Community Organization Forms of Mon-Khmer Linguistic-ethnic Groups: An Interdisciplinary Approach

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Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

Short Communication

ABSTRACT

Applying the interdisciplinary approach and the retrospective methods of archeology, ethnography, history, ethnolinguistics, the paper tries to clear the process and status of the Mon-Khmer linguistic-ethnic groups' community organizations that much changed in the history. Starting from the primitive defense form of hamlets, most of the linguistic-ethnic groups used the adjectives meaning "round" to organize the nouns indicating the forms of hamlet – their fundamental community organization. Particularly, the North Bahnaric sub-branch borrowed the nouns of plầy, plâi from Austronesian languages to indicate their hamlets. The larger than the hamlets is forms of village, leaving traces in the nouns of plang of Bahnar, kruang of Bru, làng of Viet and làng of Muong. From forms of the community organization of hamlet and village, Viet-Muong people advanced towards establishing nước "nation" as a supreme administrative-political institution. The parallel structure of làng-nước "village-nation" has been maintained until the end of the nineteenth century.

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1. INTRODUCTION

According to linguistic classification, Austro-Asiatic linguistic family that distributes from East India to South East Asia and South China roughly consists of three branches: Nicobarese, Munda, Mon-Khmer. In which, Mon-Khmer branch is the largest and includes more one hundred linguistic-ethnic groups living in Vietnam and South East Asia: Bahnar, Brao, Bru, Chrau, Cua, Koho, Katu, Jeh-Trieng, Hre, Khang, Khmer, Khmu, Ma, Mang, M'nong, O-du/Tay Hat, Romam, Ta'ioh, Xinh Mul, Sedang, Stieng; Chut, Muong, Tho, Kinh/Viet, etc.

Due to the evolution and acculturation, the community organizations of the Mon-Khmer linguistic-ethnic groups have changed so much. In their family modes, there are different forms of patriarchy, biformed, matrilineal, and transition. In their forms of family, there are all types of great family, small family and in their community organizations, there are different forms of hamlet, village, nation, etc. Therefore, when contacting their forms of community organization, people could not help being confused by their diversity. For example, the concepts of "hamlet" and "village" popular in Mon-Khmer linguistic-ethnic groups are described by different nouns as follows:

- Viet-Muong (Vietic) sub-branch: Ruc: kaBêl[1] "hamlet, village". Muong: quêl / quên "village"; quê "homeland, country"; làng "village" (Thanh Hoa Province). Viet: quê "homeland, country"; kẻ "residential unit"; làng "village"[1].

- Khmuic sub-branch: Ksing Mul: col "village".

- Katuic sub-branch: Bru: vil "hamlet, village". Ta-oih: wel / wil "village". Katu: vel "village"; bhươl "village".

- North Bahnaric sub-branch: Jeh-Trieng: plây "village". Sedang: vi "village"; plâi "hamlet". Cua: plây "village". Hre: plây "village". Bahnar: plây "village".

- South Bahnaric sub-branch: Mnong: bon / uan "village, homeland". Koho: bòn "village, homeland". Stieng: bon "village"; poh "village"; văng / wăng "village".

That situation poses at least three questions:

(1) It can be said that the Mon-Khmer languages namely Ruc, Muong, Viet, Bru, Ta-oih, Katu, Mnong, Koho, Stieng, Ksing Mul are relatively uniform at calling their fundamental community organization forms through the phonetic reciprocal and semantic similarity of nouns denoting "hamlet, village". However, as we can see, the south Mon-Khmer languages as Bru, Ta-oih, Katu, Sedang, Mnong, Koho, Stieng use only nouns with initials being labial consonants v-, w-, b-, p- (vil, wel / wil, vel / bhươl, vi, bon / uan, bòn, bon / poh / văng / wăng); while the north Mon-Khmer languages as Ruc, Muong, Viet, Ksing Mul use nouns with preceded element being consonant k- (kaBêl[1], quêl / quên, quê, kẻ, col). Why is there the significant difference between the south Mon-Khmer languages with the north ones?

(2) Why do the North Bahnaric languages as Jeh-Trieng, Sedang, Cua, Hre, Bahnar use a completely different noun from the Mon-Khmer languages as plây, plâi for denoting "hamlet, village"? Where is this noun from?

(3) Similarly, in Vietnamese, while quê "homeland" and kẻ "residential unit" have remained, the noun of làng "village" has appeared too. According to Vietnamese Dictionary [1], quê is "where the family, lineage spent many generations making a living, for myself often has emotional natural connection"; kẻ is "(old; usually used before a place name). Residential unit, where often has markets". Furthermore, làng is "rural residential block forming a unit which has separate life in many aspects, and is the lowest administrative unit in feudal time". Thus, the meaning denoting community organization form of clan remains vestige in quê and kẻ. However, quê and kẻ almost no longer have been used to denote fundamental community organization form of the Viet people anymore. That role has been replaced by làng "village". The Muong people in Thanh Hoa Province (Northern Central Vietnam) has also noun of làng, homonymous and synonymous with the Vietnamese noun of làng "village". So where are the nouns of làng "village" from?

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[1] *Except Aream language, the languages belonging to Viet-Muong (Vietic) sub-branch are tone languages. Thus, the vocabulary data of the languages of Ruc and Muong used in this article are followed by a diacritical marks or replaced by tone symbols: 1 (tone "ngang"), 2 (tone "huyen"), 3 (tone "hoi"), 4 (tone "nga"), 5 (tone "sac"), 6 (tone "nang"). For example: The notation kaBêl[1] means that the word kaBêl is spoken with tone "ngang" (smooth).*

Replying to those questions practically means to identify the process of formation and evolution of community organization forms of the ethnic groups. Thus the process left only blurred informations in the written history. The difficult condition of documentation caused scholars not to care about this auspicious topic. Therefore, the current study sought to apply the interdisciplinary approach, with retrospective methods and achievemens of the relating sciences as archeology, ethnography, history, ethnolinguistics, etc. In which the ethnolinguistic data are of the author, and being collected in the provinces of Truong Son Mountains and Central Highlands in Vietnam. According to linguistic convention, the author uses underline to denote a native word, which was followed by its meaning between quotes. And, according to convention of citation, the author uses italics to discriminate titles of mentioned works.

2. BUÔN "HAMLET" – FUNDAMENTAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION FORM

2.1 The Nouns Denoting "Hamlet", "Village" of the Mon-Khmer and Correlative Vocabulary

To answer the first question, and enlighten origin and meaning of the words, we need to set up a larger vocabulary comparative table, including all words related semantically and morphologically with the nouns denoting buôn, làng "hamlet, village" in the Mon-Khmer languages, as follows:

Table 1. The nouns denoting buôn, làng "hamlet, village" in Mon-Khmer languages

Languages		Adjectives	Verbs	Nouns
Viet-Muong (Vietic) sub-branch	Ruc		kaBa[4] "stir"	kaBêl[1] "hamlet, village", Bệnh[2] "rim (ear)", khwang[1] "owston", rơBaj[3] "hair vortex", saBạj[3] / swạj[3] "whirlpool"
	Muong	wặl "curved", wẽo "curved, turned", wĩl wĩl "rounded", quăn "curling", quằn quẽo "twisted, shriveled", queo "curved, certainty"	wảnh "eddy", wãnh "braid, plait, eddy", way "rotate", wằl "roll round", wẳn "roll", wẽl "turn", quai "stir", quay "rotate", quằn "bend", quấn "round", quenh "round", khoắl "pick", khoenh "coil"	wành "owston", wèl ang "whirlpool", wềnh "rim", wòng "circle", quêl / quên "village", quê "homeland, country", quằl "circle", khoảy "hair vortex", khoenh "coil"
	Viet	vạnh "circular", vành vạnh "circular", vạy "curved", vẫn "circular", (tròn) vìn "(circular) round", vòng "roundabout", oằn "bended", quanh "rounded", quăn "curly", quằn "twisted", quắn "very curly", quặn "crampy painfully", quần "circular", cong "curved", còng "bending", xoăn "curly"	vanh "cut round", vành "rim", váy "ear swab", văn "curl", vẳn "rise owstons in eyes", vặn "eddy", vần "roll", vấn "twisting", vây "hem", viên "make round by hands", vòng "curve", oằn "bend", uốn "curl", quanh "round", quành "turn", quay "rotate", quày "turn back", quặn "cramping painfully", quẩn "round", quấn "roll", quây "hem", quấy "stir", quậy "stir", còng "bend", cuốn "eddy", cuộn "roll", khoanh "coil", khoắng "stir", khuấy "stir", xoay "rotate", xoáy "eddy", xoắn "curl"	vành "rim", vằn "owston", vân "strip", vầng "halo", viên "balloon", vòng "circle", vừng "halo", quê "homeland, country", kẻ "residential units", quanh "round", quay "gyrostat", quầng "halo", còng "manacle", khoanh "coil", khoáy "hair vortex", xoáy "vortex"

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Languages		Adjectives	Verbs	Nouns
Khmuic sub-branch	Ksing Mul			col "village"
Katuic sub-branch	Bru	vứl "circular"	aviêl "rotate", ván "eddy, entwine", viêl "round", kavang "turn, hem", kuvang "roll, hem", kuvár "stir"	vil "hamlet, village", vứl "circle"
	Ta-oih			wel / wil "village"
	Katu	vil / tavil "circular", vạng "curved"	kavương "round", val "turn back", vạng "hem", vọʔ "stir"	vel / bhươl "village", aviḷ "hair vortex", kAng "wristlet", vương "circle"
North Bahnaric sub-branch	Sedang			vi "village"
	Bahnar	hoăng "bended"	veh "rotate", hoey "rotate", hoăng "bend", kơvâh "wave", kuanh "turn"	
South Bahnaric sub-branch	Mnong	vil "circular"	vănh "curl", văr "roll", vâr "stir", vel "roll", vên "roll"	bon / uan "village, homeland"
	Koho	wil "circular", wơl / gơwơl "circular"	wềl "hem", wơr "stir"	bòn "village, homeland", rơwềng "circle", kong "wristlet"
	Stieng	wil / rơwal "circular"	wâr "stir"	bon / poh / văng / wăng "village", kong "manacle, collar"
Khmeric sub-branch	Khmer	mul "circular", koông "curved"	wiêng "round"	viêl "field", wan / wun "circle"
Different Austro-Asiatic languages	Mon	wen "curved"		win "circle"
	Khasi		wan "wrap around"	
	Nicobarese	envin "circular"	hawin "wrap around"	

The above table shows clearly the cause of the difference between the languages in the South as Bru, Ta-oih, Katu, Sedang, Mnong, Koho, Stieng using only the nouns denoting "hamlet, village" with initials being labial consonants v-, w-, b-, p- (vil, wel / wil, vel / bhươl, vi, bon / uan, bòn, bon / poh / văng / wăng), with the languages in the North as Ruc, Muong, Viet, Ksing Mul using the nouns denoting "hamlet, village" with preceded element being consonant k- (kaBêl[1], quêl / quên, quê, kẻ, col). In my opinion, this k-factor primitive could be a noun denoting things (like ke[4] "what (article)" of the Ruc, cái "general things" of the Viet, etc.), was joined into the rest of words, and later became blear to turn into affixe. As we all know, the origin of affixes in languages are usually independent words used to organize compound words. Over time, the independent words were shortened and closely tied to the roots and became affixes. That situation could have occurred for affixes *k-, *ka- in the nouns denoting "hamlet, village" (kaBêl[1], quêl / quên, quê, kẻ, col) of the Ruc, Muong, Viet, Ksing Mul. The reason affixes *k-, *ka- denoting things must be joined is that the rest of words only mean "circular". In order to turn "circular" into nouns denoting residential form, they or turn its sound, turn its meaning, transfer its kind as the south Mon-Khmer languages did, or use affixes to nominalize it as such selection of the north Mon-Khmer languages. Similarly, in order to turn "circular" into a verb denoting circular action or motion they must join to it causative affixes (a-, pa-, ta-, ka-, ku-, sa- …), as the choice of most Mon-Khmer languages in the table.

The linguistic evidences above are compatible with the ethnographic and archaeological documentaries of the circular habitations of many Mon-Khmer linguistic-ethnic groups. In the community organization culture of the native ethnic groups in the Central Mountains and Highlands in Vietnam (Truong Son - Tay

Nguyen), buôn "hamlet" is a fundamental community organization form. Each buôn "hamlet" is a residential unit and an autonomous, defensive unit, developed from the primitive clan commune, has its own autonomous apparatus consisting of hamlet master, landowner, shaman, oracle, patriarches and hamlet elders, who self-regulate relations and resolve issues arising under customary. On the survey field, according to the ethnographic materials, traditional hamlets of the Bru, Ta-oih and Katu, who reside in Central - South Laos and Central Vietnam, are round or oval. Their housings, mostly small patrilineal families, are arranged around a wide beach, gyrate a community house (dống chống, roong, khoan, gươl) in the center. Around the hamlets there are ringfences, where people get in and out through the public gates. This is a typical defensive hamlet of the Mon-Khmer ethnic groups in the North Central Mountains (Truong Son Bac) in Vietnam [2]. Only in areas where the terrain is not suitable or for some hamlets built in recent years, that residential form omitted in order to layout housings along the roads, rivers, streams, and hillsides. As for the Bru people, according to the ethnographic materials [3] and according to my fieldwork survey, original vil "hamlet, village" was the residential form of the muôi tăng "clan". Every vil had more or less twenty families of the same lineage, living clustered together. Each muôi tăng had a dống chống "house-common" built by all clan or that was the house of patriarch (ariêih tăng, yống asĩauq, suôt). Because vil is the residential form of clan or expanded clan, in some areas the patriarch also concurrently hold the chief official positions in the autonomous apparatus of vil: suôt vil "hamlet master", suôt kutẽq "landowner", riêih sữq parnai "judge". Perhaps so, these positions are under father-to-son, older-brother-dies-younger-one-replace regime. Later, due to the muôi tăng expanded more and coexist with each other, each vil usually has many muôi tăng, blood relations in vil are fainter neighborly relations, and the vil are often no longer in a circle. To present day, however, Bru people still follow habits in which brothers of a family, lineage build their houses near each other after the own wife, so lineal people often cluster together, convenient for conduct of common festivals. For example, at the Huc Commune of Huong Hoa District, Quang Tri Province in Vietnam, there are 60 families belonging to Hok lineage settled, not to mention 40 other families of the lineage went to settle in Ea Hiu Commune, Krong Pak District, Dak Lak Province. The name of the Huc Commune was taken from the name of the clan Hok settled there.

In the Central Highlands of Viernam, until recently, each of the hamlets/villages of the Mon-Khmer ethnic groups only consists of one or several family lines. Consequently, some ethnic groups have custom in which family name is used as village name, and village name become family name. Due to strong influence of the ethnic groups of Austronesian linguistic family, circular inhabited forms of the Mon-Khmer ethnic peoples barely a trace in the Central Highlands. However, in the provinces of Kompong Cham (Cambodia), Binh Phuoc, Tay Ninh (Vietnam), where the ethnic groups of Mnong, Stieng, Ma inhabit, there are not less than 24 circular earthen battlements remained. Those relics were found from the year of 1930 by the archaeologist Louis Malleret (1901-1970) of the École française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO), and were researched by the archaeologists from the Southern Institute of Social Sciences (SISS) in Vietnam [4,5,6,7,8]. In the year of 1958, Louis Malleret described and mapped the distribution of 18 monuments, including 17 round relics excavated earth, including 12 sites in Binh Phuoc and 5 sites in Kompong Cham. They all have form of 2 concentric earthen battlement rings, about 100 m – 200 m in diameter, aiming to defense [9]. In the year of 1962, in Kompong Cham, Bernard-Philippe Groslier (1926-1986) unearthed the relic of Mimot, which is 200 m in diameter, has two doors, 3 m thick cultural floor consisting of 14 layers; and collected 1,000 stone artifacts, 20,000 pieces of pottery. Groslier called it "Mimot culture" and said that it is the most important Neolithic sites in Southeast Asia [10]. By 1999-2000, the Center for Archaeological Studies of the Southern Institute of Social Sciences conducted a large-scale survey, discovered and re-discovered a total of 18 circle earthen sites in the province of Binh Phước. In particular, they carried out a large-scale excavation at the ruins of An Khuong in An Khuong Commune in Binh Long District. The monument has 265m (east - west) diameter with two embankment rounds separated by a concentric moat. The monument is concave in the center and has two entrances symmetrical east - north and west - south. The west - south entrance is about 300m from a ravine. The east - north entrance overlooks the 1km, wide and flat valley of An Khuong [11].

That is why the Mon-Khmer languages from Viet, Muong, Ruc, Ksing Mul to Bru, Ta-oih, Katu, Sedang, Mnong, Koho, Stieng, use the

adjectives meaning "round" to construct the nouns denoting "hamlet, village".

2.2 Origin of the Word Plây, Plâi "Hamlet, Village" of the North Bahnaric Languages

The second question is not difficult to answer: The reason for languages of Jeh-Trieng, Sedang, Cua, Hre, Bahnar of North Bahnaric sub-branch to use a noun completely different from the Mon-Khmer languages such as plây, plâi to denote "hamlet, village", is that the minorities have borrowed it from the Austronesian languages distributed surroundingly: plơi of Jrai people and palay of Cham people.

Since BC, the Austronesian ethnic groups following matriarchal family regime have been in the Central Highlands of Vietnam and have caused profound customary and linguistic influences on the Mon-Khmer ethnic groups in this area, especially in family mode, family form and community organization form. Due to those influences, being different from the Mon-Khmer neighbors in the Truong Son region, the ethnic groups of Jeh-Trieng, Sedang, Hre, Bahnar in North of Central Highlands are under biformed family mode; their lineage relations, inheritance and marital relations do not lean on the side of the father as well as mother. Their fundamental residential unit plây, plâi is being held in the form of neighboring communes, which has the appearance and names imitating neighboring Austronesian peoples. The community houses (Bahnar: rôông), an institution of Mon-Khmer's community organization retained by those ethnic groups, do not throughout exist in every plây, plâi.

In contrast, the community organization form bon "hamlet, village" of Bahnaric languages also affected the Austronesian languages to create the noun bon "hamlet, village" which exists in parallel with the noun plơi "hamlet, village" in Jrai language, and to create the noun buon "hamlet, village" which totally replaced the noun denoting "hamlet, village" in Ede language. Part of the Jrai people nearby to the Bahnar people also has the community house in every plơi.

2.3 Acculturation and Creativity of the Viet-muong Languages

A secondary problem also need to be resolved: why is it that in the languages of Muong, Vietnamese is there a very large number of adjectives, verbs and nouns of which the meaning component is "round"? That is because, as the linguists and ethnographers pointed out, besides the original vocabulary Mon-Khmer, Muong and Vietnamese also received the source of the Tay-Thai vocabulary since the northern branch of Proto Viet-Muong contacted with the Tay-Thai peoples in the midlands and deltas in Northern Vietnam to begin forming Viet-Muong group from about the year of 2000 BC. Archaeological materials also confirmed that, about 4000 years ago, rice-farming tribes of the Phung Nguyen culture residing in the midlands and deltas in Northern Vietnam have reached a high level in techniques of making stone tools and have known metallurgy of bronze. The tribes followed primitive commune system, often lived on the high lands, the mounds near the rivers, grew rice, raised buffaloes, cattles, pigs, chickens, made pottery by turntable, etc. According to the archaeologist Ha Van Tan [12], residents of Phung Nguyen culture may be consolidated results between some Proto Viet-Muong tribes and ancient Tay tribes:

"The Chut language in the west of Quang Binh Province and the Poong language in the west of Nghe Tinh Province are the linguistic islands left over from a block of Proto Viet-Muong which widely distributed in former Area Four [North Central Vietnam] and possibly a part of the west of Truong Son Mountains. This Proto Viet-Muong residents is likely to be the owner of the post Neolithic or the early Metallic monuments somewhat near to the Phung Nguyen culture. Several Proto Viet-Muong tribes immigrated to the north as the Northern Plain was flooded. In the midlands along the plain, the tribes contacted with the ancient Tay tribes at that time widely distributing around the Hanoi Bay [delta of the Hong river today]. Proto Viet-Muong language gradually transformed into general Viet-Muong language. Perhaps the influence of Tay-Thai languages is one of the factors which promote that metabolism".

In the Tay-Thai languages there are a very large number of adjectives, verbs and nouns having a common meaning element that are "round", absolutely synonymous and uniform with the Mon-Khmer languages, with the reciprocal first consonants alternating as V, W, B, P, Ph, M, Kw, Khw, K. For example in Tay-Nung language: V, W: vẻn "bangle (wrist)", vẹn "encircle (thieves)", vện "(go) round, round (through), (road) around", vỉn "(Earth) revolve", vín "turn (head)", voỏng

"circle (round)", uổn "twist (body)"; B, P, Ph, M: bản "village", bủn "curl (lips)", bỉn "curl (lips)", pắn "turn (clockwise), rotate, roll (rock), (pinwheel) rotate, (water) vortex", phẳn "twist, twisted (rope)", mần "round", mồn "round"; Kw, Khw, K: quảng "put arms around (the neck), crossed (back), (saying) around", quầng "rim (hats)", quẩy "stir (powder), stir", quấy "stir", queng "surround, (go) round, (road) around", quển "wind (turban)", khoảng "go round (foot)", khoảy "vortex (top)", coóng "buckling (down)", cuốn "roll, wind (turban)" [13]. This shows that the group of words denoting concepts related "round, curve" may be the common group from ancient times of two branches of the Mon-Khmer and the Tay-Thai and not merely the result of borrowing between the two branches.

Besides, next to series of adjectives whose general meaning is "round" as vành vạnh, vạy, vẫn, (tròn) vìn, vòng, oằn, quanh, quăn, quằn, quắn, quặn, quần, cong, còng, xoăn, why does in Vietnamese appear the adjective tròn "round"? Precursor form of the tròn of the modern Vietnamese can be found easily in the medieval Vietnamese as tlòn in ancient dictionaries of 安 南 譯 語 (Translation of Annam language, XV-XVI centuries) and Dictionarium Annamiticum - Lusitanum - Latinum (Annam - Lusitan - Latin dictionary, 1651) [14,15] and in different Viet-Muong languages as Aream: tlon, Ruc: pulông[3] / klon[2], Muong: long, Muong Khoi: tlon[1], all of them mean "round". These forms are completely not found in other Mon-Khmer languages. So there is only explanation: tlon, pulông[3] / klon[2], long, tlon[1], tlòn and tròn are the particular, specific forms of the Viet-Muong, not of the Mon-Khmer in general.

3. LÀNG "VILLAGE" – SECONDARY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION FORM

3.1 Mon-Khmer Origin of the Word Làng "Village" in Viet-muong Languages

The third question is, while quê and kẻ still exist, why does in Vietnamese appear more a noun that is làng "village"? In Muong language in Thanh Hoa Province, there is also the noun làng "village". So where do the two words of làng "village" come from? Currently, among our linguistic data collected through field surveys, precursor traces of làng in Vietnamese and Muong Thanh Hoa were found in the languages of Bru and Bahnar.

So far, Bru people still reserve the noun kruang that refers to an ancient form of community organizations including many vil "hamlet, village", led by an ariêih kruang or tăng pử i.e. "chieftain" who was elected by heads of the group of vil in the kruang. If the noun vil "hamlet, village" is derived from the adjective vửl "round", said on the resident form aiming to increase the defenses of the muôi tăng "lineage" of the Bru days ago, the noun kruang is derived from the verb kruang "fence", shows kruang essentially was "allied clans", form of link of many vil "hamlet, village" in order to create greater defensive strength. Later, position of ariêih kruang or tăng pử "chieftain" of Bru people was replaced by Vietnamese feudal state with position of lý trưởng (head of commune) to manage đầu mục (heads of hamlets, villages); also in Laos, it is replaced with position of phò bản, who manages ariêih vil (heads of hamlets, villages). Today, although the organization kruang no longer exists, the noun kruang continues to be used by Bru people to denote "country, homeland, region, country, nature", and to create the nouns denoting higher community organization forms as kruang kutễq "country", dồng kruang "land, country, rivers and mountains, nation".

In Bahnar language, besides the words of lơm hnam "family", plây "village"..., there is the noun plang to indicate a level of community organization including many of the villages. Today, Bahnar's villages have become neighboring communes including many small families belonging to different lineages. But formerly, when kơtum "clan" of the Bahnar existed, the villages also were clan communes, so the unit plang was essentially "allied clans", form of community organization to link the plây "villages". Currently, Bahnar people also use plang as a sememe to construct a noun with more general meaning that is plây plang "co-villagers".

In addition, ethnographic materials said that in former times Bahnar people also set out t'ring, which was a form of temporary military alliance gathering villages to increase the power in combat. The t'ring of Bahnar people probably were influenced by organizational form k'ring (also known as hrơm pít plơi), a coalition form of many communes of Jrai people, formed in the century XV in Ayun Pa tableland, a vast and fertile plateau in North Central Highlands of Vietnam [16].

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3.2 Primitive Kruang, Plang, Làng: Allied Clans

The above practical meanings of kruang of the Bru and plang of the Bahnar completely correspond to the true meaning of làng of the Viet and the Muong in history. According to the historian Phan Huy Le [17], a key feature of rural communes in Vietnam at Hung Kings times (from seventh century to third century BC) is:

"Besides neighborly, geographic relations, blood relations had been preserved within the communes. In the villages there were family lines and many villages were named after names of the family lines as Hoang Xa, Cao Xa, Le Xa Dang Xa... Homeland of Mai Thuc Loan (century VIII) was Mai Phu Village (Thach Ha, Nghe Tinh), means the mound of Mai family line. Homeland of Duong Dinh Nghe (tenth century) was Ke Dàng, had the name of Duong Xa Village (Dong Son, Thanh Hoa). The above way of calling family line certainly appeared after the Hung Kings times, but the texture *'both village and family line'* or *'village-family line'* existed from ancient time. That is a type of rural commune lasting combinated with family commune (or clan commune), on the basis of geographical relations, blood relations were still preserved. This feature made the bond within the communes becomes durable".

Thus, Viet's làng, Muong's làng in history were forms of community organizations which like kruang of the Bru and plang of the Bahnar. And in terms of language, kruang, plang and làng may have the same origin, in which làng is the result of phonetic variant of a noun denoting form of allied clans of Mon-Khmer residents, similar to kruang and plang. In other words, làng is a form of allied clans originated from the Mon-Khmer, carried and changed by ancestors of the Vietnamese and the Muong Thanh Hoa to suit the conditions of residence in the midland and plain after separating from the block of Proto Viet-Katu.

4. NƯỚC "NATION" – SUPREME ADMINISTRATIVE - POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

4.1 Consolidation of the Villages to Form State

According to the archaeologist Ha Van Tan and the linguist Pham Duc Duong, ancestors of the Viet-Muong people were a part of Mon-Khmer residents who cultivated fields in the mountains. In contact area in Northern and North Central of Vietnam, the ancestors of the Viet-Muong people had acculturation of the ancient Tay to transform to the Viet-Muong people, and found first rice agriculture in Vietnam in the valleys of Hoa Binh Province today. And according to the advance of deltas of the Red River, Ma River, Ca River, Viet-Muong residents expanded area of residence and rice cultivation to the entire midlands and North Delta - North Central [18,19,20].

In terms of forms of community organization, as part of the Mon-Khmer inhabitants, ancestors of the Viet-Muong naturally organized residence following hamlets (quêl / quên, quê, quê, kẻ) and villages (làng). However, in the process of occupation of delta, because of demand for control over floods and protection of their vast territory, the Viet-Muong people developed village structures to a higher level, by forming 15 bộ "tribe", and linking the tribes to form a higher all that was nước "nation" (Muong: tất đác "country"; Viet: đất nước "country", nước "nation"). Confirmed by archaeologists and historians, around the seventh century BC, based on wet-rice agriculture development and brilliant achievements of the Dong Son culture, Viet-Muong residents have built the nation of Van Lang, the first state-nation in Southeast Asia in the midland and delta areas of the Northern - North Central of Vietnam and Guangxi Province of China today [21,22,23]. In the year of 257BC, Van Lang State was followed by the Au Lac State, established by the King Thuc Phan (257-208BC). By the year of 208 BC, Au Lac State fell and was merged into Nam Viet Kingdom of the King Trieu Da (208-137BC), a Chinese conqueror. Van Lang and Au Lac were constituent Hung Kings era in the history of Vietnam. According to Van Tan and co-authors [24]:

"In society of the era of Hung Kings, the fate of individuals was tied to the fate of the teams. These teams firstly were villages. Villages were the basis of organization of the society in Hung Kings era. The villages were surrounded by ramparts of green bamboo. Rampart of green bamboo is the armor protecting the villagers against robbers and aggressors. [...]. From the unity of all members of a village, the people of Van Lang nation and then the people of Au Lac nation, has advanced to the full unity to people throughout the country to embankment flood

prevention or to struggle against foreign aggression".

During the period of domination by the Chinese invaders (111BC - 938A.D.), Viet-Muong residents suffered domination and assimilation plot of Chinese dynasties throughout the millennia. Starting from the administrative seat of the administrative divisions, regions and districts of the invaders, the Chinese culture spread powerfully, especially under the reigns of the Cinese governors as Xī Guāng (錫 光 , "Tích Quang" in Vietnamese, Chief of Jiāo-Zhǐ District in 1-5A.D.), Yán Rén (壬 延 , "Nhâm Diên" in Vietnamese, Chief of Jiǔ-Zhēn District in 29-33A.D.), Mǎ Yuán (馬 援 , "Mã Viện" in Vietnamese, Conqueror General in 43-45A.D.), Shi Xie (士 燮, "Sĩ Nhiếp" in Vietnamese, Chief of Jiāo-Zhǐ District in 187-226A.D.), and Du Huidu (杜 慧 度, "Đỗ Tuệ Độ" in Vietnamese, Cinese Governor of Jiāo-Zhou Administrative Division in 411-423 A.D.). Unlike the first phase of the Chinese domination, since the General Mǎ Yuán recaptured Jiāo-Zhǐ Administrative Division ("Giao Chỉ Bộ" in Vietnamese, including provinces of Guāngdōng, Guǎngxī, Hǎinán of China, and North Vietnam today), the leaders who supported the Two Queens ("Hai Bà Trưng" in Vietnamese, 40-43A.D.) against oppressive Chinese rulers were exiled, hereditary regime of military chiefs was abolished, replaced by a direct ruler regime by districts, and the population were managed according to the civil status. The purpose of the General Mǎ Yuán was to kill autonomous local system as well as the role of indigenous tribe leaders, replaced by a system of Chinese administrative and mandarins. Since then until the end of the Chinese domination, the delegations of Chinese immigrants and refugees after another pushed to the south, while the northern dynasties were constantly promote the assimilation of indigenous peoples. Consequently, from the eighth century to the tenth century, the part of Viet-Muong people in the Midlands and North Delta - North Central Vietnam transformed into Vietnamese. Meanwhile, the part of Viet-Muong people in the mountains under the influence of Thai culture (from the seventh century to the fourteenth century, the Thais migrated to the northwest and north-central mountains of Vietnam), transformed into Muong people.

However, inside the bamboo ramparts of villages, Viet-Muong culture has been preserved quite well. In terms of material, the bamboo ramparts were the village's means of defense. But mentally, it is also a means to preserve the culture, means of maintaining autonomy and solidarity of each village community. It can be said, in the period of Chinese domination, though the Viet-Muong people lost their nước "nation" they still maintained làng "villages". And the community organizations of làng "villages" helped Viet-Muong culture not to perish. Thus, despite being conquered, dominated, suppressed by the military and forced assimilation, Viet-Muong residents did not lose ethnic consciousness and undauntedness. Their culture was changed but still remained. And by tradition of building nước "nation" from the period of Van Lang - Au Lac, the consciousness towards common roots and aspiration for independence have always actuated Viet-Muong residents to uprise whenever the opportunities emerge.

4.2 Village - Nation: Typical Structure of Community Organization of the Peoples of Viet-Muong and Viet

After regaining sovereignty and restoring nước "nation" at the beginning of the tenth century (939 A.D.), the Vietnamese in the North and North Central remained clustered living tradition in làng quê "villages". Each village is a rural commune transformed from primitive patrilineal clan commune, but lineage relations still existed beside neighborly relations: "family line inside, village outside" (Vietnamese idiom). That made the cohesion of the village communities becomes stronger.

Because the primitive village was resident forms of the family lines, the Vietnamese in North Delta and the North Central had practices using family names to name their villages and add Xa or Gia, which means "home" in the back: Nguyen Xa Hoang Xa, Do Gia, Lưu Gia... Practically these villages also had some family lines living together, but in which there was a family line occupying monopoly or a majority, or a family line famous at that residential area. In *O Chau Can Luc* (Notes about region nearby O Chau) wrote in 1553, Duong Van An listed 47 place names containing the word Xa "home". By the early nineteenth century, in North Delta - North Central to Ha Tinh Province, there were 586 place names in this category: 36 villages named Nguyen Xa; 35 villages named Hoang Xa; 23 villages named Dang Xa; 21 villages named Le Xa; 19 villages named Cao Xa, Luong Xa, Ngo Xa; 16 villages named An Xa, Do Xa; 13 villages

named Bui Xa, Dao Xa; 10 villages named Duong Xa, Dong Xa, Pham Xa, etc.

During Vietnamese feudal times (939-1883), administrative organizations at grassroots level (thôn "hamlet", xã "commune", thuộc "remote hamlet", phường "ward", etc.) and intermediate level (tổng "canton", huyện "district", châu "mountain district", phủ "upper-district", đạo "upper-district"", thừa tuyên "old province", trấn "old province", dinh "old province", đạo "small province", tỉnh "province", thành "upper-province"…) were imposed on the villages. Not only that, the central government in many times also wanted stripping off the autonomy of the villages. In the year of 1242, the King Tran Thai Tong (1226-1258) set the position xã quan "commune mandarin". In the year of 1466, the King Le Thanh Tong (1460-1497) changed the xã quan "commune mandarin" into xã trưởng "commune chief". But after that the administrative organization at grassroots and intermediaries were in turn altered or mortal, only the villages and the nation of Viet people are still enduring. The structure of village - nation has become a characteristic of the community organization culture of Vietnamese people in North Delta - North Central and all the country. The stability of the community organization structure of village - nation has created a source of strength for Vietnamese culture and will help to maintain undauntedness for independence when their country lost sovereignty.

Aware of the power of that village - nation structure, in the period of occupation of Vietnam (1883-1945), French authorities imposed the administrative organizations at grassroots level (thôn "hamlet", xã "commune", thuộc "remote hamlet", phường "ward", etc.) and intermediate level (tổng "canton", quận "district", hạt "arrondissement administrative, county", vùng "circonscription administrative, area", tỉnh "province", khu "zone", xứ "country") on the villages. In order to directly manage people in grassroots administrative units, the French authorities also conducted "administrative reforms of villages" in Tonkin (Northern Vietnam) in the years of 1904 and 1921 and in Cochin-china (Southern Vietnam) in the years of 1904, 1927 and 1944. By the reforms, the French authorities have deprived autonomous right of Vietnamese villages, directly handled the right of disciplinary treatment and dismission of village officials, transformed them into henchmen. Since then, all Vietnamese villages lost the autonomous right, and gradually disappeared [25,26].

5. CONCLUSIONS

Since the ancient times, human have gone through many forms and levels of different community organizations: Clan, clan alliance, tribe, state, etc. One of the consequences of the process is the formation of ethnic groups when members of each community to be self-conscious and unanimously protect the common elements affording their survival: survival space, economic activity, customs, language, etc. The development of organizational forms of the ethnic communities, however, did not follow an isolated and straight path but often through interferences, borrowings, or the models imposed from the stronger or more developed ethnic groups. Therefore, the community organization forms of peoples today are separated very far from the roots to be reformated according to the models of other peoples. That is very situation of community organization forms of Mon-Khmer linguistic-ethnic groups living in Vietnam and South East Asia.

Applying the interdisciplinary approach, with retrospective methods and achievemens of the relating sciences as archeology, ethnography, history, ethnolinguistics, etc, the author comes to a conclusion that is: the root meaning of the nouns denoting hamlet in Mon-Khmer languages is "round things", because the vil, wel, wil, vel, bhươl, vi, bon, uan, bòn, bon, poh, văng, wăng, kaBêl[1], quêl, quên, quê, quê, kẻ, col primitively were residental forms in a circle or oval aiming defense of each clan. Originally each hamlet included only one clan. The root meaning of the nouns denoting village in Mon-Khmer languages such as Bahnar, Bru, Muong, Viet is "fence", because their plang, kruang, làng primitively were associate forms of hamlets that clustered together, through the exchange of marriage, in order to make up the defensive strength of the village, limited by natural and artificial fences. Separately linguistic-ethnic groups belonging to the North Bahnaric sub-branch uses a noun completely different from the Mon-Khmer languages that is plây, plâi for denoting "hamlet, village", because these groups have borrowed it from the peoples speaking Austronesian languages residing nearby.

Today, the ethnic groups speaking Mon-Khmer languages in Vietnam have a lot of terms denoting the various forms of community organizations and administrative organizations. But except for nouns denoting hamlet or village, the rest of the terms mostly were borrowed or

derived from Viet ethnic group by which they were influenced in history. For example, the Bru borrowed Vietnamese: sáq "commune", kốn "district", tớn "province", etc.; the Ruc borrowed Vietnamese: som[3] "neighbor", thôn[1] "hamlet", tinh[4] "province", etc. This demonstrates that, before culture and language contact took place between the ethnic groups speaking Mon-Khmer languages with Viet ethnic group, most of ethnic groups speaking Mon-Khmer languages in Vietnam only achieved forms of community organizations at the level of hamlet or village.

In 25 ethnic groups speaking Mon-Khmer languages in Vietnam, there are only three ones of which ancestors established nation as a supreme administrative - political organization: Viet, Muong, and Khmer. As historians and archaeologists have confirmed, the ancestors of the Khmer people formed nation by the acculturation of the empire of Funan [27]. The ancestors of the Viet and Muong peoples formed nation mainly by endogenous resources. Then, in the process of building the nation, the residents of Viet-Muong and Viet acculturated exogenous resources. For example, the Muong borrowed from the Thai forms and nouns of chiềng "central village" (Thai: chiềng, xiềng), mường "country" (Thai: mường); the Viet borrowed from the Chinese forms and nouns of thôn "hamlet", xã "commune", huyện "district", quận "district", tỉnh "province", quốc gia "nation", etc. But all the loan words denoting the administrative organizations frequently changed in history. Finally, only làng "village" and nước "nation", the endogenous community organization products of the ethnic groups of Viet-Muong and Viet, have been maintained until the end of the nineteenth century. Because the autonomous right of làng "village" conflicts with the centralism, since the twentieth century up to now in Vietnam, except some retained names, làng "village" have practically disappeared, made room for grassroots administrative units controlled by nước "nation" (which is represented by nhà nước "state").

The foregoing is all of my hypothesis, made by applying the interdisciplinary approach, with retrospective methods and evidences of the relating sciences. If the hypothesis is worth to trust, it will prove effect of interdisciplinary approach in social sciences and hunanities, instead of one-sided view of mono-disciplinary approach before. That is also another purpose of the article.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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