

RESIDUAL CHINESE LOANS IN VIETNAMESE
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This paper is based on material in Paul Schneider's dictionary of Vietnamese as written in *chữ-nôm*—characters modeled after Chinese. Schneider provides abundant suggestions of possible Chinese etymologies for Vietnamese words. The example shown on the last page, for 'sail' is a particularly clear case of a Vietnamese item derivable from Early Middle Chinese (EMC) as reconstructed by Pulleyblank: **buam*. A subsequent stage, in Late Middle Chinese (LMC), led to the Sino-Vietnamese (SV) *phàm* and Modern Chinese (Md) *fán*. The character for the presumed Chinese source appears at the beginning of the entry labeled "nac" for 'nôm apparenté au chinois' (character related to Chinese). When he is not suggesting a connection, entries are labeled "n" (*nôm*) and are headed by the character he takes as being most commonly used in Vietnamese texts.

The citations given in an entry are from classical texts or historic dictionaries. In the case of borrowings, this guarantees at least their existence in the Southern Language, even if they are not found in readily available modern dictionaries.

Generally Schneider seems to have tried to find a Chinese connection for all the words he could. For a good many this seems to stretch the limits of phonological or semantic realism beyond what I find plausible. (He has in fact proffered Chinese sources for some words with widely accepted Mon-Khmer etymologies. At times he also mentions the Mon-Khmer similarities he had noted in his sources.)

I have been looking to find some patterns among the likely loans that go beyond those most characteristic of borrowings from EMC.

A. Residual ch .

The most striking anomaly I have so far located concerns the initial **ch** . In words that can readily be connected to reconstructable EMC forms, **ch** derives from a number of sources:

tç	chúa	lord
tr	chứa	to store
tş	chén	bowl
dz	chợ	market
dr	chè	tea
dz	chữa	repair
dz	chữ	a character
z	chước	ransom

From descendents of these in LMC only the first appears with **ch** in Sino-Vietnamese **chủ**. The muddy-tone examples above must be assumed to have been originally borrowed with initial [j], while the clear-tone ones had [c].

Surprisingly, there are quite a few words with initial **ch** showing plausible resemblance to Chinese forms but with reconstructed initials not on that list.

(Some of these etymologies have other problems.) EMC onsets that appear related are:

ts		SV
châm	soak	tắm
chêm.	wedge	tiêm
cháp	join	tiếp
chiên	fry	tiên

	chở	transport	tái
tçh	cháy	burn	xí
	chốt	pivot	xỉ
ç	chiên	sheep	thiên
	chốc	moment	thúc
	chú	father's younger brother	thúc
s	chan	tearful	san
sw	chửi	insult	toái
	chọn	choose	tuyễn

Well-behaved EMC borrowings would have the same initials as the SV forms except for ‘tearful’ which should also yield **th** . (It is believed **t < *s x < *c’ th < ʃ** in earlier Vietnamese.) (There are also a few look-alikes with other less-compelling relations to EMC ***t *d *k *ɣ**.)

My tentative hypothesis is that with extensive exposure to oral Chinese during the EMC period it might become evident that [c] and [j] could substitute for a variety of Chinese sounds—mostly affricates. I envision that occasional confusion with nearby sounds could easily become generalized.

B. Residual eo.

There is a consistent pattern of Chinese loans in which Vietnamese **eo** matches the EMC rhyme reconstructed as **a+w/e:w**. In this instance there is an obvious resemblance to the latter form. A convenient example is **beo** ‘leopard’ compared to SV **báo** from LMC ***pa:w** .

There are also other correspondences. Quite a few, like *teo* ‘shrine’ and *bèo* ‘duckweed’ match EMC **iaw* or **jiaw*. A scattering of others would relate to different rhymes if an EMC source is pertinent to their history.

<i>uw</i>	<i>mẹo</i>	scheme
<i>wiã</i>	<i>ngheò</i>	pour
<i>iã</i>	<i>theo</i>	follow
<i>ao</i>	<i>réo</i>	yell
<i>ɛw</i>	<i>lẻo</i>	limpid

C. Residual *âu*,

In the course of looking through this material I have come to the conclusion that **uw* of EMC gave rise to Vietnamese words in both *u* and *âu*. thus **kuw* can lie behind both words for ‘pigeon’ *câu* and *cu*. (Later shifts led to SV *cuu* and Md *jiu*. Such a name is subject to onomatopoea. There are also some suggestively similar Mon-Khmer forms.)

Yet other instances of *âu* seem to relate to other EMC origins.

<i>aw</i>	<i>bâu</i>	collar
	<i>bâu</i>	proceed
<i>w</i>	<i>bâu</i>	to cluster

R e f e r e n c e s :

- Pulleyblank, Edwin G. 1991. *Lexicon of Reconstructed Early Middle Chinese, Late Middle Chinese, and Early Mandarin*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Schneider, Paul. 1992. *Dictionnaire historique des idéogrammes vietnamiens*. Nice: Université de Nice-Sophia Antipolis. Unité de Recherches Inter-

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