

CULTURAL IMPRINTS OF MUONG AND THAI ETHNIC MINORITIES IN LAM KINH CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL SPACE

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Lam Kinh is both a cultural and historical space and the home to the Kinh, Muong and Thai ethnic groups who are living in the semi - mountain and midland areas of the western mountainous region of Thanh Hoa province. The article focuses on learning about this cultural - historical space to clarify the intertwined nuances and mixtures between ethnic culture and deep historical nature associated with Lam Son uprising of national hero Le Loi. At the same time, the research results also supplement and identify more geographical and historical imprints of the land based on typical cultural elements such as language, place name and cultural heritage system.

Key words: Cultural imprints; Muong and Thai ethnic groups; cultural and historical space, Lam Kinh.

1. Introduction

Lam Kinh historical - cultural space takes Lam Kinh Palace (Xuan Lam commune, Tho Xuan) as the center, but the scope spreads in many neighboring communes of Tho Xuan, Ngoc Lac, and Thuong Xuan districts (Thanh Hoa). This is a cultural space densely packed with outstanding tangible and intangible cultural values. For a long time, Lam Son in general, Lam Kinh historical-cultural space in particular has been known as the main land of the Le Dynasty, the base of the early Lam Son uprising, a mainstream in the flow of history - culture imbued with Thanh's identity. Based on specific studies, it can be generalized that one of the basic characteristics of Lam Kinh historical-cultural space is the semi-mountainous midland land with a long history of formation, where many generations of Kinh - Muong - Thai residents live and work. Through the ups and downs of history, the imprint of Muong and Thai culture remains relatively clear in the cultural sediment layers of Lam Kinh historical-cultural space.

2. Research overview

There have been different researches on the Later Le Dynasty, Lam Son uprising, Lam Son - Lam Kinh cultural space; however, these researches are mainly on promoting, introducing and preserving relics for archaeological work and cultural research. The researches mainly focus on studying history and cultural values (Lam Son uprising, the architecture of Lam Kinh works); folk tales and legends about Le Loi, Lam Son uprising while there is no comprehensive study of Lam Kinh historical-cultural space.

There are few researches on Lam Kinh historical-cultural space, imprints and roles of the Muong and Thai ethnic minorities in Lam Kinh historical-cultural space, which mainly presented in the following researches:

In the book *Complete Annals of Dai Viet*, Le Loi's motherland was recorded in Thuy Chu village, which was formerly a Muong ethnic village [2]. That gives us a basis to determine the origin of half of the Muong bloodline of Binh Dinh Vuong Le Loi - who initiated the Lam Son uprising.

Geography of Tho Xuan district is the research on some influencing aspects of Muong residents in Lam Kinh historical-cultural space. However, these studies are not systematic and do not outline an overall picture of life, imprints and cultural exchanges among the Muong, Thai and Kinh ethnic groups in Lam Kinh area.

The author Bien, Tran Lam in his study *The Way to Approaching History* mentioned folk beliefs of ethnic minorities (mainly Muong) in Lam Kinh architecture [3].

3. Research approach and methods

The author approaches the problem from the perspective of studying ethnic-cultural interference in a historical-cultural space.

To study the problem, the author mainly uses specialized methods such as ethnographic fieldwork, search, analysis, synthesis of bibliography, historical and cultural documents, combined with interdisciplinary research methods of the area of study ...

4. Research results

4.1. Lam Kinh historical and cultural space

4.1.1. The concept of cultural space, historical - cultural space

When Regional Studies in the world have made certain achievements, the theory of cultural space, historical-cultural space, and cultural area has begun to receive research attention. The theory of cultural areas is interested by scientists about the unique values of culture in each land, each human community associated with different living environments. In Vietnam, many cultural researchers also have empirical studies "Theory of cultural regions" applied to Vietnam. Basically, scientists reach a common consensus that "cultural area" has been shown as a "cultural space" with similar values.

According to the researcher Thinh, Ngo Duc, "Cultural space is a defined geographical space in which a phenomenon or a combination of cultural phenomena arises, exists, changes and they are associated with each other as a system" [9, p. 2].

The concept of "cultural space" is also applied in a narrow scope, indicating regions with geographical, economic, cultural and social characteristics that share certain geographical, cultural, historical and economic similarities.

According to the author Giang, Vu Minh, cultural space is an object of study of Regional Studies: "the science that takes socio-cultural space including the fields of human activities and the interaction between people and natural conditions as research subjects. The purpose of zonal research is to achieve an integrated perception of a space, to find out the natural and human features in that space"[5; p. 52].

On the basis of the theory of "Cultural Space", we can define Historical-cultural space as a cultural space in which there are deep historical imprints.

4.1.2. Lam Kinh historical and cultural space

Applying the theory of the interdisciplinary research method and the regional method, it can be determined that the historical - cultural space of Lam Kinh takes Lam Kinh palace (Xuan Lam commune, Tho Xuan) as the center; however, it is also extended to many neighboring communes of Tho Xuan and Ngoc Lac districts (Thanh Hoa).

Many researchers, when studying at a larger level of the regional study, have divided it into two classes, including the Lam Son culture and the Lam Kinh culture. Within the framework of this article, we define and research the existing elements of the Muong and Thai cultures in the Lam Kinh historical-cultural space. This is a densely packed space of outstanding tangible and intangible cultural values, in which there are clear imprints in the cultural values of the Thai and Muong ethnic minorities.

Lam Kinh historical and cultural space was formed mainly on the ancient land of Lam Son - a land that appeared when Hung Vuong founded the country. According to Dr. Pham Van Tuan, Director of the Center for Conservation of Cultural Heritage of Thanh Hoa claimed that "Lam Son in the early 15th century is a large administrative unit that can control all communes, villages, wards, and districts which are equivalent to the area of Tho Minh, Tho Lap, Xuan Thien, Xuan Lam communes, a part of Lam Son town (Tho Xuan district); Kien Tho, Van Am, Nguyet An, Phuc Thinh communes (Ngoc Lac district); Ngoc Phung commune and Thuong Xuan town (Thuong Xuan district)" [11; p. 15]. Thus, Lam Son is a large area, "covering" a part of the upstream Thanh Hoa around the Chu and Am rivers, of which Cham village - Le Loi's hometown - is the central area.

The formation of Lam Kinh historical-cultural space bears the bold imprint of the Lam Son uprising; however, the name of "Lam Kinh" only began to exist after the Lam Son uprising

won a complete victory; and Binh Dinh Vua Le Loi ascended the throne to take the reign of Thuan Thien in the first year (1428), set the national capital in Thang Long as Dong Do (later changed to Dong Kinh), and advocated to build Lam Son's hometown into a second citadel called Lam Kinh. Lam Kinh is also known as Tay Kinh or Tay Do - the shrine and mausoleum of the Later Le dynasty, which is both the precious land of the royal family and the starting place of the famous Lam Son uprising in the history of the Vietnamese nation against aggression in the fifteenth century

Lam Kinh historical - cultural space takes Lam Kinh Palace (Xuan Lam, Tho Xuan communes) as the center; however, its scope is extended to some neighboring communes of Tho Xuan, Ngoc Lac, Thuong Xuan and Lang Chanh districts. This is a plain connected with the midland and mountainous areas. The terrain slopes gradually from Northwest to Southeast and is the delta region of the Chu river - Ma river adjacent to the midland and mountainous region. This is the survival place for many generations of Kinh - Muong residents, attached to the changes of the country, especially the late Ho Dynasty, the period of existence and development of the Le dynasty.

4.2. Cultural imprints of Thai and Muong ethnic groups in Lam Kinh historical and cultural space

4.2.1. Cultural imprints of Thai and Muong ethnic groups in dialects - legends

Tho Xuan - the central area of Lam Kinh cultural space is a semi-mountainous area, where two ethnic minorities, Muong and Thai, have long lived with the Kinh. Most of the Muong have integrated with the Kinh people. Thus, many Muong communities consider themselves Kinh people; however, there are still some Muong languages in daily use with no consciousness. For example, “tróc cún tau” (knee pain); tu vèn nun (the buffalo returns in the evening)... According to linguistic studies of ethnic minorities, it is "also the ancient Vietnamese language that was transformed into Kinh language according to the relatively strict rules of sound variation" [7; p. 57]. For example, *ôi, ui, uôi* are inherently *un* or *uôn* sounds; *ây, ay, ai* are inherently *ân, ăn; tr, d* are inherently *t; d* is inherently *d*...

The places in Lam Kinh historical-cultural space clearly show the preservation of a lot of ancient Vietnamese - Muong languages and a few Thai languages. "Tho Xuong commune (Tho Xuan district) has a fortress of Bu Da, in which "bu" in Thai means mountain. Many fields are called "hóc" such as Hoc Cuon, Hoc Ngoa... “Hóc”, according to Thai people, does not mean a deep hole, but a deep field when looking down from a hill or a mountainside. [7, p. 259].

In Xuan Vinh commune (Tho Xuan), there are Con Mon temple, Xuan Khanh commune (Tho Xuan); Lan Kha field, Xuan Lam commune; and many duck holes (where ducks are raised). In Tho Xuong commune, there are fields called "phốc" or "phước", which refers to a field next to a flooded river, used to be a wharf or a boat dock. It can be seen that

the way to call such places is originated from the historical and cultural space of Lam Kinh thousands of years ago, which was the living area of the ancient Vietnamese - Muong people.

In terms of pronunciation, people in Tho Xuan district often say things differently, for example, an onion is *củ hiềng*, a comb is *cái liệc*, a parent is *che mạy*, rice is *cấu*, catching fish is *mọ cá*, wine is *riệu*, return is *viềng*. At present, many ancient Vietnamese - Muong languages have been preserved quite sustainably, for example:

Trượng: the eye

Chộ is look at something

Lum is a shallow puddle

Bầu is a small lake

Mau is a water reservoir

Hón is a dead-end river

Nân or *nẫ* is originally a pot of water to cook sticky rice (Muong language).

In addition, there are stories about Mieng Village - an ancient Muong village in Ngoc Lac associated with the story of the White Fox Goddess (Lady Ho Ly) who saved Le Thai To from the Ming army's siege. Today, there is still the name of Bai Lanh, Ma Ngo, the field of Dogs and the story of two families Bui and Pham worshiping the magical tree (the story of the old tree tearing its body to hide Le Thai To).

4.2.2. Cultural imprints of Thai and Muong ethnic groups in ancient villages

In Lam Kinh's historical and cultural space, there are still many ancient villages, whose names have gone down in history associated with vestiges of the Muong and Thai ethnic groups. These are ancient villages associated with Le Loi's birth and upbringing, with his father's hometown being Cham village (Lam Son), and his mother's hometown being Chua village (Thuy Chu). The ancient villages around Lam Son area keep tough and heroic memories during the resistance war against the Ming army. The village names have come to mind such as Nhan, Huu Le, Bai Thuong, Bai Do villages..., which present the warm and friendly feelings of the King - the people. Tro Village (Ngoc Lac) is associated with Muong cultural activities. Bat Cang village is reminiscent of the historic battle of Da Cang citadel. Tri Nang village, Nang Cat village record the hard and difficult survival of the insurgents when the enemy chased them away. Many ancient villages preserve long-standing cultural values such as Hao Luong, Le Nghia, Xuan Pha, Quang Phuc, Hoi Hien...

In the Lam Kinh historical-cultural space, the Muong and the Vietnamese are the earliest communities to appear, living in ancient villages. Typically, there is Trung Lap village (Xuan Lap commune) formerly known as Kha Lap. In folklore, there are many ways to call the village because it comes from different pronunciations: Ke Sap or Ke Xap; Ke Sap hay Ke Sap; Ke Sop hay Ke Xop,.. Sound *s* and sound *x* often do not have a clear distinction between regions.

Therefore, in terms of ancient Muong - Vietnamese words, the *s* or *x* sounds are also *l* sounds. The common name of the old Trung Lap village was Ke Sap or Ke Sap. Kha Lap is a Muong village. When talking about chickens, the ancient Muong people pronounced it "kha" or "ca". Therefore, "kha" or "ca" both have a basis to be transliterated into "kha" because the ancient Muong people did not distinguish the sign as clearly as the Kinh people. Thus, "based on the administrative unit and the transliterated name "Kha Lap", Trung Lap village in the 9th and 10th centuries originated as a Muong village. After becoming a Vietnamese village like many other Vietnamese villages, the Muong imprint on the language is still bold. [9; p. 560]

In addition to Kha Lap village, Cham village (Lam Son) is also a village of the Muong people. The Le family lived in the Muong Nhu Ang village (about the 18th century and earlier). According to Complete Annals of Dai Viet, "Le Loi's great-grandfather for three generations, Le Hoi, one day went out to Lam mountain, saw a flock of birds flying around under the mountain, like many people gathered, then he said, "This place is definitely a good land". Then he decided to move from Nhu Ang to this place. Since then, the Le family has been the leader of this land" [3; p. 225].

According to *Complete Annals of Dai Viet* (volume 3), "Le Loi, born on the 6th of August, 1385 in his mother's hometown, Chu Son, Loi Duong district (later changed to Thuy Chu village, Loi Duong district, now belonging to Xuan Thang commune, Tho Xuan district, Thanh Hoa province). His father's hometown is Lam Son, Luong Giang district (now Xuan Lam commune, Tho Xuan district, Thanh Hoa province)" [4; p.239]. Cham Village is the ancient name of Lam Son, or Kha Lam. Around Kha Lam village, there is a relatively densely populated area. The villages of the Muong, Thai, and Kinh people have settled down along the banks of the Luong River.

The Le Dynasty was the richest in the region with thousands of servants. This was an important military base for Le Loi to become the leader of the uprising. In Muong Cham, later Lam Son, at that time there were many villages and people responded to the uprising against the Minh invaders, in which some civilians became famous general Lam Son. When Le Loi ascended the throne, Muong Cham was renamed Lam Son and considered Lam Ap (the king's hometown).

On the right bank of the Chu River, there is the old Loi Duong district, with Thuy Chu village - a famous place in history. Thuy Chu is known as Chua village, near Chua mountain (Chu Son) in the middle of an undulating land. This is a long-standing residence of the Muong. Cu Tham in the Trinh family from Moc Trung decided to settle Thuy Chu land when he realized the fertility of this land and loved the nature here on the way to shoot birds. Cu Tham had a son of Trinh Tam who was a mandarin under the Tran dynasty. Trinh Tam's son, Trinh Sai, gave birth to Trinh Thi Ngoc Thuong who married Le Khoang from Lam Son - Le Loi's parents. At that time, the Thai chieftains, Cam Lo and Cam Lan, robbed the local people, so Le Khoang

had to bring his wife back to Thuy Chu's hometown and give birth to Le Loi and children here. After the Tay Son army defeated the Trinh family, the Trinh family of Le Loi's mother had to move to another place. Meanwhile, the Muong, Thai, and Vietnamese residents moved to settle down, such as the Bui family (the Muong from Hoa Binh), the Ha family (the Thai from Lang Chanh), the Quach, Ngan, Pham, Vi family (Muong and Thai people) continued to move to settle down here at the end of the 19th century and built a new Thuy Chu commune. However, Trinh Khac Phuc - the grandson of Le Loi's mother - the founding god of the Le dynasty was still worshipped here as the village god. Thuy Chu now belongs to Xuan Thang commune with 3 ethnic groups living together including the Muong, Thai and Kinh.

During the Lam Son uprising, the people of Thai and Muong villages also actively participated in the uprising. In Cao Tri village (Xuan Khao - Thuong Xuan), there are four members in the Pham family including Pham Yen, Pham Thai, Pham Not, Pham Oanh, father and son of the Muong mandarin in Ngoc Chau (Kien Tho - Ngoc Lac) including Le Dang, Le Hieu...

4.2.3. Architecture

In the historical and cultural space of Lam Kinh, the most typical architectural works are the shrines and tombs of Lam Kinh. The art in Lam Kinh architecture shows a combination of Confucian thought with folk beliefs of ethnic minorities. According to the researcher Bien, Tran Lam, "It can be said that the architecture of temples and mausoleums of the early Le Dynasty in Lam Kinh is a creative project, absorbing the basic elements of Chinese feng shui theory combined with folk beliefs of ethnic minorities (mainly Muong) and traditional cultural values of the nation" [3; p. 119]. This brings the art in Lam Kinh architecture with many unique values, which is a mixture of ancient Vietnamese thought that values nature and simplicity, and Confucian thought which is standard, sophisticated, and imposing.

The stele and the Shinto axis of the mausoleum at Lam Kinh do not lie on a straight line. In his work on the evolution of traditional Vietnamese architecture in the Red River Delta, the researcher Bien, Tran Lam made a hypothesis that "The stele is considered as the boundary between the human world and another world of those who have passed away. The path from the tombstone is the way from the human world to the spiritual world of the deceased. There might have been a couple of stops along the way, they weren't meant to be places to rest. It meant doors on the way into another world. At each of these stops, doors like bamboo greeting gates have been built. This is reminiscent of the Mo Muong songs, which contain the content that when leading the soul of the dead to heaven, one must go through many doors and many levels" [3; p. 119]. In each of those doors, people have to do a simple ceremony to pay their respects and ask permission to access the world of the dead.

4.2.4. Cuisine

In the historical and cultural space of Lam Kinh, there are still some dishes with Kinh and Muong flavors such as special sauces, bitter soup, ant egg cake, some Thai dishes... Nowadays, there are a number of sophisticated dishes made by both Kinh and Muong people in some communes of Tho Xuan and Ngoc Lac districts such as Banh Chung, Banh Day, compressed sticky rice,... These dishes were only served in the rituals of King Le Dai Hanh and King Le Thai To.

5. Discussion

The issue that needs to be further discussed and clarified is how clearly the imprints of ethnic minority culture (mainly Muong culture) shown in the Lam Kinh mausoleum. To get a specific and profound answer, it takes time for fieldwork, detailed research, and the author presents the research results in further researches.

6. Conclusion

In short, the remaining cultural imprints of the Muong and Thai ethnic groups are most evident in the historical and cultural space of Lam Kinh reflected in the landmarks of ancient villages, in the daily language used by the living community and especially the Lam Kinh mausoleum - the typical art work of the Le dynasty left for posterity. It is the survival of many generations of Kinh - Muong - Thai residents and the imprints of Muong and Thai culture in the material and spiritual life of the resident community living in Lam Kinh historical - cultural space, which contributes to creating the distinct cultural characteristics of this space.

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