

The Ming Records:

an Account of Annam

(a partial translation)

* * * *

John D. Phan
Ph.D. Candidate
East Asian Literature
Department of Asian Studies
Cornell University
5.2008

*

History of the Ming: Fascicle 321

Accounts 209

Foreign States 2

Annam

Annam is the land of ancient Jiaozhi 交阯. Through the Tang, it was administrated by the Middle Kingdom. In the time of the Five Dynasties, [Annam] was first usurped and occupied by the local Qu Chengmei 曲承美 (Khúc Thừa Mỹ 917-923). In the early Song, Ding Buling 丁部領 (Đinh Bộ Lĩnh 924-979) was installed as the King of Jiaozhi Commandery; after three successions, [the Ding clan] were overthrown by senior official Li Huan 黎桓 (Lê Hoàn 940-1005). The Li Clan in turn lasted three successions, and was then overthrown by senior official Li Gongyun 李公蘊 (Lý Công Uẩn 974-1028). The Li Clan [ruled for] eight generations, [then,] lacking a son, [the king] transferred [power] to his son-in-law, Chen Rijū 陳日炬 (Trần Cảnh 1218-1277).¹ In Yuan times, [the Mongols] repeatedly ravaged [lit. “broke”] the kingdom.

In the 1st year of Hongwu [1368], King Rikui 日燿 (Nhật Khuê/ Nhật Hạo/日皞 1336-1369), hearing that Liao Yongzhong 廖永忠 had pacified the Two Guangs², commanded the dispatch of an envoy to receive seals, but was unsuccessful on account of King Liang 梁 in Yunnan.

In the twelfth month, Taizu ordered the Prefect of Hanyang, Yi Ji 易濟 to issue a summons [to Rikui]. Rikui dispatched his Junior Grand Minister of the Palace³ Tong Shimin 同時敏, and Grand Masters⁴ Duan Ti 段悌 and Li Anshi 黎安世 to come present a memorial at Court, and to offer up a tribute of local goods.

In the Sixth Month of the following year [1369], [the embassy] reached the Capital. The Emperor was pleased, and gave a banquet, ordering the Academician Reader-in-Waiting, Zhang Yining 張以寧 and the Manager of Registration Niu Liang 牛諒 to go invest Rikui as King of the State of Annam, and confer [upon him] a silver seal with a gilded camel loop.

¹ This ostensibly marked the beginning of the Chen 陳 Dynasty (Nhà Trần).

² I.e. Guangxi 廣西 and Guangdong 廣東.

³ Chinese: 少中大夫.

⁴ Chinese: 正大夫.

The decree read⁵: “Lo! You are the King of Annam, Chen Rikui, and it was your ancestors who guarded the Southern Frontier, counting themselves a fence of the Middle Kingdom, who were laudable in their official duties, and [received] investment for successive generations. We have received the grace of Heaven and Earth, [and having achieved] the ordering of China,⁶ have expeditiously spread word [i.e. of these achievements]. Your ministers have presented a memorial acknowledging your service to us⁷, and so we have sent special envoys bearing felicitations⁸. You have followed the model of your forebears’ admonishments, and brought peace to the people of [your] distant land. Your care, and industrious sincerity are deeply commendable. And so⁹ we have dispatched an envoy to bestow [this] seal [upon you], and confirm you as King of Annam. Lo! With broad vision and compassionate humanity, let you imitate the great laws of the wise kings. Your rank surpasses the five grades; may you inherit the eminence of your renowned forebears. If you further the excellence of good regulations, you will eternally be considered a worthy neighbor. So commanded.”

The Emperor bestowed upon Rikui the *Grand Unified Calendar*¹⁰ and brocades and gauze woven with golden patterns, totaling forty bolts. Tong Shimin and all his subordinates also received gifts.

When Yining and the others arrived, Rikui had already passed away, and his nephew Rijian 日堅¹¹ (Dương Nhật Lễ 揚日禮 ?-1370) had inherited his position. He dispatched his minister Ruan Ruliang 阮汝亮 to go and welcome [them], and requested that they confer the seal, but Yining and the others did not yield it. Rijian thereupon sent Du Shunqin 杜舜欽 and others to request an imperial order from court. Yining remained in Annam, awaiting the mandate. At that time, Annam was at war with Champa 占成, and the Emperor ordered the Hanlin Compiler Luo Furen 羅復仁 and the Secretary of War Zhang Fu 張復 to negotiate the cessation of hostilities. Both kingdoms presented a memorial (to the throne).

⁵ Literally “said”. Here, I render “read” for stylistic reasons.

⁶ Chinese, 華夏.

⁷ Chinese: “...稱臣”; lit. “calling [you our] servant.”

⁸ More literally, “have *especially sent* envoys to come with felicitation.”

⁹ Literally “for this” (是); modified for stylistic reasons.

¹⁰ Ch. 大統曆; the official calendar (released by the Ming).

¹¹ This character should in fact have a 火 radical to the left. It seems that all Chen Dynasty kings bore a fire radical in their names.

In the following year, Shunqin and the others arrived to announce the death (of Rikui). The Emperor, in plain attire, graced the Xihua gate, receiving them for an audience; then the Emperor ordered Compiler Wang Lian 王廉 to go offer sacrifice, and funerary gifts were made to the envoys of 52 taels of white gold, and 50 bolts of silk. Separately, the Emperor sent Secretary Lin Tangchen 林唐臣 to invest Rijian as King, bestowing a golden seal, and 40 bolts of silks and brocades of knit gold. As Lian 廉 was going, the Emperor ordered [him] to go and make sacrifice in honor of the great and extraordinary achievement of Ma Yuan of the Han 漢馬援 (Hán Mǎ Vièn 14BCE-49ACE) erecting the Bronze pillars upon quelling the Southern Barbarians,.

They [Wang Lian and Li Tangchen] were further to distribute a decree for the civil service examination; the two envoys were also to announce the reestablishment of the names of the spirits of the peaks and waterways, and the clearing of the desert.

Rijian dispatched the Senior Grand Master Ruan Jian 阮兼, Ordinary Grand Master Mo Jilong 莫季龍, Junior Grand Master Li Yuanpu 黎元普 to give thanks, and offer a tribute of local goods. Jian died en route. The Emperor decreed the conferral of gifts upon the King and his envoys, and sent [Jian's] coffin back to the kingdom [of Annam].

Immediately following this, Furen and the others returned, and, asserting their refusal, did not accept their parting gifts [out of humility]. The Emperor was pleased by this, and bestowed further (treasures) upon Jilong and the others.

In the spring of the Fourth Year [1371], [Rijian] sent an envoy to offer up an elephant (to the Emperor), in congratulation for [his Majesty's] quelling of the desert, and dispatched an envoy to accompany Yining and the others back to court. That winter, Rijian was killed by his uncle, Shuming 叔明. Shuming feared punishment, and so offered up a tribute of elephants¹² and local products. The following year, [Yining and his entourage] arrived at the capital. An official of the Ministry of Rites saw that the signature tags were not in Rijian's name; interrogation revealed the truth, and [so] it was decreed that [the tribute] be refused. Shuming returned to court and offered to accept punishment, and thereupon requested investiture. His envoy lied, saying that Rijian had in fact died of illness, and that Shuming was obedient and respectful, had fled abroad, and was [in fact] pushed by the kingdom's people [to request investiture]. The Emperor ordered the kingdom's people to mourn Rijian, and [ordered] Shuming to oversee affairs with the seal of the former king, for the time being.

In the Seventh Year [1374], Shuming dispatched an envoy offering thanks. Calling himself elderly, he requested that his younger brother Tuan 端 take up governance. This was approved. Tuan dispatched an envoy giving thanks, and inquiring on the tributary period. It was decreed that tribute would be offered once every three years, and—in the

¹² Or just one elephant.

[8311]

event of] a new king, at the onset of his reign.¹³ [Tuan] thereupon dispatched an envoy offering tribute, but the Emperor ordered the relevant offices to refuse [it], and thereupon decreed that delegations not exceed 3-4 people, and that tribute items not be extravagant.

In the tenth year [1377], Tuan invaded Champa, and was lost in war. His younger brother Wei 煒 was set up in his place, and dispatched envoys bearing news of [the King's death].¹⁴ [The Emperor] ordered the eunuch Chen Neng 陳能 to go offer sacrifice. At that time, Annam, relying on [her] strength, desired to destroy Champa, but instead met with heavy defeat. Because Shuming was the true master of state affairs, the Emperor dispatched officials ordering the former king Shuming not to instigate a rift [with the Cham], [and] to leave off disaster. Shuming offered up a tribute of local goods, and accepted punishment. The tribal officials [of] Siming 思明 in Guangxi, complained that Annam had violated their borders; Annam for its part complained that Siming was harassing its frontiers. The Emperor sent [to Wei] evidence enumerating [his] traitorous and deceptive crimes, and gave imperial decree that the border officials not accept [his] envoys. Wei grew fearful, and dispatched an envoy to accept punishment, and year after year offered tribute of eunuchs, gold and silver, basins of purple gold, wine ewers of yellow gold, elephants, horses, and the like. The emperor ordered the Instructor Yang Pan 楊盤 to travel as emissary, and order the submission of rations for the Yunnan army. Wei then sent five thousand piculs to Lin'an 臨安.

In the 21st year [1388], the Emperor again commanded a Director of the Board of Rites, Xing Wenwei 邢文偉, to carry an edict and specie, and go bestow [these upon Wei].

At that time, the Prime Minister, Li Jili 黎季 [Lê Quý Lý] usurped power, and dethroned his lord, Wei, and then killed him and established the son of Shuming, Rikun 日焜, to rule over the kingdom's affairs, while yet falsely using Wei's name to offer up tribute. The Court did not know [of this], and accepted it. Realizing [the truth only] after several years, [the Court] commanded the border officials of Guangxi to reject [Jili's] envoys.

Jili was greatly afraid, and in the 27th year [1394], sent an envoy via Guangdong to offer tribute. The Emperor was incensed, dispatched officials to determine responsibility, and refused the tribute. Jili became even more fearful, and in the following year [1395], again, with cunning words, offered tribute. The Emperor, although wrathful at his murderous betrayal, did not want to belabor the soldiers with a distant expedition, and so accepted it [the tribute].

[8311]

¹³ Literally “when a new reign/period appears”. Tribute, therefore, was to be sent every three years, and on the occasion of succession.

¹⁴ Chin. 告哀, lit. “reporting grief”.

[The Emperor] deployed a force [against] Zhao Zongshou in Longzhou 龍州趙宗壽. [The Emperor] commanded The Minister of Rites Ren Hengtai 任亨泰, and Censor, Yan Zhenzhi 嚴震直 to advise Rikun not to worry. Jili heard these words, and felt somewhat at ease. The Emperor also dispatched the Minister of Punishments Yang Jing 楊靖 to issue an order for the transport of 8,000 piculs of grain, [in order to] supply the Longzhou army. Jili transported ten thousand piculs, and also presented 1,000 taels of gold, and 20,000 taels of silver; and saying that the land routes to Longzhou were dangerous, asked that [the supplies be] transferred to the Pingxiang Grottos 憑祥洞. Jing did not permit it, and ordered the transport of 20,000 piculs to Tuohai River 沱海江, only half a day away from Longzhou.¹⁵ Jing thereupon said: “Rikun is young in years, and all the affairs of state are decided by Jili and his son, and that is why I have dared to wait and watch in this way.”

At that time, the Emperor—given that Zongshou had accepted a seal of office, transferred the soldiers to campaign against the various southern barbarians at Xiangwu 向武, and then ordered Jing to transport 20,000 piculs to supply the army, exempting [him] from the gold and silver that he was to have supplied. In the following year [1395], Jili gave notice of the passing of the former king Shuming. If the Emperor mourned him and offered sacrifice, this would have encouraged chaos, given that Shuming had originally usurped [the throne] through murder, and so he desisted, and did not proceed [in mourning], [but] transmitting an announcement to make [Shuming’s passing] known.

The tribal official of Siming, Huang Guangcheng 黃廣成, said: “Since the Yuan Dynasty established the route command of Siming, the districts and prefectures of Zuo Jiang 左江 under [its] administration, have taken Shangsi Prefecture 上思州 in the East, and the Bronze Pillars in the South as borders. When the Yuan attacked Jiaozhi, they went 100 *li* beyond the Bronze Pillars and established the 10,000 household prefecture of Yongping Fort 永平寨, dispatching soldiers to garrison [there], and ordering the Jiao people to supply their army. After the Yuan Dynasty collapsed, the Jiao people attacked and raided Yongping, passing beyond the Bronze Pillars more than 200 *li*, invading and usurping the lands subject to Siming—the five districts of Qiu Wen 丘溫, Ru Ao 如敖¹⁶, Qing Yuan 慶遠, Yuan 淵 and Tuo 脫.

“Now once again I request Minister Ren 任上書 to station troops at Dong Deng 洞登 in Siming. I once received a memorial [detailing] the secret dispatch of Minister Yang to investigate [the matter].

¹⁵ The first character of in the name of the river is recorded using a variant of the one used here, formed of a water radical to the left, and the right side of the following character: 拖.

¹⁶ This character should have a 山 radical on the bottom; alternatively, the 山 radical may appear on top.

“I beg [Your Majesty] to order Annam to return the lands of the five districts to me, and again to draw the border at the Bronze Pillars.”

The Emperor ordered messengers Chen Cheng 陳誠 and Lu Rang 呂讓 to carry the order; Jili took it but did not obey.

Cheng himself wrote a document admonishing Rikun, and Jili sent a document contesting [it]. On behalf of Rikun, the document was sent to Ministry of Revenue.

The order to Cheng and the others was re-issued, but the Emperor knew that [the Annamese] would never return [the occupied lands], and so said: “Ever since ancient times, there has been conflict among the barbarians. This is because of recalcitrance, and it will certainly invite disaster, so for the time being [we] will wait on it.”

In the first year of *Jianwen* 建文 [1399], Jili killed Rikun, and established his [Rikun’s] son, Yong 顛 [Trần Ngung 1378-1399] [as heir to the throne]. He [subsequently] also killed Yong, and set up [Yong’s] younger brother An 案 [Trần An 1396-1399], [at the time, merely a child] in swaddling clothes, and [then] killed him too. [Jili] massacred the Chen Clan, and established himself [on the throne], changing his name to Hu Yiyuan 胡一元 [Hồ Nhất Nguyen], and (re)naming his son Cang 蒼, “Hu Di” 胡□, claiming descent from Duke Hu 胡公, of Emperor Shun’s 舜 line. He illegitimately changed the name of the Kingdom to “Da Yu” 大虞 [Đại Ngu], and the reign title to Yuan Sheng 元聖 [Nguyễn Thanh], calling himself the Great August Emperor, and conferring the throne to Di.¹⁷ The Court did not know any of this.

At that time, Chengzu 成祖 succeeded to the throne, and dispatched officials in order to announce his ascension to the Kingdom [of Annam].

In the first year of Yongle 永樂 [1403], Di was managing the affairs of the state of Annam in his own name, and dispatched an envoy to present a memorial to the Court, saying:

“In the time of Emperor Gao, King Rikui of Annam followed his predecessors in demonstrating his loyalty], but unfortunately was lost early, and his line of descent broken.

¹⁷ The title that Jili claims is *Taishanghuang* 太上皇. This may be in reference to the dual kingship system of the Chen Dynasty, in which kings would abdicate to their mature heirs, but retain the title of “Senior King”. However, the terminology here is different than what was elsewhere used to refer to the senior kings (note the use of 皇, “emperor”). This seems likely due either to ignorance on the part of the Chinese historians, or to a desire to underscore the illegitimacy of Jili’s title (by selecting the term 皇, reserved only for the Chinese emperors).

“I am a son of the Chen Clan, and being pushed by the multitudes, have watched over the affairs of the kingdom, for four years to this day. I pray that your Heavenly Grace will bestow upon me a seal of office and title, for I would die without it.”

The issue was passed to the Board of Rites. An official of the Board was suspicious of [the claim], and requested the dispatch of an official to investigate.

And so the messenger Yang Bo 楊渤 and others were commanded to carry imperial orders instructing the Attendant Officials and Elders [of Annam]. They were also to inquire into the existence of Chen heirs, as well as the sincerity of Hu Di’s claim to power.

Envoys [bearing gifts] to bestow upon Di were dispatched to return [to Annam], and further orders that messengers Lu Rang 呂讓 and Qiu Zhi 丘智 bestow fine woolen brocades, patterned twilled silks, and gauze [upon Di]. Thereupon, Di sent Bo and the others back, [and they] presented a memorial that had been submitted by the Attendant Officials and Elders [of Annam]. In the same way Di had deceived the Emperor, they now begged [his Majesty] to bestow upon Di a seal of office. The Emperor thereupon ordered a Director of the Board of Rites, Xia Zhishan 夏止善, to install [Di] as King of Annam. Di dispatched an envoy with thanks, but continued to act as emperor within his kingdom.

The territories administered by Siming—Lu Prefecture 祿州, Xiping Prefecture 西平 and Yongping Fort were all invaded and seized [by Annam]. The Emperor sent instructions ordering their return, but [these] were not obeyed. Champa complained that Annam had invaded and plundered [their lands], and [so the Emperor] ordered [Annam] to behave. Di, upheld the mandate in public speech, but attacked and invaded as before, issuing seals and forcing [others] to become his dependent, and also sought to seize items bestowed by the Heavenly Court.

The Emperor was incensed by this, and sent an official to exact punishment; the former Attendant Official Pei Boqi 裴伯耆 came to Court, and lodged a complaint, saying:

“My ancestors have all served as officials, and died in service to the state. My mother was close kin to the Chen Clan. Hence, when I was young I served the king, and was an officer of the Fifth Rank.

“Later I served the Marquis Chen Ke’zhen 陳渴真 and was appointed General-Adjutant.¹⁸ At the end of the Hongwu reign, I defended against pirates in the Eastern Sea on behalf of Ke’Zhen. When the traitorous minister Li Jili, together with his son, killed his lord and usurped his position, [he] murdered the faithful and virtuous, and tens and

¹⁸ Chinese: 裨將. I was unable to locate this title in Hucker’s *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*. The character 裨 has a verbal meaning of “to supplement”; thus “General *Adjutant*”.

[8313]

hundreds were killed in clan massacres. My brothers, their wives and children were also victims. [Jili] sent someone to arrest me, and moreover intended to execute me by mincing. I deserted, fled, and hid in the mountains. I hoped to address the Court to express my utter loyalty, and after wandering for several years, now finally do I see the Son of Heaven.

“I declare that Jili is the son of the former Military Commissioner, Li Guomao 黎國髦. [He] served the Chen Clan for generations, stole imperial favor and glory, and [his impropriety] extends even to his son, Cang, also bereft of worth or benevolence. One day, he seized [power], changed his name¹⁹, expropriated a title, began a new reign, and stopped honoring the orders of the Court.²⁰ The minds of faithful ministers and virtuous lords were pained, and their hearts grew bitter.

“I desire the sending of a punitive army, to restore the righteousness of that which was broken, to wipe out that villainous traitor, and reinstate a descendent of the Chen Clan. My resolve is unshakeable.

“I dare to imitate the loyalty of Shen Baoxu 申包胥, and wail in grief before the palace steps. I beg that the Emperor condescend to investigate [this matter].”

“The emperor received this memorial, was moved, and ordered the relevant agencies to clothe and feed [Pei Boqi].

It so happened that Chen Tianping 陳天平 [was then just] arrived, escorted by Laotians 老撾. He said:

“I am Tianping, the grandson of the previous King, Rixuan 日烜 (Trần Hiến Tông/Trần Vương 陳憲宗/陳旺 1319-1341), the son of Weng □, younger brother to Rikui.²¹ [When] the bandit Li obliterated the Chen Family, I fled to foreign districts, and was (thus) able to escape. My subordinates and assistants were stirred to loyalty and righteousness, and pushed me to act as lord, in order to quell the bandit. I implemented a plan to raise an army, but the bandit's soldiers became wary, and so we fled in haste. Hiding amid mountains and caves, we made our way to Laos against all odds.

“I am overjoyed to hear that Your Majesty the Emperor has restored the Great Line, [for it is] that which I can depend upon to return [to my kingdom]. I bring a plaint [before the] Illustrious Court: the progeny of the descendents of the Chen Clan ends with me alone, and I will not share the same sky with this bandit!

¹⁹ Literally “altered his surname and changed his name” 便姓易名.

²⁰ Here, literally, “...did not honor the orders of the Court”. I have supplied “stopped” to maintain the frame of “one morning”.

²¹ As in the case of Rikui/Hao above, there seems to be two different given names for the king. I am unsure as to what custom is being practiced here. Also, note that Tianping is the son of Weng, who is the younger brother of Rikui (and the son of Rixuan); the relationships are somewhat ambiguous in the translation.

“I bow down, imploring that your sagely benevolence descend upon me, that in haste you will send forth (the) six armies, and thereby use your authority in heavenly retribution.”

The Emperor was further moved, and ordered the officials in charge to lodge him.

Di dispatched an envoy with congratulations on the First Morning [of the new year]. The Emperor brought Tianping out and revealed him [to the assemblage]; all were startled, and lowered themselves in obeisance, and there were those who wept. Boqi upbraided the envoys concerning righteousness, and they were all fearful and could not reply.

The Emperor instructed his attendant officials: “Di and his son have revolted and betrayed [us]. The demons and spirits will not permit this! The ministers of the whole country are cheating and deceiving—it is a nation of criminals! How can we permit this?”

In the Third Year [1405] the Emperor ordered the Censor Li Qi 李琦, and messenger Wang Shu 王樞 to carry a decree castigating Di, and to order an investigation into the truth of [his] usurpation and regicide.

Another complaint came from Ningyuan District 寧遠州 in Yunnan, that Di had invaded seven outposts, and kidnapped the daughter of a son-in-law [of the tribal chief].

Di dispatched his servant, Ruan Jingzhen 阮景真 to accompany Qi and the others to Court and accept punishment; they lied saying that he had never usurped a title nor started a new reign period; [they] welcomed Tianping’s return and his investment as lord, and thereupon returned the territories of Luzhou and Ningyuan.

The Emperor did not recognize their deception, and so permitted this. He ordered the attendant Nie Cong 聶聰 to carry a decree to instruct them, saying “You have indeed welcomed the return of Tianping, and serve him with ritual appropriate for a lord, and [thus] it is fitting that I establish you [Di] as High Duke, and invest you with a large commandery.

Di in turn dispatched Jingzhen to accompany Cong and the others back and give report, and to welcome Tianping. Cong forcefully claimed Di to be sincerely worthy of trust, and so the Emperor thereupon ordered Tianping to return to the kingdom, and ordered the Deputy Generals of the Left and Right of Guangxi, Huang Zhong 黃中 and Lu Yi 呂毅 to command five thousand (troops) to escort him.

In the Fourth Year [1406], Tianping took his leave of the Throne; the Emperor richly conferred [even] more [gifts upon him] and ordered the investment of Di as Duke of the Commandery of Shunhua 順化, supported by all the subordinate districts and prefectures.

In the Third Month, Zhong and the others escorted Tianping through the Jiling Pass 雞陵關. They were about to arrive into Qinshan 芹站 [when] Di's hidden troops attacked and killed Tianping. Zhong and the others returned in defeat. The Emperor was greatly angered, and summoned the Duke of Chengguo 成國, Zhu'neng 朱能 and others to form a strategy with the decided intent to crush [Di].

In the Seventh Month the Emperor ordered Neng to bear the *Barbarian-Attacking General's Seal* and take full control of [all] soldiers and officials; and ordered the Lord of Xiping 西平, Musheng 沐晟 to bear the *Barbarian-Attacking Lieutenant-General's Seal*, designating him Lieutenant-General on the Left. [He] promoted the Lord of Xincheng 新城, Zhang Fu 張輔 to Lieutenant-General on the Right, [as well as designating] the Lord of Fengcheng 豐城, Li Bin 李彬 and the Earl of Yunyang 雲陽 Chen Xu 陳旭, General Adjutant on the Left and Right [respectively], [in order to] oversee the soldiers in the southern offensive.

When Neng arrived in Longzhou, he fell sick and died, [and so] Fu took lead of the army in his stead. They entered Annam [through] the Polei Pass 坡壘關, and issued a public announcement enumerating the twenty crimes of the Yiyuan father and son, and instructed the kingdom's people to assist in the effort to establish a descendent of the Chen Clan [on the throne]. The army bivouacked at Qinshan, and then constructed a floating bridge at the Chang River 昌江, in order to create a crossing. The Vanguard attacked Jialin District 嘉林縣 north of the Fuliang River 富良江, and Fu went west from Qinshan by another road to reach Xinfu District 新福縣 in Beiji Prefecture 北江府. The troops of Sheng and Bin went on reconnaissance from Yunnan to Bai'he 白鶴, and Cavalry General Zhurong 朱榮 was dispatched to rendezvous with them.

At that time, Fu and the others had [already] parted ways, and everywhere their soldiers advanced, they conquered. The bandit then hemmed the river, erecting a palisade, and furthermore built an earthen rampart at Duobang'ai 多邦隘. The rampart and palisade together (ran for) over nine hundred *li*, and [the bandits] greatly mobilized the population north of the river—over two million men—to guard it.

They planted stakes at the various river harbors, and the Eastern Capital where they dwelt was vigilantly on guard and prepared. The army and navy numbered seven millions, and planned to entrench [themselves, and] outlast the Imperial Army.

Fu and the others then transferred bivouac to the harbor of Gezha Market 箇招市 in Sandai Prefecture 三帶州, [for the] building of warships. The Emperor was concerned that the bandit would eat away at his soldiers by waiting for a miasma, and so decreed that Fu and the others must destroy the bandit by the spring of the following year. In the

Twelfth Month, Sheng bivouacked on the north bank of the Tao river 洮江, facing the rampart of the Duobang Fort

Fu sent Xu to attack Taojiang Prefecture 洮江州, built a floating bridge to ferry soldiers, and then gave battle below the wall, attacking and capturing it. The bandit had depended upon this wall alone, and so when breached, his courage was shattered. The great army then followed Fuliang River southward, and harassed the Eastern Capital. The bandit abandoned the city and fled; the great army entered and occupied it, and then pressed on to the Western Capital.²² The bandit burned the palace and halls, and took a boat to sea. The commanderies and districts submitted one after the other, [but] those who resisted or refused were struck and crushed. The documents presented by the gentry and commoners recounting the crimes and atrocities of the Le Clan, [arrived] in the hundreds each day.

In the First Month of the Fifth Year [1407], Jili was defeated at Muwan River 木丸江, and a memorial was issued seeking out descendents of the Chen Clan. Thereupon over 1,120 elders approached the military headquarters, and said:

“The Chen Clan were obliterated by the Li bandits; there are no heirs. Annam was originally a territory of the Middle Kingdom, we beg you once again to include Annam within the bureaucratic domains [of the Empire], in the same manner as the inner commanderies.”

Fu and the others listened to this. Then, there came a great victory over the traitors at Fuliang River, [though] Jili and his son escaped and fled with a number of ships. The various armies gave chase by land and sea. [The armies] bivouacked at Chalong District 茶龍縣, and, realizing that Jili had fled to Yi'nan 义南, following [him] to the Jujue River 舉厥江, pursued him to Qiluo Harbor 奇羅海口 in Rinan Prefecture 日南州, [where] Liu Sheng 柳升 was ordered to put to sea in pursuit of him. The bandit [suffered] multiple defeats, and could no [longer] maintain an army.

In the Fifth Month, they seized Jili and his false heir at Gaowang Mountain 高望山, and Annam was fully pacified. The various officials requested, in accordance with the request of the Elders, that districts and commanderies be established.

At the beginning of the Sixth Month, a memorial was announced to all under heaven, renaming Annam to Jiaozhi, and establishing three agencies: that the Assistant Chief Military Commissioner Lu Yi 呂 be in charge of the affairs of the Regional Military

²² The Western Capital, 西都 (Tây Đô) was built by Li Jili as his new imperial center, meant to replace Hanoi (the “Eastern Capital,” Viet. Đông Đô).

Commission²³ [with] Huang Zhong 黃中 as his second; that the former Vice-Minister of the Headquarters Bureau, Zhang Xianzong 張顯宗, and the Left Assistant to Administrative Agencies of Fujian,²⁴ Wang Ping 王平, be named Provincial Administrative Commissioners on the Left and Right;²⁵ that the former Surveillance Commissioner of He'nan 河南, Ruan Youzhang 阮友彰, be named Surveillance Commissioner [of Annam], while Pei Boqi was given the [position] of Consultant on the Right; and finally²⁶ that Minister Huang Fu 黃福 be set to oversee the affairs of the two agencies of the Provincial Administrative Commission, and Surveillance Commission.

They established the fifteen prefectures of Jiaozhou 交州, Beijiāng 北江, Liangjiang 涼江, sanjiang 三江, Jianping 建平, Xin'an 新安, Jianchang 建昌, Fenghua 奉化, Qinghua 清化, Zhenman 鎮蠻, Liangshan 諒山, Xinping 新平, Yanzhou 濱州, Yi'nān 乂南, and Shunhua 順化, divided into 36 sub-prefectures, and 181 districts. They also established the five prefectures of Taiyuan 太原, Xuanhua 宣化, Jiāxing 嘉興, Guihua 歸化, Guangwei 廣威, as well as the directly administered [Provincial Seat], divided into 29 administrative districts. As for other strategic points, all were set with guard posts to control them. Then, an order [was sent] to the relevant agencies bestowing posthumous titles upon the murdered kings of the Chen Clan; graves and a shrine were built, allocating 20 households each for upkeep. The clansmen of the victims were given offices, and the bodies of those soldiers and civilians who had died were buried. Those who held office were confirmed [in their] old [positions], and together with newcomers, participated in government. The severe policies of the Li Clan were eliminated entirely, and all criminals were released. Rituals [were honored] in expectation of a high year of great virtue. [For the] widows and widowers, the bereft and orphaned, centers for nourishment and supply were established.

The sincerest and most refined among those possessing talent, and harboring virtue, were sent to the Capital. There was furthermore, a summons issued seeking recluses [dwelling amid the] mountains and forests, those enlightened in the Classics, of erudite learning, the worthy and the upright, the filial and brotherly and the hardy, the intelligent and honest, the frugal and capable, and the skilled in material support, the well-trained in clerkship, thoroughly versed in writing and accounting, well-trained in military arts, bearing an impressive countenance, with a faculty for language, with physical strength and heroic courage, and [skilled in] divinatory arts, medicine, pharmacy and pulse reading—all these to go to the capital with ritual and sincerity for recording and employment. Thereupon Zhang Fu and the others submitted a memorial [presenting] a total of over 9000 men.

²³ Chinese 都司; abbreviated from 都指揮使司.

²⁴ Chinese: 政司左參. I was unable to locate this title in *Hucker*.

²⁵ Chinese: 部政使; abbreviated from 承宣布政使司.

²⁶ More literally, "further".

[8316]

In the Ninth Month, Jili and Cang—father and son—arrived as prisoners to the Capital, and together with their false Military Councilor²⁷ Hu 胡 and Du 杜, as well as all their subordinate officials. [The Emperor] pardoned Cang's younger brother, Cheng 澄, the Realm-Protecting King 圍國大王 and his son Na 𠂔, and the appropriate agencies clothed and fed [them].

In the Sixth Month of the Sixth Year [1408], Fu and the others returned to the Capital, and submitted a map of Jiaozhi. From East to West [it measured] 1,760 *li*, from North to South, 2,800 *li*. The pacified peoples [numbered] 3,120,000 or so; the captured barbarians around 2,287,500; elephants, horses, and oxen [numbered] around 235,900; grains 13,600,000 piculs or so; ships [numbered] over 8,670; weapons, 2,539,800. Thereupon, there was a distribution of certificates and positions. Fu was promoted to Duke Hero-of-the-Realm 英國公, Sheng to Duke of Moguo 默國公²⁸, and the rest received imperial gifts in various degrees.

* * * *

²⁷ Chinese: 將相. I could not locate this title in *Hucker*; it is possible that it is not a Chinese title.

²⁸ I am not certain what this title indicates. The first character should have 𠂔 as its left component, rather than 犬.