

**Vietnamese Phonology and Graphemic Borrowings
from Chinese:
The Book of 3,000 Characters Revisited**

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1. Among the textbooks used in traditional Vietnam to teach Chinese as a classical foreign language to schoolchildren, and referred to as "cultural dictionaries," there are *Nhất Thiên Tự* 一千字 "The Book of One Thousand Characters" [Nguyễn Đình-Hoà 1963 & 1989], *Tam Thiên Tự* 三千字 "The Book of Three Thousand Characters", *Ngũ Thiên Tự* 五千字 "The Book of Five Thousand Characters" [Nguyễn Đình-Hoà 1973], *Tự-Đức Thánh-chế Tự-học Giải-nghĩa-ca* 嗣德聖製字學解義歌 [Chen 1971; Nguyễn Hữu Quý 1971; Nguyễn Đình-Hoà 1988]. All of these pedagogical tools use Vietnamese verse as a mnemonic device to teach Chinese characters together with their glosses in the vernacular, the latter cited in *nôm*, i.e. "southern or demotic" characters [Nguyễn Đình-Hoà 1959 and 1990].

Whereas the other three books use the typically Vietnamese *lục-bát* "six-eight" meter, *Tam Thiên Tự* uses lines of four words (*tứ-tự*) with the following rhyming scheme:

THIÊN giời ĐỊA đất
CỬ cát TÔN còn
TỬ con TÔN cháu
LỤC sáu TAM ba
GIA nhà QUỐC nước
TIỀN trước HẬU sau
etc.

天 歪 地 坦
舉 拮 存 群
子 隳 孫 詔
六 款 三 巴
家 茹 國 諾
前 畧 後 婁

In his review of the Nguyễn emperor's Chinese-Vietnamese dictionary entitled *Tự-Đức Thánh-chế Tự-học Giải-nghĩa-ca* [Nguyễn Đình-Hoà 1988],

Nguyễn-Trần Huân mentioned a Haiphong edition of *Tam Thiên Tự* edited by Xuân-Lan in 1911, and a Hanoi edition edited by Ninh-Hà in 1935: Dr. Nguyễn-Trần wrote [1974:366] that the latter editor cited Ngô Thì Sĩ (1726-1780) as the scholar who compiled this word list in 1776 [377].

To my knowledge there are two other editions: one edited by the polyglot scholar Petrus Trương Vĩnh-Ký in Saigon in 1898, and the other edited by Buddhist scholar Đoàn Trung Cồn and published by Trí-đức Tòng-thơ in Saigon in 1959. Lê Văn Quán [1981:168-169] disclosed that the Social Sciences Library in Hanoi has as many as six editions with the title *Tam Thiên Tự Giải-dịch Quốc-ngữ*, blockprinted under the reign of Emperor Duy Tân, in addition to an earlier text (found in the back of *Đạo-giáo Nguyên-lưu* by Monk Phúc-Điền). This latter text, he said, is entitled *Tam Thiên Tự Toàn-yếu*, and shows the printing date as the fifth year of the reign of Emperor Thiệu-Trị, i.e. 1845.

For my 1973 paper, I used the manuscript graciously lent to me by Mr. Đỗ Linh Thông of Vienna, Virginia, entitled *Tam Thiên Tự Giải-dịch Quốc-ngữ*, edited by Father Vũ Khoa of the Phát-diệm Cathedral in North Vietnam, and published in late summer of the second year of the reign of Emperor Duy-Tân, the Year of the Monkey Mậu-Thân, i.e. 1908. The title page indicates that the book came from a second printing of the woodblock kept at the above cathedral and that it sold for 0.30 piasters.

In his 52-line Preface written in both Chinese and Vietnamese, Father Vũ Khoa confessed [1908: 1-4] that he did not know the identity of the author of this Chinese-Vietnamese dictionary, who must have been "an extremely erudite scholar" [Preface, lines 1-2]. But actually *Tam Thiên Tự* was not the work of an anonymous author. In an article which appeared in Hanoi in the review of the Institute of Historical Studies, the late scholar Trần Văn Giáp, while discussing the origin of *chữ nôm* [Trần 1969: 7-24], revealed that the author of *Tam Thiên Tự* or *Tự-học Toàn-yếu* was the scholar-poet-historian Ngô Thì Nhiệm [Trần 1969: 14-17], and not his father Ngô Thì Sĩ, as mentioned with appropriate reservation in Nguyễn-Trần Huân's book review of 1974. This matter of authorship has been confirmed by Đào Duy Anh in his monograph on *chữ nôm* [1975:123] as well as in Trần 1990 [Entry 215: 14-17]. Ngô Thì Nhiệm (1746-1803), like his father Ngô Thì Sĩ (1726-1780), came from an illustrious family of the Village of Tả Thanh-oai in Hà-dông Province (popularly known as Tó Village and famous for its lichee orchards as well as for its numerous Confucian scholars) [Trần 1984: 324-325].

2. The several *quốc-ngữ* editions of this popular primer which Lê Văn Quán mentioned in his 1981 monograph and which I have seen in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, were all published after the Trương Vĩnh-Ký edition of 1898, and before the more recent Trí-đức Tòng-thơ edition of 1959. Like the one translated and edited by Trương Vĩnh-Ký, the Trí-đức Tòng-thơ edition does not cite the *nôm* characters but gives only French glosses and Vietnamese definitions transcribed in *quốc-ngữ*. I was therefore

very happy to find a 1939 edition of the book at the Fu Ssu-nien Library of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, Republic of China, upon my arrival at Nankang, Taipei, in January 1989.

No editor's name appears on the cover of this book, printed at Thuy-Ký Press and sold at Quảng-Thịnh Bookstore (115 Hemp Street, Phố Hàng Gai, in Hanoi). The price was listed as one Indochinese piaster. Each of its 150 pages accommodates twenty Chinese characters lined up in four columns to be read from top to bottom, but the columns started from the lefthand side of each page. In each column, each entry consists of (1) a Chinese character, e.g. 天, (2) its Sino-Vietnamese reading, in this case *thiên*, followed by (3) the *nôm* character 𠄎 used to write down its Vietnamese meaning, (4) the quốc-ngữ romanization, *giời*, and (5) the French equivalent *ciel*, thus:

天	Thiên
𠄎	Giời ciel
地	Địa
坦	Đất terre

My comparison between that 1939 edition and the 1908 edition concentrates on the *nôm* characters used in each of them to transcribe the Vietnamese glosses and pertinent explanations.

3. We will, however, examine first the Preface by Ngô Thì Nhiệm in order to see what he had in mind when he started his compilation.

"In my childhood I had the opportunity to study literature. Now while serving as an official in the imperial court, each time I have some doubt about the meaning of a character, I ask the eminent scholars and we discuss and consult one another regarding the matter. Lately in carrying out my duties in the Prime Minister's office I have been able to read interesting books, so I looked up the words in various documents; those which I understood, I collected them and filed them away, then transcribed them and gave explanations, each meaning listed next to the word, with rhyming characters. I have called this total corpus of three thousand characters *Tự-học Toàn-yếu*, and after completing the book I had the woodblocks made and the volume printed." [Trần 1969:16; 1990:14-16]

Although this word list "is only a tree branch amidst the forest and a spoonful of water from the sea," as Ngô Thì Nhiệm modestly put it [Trần 1969:16; 1990:16], this distinctly Vietnamese creation differs from both the Chinese *San ch'ien tzù* "Three Thousand Characters" by Su Kun Yue [Tù Côn Ngọc] and the Chinese *Ch'ien tzù wên* "One Thousand Characters" by Chou Hing Tsu [Chu Hung-Tự] in that it uses medial rimes; with the fourth syllable of a line rhyming with the second syllable of the following line, and so forth

throughout 750 lines.

4.1. First of all, the book shows several archaic words that are either no longer used nowadays or used only in compounds. Examples are:

bom 姪 'prostitute' 28b

bui 慍 'only' 36a

chiêu 昭 'left--opp. of right' 61b

chỉn 今 'very, really' 37a

chung 丞 'at, because' 26a

da 也 'to recover [from illness]' 53b

dảng 寺 'stool' 13a

dau-dáu 叨啣 'worried' 50a

dùm 擔 'sac, package' 27a

ghe 技 'to distinguish' 64a

ghín 謹 'cautious, polite' 12b

gìn 厔 'to hold, keep' 51a

hen 嘔 'to cough' 56b

kín 謹 'to carry [water]' 28a

lét 矚 'to glance casually' 13a

luống 墮 'to waste [efforts]' 38a

mảng 擘 'to hear' 48b

náu 鬧 'to hide' 27b

nhà trò 茹路 'actor, clown' 29b

níp 籬 'basket' 23b

tôi 撮 'to look for' 51b

thày mo 柴謨 'fortune teller' 24b

thừa 所 'its..., his...' 25b

va 埠 'to walk a long distance' 33a

vai 提 'to sow [seeds], broadcast' 38b; etc.

4.2. The 1908 edition contains some words that could be lexical localisms peculiar to the Catholic communities of Phát-diêm and Bù-chu. Examples are:

把 *lả* (3b, Preface: 字册吏把册 *chữ sách lại lả sách*) with *lả* meaning 'to pay back' under 報 *báo* (15b); 'to return [object]' under hoàn 還 (19a), and 'to return [hospitality]' under thù 酬 [49b]. This verb is obviously the same as *blả* [De Rhodes 1651];

果 賴 *lái* (28a) 'fruit' under quả 菓 [cf. *blái* in De Rhodes 1651]

貝 *vuối* (3a, 4b, 49a) 'together with'

4.3. All words beginning with /r-/ are transcribed with characters that contain a Sino-Vietnamese character pronounced with /l-/:

ra 呎 'to exit' 2b, 4a;

rau 菜 'vegetable' 15b, 17a;

rau 腰 'placenta' 27b;

(rõ) rãng 烘 燥 'radiant' 25a;

răn 嗔 'to admonish' 30b;

răng 齒 'tooth' 29b;

rất 慄 'very' 49a;

râu 鬚 'beard' 15a;

rét 冽 'cold' 49b;

rễ 禮 'root' 11b, 12b;

rêu 藜 'moss' 64a;

rình 伶 'to watch' 35b;

riù 斨 'axe' 13a;

rô 燿 'clear' 2b, 4a;

roi 撻 'whip' 40b;

ròm 瞞 'to look' 13a;

ròi 耒 'idle(ness)' 34a;

ròng 虯 'dragon' 16b;

rông 穰 'spacious, roomy' 21b, 27a, 53a;

roi 掬 'to drop' 24b;

ruòi 蛛 'fly' 17b;

ruông 畝 'ricefield' 11b, 28b;

ruôi 脾 'intestine' 14a;

rùng 叢 'forest' 14a;

4.4. Next, one notices that there was an alternation between initials /l-/ and /n-/: thus, the editor Vũ Khoa has *loãn* for the Sino-Vietnamese entry *noãn* 卵 (page 27b) glossed as *trúng* 卵).

5. The Sino-Vietnamese entries themselves are interesting because in several cases, including those of rare characters, the meaning(s) in Vietnamese are broader than the original meaning in Chinese. For examples,

虫亢 hàng 'species of silkworm' (52b) is glossed as *thần-lân* 'lizard'; 神龍

石砭 biêm 'stone needle used in acupuncture' (53a) is glossed as *mài* 'to polish, whet [blade]'; 砭埋

狒 phât 'orang utang, cynocephalus hamadryas' (55b) is glossed as *lợn lòi* 'boar'; 猪猡

束 thích 'thorn' (62b) is glossed as *bướu cây* 癩核 'boss, excrescence on tree';

絳 tương 'light yellow silk' (64b) is glossed as *vàng* 鑽 'yellow'.

6. Next, the shape of a *nôm* character in *Tam Thiên Tự* is different from forms found in earlier writings. Whereas earlier forms seem to reflect

the pronunciation of the time, using the 假借 *giả-tá* "loan characters" method, characters in *Tam Thiên Tự* often use the 形聲 *hình-thanh* "phonetic compounds" method by adding a significant element, usually a radical:

蹟 *chân* 'foot' (16b), cf. 眞 in *BV* [*Bạch-vân-am Quốc-ngữ Thi-tập* by Nguyễn Bình Khiêm];

羸 *con* 'child, offspring' (11a), cf. 昆 in *BV*, or in *TKML* [*Truyền-kỳ Mạn-lục*];

悞 *dại* 'unwise' (15a), cf. 曳 in *BV*;

赤覩 *đỏ* 'red' (17a), cf. 覩 in *BV*;

覩足 *đủ* 'sufficient' (11a), cf. 堵 in *TKML*;

逐 *giục* 'to urge' (33b), cf. 逐 in *TKML*;

嗜 *khen* 'to praise' (19b), cf. 看 in *TKML*;

晨 *mai* 'morning' (13b), cf. 埋 in *BV*;

TKML; 語 *ngửa* 'to raise one's head' (13b), cf. 語 in Taberd's dictionary, or

忍 *nhịn* 'to abstain' (28a), cf. 忍 in *TKML*;

餒 *no* 'full [from eating]' (21a), cf. 奴 in *BV*;

探 *thăm* 'to visit' (30a), cf. 探 in *TKML*;

覓 *thấy* 'to see' (23b), cf. 体 in *TKML*;

詩 *thơ* 'poetry' (25b), cf. 疎 in *BV*;

試 *thử* 'to try' (42b), cf. 此 in *TKML*;

撐 *xanh* 'blue, green', cf. 青 in *BV*; etc.

7. All the words beginning with the retroflex *tr-* in modern Vietnamese are represented by characters that contain the /l-/ element, which scholars agree is the second member of a consonant cluster in Middle Vietnamese, as recorded in De Rhodes' dictionary of 1651 [Gregerson 1969; Nguyễn 1986]:

蛸來 for (*con*) *trai* 'oyster' (16b)

禮少 for *trẻ* 'young' (11b)

撩	for <i>treo</i> 'to hang' (27b)
撩	for <i>trêu</i> 'to tease' (30b)
輪	for <i>tròn</i> 'round' (21b)
中	for <i>trong</i> 'inside' (12b)
溜	for <i>trôi</i> 'to drift' (20a, 20b)
味	for <i>trối</i> 'to leave last wishes' (51a)
鞞	for <i>trống</i> 'drum' (13b)
掩	for <i>trồng</i> 'to plant' (22b)
瀟	for <i>trơn</i> 'slippery' (33b)
畧	for <i>trước</i> 'in front, before' (48a), etc.

8. Moreover, many words whose initial is /s-/ in Hanoi and /ʃ-/ in Saigon are transcribed by means of combinations which contain an /l/ element, attesting to the earlier cluster /sl-/, as in:

沚	for <i>sạch</i> 'clean' (27a)
埽	for <i>sân</i> 'courtyard' (20b)
淪	for <i>sâu</i> 'deep' (15b, 66a)
螻	for <i>sâu</i> 'insect' (22a)
燿	for <i>soi</i> 'to light up' (19b, 37b)
礪	for <i>sỏi</i> 'pebble' (51b)
泝	for <i>sóng</i> 'wave' (21b, 45b)
燿	for <i>sôi</i> 'to boil' (34b)
澗	for <i>sông</i> 'river' (18a, 24a)
甞	for <i>sống</i> 'alive, living' (20a, 39a)
劍	for <i>sớm</i> 'early' (23a, 29b)
痠	for <i>sưng</i> 'swollen' (29a), etc.

In the case of ^巨郎 for *sáng* 'bright' (25a, 30b), one can posit a cluster /kl-/, being a diacritic just like ^个尔 巴 車 麻 < ^个司 [Nguyễn 1989:19-21].

9. Regarding reduplicative forms, of which the book lists many, we can say that, in addition to the complete reduplications such as *àm àm* 暗 3 (64a), *đa đa* 多 3 (56b), *mành mành* 萌 3 (66a), *le le* 離 3 (58b), *mờ mờ* 麻 (59b), *ồ ồ* (61b), etc., a number of forms (a) reflect their respective tone registers, the level tone *ngang/bằng* occurring with *hỏi, sắc*, and the falling tone *huyền* occurring with *ngã, nặng*; (b) show alternance between homorganic stops and nasals; or (c) show parallelism of vowel height (*u - i, ô - ê, o - e*):

(a) *chăm chăm* < *chăm chăm* (55b) 占 < 占

đau đau < *đau đau* (60b)

năm năm < *năm năm* (55b)

ong óng < *óng óng* (64a)

phoi phói < *phối phối* (64a)

rày rầy < *rầy rầy* (60b)

vò vớ < *vớ vớ* (55b)

vòi vọi < *vọi vọi* (55a)

(b) *cun-cút* < *cút-cút* (56b)

(c) *thùng-thỉnh* (58b, 62a)

mông mênh (56b)

占 < 占

叨 吊

輒 捻

癡 3

派 3

汜 3

宇 3

位 3

隗 髀

春 請

濛 溟

10. The 1908 and 1939 editions represent the Phát-diệm and the Hanoi dialects respectively, as shown in the following pairs of *chữ nôm*:

短問 *vấn* vs. ^短短 *ngắn*, under ĐOẠN 短

把 *lả/trả* vs. ^者者 *giả*, under BÁO 報

輪 *lòn* vs. ^是是 *tròn*, under TOÀN 全

須 *tua* vs. ^寘寘 *nên*, under TU 須

鬧 *náu* vs. ^迺迺 *dấu* [i.e. *giấu*], under ẨN 隱

菓 *lái* vs. ^輕輕 *trái*, under QUẢ 菓

賴

培 va vs. 步 bộ, under LỤC 陸
 櫃 纒 máy rối vs. 櫃 纒 máy dối, under LỐI. 偶

11. The 1908 edition shows more rigorous editing than the 1939 edition, which at times does not obey the rhyme scheme. Thus, under 遲 *tri*, misspelled as *chi* [p. 22], it gives the gloss 遲 *châm*, which would not fit into the rhyme -ây:

速 TỐC 擗 chóng 遲 TRI 泥 chày
 雲 VÂN 霽 mây 火 HOẢ 煜 lửa (1908:18b)

Elsewhere, in the sequence

必 TÁT 乙 ất 須 TU 須 tua
 寺 TỰ 尉 chùa 垂 BUU 驛 dịch,

the 1908 edition (22b) uses for TU the gloss *tua*, an archaic form which is more tolerable than the gloss *nên*, 輶 in 1939:32.

In another sequence,

刷 UY 官刷 (quan) uy 丞 THĂNG 官丞 (quan) thăng
 齒 XÍ 齧 răng 眸 MÂU 相 mắt,

the 1939 edition (p. 50) gives the reading *thừa* for the Chinese character 丞, to which Vũ Khoa gives the reading *thùng*, i.e. *thăng*, rhyming with *răng* (29b).

As for the Chinese character 炒 *sao*, the gloss 炒 *rang* (1939:68) although accurate is not so good as the gloss 燿 *thui* (1908:36a) because the latter word rhymes with *đôi* in the following 4-word line:

燎 LIÊU 炆 đốt 炒 SAO 燿 thui
 巖 NHAM 頰 đôi 穴 HUYỆT 魯 lỗ.

12. It is well known that the *nôm* script allowed an individual scribe to choose the first variant form of a character that came to his mind. However, the anonymous editor of the 1939 book, despite the initiative of providing French glosses, shows many inconsistencies and certainly lacks rigor -- on page 61, the third and the fourth columns have the ten Chinese characters and their *nôm* equivalents all mixed up -- so it can be said that this printed edition does not do justice to Ngô Thì Nhiệm's great contribution, and that the earlier book, with its scholarly apparatus, including its front matter, is more

valuable both as a teaching tool and as a research tool.

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Thiên Giời ciel	Tôn cháu petit-fils	Tiền trước devant	Nha răng dent
Địa đất terre	Lục sáu six	Hậu sau derrière	Vô không non
Cử cất élever	Tam ba trois	Ngưu trâu buffle	Hữu có oui
Tồn còn encore	Gia nhà famille	Mã ngựa cheval	Khuyển chó chien
Tử con fils	Quốc quốc nation	Cự cựa ergot	Dương dê chèvre

字千三 TAM THIÊN TỬ

MỘT CUỐN TRỌN BỘ
Giá 1300



1938
Bán tại hiệu
QUẢNG THỊNH
115, phố hàng Gai
HANOI

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Imp. Thuỵ-Kỳ - Hanoi

維新貳年戊申季夏 重印

三千字解譯國語

發艷總堂藏板

出售每本三角

Title page of the 1908 edition
Tam Thiên Tự giải-dịch quốc-ngữ

Đơn riêng mấy điều cần trước.
 (Sách này in lần trước thọ làm sai nhiều;
 lần này đã khảo lại kỹ hơn và in lần thứ
 hai.) 1: Các chữ nhỏ thường dùng hằng
 ngày độ tám trăm hay là một nghìn là cũng
 mà sách này những ba nghìn chữ, ắt là
 sách này như bột cho dễ xem nhiều
 sách khác; song ai muốn được ích thì
 chẳng những phải học thuộc lòng, lại
 cần phải ý tứ nhận lấy từng chữ từng
 nghĩa cho mình bạch, rồi thì viết, âm tả
 nghĩa là viết thuộc lòng, chữ nào nghĩa
 ấy một hai lượt, hễ mà nhận và nhớ
 hết các chữ mới thôi, dù có tốn mất
 năm bảy tháng, thì chẳng mất công vô
 ích đâu: vì tập chữ một thể; đến khi
 học sách khác, thấy nhẹ mình lắm: vì
 không phải hỏi mấy chữ nữa, bằng
 chẳng chỉ như thế, chỉ học thuộc
 lòng không, thì chữ sách lại là sách
 chẳng được ích là bao nhiêu.
 2: Về phần con trẻ mới vỡ lòng, thì
 cũng nên cứ cách ấy: mỗi ngày cho rõ.

Introduction to the 1908 edition by Vũ Khoa
 (in quốc-ngữ)

引盈余調勤畧。

(冊尼印各畧僭少差移、各尼屯改吏技欣吧印各次、)

次一、各字儒常用恒鼎、只度糝森哈哭沒疥哭穷、麻冊尼仍阯疥、
乙哭冊尼如勃朱易貼移冊恪、双埃悶特益、辰庄仍沛學屬悉、吏勤
沛意思認祀曾符曾姜朱明白、未辰日暗寫姜哭日屬悉符市姜、
汶、棘係麻認吧、收歇各符買催油固損、耘融罷、胸辰庄、耘功無益
幾、為習符汶体、旦欺學冊恪、覓式、禽凜為空沛、晦余符女、平庄志趣
如劫、只學屬悉空、辰符冊吏把冊、庄特益哭包饒、
次、衞分昆祀買破悉辰強、械拋格、么每鼎朱奴學、也移隨、飭奴、共

Introduction to the 1908 edition by Vū Khoa
(in Nôm)

<p>我^四 Ngã 所^三 Sở 不 bất 識 thức</p>	<p>甚^三 Châm 姓 tính 誰 thùy 名 danh</p>	<p>古^二 Cổ 士 sĩ 聰 thông 明 minh</p>	<p>此^一 Chử 書 thư 成 thành 自 tự</p>	<p>三 tam 千 thiên 字 tự</p>
<p>bên^三 魁 hèm 嫌 tên 魁 hộ 户 gọi 噲 là 哭 chi 之 chi 之</p>	<p>đây^四 低 ta 些 không 空 thê 体 khảo 考 tra 查</p>	<p>Là^二 哭 người 哭 thông 通 thái 太 khôn 坤 tây 育 dời 莪 xưa 初</p>	<p>kẻ^一 兀 đã 奄 làm 少 nên 弼 sách 册 này 尼</p>	<p>解 giải 譯 dịch 附 phụ 序 tự</p>

Preface in Chinese and in Vietnamese by Rev. Vũ Khoa

Cây 西	二五 特 Đắc	一五 靈 Linh	十五 祈 Hi
lich 歷	Đắc 筆 bút	Linh 牧 muc	勿 vật
nhát 壹	bút 私 tư	muc 武 vũ	笑 tiếu
thiên 千	tư 篆	vũ 科 khoa	議 thĩa
cửu 玖	篆 triện		thoà
bách 百	二五 Bút 筆	一五 Phát 發	十五 Phụ 附
bát 捌	biên 編	đường 堂	thêm 添
niên 年	triện 篆	linh 靈	biện 辦
	áp 押	mục 牧	bác 博
	đế 底	vũ 武	xin 吁
	mà 麻	khoa 科	đing 叮
	lâm 少		cười 嗤
	tin 信		chê 吱

End of preface by Rev. Vũ Khoa in Chinese and Vietnamese

去 <small>去</small>	犬 <small>狂</small>	牛 <small>牜</small>	六 <small>老</small>	天 <small>忝</small>
Khúc đi	Khuyển chó	Ngưu trâu	Lục sáu	Thiên giới (ngày)
來 <small>吏</small>	羊 <small>羴</small>	馬 <small>馭</small>	三 <small>匹</small>	地 <small>坦</small>
Lai lại	Dương dê	Mã ngựa	Ba ba	Địa đất
女 <small>媽</small>	歸 <small>衛</small>	距 <small>距</small>	家 <small>茹</small>	舉 <small>拮</small>
Nữ gái	qu nê	Cự cửa	Gia nhà	Cử cát
男 <small>甥</small>	走 <small>彳</small>	牙 <small>齧</small>	國 <small>諾</small>	存 <small>群</small>
Nam giai	Châu chạy	Nha răng	Quốc mước	Tồn còn
帶 <small>帶</small>	拜 <small>禡</small>	無 <small>无</small>	前 <small>畧</small>	子 <small>視</small>
Đới đai	Bái lạy	Vô chăng	Biên trước	Tử con
冠 <small>帽</small>	跪 <small>葵</small>	有 <small>固</small>	後 <small>黠</small>	孫 <small>招</small>
Quan mũ	Quy quỳ	Hữu có	Hậu sau	Tôn cháu

First page of Tam Thiên Tự (1908) edition by Vũ Khoa