

VOVINAM – VIỆT VÕ ĐẠO and Founder Nguyễn Lộc & Grand Master Lê Sáng

* **Source:** Trainer Trần Ngọc Thành written from document of Master Lý Phúc Thái "Sổ tay Võ Thuật" edited in Việt Nam

The late Grand Master Nguyễn Lộc, founder of VOVINAM, was born on the 8th day of the 4th month (lunar calendar) of the year 1912, in Huu Bang village, Thạch Thất district, Sơn Tây province, now on the outskirts of Hà Nội. As he was born and raised at a time when Vietnam was under French colonialism, Mr. Loc in his early days started seeking a way to help his country and his fellow – citizens out of foreign domination.

Mr. Loc incessantly researched the traditional Vietnamese martial arts and wrestling techniques as well as Oriental philosophies, former the foundation for a style of martial arts focusing on practical and effective applications. Thus, the Martial Arts Discipline of Vovinam was founded in 1938., and it officially began operation after a debut demonstration at the Hanoi Auditorium in 1939. Mr. Loc passed away on the 4th day of the 4th month (lunar calendar) of the year 1960 in Saigon, passing the leadership for Vovinam onto his heir disciple, the **Grand Master Le Sang**.

Having working closely with the Founder all his life, Grand Master Le Sang has a through understanding of the Founder's teachings in Martial Arts techniques as well as philosophy. Following the route mapped out by the Founder, Grand Master Le Sang has assumed the former's research to bring his work to fulfilment, creating the complete system of Vovinam, encompassing both martial arts techniques and martial arts way of life. At the same time, Grand Master Le Sang has led Vovinam in its day-to-day operation and development.

Vovinam combines martial arts philosophies of the Orient with the practicalities of the Occident. Vovinam's philosophies are based on Humanity and Harmony. The Vovinam man lives in harmony with others, without internal confinements, so he can live for himself as well as for others, reasonably and effectively. In Vovinam, man and nature co-exist and co-develop.

Along with martial arts philosophies and health maintenance techniques, Vovinam provides a system of martial arts techniques that encompass various form of self-defense and combat based on **the principle of Yin-Yang co-development**. Vovinam adapts the techniques of other styles of martial arts worldwide and updates itself based on psychological and physiological discoveries as they become available. Hence, Vovinam techniques are rich and varied, appropriate for people of all physical statures and all ages. Vovinam is lot high combat, but it is also **for health maintenance**.

After many years devoting his living to doing what is taught by the Founder, Grand Master Le Sang has systemized Vovinam's techniques to prepare the disciplines for its next step forward, **from Viet Vo Dao (Vietnamese Martial Arts) to Nhan Vo Dao (Martial Arts to Serve Mankind)**.

Its characteristics are as follows:

1. Basic attack strategies (**Thế Chiến Lược: serial moves, Đòn Chân: foot attack techniques**)
2. Basic counter-attack strategies, **Phản Thế** (moves against various punched, kicks, locks and weapons)
3. **Song Luyện:** Hard dual training (includes falls, designed for the younger set)
4. **Liên Hoàn Đối Luyện:** Soft dual training (excludes falls, designed for the older set and woman)
5. **Vật:** wrestling

6. **Giao đấu:** dueling
7. Đơn Luyện: Single training (**Quyền Pháp, Kiếm Pháp, Côn Pháp, Dao Pháp, ...:** forms with and without weapons)
8. Luyện Khí Công: Mind body training (**Nội Công Tâm Pháp**)

Thus Vovinam has been able to enrich itself with combat techniques of the various martial arts styles all over the world. It is not based on one single technique, but it combines all and adapts them under the principle of Yin-Yang Co-development.

Yin-Yang Co-development (Cương Nhu phối triển)