On the Loans of Vietnamese Origin in the Saek Language

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INTRODUCTION

The manners of lexical borrowing could theoretically have a great number of varieties from "in a mutual way with a relatively homogeneous linguistic entity" to "under an overwhelming influence of several predominant neighboring dialects." When lexical borrowing occurs between monosyllabic tonal languages, the borrowing dialect receives words from the "lending" party, including its tones, and each of these borrowed tones ends up with identifying itself with the one among the borrowing dialect's tones that happens to have the most similar tonal features. Once the borrowing is over, the borrowed tones will evolve systematically in conformity with the already existing tones in the borrowing dialect. Hence, if lexical borrowing continues between two different tonal languages for some time, it is reasonable to expect that in due time there will be some irregularities between the two languages in the tonal correspondence of the dislocated vocabulary.

As for the three tones on smooth syllables considered to have existed in Proto-Tai, it is graphically convenient to mark 0 (for words having no tonal mark in the Siamese orthography), 1 (for those having the mark /máaj ʔèek/), and 2 (for those having /máaj thoo/) on the upper right side of the final letters in the transcription. These three tones show almost complete accord among the three branches (NT, CT, SWT) of Tai established by Fang Kuei Li (1977).

There exists a minority language called Saek spoken in some villages in the northeastern part of Thailand. As judged by its characteristic vocabulary and phonological features (Gedney, 1970), the Saek language is undoubtedly a member of the northern branch of Li's classification. When generally considering the Saek vocabulary, however, one immediately notices the occurrence of certain words extremely close to Vietnamese on a segmental level as shown in Table 1. A series of these Saek terms might invite some to assume a genetic affiliation of Saek with Vietnamese rather than a relation of substratum or superstratum only.

Contrary to the words given in Table 1, words such as *crab*, *grass*, *centipede*, *water buffalo*, *fingernail*, *tree*, etc., are ones having cognates in other Tai dialects, and the criteria for the borrowing are not necessarily evident.

The present paper aims at putting in order the apparently confusing sort of vocabulary of the Saek language. Let me now display a comparative wordlist for fifty items of Swadesh's basic vocabulary and reconfirm the Tai nature of Saek. For reference, Siamese (Southwestern Tai) and Lungming (Central Tai) are included. The former is based on the standard dialect of Bangkok Thai and the latter (Gedney, 1991) is spoken in Lungming in Kwangsi province in southern China. The Saek data are from my field notes.

Table 1. *Some Saek Words Apparently Similar to Vietnamese*

Gloss	Saek	Vietnamese	cf. Siamese
snail	ʔook⁶	ốc	hɔ̌j
cow	bɔɔ⁴	bò	wua
tooth	nɛɛŋ¹	nanh ('fang')	fan
bamboo	traa³	tre	phàj
gums	lɔəj⁶	lợi	ŋɯ̀ak
tortoise	rɔɔ⁴	rùa	tàw
sesame	vɯɯŋ¹	vừng	ŋaa

Comparison of Tones

The tonal details of the four languages to be compared are given in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2. *Correlations between Ancient Initials and Tones of Saek, Lungming, Siamese, and Vietnamese*

Saek

*initials \ *tones	0	1	2	DS	DL
Asp.	2	6	3	4	6
Non-asp.	1	6	3	4	6
Voiced	4	5	6	6	5

Lungming

*initials \ *tones	0	1	2	DS	DL
Asp.	1	2	3	3	2
Non-asp.	1	2	3	3	2
Glott.	4	2	3	3	2
Voiced	4	5	6	4	5

Siamese

*initials \ *tones	0	1	2	DS	DL
Asp.	5	2	3	2	2
Nonasp.	1	2	3	2	2
Voiced	1	3	4	4	3

Vietnamese

*initials \ *finals	Ø	-h	-ʔ	D
Voiceless	1	4	3	3
Voiced	2	5	6	6

Note that **Ø** as a Vietnamese ancient final refers to words having syllables without finals or ones ending in a sonorant (Haudricourt, 1954), while **D** indicates those with checked syllables distinctively treated in Tai dialects according to the vowel length ("short" or "long").

Table 3. *Actual Tonal Values of Saek, Lungming, Siamese, and Vietnamese (Numbers 1 and 5 indicate the lowest and the highest level of the voice range respectively.)*

Saek	Lungming	Siamese	Vietnamese
1. (334)	1. (55)	1. (33; no mark)	1. (44; no mark)
2. (11)[a]	2. (45)	2. (11; à)	2. (221; à)
3. (31)[b]	3. (33)[c]	3. (52; â)	3. (35~45; á)[d]
4. (55)	4. (21)	4. (45; á)[b]	4. (213; ả)
5. (53)	5. (11)	5. (213; ǎ)	5. (35; ã)[e]
6. (33)[b]	6. (212)[c]		6. (11; ạ)[b]

[a]With a rather breathy phonation.
[b]Glottalized at the end.
[c]Glottalized.
[d]Mostly on checked syllables.
[e]With /ã/ a glottal constriction in the middle of the vowel duration.

Basic Vocabulary

Fifty items of basic vocabulary from Swadesh's list (Swadesh, 1955) are given in Table 4 for the four languages.

Table 4. *Fifty Basic Lexical Items in Saek, Lungming, Siamese, and Vietnamese*

Gloss	Saek	Lungming	Siamese	Vietnamese
1. 'all'	thɯɯŋ⁴	taŋ⁴	tháŋ	tất cả
2. 'ash'	thaw⁵	pyaw⁵	thâw	tro
3. 'bark'	praak⁶	naŋ¹ (may⁶)	plɯak	vỏ
4. 'belly'	thuŋ⁶	tooŋ⁶	thɔ́ɔŋ	bụng
5. 'big'	bɯk⁴	luuŋ¹	jàj	lớn
6. 'bird'	nɔk⁶	nok⁴	nók	chim
7. 'bite'	ɣap⁶	kat³	kàt	cắn
8. 'black'	ram¹	nam⁴	dam	đen
9. 'blood'	luat⁵	lɯɯt⁵	lɯ̂at	máu
10. 'bone'	rɔɔk⁶	nok³	(kra-) dùuk	xương
11. 'breast'	ta-baaŋ¹	ʔɤk³	ʔòk	ngực
12. 'burn'	ham²	may³	mâj	đốt
13. 'cloud'	via³	phaa³	fâa	mây
14. 'cold'	seeŋ²	naaw¹	nǎaw	lạnh
15. 'come'	hun⁴, maa²	maa⁴	maa	đến

(Table continues.)

Gloss	Saek	Lungming	Siamese	Vietnamese
16. 'die'	praaj[1]	thaay[1]	taaj	chết
17. 'dog'	maa[2]	maa[1]	mǎa	chó
18. 'drink'	kin[1]	kin[1]	dɯ̀ɯm	uống
19. 'dry'	khoo[2]	khaɯ[2]	hɛ̂ɛŋ	khô
20. 'ear'	rua[4]	low[1]	hǔu	tai
21. 'earth'	ban[1]	(Nung tì)	din	đất
22. 'eat'	kin[1]	kin[1]	kin	ăn
23. 'egg'	trɔɔŋ[3]	lay[2]	khàj	trứng
24. 'eye'	praa[1]	thaa[1]	taa	mắt
25. 'fat'	man[4]	man[4]	man	mỡ
26. 'feather'	pun[1] nɔk[6]	khon[1] nok[4]	khǒn nók	lông
27. 'fire'	vii[4]	fay[4]	faj	lửa
28. 'fish'	praa[1]	pyaa[1]	plaa	cá
29. 'to fly'	bɯɯn[1]	min[4]	bin	bay
30. 'foot '	ɣeeŋ[5] (kua[1] 'leg')	khaa[1]	tiin (khǎa 'leg')	chân
31. 'full'	rim[2]	tim[1]	tem	đầy
32. 'give'	hɔɔ[3]	hˠɯ[3]	hâj	cho
33. 'good'	dii[1]	nay[4]	dii	tốt
34. 'green'	heew[2]	kheew[1]	khíaw	xanh
35. 'hair'	phram[2]	phyom[1]	phǒm	tóc
36. 'hand'	mɯɯ[4]	mˠɯ[4]	mɯɯ	tay
37. 'head'	thraw[3]	thuu[1]	hǔa	đầu
38. 'hear'	ñia[2]	yin[4]	jin	nghe
39. 'heart'	cɯɯ[1]	sim[1]	caj	tim
40. 'horn'	kaw[1]	kook[2]	khǎw	sừng
41. 'I'	hɔɔj[6]	ŋoo[5]	kuu	tôi
42. 'kill'	kaa[3]	khaa[3]	khâa	giết
43. 'knee'	kɔɔ[6]	khaw[2]	khàw	đầu gối
44. 'know'	rɔɔ[6]	low[6]	rúu	biết
45. 'leaf'	bɔɔ[1]	maɯ[4]	baj	lá
46. 'lie'	nuun[4]	noon[4]	nɔɔn	nằm
47. 'liver'	tap[4]	tap[3]	tàp	gan
48. 'long'	raj[4]	ley[4]	rii	dài
49. 'louse'	raw[2]	thaw[1]	hǎw	rận
50. 'man'	saaj[2]	laaw[6]	chaaj	đàn ông

LINGUISTIC MATERIALS ON VIETNAMESE

The Ancient Chinese items (abbreviated as AC) hereafter cited are according to Tōdō (1990).

Chữ nôm   字喃

Chữ nôm is estimated to be the oldest written linguistic material on Vietnamese (end of 13th C) and agrees with Japanese *Man-yō gana* in that they both utilize the phonetic aspects of Chinese characters to write down their own languages. The notation most frequently employed there is *xíng shēng*   形声   in which parts of two different Chinese characters representing phonetic and semantic content respectively are combined to form a new notion-sound compound (there are also cases in which each part combined is the whole of a certain character. The other methods adopted are *huì yì*   会意   in which only the meanings of characters are used independently of their sounds and *jiǎ jiè*   仮借   in which only the pronunciation of a certain character is employed as a substitute regardless of its meaning. *Chữ nôm* examples cited hereafter are from Takeuchi (1988).

Huá yí yì yǔ 華夷訳語

Huá yí yì yǔ is a collection of lexicons edited by the Chinese with the purpose of learning languages of neighboring countries and areas. One of these lexicons, *An nán yì yǔ*   安南訳語   deals with the vocabulary of the Hanoi dialect of the 15th C, employing the method of *jiǎ jiè*   仮借   based on the sounds of Chinese during the period of the Ming dynasty (Gaspardone, 1953). In this material, a certain instability is already beginning to be attested with the phonetic value of ***r**, as can be seen in examples like **rộng** 'wide' (herein copied with 弄   (AC.*l-)), **răng** 'tooth' (copied with 生   (AC. *ṣ-)) and **rượu** 'liquor' (copied with 饒   (AC.*ř-)). It is also characteristically observed that the initial ***p** (<帛   (AC. ***b-**)> 'cotton cloth') that is to converge with ***w** after spirantization is here still consistently differentiated from the latter. The letter ꞗ is accorded to the former for the distinction in the *Dictionarium*.

Dictionarium-Annamiticum-Lusitanum et Latinum

It is a dictionary edited by Alexandre de Rhodes (1651) on the basis of a central dialect of Vietnamese. Here ***r** and ***j** are distinctively transcribed as **r-** and **d-** (a distinction still maintained except in northern dialects). The modified type of the letter ꞗ already referred to in the *Dictionarium* is presumably for representing a bilabial voiced fricative [β] that occurred at an intermediate stage of spirantization from ***p-** to modern **v-**. According to the dictionary, we can see that the Vietnamese

in the middle of the 17th C (at least around the area where the dictionary was compiled) still conserved initial clusters like **ml-**, **bl-**, and **tl-**. The notation employed here finally constituted the basic outline for the formation of the present Vietnamese orthography, thus causing a remarkable discrepancy between the actual Vietnamese orthography and the phonology of the modern Hanoi dialect. This dictionary is abbreviated as *Dictionarium* in this article.

Yuè nán hàn zì yīn 越南漢字音

In addition to those materials mentioned above, we have internal linguistic data within Vietnamese, namely, loanwords of Chinese origin or Sino-Vietnamese. The abundant quantity of vocabulary of this category in Vietnamese tells us eloquently about the overwhelming influence of Chinese on the Vietnamese language. These Chinese loanwords in Vietnamese are roughly grouped into three major categories on the basis of their origin and segmental features (Maspero, 1912). They are, first, *Gǔ hàn yuè yǔ*) 古漢越語   that indicates loans introduced during the first Vietnamese subordination to China (B.C. 111–A.D. 40), secondly, *Hàn yuè yǔ* 漢越語   that refers to those introduced together with characters most richly and systematically in the period of the Tang dynasty, and finally, the one called *Yuè huà hàn yuè yǔ*   越化漢越語   representing those among the former (*Gǔ hàn yuè yǔ*) that became colloquial and participated in the subsequent Vietnamese phonological mutations. Detailed information on *yuè nán hàn zì yīn* is obtainable from Mineya (1972).

PHONOLOGY OF SAEK AND VIETNAMESE

Saek Phonology

The inventory of Saek phonemes is given in Table 5.

It is to be noted that in Saek the original voiced plosive series ***b**, ***d**, ***ɟ**, ***g** developed into corresponding aspirated plosives **ph**, **th**, **(*ch >)s**, **kh** as in Lao and Siamese and differently from the other Northern Tai dialects. The rhymes **ɛɛ-**, **əə-**, **ɔɔ-** are probably what has recently been introduced through contacts with Vietnamese after its separation from Proto-Northern-Tai.

Table 5. *Saek Phonemes*

Simple initials	Initial clusters	Vowels

Simple initials					Initial clusters		Vowels						
b	d				bl		i	ii	ɯ	ɯɯ	u	uu	
p	t	c	k	ʔ	pr	tr	e	ee	ə	əə	o	oo	
v			ɣ		phr	thr	ɛ	ɛɛ	a	aa	ɔ	ɔɔ	
ph	th		kh		ml								
s			h				ia		ɯa		ua		
m	n	ñ	ŋ										
	r												
	l												
		j											

Characteristics of Vietnamese Phonology

Synchronic Aspects

To start with, the inventory of initials of the Hanoi dialect is displayed in Table 6. Orthographical notation is shown in parentheses.

Table 6. *Actual Vietnamese Initials (Hanoi Dialect)*

	t (t)	c(tr, ch)	k (c, k, q[u])	ʔ (no character)
f (ph)	th(th)	s(s, x)	x (kh)	h (h)
b (b)	d (đ)	z (d, r, gi)	ɣ (g, gh)	
v (v)	l (l)			
m (m)	n (n)	ñ (nh)	ŋ (ng, ngh)	

The consonants /b/ and /d/ in modern Vietnamese are pronounced as the implosives [ɓ] and [ɗ] respectively.

As a general rule, Vietnamese /-k/ and /-ŋ/ appear respectively as [-cˀ] and [-ɲ] after the front vowels /i,e,ɛ/.

Phonological interpretation		*Actual pronunciation*
/n ɛ ŋ/	⟹	[n ɛ̞ i̯ ɲ] 'fang'
+palatal		+palatal
cf. /ʔ o ŋ/	⟹	[ʔ ʌ̆ ṳ̆ ŋm] 'grandfather'
+labial		+labial

Only the vowels /a/ and /ə/ have phonologically distinctive length.

The Saek rhyme /-ɯa/ (one reconstructed in Proto-Northern Tai as well) is presumed to have already disappeared when Saek began borrowing words from Vietnamese and then was revived afterwards in Saek under probable foreign influences. Following are the grounds for the argument.

—The rhyme ***-ɯa** reconstructed in Proto-Northern Tai has been linguistically proved to occur as **-ia** or **-ua** in modern Saek (Kosaka, 1992a).

—Saek words like 'eel' (Viet. **lươn**) and 'to slip' (Viet. **trượt**), presumed to have been borrowed from Vietnamese, present vocalic forms that are inexplicable by Saek diachronic phonological rules ('eel' is **lian** in Saek instead of **luan** , while the vowel for 'to slip' is not **-ia** nor **-ua** but **-ǝǝ**).

—Words having **-ɯ a** in modern Saek are considered in general to be of loan-word origin ('love,' 'thing (from old Lao?),' 'for a long time,' etc).

Diachronic Aspects

The Vietnamese inventory of initials in the mid 17th C is represented in Table 7 with letters used in *Dictionarium*

Table 7. *Vietnamese Initials in the mid 17th Century*

	t	tr	ch	k/c/q[u]	(ʔ)
ph	th	s	x	kh	h
b	đ				
ƀ	d		gi	g/gh	
v	l	r			
m	n		nh	ng/ngh	

Among the phonemes in Table 7, **đ** issued from the original ***t** and ***d**, and its point of articulation in those days could have been of somewhat apico-alveolar inclination considering the coexisting **d-** in the cited document. The letter ƀ is, as already explained, presumed to have been used to represent something phonetically realized as [β] — a voiced bilabial fricative. The consonant **ʔ**, meanwhile, has never evolved into a grapheme. It might be confusing that as for **x-**, what is indicated here in *Dictionarium* is completely different from the phoneme **x-** adopted in the presentation of the phonological system of modern Vietnamese (Table 6), namely, **x-** in *Dictionarium,* as contrasted to the latter (phonetically [x]), should have been used to reproduce a sound like [ɕ] ~[ʃ] represented with the same letter in the Portuguese of those times.

The main diachronic changes in Vietnamese initials, except (3), are enumerated below (Muong forms are from Thompson, 1976).

(1) *p>b, *t>d

Vietnamese voiced stops (pronounced as implosives) correspond to voiceless stops in Muong. That is, proto-voiceless stops stay unchanged in Muong, while in Vietnamese they evolve to the actual sounds via an intermediary stage of preglottalization. Original voiced stops, on the other hand, became devoiced in Muong, whereas in Vietnamese they first devoiced themselves and converged on ***p** and ***t** to consequently be transformed into actual **b-** [ɓ] and **đ-** [ɗ] as with the original voiceless stops.

cf.	Vietnamese	Muong		Vietnamese	Muong
'three'	ba	pa	'go'	đi	ti

(2) -l → -j / V [- FRONT] ____ , Ø / V [+ FRONT] ____

Proto-final ***-l** palatalized to **-j** (orthographically **-y** or **-i**) in modern Vietnamese except that it appears when following front vowels /i, e, ɛ/ .

cf.	Vietnamese	Muong		Vietnamese	Muong
'to fly'	bay	păl	'light (weight)'	nhẹ	ñɛl-

(3) 'Spirantization'
    *-p/b-, -t/d-, -c/ɟ-, -k/g-, -s/ś->v-, d[z]-, gi [z]-, g/gh [ɣ]-, r[z]-

It is a phonological phenomenon in which original plosive initials, situated between prefix and vocalic nucleus, turn to corresponding (voiced) spirants (Ferlus,1982). This is a phenomenon observed typically and uniquely with Vietnamese among Viet-Muong dialects. Concerning the period of occurrence of this evolution, it had possibly started already in the 13th C supported by *Chữ nôm* examples like the words for 'cotton cloth' and 'pillow' (cf. **List of Loans** below), but the *Chữ nôm* has also an example suggesting ***k-** as in the word for 'a bear' (cf. Mod. Viet. **gấu**) and the degree of the progress of the phenomenon might have varied according to lexemes.

cf.	Vietnamese	Muong		Vietnamese	Muong
'shoulder'	vai	bay	'chicken'	gà	ka

(4) * s > t, * ś > th

The former change, according to the character applied to represent the word for 'umbrella,' is supposed to have been completed in the time of *Huá yí yì yǔ*, while the latter, judging from the character used for the word for 'meat,' was then yet to be accomplished. For further reference, in *Chữ nôm* 'clear (tở)' and 'love (**thương**)' are represented with characters that would imply that both of the phonological changes had not taken place in the period of *Chữ nôm*, while in *Dictionarium* they both carry initials after modification, denoting that ***s** >. **t** occurred approximately between 13th C and 15th C, and ***ś** > **th** occurred between 15th C and 17th C. The distinction between ***s** and ***ś** in question has been handed down exclusively to Vietnamese.

cf.	Vietnamese	Muong		Vietnamese	Muong
'eight'	tám	tham.	'breathe'	thở	thë´

(5) *ʔb > m, *ʔd >n

These changes had probably arrived before the 13th C as the phonetic parts of the *Chữ nôm* for 'taro (Saek **bɔɔn***ⁱ*)' and 'to taste (Saek **deem***³*)' are respectively 門 (AC. ***m-**) and 忝 (AC. ***n-**).

cf.	Vietnamese	Muong		Vietnamese	Muong
'sew'	may	băl	'water'	nước	dak´

In relation to (1) (page 133), there is a Saek word **tɔɔt**ᶜ 'sting' (Mod. Viet. **đốt**), suggesting a possibility that borrowing from Vietnamese by Saek precedes the change of ***t > d**. The fact that Saek has **bɔɔn**¹ and **deem**³ as shown in (5), on the other hand, allows us to hypothesize that mutations ***ʔb > m** and ***ʔd > n** must have been completed prior to or at least contemporarily with those of ***p > (*ʔb >) b** and ***t >(*ʔd>) d**, hence the borrowing of Vietnamese vocabulary by Saek could be summarized as having originated before the changes of ***ʔb > m** and ***ʔd > n**. The evolution of ***t > d** ((1)) probably must have been accomplished before that of ***s > t**, and the ***s > t** (**t** is already observed in *Huá yí yì yŭ*) should have been terminated before ***ʂ > th** (yet to be confirmed in *Huá yí yì yŭ*).

Two other phonological changes are explained below.

(6) Original sonorant initials ***w** and ***j** changed to the consonants [v] and [z] in the northern dialect of modern Vietnamese, both converging on the spirantized sounds of the plosives ***p, b,** and ***t, d** respectively. As for ***j** copied with the letter **d-** in *Dictionarium*, it was then probably pronounced as [d] somewhat palatalized, falling in with **gi-** and **r-** of the same material (assumed pronunciations at that time of the two are [dʑ] and [ʐ]) to ultimately become [z] in modern standard Vietnamese.

(7) ***tl > c (tr), *bl > c (tr) ~z (gi), *ml > ñ (nh) ~l (l), *kj > z (gi)** are the phonological developments of some initial clusters, of which in most instances the phonemes prior to the change still remain intact in *Dictionarium* except the last one, and therefore, the evolutions are considered to have been completed after the 17th C.

LOANS OF VIETNAMESE ORIGIN IN SAEK

List of Loans

Saek words taken to be loans from Vietnamese are given in phonological notation in Table 8. As supplementary information, each Vietnamese entry is accompanied by its orthographic form in parentheses. Rục and Thavung genetically both belong to the Pong-Chut branch of Viet-Muong. The "Proto-Viet-Muong" posited by Ferlus (1975) in contrast with his "Common Viet-Muong" is a theoretical proto-language presented as a result of reconstruction on the basis of dialects also from this Pong-Chut branch. Rục is based on Nguyễn, Trần, and Ferlus (1988), while Thavung (1979), Vinh (1991), and Sô (1975) forms are all according to Ferlus. Note that the lexemes in lines 61–64 are similar to other Viet-Muong dialects rather than to Vietnamese. The Muong forms in 62 and 64 are from Sokolovskaja and Nguen (1987).

Table 8. *Examples of Saek Considered to be Loans from Vietnamese*

Gloss	Saek	Vietnamese	cf. Siamese
1. 'love'[a]	sɯaŋ²	thɯəŋ (thương)	rák
2. 'chin'	ka-haam⁴	haam (hàm)	khàaŋ
3. 'to taste'	deem³	nem (nếm)	chim
4. 'elder brother'	ʔɛɛŋ¹	ʔɛŋ (anh)	phîi chaaj
5. 'elder sister'	cii⁵	ci (chị)	phîi săaw
6. 'insipid'[b]	mlaat⁵	ñaat (nhạt)	cɯ̀ɯt
7. 'lightning'	cɔəp⁶	cɔəp (chớp)	lɛ̂ɛp
8. 'cow'[c]	bɔɔ⁴	bɔ (bò)	wua
9. 'beautiful'[d]	haj¹	haj (hay 'good')	săaj
10. 'eel'	lian¹	lɯən (lươn)	plaa lăj
11. 'delicious'	ŋɔɔn²	ŋɔn (ngon)	ʔa-rɔ̀j
12. 'late'[e]	thraa⁴	ce (trễ)	săaj
13. 'remember'	ñəə³	ñəə (nhớ)	cam
14. 'stupid'	jaaj⁶	zaaj (dại)	ŋôo
15. 'snail'	ʔook⁶	ʔok (ốc)	hɔ̌j
16. 'mass'	khook⁵	kuk (cục)	kɔ̂ɔn
17. 'incline'	ŋiaŋ²	ŋiəŋ (nghiêng)	ʔiaŋ
18. 'rich'[f]	traw¹	zaw (giàu)	ruaj
19. 'chew'	ñaaj⁴	ñaaj (nhai)	khíaw
20. 'tortoise'[g]	rɔɔ⁴	zuə (rùa)	tàw

Table continues.

Gloss	Saek	Vietnamese	cf. Siamese
21. 'borrow'	maan^4	mɯən (mượn)	jɯɯm
22. 'dry'	khoo^2	xo (khô)	hɛ̂ɛŋ
23. 'yellow'	vaaŋ^4	vaaŋ (vàng)	lɯ̌aŋ
24. 'mouth (lips)'	(rim) muam^4	mom (mồm)	pàak
25. 'sesame'[h]	vɯɯŋ^1	vɯŋ (vừng)	ŋaa
26. 'to slip'	thrəət^5	cɯət (trượt)	phlâat
27. 'avoid'	trɛɛŋ^3	cɛŋ (tránh)	lìik
28. 'to sting'	tɔɔt^6	dot (đốt)	tɔ̀j
29. 'white (cow)'	baak^5	baak (bạc)	phɯ̀ak
30. 'worry (think of)'	lɔɔ^1	lɔ (lo)	khít thɯ̌ŋ
31. 'cool'	maat^6, nɛk^4	maat (mát)	jen
32. 'grandfather (pat.)'	ʔooŋ^4	ʔoŋ (ông)	pùu
33. 'bamboo'[i]	traa^3	cɛ (tre)	phàj
34. 'egg'	trəəŋ^3	cɯŋ (trứng)	khàj
35. 'silent'[j]	mit^6	mik (mịch)	ŋîap
36. 'pair'[k]	tooj^1	doj (đôl)	khûu
37. 'spine (fish)'	ŋɛɛŋ^6	ŋɛŋ (nganh)	ŋîaŋ
38. 'flow'	trooj^1	coj (trôi)	lǎj
39. 'thirsty'[l]	haat^6	xaat (khát)	jàak, hǐw
40. 'tooth'	nɛɛŋ^1	nɛŋ (nanh'fang')	fan
41. 'gums'	ləəj^6	ləəj (lợi)	ŋɯ̀ak
42. 'bridge'[m]	khaw^4	kəw (cầu)	khua (Lao)
43. 'story'[n]	cian^5	cwiən (truyện)	rûaŋ
44. 'speak'	nɔɔj^3	nɔj (nói)	phûut
45. 'pull'	looj^1	loj (lôi)	lâak
46. 'pupil (eye)'	trɔɔŋ^4	cɔŋ (tròng)	duaŋ taa
47. 'sick'	ʔoom^3	ʔom (ốm)	(pen) khâj
48. 'wide'	rooŋ^6	zoŋ (rộng)	kwâaŋ
49. 'bag'[o]	daj^5	daj (đãy)	thǔŋ
50. 'tremble'	ruŋ^1	zuŋ (rung)	sàn
51. 'hat'	moo^4, muak^2	mu (mũ)	mùak
52. 'piece (cloth)'	mɛɛŋ^6	mɛŋ (mảnh)	chín
53. 'lose (battle)'	sua^2	thua (thua)	phέɛ
54. 'chopping board'	thəət^6	thəət (thớt)	khǐaŋ
55. 'guard, keep'[p]	kɯɯ^3	zɯ (giữ)	waj

Table continues.

Gloss	Saek	Vietnamese	cf. Siamese
56. 'look'	nɔɔm[1]	nɔm (nom)	duu
57. 'cotton cloth'[q]	paaj[1]	vaaj (vải)	fâaj
58. 'burn'	ham[2]	həm (hâm 'warm up')	mâj
59. 'return'[r]	prəə[6]	cəə (trở)	klàp
60. 'loose'	lɔɔŋ[1]	lɔŋ (lỏng)	lǔam
61. 'wash (head)'	pɔɔ[1]	pɔ́ 'wash' (Rục)	sà?
62. 'crest'[s]	khian[4]	kɔ́ñ[1] '(fine-toothed) comb' (Muong)	ŋɔ̌ɔn
63. 'left'[t]	vɛɛn[6]	vɛɛl[1] (Thavung)	sáaj
64. 'pillow'[u]	heen[2]	ɣoj (gối); kêl[3] (Muong)	mɔ̌ɔn

[a]Represented with <傷 (AC. *ʃ-)> in *Chữ nôm*. The borrowing probably occurred before Vietnamese evolution of ***ś > th**.

[b]Consonant cluster **ml-** found in *Dictionarium* is precisely conserved in Saek.

[c]The coexistence of voiced plosive initial **b-** and tone n° 4 in Saek shows the impossibility of the word being of properly Tai origin. The word was possibly borrowed from Vietnamese after the devoicing of initials in Saek, or the initial in question introduced into Saek might have been something like [mb-] phonetically, resulting in the preservation of voicing in the initial and the development of a tone from an ancient voiced initial. (Normally, actual voiced plosive initials in Saek derive from the preglottalized series of initials.)

[d]Ferlus (1982) asserts that initial **h-** in the cited word goes back to ***q**, which would explain the seemingly incomprehensible tonal disagreement.

[e]Saek **thraa⁴** 'late,' seemingly to be traced back to Chinese < 遲 (AC.***ɖ-**) >, is supposed to have been borrowed before the transition of ***ɖ > ʈ** in Vietnamese, judging from the initial aspiration in Saek. The mutational process of the initial, therefore, might be ***ɖ** (in Chinese of the Tang dynasty) → ***ɖ** (into Vietnamese; at this stage borrowed by Saek) → (***dr->**) **thr-** (in modern Saek).

[f]In spite of **giàu** in modern Vietnamese carrying a tone of an original voiced initial, Saek **traw1** has tone n° 1, indicating an original voiceless initial, provided that Proto-Viet-Muong ***kca:w** reconstructed by Ferlus (1991) permits us to expect a high register tone (cf. Vinh dial. **tràu**, Rục **kəcaw**).

[g]Cf. Vinh. dial. **rò/rùa**.

[h]Concerning the Saek tone indicating an original voiceless plosive initial, the fact that 'sesame' in *Huá yí yì yǔ* is copied with <共(AC.***k-**)> and that [ʔweː] 'native village' is seen in the Saigon dialect (Standard Viet. **quê**) is quite suggestive in tentatively reconstructing ***kwɯɯŋ—>*ʔwɯɯŋ** presumably a borrowing by Saek—here as proto-form. **ləvɯɯŋ** in Rục probably is a form reflecting a different prefixation.

[i]The vowel in Vietnamese **tre** [cɛː], contrasted with that of Saek **traa³**, possibly indicates that the vowel -**ɛɛ** did not exist in Saek at the time of the borrowing and **aa**- was thus applied as a substitute. On the other hand we have a Saek word like **neeŋ**[j]— probably a loan from Vietnamese (cf.40) —which implies that the borrowing of Vietnamese vocabulary by Saek could have continued over quite a long time.

[j]The cited Vietnamese is supposed to have some relation with Chinese <黙 > 'silent' (AC.**mək**; Vietnamese **mịch** is phonologically interpreted as /mik/). The Saek form with final -**t** might be what was modified from the borrowed **mịch** for want of final -**c** in Saek.

[k]Probably the borrowing was done prior to the occurrence of *t >ʔd in Vietnamese.

[l]Borrowed after the 17th C when *kh > x was completed in Vietnamese? It is copied with < 各 (AC.**k-**) > in *Huá yí yì yǔ*.

[m]Saek must have introduced the word from Vietnamese with initial *g-, considering the aspiration in the Saek initial. Vietnamese has doublets for 'bridge'—**kiều** and **cầu** —the former being categorized as *Hàn yuè yǔ* (introduced together with characters) and the latter as *Yuè huà hàn yuè yǔ* (having undergone a typical Vietnamization of "demedialization"). The fact that Saek **khaw⁴** is precisely a reflected form of **cầu** also marks the colloquial nature of the latter.

[n]While Vietnamese words of Mon-Khmer origin with initial **tr-** ('egg,' 'avoid,' etc.) appear for the most part as having **tr-** as initial in Saek after the borrowing, the initial of Saek **cian⁵** here, probably related to Chinese < 伝 (AC.**ɖ**) >, adds strength to Li Wang's remark (1958) that there used to be an initial fluctuation **tr~ch** in the Vietnamese vocabulary of Chinese origin.

[o]As for the question of the tone-initial correlation, cf. note c.

[p]In connection with this word, in Ferlus (1979) we have a Thavung cognate **kyuu¹** 'wind' (Mod. Viet. **gió**), of which the initial **ky-** (=**kj-**) agrees with one deduced from < 教 (Mod.Mandarin [tɕ-], AC.**k-**)> recorded in *Huá yí yì yǔ*. The confirmation of the initial **ky-** in Thavung would lead us to affirm that the initial **gi-** of part of the Vietnamese vocabulary issues from proto *kj-. This fact, reinforced by initial and semantic correspondences, might help us judge that the Saek word in question is doubtlessly a loan from Vietnamese. Maspero (1912) assumes that this phonetic change (*kj- [kj] > *gi- [dʑ]) occurred in Vietnamese sometime between the 15th and 16th centuries.

[q]If the borrowing is truly from Vietnamese, it should have been at least before spirantization. Given the characters with which the word was copied in *Chữ nôm* and *Huá yí yì yǔ*, it seems quite difficult to specify when exactly the word was introduced only with the information supplied by the cited materials.

[r]It is traced back to *pləə according to Thompson (1976), probably undergoing thereafter the following development: *pləə > (*tləə >) *trəə > cəə.

[s]Concerning the actual slight semantic discrepancy, English *comb* is to be compared. The initial **kh-** in Saek shows that the word was introduced into Saek with voiced initial ***g-** as in the case of line 42 in the table.

[t]What was borrowed by Saek might possibly be a native Vietnamese form of authentically Mon-Khmer origin that already disappeared. I sporadically observed a final **-l** for this word with an aged informant (Kosaka, 1992b).

[u]Cf. *Sô* **təkɔl** 'pillow', Thavung **ckuu**[4] 'a bear' versus Standard Viet. **gâ̭u** 'a bear.' The phonetic part of the *Chữ nôm* for this word (AC.***ɦ-**), allows us to know that Vietnamese used to have initial ***x** or a similar spirantized initial at that time. Speaking of spirantization, Ferlus explains its process of generation as in the following manner (**A**). Suppose we apply the rule here and replace the initial **p-** with **k-**, **A** turns to **B** and we therefore have ***x~*h** as the assumed initial of the word at the time of the borrowing (***x-** changes to **h-** in Saek). Though appearing irredeemably separated from each other, they (**gô̭i** and **heen**[2]) reveal quite probably some connection with a prior common antecedent by allowing us to reconstruct a borrowed form ***xeel** (<***keel**) by means of the phonological rules of "spirantization" and "disappearance of the final **-l**," both diachronically confirmed in Vietnamese. As for the final, the change **-l >-n** is here understood as internal evolution within Saek, based upon the observation of **-l** in Saek by Haudricourt and Gedney.

A* Kp- >*Kɸ-(spirantization) >* (K)ɸ- > *β- > v- (Mod. Viet.)
    (**K** is a representative of some prefix independently of its phonetic form.)

⇓

B* Kk- >*Kx-(spirantization) > *(K)x-(borrowed by Saek)> ɣ-(Mod.Viet.)

From the loans we have checked so far, it is known that in most cases the Vietnamese tones [a à] correspond among ancient Saek tones to *0, and [á ạ] to *2/proto-checked syllables (Table 9). These tonal correspondences probably indicate that in the times when the borrowing commenced, tones had already existed in both languages, whose tonal features should roughly have conformed within each pair of the two above, and that when Vietnamese vocabulary entered into Saek, these tonal features were also borrowed and underwent the subsequent phonological developments, including their splits just as the native Saek vocabulary.

Concerning the remaining tones [ả ã] and *1, it would be worth mentioning here that in Thavung the final **-h** still persists and hence it lacks any tonal category corresponding to Vietnamese [ả ã]. The tones of a lexical series not abiding by the presented tonal correspondences could be due to some secondary alternation or to external origin by way of some other dialects.

Table 9. *Correspondences between Actual Vietnamese Tones and Ancient Saek Tones*

Vietnamese tones	[a à]	[ẳ ã]	[á ạ]
Ancient Saek tones			
*0	1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11,17,18,19,20, 22,23, 24,25,30, 32,36,38,40,42, 45,46,50,53,56, 58	12, 51, 57, 60	21, 64
*1		49,52,59	5,43
*2	33	55	3,13,14,27, 34,37,41,44, 47,48
*checked syllables			6,7,15,16,26,28 29,31,35,39,54

Characteristics Observed in Loans

1. Regular tonal correspondence is attested with most of the loans, that is, Vietnamese [a à] and Saek ***0**, and Vietnamese [á ạ] and Saek ***2**/ proto-checked syllables.

2. Some loans show signs of having been borrowed in the times when Vietnamese had not suffered from the devoicing of initials (cf. 'bridge,' 'to slip,' etc.); more concretely, it is highly probable that Saek had initiated the borrowing before the 10th C, the time of the formation of Sino-Vietnamese where it is assumed that the initials had already devoiced themselves by the fact that the split six tones are there distributed in such a manner as to properly reflect the state of Chinese tones after the tonal split (Mineya, 1972, pp.160–161).

3. There is a probability that the final **-l** existed in the oldest strata of loans (cf. 'left,' 'pillow')

4. The phenomenon of "spirantization" as evident index of Vietnamization is observed in the Saek vocabulary of apparently Vietnamese origin (cf. 'pillow').

As judged only from linguistic evidence, there are a certain number of items among the cited loans, of which it is not definitely clear whether they came from Vietnamese or Muong (or some other Mon-Khmer language or even Common-Viet-Muong). I, notwithstanding, argue temporarily that Saek principally treats Vietnamese and not Muong as source of borrowing. This is based upon some circumstantial facts mentioned below, though they are not entirely determinative.

1. Question of the expected geographical and social predominance of the Vietnamese over the Muong on the hypothesis that the two were already independent tribes when Saek began the hitherto-mentioned borrowing.

2. Persistence in Saek villages of a traditional custom of deifying Grandpa **muu⁵** identified by the Saek people as a Vietnamese.

3. The possibility of pointing out loans insinuating some phonological characteristics typically observed in Vietnamese (like "spirantization") in the Saek vocabulary in question.

Incidentally, it is confirmed that tone n° 1 appears with some of the Saek loans with sonorant initials. In this context, the fact that preglottalized sonorant initials (**ʔm, ʔn, ʔl**, etc.) can be seen in Bahnar (of the Mon-Khmer family) and several Miao dialects as well, permits us to assert that such preglottalized initials as [*ʔl] and [*ʔn] might have existed phonetically in Vietnamese at one time, these assuming subsequently high-register tones as opposed to words with proto-voiced initials. Words with these preglottalized initials, after being borrowed by Saek on the other hand, took part in the individual tonal evolution (tone n°1), as in the examples of *30,40,45,50* and *60* of Table 9 when equipped with a tonal contour corresponding to Saek's ancient ***0**.

CONCLUSION

Reasoning from what we have surveyed so far and the present geographical location of the dialects concerned, we may conclude that the Saek people started a southward migration earlier than any other member of the Northern Tai group, leaving from somewhere around the provinces of Kwangsi 广西 or Kweichow 貴州 in southern China. They then reached the plains within the present Vietnam, being linguistically influenced thereafter by the Vietnamese language throughout their gradual southward dislocation, before coming into contact with Southwestern Tai speakers whose dialects changed ***b**, ***d**, ***ɟ**, and ***g** to their aspirated counterparts. This probably occurred at a time when the Saek language still maintained voiced plosive initials. The migration of the Saek people concluded when they settled at the present localities along the Mekhong River. As to when in detail the significant lexical movement commenced between Saek and Vietnamese, it seems possible to date it to an era when both languages still retained the voiced plosive series of initials (i.e. before the 10th C). More strictly speaking, on the basis of Saek, it must have happened sometime after the loss of the rhyme ***-ɯa**, and from Vietnamese point of view, on the other hand, it should be at least prior to the disappearance of the final **-l** and the nasalization of the preglottalized series of initials. The two languages must have since continued to maintain close and extensive contacts with each other for quite a long period of time.

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