

STUDYING OF VIETNAMESE THAI'S SCRIPT
 ITS COMPARISON WITH THE SCRIPT
 OF THAILAND

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It is natural that Thai Language communities have their own scripts for a very long time. Among them, the Eastern communities, such as Choang and Tay, have been using square script system that bears the Chinese origin. And the western communities, including Thai in Vietnam, have been using other kinds of script. These are more close to the script system of Mon, Khmer and Eastern India.

In Vietnam, though many peoples use the Language system of Thai like Tay, Nung, only those who claim themselves Tày, or Thai in Vietnamese, living from the west Bank of The Red river towards the west border, have been using the same script of Thai communities in the west. The script does not belong to the square script. This has made it clearer for the difference between the people officially call themselves Thai (Tày) with those who call themselves Tày, Nùng.

Those who are called Thai (Tày) are divided into "black" branch - Tày dăm, and "white" branch - Tày Khao. But both of these two branches use the same script called Xu Tày - Thai script, though they are a bit different from each other, owing to the differences in the two Languages. (1).

(1) Câm Cương, Dương Xuân Cương : "First steps in search for comparison between Vietnamese Thai and Thai in Thailand".

However, this difference is only a small one in the comparison with other Thai communities' ones.

In order to compare, we have taken the present national Thai from Thai in general as the standard script. And, on the side of Vietnamese Thai, we have chosen the script of Black Thai, with the comparison of some special differences with White Thai's script. The reasons are:

- The Black Thai people are over 50% of the total Thai people in Vietnam.

- The Black Thai people have a high unity in Language script, culture etc ... Whereas this unity is decreased in the White Thai because they are divided into different regional smaller groups.

- For a long time now, The Black Thai area has been considered the centre of general culture of Thai peoples in Vietnam. And there maintains the common culture legacy of Thai peoples.

We are sure that Vietnamese Thai, Laos and Thai in Thailand have the same origin. But, the concrete historic and geographic circumstances have led to the present differences.

However, how this historic landmark appeared is still a question to us.

In Thailand, the most historical evidence of the script presence is the stela of Rem Khăm Heng Time, the year of The Goat 1205 - But, it is not the most historical time of Thai script.

Among Vietnamese Thai people there has been a legend as follow .

Long long ago, The God informed that he would give scripts to the men kind. And all kinds of Men hurried up there to receive their own scripts. The Chinese and other peoples were quick enough to get theirs. The Thai were so slow that when they got there, all scripts had been given. The God did not know what to

do though the Thai entreated very insistingly. Suddenly the God saw a basket of peas. He took a handful of peas and threw them down the yard, saying these words with sympathy: "Because you are too late. I have distributed all the scripts. In fact, the scripts have the same form with these peas. Take them as the model home and then try to creat your own scripts". So The Thai, Laos, Lu etc... took those peas home and began to make their scripts.

Therefore, the scripts of the Thai, Laos and Lu look the same and are similar to the form of pea seeds. Some other peoples like Mèo, Xá and Puộc ... were much slower than the Thai. And, there was nothing for them, even peas. That is the reason why they have not had their scripts yet. Legends are far from history - But they have shown us the truth that the scripts of The Thai, Laos and Lu are close to each other in many ways. We, therefor, think that it is useful to search for comparison between these scripts scientifically. It is still impossible to define charly the appeasing time of these scripts, but they must have been for over 1,000 years. Because the Vietnamese Thai are completely sure that their "Thông nǎng Xư" - the bark bags with engraved scripts have been made since Tào Xuông, Tào Ngan led Thai people from Mường Oun, Mường Ai to Mường Lo (2), The early of this century we hope that a complete study about the scripts of The Thai, Laos and Lu will bring useful scientific conclusions.

First of all, we study and compare the present-used scripts of Vietnamese Thai and Thai people in Thailand.

A. Comparison between Thai scrips in Vietnam and in Thailand.

I, Consonant *l*m (tô).

(2) Quār Tô Mường (History of Thai in Vietnam).

* (Thông nǎng Xư" was engraved by hard pens. To read it, you must use "Mack nho" - a pink - bellied frnit to rub on, and the letters appear.

1.	v	w	b
2.	u	A	c, k
3.	ŋ	ɔ	j, z
4.	ŋ	ŋ	d, t
5.	ɒ	ɔ	h
6.	ɔ	ɔ	l
7.	ɔ	ɔ	m
8.	u	u	n
9.	ɔ	ɔ	o
10.	ɔ	ɔ	p
11.	m	u	t
12.	ɔ	ɔ	v
13.	x	ɔ	x
14.	ɔ	ɔ	ch
15.	ɔ	ɔ	kh
16.	ɔ	ɔ	nh
17.	ɔ	ɔ	ng
18.	ɔ	ɔ	ph
19.	ɔ	ɔ	th

w