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- (1) A Layer of Dongsonian Vocabulary in Vietnamese
- (2) Historical
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Abstract

In Proto Viet-Muong, the following series of voiceless stops can be reconstructed :

Proto Viet-Muong	p	t	c	tʃ	k	ʔ
Viet. (quốc ngữ)	<i>b</i>	<i>đ</i>	<i>ch</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>c/k</i>	<i>#</i>

The proto phoneme **tʃ** (*x*) is represented only in a short list of vocabulary properly Vietnamese, except Sino-Vietnamese vocabulary. It does not have correspondences in the other languages of Viet-Muong group, nor in the languages of the other groups.

The Vietnamese language comprises a short but significant list of pairs of words made of a verb with initial *x* associated to a nominal derivate with initial *ch* :

<i>xáy</i> ‘dig, hollow, excavate’ /	
<i>xay</i> ‘grind, husk (rice)’	<i>chày</i> ‘pestle’
<i>xeo</i> ‘lift up with a crowbar’	<i>chèo</i> ‘oar’
<i>xum</i> ‘gather, form groups’ /	<i>chùm</i> ‘bunch, cluster’
<i>xúm</i> ‘gather, form groups’	<i>chùm</i> ‘assemble, gather’
<i>xĩa</i> ‘pick, jab, to put on a spit’	<i>chĩa</i> ‘pitchfork, trident’
<i>xỏ</i> ‘string, pierce’	<i>chõ</i> ‘earthenware pan to cook sticky rice’

The derivational relationship between *x* and *ch* is particular to Vietnamese. It can be explained by an ancient infix **-r-** with instrumental meaning. Thus, in PVM:

tʃ (*x*) + *infix -r-* > **tʃr** > **ʃ** (*ch*)

Let us examine the semantic pair "husk, pound (rice) - pestle" in Viet-Muong and some austroasiatic languages:

VIET-MUONG : PVM **tʃeʔ/tʃe:** - **tʃreʔ** [**tʃeʔ** > (*duplication*) **tʃ-tʃeʔ** > (*loss of ʔ and monosyllabization*) **tʃe:**] ; Viet *xáy/xay* - *chày* ; Muong **saj¹** - **k^haj²** [in muong **Cr** > **k^h**] ; Cuói **saj¹** - **re:¹** ; Sách **cuk⁷** - **əri:¹** ; Arem **tluh** - **rr:¹**. KATUIC : Souei **ntap** - **n^drè:** ; Kantou **kloh** - **ntre:**. BAHNARIC : Proto-B **pəh** - **ʔənrəj** ; Proto-North-B **pəh** - **ʔənrəj** ; Proto-West-B **jaʔ** - **ʔrəj** ; Laven/Jru' **tpeh** - **ʔrej** ; Nyaheun **jaʔ** - **ʔre:** ; Proto South B **pəh** - **rənaj**. NORTHERN MON-KHMER : Khamou **hic** - **cn^dreʔ** ; Phay **k^hət** - **ŋgleʔ** ; Phong keneng **kal** - **kanre:/kare:** ; Wa pəraək **tah** - **grìʔ** ; Palaong taʔa:ŋ **đoh** - **gre:**. KHASI : *du* - *synrei*. MON : **jàc** - **rì²**. KHMER : **bok** - **ʔəŋre:**. PEARIC : **čha:k** - **rəhi:**. MUNDA : Sora **taŋlad** - **ənrìj** ; Gorum **taŋlad** - **in(d)ri**.

Conclusions :

(1) In Austroasiatic languages examined here, the words for "pestle" have the same etymology, but Vietnamese is the only language to have preserved the verbal base "husk, pound (rice)" which produced the derivative noun "pestle". It means that the pestle was invented in the linguistic area from which Vietnamese comes.

(2) An infix **-r-** with instrumental meaning has been highlighted. It is present in the five vietnamese allofamic pairs with initials *x* - *ch*.

(3) These archaic features are survivals of the language of Dongsonians, ancestors of the Vietnamese.

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