

WORLD SUPER POWER AND REGIONAL CONFLICTS

The Triangular Game Of Great Britain With Bangkok And The Lao During The Embassies Of John Crawford (1821-1822) And Of Henry Burney (1825-1826)

“Those men will only be seized and made grass-cutters to the king of Ava’s Elephants”, exclaimed the King of Siam, Rama III (1787. 1824-1851) in 1825 of the 10,000 men of the British Expeditionary Corps led by Sir Archibald Campbell when they landed in Rangoon¹. Was this the scepticism and hilarity of an assiduous reader of Napoleon’s works with regard to everything British²? In fact, the image of England during this period was rather mixed, emotional and conflicting in the eyes of Asian leaders. On the one hand, “the colossal influence of the English in India has inspired terror throughout the Orient. This formidable and always growing influence has overwhelmed every Court in Asia. The King of Siam feared being thrown off his throne from the first day. When he saw a European he always took him for a British emissary. Neither could he distinguish a priest from a layman, nor a Christian from a British”³ wrote Lord Bruguieres when he arrived in Bangkok in 1829. On the other hand, with their repeated failure in other parts of Asia, they appeared to be like a “paper tiger” or a “hampered Gulliver”. In 1808, 10 vessels of war, which were sent against Macao by Lord Minto, Governor General of India, disengaged themselves from the expeditionary fleet and sailed towards Tonkin to intimidate the Hue Court. Vietnamese junks forced their retreat and 6 or 7 vessels were destroyed by fire. The survivors who arrived in Macao, were piteously hunted down by Chinese troops sent from Canton⁴.

The world power of that period dismissed the Royal Courts of Hue, of Bangkok and of Ava as “barbarous”⁵. Terms that were derogatory and intended to compensate for the frustrations in the relations between the countries. John Crawford or Henry Burney would repeat ad nauseam, vis a vis the Siamese leaders, “their great ignorance of what foreign nations were, had made this people weak and pusillanimous, vain and arrogant and they have got to the point of believing themselves as nothing but the very first nation of the globe.”⁶

The Anglo-Dutch Treaty signed on 17 May 1824, made mainland South East Asia an English sphere of influence. At first, the British objectives concerning this part

of the world seemed limited to establishing Britain in certain Malay States in order to assert its commercial imperialism. Perhaps we have got so many colonies to keep for ourselves, so many territories to exploit but we can never have enough secure points for our commerce and we can never get so many ports of call to supply and repair our vessels" wrote Barrow in 1806⁷. However a certain British politico-strategic conception viewed continental South East Asia (as the English then called it "Indo-China" (Crawfurd wrote "Hindoo-Chinese")) as composed of 3 large units: Burma, Siam and Cochin-China. Siam comprised 2 sub-units: "Lao and Cambodian"⁸.

The power balance between England and Siam were so excessively disproportionate that British properties in South East Asia were more likely to become inviolable sanctuaries, safe from Siamese attacks. "May I repeat again", wrote Crawfurd, "that the Siamese people, notwithstanding their number and their vast territory, are a people who are not in any way dangerous to us, even on the weakest point such as the Island of the Prince of Wales. Their total lack of maritime talents and abilities not only makes them incapable of all serious and dangerous aggression, but also prevents them from worrying and annoying their neighbours from India and from the Persian and Arab Gulfs, by causing trouble and indeed dangerous plunderings against the rich and peaceful nations, their neighbours. The power and population of Siam lies along the Menam banks: between this river and the points where they can strike against us, there exist mountains, forests and dangerous swamps which cause many difficulties to be overcome. Only power will permit them to invade enemy opposite territory; the Kedah, doesn't exist. All the more reason why we should set aside this more difficult venture, the invasion of Penang. It will never be dangerous to us and a few mercenary troops will be enough to repel them rapidly"⁹. Being a rational utilitarian, Crawfurd even foresaw some advantages. "If the Siamese nation became our neighbour, I would fearlessly take the risk to affirm, after what I saw of her that her power is just as fearful as the Malay power. From their proximity we can get some advantages that cannot be received by the latter, of whom the form of the Government is still more barbarous and more unpolished" wrote Ambassador Crawfurd in Bangkok on 12 July 1822¹⁰. From the commercial point of view, Singapore has done it quickly to attract Siamese trade¹¹.

Being Siam's immediate neighbour, the English are attracted to Siam "which is probably, at this moment, more powerful and richer in resources than at any time in its history" wrote Crawfurd in 1822¹². "The large variety of Siamese possessions present a wide diversity of soils and products. Allow me to say, that no country in the world, has ever been so favoured by nature. Its products in the mineral, vegetable and animal fields are not only so varied, but are also so appropriate for the stimulation of commercial enterprises and attract the attention of foreign nations"¹³.

The sending of Ambassador Crawfurd was aimed at "renewing the trade relations on better footing, and at preventing all negotiations, having reference to terri-

torial assignments, no matter what they were"¹⁴. Having arrived in Siam in 1821, Crawford would then leave in 1822 full of bitterness. In a letter dated 15 June 1822 about Siam, the surgeon of the Crawford mission, George Finlayson, expressed the idea of this climate at the time: "It is needless to say why our mission failed, for we can really say that it was doomed to failure. After the way diplomatic affairs have taken place so far in this part of the world, it is undoubtedly better for us to leave without being insulted or worse..."¹⁵.

The psychological climate, the cultural clash, as has already been mentioned, partly explained this failure. Adding to this, there was a commonplace, but essential, reason. What the British demanded was equivalent to the abrogation of royal monopolies. In exchange, Siam would get nothing out of it, not even the arms provisions in which they were much interested: "What we chiefly want from you are firearms" were the only substantial words - among others purely protocol-addressed by Rama II to the British negotiator during the first audience given to him upon his arrival¹⁶. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Phra Klang, would certainly ask him this question with clenched teeth: "If a treaty were made ... would Siamese vessels be permitted to purchase firearms and ammunitions freely at British ports?"¹⁷ Canons in exchange for a commercial treaty. Desiring not to offend the Burmese with whom they were still on the best of terms, the British would give the Siamese a negative answer.

To overcome this impasse, two tendencies were created. Humiliated by the failure of his negotiations with Siam, Crawford advocated the use of the strong hand and insistently proposed the blockade of Bangkok in order to induce her to give in. "It is mostly from foreign trade, practised along the Menam river, that the kingdom receives its principal resources and the government's officials most of their income. It would need only one mounted gun, blocking the river, to completely stop all this trade and only two of these could destroy the Capital without any possible resistance on the part of the people. The Menam is accessible to this type of vessel, in all seasons; no obstacle would make the navigation dangerous and either being suspicious of inside treacheries or by negligence, there doesn't exist any equipped canon to defend the Capital". (Report of Crawford at Bangkok on 12 July 1822)¹⁸.

For this end, he would collect operational information. That was the Court of Bangkok would particularly as a grievance against him. "Crawford is an intelligent man, a very fine observer and his objective was to seek information on the Siamese Empire, before the English could send in their war vessels, intended to conquer the Empire. It is for this reason that Crawford, Dangerfield, the doctor, and the officers have explored rivers, surveyed islands, large and small, studied the population, informed themselves and received advice in order to bring on other things that gave offensive motives" (letter of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Siam addressed to the Governor General of India, dated 20 February 1823)¹⁹. In spite of his repeated denials Crawford would declare, like an echo of Phra Klang accusations, "I proudly confess

that I have on every occasion tried to get information on the situation of the country and especially of its commercial interests. I was particularly instructed otherwise"²⁰. Satisfied, his superiors wrote "Your estimation on Siamese military power and the indication you have given on their territory's vulnerable points deserve the utmost attention" (letter dated 7 August 1823 of the Governor General of India)²¹.

With the impetuous protest of Bangkok against the conduct of Crawford, London decided finally to disavow her envoy²².

There was another more sophisticated approach which took place at the same time the Anglo-Burmese war exploded. The question was how to carefully destabilize Siam and to make her come to terms with a commercial treaty. For, as declared by Burney (who was on his way to the Court of Siam to take charge of his functions) in a report dated 2 September 1825, "As long as the Burmese war continues, I do not foresee the probability of our being able to bring this Court to any positive arrangements with respect to trade and mutual boundaries..."²³. But, in the meantime, a set of incongruous measures to produce converge effects was chosen to weaken Siam. The merchants as well as the officials, would on all occasions make political approaches to very carefully chosen high ranking Siamese officials. A guaranteed friendship was promised. On 5 October 1824, Crawford instructed Mr. Gillies, who was on his way to Bangkok in a ship full of armaments to "Seize the opportunity, under any given circumstances, to make the Siamese believe in our friendship. They have nothing to worry about. Quite the contrary, they are to profit from the result of this conflict"²⁴. This done, he had only to put into practice what he had proposed in his long report dated 12 July 1822, during his long stay of four months of negotiations in Bangkok, "In establishing closer relations with us, the Siamese will learn of our character and our power better; they will be more willing to seek our friendship and our good office; finally, they will be led to appreciate our indulgence and our moderation; they will learn how to repose confidence on us, which wasn't the case up to now due to their distrust and ignorance. Such a situation will have pleasant repercussions on the development of their commercial resources and will lead to our better acquaintance with the resources of that large and fertile country, which undoubtedly is susceptible to our offer"²⁵.

Under these favourable circumstances, the arms trade was authorized by London since 1823. This was because the Americans at that time had become the first purveyors to the Court of Siam. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Siam told Crawford on 21 May 1822 "These people (the Americans) bring us what we are most anxious to receive, plenty of firearms and ready money, and take away large cargoes of sugar and other produce of the country"²⁶. Blackmailing with the powers from outside the region and with rivalry among themselves is an old reflex; a political art in itself. "The Americans bring to Bangkok no other cargo than muskets, gun powered, brimstone and Spanish dollars which are extremely acceptable to the Siamese ... In 1818, a

Captain Hale visited Bangkok with an American vessel, and engaged to return which he fulfilled, and which obtained for him the Siamese title of Luang, and some offer it is said, to the American Government to establish a factory at Bangkok several Americans incited by the success of Captain Hale's speculation, afterwards visited Bangkok..."²⁷ reported Burney.

British arms dealers would soon be making a fortune in Siam and one of them would even receive the title of "Luang Awutwiset"²⁸ (Noble of extraordinary armaments). Deliveries would be so prodigious that in 3 years, saturation would be attained²⁹. It was then in 1826, the eve of the war against Laos. Those arms would furnish the Thai unsurpassed firepower against the Lao in 1827³⁰

Still, Siam remained sceptical with regard to British victory over the Burmese, who was then considered the "Super Power" of the region just after China, "Chao Phraya Maha Yotha, ... was sent to take possession of Martaban, but with two sets of dispatches, to be presented to the English or the Burmese whichever the victorious party"³¹. A double game which had made Burney laugh as it came from those who professed to be British allies. Burney was also irritated by Bangkok's stubbornness which didn't believe in British power even on that day of its victory.

The British victory in Burma overwhelmed Bangkok's governing class who expressed their confusion in a session of the Council of Ministers as was reported to Burney, "On that occasion he (the Siamese King) said to Wangna (called the Second King by the Portuguese) "The Burmans with ten times our population have not been able to resist the English. They are now very near to Siam. What could we do with our small force?". The Wangna replied, "Siam has numerous people to defend the country, and besides, there are many Chinese". The Phra Klang was of the same opinion as the Wangna. Kroma-Kun and Kroma-Surin remained silent, considering what answer they should give. The opinion of the King was delivered in these words, "I think it right to continue in friendship with the English by doing which I shall remain a King and maintain possession of my country. If I act otherwise, I shall lose my throne, be driven into the forest and become food for tigers...."³².

Hence, it was either the throne or the Burney Treaty which had been insistently proposed to him by Crawford's successor since 1825³³.

Rama III knew the English were trying to bribe the General who was sent to assist the English in Burma and they intended to appoint him to lead a "Mon State"³⁴,—the nightmare of Bangkok. During Crawford's stay in Bangkok, two Siamese noblemen came and proposed to him to exert British influence on their country and they proposed then to gather 20,000 men for that purpose³⁵. Anou himself (1767. 1804-1829) met with Crawford on 19 May 1827³⁶. The unificator and the "champion of independence" of his country³⁷, Anou wanted to set his country free from Siam which had dominated the Muong Lao since 1778. "At the beginning of the XIXth century, when Chao Anouvong was enthroned at the head of the vassal country of

Vientiane, a political movement was born in Laos under his direction. Chao Anouvong set Vientiane up as the unique political centre of Laos and led the Lao people out of Thai political influence" said a professor from Chulalongkorn University³⁸.

Before the opposition of the Court of Hue against his attempt³⁹, Anou had tried to break the diplomatic encirclement which Siam had imposed on Laos. At that time, to the eyes of Anou, the Prince of Kedah favoured the British who had welcomed him after a Siamese invasion against his State of Kedah⁴⁰. But Crawford's instructions were quite explicit. He was to inquire about the "differences that existed between Siam and tributary States...."⁴¹ and "about the establishment of direct trade relations with the dependencies of Siam's Government"⁴². And, according to the unanimous declarations of the contemporaries "his own country, the Lao, which form so interesting and considerable, ..., a portion of the present Siamese Empire"⁴³. Being pragmatic, the English had never said, like some other writers that Laos was the "heart", the "keystone" and that "whoever has hold of Laos, also has hold of South East Asia"⁴⁴, that "the power that has hold of Luang Prabang will become the sovereign master of Indochina: caveat consuls!"⁴⁵. But it is all the same thing!

Moreover, "almost all the most valuable exports of Siam, benzoin, cotton, teak, copper, poltry, stick-lac, lead, etc. ... are the products of Laos, a great portion of which is now annexed to the Kingdom of Siam ..."⁴⁶. Crawford himself who had studied since 1822 the Lao commercial flux via China and Siam had annotated: "Benzoin is the principal production of the Lao ... It was commonly believed that this produce was from Sumatra and the Borneo Islands ... Stick-lac of the highest quality was a very remunerative produce. It is harvested mainly in Laos and in the Northern region of the Country"⁴⁷.

The diplomatic breakthrough of Anou towards the British had spread. Although the British were considered by the Siamese with suspicion. "The English were a dangerous people to have any connexion with, for that they were not only the ablest, but the most ambitious of the European nation who frequented the East ... Those people are clever and active, and the country would not be long in their possession before they made it such that you might sleep in the streets and rice-fields". However, the Prince of Xieng May wrote a letter sent to Moulmein in March 1825 to offer the British his friendship. This happened six months before the arrival in Bangkok of the British envoy, Henry Burney⁴⁸. Once there, Burney incessantly tried to meet with the Princes of Xieng May but was refused with great obstinacy by the Siamese authorities to do so⁴⁹.

The new King of Siam, Rama III, attempted a political seduction on the English. He spread the news that he was different from his predecessor, his father, Rama II. He closed down the harem; "submitted himself to the English"; and freed the trade. All that was a hidden tactical change by a tactician of power who had under Rama II led the anti-British party and, who later as King himself, became the leader of

the pro-British Party⁵⁰.

Rumours on the next invasion of Siam travelled quite fast throughout Bangkok. An old prophecy had been foretold that, "a foreign King will soon rule Siam"⁵¹. The praetorian guard of Rama III lost its morale and spoke of giving in. The Bangkok population started to leave the city⁵².

The treaty was signed with Burney on 20 June 1826 (some months after the Yandabao treaty which ended the first Anglo-Burmese war and was signed on 24 February 1826) in which Siam was represented as Great Britain's ally. Against all its hope, Siam didn't receive any territorial compensation. "The need to avoid a break with the rising Anglo-Indian Empire was especially urgent in view of the developing Siamese problems on the Laotian and Cambodian frontiers"⁵³.

And according to James Low's report of October 1826 addressed to his superiors in Calcutta and in London, "Her neighbours (of Siam) on the north, the Laos of the Che-Ung Mai and Lan-Chang, are ever ready to assert independence"⁵⁴.

At the beginning of 1827, Anou wrote a letter to Rama III to inform the latter of the deployment of Lao troops on the plateau of Khorat at the request by Rama III to help him face the expected British invasion by sea⁵⁵. In fact, Anou used this action as a political camouflage to destroy the stronghold of Khorat, the outpost of Siam's annexationist policy in the Mekong basin, and to repatriate the population of that region. He had even used that opportunity to organize a commando party led by Chao Ratsavong to reach Saraburi in order to take back the Lao who had been deported there since 1778. Rama III used the pretext of this action to mobilize every available force against Anou. Careful enough, he left a portion of the troops to guarantee the defense of the Menam mouth against a possible British adventure, which, on the initiative of Governor Fullerton, from Singapore did make an armed gesticulation⁵⁶.

Anou was caught and died in Bangkok after being put into prison and tortured for 3 days. "The Siamese made a complete holocaust of Vientiane"⁵⁷, wrote D.G.E. Hall. Arthur Dommen recently declared "the Siamese who by now were embarked on a policy of vigorous presence in the Lao territory reacted to this impudent and imprudent challenge by sacking Vieng Chang as the Romans had destroyed Carthage after the Second Punic war"⁵⁸.

Rama III who, since his accession decreed the annexation of the Muongs Lao by generalized tattooing, was ensured of a scope of manoeuvres on the international scale by signing a *modus vivendi* with the English. Fifty years before, Siam under Taksin, considering the Burmans and the Lao as enemies⁵⁹ then signed in 1776 a *modus vivendi* with Asevunki, the Burmese general. In 1777, Siamese armies invaded Cambodia to recruit troops, then Champassak and Vientiane in 1778. Fifty years later, Siam under Rama III, "distrustful of the Lao as of us" (the English)⁶⁰, signed in 1826, the Burney Treaty; it became the *modus vivendi* to invade and finally annex Laos a year later.

The definition of the enemy by Siam was that it must attack first to establish "the law and the order" in what it considered as its backyard Laos. So as to eventually face the more distant enemies in space and time: the Burmese in 1778 and the English in 1827.

On his dying bed, Rama III said "there will be no more wars with Vietnam and Burma. We will have them only with the West. Take care and do not lose any advantage to them. Anything that they propose should be held up to close scrutiny before accepting it; do not blindly trust them"⁶¹. His successor Mongkut, champion of the irreversible of the westernization of Siam, wrote to his Ambassador in Paris in 1867, "Both the French and the English probably think of us as animals for them to grow on the carve out; they deceive us into expending our energy as if we were oxen and buffalo"⁶².

Finally, a problem of some importance for history can be raised. What was the decision-thinking of Chao Anou himself after his meeting with the British Ambassador John Crawford in Bangkok? The most famous and fastidious Lao literary masterpiece traditionally attributed to Chao Anou for the authorship, the *San Leub Bo Soun*⁶³ emphasized: "I would like to gather all my related communities to assist me. This includes the Ho (i.e. Chinese), the Kaleung (i.e. inhabitants from Chiang Mai to Burma?) and the Keo (i.e. Vietnamese)..."⁶⁴.

The *San Leub Bo Soun* continued: "With a deeply troubled heart, I am like a tangled stem of lotus leaf and how can I bond an elephant with it. Such a strong fire is burning inside me that the waters of the five rivers would not be able to put out. My heart's desire cannot be fulfilled because Mahanathi in Panjab is too far away"⁶⁵. This "fire burns inside me", albeit the cold weather, stressed the poems. The meaning seems to be that the British, a Super-Power in India at this time, is too far away to be of any strategic assistance, or that those newly footed English in the Malay peninsula did not seem to have made any commitment. In his Lao best-seller *Pheui Sane Leub Bo Soun*, Somsy S. Desa comments about another phrase of the *San Leub Bo Soun* (which said: "I want to round up all the fighting men to protect the country.") in these terms: "This means to build a strong army to fight for the liberation of the country till victory. For that we cannot depend on foreigners"⁶⁶.

Chao Anou, the builder of pagodas along the two banks of the Mekong river in his Lan-Xang, Vientiane, Chanthaboury, Sissatanakhanahout⁶⁷ must have often recited the Buddhist formula: "Attahi Attano Natho". (One should help oneself and nobody can know and help us as ourself.)

*Dr. Mayoury and Dr. Pheuiphanh
Ngaosyvathn*

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES:

1. The Burney papers, Bangkok, Vajirana National Library 1910-1914, Vol. III, Part 4, p. 46. In fact, it will be necessary to have 40,000 men to abduct Burma. 15,000 will die during this war. Cf., D.G.E. Hall, *A history of Southeast Asia*. The Macmillan Press, Melbourne, 3rd. Ed. 1976, 599 pp.
2. At the time when he is Prime Minister of his father, Rama II, the future Rama III, paid the Portuguese Consul at Bangkok to translate for him the works of Napoleon. King Rama II asked J. Crawford to cut a suit for a doll in the image of Napoleon. Cf. John Crawford, *Journal of an embassy to the Courts of Siam and Cochinchina* (Intro. David K. Wyatt). Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1967, p. 194, 211. Also, see the Burney Papers. Furthermore in the Royal Palace as well as in the Royal Pagodas at Bangkok, Napoleon's portrait was placed next to the statues of Buddha, Cf. Mgr. P.B. Pallegoix; "Royaume du Siam. Visite d'un eveque Catholique a un prince talapoin". *Revue De L'Orient*. Paris 1844, Tome 2, p.141-143. It was thus not a surprise that a British official, M. Anderson, was reported to have "compared his Siamese Majesty (Rama III) with the ambitious ruler of France, "Napoleon..." Cf, The Burney Papers. Vol. V, Part I, p.8.
3. *Annales de L'Association pour la Propagation de la Foi* Paris, July 1831, T. XXV, p. 138-139.
4. See the preface of Henri Berland in the French edition of the Crawford Papers, in *Bulletin de la Societe d'Etudes Indochinoises* 1941, p.16.
5. The Crawford Papers, p.50, 78.
6. The Crawford Papers, p.30, 38. See also J. Crawford, *Journal....* p.136.
7. Henri Berland, in The Crawford Papers, p.13.
8. The Burney Papers, Vol.I, Part I, p.727, 745, Vol.I, Part 4, p.578-579, Vol.II, Part 5, p.105. On "Hindoo-Chinese", see J. Crawford, *Journal ...* p.439.
9. The Crawford Papers, p.80.
10. The Crawford Papers, p.37.
11. The Crawford Papers, p.85, 98, 99.
12. The Crawford Papers, p.61 and also pages 32, 38, 63 and 80.
13. The Crawford Papers, p.63.
14. The Crawford Papers, p.23.
15. Henri Berland (Ed.) "Journal de George Finlayson. Chirurgion et naturaliste de la mission Crawford" *Bulletin de la Societe d'Etudes Indochinoises*, 1939, p.15.
16. John Crawford, *Journal*p.147.
17. J. Crawford, idem, Virginia Thompson will write in 1941: "When Crawford tried to negotiate a commerical treaty with Rama II, he found that British trade would be welcomed only if accompanied by British firearms". V. Thompson *Thailand: The New Siam*. Paragon reprint, 1967, p.31.
18. The Crawford Papers, p.38-39 and also pages 55, 80, 81, 91, 97.
19. The Crawford Papers, p.127.
20. The Crawford Papers, p.54-55.
21. The Crawford Papers, p.91.
22. The Crawford Papers, p.108.
23. The Crawford Papers, Vol.I, Part I, p.62.
24. The Crawford Papers, p.104. On other attempts to "sensibilise" Siamese officials, see also pages 100, 103 and 190. And also G. Finlayson, *Journal ...* p.15.
25. The Crawford Papers, p.38.
26. John Crawford, *Journal of an embassy...*p.243.
27. The Burney Papers, Vol.II, Part 4, p.95.

28. "Robert Hunter whose vessels bring to the Court (of Bangkok)...canons, rifles and munitions..." (The Crawford Papers, p.100, 101) will be the "resident British merchant to Bangkok...and was given the title of Luang Awutwiset" (V, Thompson, idem, p.31). In the same sense, Walter F. Vella, *Siam under Rama III*. J. Augustin inc. New York, 1957, p.126.
29. The Burney Papers, Vol.III, Part 4, p.101, stated in 1826 that "ordonance Pun Yai (canons) are in great demand and old canons bring a price far beyond its value. Muskets, Pun Khap Sila, are not in such great demand as they were 2 or 3 years ago...." This saturation is provoked by the rapid rhythm of the delivery as it is revealed in the Crawford Papers, "On the 9 September, 1823, Crawford informed Phra Klang by a letter from Singapore where he is Resident: "It is a pleasure for me to inform your Excellency that there doesn't exist now any objection for the merchants in England to furnish firearms to the Siamese Government. The cargo of the vessel of M. Gillies is composed totally of articles of this nature" (p.95). On the 15 August 1824, Brigk "Shannon" set sail from London to Bangkok bringing "besides an important cargo of British manufactured goods, 4,000 firearms and a considerable quantity of ammunitions" (p.200). In a letter dated 28 August 1824 from Singapore, John Morgan, another British merchants d' armes informed Calcutta that he had to "provide the Siamese with war equipment numbering 10,000 rifles, and that he has gained the confidence of this Government and can succeed during these last 3 years to deal with a great amount of business with them... I have succeeded to build and maintain a prosperous, important and flourishing business" (p.101-102). The same J. Morgan, on the 20 November 1824, gave as a gift 500 rifles to the King Rama II, 150 for the future Rama III, 100 for the Phra Klang and 20 cannons for Rama II who reserved them for the fort of Paknam (p.103). The fort of Paknam was destined to oppose an expected British attack by the sea!
30. On the use of the bulk of these arms against the Lao, Cf, Hong Lysa, *Thailand in the Nineteenth Century, Evolution of the Economy and Society*. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore 1984, p.62. Adey Moore, "An early British merchant in Bangkok" in *Siam Society Journal: Selected articles from the Siam Society Journal*, Volume 8 "Relationship with France, England and Denmark", Bangkok 1959, p.233. J.H. Moor, *Notices of the Indian Archipelago and adjacent countries*. Singapore 1837, p.204. Siamese armies will use for the first time these modern arms in 1827 against the Lao who fought, in their great majority, with cool steel or wooden piles. General Bodinthondechcha would gain his "reputaion" during the war, thanks to the fire power provided by Portuguese, American and British firearms which heavily equipped his army. For example, a despatch of the High Command in 1827 and signed by Phraya Chasengnakone stated, "Ammunition has mostly been distributed to the forward forces of Phraya Ratchasuphavadi (Bodin), to Phraya Khorat's force". *Thai National Library*. (Manuscripts Division), "Document Rama III (27) 1189/10 Volume II Khun". Department of Fine Arts (Ed.) *Documents concerning the suppression of the revolt of Vientiane*, Bangkok, Sophon 1926, pp.7, 8, 9, 10.
31. The Burney Papers, Vol.II, Part 4, p.46.
32. The Burney Papers, Vol.IV, Part 5, p.12.
33. "The Siamese seem to have viewed the treaty as a political necessity", writes W.F. Vella, idem, p.121.
34. John F. Cady, *Southeast Asia its historical development*. McGraw-Hill Book, New York 1964, p.335.
35. In a report dated 8 October 1825, J. Crawford, then Resident at Singapore, told about this episode, "I had a conversation with two mandarins in Bangkok who said they would be glad if the English took possession of the country, and that they would rise in their favour with 18 or 20,000 men. I said "you must be patient, in time you will be under the English". (The Burney Papers, Vol.II, Part 5, p.14.) One must note that Rama III was not appreciated because he was attacked by pamphlets (Cf, Prince Damrong Rajanuphab *The Royal Chronicle of the Second Reign of the Bangkok Dynasty*, Bangkok, Khuru Sapha, 1983, p.165-166).
36. "Visit from a Chief Lao" announced British Ambassador J. Crawford who reported "In the afternoon (19 May 1822) I had a visit from a native chief; a circumstance which did not often take place, for our

vicinity to the Prah-Klang's house, and the fear of exciting the jealousy of the Government prevented many persons from calling upon us who were otherwise well disposed to do so. The manner of this individual, who was a native of Lao, were singular. When he entered the room, I begged him to be seated but before complying, he made three obeisances towards the palace, then three towards the residence of the Phra-Klang, and three more to the company before him. His conversation was frank and intelligent, and he appeared well-informed respecting his own country, which forms so interesting and considerable, but to Europeans so little known, a portion of the present Siamese Empire" (J. Crawford *Journal of an Embassy*....p.240). The detailed data published by J. Crawford on Laos permitted us to identify this visitor as Anou, 'Chief of a country which form so interesting and considerable....a portion of Siam', standard formula unanimously used to refer to the kingdom of Vientiane and his king. For an identical view, Cf, Prince Damrong Rajanubhap; idem, Volume 2, p.165-166. See also, Thao Youne Conephom; 'Phongsavadan Lao samay tokpenh khoi muang kheun khong pathed Sayam kai pathed falangset' (*History of Laos during the Siamese and French colonization*), Vientiane, 1971, p.20 Pansa Sinsawat "The Bangkok-Vientiane relationship during the reign of King Rama III. A.D. 1924-1927". M.A. Thesis, Silpakorn University, Bangkok 1978, p.80.

37. Expressions of Professor Le Ruyer in his speech on the occasion of the ceremony of distribution of awards at the Lycee of Vientiane, on 28 June 1971. He said, "History can act - as often in Europe, in the XXe. century - as a social role; a national and dynastic reminder - I think mainly of Fa Ngum, the conqueror; to Samsenethai, the organiser; to Setthathirath, the builder; to Anou, the champion of independence - as well as the collective myths which together made up the Unity of the Lao Nation".
38. Chalongsongtravanij "History of the Thai-Lao relations before the XXe century", in *Coalition for Peace and Development, Seminar on the Thai-Lao friendship relations*, Bangkok 21 June, 1986, p.8. This view fits remarkably with the general impression which prevailed in the XIXe century. Thus, Francis Garnier wrote "In 1826, the Princes of Vienchang tried again to proclaim independence of Laos; but the repression was rapid and terrible ..." (p.54); "Xiang Mai was warmly solicited by King Anou to join him to reconquer the independence of the Lao race..." (p.388). Francis Garnier "Voyage d' exploration en Indo-Chine", *Revue Tour du Monde*, Paris 1870-1871. The official historiography of the Court of Bangkok will report that Anou said the same thing to his collaborators, "The situation becomes more than intolerable, we must not accept at all to continue to be a dependency of Siam" (Chaophraya Thiphakarawong *The Royal Chronicle of the Third Reign of the Bangkok Dynasty*. Bangkok, Khuru Sapha, 1961, p.39). Furthermore, a Thai historian, linked with the Dynasty of the Vientiane kingdom, Phraya Pramouanevisaphoum wrote "Phrachao Anouroutharaj, Phrachao Lan Xang Hom Khao Vientiane, (whom the Thai called briefly "Chao Anou") considering that Myong Lane Xang has always been in the past an independent country....but was then defeated by the armies of Krung Thonburi and abducted as vassal of Krung Thep and at the same time lost the emerald Buddha, palladium of the country, decided to launch a national liberation war...." Cf, Phraya Pramouanevisaphoum *Phongsavadan Muong Lane Xang*, Bangkok, 25 February 2484 (1939) 2nd Ed. p.43. Finally, Chao Ratsavong, heir of the Vientiane kingdom said the same thing as was reported as follows by Chao Ratsavongtheukommeun *Charathshphonpatithane* "Perched on his elephant, Ratsavong shouted in Lao to the peasants who were there, "In Myong Thai we have no rice to eat nor fish-bone to nibble. Go back (after these harsh labour that Siam constrained us to do) to Myong Lane Xang, we will have perfumed rice and delicious fishes to eat". After arriving at Vientiane, he pressed Chao Anou thus "I don't want to be slave of the Thai anymore. A radical measure must be taken to put an end to this situation. What do you think about it, father?" (S. Playnoy *Saranoukom Pawatsat Thai*, Bangkok, Houamsasom, 1984, p.246-247). More generally on this topic, Cf, Maha Silva Viravong "Phrarajpavat khong Somdet Phrachao Anouvong, kasat Ong Southay heng Phraratsavong Vientiane" (*Royal Biography of His Majesty Somdet Phrachao Anouvong, the last king of the Vientiane Dynasty*), Ministry of Culture, Vientiane, 1969, 74 pp.

39. Anou approached Gia Long in 1805 about his intention to break the domination of Siam on Laos. Gia Long pleaded a "fin de non recevoir" to Anou, Cf, Paul Le Boulanger *Histoire du Laos Francais, Essai d'une etude chronologique des principautes Laotiennes*, Plon, Paris 1932, p.104. See also Nguyen Le Thi (Ed.) *Compilation of ancient Vietnamese texts on Laos* (in Vietnamese), Department for Southeast Asian studies, Social Science Committee of Vietnam, Hanoi 1977, p.132. Busy with preparations to cope with the annexation of Laos by Siam which resorted to the general tattooing of Lao, Anou was to receive from Minh Mang an embassy in November 1826 which forbade him to cause any troubles to Siam or to reject the domination of Siam on Laos, Cf, Thai National Library (Manuscripts Division), "Document Rama III (19) 1189/4 Phraya Phetphichai to Phraya Sisahathep, 17 April 1827." For an identical view, see Bui Quang Tung "Chao Anou, King of Vientiane through the Vietnamese documents", *Bulletin de la Societe d'Etudes Indochinoises*, Saigon, 1958, p.401-406. Pham Nguyen Long "The uprising of the Lao people under the leadership of Chao Anou (1827-1829) against the yoke of the Siamese policy of domination". (In Vietnamese) *Review of History Study*, Hanoi, 1972, No.143, p.15. Charles Archaimbault; "Les annales de l'ancien Royaume de S'ien Khwang", *Bulletin de l'Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient*; 1967 p.582, 620, 654. Pansa Sinsawat: idem, p.93-96 A.B. Woodside *Vietnam and the Chinese model. A comparative study of Nguyen and Ch'ing civil Government in the first half of the Nineteenth century*", *Harvard University Press*, 1971, p.248-249.
40. On the affairs, Cf, The Crawford Papers, p.31-39.
41. The Crawford Papers, p.26.
42. The Crawford Papers, p.53.
43. John Crawford, *Journal of an embassy*..., p.436; "A large portion of Lao", p.437; "The extensive territory of Laos"; The Burney Papers, Vol.II, Part 4, p.82; "Laos, a great portion of which is now annexed to the kingdom of Siam"; Charles Gutzlaff writes: "the Siamese empire is composed of....a large portion of Laos...." (p.20). C. Gutzlaff *Journal of three voyages along the coast of China in 1831, 1832, 1833 with notices of Siam...* London, Westley and Davis, 1834.
44. Arthur Dommen *Laos. Keystone of Indochina*. Westview Profiles, New York, 1986, 182 p. Guy Perreol Laos, carrefour a prendre, *La Revue de Paris*, August 1960, p.57-63. U.S. News and World Report, "Reds heat up Laos, Real key to Asia?" 17 June 1968, p.86-88.
45. Albert Septans, *Les commencements de l'Indochine Francaise d'apres les archives du Ministere de la Marine et des Colonies et les Memoires du temps*. Challamel, Paris, 1887, p.199.
46. The Burney Papers, Vol. II, Part 4, p.82.
47. The Crawford Papers, p.65; The Burney Papers. Vol.II, Part 4, p.105.
48. Parliamentary Accounts and Papers, C., Vol.50 (1867). The journals of Capt. W.C. McLeod and Dr. D. Richardson, p.3; Nigel Brailey: "The origins of the Siamese forward movement in Western Laos, 1850-1892". Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1968, p.63.
49. The Burney Papers, Vol.I, Part I, p.16, 56.
50. The Burney Papers, Vol.I, Part I, p.51; Vol.II, Part 4, p.8, 113.
51. "The result of the Burmese war has made a total revolution in their ideas of the British power... The conclusion of the Treaty (Burney) has insured their respect for the British Government, to please which appears at present to be a very great object with them. After Captain Burney's departure their fears of the appearance of British troops was so great, that all our attempts to quiet them were unsuccessful. Their belief in astrology only adds to their timid fears, as they say it is decreed and written in their Books that the English will conquer Siam, and they think that it will ultimately be the case". The Burney Papers, Vol.II, Part 4, p.224.
52. The Burney Papers, Vol.II, Part 4, p.8.
53. John F. Cady: idem, p.335.
54. The Burney Papers, Vol. V, Part I, p.89.

55. Thai National Library (Manuscripts Division) Document Rama III (6) 1188 20, Vientiane Prince to Rama III, 15 January 1827, letter reached Bangkok, 23 February 1827. This letter has been published in Thai National Library (Ed.): *"A collection of accounts and documents concerning Nakhon Ratchasima"*, Bangkok, Prachak. Vitthagna, 1968, p.27-29; Thawatt Poonothok: *"Report of an analysis of tale 'Pheun Vieng': a study of history and culture of Isarn"*, Bangkok, Thammasart University, 1980, p.155-156.
56. "In 1824, the year of Siam's expansion in Selangor and Perak, a new and aggressive Governor, Robert Fullerton, arrived in Malaya... In May 1825, ... he sent a fleet to simulate a blockade of the mouth of the Trang River. The ruse was successful...." (Virginia Thompson, diem, p.150-151). In 1827, it seems that Robert Fullerton renewed his exploit, but his superiors rapidly stopped him, The Burney Papers, Vol.II, Part 6, p.262-286. The reports sent by the Siamese spy from Penang confirmed the movements of British armies, Cf. Thai National Library, (Manuscripts Division), "Document Rama III (15) 1188/20 (On events in Penang, March 1827). (16) 1188/20 (On events at Moulmein, 1 April 1827)".
57. D.G.E. Hall *History of Southeast Asia*, idem, p.451.
58. Arthur Dommen *Laos. Keystone of Indochina*, idem, p.22.
59. On the dual friend/enemy of Taksin, see Chroniques Royales Khmer (Ed. Trad. Martine Piat.) Bulletin de la Societe d'Etudes Indochinoises, 1974, p.68, Mongkut recognized this fact when he told the missionary, J. Tomlin, on the 30th October 1831, "His-own nation, the Siamese, he said, had also been very cruel in their wars against the Burmans and Laos" (p.57) (J. Tomlin, *Missionary Journal kept at Singapore and Siam* from May 1830 to January 1832, The Mission Press, Malacca, 1832), see also The Burney Papers, Vol.II, Part 4, p.51, 53.
60. The Burney Papers, Vol.I, Part I, p.84.
61. Chaophraya Thiphakarwong *"The royal chronicle of the Third Reign of the Bangkok Dynasty"*, idem, Vol.2, p.188.
62. Annotations and commentary of Chadin-Thadeus Flood, in Chaophraya Thiphakarawong: *"The Dynastic Chronicles, Bangkok Era. The Fourth Reign"* (Tra. Chadin Flood). The Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, Tokyo, 1965, Vol.IV, p.230.
63. Maha Sila Viravong: "Wannakhadi." Review Wannakhadisane. Royal Lao Literary Committee. Vientiane. No.6. April 1954. pp.51-54. Maha Sila Viravong: "Wannakhadi Lao pheua kane seuksa." Royal Lao Literary Committee. Vientiane. 1960. p.272. Soulang Dejvongsa: "Phasa, wannakhadi lae wathanatham ta venh ork." Vientiane. 1974. pp. 120-150. Dr. Khampheng Ketavong: "Wannakhadi Lao." "Institut de Droit et d'Administration du Royaume du Laos. 1968. pp.287-288.
64. Royal Lao Academy (Ed.): "San Leub Bo Soun." (Everlasting message). Kingdom of Laos. 1967. p.17.
65. Idem. pp. 3-4.
66. Somsy S. Desa: "Pheui Sane Leub Bo Soun." (Deciphering the everlasting message.) Imprimerie of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Vientiane. 3rd. Ed. 1984. p.33.
67. The antic name of Laos which had at this time a different territorial component than today. This is the past. Since 1975, the Lao country has become the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and Lan-Xang exists no more.