

XÒE DANCE OF THE TAI - FIELDWORK IN XISHUANBANNA PREFECTURE, YUNNAN PROVINCE, CHINA)

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Abstract: *Until now, the humanities and social science researchers in Viet Nam and China have basically agreed that the ancestors of the Tai exploited and settled upstream of the Mekong River and the Red River, in southwestern Yunnan Province, China, and that a part migrated to the south, to Vietnam, Laos and Thailand in the 11th century. The results of scientific research also coincide with the records in ancient histories of the Tai people and those that have been handed down in folk legends for generations. Spreading along these great migrant flows, the art of Xòe dance of the Tai, which was considered a cultural nucleus deeply imbued with ethnic identity, also followed the footsteps of exploring and establishing the Tai people to take root and flourish in the daily life of the local community and integrate with the indigenous culture in order to survive sustainably. So far, several works, theses, dissertations and scientific essays in Viet Nam have focused on surveying and studying the art of Xòe dance of the Tai as a unique ethnic cultural heritage, bringing the diverse values of the Tai community in the northwestern region as well as many other provinces and cities nationwide. Meanwhile, there is a lack of scientific survey, research and introduction for the source of this art and culture from the original land of the Tai, which was possibly accessible to the historical process of formation and development of this unique cultural heritage. To fill in the gaps, this article wants to initially provide new resources found in December 2018 through the survey of activities of Xòe dance of the Tai in five Tai villages upstream of the Mekong River and Red River (southern Yunnan Province, China) as a practical basis for a comparative view of the movement and creative development of Xòe dance of the Tai across different cultural spaces. Since then, it has recognized the acculturation trend of this special art form and the localization process, bringing the diversity and richness of cultural activities as well as the indigenous cultural values of Xòe dance of the Tai in Vietnam.*

Key words: *Xòe/dance, the Tai people, Yunnan, Honghe, upstream.*