The study of maps made in Vietnam over the past five centuries has barely begun. Any person attempting to examine the Vietnamese cartographic tradition must cast a wide net to gather the scattering of detail in various forms that helps us understand how this tradition came to be. Although scholars of the Ecole Française d’Extrême-Orient (such as Henri Maspero, Leonard Aurousseau, and Emile Gaspardone) laid the bibliographic foundation for the study of Vietnamese cartography, the colonial period saw almost no work on historical maps. The only major exception was Gustave Dumoutier’s 1896 study of an early itinerary to the south (see below).

The main work available to us is a collection of maps called the Hồng-dực bản đồ (Maps of the Hồng-dực period [1471–97]), which was published three decades ago by the Viện Khảo-Cô (Institute of Historical Research) in Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City).\(^1\) Besides reproductions of the maps, the work presents a good index to the names recorded on the maps and a brief introductory study of the maps (in Vietnamese and, in a shorter version, French) by Trương Bửu Lâm. This introduction forms the core of our knowledge about pre-1800 Vietnamese maps. It is supplemented by several articles published in Hanoi over the past decade by Bùi Thiet that look at indigenous maps of the old capital (now Hanoi).\(^2\) Bùi covers the same time period as the previous study but extends it into the nineteenth century. Thái Văn Kiệm also produced several pieces dealing with mapping during the Nguyễn dynasty (1802–1945).\(^3\) Yet no synthesis exists for the half millennium of premodern Vietnamese mapping.

To attempt such a study in North America is difficult. The major collection of old Vietnamese manuscripts, including maps, is that developed by the Ecole Française d’Extrême-Orient in Hanoi and taken over by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1954–55. This collection is now held at the Viện Nghiên Cửu Hán Nôm (Sino-Nom Institute) in Hanoi, though its documents are still identified by the French system (A. plus a number).\(^4\) The imperial library in Hue was divided in the late 1950s, with the Nguyễn dynasty archives going to Da Lat (now in Ho Chi Minh City)\(^5\) and the pre-1800 material deposited at the Viện Khảo-Cô. Little serious damage appears to have been done to any of these collections during the war. Upon the French withdrawal, microfilm copies were made of the most important documents in Hanoi, and collections of the microfilms were deposited in two locations, the above-mentioned Viện Khảo-Cô and the Ecole Française d’Extrême-Orient in Paris. Other manuscript collections exist at the Société Asiatique in Paris (the Henri Maspero Collection, designated by HM plus a number) and the Tōyō Bunko (Oriental Library) in Tokyo.

The only historical Vietnamese maps available in the United States are black-and-white reproductions (and sometimes reproductions of reproductions). The maps in the published Hồng-dực bản đồ are photographic reproductions from the negatives of a Japanese microfilm, and the white-on-black illustrations are often none too clear.\(^5\) In general, the American scholar of Vietnamese maps is dependent on collections of the Ecole Française d’Extrême-Orient: the above-mentioned Viện Khảo-Cô and the Ecole Française d’Extrême-Orient in Hanoi and taken over by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1954–55 (reel 3, nos. 8–9), containing cards for over 3,600 documents. A document with a map contained in this microfilm collection is noted in this chapter by the document’s reel and number(s). A list of the nearly six hundred microfilmed documents may be found in G. Raymond Nunn, ed., Asia and Oceania: A Guide to Archival and Manuscript Sources in the United States, 5 vols. (New York: Mansell, 1985), 3:1054–60. All original documents designated by A. are in Hanoi; only microfilm copies of them exist elsewhere. For a list of early maps, including most in this chapter, see also Trần Nghĩa, “Bản đồ chế Việt Nam” (Old maps of Vietnam), Tạp Chí Hán Nôm (Hán Nôm review) 2, no. 9 (1990): 3–10.

To avoid confusion, note that the grids of lines drawn on the maps in the published Hồng-dực bản đồ were not on the originals and were intended only as an index grid for the transcription of the Chinese characters.

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1. Trường Bửu Lâm, ed., Hồng-dực bản đồ (Saigon: Bộ Quốc-gia Giáo-duc, 1962). Although A.2499 (ree 141, no. 253) is the main copy of this work, the scholars of the Viện Khảo-Cô used an almost identical copy (on microfilm) from the Tōyō Bunko in Tokyo (number 100.891); Hồng-dực bản đồ, XVI–XVII, XXVII–XXIX.


4. For the holdings of this collection, see its catalog as microfilmed in 1954–55 (ree 3, nos. 8–9), containing cards for over 3,600 documents. A document with a map contained in this microfilm collection is noted in this chapter by the document’s reel and number(s). A list of the nearly six hundred microfilmed documents may be found in G. Raymond Nunn, ed., Asia and Oceania: A Guide to Archival and Manuscript Sources in the United States, 5 vols. (New York: Mansell, 1985), 3:1054–60. All original documents designated by A. are in Hanoi; only microfilm copies of them exist elsewhere. For a list of early maps, including most in this chapter, see also Trần Nghĩa, “Bản đồ chế Việt Nam” (Old maps of Vietnam), Tạp Chí Hán Nôm (Hán Nôm review) 2, no. 9 (1990): 3–10.

5. To avoid confusion, note that the grids of lines drawn on the maps in the published Hồng-dực bản đồ were not on the originals and were intended only as an index grid for the transcription of the Chinese characters.
Cosmography

Non nươc is one term the Vietnamese use for their country. It means quite simply "mountain and water" in Vietnamese (not Sino-Vietnamese), and this concept seems to underlie the Vietnamese visual approach to spatial representation. Rolf Stein has demonstrated the importance of this concept into the twentieth century through the study of miniature gardens. Here we see, set up in the courtyards of both homes and temples, containers of water with rocks placed in them. On these rocks are grown or set live miniature plants, with ceramic models of buildings, humans, and animals. The symbolic mountain and water form the landscape in which the integration of natural and supernatural is shown. In a number of the famous temples of Vietnam whose origins go back almost a millennium, we find magical representations of the universe (heaven, earth, and water) in the form of the miniature mountains and ponds (fig. 12.1). Here we have what seems to be the original form of Vietnamese cosmography, a graphic portrayal of their universe. This portrayal is simple, and for that very reason the Vietnamese appear to have retained it as their image of the world around them, of the magical and fertile forces at large in the natural world.

Linked to this image is the construction of artificial mountains by Vietnamese kings for their court rituals during the tenth and eleventh centuries. In 985, 1021, and 1028, first Lê Hoan, then the Lý kings Thái-tô and Thái-tông, celebrated the royal birthdays by having mountains built of bamboo, called Mountain of the South, Nam Sơn, and using them as the centerpieces of the accompanying rituals. The construction of 985 was built on a boat in the middle of a river and was associated with boat races (perhaps the dragon boat festival). In the celebration of 1028 there were five peaks, one in the center (Mount Meru) surrounded by four peripheral ones (possibly indicating the cardinal directions). Among these peaks was coiled a dragon (or water spirit). Here too we have the imagery of mountain and water serving as nearly as we can tell to represent the cosmos and its powers in a smaller form and paralleling the temple structures of Angkor and Pagan in contemporary Cambodia and Burma.6


Although there are no sources to say whether this form of royal ritual continued beyond 1028, we may easily transfer the imagery to the Buddhist structures of the following three centuries. Just north of the capital of Thăng-long (now Hanoi) lay the temple of Văn-phúc, which we know has existed since at least 1057. It is a 140-foot brick tower built on ascending terraces and flanked by two sacred ponds. Though the temple is built in Chinese fashion, the existence of the ponds was a distinctively Vietnamese trait and continued the conjunction of mountain and water as cosmic symbolism. This style of Buddhist temple, the tower, continued from the eleventh century into the fourteenth, the years of the Lý and Trần dynasties. The Vietnamese state of these centuries was more akin to its contemporaries in Southeast Asia than to the Song state in China. The Vietnamese administration depended on personal ties, not bureaucratic ones, and its cosmology was Hindu-Buddhist.

An attempt to strengthen central power occurred in the mid-thirteenth century, but the Mongol threat and subsequent invasions in the second half of the century deflected it. Royal power primarily covered the area immediately around the capital, while outer areas were controlled indirectly through local intermediaries or powerful figures (royal or otherwise) designated by the throne. In either case, the capital had no direct control over these outer areas. The king gained access to their resources only so far as the area remained loyal to the center. No maps of Đại Việt exist from these centuries, though the Vietnamese history Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư (Complete book of the historical records of Great Viet, 1479) mentions two that dealt with the outer reaches of the kingdom, one from the late eleventh century, the other from a century later. The first was drawn up by the famous minister Lý Thụng Kiệt in 1075 and covered the then southern frontier with Champa (south of Nghệ-an Province and the Col des Nuages, the old

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Maps of Đại Việt

Maps became important for the Vietnamese when the government of Đại Việt adopted the Sinic bureaucratic model in the second half of the fifteenth century. Following half a century of crisis from the 1370s to the 1420s (Cham invasions, 1371–90, the Hồ regime, 1400–1407, and the Ming occupation, 1407–27), the liberator of Vietnam, Lê Lợi, established a new dynasty that continued many of the elements of the old world. The new king was, however, very interested in maintaining a stronger resource base for the central government and acted to establish a system of public land that would ensure it. At the same time, the Lê court was ideologically open, and a new strand of modernist Neo-Confucian thought modeled on that of Ming China appeared, advocated by younger scholars.

After three decades of intermittent strife, the modernist group of scholars, with a young king supporting them, overcame the resistance of the conservative military oligarchy that had helped found the dynasty. The young king, Lê Thánh-tông (1460–97), promptly took the opportunity to change the orientation of the state. During the 1460s, he initiated triennial Neo-Confucian examinations, used the successful scholars in his government, and established a centralized bureaucratic administration. The government, staffed by literati-officials, now penetrated all the way to the village and was able both to preach the new moral precepts and to gain a stronger control of local resources. Almost immediately, a large amount of information began to flow from the provinces into the capital of Thăng-long, including population figures in 1465. Local officials were expected to travel throughout their jurisdictions and to know them at first hand. Within a hundred days of arriving at their posts,...

10. Đại-Việt súc-ký toàn-thư, 1:248 (note 7). Specifically, the mapping covered the three territories of Bồ-chinh, Địa-ly (Lâm-bình), and Mả-linh (Minh-linh); see Hồng-dục bản đồ, 16–17, 46–48, 193 (note 1).
14. Wolters, Two Essays, xvii, xxxviii n. 21 (note 13).
the officials had to submit a detailed report on their jurisdictions.\textsuperscript{15}

In 1467 the king sent the twelve provinces an order to map the country. In it he commanded the officials to draw careful maps of their provinces' topography, illustrating the mountains and streams and pointing out the strategic areas, the communication routes, and historical and contemporary features. These maps were then to be sent to the capital where, in 1469, they were combined with data on the numbers and different types of local communities to establish the official maps for the twelve provinces. Twenty-one years later, in 1490, Thành-tông accepted the \textit{Thiên hạ bản đồ} (Maps of all under heaven [the empire]) as the official atlas for his realm, now expanded to thirteen provinces with the conquest of Champa in 1479 and the annexation of its northern territories.\textsuperscript{16}

The Hanoi scholar Bùi Thiet has stated that there appear to be no existing maps from this first period of Vietnamese cartography.\textsuperscript{17} As we shall see below, all the maps known to us that can be linked to these original maps are seventeenth century or later. Yet there is one map, unstudied as far as I know, that offers the possibility of being from before 1600. It is unlike what comes to be the standard Lê dynasty map and has much information on it. It will require a detailed examination for full understanding. Here I can only introduce it and make some initial comments.

This map, which I shall call the Tông-quát map, is fixed as a sort of appendix to the Lê atlas in a section called

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example.png}
\caption{TÔNG-QUÁT MAP. This possibly sixteenth-century (Mạc) map (the earliest extant Vietnamese map?) shows the country of Đại Việt but emphasizes the north rather than what was then the south (home of the Lê). North is at the top. Photograph courtesy of Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu (microfilm collection, A.2499).}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{15} John K. Whitmore, \textit{Transforming Đại Việt: Politics and Confucianism in the Fifteenth Century} (forthcoming), chap. 5.

\textsuperscript{16} Đại-Việt sử-ký toàn-thê, 2:665(62), 676(11), 736(8) (note 7); Gaspardone, “Bibliographie,” 46 (#22) (note 11).

\textsuperscript{17} Bùi, “Bản đồ,” 49–50 (note 2).
“Bản-quốc bản đồ tổng-quát mục-lục” (Index and overview of the maps of our country). It is unrelated to the written text attached to it and is totally concerned with Đại Việt, making almost no mention of any neighboring country or people (a local prefecture in southwestern China being the lone exception). Bearing a northern orientation, this map is a sketch drawn in a simple style (fig. 12.2). It apparently covers two sides of a sheet and consists of a line drawing showing the rivers and the land between them. No pattern was used to show water in the rivers, and only a few scattered mountains are drawn in, employing the standard Chinese three-ridge style. Location is shown by the numerous written names, with no signs. The result is a map that gives a sense of crowded places and of water where there is no land. Hence, stylistically, it could easily represent an early Vietnamese attempt to render a picture of the country.

The information provided by the names on the map seems rather mixed, at least from my initial examination of it. There are over three hundred names, fifteen of them circled for emphasis. These fifteen place-names include the capital city, called here An-nam Long-biên Thành (a reference to the days of Tang dynasty control in the region), the West Lake outside the capital, the site of the cult to the legendary Hùng kings, and twelve provinces. The term for province, used only for the five central (Red River Delta) provinces (Kinh-bắc, Hải-duương, Sơn-tây, Sơn-nam, and An-bang), is thừa-chình (seat of the provincial government), derived from the term applied in the 1460s. The other seven provinces, in the northern and western mountains and the then-southern plains, are identified by name only. The curious point here is that one of these “provinces” is Cao-bằng, which did not become a separate province until the late seventeenth century. On the other hand, the normal twelfth province of 1469, the southernmost one of Thuận-hoa, is here listed uncircled in its two old parts of Thuận-châu and Hoa-châu. The new thirteenth province, listed in 1490, Quang-nam, south of Thuận-hoa, also appears uncircled but is shown as an estuary. Overall, this map shows a decided lack of interest in the southern area. There is no emphasis on Thanh-hoa and Nghệ-an provinces, which formed the home base of the Lê dynasty, and the Western Capital (Tây-kinh), the original home of the Lê, does not appear at all.

The most important evidence for an early date for this map is that An-bang Province is not called An-quang, as it was from the late sixteenth century on, and Thái-nguyễn is not called Ninh-sóc, as it was between 1469 and 1490. The capital is also known as Phong-thiên, a term Lê Thánh-tông used for it. Although this set of terms might have come from the late fifteenth century, my inclination is to see the map as a product of the Mạc dynasty in the following century. This new dynasty ignored the sites significant to its predecessor, did not control the south—hence its lack of focus in that direction—and had a decided interest in the northern mountains (especially Cao-bằng, where it would take refuge on its defeat). In addition, the Mạc had a strong reason, as I shall discuss below, to maintain the institutions of Lê Thánh-tông’s Hồng-dực period (1471–97). Until a more detailed study of the terms on this map can be made, we may see it as the only extant pre-seventeenth-century Vietnamese map.

The standard Lê dynasty atlas derives from the cartographic activity of the second half of the fifteenth century, but all extant copies show signs of having been redrawn in the seventeenth century or later. First of all, An-quâng is the contemporary name for An-bang Province, and this change occurred after the Lê Restoration of 1592. In addition, the map of the capital shows the location of the Trịnh chúa’s (lord’s) residence, the palace of the prince (vương phủ). This is another indication of a post-restoration date, since the Trịnh held power in Thăng-long only after they had placed the Lê back on the throne.

The Lê atlas consists of fifteen maps: the entire country, the capital, and the thirteen provinces (fig. 12.3). The maps generally have a western orientation and are more sophisticated than the Tống-quát map discussed above. In particular, water is shown in the rivers (the flow of the current) and the sea (roiling waves), thus providing a greater sense of the solidity of the land. The mountains are drawn in the same three-ridge style, but now they fill out the landscape more and provide a better sense of Vietnam’s topography. Human constructions (walls, temples, and palaces), when drawn, are shown in frontal elevation on these maps. All other features are noted by written terms. The main purpose of these maps is administrative, and consequently they record the locations of the various jurisdictions (province, prefecture, and district), generally in rectangular boxes with no hierarchy present. Other names record either mountains or riverine features, with an occasional human construction noted, not drawn.

The map of Đại Việt as a whole includes borderlands of the countries to the north and south, China and

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20. Hồng-dực bản đồ, 189, 196, 198 (note 1).
22. Hồng-dức bản đồ, 2–49 (note 1). The maps of Kinh-bắc and Thái-nghê-nâm have an eastern orientation and those of Hải-duương and Lạng-sơn a northern one. The Lê atlas also came to be known as Hồng-dức bản đồ, but I will refer to it in this chapter as the Lê atlas to avoid confusion with the larger collection and published volume.
Cartography in Korea, Japan, and Vietnam

FIG. 12.3. REFERENCE MAP FOR THE STUDY OF ĐẠI VIỆT CARTOGRAPHY.

Champa, and shows what demarcates Vietnam from these two states: walls on the north and a stone inscription on the south (fig. 12.4).23 To the northwest is the southwestern Chinese province of Yunnan, and to the northeast are the southeastern Chinese provinces of Guangxi and Guangdong, marked by fortresses and noted as being respectively “location of the Hundred Yue” and “location of the Yue, capital of Chao To” (Triệu Đà, king of Nam Việt in the second century b.c.). These latter phrases are the result of the Vietnamese cultural boundary construction of the fourteenth century. The two Vietnamese capitals are located: Trung-dō (Thang-long [Hanoi]) in the central Red River Delta and Tay-kinh (the Western Capital) in the upriver part of Thanh-hoa Province. The only temples on this map reflect a ritual configuration. At the center, just outside the capital, lies the temple to the spirit cult of Lý Òng Trông, a mythic hero believed to have helped the great Chinese emperor Qin Shihuang (third century b.c.) fight the barbarians and to have protected the Vietnamese capital region thereafter.24 North, east, south, and west of the capital in the delta are four Buddhist temples (Phà-lài, Quỳnh-lâm, Phô-minh, and Thiện-phúc on Mount Phát-tich), standing guard over the Vietnamese domain.

The map of the capital, Thăng-long, is the major city map we have for Vietnam before 1800 (fig. 12.5). It is strictly for government activities and court rituals, showing little of the thriving everyday and commercial life.25 The shape of the outer citadel is irregular, fitted as it was within the watercourses surrounding the city. The imperial city within the citadel is, however, decidedly regular, with its proper Sinic north-south orientation. Outside the walls of the citadel are shown the Bào-thiên Buddhist tower, a central part of Vietnamese Hindu-Buddhist cosmography from the middle of the eleventh century, and the fifteenth-century site of the Nam-giao ceremony, the Confucian sacrifice to heaven. There are also the White Horse Temple (Bạch-mã tự) and the temple of Trần Văn, sites of ancient cults, as well as the National College (Quốc-tư-giam). Within the walls of the citadel are various government buildings and palaces, together with the grounds where the Confucian examinations were held.

The maps of the delta provinces (Kinh-bắc, Sơn-tây, Hải-duong, An-quang, and especially Sơn-nam; fig. 12.6) reflect the riverine nature of their environment.26 In them we find such features as the intertwining of streams meandering through the delta (ngã-bà), canals (kinh), bridges (cầu), channels (cầu), and estuaries (môn). In human terms, we see Buddhist temples (tuôn) and spirit cults (mìđa), as well as some guard stations (tuân) and the occasional major historical site (such as the old capital at Cố-loa) or tomb (for example, that of the old Tang governor Gao Jian). In the northern and western provinces (Thái-nguyên, Tuyên-quang, Hưng-hóa, and Lạng-sơn), mountains are the dominant feature, both drawn and noted. Passes (di) are indicated, as well as a scattering

23. Hồng-dức bản đồ, 4-5 (note 1).
of other natural features. The main human features are military camps (doanh), guard posts (tuần), and walled cities (thành). Lạng-sơn Province shows a large fortress with a gate leading into the Chinese province of Guangxi. Because the Lê dynasty base was originally in the two southern provinces of Thanh-hoa and Nghệ-an, these two maps come first in the atlas. But they, together with the newer provinces of Thuận-hoa and Quảng-nam, share the same features. They are part of what is now central Vietnam, and they have narrow lowlands lying between the mountains and the sea, with short streams running parallel to each other, usually from west to east. The prominent feature is consequently the estuary (mòn).

The political situation of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries ensured that the cartographic pattern established by the Lê king Thanh-tông in the late fifteenth century would continue. When the dynasty fell into chaos following the death of Thanh-tông’s son Hiền-tông in 1504, later rulers made various efforts to restore what Thanh-tông had established in his great Hống-dưc period. This was achieved only when the powerful minister Mạc Đăng Dung seized the throne and began his own dynasty in 1528. His legitimacy and that of his family lay in rebuilding central power along the bureaucratic lines Thanh-tông had first set up sixty years earlier.27 As far as we can tell from the surviving evidence, the Mạc retained and developed the fifteenth-century institutions. If the Tông-quát map is a Mạc production, they continued the Hống-dưc provincial organization, at least in the territory they controlled.

FIG. 12.5. THE CAPITAL FROM THE LÊ ATLAS. This seventeenth-century (Trịnh) copy of the late fifteenth-century map shows the Vietnamese capital of Thăng-long (now Hanoi), fitted within the waters of the Red River and its delta (west is at the top).

Photograph courtesy of Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu (microfilm collection, A.2499).

The Trịnh military regime, which brought the Lê back to the throne, picked up the Hồng-dức institutions preserved by the Mặc. The Trịnh did not, however, emphasize the civilian elements as they contested the Lê legacy with their erstwhile allies, the Nguyễn. The latter had established their base on the southern frontier in the newest province of Quảng-nam during the sixteenth century and now claimed that the Trịnh were usurpers. Since these two families remained at loggerheads for almost two centuries, the cartographic tradition stayed frozen: both sides considered Thanh-tông's thirteen provinces to be the established pattern.

In the middle of the seventeenth century, the collection that we now call the Hồng-dức bản đồ began to come together. Lê/Trịnh literati evidently redid the Lê atlas, continuing the Hồng-dức work with minor changes. One scholar, Đỗ Bá, compiled the above-mentioned “Bản-quốc bản đồ tổng-quát mục-lục,” joined it with the (possibly) Mặc map, and placed it at the end of the redrawn atlas late in the century. He also added the set of four itineraries that I shall discuss in the following section. To all appearances, these remained the official maps of Đại Việt for the following century to the end of the Lê dynasty in 1787. Despite population growth, little change occurred in the organization of the kingdom.

The major geographical change for the Trịnh zone of Đại Việt came later in the seventeenth century when their

forces were finally able to drive the Mạc out of the latter’s refuge in the northern mountain prefecture (phủ) of Cao-bằng. The Mạc remnants had fled there following their defeat in 1592 and had received diplomatic protection from the Ming dynasty in China. The Ming themselves were defeated by the Manchus in 1644, but for the next two decades the Lê/Trịnh court was, first, uncertain about the Qing dynasty’s intentions and, second, totally involved in its attempt to smash its recalcitrant Nguyễn rivals in the south. Then in 1667 the Trịnh seized Cao-bằng, but the Chinese forced them to give it up through diplomatic pressure two years later. Finally, in 1677 the Trịnh managed, this time by diplomacy, to regain the territory.\footnote{Keith W. Taylor, “The Literati Revival in Seventeenth-Century Vietnam,” \textit{Journal of Southeast Asian Studies} 18 (1987): 1–22, esp. 17; \textit{Hồng durée bàn đồ}, xiv, xxvii (note 1).}

There are three surviving maps of Cao-bằng within the \textit{Hồng durée bàn đồ}, and they were probably drawn in the two years between the original conquest and the Chinese-induced surrender, that is, 1667–69. These maps show the prefecture as a whole, the fortified camp of Mục-mả, and the region of Cao-bằng city, known as Phúc-hòa.\footnote{\textit{Hồng durée bàn đồ}, 174–85 (note 1).} The style of the first map is once more simplistic, similar to that of the Tông-quất map. Again the rivers are merely outlined, while the pattern of mountains in this highland area remains more similar to that of the Lê atlas, thus bestowing a better topographical sense. A different element, like the itineraries below, is the indication of roads and trails throughout the territory. Administrative units are shown by their

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{red_river_delta.png}
\caption{A PROVINCE FROM THE LÊ ATLAS. This seventeenth-century (Trịnh) copy of the late fifteenth-century map shows Sơn-nam Province in the southeastern portion of the Red River Delta and its watery domain (west is at the top). Photograph courtesy of Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu (microfilm collection, A.2499).}
\end{figure}
names in ovals. Besides the mountain terrain and its settlements (tông), the major elements of the prefectural map are military: eleven camps (dồn), the main fortification of Mộc-mà, and the walled city of Phúc-hóa. The second map is a detailed study of the Mộc-mà fortification (fig. 12.7), locating the walls, twelve strong points (diểm), sixteen camps (trại) within the walls, and five settlements (phố) just west of the fortress. Compared with the detail of this map, the third map—of the walled city and its immediate environs—is merely sketched in. These maps, undoubtedly deriving from the 1667 military campaign and its aftermath, supplemented the standard provincial map of Thái-nguyễn (to which Cao-bằng Prefecture then belonged) in the Lê atlas.

When the Nguyễn dynasty was establishing itself after 1802, an unknown scholar brought these seventeenth-century northern maps—those collected by Đỗ Bá (the Lê atlas, the Tông-quát map, and the set of four itineraries discussed in the next section) and the three Cao-bằng maps—together with the Binh-nam dỗ, the major
FIG. 12.8. A PROVINCE FROM THE AN-NAM HÍNH-THÁNG ĐÔ. This possibly mid-eighteenth-century (Trịnh) copy of the late fifteenth-century map shows the northern highland province of Thái-nguyễn and the new vertical style of illustrating the mountains (west is at the top).

map made in the south, and the Đại-Man quốc-dổ, a later one from the north (both discussed below), probably to help set up the administration of the then newly unified country.32 This came to form the present collection called the Hồng-dục bản đồ. Although this is the most important collection, others are known to exist, evidently copies (at least in part) of it.

The chief example of a later version is the An-nam hình-thẳng đồ (Illustrated maps of An-nan).33 The versions of the Lê atlas maps found in the An-nam hình-thằng đồ are basically the same as in the Hồng-dục bản đồ; even the orientation of each map is the same (Kinh-bác an eastern one, Hải-duong northern). Yet the style of the drawing differs greatly (fig. 12.8). Although again only lines are used to delineate water and land, the mountains have moved from the earlier three-ridge style toward the naturalistic landscape mode with its vertical exag-

32. Hồng-dục bản đồ, xiv, xvii, xxvii, xxix (note 1).
33. A.3034 (reel 114, no. 171).
geration, just as in Chinese cartography. In this way the Vietnamese imitated the karst formations of their northern border. The mountains are no longer mere outlines but are well drawn, with specks of vegetation on them. Temples and walls are given a more Chinese quality as well. One map even shows waves lapping the shore. Somewhat arbitrarily, I believe that the redrawing of the maps now in the *An-nam hinh-thang do* took place in the eighteenth century. The one substantive change that leaps to the eye is in the center of the map of the country. No longer is the temple to the cult of Lý ORMAL TRONG there (though it is on the map of Sơn-tây Province); rather, the Bão-thiên tower now stands at the capital. The emphasis on this Buddhist protective element at the center of Đại Việt may have been a result of the Buddhist resurgence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In general, we may say that the tradition of the Lê atlas remained a strong one in Vietnamese history. It appears in a number of different versions and artistic styles through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and into the twentieth. Yet the information contained on the maps varied little. As Joseph Schwartzberg has noted in viewing these collections, “There appears to be a variety of individuals drawing the maps, which would help to account for the wide variety of styles in the depiction of particular types of features. Here and there are some idiosyncratic touches.” A good example of how far this atlas tradition continued and of how little it actually changed may be seen in an artistically redrawn version from the early twentieth century (see below). This version almost exactly maintains (with a few errors) the information contained in the Lê atlas of at least two centuries earlier.

**Itineraries of Đại Việt**

The other major type of Lê dynasty map is the itinerary, generally tracing the route from the Vietnamese capital to a location on or beyond either the southern or the northern border. This type of cartography seems to have begun with the great military expedition led by Lê Thánh-tông as he crushed the southern state of Champa in 1471. The *Dai-Viêt sí-ký toàn-thue* noted that on this campaign the king consulted a map of Champa as his armies moved south and began to change the names linked to the mountains and rivers there. With the Vietnamese marching into Champa, Thánh-tông became comprehensive about the difficulties of knowing the terrain and had a local chief help draw up another, more detailed map of the area, focusing on strategic points and on good routes through the mountains and across the streams. These efforts undoubtedly laid the foundation for the first of four sets of maps, the route south to Champa, in the *Thiên-nam tự-chí lộ-dổ the* (Book of maps of the major routes of Thiên-nam). Again, when the maps were originally drawn is unknown. The term Thiên-nam (South of Heaven) implies the fifteenth century, since Thánh-tông was the first to use it.

Once more, we know the text only in its seventeenth-century form. As I noted earlier, the scholar Đỗ Bá brought it together with the Lê atlas and the “Bản-quốc bản-dổ tổng-quất mục-lục” late in the seventeenth century at a time when road maintenance had taken on added importance. The four routes move from the Vietnamese capital of Thăng-long: south to the Cham capital (thirty-one pages of maps); northeast to the two regions of Khảm and Ninh along the coast near the Chinese border (ten pages of maps); northwest to the southwestern Chinese province of Yunnan (ten pages of maps); and north to the great gateway into the southeastern Chinese province of Guanxi (ten pages of maps). The style of these maps also returns to that of the Tông-quát map, with only lines separating land and water. Again, however, as in the Lê atlas, the topography is shown in the form of three-ridge mountains and the administrative units are indicated by names within boxes. Some human construction is sketched in, particularly the southern fortifications. Being itineraries, the maps show the paths to be taken through the landscape (fig. 12.9). Although the text of each section seems to speak of routes by land, water, and sea, what they mean is that the maps show the distinctive features of all three environments, differing from route to route.

The route to the southern border and Champa begins by noting the features for the different environments: land—innns and bridges; water—rivers, canals, and harbors; sea—estuaries, currents, shallows, and deeps. Compared with the Lê atlas, the maps for these itineraries show much more detail of the common and commercial life in Vietnam. As we move across the southern provinces, we encounter villages, markets, inns, temples, guard stations, and other local institutions lying close by the road. Bridges, ferries, creeks, confluences of streams, rapids, estuaries, and dangerous places are noted. The route

34. Woo, “Evolution” (note 19).
35. Personal communication (July 1991).
39. Hồng-dạc bản đồ, 66–137 (note 1). Curiously, the routes west into Laos are ignored; see Nguyen, *Tableau*, 195 (note 25).
40. Hồng-dạc bản đồ, 70–103 (note 1).
FIG. 12.9. THIỀN-NAM TỬ-CHÍ LỘ-DÔ THU, PORTION OF THE ITINERARY TO THE SOUTH. This portion of the seventeenth-century (Trịnh) itinerary shows the road through the mountainous area of southern Thanh-hoa Province and moves out of the Red River Delta, across Thanh-hoa and Nghệ-an, past the old southern border (Nam-giói), and into the militarized zone. Here the Nguyên, controlling the south, built their defensive walls, which the Trịnh assaulted sporadically without success for half a century (from the 1620s to the 1670s). Marked out on the map are the series of walls, known generally under the name Đông-hới, and the military support accompanying them: arms depots, camps, entrenched and artillery positions, granaries, and elephant stables. Interspersed among these features are the villages and markets of everyday life. This zone ends on the map at about Đà-năng. After that the detail lessens somewhat—not surprisingly, since it was an itinerary to the south made in the north. Going past the major port of Hội-an, villages, lagoons, estuaries, islands, and more mountains are the major features along the coast as it stretches south. Beyond Nha-trang and Cam-ranh Bay, the capital of Champa is reached. Here distances are distorted as the northern sense of location became vague, trying to blend what mapmakers heard of the distant reality with the detail of their old maps.

The other three routes in the collection all concern the north, going from the Vietnamese capital to some point on or near the Chinese border. The first moves to the northeast, going through the delta to the coast. Besides the usual inns, bridges, and streams, there is an emphasis on the sea, with its rocks and waves. The main local human institution noted is the market, perhaps indi-

41. Hồng đức bản đồ, xiii, xxvi (note 1).
FIG. 12.10. THIÊN-NAM TỪ-PHÍL Ô-DÔTHU, PORTION OF THE ITINERARY TO GUANGXI PROVINCE. This is the last portion of the itinerary to the north through Lạng-son Province (and its citadel) to the gateway leading into Guangxi Province, the route generally taken by Vietnamese embassies to China. Photograph courtesy of Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu (microfilm collection, A.2499).

The Thiên-nam từ-chí lộ-dổ thu is thus a guide to a good part of the kingdom of Đại Việt. The maps show us the “beaten paths,” the main communication routes throughout the kingdom, and much of the natural and human detail lying along these routes. They also show us the international routes of communication by land, ignoring the important sea connections. Yet, as I have noted, the maps cannot show us all of Vietnam at the time. The Lê/Trịnh cartographers were blocked by the Nguyễn and their defensive walls from penetrating the southern lands. Here Vietnamese society was expanding southward down the coastal lowlands through Cham territory into the Khmer domain, building roads as it went. For information on this area, we need to look at the Binh-nam dỗ (Maps of the pacification of the south), covering “from [the walls of] Đông-hội to the border of
FIG. 12.11. BỊNH-NAM ĐỒ, NORTHERN END OF THE ITINERARY. This section of the seventeenth-century southern (Nguyễn) itinerary shows the fortifications on their northern border in Quảng-bình (formerly Thuận-hôa) Province (west is at the top).

Cambodia” (twenty-eight pages of maps). It appears to date from 1654, according to the cyclic characters on the title page and information from the text. These Nguyễn maps begin with much detail on their fortifications and the militarized zone (fig. 12.11). Their style differs little from that of the northern maps just discussed, though they are somewhat more artistic, with elephants pictured in the mountains and turtles in the sea. As we move south, we gain information not provided by the northern maps—on rice fields, residences, temples, troop strengths, and the depths of the channels in the estuaries. We even see a Buddhist tower adjacent to a lake in the old cosmographic style. We pass the old Cham city, then Đà-năng, the international port of Hội-an, and Quy-nhon, go beyond Lê Thánh-tông’s conquest of 1471 and Nha-trang, through the remains of Champa, until we reach Angkor in Cambodia (fig. 12.12). The detail lessens as we go farther south and gets quite thin beyond the boundaries of the fifteenth-century territory. Yet while the geographic relationship of the Mekong Delta and

Photograph courtesy of Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu (microfilm collection, A.2499).

42. Hồng-dực bản đồ, xiii-xiv, xxvi-xxvii, 138-67 (note 1); Nguyễn, Tableau, 179-80 (note 25). Từ Trong Hiệp believes the date should be 1774 at the earliest; notes from Joseph E. Schwartzberg.
Angkor was beyond the ken of the Nguyễn cartographers, they did pick up some interesting detail from Cambodia. Angkor itself is shown in a planimetric view with an interesting configuration. The South China Sea commercial connection is noted, as Cambodia is stated to have a Cantonese settlement and a Fujianese entrepôt to the east (Ba-vinh Phô; whether Hokkien or Teochiu speakers cannot be determined). The Mekong connection to Laos and Yunnan is recognized, as is the King of Fire, a highland chieftain, and his connection with Cambodia. These maps explore the Nam-tien, the Vietnamese push southward during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (fig. 12.13), and provide interesting data on the social expansion and commercial interests of the Nguyễn domain.

Despite some problems, all the itineraries described so far, both northern and southern, appear to date from the latter half of the seventeenth century. This brings us again to the An-nam hình-thằng đồ, the collection of maps paralleling the Hồng-dực bản đồ. Although the latter has been published in detail, the An-nam hình-thằng đồ still exists only in manuscript and has yet to be closely examined. As noted above, parts of this collection are much better illustrated than the Hồng-dực bản đồ. On a very general impression, I am placing it in the eighteenth century, but the question needs to be addressed in detail. It
is a northern production and reproduces, with two additional sections, the Lê atlas (as I noted above) and the Thien-nam tie-chi lô-thơ thue of the Hông-dic ban dô (table 12.1). Yet the four itineraries are here untitled, somewhat longer, and treated as internal routes, not links to the borders and foreign parts. They do not start explicitly at the Vietnamese capital, and they do not end on foreign soil. The route to the south (well illustrated with mountains and temples) goes beyond the Cham capital, as Vietnamese society itself did; the route to the northwest ends at the border of Yunnan; and we see only the great gate as the culmination of the route to the north. Instead, these routes are seen as going through the Vietnamese provinces.

A very interesting addition is the untitled second section of the An-nam binh-thang dô (fifty pages of maps). It is a detailed look at the northwestern mountains, their rivers, and the human settlements along the banks of these streams. Unlike the Lê atlas and the route to the south in the An-nam binh-thang dô, this set of maps is very simply sketched, even more so than the Tông-quát map. It consists only of lines indicating either the riverbanks or the route being illustrated. Boxed-in names show communities, and names without boxes mark other features. Despite the region, no mountains are shown. The value of this section lies in the multitude of villages and other institutions shown lying along the streams.

The An-nam binh-thang dô is thus possibly an eighteenth-century collection from the northern state of Đại Việt. Other collections also exist in different styles from about this time and place, combining the Lê atlas and the itineraries or including the latter alone. We see the Toan-táp Thien-nam lô-dô thue (Compilation of route maps of Thien-nam), the Thien-nam lô-dô (Route maps of Thien-nam), and the Kien-khon nhât-lâm (An overall view of the cosmos) as eighteenth-century variants of both the atlas and the itinerary traditions. Eighteenth-century variants of Nguyễn cartography in the south are the Binh-nam chi-chương nhât-trình-dô (Map of the daily stages on the route to the south) and again the Kien-khon nhât-lâm, whose author, Phạm Đình Hồ, probably gained access to the Nguyễn mapping after the Trịnh forces took the Nguyễn capital in the wake of the Tây-son revolt. Two of these manuscripts, the Toan-táp Thien-nam lô-dô thue and the Binh-nam chi-chương nhât-trình-dô (fig. 12.14), represent the northern and the southern itinerary styles, and Schwartzberg has examined them in Paris. Apparently woodblock prints, they are illustrated in black ink, with red used to highlight roads and buildings. The first also used gray shading in the mountains. The two are probably typical of the pre-1800 cartographic style.

The fourth section of the An-nam binh-thang dô, however, is a strikingly illustrated trip through southern China by water (one hundred pages of maps). The drawings include mountains, trees, and settlements. The trip is called an embassy and possibly took place in 1729–30, though it ends before reaching the Chinese capital in northern China. The route goes through the mountains

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43. Société Asiatique, Paris, HM2241 (All original documents designated HM are at the Société Asiatique), A.1081, and A.414 (reel 21, no. 58), respectively.
44. HM2207.
45. Gaspardone, "Bibliographie," 46–47 (note 11); Bôi, "Bản đồ," 52 (note 2); Schwartzberg notes.

of northern Vietnam, the province of Lạng-sơn, and the great gate on the Guangxi border before picking up the Chinese river system and passing through Siming, Taiping, Nanning, and Guizhou. The final map is of Huaian Prefecture in Jiangsu Province, east-central China.

Two other Vietnamese sets of maps are probably also from the eighteenth century and are similarly rich in artistry. Both go all the way through China to the capital. In the first manuscript, for example, the rivers are in terra cotta, the roads red, the mountains gray, blue, or violet, walls (single and double) of the towns and cities in red, gray, or blue, and village residences in black and white (plate 30).46 These sets of maps provide well-illustrated Vietnamese views of southern China and of life along its rivers. The view is from the river as both sides stretch away from it—bridges, walls, banners, dwellings, temples, and mountains. The temples are in frontal elevation with considerable detail, and the mountains are in the naturalistic style with vertical emphasis.

The only other Vietnamese map we have of a foreign country before the nineteenth century is also the only map we possess from the Tây-sơn dynasty (1788–1802). This is the Đại-Man quốc-dô (Map of the country of the Great Man [Southern Barbarians]), drawn in the western Vietnamese mountain province of Hưng-hóa at the end of the eighteenth century (1798, with a preface of 1800) (fig. 12.15).47 The “country” concerned is an overview of the Thai world to the west of Vietnam, stretching from the mountains in the north to the sea in the south. It is full of mang (in Thai muang) and trình (chieng or xieng), local polities that ruled the wet rice villages. At the center of the map is the Southern Barbarian country capital (apparently Ayudhya rather than Bangkok). Formerly it had been part of Xiêm-la (Siam), the map tells us. The depiction of the coast and its estuaries is inaccurate, as befits a map drawn at an inland site. The map has a northern orientation, from the seacoast to the mountains. The rivers run from north to south with the Mae Nam Yom and Chao Phraya in the center. To the east is the Mekong River system and to the west another river, possibly the Salween. On the eastern side lie Xieng Khouang, the Lao-long capital (Vientiane?), the former Khmer capital (Angkor), and Champa. Like the mapmakers in the earlier Binh-nam dô, these Vietnamese cartographers had difficulty with the Mekong and its delta. Neither portrays  the great lake in Cambodia, and the entrances to the sea are confused. This map also shows a reliance on Chinese texts in the terms used for Siam and Cambodia. Such a mixture of prior text and contemporary report probably confused some of the political reality to the south and west. In general, though, the map appears to reflect what was then known, and it was meant to serve as a guide, listing the number of days’ travel between locations. Note that all these itineraries are by land or river, not by sea. The style is standard for most of the pre-1800 Vietnamese maps. Lines separate water and land, though as in Burmese maps many of the rivers are fringed by mountains that set off the streams and help define the land. The mountains are the usual three-ridge type and form a decoration on the eastern, northern, and western land fringes of the map, while also filling much of its surface. Lines connecting locations (boxed-in names) show the communication routes. Only the Thai capital is drawn with a double set of boxes and a gate.

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46. HM2182 (untitled) and HM2196 (titled Sự trình thủy hành [Illustrated map of an embassy to China]); for a description of the different routes taken by Vietnamese embassies north to Beijing, see Trần Văn Giáp, “Relation d’une ambassade annamite en Chine au XVIIIe siècle,” Bulletin de la Société des Etudes Indochoises, n.s., 16, no. 3 (1941): 55–81, esp. 55–58.
47. Hồng-dức bản đồ, xiv, xxvii, 168–73 (note 1).
MAPS OF ĐÀI NAM

Vietnamese cartography took a sharply different turn in the nineteenth century, becoming both more Western and more Chinese. The simplicity and sketchiness of the Lê style of maps were superseded by these international influences. While the Gia-long emperor (1802–19), founder of the new Nguyễn dynasty, harked back to the great Hồng-dực era of Lê Thánh-tông over three hundred years earlier, he made a conscious effort to bring Chinese influences more strongly into Vietnam. The Western influence came from the small group of Frenchmen who formed part of the international mélange the Nguyễn brought together to conquer the kingdom. This influence is particularly to be seen in the Vauban style of fortification adopted by the Nguyễn and blended with the Chinese ideological influence in building their new type of citadel.48

When the Nguyễn first gained power in 1802, one necessary initial task was to gather maps from all parts of the country and all prior regimes in order to begin the cartographic integration of Vietnam, now unified from China to Cambodia. The Nguyễn officials had to go beyond the frozen tradition of the Lê, based as it was

FIG. 12.15. DAI-MAN QUOC-DOMAP. This 1798 (Tây-san) map of the Tai principalities to the west of Vietnam was drawn in the northwestern mountain province of Hùng-kiêng and reflects its view of the Mekong, Chao Phraya, and possibly Salween river systems (north is at the top [the book is rotated 90° counterclockwise]). Photograph courtesy of Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu (microfilm collection, A.2499).
on the fifteenth-century work, and add the territory that Vietnamese society had encompassed under its own regime in the south during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In addition, there was the broader Vietnamese knowledge of the international scene with which the Nguyễn had become so familiar during their years out of power. One result of this initial effort was the Hỏng-dúc bàn đồ collection that I have used for the Lê period. Though it actually originated in the seventeenth century, the memory of its derivation from the greatness of the fifteenth century remained.

In addition to the international influences, two other elements need to be considered if we are to understand the cartographic development under the Nguyễn, one political, the other bibliographic. Although the Gia-long emperor reigned over all of Vietnam, now called Đại Nam (Great South), he chose not to rule directly in all parts of it. The Nguyễn court in Huế controlled central Vietnam (the old south and the base of its power for over two centuries) but decided to place viceroyos in charge of the north and the far south. These viceroyos, Nguyễn Văn Thành and Lê Văn Duyệt, respectively, thus stood between the throne and the people they administered. In effect, the two were warlords. In the north, capital of the Lê dynasty and home of its officials, this indirect rule was meant to soothe injured feelings. In the south, the least developed section of the domain, it was merely convenient. In any case, this tripartite division hindered bureaucratic development throughout the country and hampered the accumulation of local data. The bureaucratic and cartographic development took place gradually over three decades. First, Thánh in the north was removed in 1816 following the crisis over the newly appointed heir apparent, the future Minh-mạng emperor (1820–40). The latter, when he took the throne on his father's death in 1819, worked to extend the bureaucracy, but not in the south, where Duyệt held sway until he died in 1831. Only then did the throne move in, setting off a massive rebellion in 1833–34, which was crushed. Thus an integrated bureaucratic entity came to exist in Vietnam only in the mid-1830s, and the cartographic achievements followed suit.

The bibliographic development that occurred was a rejection of the atlas form used by the Lê and the adoption of the geography as it evolved under the Ming and Qing dynasties in China. This form was initially used by the Ming government in 1461 under the name Da Ming yitong zhi (Comprehensive gazetteer of the Great Ming). The phrase yitong zhi (Vietnamese nhât thồng chí) would continue to be used for this form, and it appeared in Vietnam in the nineteenth century. The geography was organized by province and, within each section, dealt with a standard list of topics. The first such new geography to appear in Vietnam (though without maps) had been the Ô-châu căn-lục (Modern record of Ô-châu), a study of the southern Thuận-an area from the sixteenth century during the Mạc dynasty. Now, in the surge of government borrowing from China, the Nguyễn chose to develop this form of writing, and the official country, capital, and provincial maps would eventually appear within it.

In 1806, probably not long after the compilation of the Hỏng-dúc bàn đồ collection, Lê Quang Định completed the Nhạt-thống dư-dịa chí (Unified geography) for the Gia-long emperor. Even though it was without maps, it was similar to the work compiled by Dô Bâ some 150 years earlier. Of the ten chapters, the first four cover routes south and north from the capital, now in the center at Huế, to the borders, and the final six look at the provinces without any particular topical organization. As noted, the Nguyễn court in Huế during this first reign focused mainly on central Vietnam.

In the north, scholars carried on the Lê cartographic tradition as maps of the region appeared in various collections. In 1810 Dâm Nghĩa Am compiled the Thiên tài nhạn damn (Concerning ideas of a thousand years), which reproduced the Lê atlas, following its basic pattern (such as the three-ridge mountains) while developing it stylistically. The map of the entire country provided a northerner's view of the southern expansion (fig. 12.16). Just beyond Champa, Am put in Gia-dịnh (the Saigon area), and in a new map of the "southwest" he followed it with Cambodia (Cao-miên) and Siam (Xiêm-la). In the process, he skipped over the southern coast lying between Gia-dịnh and the old Cham capital. Other maps in the text, however, came from the southern Binh-nam đồ and cover this missing territory. Artistic touches that were added include tigers roving in the mountains, a crab on the shore, and fish in the sea. The old capital is no longer called the capital, just Thăng-long, and certain details were added to its map that appear to reflect contemporary reality. Somewhat later (1830), another such volume appeared, this time called the Giao-châu du-dịa đồ (Geographic maps of Giao-châu [an old Chinese name for northern Vietnam]), with three sections of maps. Drawn in black ink, the maps have an overpainting in...
FIG. 12.16. THIÊN TÂI NHÂN DẤM MAP OF THE COUNTRY. This 1810 (Nguyễn) copy of the late fifteenth-century map of Đại Việt (or Thien-nam) shows the traditional northern (Lê) view of the country and its limited concern for the Vietnamese extension to the south (Gia-dịnh) (west is at the top). Compare figure 12.3. Size of each folio: ca. 25.3 x 18.7 cm. By permission of the Société Asiatique, Paris (HM2125).

gray for water and shading in the mountains and red on the roads. The illustrations of the mountains go from the three-ridge style to a style representing more naturalistically the strongly vertical karst landscape, though in places more rounded than before. Interestingly, the islands off the coast, instead of being drawn merely as mountains jutting out of the water, are shown in perspective, with shoreline surrounding the peaks (fig. 12.17). The result is a better topographic sense and the beginning of a more realistic approach being taken by the Vietnamese cartographers. Even so, artistic touches appear here as well, including elephants and monkeys. The work also reproduces the map of the Great Man country—the Thai world—in a clearer format while leaving out some detail (such as a reference to Yunnan). A few years after Đâm Nghĩa Am’s text, there appeared the Bác-thành dữ chí (Geographic record of the north), an examination of the northern provinces, again without maps. Each of the eleven provinces and the old capital (Thăng-long) had its own chapter.53

The south, operating almost independently under the viceroy Lê Văn Duyệt, had its own mapping efforts. In 1816, Trần Văn Học completed his map of Gia-dịnh Province (the Saigon region), providing a planimetric view and strongly showing Western influence (fig. 12.18). Học,

53. A.1565 (reel 17, no. 45, and reel 143, no. 264A); A.81 (reel 188, no. 435; French copy); Maspero, “Essai,” 543 (note 38); Aurousseau, Review of Mayborn, 83–84 n (note 50); Smith, “Sino-Vietnamese Sources,” 608 (note 50); Thai, “Lời nói đầu,” x (note 3); Woodside, Chinese Model, 142 (note 48).
long a companion of the Gia-long emperor, had had contact with the French in India and during the long campaign to conquer the country in the 1790s. He was involved in building the first of the Nguyễn’s Vauban-style citadels, that of Saigon, in 1790 and became the main architect for later construction. The map well reflects Hoc’s abilities in this direction. No longer do we have the sketched-in, impressionistic drawings of the Lê. The rivers give a sense of more precise measurement, and the citadel shows its Vauban origins. The roads, paths, and walls seem accurate, with buildings and ponds outlined along them. Unlike the earlier maps of Thăng-long in the north, this map provides a sense of the ordinary and commercial life going on within the city. However, no hills or changes in elevation are shown. Notations provide the locations of various significant natural and human features, but unlike the Lê maps, there are no drawings of temples or other buildings. All is strictly orthogonal, with no frontal views (as of temples, gates, walls, and such).54 Then, in the 1820s, the former governor of the south, Trịnh Hoài Đức, compiled the Gia-dình thành thông-chi (Geography of Gia-đình) covering the five provinces of the southern region, also without maps.55 Within a decade, there appeared the Nam-kỳ hợi-dô (Collected maps of the south) with maps of the

54. Thái, “Interprétation” (note 3).
55. A.1561 (reel 100, no. 154); Smith, “Sino-Vietnamese Sources,” 609–10 (note 50); Thái, “Lời nói đầu,” X (note 3).
FIG. 12.18. GIA-DỊNH TỊNH, MAP OF SAIGON. This redrawing of the 1816 (Nguyễn) map depicts Saigon and its environs in a planimetric view using a European style, as drawn by the southerner Trần Văn Học (north is at the top).

entire country and of each of the now six provinces. These maps were also European in style.56

As I noted previously, the bureaucratic integration of the country occurred slowly through the 1820s and into the 1830s. In 1833 the Minh-mạng emperor had the Hoàng-Việt địa-đức chí (Geography of imperial Vietnam) compiled. It was quite brief, covering the country in only two chapters, focusing on the center and the north, still with no maps. A map of Hà-nội (the new name for Thăng-long) in the early 1830s now shows the same precision and design as Trần Văn Học’s southern map fifteen years earlier.57 Only in the late 1830s was Đại Nam sufficiently integrated to have equal information from all the provinces. While the detailed results would not be seen for several decades, we begin to get an effort to show the whole of Vietnam as it had come to be under the Minh-mạng emperor. The apparent first attempt in this direction, the Đại-Nam (or Nam-Viết) bản đồ (Maps of Đại Nam), reflects the old tradition. It was a new edition, redrawn in a somewhat different style, of the Hồng đức bản đồ collection from over three decades earlier. It contained the Lê atlas, the four northern itineraries (Thiên-nam tức-chí lộ-dỗ thú), the Cao-bàng maps, the southern itinerary (Bình-nam đồ), and the map of the Thai world (Đại-Man quốc đồ). What points to this decade as the collection’s time of origin is that Cambodia is noted as Cao-miền Phù (prefecture) and that it no longer contains

56. A.95 (reel 13, no. 29); Woodside, Chinese Model, 142 (note 48).
57. A.71 (reel 12, no. 25); A.1074 (reel 135, no. 220); Maspero, “ESSAI,” 544 (note 38); Aurousseau, Review of Maybon, 83 n (note 50); Smith, “Sino-Vietnamese Sources,” 609 (note 50); Hoàng, Thăng Long, plate between 54 and 55 (note 25).
the drawing of Angkor. Thus Cambodia had lost its sovereignty, as symbolized by Angkor, and had become in Vietnamese eyes a part of their own administrative apparatus. This was the result of Vietnam’s temporary conquest of Cambodia in the mid-1830s.

At the same time, the Vietnamese court had become relatively open to technological and military advances from the West. Thus encouraged, other Vietnamese cartographers had begun to use Western techniques in drawing a new set of maps for the now integrated country, which stretched all the way to the Gulf of Thailand. In 1839 there appeared the Đại-Nam toàn-đồ (Complete maps of Đại Nam). The map of the entire country shows thirty-two provinces (including Cambodia) and eighty-two estuaries extending along the entire coastline of nineteenth-century Vietnam (fig. 12.19). This map has taken on the more realistic Western form, showing with greater accuracy the shape of the coast and the hydrographic complexities, even of the Mekong River system (as the great lake of Cambodia). The provincial maps are individualized, are European in outline, and concentrate more on the natural features. They show the river systems in a dendritic manner, and though the mountains are only jotted in, using a simple three-ridge style, many of them are named. Large forests are also shown. The maps seem to be newly drawn, breaking with the previous tradition.

58. A.1603 (reel 139, no. 245); Schwartzberg notes; Hồng đức bản đồ, x (n. 4), xxiv (n. 5) (note 1).
60. A.2559 (reel 18, no. 43).
FIG. 12.20. MAP OF A PROVINCE FROM THE ĐẠI-NAM NHẬT-THỌNG ĐÔ-DÔ. This map from an early 1860s national atlas shows Biên-hoa Province in the south.

Photograph courtesy of Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu (microfilm collection, A.68).

Thiên-nam tự-chi lở-dổ thư dân (Introduction to the book of maps of the major routes of Thiên-nam), that are simpler, more traditional versions of the map of the entire country in the Đài-Nam toàn-dổ. All three maps show Indochina, its estuaries, and the coastline around to Cambodia (as well as the latter’s great lake) from a similar perspective. The latter two maps, one simpler than the other, thus share much with the 1839 map but are less precise.

Also in the Thư dân manuscript is a sky chart, showing only patterns of stars. No identification is offered for any star or cluster of stars, and no title exists for the celestial map itself. It is merely attached to the manuscript. The only other sky chart I have seen in the Vietnamese documents is a clearly Chinese one included in a later edition of the Thiên-hạ bản-dổ (Maps of all under heaven [the empire]), the original name of the Lê atlas. Here the stars and star clusters are named and linked to the zodiac. In addition, at the center of the sky chart and oriented to it is an oversimplified, unscientific map of China and East Asia. Although it shows Korea, Japan, and the Ryūkyūs, the view of Vietnam (An-nan) and Southeast Asia gives no indication of Vietnamese knowledge. It is the only map of East Asia I have seen in any Vietnamese manuscript.

Although the Thích-trị emperor (1841–47) also put together a short geography of his country (the Đài-Nam thông-chí [Record of Đại Nam]), it was the following Tư-dục emperor (1848–84) who was able to produce the

61. A.73 (reels 9–11, no. 22); A.588 (reel 156, no. 305); Woodside, Chinese Model, 145 (note 48); Schwanzherg notes.

62. A.1362 (reel 21, no. 55); Archives d’Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence, France, B.439–40.
major geographic work of his dynasty, finally integrating the geographical text with the maps. First, in the early 1860s, his court produced the Đại-Nam nhất-thồng dư-dồ (Geographic maps of the unity of Đại Nam). Here we have maps of the provinces (and even of some prefectures) encompassing all of Vietnam to the southernmost province of An-giang. These maps show some Western influence in their boundaries, river systems, and coastlines. The style in general, however, has the standard three ridge mountains scattered about and other physical features similar to the Lê pattern (fig. 12.20). The map of the country has become more international, showing more of the surrounding countries than earlier maps had done. The Mekong River system, for example, is better understood (fig. 12.21).

This work forms the bridge between the Đại-Nam tổan-dồ of the 1830s and the major project to follow. It continued and brought forward the new realistic emphasis from Europe, which the Vietnamese joined to the Chinese geographic tradition. The new work, the Đại-Nam nhất-thồng chí (Record of the unity of Đại Nam), based on the Da Qing yitong zhi (Comprehensive gazetteer of the Great Qing realm, completed 1746) in China, was begun in 1865 and completed in 1882. For the capital of Huế, the capital region (Thái-thiện), and each of the twenty-nine provinces, there is a map and a description following the Chinese pattern: the province...
as a whole, its constituent parts, physical nature, climate, customs, cities, schools, taxes, mountains, rivers, temples, biographies, and products.  

The Tự-dực geography was the only one in the nineteenth century to cover the entire country. This was so even though the six southern provinces were lost by the end of 1867. The emperor never gave up hope of reacquiring them, and the cartography represented the wish to reintegrate the land. Immediately after the French conquest of northern and central Vietnam in 1884–85, the new Đông-khánh emperor (1885–89) brought out his own geography, the Đông-khánh Địa-dục chí-lục (Geographic summary of the Đông-khánh era), more Europeanized still and covering just central and northern Vietnam. There also appeared during this reign a collection of maps called the Đại-Nam quốc cứu-ngộ vị-biện [or vung-bien] (Boundaries of Đại Nam), by Hoàng Hữu Xương. There is one map for the entire country, one for the capital, and one for each of the thirty-one provinces. The country map is about halfway between the traditional style and that of the West. The Indochinese peninsula is generally recognizable, but the form of the coastline is like the old style. The Mekong system resembles that of the Đại-Nam nhất-thống dur-dơ map. The provincial maps are similar, partway between the realistic and the traditional styles. 

Then, two decades afterward (1909) under the Duy-tân emperor (1907–16), a reedition of the Đại-Nam nhất-thống chí came out, though only for central Vietnam. This edition has seventeen chapters, with a map for each, covering eleven provinces, the capital, and the capital region, plus maps for the country, for central Vietnam, and for the forbidden city within the capital. These maps are even more Western in style, with the four points of the compass shown and a legend defining the signs used on the map (including railroads). The rivers and coastlines are quite realistic, but mountains are not shown.  

By this time, Vietnamese scholars under French colonial control had begun to develop a new style, one less realistic and more Sinic. We see this in two map collections. The first, the Nam bắc kỳ hoạ độ (Illustrated maps of the northern and southern regions), is a copy of the early 1860s Đại-Nam nhất-thống dur-dơ. It shows the developing realistic influence of French cartography. But it also has decided Chinese features—a roiling sea and the vertical, karst-style mountains. The second collection is a curious pastiche of earlier works. Called the Tiến-Lê Nam-Việt bản-dơ mô-băn (Copy of the atlas of Vietnam of the former Lê dynasty), it is an artistic, colorful rendering (with a few errors) of the Lê atlas. Tạ Trọng Hiệp believes it comes from the early twentieth century, produced by scholars working for the Ecole Française d’Extrême-Orient in Hanoi. The one addition to the Lê atlas is the last map, a new drawing of the country map from the Đại-Nam toàn-dơ of 1839. This map shows the coastline and river systems of Indochina. Yet its rendering is a step away from the realistic Western style of the nineteenth century and a move toward the impressionistic Sinic style. In effect, these two works seem to represent a choice by Vietnamese literati in the French colonial system to reject scientific detail for artistic Chinese style. 

Other maps from the middle to late nineteenth century are of the citadels adapted by the Nguyễn from the French Vauban style. The Archive d’Outre-Mer has a number of such maps, those of Hà-nội, Sơn-tây, Tuyên-quang, Nam-dịn, and Nha-trang. Each is drawn somewhat differently, but all in Western style, reflecting variety therein as well as in the designs of the walls themselves. Yet despite the differences, all these maps reflect the continuity from the original Vauban design as well as from Trần Văn Học’s 1816 Gia-dình map. These maps, however, are not the urban maps that Học’s was. In this sense they are more like the maps of Thàng-long from the Lê period, showing only the walls and certain government and court ritual buildings, not the common, commercial life. 

The French, in their sweep across northern Vietnam in the 1880s, seem to have availed themselves of local maps to aid their efforts. The Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris and the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich hold maps that the French apparently picked up and used in the campaign. They may even have copied or commissioned some of them in order to gain local knowledge of the terrain. The existence of romanized script (quốc ngữ) on the maps indicates their adaptation to French needs. Three maps are of Hà-nội, two others of Ninh-bình and Nam-dịn, provinces in the southern portion of the Red River Delta, two of Sơn-tây Province, and the other six of mountain areas to the north and north-
west (Lào-cái, Thái-nguyễn, and Lạng-sơn). The maps continue the earlier mode, being generally drawn in black ink with other colors used to illustrate different features (roads in red, rivers in blue, and mountains in brown or gray). Citadels (Hà-nội and in the provinces) are drawn to show their Vauban characteristics. These thirteen maps provide some indication of the cartography available locally in the north during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Other local maps also exist from the Nguyễn period. The card catalog from the collection in Hanoi lists a number of village maps, but I have seen no example of them. Another type of local map was most significant for the central government, the land record (địa bạo). These records, village by village, show each piece of land in outline, along with its dimensions and type. The government undertook the surveys somewhat piecemeal, though we as yet know little of how the officials proceeded (some of the records have been lost). In dealing with land and land taxes from 1836 to 1875, the Nguyễn government divided its territory into three zones similar to, but not exactly the same as, its earlier political jurisdictions. In the old Đại Việt of earlier centuries, from Hà-tĩnh to the Chinese border, the taxes were heavy on communal lands and light on private lands. In central Vietnam, from Quảng-bình to Khánh-hoa, taxes were moderate and equal on both communal and private lands. In southern Vietnam, from Bình-thuận through the Mekong Delta, taxes were light in general. The development of the land records followed these same zones. The oldest records were undertaken in the first years of the dynasty (1805–6) in the nine northernmost provinces of the first zone. Then, from 1810 to 1818, the surveys took place in the central zone. No original surveys exist from the Gia-long period for the four provinces in the southern section of the first zone or in the third zone to the south. About 1830, the northern and central surveys already done were confirmed, then the four provinces not yet done in the first zone held their surveys in the early 1830s. Finally, the provinces of the southern zone held theirs in 1836 following the defeat of Lê Văn Khôi’s rebellion in the mid-1830s. Right after that, in 1837–40, four marginal northern provinces were resurveyed, and evidence exists for mapping of newly developed lands in the south.

The final set of Vietnamese maps that concern us are quite different ones, and they bring us back to where we began—the pattern of mountain and water. These maps are diagrams of the Nguyễn imperial tombs (fig. 12.22). Differing greatly from Western diagrams of the tombs, they feature both mountains and water and reflect the increasingly strong Sinic influence of the Nguyễn period. Stein has pointed out the strong parallel between tombs and the miniature gardens he has studied. Even as the Vietnamese became more Sinic through the nineteenth century, these maps show that they retained the basic magical elements of mountains and water that underlay their cartography into the modern era.

CONCLUSION

The development of Vietnamese cartography followed efforts of the governments to centralize and extend their control over the country. Mapping was linked to the bureaucracy, and the atlases were meant to show the locations of the different jurisdictions, often recording as well the number and types of villages in each district. The Vietnamese government sought to gain access to the resources of the realm, human and material. These resources came out of the villages, and the maps were meant to show their spread. Thus premodern Vietnamese maps as they exist today were tied strongly to the government’s adoption of the Chinese model, and with it the Chinese mode of bureaucracy. That the maps were generally Sinic in style followed therefrom. The atlases served as bureaucratic tools in the efforts of the imperial court to manage the villages. In the earlier centuries, during the Lý and Trần dynasties when indirect control was the norm, the Vietnamese throne had had neither the control nor the inclination to map the country. During the Lê and Nguyễn dynasties the bureaucracy provided the means, and its purpose—resource control—the aim for doing so. Thus the major efforts at mapping (or reproducing earlier maps) took place at times of bureaucratic strength: the last third of the fifteenth century, the second half of the seventeenth century, the 1830s, and the 1860s.

Vietnamese mapping was internal, not external. The itineraries mainly led to the borders, north and south, and no farther. The southern route first went to the capital of Champa, but this territory soon became Vietnam...
FIG. 12.22. THE NGUYÊN TOMBS, HUÉ. This redrawing of the Vietnamese diagram of the Gia-long emperor’s tomb with the rare (imperial) southern orientation shows again the cosmological mix of water and mountains.

From Charles Patris and L. Cadière, Les Tombeaux de Hué: Gia-Long (Hanoi: Imprimerie d’Extrême-Orient, 1923), pl. XXI.

e. It eventually went to Angkor, which in turn became (temporarily) part of Vietnam. Only the routes into China and Siam were non-Vietnamese subjects of Vietnamese cartography, and these were by land. Sea routes, as illustrated in charts, are not to be found. However, the international contacts of the Vietnamese in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries did lead to inclusion of more of mainland Southeast Asia in maps of the country. Still, East Asian, general Asian, and world maps are essentially unknown in the Vietnamese collections. The itineraries supply interesting descriptive detail for Vietnam itself and remain within the cultural framework of the pre-1800 style. They do not seem to have made the change into the realistic style of the mid-nineteenth century. The new style seems to have been reserved for the government atlases.

This chapter marks a beginning, and many questions inevitably remain. Much more work is still to be done on Vietnamese maps, using both those documents on microfilm and the manuscripts held in Hanoi. Such work will undoubtedly bring forth significant cartographic materials, the interpretation of which will change the synthesis supplied here. In particular, we must examine the documentation of the nineteenth century more closely in order to gain a better sense of the cartographic efforts of the Nguyên government. We need to understand better both the Western and the Chinese elements available to the Vietnamese and their use of them. Overall, we must use the cartographic materials to further our understanding of Vietnamese society and its development in the early modern world.