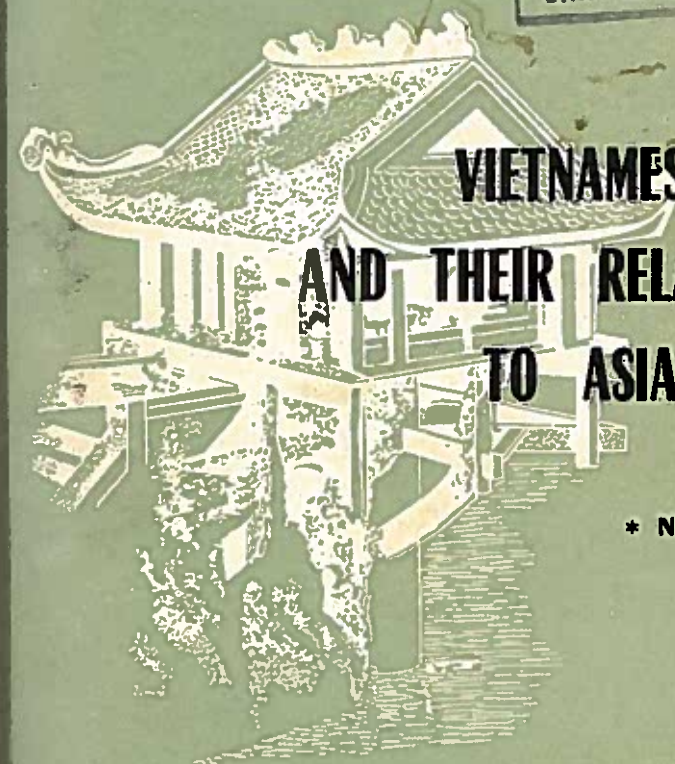


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**VIETNAMESE STUDIES  
AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS  
TO ASIAN STUDIES**

\* NGUYỄN-KHẮC-KHAM

**DIRECTORATE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTRY OF STATE  
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& Their Relationships  
to Asian Studies

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## VIETNAMESE STUDIES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS TO ASIAN STUDIES

*(Paper sent by NGUYỄN-KHẮC-KHAM  
to the XXVI International Congress of  
Orientalists held at New-Delhi from  
4 th to 10 th January 1964)*

### I. CHARACTERISTICS OF SOUTHEAST- ASIAN CULTURES

Prehistoric Southeast-Asia, that is Southeast-Asia from the remotest times up to the beginning of the Christian Era, is marked at least by four main stages of culture.

The first man believed to people Southeast-Asia about three hundred thousand years ago, may have been of Proto-Australian stock which showed some connections both with Java's Pithecanthropus and North-China's Sinanthropus.

At the end of the Paleolithic period and the beginning of the mesolithic one, there appeared a certain number of stone-tools shaped into such weapons as hammers, axes, arrows, etc... These stone-tools have been unearthed at the site of Hòa-Bình (North-Vietnam). Hence the name given to this first prehistoric period (about 5.000 years ago).

Hòa-Bình's stone-implements have been often found together with other tools made of polished stone.

The latter category has been most abundantly discovered at Bắc-Son (North-Vietnam). Hence the name Bacsonian culture given to this second prehistoric period. (About 3,000 years ago).

Human bones discovered at Hòa-Bình and Bắc-Son have characteristics of Papu — Melaneso — Australoïds.

On the first millenium B. C. there began the neolithic period. This third stage of culture is associated with people which may have been of Indonesian extraction. Its characteristic elements are stone axes with the notched handle (*hache à tenon*). Megalithic works unearthed at Xuân-Lộc site also belong to the same culture <sup>1</sup>.

« This culture to which the names Austro-Asiatic (for the mainland) and Austronesian (for the islands) have been applied by Scholars was apparently marked by such essential features as follows: It was a civilization of the monsoon the peoples of which had more or less some culture-elements in common. They all practised the cultivation of irrigated rice with the domestic water-buffalo. They could use metals on a rudimentary scale and possessed excellent stone - tools of their own. They showed a great skill in navigation which accounts for the diffusion of some Austro-Asiatic culture patterns as far afield as Taiwan to the North-East and Madagascar to the Far-West. In their societies,

<sup>1</sup> See G. COEDÈS, *Les Etats Hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie* (E. de Boccard éditeur, Paris, 1948).

G. COEDÈS, *Les peuples de la péninsule Indochinoise. — Histoire des civilisations.*

(Dunod éditeur; Paris, 1962) — pp. 17-32.

P. HUARD et M. DURAND, *La connaissance du Viêt-Nam.*  
(Ecole Française d'Extrême - Orient, Hanoi, 1964) pp. 45-46.

woman played an important role and enjoyed a position comparatively higher than anywhere else in Asia. As for their religion, it was a mixture of animism, ancestorworship and worship of the local gods especially of those of water.»

Thus, in the Neolithic period, even before the Aryanization of India, Austro-Asiatic culture which embraced a considerable variety of racial types pervaded Southeast-Asia as well as India herself, profoundly tinging the languages, customs and manners, social organization, art and beliefs of their peoples.

The last stage of culture in Southeast-Asia's Prehistory began at about a few centuries B. C. At this date, there was in Southeast-Asia a great cultural influx from India on one hand and from China on the other. Among vestiges of this culture stage found at Đông-Son (Thanh-Hóa Province) the most characteristic ones have been bronze drums - war and rain - drums with on them carvings of human figures and houses which shed some light on the living-mode of Đông-Sonian people.

« As far as China's influence is concerned, it was extended not only to the coastal Southeast and into North-Vietnam but also to the Southwest where in Yunnan, as documented by recent excavations western Han and Scythian elements mixed with basic Southeast-Asian cultural traits » <sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> See G. COEDÈS, books quoted above.

Lauriston Sharp, « Cultural continuities and Discontinuities in South-east - Asia », *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XXII, Number 1, November 1962, page 8.

JANSÉ, « Vietnam carrefour de peuples et de civilisations », *France-Asie*, N° 165, Janvier-Février 1961; pp. 1645 - 1670.

“Later on, about in the second century of the Christian era, when History began to dawn, most of Southeast-Asian peoples were already in regions where they are found today. With regard particularly to Indochinese peoples, the Vietnamese were already in Tonking, the areas from Hoành-Son southwards being at this time occupied by the Chams, a Malay people who was to be overwhelmed by the Vietnamese in the later half of the fifteenth century.

The Khmers were on the rivers leading to the Middle Mekong. The Mons were already in Lower Burma and the Chao Phraya (Menan) basin. The various Malay peoples were to be found in the Peninsula and throughout the vast inland world chiefly round the coasts and in the river valleys. Other immigrants than those named above yet to arrive were the Burmese who were to penetrate Central Burma from Yunnan in the ninth Century and the Tai who were to percolate to the regions of Northern Burma, the upper Salween, the upper Mekong and the northern parts of Siam during mainly the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries”<sup>3</sup>.

Most of these peoples had more or less undergone Austro-Asiatic cultural influence which may be considered as a common exogenous cultural substratum for them.

They were to undergo another acculturation from Indian civilization and Chinese civilization. Indian civilization whose elements had been found for the first time in Dongsonian culture

<sup>3</sup> See D. C. E. HALL, ‘Looking at Southeast-Asian History’, *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XIX, N° 3, May 1960, pp. 244-255.

exerted again its influence at two times from 2nd century to the middle of the 4th century and from the middle of the 4th century to the middle of the 6th century of the Christian Era.

This new acculturation of Southeast-Asia from Indian civilization was called Hinduization by Dr Coedès. “According to this distinguished French scholar, Hinduization ought to be understood essentially as an organized culture, founded on the Indian conception of royalty characterized by the Hinduist or Buddhist cults, the mythology of the Purānas, the observance of the Dharmasāstras and having the Sanskrit language as a means of expression. This Hinduization was a gradual process of intermixture, slow at first but gradually accelerated about the beginning of the Christian era. The causes of this acceleration were commercial: the demand for luxuries-spices, scented woods, perfumes, camphor, etc... consequent on Alexander’s conquest of Northwest India and on contact with the Western Mediterranean world, and the demand for new sources of gold following the closing of the Caravan route across Bactria by which India had supplied itself with gold from Siberia. At the same time, two new factors contributed greatly to facilitate commerce in Southeast-Asia, the development of the construction of large Indian and Chinese junks using a technique borrowed from the Persian Gulf and the discovery of the periodic alternation of the monsoons.

Another development which made long sea voyages easier for Indian sailors and merchants was the rise of Buddhism with its suppression of the barriers of caste and of exaggerated ideas of racial purity and the consequent removal of the fear of pollution by contact with barbarians as a consequence of long sea

voyages. A sort of cult of the Dipankara Buddha (« Buddha of the Isles »), protector of seamen, grew up. Until the fifth century, most of the images found in Southeast-Asia were those of the Dipankara-Buddha of the Amarāvati School of art, which have been found at P'ong Tūk and Korat (Siam), Đông-Dương (Annam) Palembang (Sumatra), Jamber (East Java) and Sempanga (Celebes). These images sometimes constitute the earliest evidence of Hinduization of the respective regions. The oldest Sanskrit inscription of Southeast-Asia — that of Vo Canh — is believed to be of Buddhist inspiration, as were some at least of those of Wellesley province in Malacca.»

The process of Hinduization began slowly, individually, and without definite organization<sup>4</sup>. On the other hand being purely cultural it went on peacefully.

On the contrary, Southeast-Asia's acculturation from Chinese civilization was primarily political. « China was the Elder Brother receiving tribute »; rulers of Southeast-Asia states like all the others within China's orbit sent specimen products of their countries accompanied very often by musicians, dancers and actors to perform before the Emperor. Chinese recognition gave independence to a ruler, there were frequent embassies and the records of them right into the Ming period are of special value to historians »<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Lawrence PALMER BRIGGS, « The Hinduized States of Southeast-Asia » — A review, *Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. VII, Number 4 (August 1948), pp. 377 - 379.

<sup>5</sup> D.G.E. HALL, « Looking at Southeast Asian History », *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XIX, N° 3 (May 1960), pp. 251 - 252.

« The influence of Chinese civilization could be traced for the first time in Dongsonian culture. Later on from the T'ang Dynasty to the Manchu period, it has been for many times spread over all Southeast-Asia by migrations and especially by military conquests. Chinese migration into Southeast-Asia date from the earliest days of the junk trade with the Nanyang. Only bits and pieces of the story are known as yet »<sup>6</sup>. As for Chinese expansion by force, it took place under such dynasties as Han, T'ang, Yuan, Ming and each of those interventions in Southeast-Asia had considerable effects upon the cultural history of the area. In this respect, let us note that along the same times Indian civilization went on influencing Southeast-Asia, though indirectly, through Chinese influence, owing to the long cultural intercourse between India and China linked for many centuries by Buddhism which, introduced by Indian monks into China, has deeply fertilized many fields of Chinese culture<sup>7</sup>.

Such are the essential component parts of most of Southeast-Asian cultures. But the picture would not be complete without mentioning the respective role played also by such other cultures as Khmer, Tai, Mon, Malay and Arab culture in the course of Southeast-Asia's History.

<sup>6</sup> D.G.E. HALL, *Ibid.*, p. 252.

NGHIÊM-THÂM, La persistance culturelle du substrat Indonésien chez les Vietnamiens actuels, Hong-Kong University, 1911-1961 Golden Jubilee Congress, Symposium on Historical, Archaeological and Linguistic Studies on Southern China, Southeast-Asia and the Hong-Kong region, held in Hong-Kong — during September 11-16, 1961.

<sup>7</sup> CHOU HSIANG-KUANG, « Indo-Chinese Relations », *A History of Chinese-Buddhism*, Indo-Chinese Literature Publications, (Allahabad, U.P., India 1955), Foreword, page 6.

Enough has been said perhaps to show the heterogeneity of Southeast-Asian cultures. However, this heterogeneity has not been exclusive of their originality because the peoples of Southeast-Asia have absorbed into their culture - patterns such exogenous elements as Indonesian or Indian, Chinese or Islamic ones, adjusting them all to their cultural requirements and to the individuality of their race. These two most salient features of Southeast-Asian cultures can also be observed in Vietnamese culture, whose studies ought to have relationships and contributions to Asian Studies.

## II. RELATIONSHIPS OF VIETNAMESE CULTURE TO SOUTHEAST-ASIAN CULTURES

For a better understanding of Vietnamese culture, we deem it necessary to give an outlook of its geographical and historical backgrounds which, as a matter of fact, have great bearing on its formation process and its characteristic features.

Lying between  $8^{\circ} 33'$  and  $23^{\circ} 22'$  North latitude, Vietnam is bounded on the West by Cambodia and Laos, on the South by the Gulf of Siam, and on the East by the Pacific Ocean which washes her coasts along some 1,460 miles. On account of her privileged geographical position in Southeast-Asia, she has always been a crossroad of many important ethnic migrations and main streams of various civilizations. Vietnam originally comprised Tonking and North Vietnam. Conquered by China in 111 B. C., she remained for 10 centuries under the influence of Chinese culture. Independent again in A. D. 968, she then entered on a struggle for influence with Champa, which she finally absorbed in 1471. Soon the Vietnamese were masters of the western valleys of the Indochinese peninsula from the basin of the Red River to the Lower Mekong.

Owing to her peculiar geographical and historical backgrounds, Vietnam has a culture in her own likeness. This culture has developed through different stages: the Hoabinhian, the Bacsonian and the Dongsonian cultures with regard to prehistoric era. Later on from the 2nd century B.C. up to the 10th century, it has



been moulded by Chinese culture with the impact of Confucianism and Taoism, by Indian culture with Buddhist diffusion, and from the 19<sup>th</sup> century it has been influenced by the West with the Coming of Christianity and the acceptance of Western thought.

Though diversified in origin, it emerges as basically homogeneous, because its various component elements, far from proving mutually exclusive have jelled smoothly to form an eminently original culture<sup>8</sup>.

#### A VIETNAMESE CULTURE AND CHINESE CULTURE

Since the year 111 B. C., the Vietnam had undergone Chinese domination two times. The first Chinese occupation lasted ten centuries from 111 B. C. to 939 of our era, and the second one from 1414 to 1427 under the Chinese Dynasty of Ming. Such is the historical background which accounts for the deep and long-lived influence of Chinese culture upon Vietnamese culture.

This influence can be traced clearly in such important cultural patterns as speech and writing, literature and Art, Religion and Social life. The Vietnamese language is full of words and expressions borrowed from Chinese. One of three systems of writing used by the Vietnamese people has been the Chinese script. Vietnamese literature has been in the past mostly composed of works more or less Chinese in inspiration or imitation. Vietnamese fine arts also show Chinese influence which is for

<sup>8</sup> See NGUYỄN-KHẮC-KHAM *Introduction to Vietnamese Culture*, (Vietnam Culture Series, N° 1), Saigon 1960, page 7.

instance transparent in the subject as well as in the motives of paintings and sculptures. With regard to religion, and social life, Chinese influence is clearly revealed in Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism embraced from the remote antiquity by the Vietnamese people.

However, in spite of these overpowering influences of Chinese culture, Vietnam has been able to shape a truly national culture by making a creative synthesis of Chinese culture elements with such other exogeneous cultures elements as Indian culture and austro-Asiatic culture<sup>9</sup>.

#### B. VIETNAMESE CULTURE AND INDIAN CULTURE

The efforts of our cultural anthropologists have usually been directed at stressing exaggeratedly the influence of Chinese civilization, thus overlooking the influence of India. As a matter of fact, the latter had taken place prior to the former because it began to be felt as early as the making of Exterior India.

In order to get a more accurate notion of its important contribution to our traditional culture, we should examine them from two points of view: On the basis of the historical ethnography of Vietnam and on the basis of distinction between direct influence and indirect influence of Indian civilization in the past.

<sup>9</sup> See NGUYỄN-KHẮC-KHAM

— *Introduction to Vietnamese culture*, pp. 7-32.

— *La Littérature Vietnamienne*, collection *Aspects Culturels du Vietnam*, Direction des Affaires Culturelles, Saigon, 1963, pp. 7-26.

Central Vietnam and South Vietnam had received an earlier acculturation from India than North Vietnam. This is due to the fact that Central Vietnam and South Vietnam had been formerly the sites of such Hinduized states as Champa, Funan and Tchèn-Là.

As for North Vietnam which was called Kiao Tcheou (Giao-Châu) it began only from the second century to the sixth century of the Christian era to be open to Indian civilization through the expansion of Buddhism.

As a matter of fact, Indian Buddhism was brought into North Vietnam first by sea. During the whole period of Chinese domination, a great number of monks from Sogdiane, from the Indo-Scythe Empire as well as from India, continued to come to our country to preach Buddhism.

Scriptures from Vietnamese monks in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries also referred to this fact as follows.

«Under the Hán Dynasty (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries) many Buddhist monks from the North came to our country both by sea and land to preach their religion such as Marajivaka, K'ang Seng Houei and Meou-Po».

The Chinese «History of the Wou» also recorded Che-Sie (Sĩ-Nhiếp) was a powerful governor in Kiao Tcheou (Giao-Châu) respected by the local population. In his wake, bells and high-sounding stones could be heard. His imposing escort moved forwards to the sound of Cornets and flutes. Roads were filled with vehicles, by the side of which were marching groups of Hou barbarians, burning incense. There were usually several tens of them».

According to the late Indianist Sylvain Levi, Hou in the Chinese language of the third century meant «inhabitants of the West», i. e. of Central Asia or of India. The Biography of Monk *Đàm Thiên* also recorded some words of Monk *Đàm Thiên* speaking to King Cao-Tồ of Souei (Tùy) Dynasty as follows:

«The people of Kiao Tcheou can communicate with India more easily than ourselves. While Buddhism has not yet entered our Kiang Tong (Giang-Đông) the inhabitants of Kiao Tcheou have already built twenty stupas and made up fifteen series of Scriptures, because they are nearer to the cradle of Buddhism than ourselves. Several monks had come over there to preach Buddhism at that time such as Marajivaka, Kang Seng Houei, Kalyanaruci and Meou-Po. Your Majesty's Desire is to send some monks of ours to preach Buddhism over there, but I do not think they are needing anyone».

The Buddhist book *Pháp-Vụ Thực-Lục* also tells us that in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century a Bhramanist named Kandra came to Kiao Tcheou at the same time with Marajivaka from Eastern India.

From the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century to the year 544 and also under the Early Lý dynasty (544-548), Buddhism in our country was only at its beginning, although a certain number of monasteries had been built which were merely a showpiece for the religion.

Vietnam at that time was undergoing the direct influence of India rather than that of China in the Buddhist area, and aside from a few Indian scholars devoted to the translation of Buddhist scriptures, nobody had considered getting Chinese Buddhist Scriptures from China.

From 603 to 939, when the influence of Chinese Buddhism gradually transcended that of the Indian one there were still some monks coming from India to preach Buddhism at the same time as the Chinese monks. For instance, in 580, the Venerable Vinitarucci came to Vietnam, took up residence at Pháp-Vân Pagoda (Vân-Giáp village, Thượng-Phúc, Hà-Đông Province) and founded the Buddhist of Dhyana <sup>10</sup>.

Direct influence of Indian civilisation could also be found in the field of Vietnamese art. Indian art, as we know, was carried to China through Central Asia, where Chinese had had trade with Indians during the early Hán Dynasty. Modern research has discovered vestiges of Indian art all along the Central Asia route. In all the chief cultural outposts of China, such as Bamiya, Bactria, Khotran, Miran, Turfan and Tung-Huang, archaeologists have discovered remains of Buddhist grottos, sculptures, paintings, etc..., which bear testimony to the great effort made by Buddhist India to foster lasting cultural relationships with India <sup>11</sup>.

India Buddhist art reached both China and Vietnam. In North Vietnam, before Chinese domination ended. There appeared a new Vietnamese art whose vestiges were found in Đại-La, the capital which Kao P'ien (Cao-Biến) had built in the northwestern part of Hanoi around the year 864. Hence the name

<sup>10</sup> See NGUYỄN-KHẮC-KHAM, « Contribution of Indian civilization to Vietnamese culture », in *Indian Literature*, Vol. 3, No 1, Sahitya Akademi (New Delhi) 1959-60, pp. 23-26.

NGUYỄN-KHẮC-KHAM, *A bibliography on Vietnamese Buddhism*, Directorate of National Archives and Libraries, Saigon, 1963.

<sup>11</sup> See CHOU HSIANG-KUANG'S, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

Đại-La art whose characteristic elements are small six-tiered stupas with figures of Buddha carved on each tier and with slightly curved roofs that suggest the architecture of houses carved on Đông-sơn bronze drums. The most representative architecture of this period is that of the Bình-Sơn Pagoda near Việt-Trì, and it is also during this period that appeared such sculptures as the Lokapála, the Kinnari and the Vajrapáni known as belonging to Phật Tích Style. Thus Đại-La art incorporates three influences together: Indian Chinese and Dong-Sonian <sup>12</sup>.

Let us by the way, mention other vestiges of Indian influence represented by art-works of Cham people relevant of different periods in Cham art as early Mi-Sơn, Đông-Dương. Later Mi-Sơn, Bình-Định periods, which can be found yet in Centre-Vietnam.

Always in the field of fine arts, Vietnamese music itself has been influenced by Indian music. Till the end of the dynasties of Northern and Southern China, several musical instruments, introduced into China from India, passed through Central Asia. The Yang Emperor of Souei dynasty collected all the instruments and divided them into nine groups; among them were some instruments from Khotan and India.

The popular instrument of that time was the Hou K'in, a stringed musical instrument used by the ancients, it came from India during the Hán dynasty. An important musical instru-

<sup>12</sup> See LOUIS BEZACIER, *L'art Vietnamien*. (Editions de l'Union Française, Paris, 1954), pp. 181-187.

ment used during the Hán and the T'ang dynasties was called the Pi-Pa, a guitar which came from Egypt, Arabia and India. Most of those instruments were used both by Chinese and Vietnamese people. With regard to Vietnam, especially, we can mention as coming from India or Central Asia such ones as the P'o (Phách), the Pi-Pa (Tỳ bà), the fan Kou (phạn Cồ, phạn sĩ Cồ or phạn sĩ Ba), a forerunner of today's Trống cơm which seems to derive from the damaru of Ancient India.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, let us say a word about a peculiar aspect of Indian influence on Vietnamese culture, that is Indian influence through the channel of Chinese Buddhism especially in the field of language.

We know that the Indian Buddhists who came to China to preach faith contributed certain tables which were helpful in the spelling of words. Shen Kung, a Buddhist priest is said to have been the author of the system and the dictionary Yu-Pien or Discrimination of language was one of the first extensive works in which it was employed. There was also a famous historian Shen-yo to whom has been attributed the discovery of the Four Tones (Tứ Thanh).

This Chinese system of Four-Tones which derived from India, shows many relationships to the tones of Vietnamese

<sup>13</sup> CHOU HSIANG-KUANG, *Indo-Chinese Relations*, pp. 3-4.

TRẦN-VĂN-KHÊ, *La musique Vietnamiennne traditionnelle*. (Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1962) pp. 16-21.

LÊ-TẮC *An-Nam chí-lược*, Ủy-Ban phiên-dịch Sử-liệu Việt-Nam Viện Đại Học Huế, 1961), pp., 47-48.

words especially those of sino-vietnamese words<sup>14</sup>.

Always with regard to language, we can mention the enrichment of words from Sanskrit words through Chinese translation. As we know, during the eight hundred years between the Hán and the T'ang dynasties, prominent Chinese Buddhist scholars created more than 35,000 new phrases and words by two methods.

By the first one, single Chinese words were combined together to evolve a new meaning, such as chin-ju. Chin (*chân* in sino-Vietnamese) means *real*, ju (Nhu in sino-vietnamese) means *likely*; Their combination means Bhùtatathatà. The word is fundamental to Mahayana Buddhism, implying the absolute, the ultimate source and character of all phenomena.

By the second method a sanskrit word was adopted with its original sound for instance Sam Mwie coming from SKt. Samadhi and Na-Mo coming from SKt Namo. Most of these words created by chinese Buddhists scholars from Sanskrit words have been integrated into the Vietnamese language. Aside from these categories of borrowed words we think it is worth quoting below some other Vietnamese words which, according to Father Souvignet seem to have derived directly from Sanskrit. Such are among the most probable ones:

Skt, *hina* (vile, abject) Vietnamese, *hèn*.

<sup>14</sup> CHOU HSIANG-KUANG, *Indo-Chinese Relations*, p. 5.

H. MASPÉRO, « Etudes sur la phonétique historique de la langue annamite — Les Initiales », BEFEO, 1912, pp. 88-103.

Skt, *rûpa* (shape, look, physionomy) Vietnamese, *rấp*.

Skt, *suci* (clean) Vietnamese, *sạch sẽ*.

Sks, *dvi, dva* (some, two) Vietnamese, *vài*.

Skt, *buddha* (He who knows, Buddha) Vietnamese, *biết, bụt*.

Skt, *punna* (having hunger satisfied) Vietnamese, *no*.

Tamil *beut, bet* (steadfast, motionless, very quiet) Vietnamese, *bất bất* <sup>15</sup>.

Thus we see that Indian civilisation and culture have exerted both direct and indirect influences upon Vietnamese culture as early as Dongsonian era.

This manifold influence went on operating then up to the 10th century at least. We have only mentioned summarily a few fields of Vietnamese culture where we think remnants of Indian civilization and culture can be identified, but if we push further our investigation in other fields of Vietnamese culture, particularly in folkloric literature, we may perhaps find out other proofs of these Indian cultural influences <sup>16</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> SOUVIGNET (P.). *Les origines de la langue annamite*. (Imprimerie d'Extrême-Orient, Hanoi, 1924) pp. 190 - 203.

<sup>16</sup> NGUYỄN-VĂN-NGỌC. *Truyện cổ nước Nam* (old Stories and Legends of Viet-Nam), Vol. I, Foreword Thằng-Long, Saigon, 1952.

PHAM-DUY-KHIÊM. *Légendes des Terres sereines*. Mercure de France, Paris, 1951.

NGUYỄN-TRẦN-HUÂN. *Vaste Recueil de légendes merveilleuses* translated from Nguyễn-Dữ's *Truyện Kỳ Mạn Lục*, Collection Unesco d'œuvres représentatives, Série Vietnamienne, Gallimard, 1962.

### C. VIETNAMESE CULTURE AND INDONESIAN OR AUSTRO-ASIATIC CULTURE

Among all the exogeneous cultural substrata which have ever contributed to the making of Vietnamese culture, the most subjacent, the most momentous, too, has been the Indonesian or Austro-Asiatic one.

Intimately mixed with such other cultural influences as Indian, Chinese, Tai, Cham, it accounts for the profound originality of Vietnamese culture.

Most of its elements more or less modified by its interaction with subsequent cultural patterns can yet be recognized in many aspects of Vietnamese culture, such as in the fields of Linguistics, Mythology and Ethnology.

#### A. LINGUISTIC DATA

The Vietnamese language has been enriched by numberless Chinese words and expressions. However, it is not recognized by Orientalists as having its origin in the Chinese language. German linguists like Kuhn and Himly <sup>17</sup> lean to the opinion that the Vietnamese language belongs to the Pegouan, T'ai or Mon-Khmer group. Henri Maspero <sup>18</sup> maintained that it is of T'ai origin, and Father Souvignet <sup>19</sup>, traced it to the Indo-Malay

<sup>17</sup> KUHN (Ernest), *Beitrag zur Sprachkunde Hinter-Indiens*, Munchen, 1889.  
HIMLY (K.). *Über die einsilbigen Sprachen des Südöstlichen Asiens*, Leipzig, 1884.

<sup>18</sup> MASPERO (H.) *op. cit.*

<sup>19</sup> SOUVIGNET (P.) *op. cit.*

family. A.G. Haudricourt<sup>20</sup> has recently refuted the thesis of H. Maspero and concluded that Vietnamese is properly placed in the Austro-Asiatic family between the Palaung-wa group in the North-West and the Mon-Khmer group in the South-West.

None of these theories quite explains the origin of the Vietnamese language. One fact, however remains certain: Vietnamese is no more a pure language. It seems to be a blend of several languages, ancient and modern, encountered through History following contacts between foreign peoples and the Vietnamese people.

Consequently, the Vietnamese language was enriched with new words from each successive wave of immigrants among whom there were Indonesians<sup>21</sup>.

For these considerations with regard to the origin of the Vietnamese language we are inclined to share Prof. NGUYỄN-ĐÌNH-HÒA'S opinion "For the time being, inclusion in the broad Austro-Asiatic family, which comprises a number of languages widely scattered through Southeastern Asia and generally surrounded by languages of other families, can be considered adequate, until the results of lexico-statistics or glotto-chronology bring us more definitive conclusion<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> HAUDRICOURT (A.G.). « La place du Vietnamien dans les langues Austro-Asiatiques », *Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique de Paris*, N° 49 (1953), I. 122-128.

« De l'origine des tons en Vietnamien », *Journal Asiatique*, N° 242 (1954), I. 69-82.

<sup>21</sup> NGUYỄN-KHẮC-KHAM, *Introduction to Vietnamese culture*, pp. 8-11.

<sup>22</sup> NGUYỄN-ĐÌNH-HÒA, *The Vietnamese language*, (Vietnam culture series N° 2), (Department of National Education, Saigon 1961), pp. 5-7.

## B. MYTHOLOGICAL DATA

One of mythic-themes which were the most widely spread over all Austro-Asiatic-stocked peoples concerns the origin of ethnic races.

In many Southeast-Asian and particularly Indo-Chinese countries, there is a whole cycle of legends related to this theme.

« Among the Palaungs (a Mon-Khmer people) for instance, the story is told of a serpent maiden who fell in love with the son of the solar King and loved him, and eventually was delivered of three eggs. Due to a misunderstanding with her lover, who had been called back home by his father, the Naga Princess took two of the eggs and threw them into the Irrawaddy River. One of the eggs moved upstream to Man Maw (Bhamo), where it was taken out of the river by a gardener and his wife and put in a golden casket as a curiosity. A male child hatched out of the egg and the gardener and his wife brought him up under the name of Hseng Nya, and afterward of Udibwa (Born of an egg). Later married to the daughter of a Shan chief, he became the father of two sons, one of whom became Emperor of China, while the other became the ancestor of all the chiefs of the Palaungs. The second egg also drifted down the Irrawaddy until it was picked up by a washerman and his wife. From this also came a man-child, who grew up to be the King of Pagan.

The same mythic theme can be found again in a folk-tale from Hsen-Wi, one of the Northern Shan states of Burma. According to this, there was an old couple who lived on the bank of Lake Nawng Put, and they had a son, who

fell in love with a Naga, a Princess which came out of the lake one day in human form and talked with him. The Princess also loved the lad—and took him to the country of the Naga, where she explained matters to her father, the King of the Dragons. The father then allowed all the dragons to assume human form, so that his son-in-law might feel at home. The Princess and her husband lived happily together, until the Annual Water Festival of the Nagas came, round. During this festival, the Nagas assumed their dragon shape and disported themselves in the lakes of the country. The Princess, however, told her husband to stay during the festival but he, overwhelmed with curiosity, climbed up the roof of the palace and was very much dismayed to find the whole of the country and the lakes round about filled with gigantic writhing dragons. In the evening all the dragons returned to the palace in human shapes. Likewise the Princess; but, when she came to her husband she found him dejected and wanting to go back to his own father and mother. The Princess accordingly accompanied him back to his own country, but told him that she could not stay there. On her departure, she told him that she would be delivered of an egg from which a child would be hatched, and that she was to feed the child with the milk which would ooze from his little finger whenever he thought of her. Then she said that if either he or the child were ever in danger of difficulty, he would strike the ground three times with his hand, and she would come to his aid. She laid the egg, plunged into lake, and returned to the country of the Nagas. The child was born in due course and grew up under the care of the boy's parents into a splendid youth. Later he married a beautiful Princess, inherited a Kingdom

and had a long and prosperous reign of seventy-two years.<sup>23</sup>

This theme of the marriage between human beings and aquatic animals has also been the foundation of our national myth, related to Lạc-Long-Quân and Âu-Cơ.

According to popular tradition, some more than four thousand years ago, King Đê-Minh, a descendant of the Chinese King Thần-Nông went on a tour to the South and met at Ngũ-Linh mountain (Hu-Nan province) a fairy whom he married and who bore him a son by the name of Lộc-Tục.

Lộc-Tục received from his father the southern part of his Kingdom named Xích-Quỷ, and reigned under the royal title of Kinh-Dương-Vương (2.879 B.C.).

One day, Kinh-Dương-Vương called on the God of the Seas whose daughter Long-Nữ he married. From this union was born a son named Sùng-Lãm. Sùng-Lãm succeeded his father under the royal title of Lạc-Long-Quân.

Later on, he withdrew to his former Palace of the Seas. But, as the Xích-Quỷ kingdom was invaded by the army of Đê-Lai, a Chinese Emperor, her inhabitants invoked Lạc-Long-Quân who came back his Palace under the Sea and saved the country from Đê-Lai's oppression.

Lạc-Long-Quân then married Âu-Cơ the daughter of Đê-Lai, Âu-Cơ bore a pouch of one hundred eggs which gave 100 male-

<sup>23</sup> PARKER (Charles Kenneth). *A dictionary of Japanese compound verbs*, (Maruzen Company, Limited, Tokyo, 1939) pp. XXVI-XXIX.

NOHIBURO MATSUMOTO. *Le japonais et les langues Austro-Asiatiques*. (Paul Geuthner, Paris, 1928), pp. 35-40.

children. Lạc-Long-Quân and Âu-Cơ shared their sons between themselves. Half of them went with their father to the South-China Sea, the other half accompanied their mother to the mountains located in the area of Phong-Châu. Once in Phong-Châu (now Bạch-Hạc — Vinh-Yên Province), the fifty sons who had followed Âu-Cơ named their eldest brother the first King to reign over the new Kingdom. This was Hùng-Vương, and this Kingdom was called Văn-Lang<sup>24</sup>.

Thus, as we can see, the national myth of the Vietnamese people shows the same elements as its congeners in most of Southeast-Asian countries, one of those elements being everywhere the maritime character of the folk-tales.

### C. ETHNOLOGICAL DATA

A more careful investigation of ethnological affinities between Austro-Asiatic peoples and the Vietnamese people could bring out such rich materials as would take a whole volume. In this short paper, we may therefore limit ourselves to the wearing apparel and ornaments, the types of dwelling, and the family organization of Vietnam in early times.

#### (a) THE WEARING APPAREL AND ORNAMENTS

The most persistent thing about Vietnamese dress is yet the *cái khố* (loin-cloth) for men and the *cái váy* (petticoat) for women. The *cái khố* consisting of one piece of cloth was wrapped once

<sup>24</sup> TRẦN-TRONG-KIM. *Việt-Nam Sử-Lược* (Tân-Việt, Hanoi, 1951), pp. 22-25.

NGUYỄN-VĂN-THÁI and NGUYỄN-VĂN-MỪNG. *A short History of Vietnam* (The Times Publishing Company, Saigon, 1958), pp. 3-5.

and a bit around the waist and the intermediate space of the hips. It is used still as an undergarment by women and as an outer garment by fishermen.

As for Vietnamese women especially country-women of North Vietnam and of the Northern part of Thanh-Hóa Province they are wearing a kind of Skirt like the Indonesian one. Both men and women are wearing jacket petticoats with diminutive sleeves like Indonesian people. Also like Indonesian people, Vietnamese people are wearing a turban made of piece of cloth wrapped around the head.

As mentioned in *Ngan Nan Tche Yuan* by Kao Hiong Tcheng, a Chinese historian of the Ming dynasty, in the X<sup>th</sup> century Vietnamese males wore a loin-cloth while Vietnamese females wore a petticoat<sup>25</sup>.

As we can read in *Đại-Việt Sử-Ký* by Ngô-sĩ-Liên (XV<sup>th</sup> century) the fishermen of Ancient Vietnam up to the Trần Dynasty (XIII<sup>th</sup> century) used to tattoo themselves in the guise of a dragon before going into the sea in order to protect themselves from the attacks of sea creatures<sup>26</sup>.

Let us mention such other vestiges of Austro-Asiatic customs as the custom of blackening the teeth and the use of the betel-nut<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> NGHIÊM-THÀM, *op. cit.*

<sup>26</sup> NGÔ-SĨ-LIÊN, *Đại-Việt Sử-Ký Toàn-Thư* (Vietnamese translation by Mạc-Bào-Thần, Tân-Việt, Hanoi, 1945), p. 36.

<sup>27</sup> HUARD (P.), Le noircissement des dents en Asie Orientale et en Indochine, in *France-Asie*, N° 28 Juillet 1948, pp. 804-813; N° 29, Août 1948, pp. 906-912.



## (b) THE TYPES OF DWELLING

Also in the field of architecture, Vietnam, while remaining eminently original, shows many affinities with Austro-Asiatic architecture. According to Lương-Đức-Thiếp<sup>28</sup>, Vietnamese architectural characteristics lie in its reflection of the living-mode of the Vietnamese people.

The Vietnamese, the author points out, live in the delta. Being not very fortunate and having not vital space enough they are reduced to building their dwelling from the materials they can find around. Since wood and bamboo are the building materials most commonly available, all edifices, whatever may be, are essentially a system of columns and rafters on which the roof rests, strengthening the whole with its weight. One of the many characteristics of Vietnamese architecture is precisely the role of the columns which serve as support for the roof. On the other hand, the tropical climate explains why there are few walls or partitions separating the interior apartments and it explains the frequent absence of a door. One sees the entrance wide open or perhaps shaded with a blind. The most ancient types of Shelter consists of four roofs — two main and two accessory roofs leaning on an wooden frame system which is in turn supported by a system of columns. Concerning especially the roof-structure, we think a further study should be undertaken for a better understanding of the religious meaning which may lie under various crossing ways of rafters and for knowing whether Vietnamese roof-structure is not an instance of the widespread use among Austro-Asiatic peoples, of crossed

<sup>28</sup> LƯƠNG-ĐỨC-THIỆP, *Xã-Hội Việt-Nam* (Vietnamese Society, Nhà xuất bản Liên-Hiệp, Saigon, 1950), p. 360.

sticks and poles as a mark of taboo or sacredness, or some associated idea such as that of good luck.

In any case, the Vietnamese Đình is certainly a parallel of such houses on piles as can still be found in Indonesia today<sup>29</sup>.

## (c) THE FAMILY ORGANIZATION

The family organization in traditional Vietnam has been under the overwhelming influence of Confucianist Concepts which give precedence to men. That is why, as early as the beginning of Chinese domination, Vietnamese society has been a patrilineal one, where the woman was subordinate to her father before her marriage, to her husband after her marriage, and to her sons after her husband's death. This status of women in ancient Vietnam was based upon a Confucianist precept called Tam Tông (Three woman's subordinations).

However, one can suppose that in the remotest times, at least before undergoing Chinese influence, the Vietnamese family may have been a matrilineal one.

According to Lương-Đức-Thiếp<sup>30</sup>, the uprisings of the two

<sup>29</sup> See LÊ-VĂN-HAO, 'Introduction à l'ethnologie du Đình', *Revue du Sud-Est Asiatique*, 1962, N° 2, Institut de Sociologie fondé par Ernest Solvay, Université libre de Bruxelles. Imprimerie Amibel, Bruxelles, pp. 85-122.

NGUYỄN-VĂN-KHOAN, 'Essai sur le Đình et le culte du Génie tutélaire des villages au Tonkin', *B.E.F.E.O.*, N° 30 (1930), pp. 107 - 139, Photog.

NGUYỄN-VĂN-HUYỀN, *Introduction à l'étude de l'habitation sur pilotis dans l'Asie du Sud-Est*. Austro-Asiatica, T. 4.

NGUYỄN-ĐĂNG-THỤC, *Democracy in Traditional Vietnamese Society*, Vietnam culture Series, N° 4, Department of National Education, 1961.

<sup>30</sup> LƯƠNG-ĐỨC-THIỆP, *op cit.* 240-243..

Sisters Trưng-Trắc, Trưng-Nhị (from 40 to 43 of our era), and of Lady Triệu-Âu against Chinese yoke (in the year 248) testify to matrilineal family system in ancient Vietnam.

As a matter of fact, the Vietnamese woman, in spite of the humble status reserved for her by official legislation which has been of Chinese inspiration, has always proved to be better treated in the practice.

Other proofs of this matrilineal system can be found in the biography of Đinh-Bộ-Lĩnh founder King of Đinh dynasty and Lý-Công-Uân, the first King of Lý dynasty. Both of them did not know whose sons they were. In other respects, Vietnamese woman always played an important role in Vietnamese family, having always been the main force behind of the agriculture in an agricultural country like Vietnam.

In this connection, the two following Vietnamese proverbial sayings are the most significant. «Chồng cấy, vợ cấy, con trâu đi bừa»: «The husband is ploughing, the wife transplanting the rice seedlings while the buffalo is harrowing».

«Lệnh ông không bằng công bà» «The man's orders are not worth the woman's jobs».

Recently, Prof. Raoul Lingat<sup>31</sup> has contributed many important findings about the matrimonial system of joint estate according

<sup>31</sup> LINGAT (Raoul). *Les Régimes matrimoniaux du Sud-Est de l'Asie. Essai de Droit comparé Indochinois.*  
Tome I: Les Régimes Traditionnels, Paris, E. de Boccard. Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, Hanoi, 1952, 176 pages.  
Tome II: Les Droits codifiés, E.F.E.O., Saigon, 195 pages.

to which, contrary to official legislation the respective marriage portions of man and woman have been put into community.

Thus, the Vietnamese woman has, at least in practice, never been in the status of subjection, which bears testimony to the strong survival of Indian influence and of Austro-Asiatic influence in Vietnamese social life.

Such are a few ethnological data we can take into account within the very narrow scope of this paper. Let us, however, mention such other important research matters on the Austro-Asiatic and Vietnamese ethnological affinities as questions related to Naval Ethnography or to physical and spiritual culture of Vietnamese people, all these questions having been initiated by distinguished scholars like Pierre Paris, P. Cadière<sup>32</sup> etc. . .

<sup>32</sup> PARIS (Pierre). *Esquisse d'une Ethnographie navale des peuples annamites.* Deuxième édition.  
Publicaties van het Museum voor Land-en Volkenkunde en het Maritiem. Museum «Prins Hendrik», Rotterdam, 1955.  
CADIÈRE (Léopold). *Croyances et pratiques religieuses des Vietnamiens.* Tome I (1953), Tome II (1955), Tome III (1957). Publications hors-série de l'E.F.E.O.

### III. RELATIONSHIPS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF VIETNAMESE STUDIES TO ASIAN STUDIES

Enough has been given perhaps to show substantial relationships of Vietnamese culture to such other Asian cultures as Indian, Chinese and Austro-Asiatic cultures.

This fundamental fact should not be absent from our mind whenever we are to do research on Asian cultures.

As far as Vietnamese Studies are concerned, we think that they will much profit by a confrontation with other Asian cultures and by being undertaken in the national context as well as in the inter-Asian context.

On the one hand, Asian Studies have thrown and will throw new light upon Vietnamese Studies in such fields as Vietnamese language, Vietnamese beliefs and Vietnamese customs. On the other one, Vietnamese Studies themselves have proved to be useful to Asian Studies through comparative methods. In this connection, we shall venture to point out a few instances referring to the assertion above. In the field of Chinese linguistics, Sino-Vietnamese was considered "a very important document" by H. Maspero for his research on

the dialect of Tch'ang-Ngan<sup>33</sup>. Bernhard Karlgren himself<sup>34</sup> among other Orientalists has emphasized the role of sino-vietnamese in sinology. "Far more important, however, he pointed out, is the reflection of Ancient Chinese in actual loan words on a large scale in certain languages. At all times, China has been the great cultural source for East-Asia, and when Korea, Japan and Annam borrowed Chinese culture en bloc, thousands of Chinese words found their way into the languages of these countries. No proofs have so far been brought forward to show any relationship between Japanese or Korean, on the one hand, and Chinese on the other; and whether Annamese is allied to Chinese is uncertain. But in historical times, as we have said, a whole army of Chinese words has entered each of these languages, comparable with the importation of Low German words into the Scandinavian languages during the Middle Ages. These elements of vocabulary in the said languages are commonly called Sino-Korean, Sino-Japanese and Sino-Annamese, respectively.

What is of such choice, interest for linguists in these three varieties of Chinese, is that the loans were made long ago, that the connections were severed, and that the loan-material was

<sup>33</sup> MASPERO (Henri). « Le dialecte de Tch'ang-Ngan sous les T'ang » *B. E. F. E. O.*, XII, I, page 21.

HAUDRICOURT (André G.) « Comment reconstruire le Chinois archaïque » in *Linguistics Today*, Publications of the Linguistics Circle of New-York Number 2, New-York, 1954, pp. 231-244.

FORREST (R. A. D.) « *The Chinese Language* », Faber and Faber LTD., London, pp. 147-169.

NGUYỄN-KHẮC-KHAM. « *Tiếng Hán Việt và Tiếng Việt-Nôm* »; Lecture at Saigon Faculty of Letters, 1962-63.

<sup>34</sup> KARLGREN (B.). *Philology and Ancient China* (Oslo 1926), pp. 75-76. « *Etudes sur la phonologie chinoise* ». Tome I, II, III, IV, Stockholm, 1915

preserved in the foreign countries uninfluenced by later sound-developments in China. Hence, this word-material often gives us the most valuable information in spite of the ingrafted words having in this or that respect — developed according to the sound — laws of the foreign tongues. Least valuable of the three is Sino-Annamese. Not only is it comparatively young, dating in the main from the 9th century, but the Annamese script is of such a nature that it is hard to decide which phenomena in Sino-Annamese go back to the period when they were borrowed and which have developed on Annamese ground ».

In the field of Chinese History, historical Research on Vietnam have much profited by historical works on China and greatly contributed to enlighten some aspects of the Chinese History itself. In this respect we can mention works of H. Maspero<sup>35</sup>, Emile Gaspardone<sup>36</sup>, Léonard Arousseau<sup>37</sup> etc... and publication of such Scholarly Institutions as the French School of Far-Eastern, the Society of Indochinese Studies, the France-Asia and the Institute of Historical Research (Viện Khảo-Cổ) and the Directorate of Cultural Affairs (Nha Văn-Hóa).

<sup>35</sup> MASPERO (H.) :

«Le protectorat général d'Annam sous les T'ang», *B.E.F.E.O.*, X, 339, 664.  
 «La géographie politique de l'Empire d'Annam sous les Lý, les Trần et les Hồ (IXè - XVè siècle)», *B.E.F.E.O.*, XVI, 1, 27.  
 «Le Royaume de Văn-Lang», *B.E.F.E.O.*, XVIII, 3, 1.  
 «L'expédition de Ma-Yuan», *B.E.F.E.O.*, XVIII, 3, 11.  
 «La dynastie des Lý antérieurs», *B.E.F.E.O.*, XVI, 1, 1.  
 «*Mélanges posthumes sur les Religions et l'Histoire de la Chine*». Vol. III : Etudes historiques. Publications du Musée Guimet — Bibliothèque de Diffusion. Edition Bibliophile, Civilisations du Sud, Paris, 1950.

<sup>36</sup> GASARDONE (Emile), *B.E.F.E.O.*, XXIX, 63.

<sup>37</sup> AUROUSSEAU (Léonard). «La première conquête chinoise des pays Annamites au IIIè siècle avant notre ère». *B.E.F.E.O.*, XXIII, 137.

In the field of the Religions of China and India, valuable contributions of Vietnamese Studies have been recorded too. In his book entitled *L'Inde et le monde* (1926), Sylvain Lévi remarked that «all the general problems about Indian antiquity come to be associated in a very natural way with the History of Buddhism». (Tous les problèmes généraux de l'antiquité Indienne viennent se grouper tout naturellement autour de l'histoire du Bouddhisme).

As a matter of fact, Research on Buddhism in Asia far from throwing light upon Ancient India exclusively, has also illuminated many aspects of Chinese History and Vietnamese History. Reciprocally, concerning Vietnam especially, her history of Buddhism has proved to be helpful to Researchers on Chinese Buddhism as well as Indian Buddhism. In this connection, we can point out such works as those of H. Maspero<sup>38</sup>, Trần-Văn-Giáp<sup>39</sup>, Paul Demiéville<sup>40</sup> not including such other important works as

<sup>38</sup> MASPERO (H.). «*Mélanges posthumes sur les Religions et l'Histoire de la Chine*» :

*Vol. I* : Les Religions Chinoises ;

*Vol. II* : Le Taoïsme.

Publications du Musée Guimet. Bibliothèque de Diffusion.

Vol LVII. Edition bibliophile. Civilisation du Sud, Paris 1950.

<sup>39</sup> TRẦN-VĂN-GIÁP, «Le bouddhisme en Annam, des origines au XIIIè siècle». *B.E.F.E.O.*, 32 (1932), pp. 191-268.

«Les deux sources du Bouddhisme-annamite : ses rapports avec l'Inde et la Chine», *Cahier de l'E.F.E.O.*, N° 33 (1942), pp. 17-20.

NGUYỄN-KHẮC-KHAM, *A bibliography on Vietnamese Buddhism*, Saigon, 1963.

<sup>40</sup> DEMIÉVILLE (Paul). *Le Concile de Lhassa*. Une controverse sur le quiétisme entre bouddhistes de l'Inde et de la Chine au VIIIè siècle de l'ère chrétienne. Tome I. (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1952).

those of Sylvain Lévi, Edouard Chavannes, Louis Finot, Jean Przyluski, Jean Filliozat, etc...

In the field of Vietnamese studies' contribution to Ausstro-Asiatic studies, we shall limit ourselves to History, Geography, Ethnology and Linguistics.

First, concerning the three first fields of studies we should mention works of Paul Pelliot<sup>41</sup>, Henri Maspero<sup>42</sup>, W. Buch<sup>43</sup>, Nguyễn-Văn-Khoan, Nguyễn-Văn-Huyên, Lê-Văn-Hào<sup>44</sup>, Georges Condominas<sup>45</sup>, J. Cuisinier<sup>46</sup>, Dambo<sup>47</sup>, Lavallée<sup>48</sup>, Maurice Durand<sup>49</sup> etc...

With regard to the field of Linguistics we have mentioned above some works of Souvignet, Haudricourt. Among the most recent publications on the matter concerned, we should draw

- 41 PELLIOT (Paul). « Deux itinéraires de Chine en Inde à la fin du VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle ». *B. E. F. E. O.*, IV, 121.
- 42 MASPERO (H.). « La frontière de l'Annam et du Cambodge du VIII<sup>e</sup> au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle ». *B. E. F. E. O.*, XVIII, 3, 29.
- 43 BUCH (W.). « La compagnie des Indes Néerlandaises et l'Indochine », *B. E. F. E. O.*, XXXVI, 97, XXXVII, 121.
- 44 NGUYỄN-VĂN-HUYÊN, NGUYỄN-VĂN-KHOAN, LÊ-VĂN-HÀO, *op. cit.*
- 45 CONDOMINAS (Georges). « Panorama de la culture Vietnamienne », *France-Asie* N° 123, Août 1956, pp. 75-94.
- 46 CUISINIER (Jeanne). « La danse sacrée en Indochine et en Indonésie », Paris, 1951.
- 47 DAMBO. « Les populations montagnardes du Sud Indochinois », *France-Asie* N° spécial, 49-50.
- 48 LAVALLÉE. « Notes ethnographiques sur diverses tribus du Sud-Est de l'Indochine », *B. E. F. E. O.*, Tome I, 1901, pp. 291-311.
- 49 DURAND (Maurice). « Imagerie populaire Vietnamienne », *Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient*, Paris, 1960.

attention on the study of Dr. Reynaud<sup>50</sup> on Vietnamese phonemes compared with some dialects of South Vietnam Highlands and particularly actual researches by the Summer Institute of Linguistics the representatives of which in Saigon are Dr. Richard Pittman and Dr. David Thomas. This scholarly Institute has currently started research in 16 minority languages of Vietnam (T'ai family) Thô, white T'ai, Nùng; (Việt-Mường family) Mường; (Malayo-Polynesian family) Cham, Rôglai (Mon-Khmer family) Brou, Pacoh, Katu, Yet, Sedang, Halang, Bahnar, Muong Rolom, Chrau, Stieng.

At the same time, S. I. L. has adapted phonemic alphabets for several of these languages based on Vietnamese orthography<sup>51</sup>,

50 Docteur REYNAUD. « Étude des phonèmes vietnamiens par confrontation entre le Vietnamien et quelques dialectes des Hauts-Plateaux du Sud Vietnam ». *Bulletin de la Société des Etudes Indochinoises*, Nouvelle série — Tome XXXVII, No 2, 2<sup>e</sup> trimestre 1962, Saigon, 1962.

51 S. I. L.'s. — *Vietnam Bibliography* :  
 — BARKER (Milton) :  
 — « Proto-Vietnamuong Initial Labial Consonants »; *Văn-Hóa Nguyệt-San* 12 : 491-500 (1963).  
 — « Annual bibliographies of Far Eastern linguistics in Asian Perspectives », Vols. 3-6 (1959-1963).  
 — « Vietnamese and Muong Tone Correspondences » to appear (1964) in N. Zide, ed. *Studies in Comparative Austro-Asiatic Linguistics*.  
 — BLOOD (David), « A Problem in Cham Sonorants »; *Zeitschrift für Phonetik* 15 : 111-114 (1962).  
 — BLOOD (Doris) :  
 — « Women's Speech Characteristics in Cham »; *Asian Culture* 3 : 139-143 (1961).  
 — « The Y Archiphoneme in Hamarwa »; *Anthropological Linguistics* 4.4 : 29-30 (1962).  
 — « Proto-Malayo-Polynesian Reflexes in Cham »; *Anthropological Linguistics* 4.9 : 11-20 (1962).  
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Finally, let us come now to another field of Vietnamese studies which has brought a three-fold contribution to Chinese

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- BLOOD (Evangeline), « Some Fauna Terms in a Muong RoLom area; *Văn-Hóa Nguyệt-San* 12: 311-315 (1963).
  - BLOOD (Henry), « The Vowel System of Uon Njuin Muong RoLom »; *Văn-Hóa Nguyệt-San* 12: 951-965 (1963).
  - DAY (Colin),  
« Final Consonants in Northern Vietnamese »; *Việt-Nam Khảo-Cứ Tập-San* 3: 29-30 (1962).
  - DAY (Colin) et HOÀNG-VĂN-CHAI, *Lục Sao Sưa* (3 Tho Legends); mimeo SIL Saigon, 1963.
  - DONALDSON (Jean),  
« A Study of the Nang Tone in Vietnamese »; *Văn-Hóa Nguyệt-San* 12: 1151-1154 (1963).  
« *White Tai Phonology* »; Hartford, Conn., Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1963.
  - HAUPERS (Ralph), « Word-Final Syllabics in Stieng »; *Văn-Hóa Nguyệt-San* 11: 846-848 (1962).
  - LEE (Ernest), « Non-syllabic High Vocoids in Maguindanao »; *Studies in Linguistics* 16: 65-72 (1962).
  - MILLER (John), « Word Tone Recognition in Vietnamese Whispered Speech »; *Word* 17: 58-60 (1961).
  - PITTMAN (Richard),  
« Jari as a Member of the Malayo-Polynesia Family of Languages »; *Asian Culture* 1.4: 39-67, (1959).  
« Southeast Asia from a Linguistic Point of View »; *Đại-Học Văn-Khoa*. 1960, 154-160.
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All those archaeological Researches on the territory of Vietnam have featured eloquently so many relationships between Vietnamese culture on the one hand and Chinese, Indian as well as Austro-Asiatic cultures on the other one while showing mutual contributions of Vietnamese Studies and Asian Studies.

In this connection let us note that most of archaeological sites concerned took their names from many Vietnamese localities like Hòa-Binh, Bắc-Son, Đông-Son for instance.

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## CONCLUSION

Interrelationships and mutual contributions of Vietnamese culture and Asian cultures, as recorded above, are of the utmost interest in many respects.

From the remotest times, three greatest cultures had spread over all Asia: Such are Austro-Asiatic culture, Indian culture and Chinese culture. Many cultural elements have been borrowed from them by almost all the Southeast-Asian peoples.

The result was that there has not been so far any pure culture in any Asian people including India and China themselves. Thus the cultural past of Southeast-Asia has handed down to us many valuable experiences in the various fields of cultural interrelations.

With regard to Vietnam especially, she can show us a very interesting case of cultural-change.

In successive contacts with such exogeneous cultures as Austro-Asiatic, Indian and Chinese cultures, she has taken over some elements from foreign cultures, while rejecting other ones. This process testifies to the preexistence of an indigeneous culture in prehistoric Vietnam which must have played a decisive role in cultural selectivity on the occasion of each of her new acculturation.

The most salient characteristic of Vietnamese culture which

is its profound originality in spite of the heterogeneity of its cultural borrowings in the course of its history, may throw much light on the mechanism of transculturation as well of neo-culturation. At the same time, it proves to be very instructive for cultural anthropologists. It is the more so because Southeast-Asian cultures are undergoing a grave crisis originated from their contacts with other new cultures, of the East as well as of the West, some of which are basically opposed to their traditional spirit.

What can we do before this jeopardy which is challenging our national cultures? Our only hope, we dare think, is in Orientalists and their welcome contributions to Humanistic sciences.





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