

## FERNÃO MENDEZ PINTO'S ACCOUNT OF EVENTS IN SIAM.

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INTRODUCTION BY MR. E. G. SEBASTIAN.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I have been asked to read you this afternoon a short paper written by Mr. Wood at Chiangmai on the subject of Pinto's travels in the Far East and especially in Siam, but before I do so I propose to give you a few introductory remarks on this very fascinating man.

Fernão Mendez Pinto was born in the year 1509 in Portugal of humble parents and it was not until he reached the age of 28 that he set out to try his fortune in the East, embarking for India in a fleet commanded by the son of Vasco de Gama, who needs no introduction to you. He spent 21 years in the East fighting and trading in China, Tartary, India and Japan; in fact he must have been in contact with every people of the Far East of any importance. His activities were very varied and during these years he played the part of soldier and sailor, merchant and doctor, missionary and ambassador. He relates the part which he took in various battles on land and sea, his connection with St. Francis Xavier, to whom he lent money to build his first Jesuit Establishment in Japan, his sudden joining of the Society of Jesus at Goa in 1554 and his devotion of a large part of his capital to the evangelization of Japan, and his appointment as Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bungo in order to give the mission an official standing; he was thus one of the first Europeans to visit Japan and is said to have introduced the musket there. On his return from Japan to

Goa in 1557, he left the company of the Jesuits, being dispensed from his vows for want of vocation at his own request; though a modern authority states that he was expelled because he was found to be possessed of Jewish blood. He finally returned to Portugal in 1558, and, having married and settled down, wrote his famous "Peregrinations". It is interesting to note that Philip II on visiting Portugal in 1583 listened with pleasure to the account of Pinto's travels and granted him a pension for his services in the Indies. Unfortunately this came too late, for the great traveller died in that same year.

In discussing the travels of Pinto one has always to remember that they were written after his return to Portugal and long subsequent to the events which he records. Again he himself admits that many of the occurrences and descriptions were merely from hearsay, and some of his most marvellous stories are expressly given on the authority of writers belonging to the countries described. It is, however, the general modern impression that he did not wilfully misrepresent the facts, and the book bears the stamp of sincerity. It is impossible at this period of civilization, when there is hardly a corner of the globe which has not been turned inside out, to put oneself in the position of a traveller such as Pinto going out into the unknown and finding mighty Kingdoms possessed of all the good things of this world. Remember, too, that there was practically continuous warfare going on between these rival kingdoms, and during Pinto's 21 years in the East he was made captive no fewer than 13 times and was sold 17 times. What a difference to one's comfortable journey to and existence in the East nowadays!

His contemporaries, as was perhaps not unnatural, were extremely sceptical about his stories. Congreve in his comedy "Love for Love" puts the following words into the mouth of one of his characters: "Mendez Pinto was but a type of thee, thou liar of the first magnitude," and later Sir Richard Burton, in one of his foot-notes to the third voyage of Sindbad the Sailor, when discussing the huge serpent which ate his companions, mentions Mendez Pinto and calls him "The Sindbad of Portugal, though not so respectable". The Portuguese of the original is said to be clear and natural and his

diction particularly rich in sea terms and appropriate to his varying subjects. It is argued that Pinto did for Portuguese prose what Camoens did for Portuguese poetry. His "Peregrinations" has been translated into English, French, German and Spanish and has gone through many editions.

His narrative must be read, not as a diary kept from day to day, but as the reminiscences of an old man writing after his return home for the benefit of his children.

### Mr. Wood's Paper.

When a modern traveller to Siam rushes into print, do we not usually find that his writings are filled with errors and misstatements? Yet modern travellers are aware that their work will be subjected to the scrutiny of hundreds of persons who know far more than themselves about the subject dealt with. Why, then, is it usual to seek for some germ of truth in every statement made by mediæval travellers, who knew themselves to be almost exempt from criticism, and could, therefore, give full rein to their fancy?

Pinto, even when his "Peregrinations" was first published in 1611, was looked upon as more or less of a romancer, but in more modern times several attempts have been made to rehabilitate him. My present object is to show that, in so far as events in Siam are concerned, Pinto was careless or untruthful, or both.

I will first give briefly his own story:

In January and February, 1546, Pinto took part in a war waged by the King of Zunda against the King of Passeruan in Java. He remained in the East Indian Islands until the end of 1547, when he set sail for China. He was shipwrecked near Pulo Condor on Christmas Day 1547, was taken to the Island of "Zebebes" and thence to "Zunda," and about a month later arrived in Siam. His first arrival in Siam thus appears to have been early in 1548.

Shortly after Pinto's arrival in Siam, the King of Chiengmai, allied with the "Timocouhos, Laos and Gueos," attacked the Siamese city of Quiteruan, killing 30,000 men, among them Oya Capimper (P'ya Kamp'engp'et). The King of Siam immediately prepared for war, and invited the Portuguese residents to accompany him,

which many of them did, Pinto among them. The Siamese army consisted of 400,000 men, of whom 70,000 were foreigners.

The King waited at Suropisem for 4,000 elephants, and then marched on and relieved Quiteruan.

There was a Kingdom called Guibem, with its capital at Guitor, ruled over by a Queen. This Queen had assisted Chiengmai against Quiteruan. The King of Siam, after capturing Fumbacor, a fortress of the Queen of Guibem, besieged Guitor. The Queen submitted, agreed to pay tribute, and handed over her son, the young King, as a hostage.

The King of Siam then proceeded to Chiengmai, situated on a lake called Singipamor, and (apparently) captured the city. At the beginning of the rains he returned to Quiteruan, and thence to Ayut'ia, having been absent for six months.

During the King's absence, the Queen had been carrying on an intrigue with one Uquumchinaraa, and was four months advanced in pregnancy. To avoid discovery, she gave poison to the King in a bowl of milk, from which he died.

The King's young son, aged nine, was proclaimed King with great ceremony.

Pinto then describes the cremation of the late King, at which the most extraordinary ceremonies are stated to have taken place.

Four and a half months later (that is to say, early in 1549, assuming that there is some consistency in Pinto's dates), the Queen gave birth to an illegitimate son. She then assembled troops, under the pretence of guarding the young King, and proceeded to execute various officials whom she feared. Finally, she poisoned the young King, married Uquumchinaraa, and caused him to be crowned as King of Siam on November 11th, 1545.

On January 15th, 1546, the Queen and the usurper were killed by Oya Passilico and the King of Cambaya in a temple called Quiay Figrau. Seven days later, a holy man named Pretiem, a bastard brother of the wicked Queen's husband, who had been for thirty years "Talagreps" in a pagoda called Quiay Mitrau, was crowned King of Siam.

The King of Burma, hearing of these events, determined to

invade Siam. On April 7th, 1548, he left Martaban with an army of 800,000 men, including 1,000 Portuguese. After a severe battle at Tapurau, he captured Sacotay (presumably Suk'ot'ai). He was advised to march direct to Ayut'ia, which he did, passing on the way by Tilau, a town on the coast, close to Kedah, and nine days later he arrived at Ayut'ia, in June 1548.

A detailed account of the siege of Ayut'ia then follows.

In October, 1548, the King of Burma learnt that the "Xemindoo" had raised the standard of rebellion in Pegu. The siege of Ayut'ia was therefore abandoned.

In this narrative truth and fiction appear to be mixed in about equal proportions.

It will be seen at once that Pinto's dates are wrong. He cannot have been engaged in a war in Java early in 1546, at the same time have been present at the coronation of "Pretiem" at Ayuth'ia. As he first visited Siam, according to his own statement, early in 1548, his allegation that he was an eyewitness of events which occurred in previous years is obviously false.

The following comparative table of dates will clearly show Pinto's unreliability:

PINTO	LUANG PRASÖT'S P'ONGSAWADAN
Pinto shipwrecked near Pulo Condor Dec. 25. 1547	King P'rajai invades Chiengmai Jan.-Mar 1546 (1)
Pinto arrives in Siam and proceeds to Chiengmai with the King early in 1548	King P'rajai dies June 1546
King dies (presumably) 1548	
Uquumchinaraa usurps the throne Nov. 11. 1545	K'un Jinarat usurps the throne Aug. 1548
Usurper slain Jan. 15. 1546	
Pretiem crowned Jan. 19. 1546	P'ra T'ien crowned Oct. (?) 1548
King of Burma leaves Martaban Apr. 7. 1548	
Siege of Ayut'ia June-Oct. 1548	Siege of Ayut'ia Mar. 1549

(1) The Histories of Chiengmai and Nan support this date.

It is possible to reconstruct the history of this period fairly correctly by comparing the Histories of Chiengmai and Burma, and the Siamese P'ongsawadan. As for dates, it is now a well known fact that all those given in the old editions of the Siamese P'ongsawadan are extremely incorrect. The correct chronology can be found in the work known as the "P'ongsawadan Luang Prasöt", a translation of which, by the late Dr. Frankfurter, was published in the Journal of the Siam Society, Vol. VI. Part 3.

The King of Siam who carried out the invasion of Chiengmai referred to by Pinto was Somdet P'rajai. This King reigned from 1534 to 1546. He was a son of King Rama T'ibodi II, and attained the throne by executing his nephew, the boy King Rasada.

King P'rajai twice invaded the then independent Kingdom of Chiengmai. The first occasion was in 1545. In that year King Müang Két of Chiengmai became insane, and was deposed and murdered by one Sên Dao. Sên Dao first offered the vacant throne to the Prince of Kengtung. He refused it, and it was then offered to Prince Mekuti (1) of Moné (or Müang Nai). A rival faction at the same time sent to invite a son of the King of Luang Prabang to assume the crown of Chiengmai.

In the meantime, the Prince of Hsenwî (Northern Shan States) invaded Chiengmai territory in order to remove and punish Sên Dao. Failing to capture Chiengmai, he sent a messenger to Ayut'ia to apply for the aid of King P'rajai.

Before King P'rajai had time to do anything, Sên Dao was executed by the rival party at Chiengmai, and a Princess named Maha T'ewi was set up as Regent, pending the arrival of Prince Jai Jett'a, the son of the King of Luang P'rabang.

King P'rajai reached Chiengmai about June, 1545, only to find that the ostensible object of his expedition, namely the removal of Sên Dao, no longer existed. He was received as an ally by the Princess Regent. After remaining some time at Chiengmai, he returned to Ayut'ia in September, 1545.

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(1) According to the Nan Chronicle, this was a Princess, not a Prince. The name is given as Chao Me Kutti.

This is clearly not the expedition in which Pinto professes to have taken part.

Shortly after King P'rajai returned to Ayut'ia, a Shan army invaded Chiengmai in support of the candidature of Prince Mekuti of Moné to the vacant throne. The Princess Regent repulsed the invaders. Later, a Luang P'rabang force was sent to assist in holding the city for Prince Jai Jett'a.

It was the news of these events which caused King P'rajai to plan a second expedition to Chiengmai. In the disturbed condition of Chiengmai, it is absurd to suppose that the Queen Regent would have made an unprovoked attack on a powerful neighbour, by capturing Quiteruan, wherever that may be. If any aggression was made against Siam, it must have been by the Moné army, but that army had no conceivable reason for going South of Chiengmai.

On this second expedition, P'ya P'itsanulok was sent ahead with a strong force. He reached Lamp'un without opposition, and encamped near that city. The advisers of the Princess Regent of Chiengmai hotly debated the question as to whether the Siamese were to be treated as allies or as enemies. The Princess Regent herself gave a final vote in favour of the former course. Before, however, any definite steps could be taken, P'ya P'itsanulok suddenly attacked Lamp'un by night, and burnt down a great part of the city.

King P'rajai arrived the next day. The attack on Lamp'un had caused the Princess Regent to decide on resistance. Chiengmai was attacked, but was not captured, and after suffering severe losses the Siamese retired. Later, King P'rajai's army was ambushed in the Muang Li District, and was utterly routed, losing three generals, 10,000 men and 3,000 boats.

The above account is taken from the History of Chiengmai. The post-Bangkok versions of the Siamese P'ongsawadan allege that Chiengmai was captured, but "Luang Prasöt's History," written in the reign of King P'ra Narai, makes no mention of this, though it expressly refers to the taking of Lamp'un. As it would be absurd to mention the capture of Lamp'un and omit all reference to Chiengmai, had the more important city really been captured, I assume that the account given in the History of Chiengmai is substantially correct.

This second expedition is evidently the one in which Pinto professes to have taken part, and it is clear that his account of it is utterly unreliable. In the first place, he grossly overestimates the numbers of the Siamese army. No army of 400,000 men ever was, or could have been, sent to invade Chiengmai, nor would it have been possible to transport and feed 4,000 elephants.

The capture of Quiteruan is probably a pure invention. It is impossible to identify the city, and it is very doubtful whether any serious fighting took place on the way North. As for the Kingdom of Guïbem, with its capital at Guitor, and its fortress of Fumbacor, it is, I suggest, a figment of Pinto's imagination. Some of his compatriots, who really accompanied the expedition, gave him various names of towns, and mentioned that there was a Queen Regent at Chiengmai, and this is the result. If Guïbem has any meaning at all, Lamp'un is the "Kingdom" referred to, but Lamp'un is not six days march from Chiengmai. As for the lake of Singipamor, on which Chiengmai was situated, and which was the source of the Lebrau River, under which name Pinto refers to the Me Yome, this is likewise a pure invention.

Curiously enough, Pinto's evidence has been believed by later writers, and this imaginary lake of Singipamor was accepted for years as a geographical fact.

Even if King P'rajai's second expedition to Chiengmai was not such a disaster as the Chiengmai Chronicle represents it to have been, it was certainly not a great success, as Pinto alleges.

King P'rajai died about June, 1546, shortly after his return from Ayut'ia and apparently nearly two years before Pinto ever came to Siam, if it is true that our Portuguese romancer's arrival in the country was *after* his shipwreck near Pulo Condor on Christmas Day 1547.

Pinto is our sole authority for supposing that King P'rajai died from the effects of poison. Prince Damrong has cited good reasons for assuming that the Queen's intrigue with K'un Jinarat did not commence until after the King's death, and this is the version given by the Pongsawadan. It is, however, conceivable that Pinto was right for once. Siamese historians sometimes rather

tend to conceal scandalous facts. On the other hand, if the lady really was  $4\frac{1}{2}$  months advanced in pregnancy when the King died, the fact would probably have been known, and it seems unlikely that she would have succeeded in getting herself made Regent.

The "Queen" in question, named Sri Suda Chan, was not really a Queen at all. She held the rank of P'ra Sanam Ek (1), but apparently King P'rajai's only two children, the Princes Yot Fa and Sri Sin, had been borne to him by her, and this fact presumably gave her a degree of influence greater than her actual rank warranted.

On the King's death, Prince Yot Fa was proclaimed King. We can believe or not, as we like, Pinto's account of the picturesque and touching ceremony which he describes as having taken place on this occasion. Personally, it appears to me very un-Siamese, and the same remark applies to the extraordinary ceremonies alleged by Pinto to have taken place at the cremation of King P'rajai.

The "Queen Regent," according to the P'ongsawadan, fell in love with a young man named P'an Sri But T'ep *after* King P'rajai's death. She caused her lover to be appointed K'un Jinarat, gave him an official appointment, and encouraged him to collect together an army. This army was raised ostensibly for the protection of the young King, but it was placed under the control of K'un Jinarat. The Queen Regent then caused her principal opponents to be assassinated, and appointed her paramour to be Regent. Emboldened by their success, K'un Jinarat and the Queen at last caused the young King to be executed, and K'un Jinarat was crowned King, with the title of K'un Worawongsa. The date of this appears to have been in August, 1548.

P'ra T'ien Raja, whose exact relationship to King P'rajai is not mentioned in the P'ongsawadan, retired to a monastery some time after King P'rajai's death.

Pinto agrees in the main with this account, but he says that the young King was poisoned. Luang Prasöt's History, our only reliable Siamese authority, tells us that the young King "had

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(1) In the Law known as Kot Mont'ien Ban this title is given as being that of one of the four senior non-Royal wives of a King.

an accident"—a euphemistic term often employed by the author of that work in cases where Kings or Princes met with a violent death. It seems unlikely that K'un Worawongsa would go out of his way to excite public feeling by executing the young King, when it was very easy to get rid of him quietly, so perhaps Pinto is right about the poison.

With regard to P'ra T'ien (Pretiem), Pinto says that he had been a priest for years—"had not budged from the temple for thirty years". This is clearly incorrect, for P'ra T'ien, when he became King in 1549, had four or more grown-up children, by at last two wives. His eldest daughter was married that same year to K'un P'iren, another daughter took part in the defence of Ayut'ia, and a third shortly afterwards married the King of Luang Prabang. His two grown-up sons, Ramesuen and Mahin, likewise took part in the defence of Ayut'ia in 1549.

Pinto says that K'un Jinarat was crowned as King of Siam on November 11th, 1545, but this is an obvious error. The year must certainly have been 1548. On the 15th. of January following, the usurper and the Queen were executed, and P'ra T'ien was crowned as King a few days later, (i. e. some time in January 1549).

According to Pinto, the ringleaders in the plot against the usurper were "Oya Passilico" (i. e. P'ya P'itsanulok), and the King of Cambaya (Cambodia), "who ranked at that time above a Duke."

The P'ongsawadan tells us that K'un P'iren was the ringleader, and asserts that he did not become "Oya Passilico" until after the accession of P'ra T'ien. Pinto speaks of Oya Passilico as taking a leading part in the coronation of the young King Yot Fa; but, as we have seen, it is impossible that our Portuguese friend can have been in Siam at that time, since he was in Java, according to his own account. Perhaps Pinto uses the title "Oya Passilico" retrospectively, so to speak. On the other hand, it is equally probable that the P'ongsawadan is wrong, and that the leader in the plot against K'un Jinarat was actually the Governor of P'itsanulok, K'un P'iren being, perhaps, a title which he had borne in earlier life.

As we have seen, a P'ya P'itsanulok was in command of the

Siamese troops who burnt down part of Lamp'un in 1546. In my opinion, it is probable that this same man was the righthander of the conspirators. He later became King of Siam (1568) and is usually referred to as King Mahā Tammaraaja. He died in 1590, being then, according to the P'ongsawadan, 76 years of age. If so, he was 32 years in 1546, so that it is quite probable that he was already a P'ya in that year. Moreover, his title was most probably a hereditary one, since he was, we are told, a descendant of the former Kings of Suk'ot'ai.

Who was the "King of Cambaya"? He is not mentioned in the P'ongsawadan, and the Cambodian Chronicle does not state that the King of Cambodian was residing in Siam at this time. On the other hand, there was a Cambodian Prince, named P'ya Ong, who had been adopted, or kept as a hostage, by King P'rajai, and who had been appointed Governor of Sawank'alok. The P'ongsawadan tells us that the Governor of Sawank'alok was one of the conspirators, and this is almost certainly the person referred to by Pinto as "King of Cambaya". He was very likely a claimant to the throne of Cambodia(1).

Siamese authorities inform us that K'un Jinarat and the Queen were captured and killed while being rowed along a canal to view an elephant hunt near P'itsanulok. Pinto asserts that they were killed at a banquet given in a temple named Quiay Figrau,

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(1) The P'ongsawadan says that King Maha Chakrap'at successfully invaded Cambodia, and kept two Cambodian Princes as hostages, one of whom, Nak Sutan, was made Governor of Sawank'alok. This is almost certainly wrong. The date is given as 1532, but it is useless to pay any attention to the dates in the P'ongsawadan. In 1532 neither King P'rajai nor King Maha Chakrap'at was on the throne of Siam, but King Boromaraja IV (Naw P'uttangkun). The Cambodian Chronicle relates that the King of Siam (i. e. King P'rajai) invaded Cambodia in 1540, and this is the invasion which the compilers of the P'ongsawadan have tried to describe as having been carried out by King Maha Chakrap'at.

We know from Luang P'rasöt's history that King Maha Chakrap'at sent an army to Cambodia in 1556. It was commanded by "P'ya Ong of Sawank'alok". This P'ya Ong or Nak Ong was a brother of King Chandaraja of Cambodia; far from being taken as a hostage by King Chakrap'at, he was, on that King's accession, already Governor of Sawank'alok. His expedition to Cambodia was a failure, and he was killed in battle.

This P'ya Ong, or Nak Ong, is clearly Pinto's "King of "Cambaya". He appears to have been Governor of Sawank'alok from 1540 till 1556.

which he translates as "King of the atoms of the sun". Pinto's names of temples are never recognizable as Siamese or Pali words, and all his translations of such names, as in this case, are mere nonsense(1). A banquet in a temple does not seem very Siamese.

We now come to the war between Burma, under King Tabeng Shwe T'i, and Siam, under King Maha Chakrap'at (P'ra T'ien). Our author agrees with the Siamese account in attributing the first Burmese attack solely to the aggressive spirit of Tabeng Shwe T'i, encouraged by the disorganised state of the government of Siam after the death of King P'rajai. But his account of the Burmese invasion is crammed with obvious perversions of the truth. At that period, there is good reason to suppose, the populations of Siam and Burma were large—probably larger than at the present day; nevertheless, it is patently impossible that the King of Burma could have transported an army, even using that word in its most comprehensive sense, of 800,000 men, including 40,000 cavalry, and accompanied by 5,000 elephants. When Pinto adds that there were 1,000 cannon, which were dragged all the way by 1,000 yoke of buffaloes and *rhinoceroes*, we are almost forced to agree with Congreve, the Restoration dramatist, who refers to Pinto as the world's most celebrated liar. Of our author's geography, which places Kedah between Suk'ot'ai and Ayut'ia, I have already spoken.

In Pinto's description of the first Burmese siege of Ayut'ia (1549), he omits a most romantic event. This is the death in battle of King Maha Chakrap'at's wife, Queen Suriyot'ai. This event is mentioned not only in the P'ongsawadan, but also in Luang P'rasöt's History, which is usually reliable, but it seems almost incredible that Pinto would have said nothing about it, had it really occurred. It is just the sort of thing concerning which he would have written several pages.

Unfortunately, we have no really reliable Siamese account of this siege of Ayut'ia wherewith to check Pinto's highly coloured description. Luang Prasöt's History gives no details. I may say,

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(1) Pinto's names of persons are more frequently recognizable; e. g. Uquumchinaraa=Ok-K'un Jinarat, or Chinaraj; Xemindoo de Satan=Thamein Sawdut; Xemindoo=Thameintaw.

however, that Pinto's chronology is, once again, very doubtful. He states that the siege lasted from June till October, and that Tabeng Shwe T'i then returned to Burma, where he defeated the rebel Xemindoo (Thameintaw) in November. It is improbable that the Burmese would commence such a siege in June, and would, or could, return to Burma in October, when the whole country is usually flooded. According to Luang Prasöt, the siege began in March, 1549, and did not last for long, and the Burmese Chronicle says that Tabeng Shwe T'i left Martaban about December, 1548, and was back in Burma six months later, thus agreeing with Luang Prasöt.

Is it possible to believe that Pinto was present during the siege? Personally, I doubt it. I cannot find anything consistent or consecutive in his narrative, by whatever test it be tried.

This being so, I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that our earliest European picture of Siamese history is a mere patchwork, made up from vague memories of tales told to Pinto by some of his compatriots, and not, as it purports to be, the work of an eye-witness.

I intended to confine myself to Pinto's account of Siam, but it is worth while, as a further test of his credibility, to examine briefly his account of the Empire of Calaminham, and its Emperor, the "Holy Calaminham".

He tells us that Calaminham was a very powerful Empire, which he places on a level with Burma, Siam, or even China. He then tells us that he accompanied an Embassy sent by the King of Burma to the Emperor of Calaminham in 1544

Pinto describes very minutely his journey from Ava to Timplam, the capital of Calaminham. He went by boat the whole way from Ava to a point in Calaminham not far from Timplam. He was travelling, not counting stops, for 58 days. On the way he passed through Gumbim, in the territory of Jangomaa. Jangomaa is a name sometimes given to Chiangmai, and Gumbim may mean Kam-p'engp'et.

Pinto stayed for some time at Timplam, the capital of Calaminham. Timplam contained "400,000 fires" and was a very

remarkable city. The palaces and temples are described as being most magnificent.

In fact, to put it briefly, Calaminham, as described by Pinto, was an Asiatic Power of the first class, and Timplan, its capital, was a very large and flourishing city, comparable with the most important cities of Asia.

Pinto's Calaminham was, as we have seen, connected by river with Ava; but its supposed position is made still more inexplicable by the alleged fact that it was likewise connected by navigable rivers with Martaban. Pinto and his party returned from Timplan to Martaban by boat the whole way, and once again, as on their journey from Ava, they somehow managed to pass through the territory of Chiengmai (Jangomaa).

It is, of course, impossible to name a State, large or small, which is, or was, accessible by river both from Ava and Martaban, the traveller passing in both cases through the territory of Chiengmai.

The Salween is not now navigable for any distance above its mouth, but even assuming that Pinto was able to overcome all difficulties of navigation, the fact remains that any State which was watered by a tributary of the Salween was certainly not a powerful Empire, rivalling Siam and Burma, but merely a petty Shan or Karen State.

It is absolutely certain that there was, in Pinto's time, no Shan or Karen State resembling in any way his great Empire of Calaminham.

Certain indications lead me to suspect that the Kingdom which Pinto really had at the back of his mind, when he invented Calaminham, was Luang P'rabang; but never having been there, and not knowing exactly where it was, he was compelled to content himself with touching up the vague and exaggerated accounts of some of his compatriots. It is only fair to admit that he performed his task very thoroughly, and that his Luang P'rabang (if it be indeed Luang P'rabang), connected by river with Ava and with Martaban and possessing an extraordinary religion, never heard of before, or since, is far more interesting than the real place.

I invite anyone who may still cherish some lingering faith in Pinto's veracity, to read carefully his account of the Empire of Calaminham.

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