

The Lawā

ADDITIONAL NOTE

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In my notes on the translation of Phra Phetchabūn's (now Phraya Narintrapakdi) communication about the Lawā in Changvad Phetchabūn, published in Volume XIV, part 1, of "The Journal of the Siam Society," I cited several instances from the "Hmannan Yazawindawgyi," or "Royal Burmese chronicle," where the Lawā had played a role in the wars between Burma and Siam. I regret that, when doing so, I forgot to mention two more events relating to this people, one taking place in A.D. 1613, and the other in the year after. According to the chronicle mentioned above, the King of Ava (Burma) in 1613 sent his brother the Prince Sagaing Min to govern the town of Ye. The King of Siam, having received news of this, ordered the governor of Tavoy to capture the Prince, which the Governor succeeded in doing; but while the Prince was being conveyed by boat to Ayuthia, the "savage" Lawā rescued him with the intention of restoring him to the King of Burma. He was, however, retaken by the Governor of Tavoy. Though I am not able to point out the exact place where this event happened, I think that I shall not be far wrong if I fix it somewhere on the upper reaches of the river Mēklong, as the Prince and his party probably followed an old route going nearly due East from Tavoy over the hills, which at present form the boundary between Siam and Burma, to Kanburi. The other event happened in 1614. When the King of Burma marched with his army from Moulmein to seize Chiengmai, it is said that the Siamese felled big trees and bamboos to bar the way which his army followed, thus greatly impeding its march, so that the King had to enlist the services of the hill Lawā to show him the way (to Lampūn). The Lawā mentioned here must be those who are still inhabiting the hills between the rivers Salween and Mē Ping to the South-west of Nakhon Lampūn. As will be seen from what has been related here, the Lawā of those days, as during the centuries before, were not particular friends of the Thai. (For reference see J. of the S. S. vol. VIII part 11 p. p. 71 & 72 of Nai Thien's—now Phra

Praisorn Salarak's—translation of “Intercourse between Burma and Siam as recorded in “Hmannan Yazawindawgyi”). Finally, I beg to point out a misprint in the above cited notes on the translation of Phra Phetchabūn's paper, namely on p. 48, where some Khā ChiaNai are mentioned; the correct name is ChiaRai.