its relation to the particular scene from the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan*. To prove this point, Zhou (2014, 26) cites a footnote from the first chapter of the *Complete Annals of Đại Việt* (大越史記全書 *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư*)<sup>31</sup>, which contains a shorter version of the *LNCQ* tale,

<sup>29</sup> See the first section of the *Annals of the Five Emperors* (五帝本紀 *wǔ dì běn jì*) in the *Records of the Grand Historian*.

<sup>30</sup> The *Tale of Liǔ Yì* is known by many names and formats. Dai and Yang (1991, 265) and Chen (2012, 117) refer to it as *Liǔ Yì Dispatching Letters* (柳毅傳書 *liǔ yì chuán shū*), while Chan et al. (1992, 2) used the title *Numinous Marriage at Lake Dòng Tíng* (洞庭靈姻 *dòng tíng líng yīn*).

<sup>31</sup> The *Complete Annals of Đại Việt* (大越史記全書 *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư*) is an official national chronicle composed by the Vietnamese royal historian Ngô Sĩ Liên (吳士連).

按唐紀，涇陽時有牧羊婦，自謂洞庭君少女。嫁涇川次子，被黜。寄書與柳毅，奏洞庭君。

According to the annals of the Tang dynasty<sup>32</sup>, there was a shepherdess in Kinh Dương who claimed herself to be the youngest daughter of Lord Động Đình. She was married to the second son of Kinh Xuyên [i.e. King Kinh Dương], but was then expelled. She entrusted a letter to Liễu Nghị [i.e. Liễu Ý], informing Lord Động Đình [of this incident].

Although the *Tale of Liễu Ý* was referenced in the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan*, claiming that it was a direct borrowing would be too simplistic. The Chinese original made clear the abusive nature of the marriage between the dragon princess and King Kinh Dương. This framing was not included in the Vietnamese retelling, which recontextualized the marriage from a romantic story to a pseudo-historical account. An additional rationale for mentioning the marriage might have been to ornament the Hùng kings' lineage and enrich the origins of the Vietnamese civilization (Zhou 2016, 75). The princess's predicament would add little value to the story, if any. The exclusion of the abusive relationship from the original indicates that the Vietnamese literati selected Chinese materials consciously for their own use, and it is important to recognize such literary autonomy.

In addition to aggrandizing the civilization of Vietnam, the author appropriated the *Tale of Liễu Ý* to explain why the Vietnamese cultural hero Lord Lạc Long is a dragon. Before the

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<sup>32</sup> This information did not come from an actual annal of the Tang dynasty but the *Tale of Liễu Ý* (Kelley 2012, 101). As a historian, Ngô could not have made such mistake. This was most likely a deliberate decision to give more verisimilitude to his account, for a citation from an annal seems more trustworthy than one from a novel. Similarly in *LNCQ*, the *Tale of the Loyal and Numinous Two Ladies* (貞靈二徵夫人傳 *Trinh Linh Nhị Trưng Phu Nhân Truyện*) begins with 'according to *shǐ jì* (史記) [i.e. the *Records of the Grand Historian*]' when its actual source of information was the *Book of the Later Han* (後漢書 *hòu hàn shū*). Verisimilitude might be a motive for 'misquoting' the source, given that the *Records of the Grand Historian* is the epitome of historiography and could make the tale appear more credible. However, this is quite an egregious error since the Trưng sisters in the tale rebelled in CE 40 but Sima Qian who authored the *Records of the Grand Historian* died in c. 86 BCE, a fact that the learned compilers of *LNCQ* must have known. A more satisfactory explanation is that *shǐ jì* is to be taken literally as 'historical records'. By the same token, *táng jì* (唐紀) can be interpreted with its surface meaning of 'records from the Tang dynasty'. Anything that was written down during the Tang dynasty would qualify, including the *Tale of Liễu Ý*. If this was indeed what the authors intended, these two examples of 'misquotes' display the shrewdness of the Vietnamese literati in manipulating Chinese phrases to their own literary advantage.

*Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* was composed, a simpler legend of the dragon-nymph union between Lord Lạc Long and Âu Cơ had already circulated among the Vietnamese, as proposed in a previous section to this chapter. When the author of *LNCQ* retold this legend, he imposed on Lord Lạc Long a genealogy traced back to Thần Nông. This technique imbued the legend with antiquity, but it also gave rise to another problem. It would be hardly plausible for a dragon to emerge from this paternal line of descent, which was composed of humans and one nymph. Without a maternal lineage of dragons, it would be impossible to justify how Lord Lạc Long turned out to be a dragon. To resolve this conundrum, the author resorted to the *Tale of Liǔ Yì* and established the dragon princess as the mother of Lord Lạc Long. Through the appropriation of this Chinese legend, Lord Lạc Long's origin story was accounted for.

Referencing the *Tale of Liǔ Yì* also allowed the author to expand the geographical claims of ancient Vietnam. As his title suggests, Lord Động Đình is the master of Lake Động Tĩnh<sup>33</sup>. Since his daughter was married into the clan of Hồng Bàng, the Hùng kings had the right to inherit Lake Động Tĩnh, providing a pretext to claim territories as far north as contemporary Hunan, China. Indeed, the author stated Lake Động Tĩnh as the northern boundary of Văn Lang. Therefore, I contend that appropriating the *Tale of Liǔ Yì* helped maximize the land claims of ancient Vietnam, which may have reflected the ambitions of the Vietnamese literati in a newly independent country.

*Creating the Chinese façade – References to Yáo and Shùn, and sons of Old Duke Dǎn Fù*

Some other Chinese stories were less explicitly referenced in the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan*. Nevertheless, they would still have been effective in elevating the literary status of the story, for readers trained within the Confucian tradition would detect their vestiges. When Đế Minh appointed his younger son Lộc Tục as his successor, Lộc Tục refused and gave up the

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<sup>33</sup> There is a discrepancy of transliterating 洞庭 as Động Đình and Động Tĩnh, because Lord Động Đình is the character in the Vietnamese text of *LNCQ* while Lake Động Tĩnh is a Chinese location.

throne to his elder brother Đế Nghi. According to Zhou (2014, 25), this scene assimilated two renowned Chinese stories.

The first one is about the legendary Chinese rulers Yáo (堯) and Shùn (舜), two of the Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors<sup>34</sup>. As Yáo grew old, he had to appoint his successor. While he could have made his son the next ruler, he ceded his throne instead to Shùn, a commoner with filial piety and aptitude for state management. After Shùn succeeded Yáo and ruled the state for some time, he handed over the throne to Yǔ (禹) who had dedicated his life in preventing floods. What Yáo and Shùn did came to be known as *shàn ràng* (禪讓), i.e. abdicating the throne to someone of exceptional ability, particularly when the throne-holder is still alive and has no imminent need in abdication.

The second story is about the three sons of Old Duke Dǎn Fù (古公亶父 *gǔ gōng dǎn fù*)<sup>35</sup>. Old Duke Dǎn Fù had three sons, namely Tài Bó (太伯), Zhòng Yōng (仲雍), and Jì Lì (季歷). By the custom of primogeniture, Tài Bó as the eldest should ascend the throne, but Old Duke Dǎn Fù intended to crown Jì Lì instead. Knowing their father's decision, Tài Bó and Zhòng Yōng left the kingdom, essentially ridding Jì Lì of all competitors to the throne. When the king died, Jì Lì searched for his elder brothers and conceded the throne. To completely renounce their entitlement to kingship, Tài Bó and Zhòng Yōng cut their hair and tattooed their skin, which effectively barred them from claiming rights to the throne under ancient law.

Similar to the protagonists in both of these stories, Lộc Tục chose not to inherit the throne when he could be king, and even surrendered it to his brother. This behavior is exalted in Confucianism, as it reflects one's regard for the greater good of his subjects rather than political power. Therefore, alluding to these two Confucian exemplars is to commend Lộc Tục

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<sup>34</sup> See the *Book of Yu* (虞書 *yú shū*) in the *Esteemed Documents* (尚書 *shàng shū*).

<sup>35</sup> This story is found in many Chinese texts. See the *Unofficial Records of the Odes by Han* (韓詩外傳 *hán shī wài zhuàn*) and the *Annals of Zhou* (周本紀 *zhōu běn jì*) in the *Records of the Grand Historian*.

for his virtues of modesty and courtesy towards his elders (Zhou 2014, 25; Zhou 2016, 75), thus glorifying the clan of Hồng Bàng.

It is important to note, however, the goal of alluding to these Confucian accounts is not necessarily to propagate Confucian virtues, even though the *weltanschauung* of the Vietnamese literati was largely based on Neo-Confucianism. As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, what the literati appeared most interested in was to manipulate and localize elements of Confucianism for their own use. As historian O. W. Wolters (1980, 87) aptly put it, ‘the Confucianist canon had always been fragmented in Vietnam to lend weight to specific Vietnamese statements about themselves’. Building on Wolters, I suggest that the specific ‘Vietnamese statement’ being made in the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* is that the Vietnamese rulers were more capable and virtuous than their Chinese counterparts, for Đế Minh wanted to pass on the throne to Lộc Tục rather than Đế Nghi, and Lộc Tục displayed propriety more so than Đế Nghi.

*Creating the Chinese façade – References to Duke of Shào and Duke of Zhōu*

After Lộc Tục refused the throne, his half-brother Đế Nghi was made heir apparent to govern the northern lands, and Lộc Tục himself was invested as King Kinh Dương to rule over the south. This scene is reminiscent of a Chinese story known as ‘dividing Shǎn and rule’ (分陝而治 *fēn shǎn ér zhì*) (Zhou 2014, 25)<sup>36</sup>. Since King Chéng of Zhōu (周成王 *zhōu chéng wáng*) ascended the throne at an early age, Duke of Shào (召公奭 *shào gōng shì*) and Duke of Zhōu (周公旦 *zhōu gōng dàn*) were appointed as regents. To better govern the state of Zhōu, they divided the country into two, with the demarcation being Shǎn Yuán (陝塬). Duke of Shào governed the region west of the demarcation, while Duke of Zhōu was in charge of the east. According to Zhou (2014, 25), the purpose of referencing this Chinese narrative in the *Tale of*

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<sup>36</sup> See the *House of Yan Shàogong* (燕召公世家 *yàn zhào gōng shì jiā*) in the *Records of the Grand Historian*.

the *Hồng Bàng Clan* is threefold. Firstly, the reigns of Lộc Tục and Đế Nghi over the south and the north respectively were legitimate. Secondly, the two regions and their rulers were equal in status. Thirdly, since time immemorial, the two regions and their peoples were independent of one another. The last point is perhaps the most important idea conveyed through the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan*, for Vietnam had only recently gained independence from Ming China when *LNCQ* was produced. This was an important political statement for the literati to make, and it again reflected flexibility and local agency in adapting Chinese materials.

*Creating the Chinese façade – References to Hòu Jì*

The abandonment of the Hùng kings at their birth was yet another possible Chinese reference. Âu Cơ gave birth to a sac which comprised one hundred eggs, from which the Hùng kings were later born<sup>37</sup>. Thinking it was inauspicious, she discarded the sac in the wild. Zhou (2016, 74) proposes the inspiration of this scene to be the legend of Hòu Jì (后稷), a revered figure reputed to have imparted knowledge of agriculture and sericulture to the Chinese people<sup>38</sup>. According to Chinese texts<sup>39</sup>, Hòu Jì's mother became pregnant upon stepping on a giant toepoint. Because of the supernatural conception, she deemed the birth of her son inauspicious

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<sup>37</sup> This scene may also have referenced an episode from the Hindu epic *Mahābhārata*. Upon propitiating the revered sage Vyāsa, Gandharī was granted a boon. She wished for one hundred sons that were as powerful as her husband Dhṛtarāṣṭra. After two years, she gave birth to a hard mass of flesh. When she was about to discard it, Vyāsa appeared and cut up the flesh into one hundred pieces. As Vyāsa was dissecting the flesh, Gandharī requested one more daughter in addition to the one hundred sons. Vyāsa then cut out one more piece of flesh which later transformed into Duḥśalā, the only daughter of Gandharī. Eventually, the one hundred Kaurava boys were born from these pieces of flesh. Similarly, instead of directly giving birth to one hundred sons, Âu Cơ first bore a sac which she abandoned in the wild. The two stories are similar not only in the number of sons, which Chen (2012, 117) has indicated, but also the atypical birth process of them.

<sup>38</sup> Zhou (2014, 26; 2016, 74) claims that another Chinese account about Hòu Jì inspired the episode of Lord Lạc Long teaching the Vietnamese about agriculture, sericulture, and the proper father-son and husband-wife relations. He quotes a passage the fascicle *Lord Teng Weng I* (滕文公上 *téng wén gōng shàng*) in the *Mencius* (孟子 *mèng zǐ*), where Hòu Jì was said to have taught the Chinese the exact same things. While there are parallels in terms of content, there is little textual resemblance between the two, unlike other instances discussed in this paper, hence a brief discussion of it only here in a footnote.

<sup>39</sup> See the poem *Sheng Min* (生民 *shēng mǐn*) in the *Greater Odes of the Kingdom* (大雅 *dà yǎ*) in the *Book of Odes* (詩經 *shī jīng*), and the *Annals of Zhou* (周本紀 *zhōu běn jì*) in the *Records of the Grand Historian*.

and made three attempts in abandoning him. In each occasion, however, she was met with an omen that dissuaded her from giving up Hòu Jì. Realizing that her son was of divine origin, she decided to keep him. Zhou (2016, 74) does not support his argument with a close textual comparison, but reading the two stories in tandem offers examples that lend weight to his argument. Here, I juxtapose the relevant portion in the *Tale of the Hông Bàng Clan* with the entry in the *Records of the Grand Historian*.

Excerpt from the *Tale of the Hông Bàng Clan*

龍君與嫗姬居期年而生一胞，以為不祥，棄諸原野。

Lord Lạc Long and Âu Cơ live together. After a year, [Âu Cơ] gave birth to a sac. Thinking that it was inauspicious, she abandoned him in the wild.

Excerpt from the *Records of the Grand Historian*

居期<sup>40</sup>而生子，以為不祥，棄之隘巷。

The time [of labor] came, and [Hòu Jì's mother] gave birth to a son. Thinking that it was inauspicious, she abandoned him in a narrow lane.

The structure and wording of these two quotes bear uncanny resemblance, especially in the last two clauses, suggesting that Hòu Jì's legend was indeed referenced here, but the origin stories of Hòu Jì and the Hùng kings diverge between a rural, wild setting and an apparently urban, built up setting. Through the allusion to this important cultural hero, this *LNCQ* tale evoked the benevolence and achievements of Hòu Jì and transposed them onto the Hùng kings, albeit with the subtle but important difference of wild versus civilized.

*Conclusion*

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<sup>40</sup> To express that a woman is ready for the process of childbirth, the ancient Chinese invariably used the term *jí qī* (及期), literally 'reaching the date'. However, the term used here was *jū qī* (居期), literally 'living the date'. This is a very peculiar usage virtually only found in this account (Xin 2021). The same term can be found in the quote in the *Tale of the Hông Bàng Clan* when the first clause is split between 龍君與嫗姬 and 居期年而生一胞, rather than 龍君與嫗姬居 and 期年而生一胞. This could further suggest the reference of Hòu Jì's tale. Nevertheless, to make sense of the sentence broken up in this manner, 居期年 would have to be interpreted as 'reaching the date after a year', which is an undesirable stretch of the Chinese syntax.

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that the Vietnamese folktale concerning Lord Lạc Long and Âu Cơ is important to the Vietnamese psyche, but its vernacular origin and particular ‘barbarian’ elements necessitated a certain degree of ‘domestication’ when it was included in *LNCQ*. I have proceeded to explore six Chinese literary references in the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan*, each making significant literary, cultural, and political statements and more importantly contributing to the Chinese façade for a tale of vernacular origin, which was necessary if the author wished to publish the folktale in the Neo-Confucian literary scene.



## CHAPTER 2 THE TALE OF THE YAKSHA KING

As the final entry of *LNCQ*, the *Tale of the Yaksha King* (夜叉王傳 *Đạ Xoa Vương Truyện*) is the polar opposite of the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* in terms of ordering. This is rather symbolic and may even be deliberate. The *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* details the origin of the rulers and the people inhabiting what is northern Vietnam today. On the other hand, the *Tale of the Yaksha King* – at least according to the preface of *LNCQ* – relates the emergence of Champa, which is situated in present-day central and southern Vietnam.

According to Southeast Asianist G. E. Marrison, ‘Champa was contemporary with other major Indianized states of Southeast Asia, including Cambodia and Java, both of which influenced Cham culture’ (Marrison 1985, 45). Hinduism was the kingdom’s dominant religion, and Sanskrit was the language of culture – at least before the advent of Islam in Champa (Moussay 1976, 187; Marrison 1985, 46). It is therefore no surprise that the Hindu epic *Rāmāyaṇa* was well known among the Cham people, as archaeological evidence reflects. A devotee of Viṣṇu, the Cham king Prakāśadharmā Vikrāntavarman (r. 653-686) favored the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the protagonist of which, Rāma, is a reincarnation of the Hindu god, and he honored the epic’s composer Vālmīki with an inscription at his capital city Trà Kiệu (Mus 1928, 147-52; Marrison 1985, 49). There are also bas-reliefs from the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> century illustrating scenes from the epic, which further suggests the prominence of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in Cham culture (Marrison 1985, 50). While archaeological evidence exists, there are no literary remains of this era. In other words, it is impossible to know for certain if the *Rāmāyaṇa* was circulated in Champa through an oral or textual tradition. What we do know is that the Hindu legend was popular in the kingdom, and popular enough for even the Vietnamese literati to know of it and subsequently adapt it as an entry in *LNCQ*, titled the *Tale of the Yaksha King*.

*Synopsis*

The *LNCQ* narrative begins with a certain yaksha king who reigned over the kingdom of Diệu Nhàm (妙岩國 *Diệu Nhàm Quốc*). He went by two titles, namely King Trường Minh (長明王 *Trường Minh Vương*) and King Thập Đầu (十頭王 *Thập Đầu Vương*). To the north of his principality was the kingdom of Hồ Tôn Tinh (胡獼精國 *Hồ Tôn Tinh Quốc*), which was ruled by King Thập Xa (十車王 *Thập Xa Vương*). This king had a son called Vi Tu (微姿). Enraptured by the beauty of Vi Tu's wife, Bạch Tĩnh Hậu Nương (白淨后娘), the yaksha rallied his subjects to besiege the kingdom of Hồ Tôn Tinh and abducted her. Infuriated, Vi Tu pulled out mountains and cast them into the sea with the help of a troop of monkeys, creating a passage to the kingdom of Diệu Nhàm. Having reached and raided it, Vi Tu slaughtered the yaksha king, rescued Tĩnh Hậu, and returned to his own kingdom. The author concludes that the kingdom of Hồ Tôn Tinh had monkeys as its inhabitants, and its name is the ancient denomination for Chiêm Thành (占城), which stands for the 'citadel of Champa'.

*Beyond the Chinese façade – An Indian (or Cham) story*

Upon reading the *Tale of the Yaksha King*, anyone familiar with the Indian tradition will realize it has little to do with Champa. Instead, it is an abridged version of the Hindu epic *Rāmāyaṇa* (Huber 1905, 168-184; Xu 1961, 62; Dai and Yang 1991, 265-266<sup>41</sup>; Chan et al. 1992, 2). In the original *Rāmāyaṇa*, Rāma was the eldest son of the Daśaratha, the king of Ayodhyā who had three other sons, namely Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa, and Śatrughna. Daśaratha intends to consecrate Rāma, his eldest son, but Kaikeyī, his second wife, made him exile Rāma for fourteen years such that her son Bharata would be crowned instead. Rāma obeyed the order

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<sup>41</sup> Dai and Yang (1991, 265-266) also quote a passage from the *Imperially Ordered Comprehensive Compendium of the History of Viet* (欽定越史通鑑綱目 *Khâm định Việt sử Thông giám cương mục*). With basically the content of which is basically identical to the *Tale of the Yaksha King*. The passage cites its source as the *Old History of Hồ Tôn* (胡獼舊史 *Hồ Tôn cựu sử*), which Dai and Yang (1991, 265) claim to be a non-extant text. However, the *Old History of Hồ Tôn* is not mentioned in any other texts to my knowledge. Since a title containing more 'objective' wordings is preferred in an official historical chronicle, the *Old History of Hồ Tôn* may well be a guise for *LNCQ*, which is probably the actual source of the record.

and left for the forest alongside Lakṣmaṇa and his wife Sītā. As Daśaratha died of grief, Bharata visited Rāma in the forest and implord him to assume the throne. When Rāma refused, Bharata acquiesced in his decision and ruled in Rāma's place until the end of his exile. Later, Rāvaṇa, the king of demons, abducted Sītā out of lust and imprisoned her in the city of Laṅkā. Rāma formed an alliance with Sugrīva, the king of monkeys, and besieged Laṅkā along with Hanumān, the commander of the monkey army. Having killed Rāvaṇa and rescued Sītā, Rāma returned to Ayodhyā and ascended to the throne. As it should be obvious, the *Tale of the Yaksha King* referenced the *Rāmāyaṇa*, especially the second half of the epic. In particular, the reclamation of the sea with mountains mirrors a famous scene in the *Yuddhakāṇḍa*, the sixth book of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, in which the monkeys aiding Rāma felled all kinds of trees to build a bridge reaching Laṅkā.

While the *Tale of the Yaksha King* is based on an Indian legend, it manifests itself just like any other Chinese story, for all Indic names in the original *Rāmāyaṇa* were translated into Chinese, leaving the story with hardly a speck of Indian flavor. Full translation of proper names is a departure from what the Sinosphere elite had historically done with regard to Sanskrit texts. More often than not, Chinese-speaking translators left out character names completely, for it is notoriously difficult to translate Sanskrit names into Chinese (Mair 1989, 687). Sometimes, translators resorted to transliterating Sanskrit proper nouns with Chinese words of similar phonetic values. This, however, would retain the Indian flavor of the original text, and was likely undesirable in the Vietnamese literary scene during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. According to the Neo-Confucian weltanschauung of the Vietnamese literati, the cultures and thus languages of Champa and India had to be classified as 'barbarian' since they were non-Chinese. Therefore, it was necessary for the author to remove the Indian traces of the story while retaining what mattered to him, the *Rāmāyaṇa* storyline. I argue that translation as opposed to transliteration of Sanskrit proper nouns was the author's deliberate attempt to 'domesticate' the Hindu epic

<sup>42</sup>, and the Chinese language can be interpreted as a tool of ‘domestication’ that helps fashion a Chinese façade for the *Rāmāyaṇa*. This chapter now begins to analyze the author’s translation enterprise, which is one of the most elaborate in the field of Chinese-Sanskrit translation. For each proper noun, I first provide the Chinese version that appears in the *Tale of the Yaksha King* and then explore its Sanskrit correspondence in the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

#### *Creating the Chinese façade – Translation of Sanskrit proper nouns*

The story begins with Diệu Nhàm Quốc (妙岩國), which translates to ‘a kingdom which is (or has) a fair rock’. Given that *nhàm* (岩) can mean ‘a rock above the water level’, hence an island, and that the kingdom was ruled by the yaksha king, Diệu Nhàm Quốc should refer to Lankā, the capital city and often by extension the entire island of Rāvaṇa. The yaksha king is said to go by two names, Trường Minh Vương (長明王) and Thập Đầu Vương (十頭王). Literally ‘a king with ten heads’, Thập Đầu Vương clearly corresponds to Daśagrīva, i.e. the ‘ten-necked one’, or Daśānana, i.e. ‘the ten-faced one’, both of which are popular appellations for Rāvaṇa. On the other hand, the name Trường Minh Vương requires more decrypting, since the Chinese word *minh* (明) is imbued with many meanings. With *minh*’s simplest definition of ‘bright, luminous’, the name translates into ‘the long and brilliant king’, which does not evoke the image of Rāvaṇa. When the Sanskrit etymology of Rāvaṇa is considered, it appears that *minh* should be interpreted as ‘clear, obvious’. Composed of the causative form of the root  $\sqrt{ru}$  ‘to cry, to roar’ and the action noun suffix *-ana*, *rāvaṇa* literally means ‘causing to cry or to roar’. Monier-Williams (1899, 879) contends that the name of

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<sup>42</sup> This is not to discount the possibility that the author wanted readers to identify with the *Rāmāyaṇa* characters more readily. Translation in lieu of transliteration may be argued as a deliberate attempt to reduce linguistic barriers, allowing access to the story especially for less literate sectors of the Vietnamese population who might have known heard of the tale rather than have read it. However, less literate sectors, to begin with, would not be able to access *LNCQ*, a text written in Classical Chinese. It thus seems more likely that the translation enterprise was geared towards satiating the ‘domestication’ desire of the Neo-Confucian Vietnamese literati.

Rāvaṇa should be interpreted in this manner. However, since there is certain leeway in the Sanskrit language for a causative verb to be read as its non-causative counterpart<sup>43</sup>, *rāvaṇa* can also be understood as ‘roaring’. In this sense, *trường minh* (長明), i.e. ‘long and clear’, as a compound means ‘reverberating, resounding’, which alludes to Rāvaṇa’s ferocious roar. The entire epithet of Trường Minh Vương can thus be read as the ‘king with a reverberating roar’.

The story then introduces Hồ Tôn Tinh Quốc (胡孫精國), which translates to the ‘kingdom of monkey spirits’<sup>44</sup>. The *Rāmāyaṇa* equivalent of Hồ Tôn Tinh Quốc is Kiṣkindhā, a kingdom ruled by the monkey king Sugrīva. Possibly to truncate the original epic, Sugrīva is left out and the ruler of the kingdom is set to be Thập Xa Vương (十車王). Literally the ‘king of ten chariots’, Thập Xa Vương is a very faithful translation of Daśaratha, which means ‘ten chariots’. Essentially, the author collapsed Ayodhyā and Kiṣkindhā into one single kingdom because he had taken out the storyline of the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa*, the fourth book of the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

The son of Thập Xa Vương is Vi Tư (微姿). Although it has ‘small’ as its basic meaning, the Chinese word *vi* (微) should be interpreted as ‘elegant, exquisite’ here. Derived from the root  $\sqrt{ram}$  ‘to delight, to rejoice’, the name of Rāma comes to mean ‘pleasing, beautiful’ (Monier-Williams 1899, 879). It is based on this definition that the name Vi Tư comes about, meaning ‘elegant appearance’.

The wife of Vi Tư is Bạch Tĩnh Hậu Nương (白淨后娘), or just Bạch Tĩnh (白淨), for *hậu* (后), i.e. ‘queen’, and *nương* (娘), i.e. ‘lady’, are merely honorifics. Since Vi Tư corresponds to Rāma, Bạch Tĩnh must refer to Sītā. However, *bạch* (白), i.e. ‘white’, and *tĩnh*

<sup>43</sup> In the grammar of Pāṇini, this is known as *svārthe ṇic*, i.e. the causative suffix in the root’s inherent meaning.

<sup>44</sup> Often rendered in English as ‘spirit’, ‘demon’, or ‘essence’, the ‘fox spirit’ (狐狸精 *hú lí jīng*) mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, *tinh* (精) is really any anthropomorphic animal or object. For example, is an anthropomorphic fox. Unlike the English term ‘demon’, these creatures are not necessarily evil.

(淨), i.e. ‘pure, clean’, have nothing to do with the name *Sītā*, which means ‘furrow’. According to lore, *Sītā* is named so because she was found in a furrow made by the king Janaka while ploughing the earth (Monier-Williams 1899, 1218). This etymology is acknowledged in some Chinese Buddhist texts, such as the twenty-third fascicle in the *Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom* (大智度論 *dà zhì dù lùn*). As its author Kumārajīva writes,

如國王夫人寶女從地中生，為十頭羅刹將度大海，王大憂愁！

When the precious consort of the prince [i.e. *Rāma*], [by the name of] Born from the Earth, is taken across the ocean by the ten-headed rakshasa [i.e. *Rāvaṇa*], the prince is deeply distraught.

Sinologist Victor Mair (1989, 687) notes that ‘Born from the Earth’ (從地中生 *cóng dì zhōng sheng*) is Kumārajīva’s attempt to approximate *sītā*, i.e. ‘furrow’, and refers to *Rāma*’s wife. In the *Tale of the Yaksha King*, the author could have translated *Sītā* in this way, but such a crude translation would appear to be incompatible with the literary style of the *LNCQ* narrative. He could also have rendered the name into a Chinese word meaning ‘furrow’, but all possible candidates, namely *huè* (畦), *triêt* (轍), and *lê* (犁), are inapt names for a woman.

The author settles on the name *Bạch Tinh*, which does have feminine connotation but lacks apparent association with *sītā* ‘furrow’. Interestingly though, and perhaps not coincidentally, given that every name in this story is carefully crafted, the Sanskrit word *sita*, i.e. *sītā* but with both vowels shortened, means ‘white’ or ‘pure’ (Monier-Williams 1899, 1218). This is the exact meaning of the heroine’s name, composed of the words *bạch* (白), i.e. ‘white’, and *tinh* (淨), i.e. ‘pure’. One possibility is that the author is well-versed in both Chinese and Sanskrit and deliberately misreads *Sītā*, i.e. the name of *Rāma*’s wife, in the original *Rāmāyaṇa* as *sita*, i.e. ‘white’, to generate a Chinese name with femineity and elegance. A more probable scenario, though, is that the author is translating from a Cham rendition of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in which Sanskrit names are only transliterated. Since Cham is a Malayo-Polynesian language of

the Austronesian family, it does not contrast vowel length phonemically. When the names from the Sanskrit *Rāmāyaṇa* entered the Cham language, regardless of orally or textually, the Cham people most likely did not differentiate between short and long vowels, which in essence shortened the length of long vowels in Sanskrit. Therefore, when transliterated into Cham, *sītā* became *sita*, and the author of the *LNCQ* tale was not aware of this. Assuming that names are intactly transmitted from the Sanskrit original to the Cham rendition, the author looks up a Chinese-Sanskrit dictionary and translates *sita*, i.e. ‘white’ or ‘pure’, as Bạch Tĩnh. Of course, what is proposed here is speculative, for there exists no literary remains of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in Champa from that period (Marrison 1985, 50), as mentioned above. Nevertheless, this hypothesis helps bridge the gap between the character name Bạch Tĩnh and the Sanskrit name Sitā.

The derivation of each proper noun in the *Tale of the Yaksha King* has been analyzed, but there remains one last issue – why is Rāvaṇa portrayed as the king of yakshas but not the rakshasas? Both *dā xoa* (夜叉), i.e. ‘yaksha’, and *la sát* (羅剎), i.e. ‘rakshasa’, exist in the Chinese lexicon by the time when *LNCQ* is composed, as Buddhism and Indian mythology has entered the Sinosphere for several centuries. The lack of vocabulary, thus, is not a probable reason for making Rāvaṇa a yaksha. To solve this riddle, it is useful to examine the *Scripture of the Descent into Laṅkā* (大乘入楞伽經 *dà chéng rù léng jiā jīng*), in which Rāvaṇa is sometimes referred to as the lord of rakshasas, just as he is in the Hindu epic,

我是羅剎王，十首羅婆那。  
I am the king of rakshasas, the ten-headed Rāvaṇa.

But sometimes also as the king of yakshas,

爾時羅婆那夜叉王...  
At that time, Rāvaṇa the king of yakshas...

Given the muddy distinction between these two species of Indian mythological beings, it appears that ‘yaksha’ and ‘rakshasa’ are more or less synonymous in Chinese Buddhist

literature, to which the Vietnamese literati are exposed to a certain extent. However, these two terms differ in frequency. In the *Scripture of the Descent into Lañkā*, ‘yaksha’ occurs twelve times while ‘rakshasa’ only appears twice. The difference in prevalence for the two terms may be related to the semantics of their respective Chinese characters. Neither of the characters in *la sát*, i.e. ‘rakshasa’, are semantically meaningful in Chinese, but those of *dạ xoa*, i.e. ‘yaksha’, are. Composed of *dạ* (夜), i.e. ‘night’, and *xoa* (叉), i.e. ‘prong’, *dạ xoa* can be interpreted as a demon active during night time and armed with prongs, presenting readers with a more vivid image of Rāvaṇa. In fact, this iconography resembles that of *niśācara*, a kenning for a rakshasa, which literally means ‘night roaming [ones]’. Perhaps the author of the *LNCQ* story is even reanalyzing *dạ xoa* as a partial calque for this synonym of rakshasa, in which *niśā*, i.e. ‘night’ is translated into *dạ* (夜), but *cara*, i.e. ‘roaming’, is transliterated into *xoa* (叉) and reinterpreted as ‘prong’, reconciling the differences in Sanskrit and Chinese. This analysis suggests that *la sát* was deemed a ‘barbarian’ term that had to be ‘domesticated’ and thus translated, and the author resorted to rendering it as *dạ xoa*.

### *Conclusion*

In this chapter, I have unveiled the Chinese veneer of the *Tale of the Yaksha King* to show that the *Rāmāyaṇa* served as its blueprint. I have further argued that the author of *LNCQ* had to ‘domesticate’ the Hindu epic because it originated in Indian culture, which the literati conceptualized to be ‘barbarian’ because of it not being Chinese. I have then explored how Sanskrit proper names in the *Rāmāyaṇa* were incorporated into Chinese/Sino-Vietnamese philology, which helped construct the Chinese façade for the Indian legend and allow its circulation in the Vietnamese literary scene.



### CHAPTER 3 THE TALE OF ARECA NUT

Betel chewing has been a common practice among the Vietnamese for millennia (Oxenham et al. 2002) <sup>45</sup>. It typically consists of three ingredients, namely areca nut, betel leaf, and slaked lime paste (X. H. Nguyễn 2006, 501). Areca nut is the seed of *Areca catechu*, the areca palm, while betel leaf is the leaf of *Piper betle*, the betel plant. Together with a smear of slaked lime, they constitute the betel quid, the ‘betel’ referred to in the term ‘betel chewing’. Chewing the quid yields a red juice, the auspicious color of which probably explains why betel and areca symbolize love and marriage in Vietnamese culture (Balaban 2000, 117). This symbolism is especially evident in the literary landscape of Vietnam. In her renowned poem *Offering Betel* (呷啞朝 *mời ăn trầu*), the poet Hồ Xuân Hương (胡春香) relates the red juice from the betel quid to fated love (Balaban 2000, 22-23) <sup>46</sup>,

菓棹儒弛嘔朝灰，  
尼貼春香買挾耒。  
固沛緣饒辰糴吏，  
停撐如蘿泊如硤。

A piece of nut and a bit of leaf.  
Here, Xuân Hương has smeared it.  
If love is fated, you’ll chew it red.  
Lime won’t stay white, nor leaf, green.

The *Tale of Areca Nut* <sup>47</sup> (檳榔傳 *Tân Lang Truyện*) from *LNCQ* is another literary work that associates betel chewing with love. In this chapter, I discuss this story which chronicles the origin of betel chewing.

<sup>45</sup> Oxenham et al. (2002) finds stains of betel nut on dentitions excavated from a Bronze Age site in Thanh Hóa, a province in northern Vietnam.

<sup>46</sup> This Nôm poem is transliterated as follows. Quả cau nhỏ nhỏ miếng trầu hôi, này của Xuân Hương mới quệt rồi. Có phải duyên nhau thì thấm lại, đứng xanh như lá bạc như vôi.

<sup>47</sup> Areca nut is commonly referred to as betel nut because it is traditionally consumed with betel leaf. In fact, many scholars like Kelley (2015, 180) use the term ‘betel nut’ and translate the title of this tale as the *Tale of Betel Nut*. However, to be taxonomically accurate and more importantly to prevent confusion in the following discussion, the term ‘betel nut’ will not be used to refer to areca nut in this thesis.



Betel quids rolled in the form of a phoenix wing  
(齧翹鳳 *trầu cánh phượng*)<sup>48</sup>



Porcelain lime container for betel  
chewing (c. 15<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>49</sup>

### Synopsis

The story begins with a prince<sup>50</sup> surnamed Cao (高), which literally means ‘tall’, because of his tall stature. He had two sons, the elder named Tân (欝) and the younger Lang (榔), who resembled each other in appearance. After their parents passed away, the brothers served a Taoist master surnamed Lru (劉). Having reached the appropriate age for marriage, the master’s daughter by the name of Liên (璉) chose Tân as her husband and the two grew intimate. However, Lang gradually felt distant from his brother and decided to leave the couple. He arrived at a river bank and died out of grief, thereupon transforming into the areca palm. Searching for Lang and realizing that he was dead, Tân ended his life and turned into a stone entwined by the roots of the areca palm. Her husband now missing, Liên looked for him only

<sup>48</sup> “Trầu cánh phượng [Betel nut with phoenix wings],” Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tr%E1%BA%A7u\\_c%C3%A1nh\\_ph%C6%B0%E1%BB%A3ng.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tr%E1%BA%A7u_c%C3%A1nh_ph%C6%B0%E1%BB%A3ng.jpg) [accessed May 13, 2022].

<sup>49</sup> “15th C. Vietnamese Anamese Lime Container, ex-Museum,” Bidsquare, <https://www.bidsquare.com/online-auctions/artemis-gallery/15th-c-vietnamese-anamese-lime-container-ex-museum-2292023> [accessed May 13, 2022].

<sup>50</sup> The specific term in the text was *quan lang* (官郎). According to the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan*, this was the title for princes during the Hồng Bàng period. More about *quan lang* is discussed in this chapter.

to discover his death. Embracing the stone, Liên died and transformed into a betel vine that coiled around it. To commemorate the three, Liên's parents built a shrine next to the river. Those worshipping at this shrine commended the fraternal affection between the brothers and the conjugal faithfulness between the couple. One day, a Hùng king arrived at this shrine. Picking a fruit from the areca tree and leaves from the betel vine, he combined them in his mouth together with ashes from the stone. This was the first occurrence of betel chewing. Since then, this practice grew popular among the people and became an essential component of weddings and other kinds of ritual in Vietnam.

*Beyond the Chinese façade – A Tai story*

Historian Liam Kelley (2015, 182) interprets the *Tale of Areca Nut* as a simplified and Sinicized version of a Tai story <sup>51</sup>, the manuscript of which was found in northeastern Laos and translated into French by Lafont (1971, 12-17). The story involves three friends studying together, namely Sam Luong, Sam Lan, and Ing Dai. Unbeknownst to the other two, Ing Dai was a girl who had been disguising herself as a boy. One day, Sam Luong saw Ing Dai blackening her teeth in her undisguised form. Failing to recognize that the girl before his eyes was Ing Dai, he asked her whether they could blacken their teeth together, to which Ing Dai agreed. Subsequently, the two made love. After some time, Ing Dai revealed her true identity and the lovers spent a night together at Ing Dai's house. However, upon witnessing them in bed together the next morning, Ing Dai's mother became furious and said she would never allow them to marry. Sam Luong thus devised a plan – he faked his death and instructed Ing Dai to inform his parents that he wished to be placed in a stone coffin big enough to hold two people. While the coffin was being transported to the cemetery, Ing Dai requested the

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<sup>51</sup> The Tai refers to descendants of those who speak a Tai language, which includes the Thai, the Isan, the Lao, etc. Although the story summarized here is first recorded in the Lao language, Kelley uses the term 'Tai' in lieu of 'Lao' in his argument, possibly because the story might have been popular among various Tai-speaking groups, but the only extant manuscript of the story just so happened to be in the Lao language.

pallbearers to open it. Immediately, she entered it and closed the coffin. Unable to open the coffin again, the people called for the parents of Sam Luong and Ing Dai along with the leader of the settlement, who then summoned Sam Lan to answer questions about his friends. When the coffin was somehow opened again, the two lovers were found to be alive. Infuriated by their mischief, the parents wished all three young people dead. The three thus died on the spot, thereupon transforming into ingredients of the betel quid. Respectively, Ing Dai, Sam Luong, and Sam Lan turned into a betel leaf, an areca nut, and lime (Lafont 1971, 12-17; Kelley 2015, 181-182).

It is quite possible that the author of *LNCQ* had access to a Tai story from Laos. For centuries before *LNCQ* was composed, Vietnamese and Lao polities interacted frequently, and intermarriage was common between the two (T. Li 2010, 84, 86). Their intimate relationship gave rise to Lao legends that incorporated figures from Vietnamese mythology. For example, the Lao story of Khun Chuong held that he conquered Vietnam and married a Vietnamese princess called Nang Oukeo (T. Li 2010, 84, Manich 1967, 96-97). Composed of *nang* (ນາງ), which means ‘lady’ in Lao, and *oukeo*, which is very likely the Lao pronunciation of Âu Cơ, Nang Oukeo most definitely refers to the heroine in the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan*. This suggests that stories had been transmitting across the two cultures for a long time. It would therefore not be surprising for a Lao tale to enter the repertoire of Vietnamese mythology.

In terms of storyline, this Tai tale differs from the *Tale of Areca Nut* to a large extent, which is attributed to very valid reasons discussed in the next section. However, both stories involve three protagonists, their death, and their transformation into components of the betel quid, a motif so outlandish that it leaves little possibility for the two tales to have developed independently.

To justify this Tai story being the basis of the *Tale of Areca Nut*, Kelley (2015) provides two pieces of textual evidence. Firstly, the father of Tân and Lang was designated as a *quan*

*lang* (官郎), a title for local administrators among non-Vietnamese ethnic groups (Kelley 2015, 172). In particular, in the Tai languages Tày and Thái<sup>52</sup>, *lang* is a term of respect for a man (Hoàng 1972, 145; Kelley 2013, 136). *Lang* was also used in the titles for some indigenous headmen inhabiting what is Guangxi today (Kelley 2013, 143, 152), a Chinese province where Northern and Central Tai languages such as Zhuang were historically spoken. Secondly, the term for betel leaf used in the story is *phù lưu* (芙蓉), which Kelley (2015, 181) believes to have derived from a Tai language, especially given its resemblance with the Lao and Thai words for ‘betel leaf’<sup>53</sup>. As he argues, even though *phù lưu* does not make sense in Vietnamese or Chinese, it is nevertheless included ‘for those in the know at the time to understand [the Tai origin of the story]’ (Kelley 2015, 182)<sup>54</sup>.

Without knowing this Tai story, it is impossible to identify the non-Chinese origin of the *Tale of Areca Nut*, for the references to Taoism and Confucianism pervade the *LNCQ* account. For example, to identify the elder among the two brothers who looked exactly the same, Liên presented the brothers with a bowl of porridge and only one pair of chopsticks. Seeing that Lang yielded to Tân, Liên knew that Tân was the elder brother and decided to marry him. Respect for seniors is highly observed in Confucian culture, and even more so within a

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<sup>52</sup> Tày is a Central Tai language spoken in northern Vietnam, and Thái is a Southwestern Tai language, the official language of Thailand.

<sup>53</sup> The words for ‘betel leaf’ in Lao and Thai are respectively *phu* (ຜູ) and *phluu* (พลู).

<sup>54</sup> While the reference to *quan lang* plausibly indicates the non-Vietnamese origin of the tale, for there is no other literary impetus for the author to do so, the same cannot be said for the use of *phù lưu*. In a citation from the *Record of Foreign Matters* (異物志 *yì wù zhì*) documented in the *Imperial Reader of the Era of Great Peace* (太平御覽 *tài píng yù lǎn*), betel leaf is referred to as *phù lưu* (扶留), a term with exactly the same pronunciation as *phù lưu* (芙蓉) used in the *Tale of Areca Nut*. The slight difference in orthography between these two terms is natural, as it is common for foreign words to be transliterated with different Chinese characters that are pronounced in a similar way. The *Record of Foreign Matters* was composed in the Eastern Han dynasty (25-220), which suggests that *phù lưu* has been in the Chinese lexicon for at least one thousand years before *LNCQ* is composed. Therefore, the use of *phù lưu* is simply expected in the *Tale of Areca Nut*, which is written in Classical Chinese. The use of the term does not necessarily suggest the Tai origin of the story, although it can and might indeed have derived from a Tai language, as Kelley here argues. Nevertheless, other pieces of evidence do confidently support Kelley’s argument.

family, which is reflected in this scene as Kelley (2015, 180) points out. More important to creating a Chinese façade for this Tai story is the removal of behaviors proscribed by Confucianism, which I will analyze in this chapter. I argue that the author was operating under a Confucian storytelling framework to ‘domesticate’ this Tai story, with the aim to make this narrative of ‘barbarian’ origin publishable in the Neo-Confucian literary scene.

*Creating the Chinese façade – Censoring premarital sex*

The *Tale of Areca Nut* preserved the bizarre metamorphosis of the protagonists in the Tai story, but many other aspects were modified. In particular, the premarital sex between Sam Luong and Ing Dai was expurgated from the Tai story in the *LNCQ* retelling. According to Kelley (2015, 182), such change was to ‘fit elite Viet sensibilities’. What Kelley meant by ‘Viet sensibilities’ probably refers to the Neo-Confucian *weltanschauung* of the Vietnamese literati. As Confucians, the literati were to decry premarital romance and other types of relationship circumscribed by Confucian precepts. A textbook example is Pô Ino Nagar, the legendary founder of Champa who was integrated into the Vietnamese pantheon. In the Cham hymns dedicated to her, she is said to have ninety-seven husbands and thirty-nine daughters (Cabaton 1901, 110; T. A. Nguyễn 1995, 55-56). However, when she was later designated as a deity of the Vietnamese, inscriptions regarding her made no mention of her polyandry or large number of children (T. A. Nguyễn 1995, 57), for they were considered unbecoming in the Confucian canon.

*Creating the Chinese façade – References to Confucian morals*

Having purged the Tai story of premarital sex, the author filled the vacuum with a proper marriage between Tân and Liên. Not only is this substitution compatible with Confucian teachings, it also reconciles the story with the nuptial connotation of areca and betel in the Vietnamese mind. In fact, when appropriating the Tai story, the author might have intended to explain why betel chewing signifies conjugal happiness.

Nevertheless, there is an issue left unresolved, namely the paranormal nature of the Tai story. Because of the adage, ‘Confucius does not speak of subjects that are anomalous, violent, delusional, and supernatural’ (子不語怪力亂神 *zi bù yǔ guài lì luàn shén*)<sup>55</sup>, Confucian scholars frowned on anything that fell under these four categories, which no doubt captured the transformation of Sam Luong into an areca nut, not to mention that it was accomplished through a curse. However, this kind of metamorphosis is to be preserved in the Vietnamese story, as it is the sole method to connect the union between Tân and Liên with areca and betel.

For the Neo-Confucian literati to accept the metamorphosis, the author employed a tactic commonly used by Chinese writers of *zhiquai* and other novel genres. To escape Confucian censorship, these writers forcibly imposed a moral on their own works, for supernatural elements are acceptable as long as the story is didactic (Liu 2020, 53). Thus, the author of the *LNCQ* story claimed that the death of the three protagonists embodied fraternal affection and conjugal faithfulness, two of the most important virtues in Confucianism, even though the story itself hardly conveyed these themes.

*Creating the Chinese façade – Chinese literary allusions to marriage*

The forced interpolation of a moral might have inspired later versions of the story to expand on how it is actually manifest in the story, since the original version is rather scant on this topic. Thus, the same story in the *Records of Clouds from South of the Sky*, a later edition of *LNCQ*, gives an extended conversation that involves the parents applauding the protagonists for observing Confucian virtues, namely fraternal affection and conjugal faithfulness. To better connect the story with the theme of marriage, the author even composed an elaborate poem with multiple allusions to love and marriage from Chinese literature. The beginning of the poem reads,

兩儀開判後，  
萬世起姻淵。

<sup>55</sup> See *Shu Er* (述而 *shù ér*) in the *Analects* (論語 *lún yǔ*).

相對冰人語，  
俱題紅葉言。

After *yin* and *yang* are set apart,  
Matrimony of thousand generations begins.  
[The lovers] each speak to the match-maker,  
And together they inscribe words on the maple leaf.

Here, the author employs a Chinese imagery about love. The particular term for a match-maker in this poem literally translates to ‘ice person’ (冰人 *bīng rén*). It derives from a story about the scholar *Ling Hú Cè* (令狐策), who dreamt that he was standing on an icy surface and talking to someone below it <sup>56</sup>. His colleague informed him that what is above and below the ice respectively belong to the categories of *yang* and *yin*, or rather masculine and feminine, and a conversation that occurs across the surface implies that the *yang* and the *yin* are about to interact, which alludes to matchmaking. The poem continues,

金屋嬌娥貯，  
紅絲繡幙牽。  
婚成稽鳳卜，  
事竟駕魚軒。

In an aureate abode, he keeps his delicate woman.  
From behind the embroidered curtain, he pulls the scarlet thread.  
The marriage completed, he consults the divination on their union.  
That errand concluded, he drives the shimmering carriage.

There is again another allusion related to love, more specifically about marriage. The scarlet thread represents marriage because of an account about the Tang-dynasty general *Guō Yuán Zhèn* (郭元振) <sup>57</sup>. Presented with five woman behind an embroidered curtain, he was tasked to choose one of them to marry. Every one of the five woman was holding a scarlet thread, and *Guō* pulled the thread of the third woman, thus marrying her. These Chinese allusions to love and marriage do not only strengthen the theme of marriage, which was absent in the *Tai* story,

<sup>56</sup> See *Sua Dan* (索統 *suǒ dǎn*) in the *Records of Arts* (藝術傳 *yì shù chuán*) in the *Book of Jin* (晉書 *jìn shū*).

<sup>57</sup> See the *Legacy of the Tianbao and Kaiyuan Eras* (開元天寶遺事 *kāi yuán tiān bǎo yí shì*).



but also rid the possibility of premarital sex between the protagonists, for such allusions characterize marriage procedures and rituals considered proper in Confucianism.

### *Conclusion*

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that the *Tale of Areca Nut* has a Tai story as its blueprint. I have shown that the author of *LNCQ* used ideals from a Confucian storytelling framework to ‘domesticate’ elements that would be considered inappropriate in the Vietnamese literary scene, particularly premarital sex. Along with the imposition of a moral in the *LNCQ* narrative, the author created a Chinese façade for this narrative originating in Tai culture and made its incorporation in *LNCQ* possible.

## CONCLUSION

This thesis has set out to explore to what extent literature manifested the Neo-Confucian weltanschauung of the Vietnamese literati in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. To conduct my research, I have analyzed three tales from *LNCQ* that were based on stories found in Southeast Asian and Vietnamese vernacular cultures, which the literati at that time considered as ‘barbarian’ because of the Sino-barbarian/civilized-barbarian dichotomy ingrained in their mind.

In Chapter 1, I have analyzed the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan* and the Vietnamese vernacular story that served as its blueprint. I have explained that the Vietnamese folktale about Lord Lạc Long and Âu Cơ bears cultural significance to the Vietnamese people, which warranted its incorporation into *LNCQ* despite certain non-Confucian tropes in it. I have then explored the Chinese myths and historical accounts referenced in the *LNCQ* entry and the specific statements the author attempted to make through them. The appropriation of Chinese accounts, as I have argued, allowed the author to ‘domesticate’ the Vietnamese folktale and elevate its literary status.

In Chapter 2, I have delved into the *Tale of the Yaksha King* and established that it referenced the *Rāmāyaṇa*. I have extensively analyzed the author’s enterprise to translate Sanskrit proper names from the Hindu epic into Chinese, which, as I suggest, was the author’s method in ‘domesticating’ the Indian legend and removing its ‘barbarian’ flavor.

In Chapter 3, I have focused on the *Tale of Areca Nut* and the Tai story that inspired it. I have demonstrated how the author used a Confucian storytelling framework to sanitize the Tai narrative and to impose a moral upon it. I have also elaborated on the Chinese allusions to love and marriage that the author included in the *LNCQ* account to replace the pre-martial love affairs in the original story.

Analyzing these three entries from *LNCQ* and the ‘barbarian’ narratives that inspired them, I have argued that a Neo-Confucian weltanschauung motivated the author of *LNCQ* to

create a Chinese façade for stories of ‘barbarian’ origin, and this façade was necessary if the author wanted to publish and circulate these stories in a literary scene that was increasingly Neo-Confucian. I have demonstrated that this façade could be constructed through the appropriation of Chinese materials such as mythology and language. At the same time, I have been careful to critically analyze how the author manipulated these materials, and noted that the Vietnamese literati often interpreted Chinese materials for their own purposes and in their own Vietnamese manner.

Through my preliminary analysis of the three *LNCQ* stories, I hope to have shown that there is much more to this anthology than its Chinese façade, as these stories have their origins in non-Chinese cultures, and even the Chinese façade itself reflects the localization genius of the Vietnamese literati. In addition to encouraging more critical analyses of *LNCQ* and Sino-Vietnamese literature in the academic community, this thesis has demonstrated that, to understand the Vietnamese literati, literature can be a research avenue as valid and powerful as more conventional approaches that study the socio-political structure of Vietnam.

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## 卷之一

## 鴻龐氏傳

炎帝神農氏三世孫帝明生帝宜<sup>①</sup>，既而南巡至五嶺，接得婺仙女<sup>②</sup>悅之，納而歸，生祿續<sup>③</sup>。容貌端正，聰明夙成<sup>④</sup>。帝明奇之，使嗣帝位。祿續固讓其兄帝宜，不敢奉命<sup>⑤</sup>。於是帝明立帝宜為嗣以治北地，封祿續為涇陽王以治南方，號其國為赤鬼國。涇陽王能入水府，娶洞庭君女曰龍女，生崇攬，是為貉龍君，代父以治國。涇陽王不知所終。

龍君教民耕種衣食<sup>⑥</sup>，始有君臣尊卑之序，父子夫婦之倫，或時歸水國而百姓晏然<sup>⑦</sup>。民或有事，則呼貉龍君曰：「逋乎，不來以救我輩（越人呼父曰吒曰布；呼君曰昀是也）<sup>⑧</sup>！」龍君即來，其威靈感應，人莫能測。

• 傳氏龐鴻 一之卷 •

帝宜傳帝來，以北方無事，因思及祖帝明南巡接得仙女之事，乃命親臣蚩尤代守國事而南巡赤鬼國。見龍君以歸水府，國內無主，帝來乃留愛女媼姬與部眾侍婢居于行在而周流天下，遍觀形勢，見奇花怪草，珍禽異獸，犀象玳瑁，金銀珠玉，椒桂乳香，沉檀等味，山穀海錯，無物不有。又四時氣候不寒不熱，心愛慕之而忘返。南國人民苦於<sup>⑨</sup>煩擾不得安帖如初，日夜望龍君之歸，乃相率揚聲呼曰：「逋在何方<sup>⑩</sup>？當速來救我。」龍君倏然而歸，見媼姬獨居，容貌絕美，龍君悅之，乃化作一好兒郎，豐姿秀麗，左右前後侍從眾多，歌吹之聲達于行在。媼姬見之，心

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<sup>58</sup> Chan Hing-ho 陳慶浩, Cheng A-tsai 鄭阿財, and Trần Nghĩa 陳義, *Yuènnán hàn wén xiǎoshuō cóng qián: dì èr jí dì yī cè 越南漢文小說叢刊: 第二輯第一冊 [A Collection of Vietnamese Chinese Novels: Series 2 Volume 1]* (Taipei: Táiwān xuéshēng shūjú 臺灣學生書局, 1992), 29-32, 197-199.

## • 傳列怪摭南嶺 •

亦悅從。龍君迎歸于龍裝岩①。及帝來還，不見嫫嫫，命群臣徧尋天下。龍君有神術，變現百端，妖精鬼魅，龍蛇虎象，尋者畏懼，不敢搜索。帝來亦北還，再傳至帝榆罔，與黃帝戰於版泉，不克而死②，神農氏遂亡。

龍君與嫫嫫相處，其年而生得一胞，以為不祥，棄諸原野。過七日③，胞中開出百卵，一卵一男，歸而養之，不勞乳哺，各自長大④，智勇俱全，人皆畏服，謂為非常之兄弟。龍君久居水府，母子獨居，思歸北國。行至境上，黃帝聞之懼，分兵禦塞外，母子不得北歸，日夜呼龍君曰：「逋在何處？使吾母子悲傷！」。龍君忽然而來，遇於襄野。嫫嫫泣曰：「妾本北人，與君相處，生得百男，無由鞠育⑤，請與君從，忽相遐棄，使為無夫無父之人，徒自傷耳」。龍君曰：「我是龍種，水族之長，你是仙屬，地上之人，本不相屬。雖陰陽之氣，合而有子，然方類不同，水火相剋，難以久居。今為分別，吾將五十男歸水府分治各處，五十男從汝居地上，分國而治，登山入水，有事相關無得相廢。」百男各自聲受，然後辭去。

嫫嫫與五十男居于峯脅（今白鶴縣是也），自推尊其雄長者為主，號曰雄王，國號文郎國。其國東來南海，西抵巴蜀，北至洞庭，南至狐孫國（今占成國是也）。分國中為十五部，曰交趾、朱雋、寧山、福祿、越裳、寧海（今南寧是也）、陽泉、桂陽、武寧、伊驩、九真、日南、真定、桂林、象郡等部，命其群弟分治之。置其次為將相。相曰貉侯，將曰貉將，王子曰官郎，女曰媚娘，司馬曰蒲正，奴僕曰鄰⑥，婢隸曰精⑦，稱臣曰瑰⑧，世世以父傳子曰父道，世主相傳皆號雄王而不易。時山麓之民浼于水，往往為蛟蛇所傷，白於王。王曰：「山蠻之種與水族殊，彼好同惡易，故為侵害。」乃令人以墨刺身為水怪之狀，自是蛇龍無咬傷之患。百粵文身之俗實始于此。國初民用未足，以木皮為衣，織管草為席，以米滓為酒，以恍榔、櫻欄為饌⑨，以禽獸魚蝦為

鹹，以薑根爲鹽。刀耕火種，地多糯米，以竹筒炊之。架木爲屋，以避虎狼之害。剪短其髮，以便入林。子初生也，以蕉葉臥之。人之死也，相舂<sup>⑩</sup>，今鄰人聞之，得來相救。男女嫁娶，先以鹽封爲問禮，然後殺牛羊以成禮。以糯飯入房中相食畢，然後交通，以此時未有檳榔故也。蓋百男乃百粵之始祖也。

## 【校勘記】

- ① 甲本「帝宜」下，有「帝宜生帝來」等字。
- ② 乙本「婺仙女」作「婺娘妾」。
- ③ 丙本「祿續」作「續祿」。
- ④ 丙本「聰明夙成」作「聖智聰明」。
- ⑤ 甲、乙二本無「其兄帝宜，不敢奉命」等字。
- ⑥ 甲本「耕種衣食」作「教養衣食」；乙本作「牧民耕種農桑」。
- ⑦ 丙本「晏然」下，有「是時以爲無事，不知以其然也」一段。
- ⑧ 甲、乙二本「越人呼父曰吒，曰布；呼君曰希是也」皆作「南人呼父曰逋，呼君曰希」。
- ⑨ 甲本「於」作「此生」。
- ⑩ 丙本「何」下，有「與化國主侵擾吾民」等字。
- ⑪ 丙本「龍裝岩」作「岱裝岩」。
- ⑫ 丙本自「再傳」至「神農氏遂亡」作「時北國蚩尤作亂，有熊國君軒轅黃帝修德以率諸侯舉兵攻之不克。蚩尤獸形人面，勇猛有威。或教黃帝以發（？）獸皮旗鼓令而戰之，蚩尤乃驚畏而敗，徙于涿鹿，黃帝自立以

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- 有其國。帝來聞之乃還北國，與黃帝三戰，不克，內（？）于落邑，神農氏遂亡」。
- ⑬ 丙本「七日」作「六、七月」。
- ⑭ 丙本「各自長大」作「各自有秀麗奇異。及長大，威猛捷敏，智勇兼全，人每畏服，謂其非常人之兄弟也」。
- ⑮ 乙本「育」作「養」。
- ⑯ 甲、乙二本「奴僕曰鄒」作「臣僚僕隸曰卯」。
- ⑰ 甲、乙二本「精」作「稍」。
- ⑱ 丙本「瑰」作「塊」。
- ⑲ 甲本「饌」作「版」。
- ⑳ 乙本「相春」作「以杵春」。



# 新編天南雲錄列傳

## 卷之一

### 鴻龐傳

出嶺南撫怪

初，炎帝之孫帝明，南巡於五嶺，接得婺仙之女，納之以歸。生祿續，容貌端正，聖智聰明。帝奇之，欲以爲嗣。祿續固讓其兄帝宜，帝明遂立帝宜以爲帝嗣。封祿續爲涇陽王，以治南方，號其國爲赤鬼國。王能遍知水府，娶洞庭君之女，曰龍母。生崇攬，封貉龍君，以代治其國。涇陽不知所之。龍君教民耕種衣食，始有君臣、父子、夫婦、朋友、兄弟之倫。龍君有時歸水府，而百姓晏然。民有事則呼曰：「逋主何在？胡不來治我輩？」龍君倏然而來，其靈應如此，人多敬畏。

時帝明子帝來治北國，帝來又思帝明南巡接得婺仙之事，乃命親臣蚩尤守其國，而自南巡。見龍君已歸水府，中國無主，乃留愛女姬姬居峰城（今白鶴縣也）。而巡行天下，徧觀刑（形）勢。至於奇華，見山瀆海錯，無物不有，風氣四時，暄陽和煦，心樂居之，忘其歸國。人民煩擾，不能如帖然之初，相率而呼龍君曰：「逋主何在？使北主擾吾民。」龍君忽然而來，見姬姬獨居宮城，侍妾僕從，儀衛甚嚴。龍君化爲好兒郎，豐姿雄偉，從官羅列，笙歌舞蹈，達於宮中。姬姬見而悅之，遂從龍君歸岱岳。及帝來回，不見姬姬，乃命遍求天下。龍君有神術，變化百端，

• 錄雲南天 •

帝來群臣畏之，不能自勝。又聞蚩尤作亂，與有熊國君較戰，未分勝負，乃北歸。蚩尤獸形人身，勇猛有歲。人教軒轅以夢（猛）獸皮縵鼓爲令，以骨爲椎，還擊之，則聞聲百里，如此可以取勝。軒轅一如其言，蚩尤震恐，大敗，死於涿鹿。於是軒轅有其國，是爲黃（帝）。

帝來還，與黃帝三戰，敗績，囚於洛邑而死，神農氏遂亡。

龍君與嫫嫫居，期年而孕，滿月，生一包，以爲不祥，棄諸源頭。過七日，包開百卵，卵開各一男，歸之而養，不煩乳哺，各自秀異。及長，資質雄偉，智勇俱全，見者知其非常人。龍君歸水府，忘其妻子，嫫嫫恍然，思回北國。行至境，黃帝聞之，甚恐，使人閉關拒守。母子不能歸，哀恐，呼龍君。龍君倏來，遇於襄野。嫫嫫曰：「妾與君王生得此子，無由鞠育，願自相從，勿令遐棄，使無夫無父之人，徒自悲耳。」龍君曰：「我是龍種，水族之長；爾是仙種，地上之人。本相屬水，屬火，雖陰陽相配，氣合而生，然方族不同，難與相處。今分吾五十男，歸水府，使治各處；分汝五十男，分國而治。登山入水，有事相關，無得相廢。」百男聽命。

龍君將五十男歸水府，嫫嫫與五十男歸峰城。自相推讓，立作君長，以其雄長尊爲王，號曰雄王。建國於文郎，其土地東接於海，西抵巴蜀，南至胡孫精，北接洞庭湖。分其國爲十五部（文郎、交趾、朱雋、武寧、福祿、越裳、海寧、陽泉、陸海、依歡、九真、平文、祈興、九德、之類），定命群弟治之，皆以臣於峰城。其次者以爲相，曰「貉相」，將曰「雄將」。王子曰「官郎」，王女曰「媚娘」。有司子曰「蒲正」，奴隸曰「列婢」。以父子相傳，曰「父道」（後改爲「輔導」）。世世相傳，皆襲「雄王」之號。

後山麓之民，見河上濮水，魚蝦多聚，相率取之，爲蛟龍所害，乃告於王。王曰：「山蠻之種，與水族殊，彼好同惡異，故有害之。」乃令以墨畫其身。自是蛟龍無咬傷之害。百越文身之

俗始於此。然初民用未足，以木皮爲衣絨（與織同），草管爲席，以欄棕爲檣榔，以桃榔爲飯，以禽獸爲鹹，以薑根爲鹽，刀耕火種，便多糯粳。以竹筍架木爲屋，以避惡獸。剪髮以便入山林。子之初生，芭蕉臥之。人之死也，以杵槥之，使鄰人聞以相救。凡稼娶之禮，先以鹽封問名，然後以牛羊成之。其迎婚也，先以糯飯入房，夫婦對食，食悉，然後交通，以其時未有檣榔也。蓋百男，乃百粵之始祖也。

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### 夜叉王傳

昔在上古時，南越甌絡國之外①有妙嚴國，國王號夜叉王（一曰長明王；一曰十頭王）②。其國北接狐孫精國。狐孫精國王曰十車王，太子③曰微姿④，微姿之妻曰白淨⑤后娘，容貌美麗，世所罕有，夜叉聞而悅之⑥，乃率衆攻圍狐孫精國，接得白淨后以歸。微姿怒，遂領⑦獼猴之衆，移山塞海，盡爲平路，攻破妙嚴國，殺叉王⑧，復取淨后娘而還（蓋狐孫⑨屬類，乃獼猴之精，今占城國是也）。

### 【校勘記】

- ① 丙本「外」作「外境」。
- ② 甲本自「國王號」至「十頭王」寫為「國王號叉王，一曰長明王，二曰十頭王」。
- ③ 甲本無「太」字。
- ④ 丙本「微姿」作「微姿」。
- ⑤ 丙本「淨」作「靜」。
- ⑥ 乙本「夜叉聞而悅之」作「夜叉聞之而悅」；丙本作「夜叉王見而悅之」。
- ⑦ 丙本「領」作「統領」。
- ⑧ 丙本「殺叉王」作「殺得夜叉王」。
- ⑨ 乙本「狐孫」作「狐孫精」。

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<sup>59</sup> Chan Hing-ho 陳慶浩, Cheng A-tsai 鄭阿財, and Trần Nghĩa 陳義, *Yuènnán hàn wén xiǎoshuō cóng qián: dì èr jí dì yī cè 越南漢文小說叢刊: 第二輯第一冊 [A Collection of Vietnamese Chinese Novels: Series 2 Volume 1]* (Taipei: Táiwān xuéshēng shūjú 臺灣學生書局, 1992), 106, 245.



## 夜叉王傳

上古時，我國之南界有沙嚴國，其王號夜叉王，又名長烏王。其國北倚胡孫精國，孫精太子名微姿，有美貌妻，名白淨娘。淡施粧粉，自有艷容，其花見羞，其蝶相隨，所謂秀色可愛者也。夜叉王聞之，欲得爲婦，乃潛襲。率衆襲擊胡孫精國，奪白淨娘以歸。微姿大怒，遂以獼猴國之衆，移山塞海，悉爲平地，以其衆，攻破沙嚴國，殺夜叉王，後取白淨娘以歸。蓋胡孫精乃獼猴之精也，其王名十車生，今占城國是也。

## 檳榔傳

上古時有一官郎狀貌高大，國王賜名高<sup>①</sup>，因以高爲姓。生二男，長曰檳，次曰榔，二人相似不辨。兄弟年方十七八，父母俱亡，相與尋師學道，師事道士姓劉<sup>②</sup>。劉家有一女年亦十七八，欲爲夫婦，不識其爲兄爲弟<sup>③</sup>，乃以粥一盃，箸一雙與二人食，以觀其兄弟。見弟讓其兄而辨<sup>④</sup>之，乃以實告父母嫁其兄，夫婦情愛日密。

至後，待弟或不如初。弟自生羞愧，謂兄愛妻而忘<sup>⑤</sup>弟，乃不告兄而去。行至村野間，忽遇深泉，無船可渡，獨坐慟哭而死，化爲一榔出於其口（檳榔是也）。及兄覺失弟，辭<sup>⑥</sup>妻追尋，見弟已死，遂投身於樹邊，成一石塊，蟠結樹根。妻怪其夫久不見還，乃追而尋之。及到處見夫已死，遂投身抱石，化爲一藤旋繞石上，葉味芳辛（芙蓉是也）<sup>⑦</sup>。劉氏父母追思哀慟，乃立祠其地祀之。時人經此皆焚香致拜，稱其兄弟友順，夫婦節義。

七八月暑氣朱退，雄王巡行，常駐蹕避暑於此，見祠前樹葉繁密，藤葉瀾蔓，王登石審視<sup>⑧</sup>，問之而知其事，嗟嘆良久，即令侍臣摘採藤葉，王親咬之，唾於石上，見其色鮮紅，覺爲佳味，乃取而歸，始命以火燒石爲灰與樹葉藤葉合一而食，甘脆芳辛，唇頰生紅，乃傳頌<sup>⑨</sup>天下隨處栽植。凡嫁娶會同大小禮，皆以此物爲先，即今檳榔樹，芙蓉葉，石灰是也。此南國檳榔之時由始焉。

• 傳榔檳 一之卷 •

<sup>60</sup> Chan Hing-ho 陳慶浩, Cheng A-tsai 鄭阿財, and Trần Nghĩa 陳義, *Yuènnán hàn wén xiǎoshuō cóng qián: dì èr jí dì yī cè* 越南漢文小說叢刊: 第二輯第一冊 [A Collection of Vietnamese Chinese Novels: Series 2 Volume 1] (Taipei: Táiwān xuéshēng shūjú 臺灣學生書局, 1992), 39-40, 205-207.

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【校勘記】

- ① 甲本無「國王賜名高」等字。
- ② 丙本自「師事」至「有一女」作「而師劉玄道有一女」。
- ③ 乙本「其為兄弟」作「其誰兄誰弟」。
- ④ 乙本「辨」作「知」。
- ⑤ 丙本「忘」作「棄」。
- ⑥ 甲本「辭」作「棄」。
- ⑦ 丙本以兄死化為「藤」，妻死化為「石」，與甲、乙二本不同。
- ⑧ 乙本「王登石審視」作「王甚愛審視」。
- ⑨ 乙本「頌」作「誦」。

## 檳榔傳

初雄王之世，有一官郎，形體高大，便以樺爲姓。生二子，長曰檳，次曰榔。二人養育俱齊，容聲相似，人莫辨爲兄爲弟。其年幾冠，父母俱亡。於是尋師肄業，舍於留道士家。留有女，年及加笄，見而悅之，欲得相配；父母鍾愛其女，亦不忍違。然而頑韻未定，（飛而上曰頑，飛而下曰頑），伯仲難知，乃與粥一碗，女於屏處潛窺之。見榔讓檳，因以告父母，乃妻檳夫婦焉。檳於是賦詩一首，以敘其情云：

兩儀開判後，萬世起烟淵；相對冰人語，俱題紅葉言。

忙忙驚白壁，愕愕駭痕肩；金屋嬌娥貯，紅絲繡幃牽。

婚成猶鳳卜，事竟駕魚軒；鶯鶯呈千戶，麒麟降自天。

孤懸期志大，鞭着破樓煙；蚌口生珠美，鳳毛肖體全。

竹叢森挺挺，瓜瓞益綿綿；萬事俱前定，方知是合緣。

榔見詩，只言夫婦之情，不及兄弟之義，乃忿然不告而歸。途經山麓時，天霖雨，泉水漲溢，無可渡者，而烏輪已入山頭矣，乃獨坐慟哭而死。檳居數日，以思弟之故，寢食不安，遂棄其妻而歸。顧見弟尸於泉上，不勝悲念，遂號哭數聲而自絕。妻深憶其夫，情不能已。於是潛出，自家而來，達於其處。忽照得之，驚悲交作，遂抱夫尸哀號一陣，吐血數升而死。留道士以女不告而去，勃然悲念心攻，愛憂情緩，遂不追訪。終及歲餘，然音耗雖屏息，而恩情則未斷。想及女之言行形容，感愁於心，不能自退。遂備裝而來，至於其處，乃息於大樹之下爲介。見源邊枯骨三



• 錄雲南天 •

人，或口旁生一小樹，纔及二三尺許，或腹間化成大石，或心間生一小藤，長及數尺，盤旋於石上，然猶未知其誰也。時當盛暑，紅日冲冲，人之往來至此，咸有休息迎風之快。有言及往事三人事者，留問之，始知其爲檳、榔及己女，於是不勝哀痛。明日，伐木編草爲祠，設三人位，具其酒饌，自制爲文以祭之。其文曰：

痛惟汝等命輕霜葉，義重丘山；同根有似紫荆，結塚何殊連理。想汝初來謁吾，以爲松柏之才；思汝自托生吾，以爲門楣之喜。意其有樛櫨之度，故欲成喬梓之恩。予方竹筍遣行，擬有兼霞玉樹；汝自椒房寵用，盡親丹桂姮娥。每云雪藕養生，豈意木墳大拱。噫！生死有限，雖楊枝之水難求；壽夭非常，則蒿里之歌易起。茲予蒲輪適往，芻生束來；忽聞薤露重悲，蜀勝哀感。謹取荆榛二叵，庶瀉幽懷。嗚呼哀哉！汝其享之。

祭畢，回程傲次，哀想不寧，傍徨就枕。忽然就睡，見三人前來，拜曰：「某等以兄弟之故，義不苟生，連及君之合（令）愛，本不見罪，復蒙慰祭，敢不來謝。」其女繼之曰：「妾自托生，蒙君撫養，垂及期年，無由報答。頃以夫婦之道，意欲從一而終，婦道雖全，而父恩則缺，敢請罪。」留道士曰：「汝等能盡友恭之道，以思從一而誠，吾亦何恨？但以異路適分，一朝千古，故成哀感爾！」已而，索酒勸酌，三人懇辭而去。留欠伸而寤，猶遽遽然，如一夢也。明日復詣祠所，揮淚爲別而去。自是時人過此，皆焚香致拜，稱爲兄弟友恭，夫妻節義。其後雄王巡行至此，見祠前樹葉稠密，藤蘿彌漫。王問之，或對以事，而不知樹藤之名。王嘆賞久之，乃令人摘樹葉藤葉視之，有置於石上摧破者，頃之朱紅競起，氣味芬芳。王令試食之，果然香靈可愛。於是燒石爲灰，浸塗之葉上，合食之，唇頰丹紅，寒邪屏辭。傳於天下，處處重之。因名其樹爲「檳榔樹」，其藤爲「芙留藤」。自是而後，凡嫁娶會同之禮，以此爲先焉。謂之「檳榔」者，以其

• 傳雉白 一之卷 •

兄弟之義名而并言之，亦謂之「棹」，蓋其性也。謂之「芙留」者，以其藤葉扶疎可愛，而女本姓留故也。

APPENDIX B1 – English Translation of the *Tale of the Hồng Bàng Clan*<sup>61</sup>

Di Ming [Đế Minh], a third-generation descendent of the Fiery Emperor Shen Nong [Thần Nông], had a son by the name of Di Yi [Đế Nghi]. [Di Ming] went on an imperial inspection tour of the south all the way to the Five Passes, where he obtained the daughter of Vụ Tiên [lit., “beautiful immortal”] and took her back with him. She gave birth to Lộc Tục. He had an upright appearance and precocious intelligence. Di Ming found him special and urged him to succeed to the imperial throne. Lộc Tục firmly declined and deferred to his older brother. Yi was thereupon established as heir apparent and appointed to rule over the northern lands, while Lộc Tục was invested as King Kinh Dương and appointed to rule over the southern region, which was called the Xích Quỷ [lit., “scarlet ghost”] Kingdom. Kinh Dương could enter the water palace [of water spirits]. He took as his wife Lord Dongting [Đông Đình] the Dragon King’s daughter. She gave birth to Sùng Lãm, who was called Lord Lạc Long. He replaced [his father] in governing over the kingdom. It is unknown what became of King Kinh Dương.

Lord Lạc Long taught the people how to cultivate grains and engage in sericulture. It was at this point that there emerged a hierarchical order between sovereign and officials, superiors and inferiors, as well as the proper relations between fathers and sons, and husbands and wives. At times [Lord Lạc Long] would return to the water palace, and the people would still be at peace, not knowing why things were the way they were. When the people had trouble, they would loudly call out to Lord Lạc Long, “Bô, why (Việt colloquially call their fathers ‘bô’) can’t you come to save our lives?” The Dragon Lord would then come, and the resonance of his numinous efficacy would be incalculable.

Di Yi passed the throne to Di Lai [Đế Lai] to rule over the northern region. All Under Heaven was devoid of disturbances. [Di Lai] ordered his official, Chi You, to oversee the kingdom’s affairs and made a southern tour to the Xích Quỷ Kingdom. At that time, the Dragon Lord had already returned to the water palace and within the kingdom there was no ruler. Di Lai then left his beloved wife [should be “daughter”], Âu Cơ, and the group of maidservants to stay in a temporary residence while he traveled about All Under Heaven. He observed the lay of the land, and saw its peculiar flowers and extraordinary plants, its precious birds and extraordinary beasts. Rhinoceroses, elephants, hawkbill turtles, gold, silver, pearls, jade, pepper, frankincense, agarwood, sandalwood, mountain foods and sea goods, there was nothing that was not present. What is more, the climate in the four seasons was neither cold nor hot. Di Lai became fond [of the region]. He enjoyed himself and forgot to return. The people of the southern region suffered from the harassment of the northern region, and could not live at peace like before. Together they called out to the Dragon Lord, “Where are you, Bô? The northern region is transgressing upon and harassing the southern people.” The Dragon Lord suddenly came and saw that Âu Cơ was wonderously beautiful. The Dragon Lord took a liking to her and transformed himself into a young man of handsome appearance. With servants following on his left and right and a large group singing and playing flutes, he arrived at the palace. Âu Cơ happily followed him. They hid in Long Trang Cave. Di Lai returned to the temporary residence but could not find Âu Cơ. He ordered his officials to search All Under Heaven. The Dragon Lord had divine powers and could transform himself in myriad ways; to a demon, ghost, serpent, snake, tiger or elephant. Those searching [for Âu Cơ] were frightened and dared not search any more. Di Lai returned. The throne was passed on to Emperor Yuwang. Chi You

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<sup>61</sup> Vũ Quỳnh, *Linh Nam chí quái liệt truyện* [Arrayed Tales of Selected Oddities from South of the Passes], trans. Liam C. Kelley et al., (1492), Viet Texts, <https://sites.google.com/a/hawaii.edu/viet-texts/> [accessed May 13, 2022].

rebelled. The lord of the kingdom of Youxiong, Xuan Yuan, led the various vassal lords to engage in battle but they could not defeat [Chi You]. Chi You was like a beast who could speak human language. He was fierce and strong. Perhaps he taught Xuan Yuan to use an animal-hide drum to direct the battle. Chi You became startled and was defeated at Zhuolu. Emperor Yuwang attacked the various vassals, and engaged in battle with Xuan Yuan at Banquan. After three battles he was defeated. He surrendered and was granted a fief at Luoyi where he died. Shen Nong's clan thereupon came to an end.

The Dragon Lord and Âu Cơ lived together and after a year she gave birth to a sac. Believing it was inauspicious, they discarded it in the wilds. After six or seven days, one hundred eggs appeared in the sac. Each egg produced a boy. They took them back and raised them. [The boys] did not drink their mother's milk but each grew and they were all especially handsome, as well as intelligent and brave. People were awed by them and saw them as a sign of something extraordinary. The Dragon Lord stayed long in the water kingdom. The brothers and the mother lived alone and longed to return to the northern kingdom. They traveled to the border. The Yellow Emperor heard about this and became frightened. He sent troops to defend strategic points on the frontier. The mother and her sons could not return. They went back to the southern kingdom and called to the Dragon Lord saying, "Where are you, Bô, that you cause us mother and children to live alone, and to suffer in pain day and night?" The Dragon Lord suddenly came. They met at Xiangye. Âu Cơ said, "I am originally a northerner. I have lived with you, Lord, and given birth to one hundred sons, but you abandoned me and left. We do not raise them together and this has caused them to be parentless. This is just causing pain." The Dragon Lord said, "I am of dragon stock, and am the leader of the water lineage. You are of immortal stock, and are an earthly being. Although the khí/qi of yin and yang coalesced to produce sons, water and fire contradict each other. We are of different types, and it would be difficult for us to live [together] for long. We should now part. I will take fifty sons and return to the water palace where they will each be allotted a place to rule. fifty sons will follow you to live on the land, and will divide the kingdom and rule. Whether one ascends the mountains or enters the waters, all will know if others have difficulties and will not abandon each other." The one hundred sons obeyed and departed.

Âu Cơ and fifty sons took up residence in Phong Region (today's Bạch Hạc District). They encouraged and esteemed each other and promoted their most dominant [hùng trưởng] to be king, calling him the Hùng king. The kingdom was called the Kingdom of Văn Lang. The kingdom pressed against the Southern Sea to the east, and came up against Ba and Shu to the west. To the north it reached Lake Dongting, and to the south it touched the Hồ Tinh Kingdom (present Champa). The kingdom was divided into fifteen regions (other [texts] have commanderies): Việt Thường, Giao Chỉ, Chu Diên, Vũ Ninh, Phúc Lộc, Ninh Hải, Dương Tuyền, Lục Hải, Hoài Hoan, Cửu Chân, Nhật Nam, Chân Định, Văn Lang, Quế Lâm and Tượng Quận. [The Hùng king] divided the group of brothers to rule over [this area]. He established his subordinates as ministers and generals. Ministers were called lạc marquises. Generals were called lạc generals. Princes were called quan lang, and [the king's] daughters, my nương. Officials were called bô chính. Servants and slaves were called sào xung (or slaves and maids). Officers were referred to as hôn. From generation to generation [positions] were passed from father to son, called phụ đạo. Those who ascended the throne from one generation to the next were called Hùng king, without change. At that time there were people in the mountain forests, and those who fished in the water were often harmed by serpents. They told this to the king, and the king said, "The mountain savage type and the water lineage are truly different. They like that which is similar and dislike that which is different. Therefore they cause harm to each other." He then ordered that they tattoo their bodies with images in the shape of the Dragon



Lord and in the form of aquatic beasts. From this point onward the people avoided the calamity of being harmed by serpents. The practice of tattooing bodies among the Hundred Yue started with this. In the early years of the kingdom, the people had insufficient resources for their daily needs. They used tree bark for clothing (other [texts] say for paper), wove reeds into mats, used rice dregs to make wine, made food from sugar palm and windmill palm, salted animals, fish and shrimp, and made salt from ginger root. They engaged in slash-and-burn cultivation. The land was used mainly for sticky rice, which was cooked in bamboo tubes. Houses were built on stilts to avoid being harmed by tigers and wolves. They cut their hair short to make it easier to enter the forests. When a son was born he was laid on banana leaves. When someone died, they would pound on a mortar so that the neighbors would hear and come to help. There was not yet any betel nut. When boys and girls got married, they would start with [the offering of] a packet of salt, and then complete the ceremony with the sacrifice of a buffalo or a goat. Sticky rice would be brought into the room where they would both eat it, and then they would have intercourse. It is probable that the hundred sons were the ancestors of the Hundred Yue.

APPENDIX B2 – English Translation of the *Tale of the Yaksha King*

In high antiquity, the kingdom of Diệu Nhàm was situated outside of the Nam Việt kingdom of Âu Lạc. Its monarch, the yaksha king, went by the titles Trường Minh Vương and Thập Đầu Vương. To the north of his kingdom was the kingdom of Hồ Tôn Tinh, of which the king bore the name Thập Xa Vương and the prince Vi Tư. The consort of Vi Tư, by the name of Bạch Tĩnh Hậu Nương, was exceptionally beautiful. Enraptured by a glimpse of this rare beauty, the yaksha rallied his subjects to besiege the kingdom of Hồ Tôn Tinh and abducted Bạch Tĩnh Hậu Nương. Infuriated, Vi Tư mobilised his crowd of monkeys, dragged mountains into the ocean to form a flatland, and raided the kingdom of Diệu Nhàm. Having slaughtered the yaksha king and rescued Tĩnh Hậu, Vi Tư retreated. The kingdom of Hồ Tôn Tinh was entirely made up of spirits of monkeys. Today, it is known as the kingdom of Chiêm Thành.

APPENDIX B3 – English Translation of the *Tale of Areca Nut*<sup>62</sup>

In high antiquity there was a quan lang who was strong and tall. He was granted the name of Cao [lit., tall] by the kingdom, and he thereupon took Cao as his surname. He produced two sons. The elder was called Tân, and the younger was called Lang. The two resembled one another, and you could not distinguish who was elder and who was younger. When they were seventeen or eighteen, both of their parents died, and they began to serve the Daoist master, Luru Huyền. The Luru family had a daughter named Liên who was also about seventeen or eighteen. The two brothers met and became fond of her, and both wished to unite with her in marriage. The girl could not yet distinguish the elder from the younger brother. So she brought a bowl of rice porridge and a pair of chopsticks, and gave this to the two brothers to eat. The younger brother yielded to his older brother, and with this she was finally able to distinguish [between the two]. The girl returned to inform her parents, and was betrothed to the elder brother.

After [the three] lived together for a while, relations with the younger brother grew distant. The younger brother felt a sense of remorse. He thought that since his brother had gained a wife he had forgotten his brother. He thereupon left without telling his brother. While returning to his home village, he reached a wild forest and came upon a deep river but there was no boat to cross it. Stricken with grief, he died and transformed into a tree which grew by the mouth of the river. The older brother could not find his younger brother, and searched all of the way to this place. He threw himself down beside the tree and died. He became a stone and was entwined by the roots of the tree. The wife searched for her husband at this place where she embraced the stone and died. She transformed into a vine which coiled around the tree and stone. The leaves had a fragrant and spicy taste. The Luru couple came searching and could not contain their grief. They built a shrine at this place. People came and burned incense and respectfully worshipped. They praised the older brother for caring for the younger and the younger for obeying the older, and they praised the husband for his righteousness and the wife for her virtue.

In the seventh and eighth lunar months when the torrid heat had not yet dissipated, the Hùng king would go on an imperial tour. He would often encamp to avoid the heat in front of the shrine. He saw how luxuriant the tree's vegetation was, with vines and leaves covering everything. The king, having asked and found out about this, sighed at length. He ordered a man to get for him the tree's fruit and the vine's leaves, and he chewed it. He spit on the stone, and [the spit] was a bright red with a fragrant smell. He then burned the stone into ash and combined everything together and ate it. Its flavor was most excellent. His lips became red and his cheeks flushed, and he knew that these objects were valuable. So he took them back with him. He ordered people to cultivate each kind. This is what today is areca nut, betel leaf and lime. Later, the rituals for marriage ceremonies and meetings of all sizes in the Southern Kingdom all used [betel nut] to begin [the ritual]. This is the origin of [the use of] betel nut.

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<sup>62</sup> Vũ Quỳnh, *Linh Nam chích quái liệt truyện* [Arrayed Tales of Selected Oddities from South of the Passes], trans. Liam C. Kelley et al., (1492), Viet Texts, <https://sites.google.com/a/hawaii.edu/viet-texts/> [accessed May 13, 2022].

APPENDIX C – Timeline of Historical Periods in Vietnam <sup>63</sup>*Archeological Cultures*

Núi Đọ Culture (?-10,000 BCE)  
 Sơn Vi Culture (?-9000 BCE)  
 Hoà Bình Culture (9000-7000 BCE)  
 Bắc Sơn Culture (7000-3000 BCE)  
 Phùng Nguyên Culture (2500 BCE-1500 BCE)  
 Đông Sơn Culture (1600 BCE-2nd century BCE)

*Prehistory and Protohistory*

Kingdom of Văn Lang (Hùng Kings) (~9th century BCE-258 BCE)  
 Kingdom of Âu Lạc (258 BCE-207 BCE)  
 Kingdom of Nam Việt (207 BCE-111 BCE)

*Period of Chinese Rule*

Western Han dynasty (111 BCE-23)  
 Eastern Han dynasty (23-39)  
 Trưng Sisters Rebellion (Vietnamese) (39-43)  
 Eastern Han (43-220)  
 Three Kingdoms (221-263)  
 Western Jin (265-316)  
 Eastern Jin (317-419)  
 Southern Dynasties (420-589)  
 Early Lý “Dynasty” (Vietnamese) (6th century)  
 Sui (589-618)  
 Tang (618-907)  
 Five Dynasties Period (907-939)

*Transition to Independence*

Ngô Quyền (939-945)  
 Period of 12 Warlords (965-968)  
 Đinh Bộ Lĩnh (968-980)  
 Lê Hoàn (980-1009)

*Period of Dynastic Rule*

Lý Dynasty (1009-1225)  
 Trần Dynasty (1225-1400)  
 Hồ Dynasty (1400-1407)  
     1400 Foundation of Hồ dynasty by Hồ Quý Ly  
 Period of Ming Occupation (1407-1428)  
     1407 Conquest of kingdom of Đại Ngu (Đại Việt) by Ming dynasty in China  
     1418 Launching of Lam Sơn rebellion (led by Lê Lợi) against Chinese rule  
 Later Lê Dynasty (1428-1527)  
     1428 Foundation of Lê dynasty by Lê Lợi  
     1471 Seizure of Cham capital Vijaya by Vietnamese forces  
 Mạc Dynasty (1527-1592)

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<sup>63</sup> Bruce M. Lockhart, and William J. Duiker, *Historical Dictionary of Vietnam* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2006), xxii, 431-433.

Trịnh-Nguyễn Period (1592-1788)

Tây Sơn Dynasty (1788-1802)

Nguyễn Dynasty (1802-1945)

*Period of French Colonial Rule*

French Indochina (1884-1945)

Democratic Republic of Vietnam (1945-1976)

Autonomous Republic of Cochin China (1946-1949)

Associated State of Vietnam (1949-1954)

*Period of Independence*

Republic of Vietnam (1955-1975)

Democratic Republic of Vietnam (1945-1976)

Socialist Republic of Vietnam (1976-present)