

# A. Note on Ta-oi, Nge', and Nyaheun

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A short linguistic workshop was held in October 1968 in Pakse, Laos for OMF missionaries working in the Ta-oi [ta oaih], Ngeq [ŋe ?], and Nyaheun [ñahə. ñ] languages, (The Nyaheun call, themselves simply hə.ñ.) Ta-oi and Ngeq are found in Saravane province, and belong to the Katuic subgroup of Mon-Khmer, closely allied to Pacoh of Viet Nam. Nyaheun is found in Attopeu province, and belongs to the Bahnaric subgroup of Mon-Khmer. Many resemblances were noted between Nyaheun and Jeh-Halang.

Each of the workers has now completed a phonemic analysis in his respective language and we hope that these will appear in *Mon-Khmer Studies IV*. A few of the findings of special interest are the following.

Ngeq vowels have an onglide system —  $\text{wa}$ ,  $\text{wa}_\text{a}$ ,  $\text{wa}_\text{ɔ}$ ,  $\text{wa}_\text{ɔ}$ , — for which we may perhaps expect a correlation with registre.

Both Ta-oi and Ngeq have post-glottalized nasals and post — glottalized liquids in word final consonant position.

In Nyaheun presyllable vowels have largely dropped out, resulting in the initial consonants of the main syllables becoming more complex, including preglottalization, preaspiration, prenasalization and doubling.

In the Nyaheun vowel system the long /i/ and /u/ have shifted phonetically to [iɛ] and [uɔ], and they with the offglides /ia/ and /ua/ appear to be in the process of shifting out of the predominant short/long/offglide system and being incorporated into the onglide system. The onglides occur with each of the vowels, but only in a short list of words. Furthermore, stress varies between onglide and vowel, making interpretation between offglide, onglide, or palatalization-labialization very difficult.