



**A STUDY OF THE BUDDHIST CONTRIBUTIONS
OF KING NGUYEN PHUC CHU TO
VIETNAMESE SOCIETY**

**Ven. Phan Thanh Dang
(Thich Giac Qua)**

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of
The Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts
(Buddhist Studies)

Graduate school
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
C.E. 2017



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The Graduate School of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, has approved this thesis entitled "A Study of the Buddhist Contributions of King Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese Society" as a part of education according to its curriculum of the Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies.

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Abstract

This is a qualitative research, the objectives of this thesis are: (1) To study the historical background during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu in South Vietnam; (2) To study the relationship between King Nguyen Phuc Chu and Buddhism; (3) To study the Buddhist contributions of King Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese society and Buddhism.

Through the methods of selection and documentary analysis, during the course of work, the research has the findings show is to study the historical background before and after of the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu in southern Vietnam, as well as his influence and development to Vietnamese society, and they have become a prominent historical event at the time.

Besides, it has played the process of studying the doctrines and Buddhist activities of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, as well as the Buddhist ethical thoughts great impacted to him, who used its as the standard for

social morality, and contributing positively to the national development. On the other hand, his influence has made Buddhism flourish both in form and in content. In addition, he has established the power of national unity that has strong impacted on the economy, politics, culture and education, creating a peaceful and prosperous country.

So, the contributions of King Nguyen Phuc Chu made strong development for Vietnamese Buddhism, and Buddhist development was a repercussion on the rule policies of the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu. And it became one of the important prerequisites for social development and thriving.

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Ven. Phan Thanh Dang
12/03/2017

List of Abbreviations

The following list of abbreviations and their expanded form refers to the name of the titles mentioned in reference below the entries. For details of titles, see Bibliography.

A.D	: Anno Domini
B.E	: Buddhist Era
BPS	: Buddhist Publication Society
C.E	: Christian Era
Ed.	: Editor
Etc.	: Et cetera/ and others
HCM	: Ho Chi Minh
Ibid.	: ibidden/ in the same book
MCU	: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
M.A	: Master of Arts
No.	: Number
Op.cit.	: Opera citato/ as referred
P(p).	: Page (s)
Pub.	: Published, publication
S	: Sanskrit
Tr.	: Translator
USA	: United States of America
Vol(s)	: Volume(s)
Ven	: Venerable
V	: Vietnamese

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Background and Significance of the Problems

Vietnam has a population of more than 90 million people, comprised of 54 different ethnic groups that possess historically rich cultural backgrounds and interesting folk arts. The country has more than one thousand historical, cultural, and architectural sites which is always to go with the national liberation movement. Vietnam is a country where had lots of wars, and has been colonized over one thousand years by aggressive and internal wars. And, in 1558 C.E, Vietnam had been occurred the wars by two powers: foreign invader of the Ming dynasty in China and internal wars of Vietnam. Thus, at that time, Vietnam had divided into two regions, called: the North Vietnam (Dang Ngoai) and the South Vietnam (Dang Trong), and to take Gianh river (Song Gianh) in Quang Binh province was border line. The North was ruled by the puppet dynasty of Latter Le government¹, the leader be king Le Anh Tong (1556-1572)², but all the power belong to the Trinh Lord, and the leader be Trinh Kiem. The South was ruled by king Nguyen Hoang (1558-1614)³.

¹Latter Le dynasty (1428 – 1789): Le Loi who is first formend this dynasty. While, before Latter Le dynasty, there is a Le dynasty called First Le dynasty (980 - 1009). This dynasty has found before Ly dynasty (1010 – 1225). See Pham Van Son, **The Complete History of Vietnam** (Vietnamese Version), (Japan: Vietnamese Community Press, 1983), p. 120.

²Quoc Su Quan Trieu Nguyen. Historical Institute, tr. **General History of Vietnam by Imperial Order** (Vietnamese Version), (Ha Noi: Hanoi Education Publishing House, 1998), pp. 643-656.

³Danny Wong Tze Ken & Champaka Monograph 5, **The Nguyen and Champa During 17th and 18th Century – A Study of Nguyen Foreign Relations**, (France: International Office of Champa Publishing House, 2007), p. 37.

Therefrom, the conflict between Nguyen dynasty and Trinh lord more and more strained.

Since above the social context, the Vietnamese Buddhism of the previous dynasties of Nguyen was impacted by that, and it had been declined, and was clearly showed in the period of the Latter Le dynasty (1428-1527)⁴, and especially, last period of the Latter Le dynasty, due to two main reasons were discrimination and boycott of the Confucianism, at this time the Confucianism had great influence in politics, therefore, they did not hesitated to repress the Buddhism⁵, such as the depravation of few Buddhist monks. Thus, in those days, The Buddhism has just played an important of religious belief⁶. However, in king Le Chieu Tong dynasty (1573 -1599) in the North and king Nguyen Hoang dynasty (1558 -1599) in the South then the Buddhism began renaissant signal, again⁷ because it was supported by the Nguyen Kings. And, afterward there was king Nguyen Phuc Chu whom had the most Buddhism's devotion rather than other Nguyen kings and he had play a part of the revival movements and development of Vietnamese Buddhism. And then, he had used the thoughts of The Three Teachings or Three Religions were a Source (Tam Giao Dong Nguyen)⁸ to make supportive methods for his rule.

⁴The Latter Le dynasty (1428-1527). According the Vietnamese history. It is including two period. The first period (1428-1527), this dynasty has been declined by the internal war of Vietnam, and then, the second period (1528-1789), this dynasty beginning rehabilitated again. See Venereble. Thích Mật Thể, **Essays on The History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version), (Da Nang: Minh Duc Press, 1970), pp. 171-175.

⁵Nguyen Tai Thu, Minh Chi, Ly Kim Hoa and Ha van Tan, **The History of Buddhism in Vietnam**, (USA: Institute of Philosophy – Vietnamese Academy of Social Science Press, 2006), p. 168.

⁶Venereble.Thich Mat The, **Op.cit.**, pp. 172-173.

⁷Thich Minh Tue, **A Brief History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version), (Ho Chi Minh: Ho Chi Minh City Buddhist Association Press, 1993), p. 412.

⁸Duong Quang Ham, **Basic History of Vietnamese Literature** (Vietnamese Version), (Ha Noi: Documental Centre of Educated Department Press, 1968), pp.37-38. **The Three Teachings (Tam Giao Dong Nguyen)**: It is including Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. King Nguyen Phuc Chu has combined the ethical and cultural quintessence of this three religion to build the good and peaceful society. Besides, he has also created unity between above three religion, without the

In fact, Nguyen dynasties's existence was over two hundred years, and the great contributions of king Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese society and Buddhism⁹. It was a vital hyphen of the recovery age between two stages of its before and after, those are from 15th to the 16th century and the 19th to the 20th century; these are the great declining periods of Vietnamese Buddhism. So, the contributions of king Nguyen Phuc Chu was a great milestone, and thanks to it, Vietnamese Buddhism and society overcome many challenges and the darkest period. But, why was nowadays only has a little scholar or a little document refered this problem? And why is nowadays society and youth people not be know or they do not interest to this event and it fade from their mind? Did those contributions had not enough influence to modern society?

For those reasons, the Researcher would like to opt for title “A Study of the Buddhist Contributions of King Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese Society” to research. For the writer wished that everyone in nowadays society to know contributing values of king Nguyen Phuc Chu for social development and Buddhist revival in those days, as well as how it has contributed for nowadays society. Beside, the writer also want to contribute a small document in studies process of Vietnamese Buddhist history such as to establishing the methods for oneself practices, serving for the Buddhism and society.

1.2 Objectives of the Research

This thesis study on the three main objectives as follows:

1.2.1 To study the historical background during the reign of the King Nguyen Phuc Chu in South Vietnam.

1.2.2 To study the relationship between the king Nguyen Phuc Chu and Buddhism.

conflict and discrimination. So, it was called Tam Giáo Đồng Nguyên. See Venereble. Thich Mat The, **Op.cit.**, p. 183.

⁹Nguyen Tai Thu, Minh Chi, Ly Kim Hoa and Ha van Tan, **The History of Buddhism in Vietnam**, (America: Institute of Philosophy – Vietnamese Academy of Social Science Press, 2006), p. 89 & p.147.

1.2.3 To study contributions of the Buddhist king Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese society.

1.3 Statement of the Problems Desired to Know

1.3.1 What is historical background during the reign of the King Nguyen Phuc Chu in South Vietnam?.

1.3.2 How was relationship between the king Nguyen Phuc Chu and Buddhism?

1.3.3 What were contributions of the Buddhist king Nguyen Phuc Chu To Vietnamese society?.

1.4 Definition of the Terms Used in the Research

1.4.1 Nguyen Phuc Chu means a Vietnamese warlord who ruled the southern provinces of Vietnam from 1691 to 1725. And he also was a Buddhist King who has great contributions to social development and Buddhism revival in Vietnam of this period. So, he was good example for latter generations to proceed.

1.4.2 Contribution means the contributions of king Nguyen Phuc Chu for revival and development of the Buddhism and society.

1.4.3 Buddhism means Vietnamese Buddhism which has only developed Mahāyāna Buddhism, and it has developed into a golden age of Vietnamese history. And nowadays, Vietnamese Buddhism had has three great buddhism traditions, Mahāyāna, Theravāda and Mendicant Buddhism.

1.4.4 Vietnamese society means a society of Vietnam during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691-1725 C.E) to the present time. And, it was greatly influenced by Buddhism cultural traditions in daily life, as the economy, culture, education, politics, even on the habits and customs of the Vietnamese people.

1.5 Review of Related Literature and Research Works

1.5.1 K.W.Taylor, **A History of The Vietnamese**. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2013¹⁰.

This book was written about Vietnamese history by the foreign author at Michigan University in American, he has studied the Vietnamese history, from Early to Modern age, comprised of language, literature, religion and warfare. So, this One exposed Vietnamese history, and specially the history of the Latter Le dynasty in the senventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. Moreover, it has refered the contributions of the Nguyen dynasty's Kings from 1558 to 1777 C.E, and the Buddhist contributions of king Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese society's development.

1.5.2 Pham Van Son, **The Complete History of The Vietnam** (Vietnamese Version). Japan: Vietnamese Community Press, 1983¹¹.

Especially, this book was noted whole historical process of Vietnam from the Epoch to Modern age (20th century). It is a historical book which has very value for the Researchers, and it help reader to be well-informed about the historical issues as well as the feudal struggles for independence of the dynasties. Furthermore, this book has showed the contribution of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu to Buddhism and society in Vietnam, and it has contributed for the development and built of the Vietnamese culture in the new period of the vietnamese history.

1.5.3 Nguyen Tai Thu, Minh Chi, Ly Kim Hoa, Ha Van Tan, **The History of Buddhism in Vietnam**. America: Washington, DC.20064, 2006¹².

This is a valuable book for the research of Vietnamese Buddhism history. Because it was noted whole historical process of the Vietnamese Buddhism as well as the Vietnamese history. Especially, the Buddhism started importing in Vietnam from the tenth to the twentieth centuries, so

¹⁰K.W.Taylor. **A History of The Vietnamese**, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2013, pp. 327-331.

¹¹Pham Van Son. **Op.cit.**, pp. 322-329.

¹²Nguyen Tai Thu, Minh Chi, Ly Kim Hoa and Ha van Tan, **Op.cit.**, pp. 196-201.

the Vietnamese buddhism's history was the historical period having a lot of change, and greatly impacted to the politics and society. Besides, this book was presented the Buddhist contributions of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu to develop culture, education, economy and politics on Vietnamese society, as well as the Vietnamese buddhism's revival in 1691 to 1725 C.E.

1.5.4 Nguyen Lang, **A Complete Work of the Historical Interpretation in Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version). Ha Noi: Literature Publishing House, 2014¹³.

This is one of the famous books which written about the Vietnamese Buddhism in the modern time. Besides, the author has also provided the information for anyone interested to Vietnamese Buddhism's history in Era to Modern age about the literature and culture. Furthermore, it was noted detail the contributions of the Kings and the Meditation Master of the Latter Le and the Nguyen dynasty in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, particularly the Buddhist contributions of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu for society's development and Buddhism rehabilitation on Vietnam in 1691 to 1725.

1.5.5 Li Tana, **Nguyen Cochinchina: Southern Vietnam in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**. USA: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1998.

The author has written about developmental history of Economy and Society of the Nguyen dynasty in Southern Vietnam in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. This is the period of the integration and innovation of Nguyen dynasty, and it has considered new developmental stage, modern stage for Vietnamese society's development. Especially, in the King Nguyen Phuc Chu's period which has considered golden developmental period of the Nguyen dynasty's history. And he has great contributions for social reformation and economic development.

¹³Nguyen Lang. **A Complete Work of Historical Interpretation of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version), (Ha Noi: Literature Publishing House, 2014), pp. 584-629.

1.5.6 Nguyen Khuong Dan (Thich Nguyen Chon), **The Recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism In The 20th Century**. (MA degree thesis). Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2008¹⁴.

This thesis studies the renaissance and development of the Vietnamese Buddhism in the twentieth century. Through, the author has presented the buddhism events and the struggling movement for the Buddhism's rehabilitation from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. And besides, this thesis has showed the contributions of King Nguyen Phuc Chu to Buddhism and society's development in Vietnam.

1.5.7 Duong Kinh Thanh. **Nguyen Phuc Chu Lord (1675-1725) - King Judiciousness - Bodhisattva of The Nation and the Buddhism**, (Sciential Seminar with title "The Nguyen Lords – Nguyen Phuc Chu's Boddhisattva", organized by Buddhist Research Institute and Religious Research Institute in Ho Chi Minh city). Vietnam: General Sciential Library in Ho Chi Minh city, 2011¹⁵.

This composition has presented the contributions of king Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese society and Buddhism as the nation expanded geographically and politically, social reformation and development, the contributions for revival and development of the Buddhism, and especially this article has refered the detail of king Nguyen Phuc Chu who has appied the Buddha's teachings for his rule in social life.

1.5.8 Ven.Thich Phuoc Son. **The Buddhist Schools's Development under King Nguyen Phuc Chu period**, (Sciential Seminar with title "The Nguyen Lords – Nguyen Phuc Chu's Boddhisattva", organized by Buddhist Research Institute and Religious Research Institute in Ho Chi Minh city). Vietnam: General Sciential Library in Ho Chi Minh city, 2011¹⁶.

In this composition, the author has refered king Nguyen Phuc Chu who has great impacted from Buddhism thoughts by the Thach

¹⁴Nguyen Khuong Dan (Ven.Thich Nguyen Chon), **The Recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism in the 20th Century**, (MA degree thesis) Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2551 B.E (2008), pp. 32-34.

¹⁵<http://quangduc.com/p4584a4865/chua-nguyen-phuc-chu-1675-1725-minh-vuong-bo-tat-cua-dan-toc-dao-phap>.

¹⁶<http://thuvienhoasen.org/a13052/duoi-thoi-chua-nguyen-phuc-chu>

Liem's Zen Master, and therefrom he has ruled the country to follow Buddhist spirit to contribute for the development, peace and unity of the nation. Besides, king Nguyen Phuc Chu has greatly contributed for Buddhism's development in Southern Vietnam.

1.6 Research Methodology

This thesis is a documentary research. Research process can be divided into the main stages as follows:

1.6.1 Collecting the relevant data from both primary and secondary sources from the Tipiṭaka, commentaries and the related historical books, dissertations and theses, journal, and the Internet.

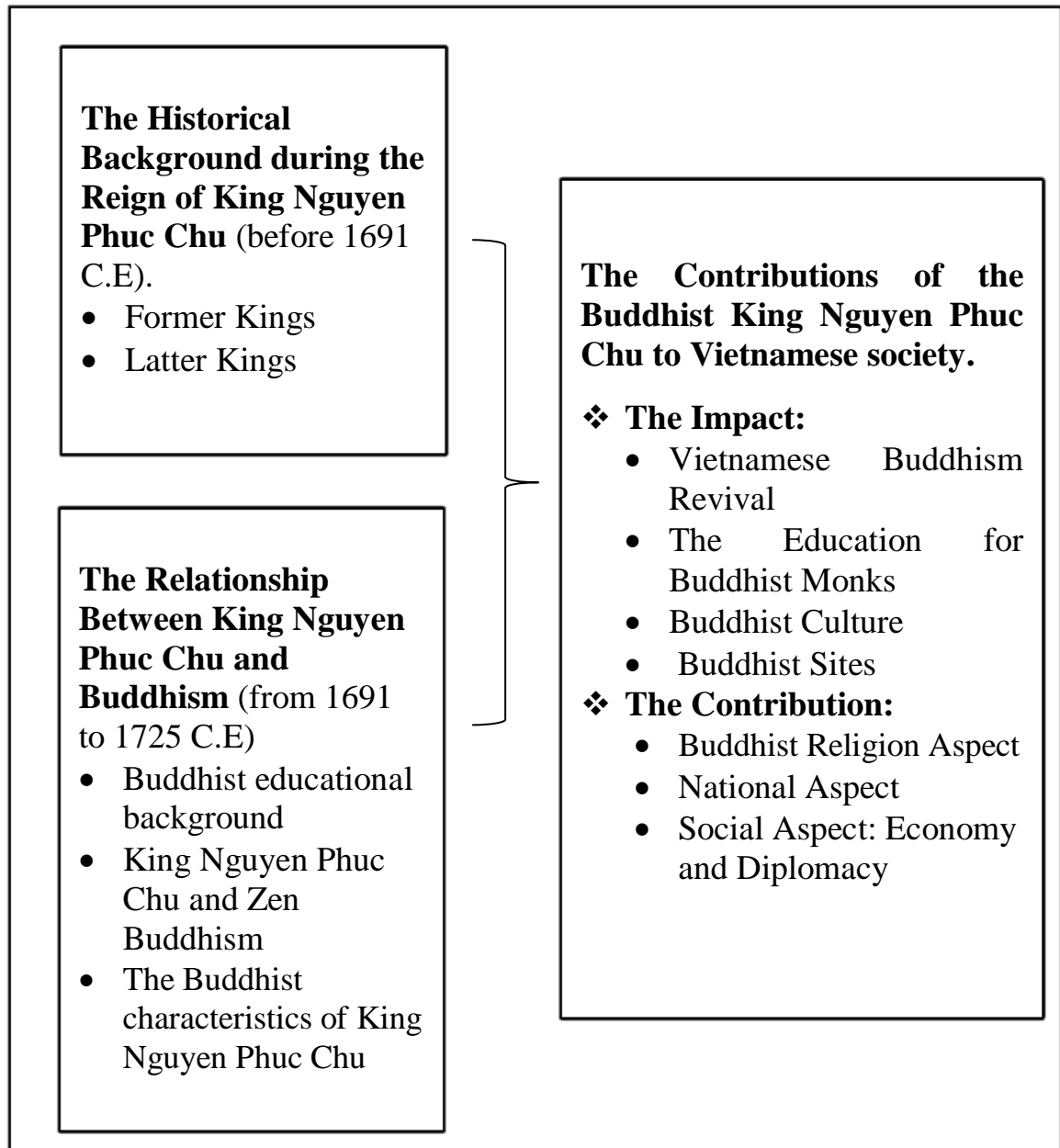
1.6.2 Synthesizing and Analyzing the collected data in accordance with the chapters of thesis.

1.6.3 Unifying the hypotheses and theoretical views without contradiction.

1.6.4 Providing a conclusion with the suggestions information for further research.

1.7 Conceptual Framework of the Research

Conceptual framework of the research can be present as the following chart;



1.8 Advantages Expected to Obtain from the Research

After finishing this study, the following advantages and results may be obtained:

1.8.1 Understanding the historical background during the reign of the King Nguyen Phuc Chu in South Vietnam.

1.8.2 Having a clear understand the relationship between the king Nguyen Phuc Chu and Buddhism.

1.8.3 Identifying the buddhist contributions of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu and its impacts to Vietnamese society.

Chapter II

The Historical Background during the Reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu in South Vietnam

Each country has different historical backgrounds, and the ups and downs were also different that have leading the governing regime changes of a country. At the same, from the influence of social circumstances had led the formation and development of the Nguyen dynasty. They have become a prominent event in Vietnamese history. And establishing new kingdom was synonymous with territorial expansion of Vietnam in the south by the Nguyen family and ended the wars between the Vietnamese and the Champa¹. Such as, it has also showed the development and influence of King Nguyen Phuc Chu on society in southern Vietnam. Throughout this chapter, readers can understand more about the setting of the Vietnamese social situation before and after the reign of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu.

2.1 The Context of Vietnamese Society

In 16th to 18th centuries, the Vietnamese reigned by the Latter Le dynasty, which had the political and social situation were encountering many unpeaceful, there are a lot the faction of feudal system, who had contradicted each other that lead founding their own governments, creating social circumstance quite troubles, which happen the wars in everywhere, and great impacted to economy, politics and people life. For

¹Li TaNa. **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**. New York: Ithaca - Cornell University Press. 1998, p. 244.

this reasons, the Nguyen dynasty formed in the southern Vietnam. With the objective and subjective factors of such society, for Vietnamese government at that time, what they have been done to face these problems, and how did Vietnamese social situation will be? We will study through the parts below:

2.1.1 Social and Political Aspect

At the time, Vietnam under the rule of the Latter Le dynasty (1428-1789), was also the time that the country was suffering from chaos by the civil wars and foreign invasion². Especially the civil was took in the court of the Latter Le to scramble for power. Specifically in 1522, General Mac Dang Dung held all the powers in the post – Latter Le dynasty³, and in June 1527, Mac Dang Dung overthrown the Latter Le government and Mac dynasty established⁴. However, the dispute between the faction has been strained, leading to the establishment of hostility between two governments: the Mac dynasty government in the North and in the South of the Latter Le dynasty (Thanh Hoa province come in of the South)⁵. Since then, the war between the Mac dynasty and the Latter Le dynasty lasted about 46 years (1546-1592), representing of the Latter Le dynasty was Lord Trinh Kiem, and we call these wars to be Trinh-Mac wars. Finally, Mac dynasty was destroyed in 1592 by the Latter Le government⁶. This is a brutal war, which has used the war to destroy each other, to competition for power between the dominant independent corporation which is the cause of the situation of the country was divided, and drew people throughout the country on the devastating sorrowfulness.

²Cao Huy Giu, tr. **The Complete History of Dai Viet** (Vietnamese Version), Vol.II. (Ha Noi: Culture and Information Publishing House. 2006). p. 513.

³Ibid., p. 534.

⁴Ibid., p. 547.

⁵Before the internal wars occurred in Vietnam, Latter Le dynasty established in Thang Long capital, Northern Vietnam. But after the struggle had happened between Latter Le and Mac dynasty, and Latter Le dynasty has been defeated by the adversary, therefore Mac dynasty had occupied Thang Long capital and Latter Le dynasty had withdrawn from the North and they have occupied in Thanh Hoa province (it was southward of Thang Long capital).

⁶Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., p. 647.

After the destroying Mac dynasty, the Latter Le dynasty moved the capital to Thang Long (Hanoi), Northern Vietnam. But again, the power of Latter Le dynasty that Lord Trinh Kiem was held and the Latter Le dynasty court just a puppet government. So, a devastating war between the Mac dynasty and Lord Trinh Kiem ended yet how long, the people of the country had fallen into a new civil war between the dynasty Le – Trinh and the Nguyen dynasty, has lasted more than a century (1558-1672). And since then, the Vietnam was divided into two parts by the two ruling dynasties. Nguyen dynasty was established in 1600 in the southern land of Thuan-Quang (Thanh Hoa province come in of Vietnam southern) by Lord Nguyen Hoang head⁷ and lasted until the period of King Nguyen Phuc Chu and the Nguyen dynasty later.

While the Northern situation was increasingly troubled, a part to prop the invader from China⁸, and to confront miserable people life and deficient, lead to the fierce struggle that followed the boom, forming the extensive farmers movements, lasted almost throughout the eighteenth century. And on the other hand, the court facing the north battle with South Vietnam's government. Meanwhile, in the South, the Nguyen dynasty was stable for people life, social development and to expand the territory toward the south.

In short, looking at the plight of the country at the time, much powerful unitary authorities, making people did not know where to cry. The people had always been in a state of fear that can not settle, this creates the plight of a country mournful and revolted, the people live in

⁷Lord Nguyen Hoang had ideas formation at long times to establish a peculiar government. Because the political situation of Latter Le government was very troublous at that time, so he must has thoughts so that. Therefore, in 1558, Lord Nguyen Hoang had decided into the land of Thuan Hoa to guard the frontiers for Latter Le dynasty. And from then on, Lord Nguyen Hoang has quieted mobilizing soldier and to consolidate the military position and economy for the strategy of Government's establishment later. So, in 1600, he has officially formed Nguyen dynasty and has separated from Latter Le dynasty. See more. Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., Pp. 584-596.

⁸Nguyen Lang, **A Complete Work of Historical Interpretation of Vietnamese Buddhism**, (Vietnamese Version), (Ha Noi: Literature Publishing House, 2014), p. 485. And Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., p.729 & p. 755.

the miserableness of the civil war lasted from the late 16th century to 18th century.

2.1.2 The Impact of Latter Le Dynasty to the Nguyen Dynasty

The plight of the country has been divided into two North – South region. Here, it has two nouns, as “Dang Trong” referred to the South or cochinchina; and the “Dang Ngoai” was used for the North at the time. Other point more, the King of the Nguyen dynasty, after their death has been bestowed as “Emperor” (in the books of the Vietnamese history written such). So, in this paper, the writer also used the term “King” instead that the word “Lord” to describe the head of each of the Nguyen dynasty.

When we refer to the development of the Nguyen dynasty, we can not fail to mention the Latter Le dynasty. Because the Nguyen dynasty had been established and developed from objective and subjective reasons by weakness of the Latter Le dynasty through the problem as follows:

First, on politically, this time the country was chaos, and the division of the factions in the Latter Le dynasty, has created many internal contradictions, standing before these events, the Latter Le dynasty expressed helplessness and weakness. Therefore, for the safety and survival for himself, General Nguyen Hoang had suggested from Le Royal for he went to the land of Thanh Hoa⁹ (southern Vietnam) to guard the frontiers in 1558. Afterward, he formed the Nguyen dynasty in 1600¹⁰. He was a General who has received a lot of credibility by the King Le and the soldiers and generals other. So, this is the premise of the establishment of his career afterwards. When he left the North come to the South, thousands of soldiers and generals and relatives to support him.

⁹Thuan Hoa: including Quang Binh, Quang Tri and Thua Thien Hue province and even Quang Nam province.

¹⁰Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., p. 687.

Second, in economic terms, the economy has been weakness by the disturbance of northern government. So, after Nguyen Hoang based in Quang Nam province¹¹, the port of Hoi An was a place to dock the boat's domestic and foreign trade; they had trade with the earlies Latter Le dynasty. And to know this advantage, the Nguyen dynasty did good diplomacy, and it has become a place of economic exchanges, as an important trade center's top of the Nguyen dynasty at that time. And later, in the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, he has developed this advantage of further power.

Third, at the moment, the social reform, the country circumstance has been disturbances (one side being the enemy invasion, on the other hand, the result of the civil war under the Latter Le reign), anyone who wants the power and position to belong to themselves. So nobody interestes and cares for people while people' life are destitute and misery, their mind is always confusion, fear, not knowing what to believe. Meanwhile, the Nguyen reign seen the weakness of the Latter Le dynasty, that have devoted care for the people's life, stable life, social reforms, launched the movement of migrant from the North to the South. Therefore, they are the people loved and surrender under the Nguyen dynasty. All of this has created power government about both economic and political, flourishing social life. As *The Complete History of Dai Viet* (Vietnamese version), recorded:

*King Nguyen Hoang reigned tens of years with clement commands, often to bestow a favour on the people, to behave the fair, to advise army Gen, to prohibit the villain, the market does not challenge the price, people be not stealing, foreign merchant boat be traded, strictly orders be careful, the people will fell the love of his virtue...*¹².

In short, for the politicians, the first importants was known the times, and next to benevolent tolerance to convert human heart. The people's confidence is the big winner of the authorities' government and Nguyen dynasty has done good this things, and be a their major success.

¹¹Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., p. 688.

¹²Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., p. 606.

2.2 The Kings of Nguyen Dynasty Before and After of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1558-1777)

In the Vietnamese history, the Nguyen government had experienced nine dynasties of the reign of nine other kings, which had the most outstanding and eminent points, as the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu who was sixth king of the Nguyen dynasty. And, what did the Nguyen dynasties have the contributions for Vietnamese society at that time? As well as how the setting of the social situation before and after of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, it will introduce brief, below:

2.2.1 Former Kings

Before king Nguyen Phuc Chu had five the kings reigned, who has been founded and developped the Nguyen dynasty over ninety years ago. They were also Buddhist kings those made first base for Buddhist development in the southern Vietnam. And then, king Nguyen Phuc Chu was the sixth king who had inherited this cultural traditions.

a. Nguyen Hoang King (1524-1613)

Nguyen Hoang was born in the Gia Mieu village, Tong Son district, Thanh Hoa province. He was the second son of Great General Nguyen Kim (who has helped Latter Le dynasty (1533-1675), his ancestors are the general in Le royal family since Le dynasty began founding from 1428 to 1789). King Nguyen Hoang has made so many big victories and was promoted to senior officials for the Latter Le dynasty. He was the first to establish the Nguyen dynasty in the 60s. In 1558, after the conflict for the right of the Latter Le dynasty, he has asked the court to allow him to the land of Thuan Hoa (including Quang Binh, Quang Tri and Hue province in Middle of Vietnam today) in the southern of the duty to hold the territory. He was stationed at Minister Trieu Phong, Ai Tu commune, Vo Xuong district, Quang Tri province. He has huge merit in created a new face for the southern region of Vietnam, and he officially founded the Nguyen dynasty in 1600, placing the capital in Quang Nam

province. He ruled until 1613. Later, he has bestow posthumously is *Thai To Gia Du Emperor*, also know as the First Lord (Chua Tien)¹³.

After entering land Thuan Hoa, the first thing do to reinforce the army of Nguyen Hoang king entitled to prepare a long – term plan for the reclaimed territory, and established a new dynasty. Next to, he built and remodeled the temples, which was spiritual prop for the people, created confidence for everyone, and national establishment of Nguyen royal family late.

In 1601, he began to build the Thien Mu pagoda in Huong Tra district, Thua Thien Hue Province. In 1602, he built the Sung Hoa temple in Phu Vang district, Thua Thien Hue province. After a few years of establishment of the imperial city in Quang Nam (1600), then Nguyen Hoang king gave up Long Hung pagoda, near the palace of the Nguyen dynasty in Duy Xuyen district, Quang Nam province. In 1607, he built Bao Chau pagoda in Tra Kieu district, Quang Nam province. And in 1609, he built Kinh Thien pagoda in Thuan Thach district, Quang Binh province.

We can see that, to be successful in the career of imperial greatness, Nguyen Hoang king must have a sharp vision in politics. And he said that, the Buddhism (Mahāyāna Buddhism) was a traditional religion of the nation, the fundamental belief of the people in Thuan Hoa. With the liberal doctrine which has an energy to release and convert the human strongly. That is the reasoning is Nguyen Hoang select the Buddhism, from which he planed and executed political lines a human way. In fact, Nguyen Hoang king is a humane person, so that everyone loved him¹⁴. As the book of The United History of Dai Viet (Vietnamese version) has written about Nguyen Hoang and praised him:

Nguyen Hoang who is quiet, steadfast, with shrewdness. He treated his soldiers very generous, tolerant and approachable,

¹³National Historical Committee of Nguyen Dynasty. **Imperial Historical Mirror of Dai Viet** (Vietnamese version), Vo.28, (Ha Noi: Education Publishing House, 1998), p. 645.

¹⁴Tran Trong Kim, **A Brief History of Vietnam** (Vietnamese Version), (HaNoi: The Culture and Information press, 1999), p. 310.

*pleased to appoint him as proconsul, to the frontier policing and fight the invadable enemy in the East (China)*¹⁵.

We can say, Nguyen Hoang succeeded on the policy of the country's rule for the win of human hearts, social stability and building a good relationship with neighbouring countries as well as the North' government because he raised high the message of Buddhism to everyone. Not only that, that message has also communicated for his descendants, as Nguyen Phuc Nguyen king, Nguyen Phuc Lan king, Nguyen Phuc Tan king, Nguyen Phuc Chu King, etc..., to continue to uphold and achieved great achievements in journey to expand the border of the future. Lastly, King Nguyen Hoang took the Buddhist tradition as the basis for life and moral culture, and also was premise for succeeding Kings continued development and nation building.

b. King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen (1563-1635)

King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen bestowed posthumously *Hy Tong Hieu Van* Emperor, also known as Chua Sai (Monk Lord)¹⁶. He was the sixth son of King Nguyen Hoang. He had his father to the throne in 1613 to 1635. He moved the royal capital to Phuoc Yen residence of Thua Thien Hue province in 1626. King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen who was very intelligent and ingenious, so the official in the court are respected him, that:

*Every day he and the minister discussed the political organization, for many things right. Founder of a dynasty (king Nguyen Hoang) know that would have entrusted his inheritance for his son, and he always look after him*¹⁷.

And finally, he had to shoulder a great task which his father had entrusted to him that:

¹⁵Le Quy Don, **The United History of Dai Viet** (Vietnamese version), (Ha Noi: Social Science Publishing House, 1978), p. 64.

¹⁶<http://kenhsinhvien.vn/topic/9-chua-va-13-vua-nha-nguyen-vai-tro-cua-nha-nguyen-doi-voi-lich-su-dan-toc.265234>.

¹⁷Historical Science Community of Vietnam. **Nguyen Lords and The Nguyen Royal Dynasty in Vietnam's History From 16th To 19th Centuries** (Vietnamese Version), (HaNoi: The World Publishing House, 2008), p. 137.

I (king Nguyen Hoang) have to died when the unfinished, shall I have left to my son (Nguyen Phuc Nguyen), you should agree to help my child, so that it is completed inheritance. If such forces can not match, than tried to hold land to waiting for the opportunity. Do not ignore advised by me¹⁸.

We can say that this is a major challenge period during the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Nguyen; because it is the beginning stage of the peak of the fierce conflict between Lord Trinh (The North) and Nguyen dynasty (The Southern), starting from 1627 to 1672. In 1620, king Nguyen Phuc Nguyen excused Lord Trinh was unfounded aggression, so he decided to completely terminate the payment of taxes to the government Le – Trinh. In 1627, the soldiers of Le – Trinh dynasty in the North, opening the first attack on a large scale hit the Nguyen Dynasty (in the South) – the opening of two tide war of during 45 years (1627 – 1672) with seven big battle¹⁹. In 1630, king Nguyen Phuc Nguyen has declared official of the South's government, which has severed the dependent relationship with authorities Le – Trinh (in the North). This marks was a fundamental transition that from a local authority, carrying heavy military nature of Le – Trinh dynasty into the civil authorities of the Nguyen dynasty. And in particular, in external relations of king Nguyen Phuc Nguyen with the foreign countries, then he has proclaimed title as the King of An Nam (Vietnam) in the role of an independent national sovereignty²⁰. In 1672, after having spent seven attacks and violent conflict between the two dynasties Nguyen and Le-Trinh, so they feel unable to solve anything. Finally, they decided to end the war, and took the Gianh river (Quang Binh province) as boundary, division of the country. And each ruled their own territory.

King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen was the heir's fortune and ideology of his father, that he follow the direction of his predecessor. So, when

¹⁸Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., p. 138.

¹⁹Nguyen Hien Duc. **Vietnamese Buddhism History Under Trinh – Nguyen Dynasty: Buddhism History in Dang Ngoai (The North)**, (Vietnamese version), Vo.I, (Vietnam: Ho chi Minh City of General Publishing House, 2006), pp.606-609. And, see. Pham Van Son, **The Complete History of Vietnam** (Vietnamese Version), (Japan: Vietnamese Community Press, 1983). pp. 330 - 339.

²⁰Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., p. 139.

recently crowned, he reformed the bureaucracy, not stereotyped old administrative regime of the Later Le dynasty as his father had done. He has arranged the main structure from central to local and rigorous science. His reforms have key significance, which has laid the basis for further progress and more solid of the Nguyen dynasty in particular and the country in general. Besides, he has continued to execute the testament of his father, protecting and developing its own national independence and territorial expansion southward. For more than 20 years of reign, King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen has reclaimed a large area of land, from land of Quang Nam province to Sai Gon – Gia Dinh, that belong to the territory of the Nguyen dynasty. He was the first to have the opening for merger sovereignty over Hoang Sa and Truong Sa islands in the East Sea belong to the Southern government in 1631-1634²¹.

Moreover, he also focused on implementing policies construction and restoration of the temple, encouraged monks from China to practice their religion, and he took the ideas of Buddhist ethics to take care of people's life, used clement virtue to rule the country.

King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen considered the most successful people for the strategic expansion of trade with the West as well as Asia and South East Asia since then and until the decade after that. Because, he knew to apply the policy of openness, trade tax cuts, he has turned into a land of Southern activities place for trade, as observes that:

The most beautiful harbour, where all foreigners were coming and where there was fair reputation, that is seaport in Quang Nam province... Lord Nguyen (king Nguyen Phuc Nguyen) was not closed before any the country, he so free and open to all foreigners²².

He was also smart who have many strategies, plus gracious character and openness have helped the way of his reign to be quite successful. And finally, King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen died at 73 years old, in 1635.

²¹Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., pp. 142 - 147.

²²Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., p. 141.

c. King Nguyen Phuc Lan (1601-1648)

Nguyen Phuc Lan was the second child of eleven child of King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen. In 1635, after King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen died, he took over his father served as the head of the dynasty, the main operating until 1648, he moved the royal capital from the village of Phuoc Yen (Quang Dien district - Thua Thien Hue province) to the village of Kim Long (Huong Tra- Thua Thien Hue province). And later he was posthumously honour *Than Tong Hieu Chieu Emperor*, also known as Chua Thuong (the Master Lord)²³.

During his thirteen years reign, he spent four great event but with the talent of his military strategy should have passed. First, just to replace his father foot steps, then his third young brother's is Nguyen Phuc Anh, who has wanted to overthrow his brother to steal the throne, so he associated with Lord Trinh of the Latter Le Dynasty in Northern troops to attack the South but he lost in this battle and he has been condemn to death by King Nguyen Phuc Lan. Second, in 1639, after Nguyen Phuc Anh died, his wife Ms.Tong Thi wanted revenge for her husband, so she used her beauty to seduce King Nguyen Phuc Lan with the aim of damaging his reputation and career, and a time long king Nguyen Phuc Lan was dismayed by her beauty and his neglect of the government, just chasing the pleasures of sensual love, lead to the chaos in royal cabinet. But in the end, he has been dissuaded from the his courtier, from which he aware of his great responsibility and dedicate itself, take care of life for the people. Third, in 1643, he must confront a war invasion of the Europeans, it is the battle of the Netherlander, with large ships equipped modern weapons, but the Army of king Nguyen Phuc Lan has beaten them and was famous victorious. Finally, the aggressive war of Lord Trinh in the North in 1648, king Nguyen Phuc Lan with his army have combatted and repulsed the invaders to be the Lord Trinh. And on the back of this battle Nguyen Phuc Lan died in 1648.

As well as his predecessor kings, King Nguyen Phuc Lan also influenced by the Buddhist tradition, and he was also a devout person to Buddhism and he has created easily conditions for Buddhism

²³<http://lichsunuocvietnam.com/chua-thuong-nguyen-phuc-lan/>

development in Thuan Hoa land. According his father's testament, he applied the Buddhism for the motto of the protection and development of the country. During this period, numerous appearances of Chinese famous monks as Zen master Vien Canh, Zen Master Vien Khoan, etc., they come Nguyen royal capital to spread Buddhism. As the country with major changes, King Nguyen Phuc Lan based on Buddhism to pray, as

In 1641, Summer in May, it has drought, withered wheat, population of starvation. The King was abstinence to pray for the good season, the people was prosperous²⁴.

Although, king Nguyen Phuc Lan ruled the country in troubles times but he completed the mission that the proposed predecessor Kings, putting upward developing country, territory is increasingly expanding, and the society was stable.

d. King Nguyen Phuc Tan (1620-1687)

Nguyen Phuc Tan was posthumously honour *Thai Tong Hieu Triet Emperor*, also known as Chua Hien (the Virtuous Lord)²⁵. He ruled from 1648 to 1687, was the fourth king of the Nguyen Dynasty. He was very knowledgeable about the art of war, courage, intelligence, determined temperament. After succeeding his father in 1648, he continued the process of building the country. Therefrom, king Nguyen Phuc Tan care and research the art of warfare, to gather brave army, military training, readying for the attack on the Lord Trinh troops in the North.

In the fourth battle in 1648, before the throne Nguyen Phuc Tan led the soldier to fight, and after win his return, he was passed on the throne to his father, and he brought 30,000 military troops of Lord Trinh got caught, that divided equally to exploit new lands to the South. From 1655 to 1672, Nguyen dynasty faced with Lord Trinh troops through three intense battles and fierce, with intelligence of King Nguyen Phuc

²⁴Le Binh Phuong Luan, **The Buddhism History of Hue Province Under Nguyen Dynasty** (Vietnamese version), Vo.III, No.2, (Science and Technology Review – Hue Science University, Press, 2015), p. 99.

²⁵<http://kenhsinhvien.vn/topic/9-chua-va-13-vua-nha-nguyen-vai-tro-cua-nha-nguyen-doi-voi-lich-su-dan-toc.265234/>.

Tan, Lord Trinh troops can not win, and had to retreat to Thang Long capital - Hanoi²⁶. In 1679, with 3,000 soliders and generals of the Ming dynasty in China went to the Southern please ruled by king Nguyen Phuc Tan, and the King bestowed this soliders to live in Gia Dinh – Saigon where was new land exploit. After the war ended in the North, the King's attention for taking care, developing social life and continue to use the strategy of reconciliation with the King of country Champa (Chan Lap) in the southward to reclaim and extend the territory.

However, in addition to caring for people's life and administration of the government, the king Nguyen Phuc Tan was also a king so devoted Buddhist, and always interested in the ups and downs of the Buddhism, by which he has great impacted from Buddhist ideology that his own becomes benevolent, was wise kings as he take good hearted to treat people, from which he was called the name Chua Hien (Virtuous Lord). In the 1665, the King restored Thien Mu pagoda (Hue province). In 1667, the King gave injunction to build Vinh Hoa pagoda in Linh Thai mountain – Thua Thien Hue province, in the inauguration temple day, the King hold a ceremony through seven days and nights to chant and pray for peaceful and prosperous of the nation²⁷. In 1677, Zen master Nguyen Thieu was the 33rd Patriarch of Lam Te Zen school from China come to the land of Binh Dinh province, visiting King Nguyen Phuc Tan and building Thap Thap Di Da pagoda (the pagoda of ten tower Amitabha) by King's commanding. In 1683, King Nguyen Phuc Tan conferred Zen master Nguyen Thieu some money to renovate the Vinh An temple in Phu Xuan- Thuan Hoa and Pho Dong tower be built in 1684, and in 1689 king Nguyen Phuc Tran renamed this temple be the Quoc An temple. At the time 1660 – 1680, with the support of king Nguyen Phuc Tan, Truc Lam Zen School was renaissance in Thuan Hoa, with the arrival of Buddhist monks as Zen master Vien Canh, zen master Vien Khoan and most importantly the Zen master Huong Hai (there are many royal families have been refuged by him). During his reign, there was Buddhist monks come to carry on missionary work as Zen master Minh

²⁶Pham Van Son. Op.cit., pp. 333 - 340.

²⁷Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), pp. 10 - 11.

Hoang Tu Dung founding An Tong temple (Tu Dam temple in Hue province nowadays); Zen master Minh Hai Phap Bao founding Chuc Thanh temple (Quang Nam Province); Zen master Minh Vat Nhat Tri, and Zen master Minh Giac Ky Phuong, ect...Beside, the King also invited many other Zen master in the country as well as from China to propagate the truth dhamma, taught people to live according to Buddhist ethics.

Being the King on a battle field war, where exposed how death that mading he will understand the essence of life, and he has stayed with the Buddhist teaching, he still enjoys the tranquil scene at the meditation monastery. Thus, at that time Buddhism was strong and pervasive development, as well as the clergy also joined in the care of cultural life, education for people, contributing to social security.

f. King Nguyen Phuc Tran (1649-1691)

In 1687, King Nguyen Phuc Tan died, whose son was Nguyen Phuc Tran (Thai) succeeded him as a King, known as Chua Nghia (the Clement Lord), was the fifth King of Nguyen Dynasty in the South. He reigned from 1687 to 1691, then he was bestow posthumously *Anh Tong Hieu Nghia Emperor*²⁸. When he became the king, he moved the royal capital from Kim Long village to Phu Xuan village (Thua Thien Hue province); from then on it became the main capital of the Nguyen Dynasty. King Nguyen Phuc Tran was celebrity about toleration, mitigation of punishment and tax, simple ritual, appointing the talent to an important post of prior dynasty; therefrom he has venerated with calling name Nghia Vuong (Clement King) by everyone.

During the short of his reign, King Nguyen Phuc Tran also has done some the good for the society. As in 1688, General Hoang Tan betrayed the Nguyen dynasty at Dinh Tuong town – My Tho (Tien Giang province), he killed the official rule of this town was Duong Ngan Dich, and occupied the main important base and interfered the lines of traffic by water at My Tho river, not for traders across the back, looting people's property of this region. King Nguyen Phuc Tran known and ordered the

²⁸<http://kenhsinhvien.vn/topic/9-chua-va-13-vua-nha-nguyen-vai-tro-cua-nha-nguyen-doi-voi-lich-su-dan-toc.265234/>.

General staff, the admiral to suppress the base of General Hoang Tan. In January 1689, General Hoang Tan has leave his family, wife and children for the escape. Meanwhile, the Chan Lap government (Champa) not want to tribute the Nguyen dynasty, who have used the army to attack of the Nguyen dynasty. But finally, they also have been beat by Nguyen military. Later, the King of Chan Lap power (Champa) and King Nguyen Phuc Tran created excellent relation together (Champa where to next border of Cambodia country and My Tho district of Tien Giang province - Vietnam). In middle of 1689, the King ordered to open the examination for choice talents to help country. And in 1691, the King being ill and died, at 42 years old²⁹.

The King Nguyen Phuc Tran was always care social life so much, so he has applied Buddhist ideas making spiritual foundation for society like as his predecessors of the previous dynasties, and promoted the spirit of Buddhist ethics as well as Confucianism for people being alive to humanist ethics. Thus, king Nguyen Phuc Tran has remodeled and built many temples in Thuan Hoa Land as well as the clearing of new land. As, in 1688, the King ordered to restore Vinh Hoa pagoda at Tu Dung seaport – Thua Thien Hue province; and in July 1689, King Nguyen Phuc Tran ordered tax-free of ground for Vinh An pagoda and other pagodas. Then, the King tasked Zen master Nguyen Thieu to come back Quang Dong province (China) invited Zen master Thach Liem and some Most Venerable other to Vietnam (1687 - 1690) to spread Buddhism. And the King ordered opening the Altar Rules (the great ceremony of the observer precepts of the Bhikkhu and Bhikkhuni) at Thien Mu pagoda – Hue province under the chairman of Zen master Nguyen Thieu³⁰.

However, in a short time for the reign, the king Nguyen Phuc Tran accomplished a lot of good works for people. He has also the promotive devoutness of the Buddhism' development, which creating a peaceful and powerful society.

²⁹Phan Khoang, **Vietnamese History in Dang Trong** (The South) **From 1558 to 1777: The Epic of The Southward Movement of The Vietnamese People**, (Ho Chi Minh City: Xuan Thu Publishing House, 1967), PP. 412 - 415 & p. 215.

³⁰Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 13.

2.2.2 Latter Kings

After the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu that included three dynasties of three other kings. All were also Buddhist kings, who has also the contributions on society and Buddhism, but in this period, the Buddhism has been declined gradual by no have power support like as the king before. And these are also the dynasties to end up the reign of the Nguyen government in the south Vietnam.

a. King Nguyen Phuc Tru (1697-1738)

Nguyen Phuc Tru was the 7th King of Nguyen dynasty, who was a King taking refuge in the Triple Gems of Tao Dong Zen school with Buddhist name “Van Truyen Dao Nhan”. He was the eldest son of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, that he succeeded his father to the throne in 1725 to 1738, being called Ninh Vuong (the Peaceful King). As the follower Buddhism, so he was very focused on morality, ethics, taking clement virtue to treat people. He died in 1738, and has been bestowed posthumously honour *Tuc Tong Hieu Ninh Emperor*³¹.

Further, the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Tru was the period of stabile peace of the nation, economic and social developing. In 1729, King Nguyen Phuc Tru ordered the construction of administrative station to protect social security in the South part, as Saigon – Gia Dinh, be called Phien Bien by General Truong Phuc Vinh head; a base at Bien Hoa – Dong Nai province called Tran Bien by Nguyen Cuu Triem head and Long Ho palace at Vinh Long province and My Tho city – Tien Giang province (in 1732).

Besides, king Nguyen Phuc Tru also had been outstanding achievements through his reign, such as: in 1726, he ordered the termination of alcoholic evils, gamble board, on the contrary he has advised and encouragd people to till. In 1729, in addition to quell the rebellion of the Champa and to build administrative institutions, the King was also to build the base of copper. In 1731, the King ordered

³¹<http://www.vietnamgiapha.com/XemChiTietTungNguoi/51/12/giapha.html>
l.

measurements back for the length of the road to the local and avenue road. In 1732, the Nguyen dynasty had good diplomatic with Champa king. In 1733 the King ordered to measure the length of the southern coastline. In 1735, the commander of Ha Tien palace in Ha Tien province was Mac Cuu died, and being conferred a title “Khai Tướng Thượng Trụ Quốc Đại Tướng Quân Vũ Nghị Công”³². In particular, last 1735, the Nguyen dynasty opened a general censorship throughout Southern and Champa land of Cambodia, and in June 1737, the court revised the official positions, wages, uniforms reform, custom change, and not follow the customary feudal backwardness as in the North³³.

Regarding religion, the King has issued a policy of openness with regard to religion, particularly Buddhism, the King was very revered and support for the Buddhism flourish. About Christianity, the King also allowed transmission religion in the South (the previous King ban spread Christianity). In 1729, for devout morality of Zen master Nguyen Thieu, the King was conferred noble name as “Hanh Doan Zen Master” (Morality Zen master). In August 1735, the King conferred with a sign plate for Ho Quoc pagoda in Bien Hoa city – Dong Nai province as “Sắc Tứ Hộ Quốc Temple”, besides the King also encouraged monks to open up new areas to expand Buddhism and building temples. With this merits that made Buddhism more flavor and spread everywhere.

Although, the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Tru not long but he was considered the person great contribution in setting up the new administrative institutions and with the policy of openness in the process of preserving and expanding the land of Dong Bang Song Cuu Long in southern west part (Mekong Delta in the Southern).

b. King Nguyen Phuc Khoat (1714 - 1765)

He was the eldest son of the nine sons of king Nguyen Phuc Tru. His father's successor in 1738 to 1765, he was also called Vu Vuong (the

³²To be a title for Great General who has been great contribution to territorial expansion.

³³Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 19.

Hopeful King). Later, he was posthumously honor as *The Tong Hieu Vu Emperor*³⁴. In April 1744, king Nguyen Phuc Khoat found favorable opportunity to declare Nguyen dynasty Government in the South which was officially an independent country. He was the eighth King, was very revered the Buddhism and took refuge the Triple Gems of Tao Dong Zen school, and he has Buddhist name as “Tùng Tế Đạo Nhân”.

After, coming to the throne, reforming the administrative system, change the name of the dynasty from capital city into royal palace, and change the name of the organization name and administrative base of the heads from the central down to the local, reconstructed the palace, making the Phu Xuan royal palace (Hue province) became the hustle and bustle of big city, and magnificent. Moreover, king Nguyen Phuc Khoat divided administrative system into twelve palace³⁵ and the defend directly under central government; and private in the Southern West part of Nguyen dynasty, there are four administrative organization, putting one town management senior official.

Beside, he had some political activities as in 1740, and ordered to open the examination, giving the rights for candidates who pass the first academic, was free military service for five years, second pass and third was permanently free forever; Fourth one pass had been accredited as the mandarin of the local. In 1757, king Nguyen Phuc Khoat occupies most of the remaining lands of Champa country. As such, the Nguyen dynasty's territory stretches from the Gianh river (Quang Binh province)

³⁴<http://kenhsinhvien.vn/topic/9-chua-va-13-vua-nha-nguyen-vai-tro-cua-nha-nguyen-doi-voi-lich-su-dan-toc.265234/>

³⁵The Headquarters is place to manage the Military and Administration of the Nguyen dynasty. The Headquarters including: 1. Main headquarters is King's Court of Ngyen dynasty (Phu Xuan –Hue province); 2. Cuu headquarters (Quang Tri province); 3. Quang Binh headquarters (Quang Binh province); 4. Vu Xa headquarters (Bac Giang or Hung Yen province); 5. Bo Chinh headquarters (Quang Binh province); 6. Quang Nam headquarters (Quang Nam province); 7. Phu Yen headquarters (Phu Yen province); 8. Binh Khang headquarters (Khanh Hoa province); 9. Binh Thuan headquarters (Binh Thuan province); 10. Tran Bien headquarters (Dong nai province); 11. Phien Tran headquarters (Gia Dinh- Sai Gon province); and 12. Long Ho headquarters (Vinh Long province).

to Ha Tien province, mastering all the Southern delta region or the South Vietnam today³⁶.

As noted above, being the Buddhist King, he could not forget the responsibility to revive Buddhism, followed ancestral traditions. So, around the years 1738 – 1744, the King ordered to restore Thien Mu pagoda be magnificent and ordering envoy seeking the Three Collections of the Buddhist canon (Tipitaka) from China more 1,000 books. In 1744, King Nguyen Phuc Khoat ordered to construct Giac Lam temple in Chợ Lớn – Saigon, and building Ham Long temple at Phu Xuan – Hue province. In 1754, the King also granted signboard for a temple in Quang Ngai province as “Sắc Tứ Viên Tông temple”, after rename into “Sắc Tứ Diệu Giác Temple” to nowadays. In 1761, the King commissioned board “Sắc Tứ Thập Tháp Di Đà pagoda” for Thập Tháp Di Đà pagoda in Binh Dinh province, and many other pagodas were also commissioned³⁷. And in 1765, King Nguyen Phuc Khoat passed away, lived to be 52 years, reigned 27 years.

We can say, the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Khoat had more innovation than the previous dynasty. He had the whole administrative reform from the central down to the local forming a logical model of a orthodox dynasty, having many policy clemency and openness to religion, and devoutly support for the Buddhism’s development, the people had seized his clement virtue, lead to civilized and peaceful society.

c. King Nguyen Phuc Thuan (1754-1777)

King Nguyen Phuc Thuan was the 16th son of King Nguyen Phuc Khoat, succeeded his father in 1765 at the age of 11, and reigned through 1777, after he was posthumously honor as “*Due Tong Hieu Dinh Emperor*”. He was the 9th King of Nguyen dynasty, who the last ruler of

³⁶Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., p. 43.

³⁷Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), pp. 20 - 21.

the Nguyen dynasty was known as Dinh Vuong (Consistent King)³⁸. He was also a Buddhist, refuted with buddhist name “Khánh Phủ Đạo Nhân”, but he had not much merit with Buddhism.

In this period, the civil war had ended long ago (1672), the Nguyen dynasty's economic developed stability and prosperous, peaceful society. After, King Nguyen Phuc Thuan succeed to the throne his father, but his age was too young what was not deciding, so the regent General Truong Phuc Loan was arbitrary and abuse. As has been said, from the life was too peaceful and prosperous should lead to arise the evils of pleasure, the harassment for bribes in royal cabinet; the divided factions together leads to the arising of complex matters such as tax increases, the belief of people decrease, scattering the dissatisfaction with the reign's regime of the perverted and decaying, ect... This is the main cause of Nguyen dynasty's collapsable later by the peasant revolt to demand their rights under the lead of the Tay Son movement³⁹ in Binh Dinh land early in 1773. This movement was the response of the whole farmers, landowners and traders, whom want to kill decaying Nguyen dynasty's in name to claim back the rights for the people. That situation brought Nguyen dynasty fell into serious menace, caught between two force that are the Tay Son movement in the southward of Nguyen royal family and military reviews of Lord Trinh – Le king in the North.

In late 1774, Lord Trinh army captured the base of the Nguyen Dynasty and closer to the inner city of Nguyen dynasty from about 20km. Early in 1775, the Lord Trinh army attacked the Nguyen dynasty's capital and King Nguyen Phuc Thuan along the General army quit the city running into region of Quang Nam province to refuges.

Meanwhile, in 1775, Tay Son troops had been invaded Quang Nam palace, where the royal capital of Nguyen Kingdom, King Nguyen

³⁸<http://www.doisongphapluat.com/nguyen-phuc-thuan.html>.

³⁹Tay son was a Place name which was a district of Binh Dinh province and bordering with An Khe district of Gia Lai Province. From Tay Son district to Nguyen royal dynasty in Hue province about 400km, and from Hanoi to Hue province about 654km. The Leader of Tay Son civil movement was including three brothers: Eldest brother was Nguyen Nhac, Second brother was Nguyen Lu, and Third Young brother was Nguyen Hue.

Phuc Thuan on the boat along the sea for the hiding in Saigon. In 1776, the Tay Son army again occupied Saigon – Gia Dinh by General Nguyen Lu, King Nguyen Phuc Thuan again fled to Bien Hoa city of Dong Nai province to flee, Tay Son forces growing stronger. One more time, in 1777, General Nguyen Lu back of the Tay Son troops into Saigon raids and destroyed completely of the government of King Nguyen Phuc Thuan, he killed here, he 26 years old at this time, no children to inherit. Therefrom, the system of government of Nguyen dynasty in Southern Vietnam collapsed completely official instead Tay Son dynasty (1778)⁴⁰.

After the Tay Son army destroyed the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Thuan, who also set up its own dynasty instead of the traditional Nguyen dynasty ago. In 1784 and 1786, the Tay Son troops conquered the North to destroy the army of Lord Trinh by General Nguyen Hue leader⁴¹, hand over the entire territory of the North to King Le reigned, and the Tay Son army returned to the South ruled their territory.

In summary, King Nguyen Phuc Thuan who was not talent and virtue, he had put away national destiny in the recession, made the end of a Nguyen dynasty has existed more than 200 years.

⁴⁰See Pham Van Son. Op.cit., pp. 362 -374.

⁴¹Lord Trinh: meaning the Trinh royal family. Their family register had have tradition to become a mandarin for Later Le dynasty. They have the trust from Le king, and afterward Trinh family has hold all powers in Le dynasty, and Later Le government was a only puppet government. After, Tay Son movement had defeated Trinh family (Lord Trinh), they had brought the justice for Later Le dynasty.

Table 1: A chart showing Kings of the Nguyen dynasty (1558-1777)

	Year	Name of Kings	Detail
Former	1524 - 1613	Nguyen Hoang	Chúa Tiên (First Lord): 1558 – 1613
	1563 - 1635	Nguyen Phuc Nguyen	Chúa Sãi (Monk Lord): 1613 – 1635
	1601 - 1648	Nguyen Phuc Lan	Chúa Thượng (Master Lord): 1635 – 1648
	1620 - 1687	Nguyen Phuc Tan	Chúa Hiền (Virtuous Lord): 1648 – 1687
	1649 - 1691	Nguyen Phuc Tran	Chúa Nghĩa (Clement Lord): 1687 – 1691
Latter	1697 - 1738	Nguyen Phuc Tru	Ninh Vương (Peaceful King): 1725 – 1738
	1714 - 1765	Nguyen Phuc Khoat	Vũ Vương (Hopeful King): 1738 – 1765
	1754 - 1777	Nguyen Phuc Thuan	Định Vương (Consistent King): 1765 – 1777)

2.3 The Reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu and Its Development (1691-1725)

It's said that, the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu was a dynasty, which had a lot of most outstanding points in the history of nine Nguyen dynasties. The previous kings who had made the base for establishing dynasty that king Nguyen Phuc Chu who had built firmly strategies to contribute for economic and political development that had great

impacted to the social and Buddhist development in Vietnam at that time, and thanks to it, the Nguyen dynasty attained refulgent prosperous age.

2.3.1 Significance of King Nguyen Phuc Chu's Reign

Nguyen Phuc Chu (1675 – 1725), who was born in Thanh Hoa province in Middle North part Vietnam today, was the eldest son of King Nguyen Phuc Tran. He insteaded his father to reign from 1691 to 1725, was 34 years in the throne. He was the 6th King of nine Kings of the Nguyen dynasty (1558 -1777) in Southern Vietnam, he was called Minh Vuong (Clear – Sighted King), who also known as Quoc Chua (Nation Lord), and then was posthumously honour as *Hien Tong Hieu Minh Emperor*⁴². He was the King devout Buddhism very high compared to the previous and later Kings, he took refuge the Triple Gems and observed Bodhisattva precepts with Zen master Thach Liem and was buddhist named Hung Long by Zen master, with noble name “Thien Tung Dao Nhan”⁴³. During this time, he always supported and facilitated for the development of Buddhism, known as the golden age of Buddhism in 17th and 18th centuries, the same period of King Tran Nhan Tong (1258 – 1308) of Truc Lam Zen School⁴⁴. And king Nguyen Phuc Chu considered the second King Tran Nhan Tong in Vietnam.

With the brisk and wise, king Nguyen Phuc Chu received many cultural ideas of many different religions including Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, to supported for his reign⁴⁵. The influence of that spiritual culture but his generals was also affected by the humanistic spirit.

According the cultural tradition of previous forefathers, King Nguyen Phuc Chu had advocated taking Buddhist thought orientations for the

⁴²<https://tuoitre.vn/chua-nguyen-phuc-chu-va-y-thuc-chu-quyen-lanh-tho-452489.htm>

⁴³Nguyễn Lang. Op.cit., p. 629.

⁴⁴Truong Phuoc Thanh (Thich Nguyen Tuu), **A Study of The Meditation Method of Master Tran Nhan Tong and Its Influence On The Vietnamese Society**, (MA degree thesis) [Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2557 (2014)], p. 6.

⁴⁵Nguyen Khac Thuan, **The Cultural Course of Vietnam From Beginning to 19th Century** (Vietnamese version), (Ho Chi Minh City: Vietnamese Education Publishing House, 2010), pp. 365 - 367.

national life. He had an intimate relationship with Zen master Thach Liem whom has advised invaluable for his government (see more of section 3.2.1 and 4.2.1 of third and fourth chapter). And once the Zen master presented governing opinion to the King in the spirit of the Buddhist, that:

Preceptive purity is make the country from top to bottom liquidated correction, nobody who would not sit in the right place, nothing would never resolve legitimate. Doing so is the observation precept fullness of a King⁴⁶.

Nguyen Phuc Chu who has keen political vision plus the ideological influence of Buddhist ethics, helped his imperial executive, made great achievements in the political sphere as well as in religious activities (for Buddhism). As, in 1697 – 1698, he extended the territory into southern part lands My Tho city (Tien Giang province), and in 1707, the territory was expanded to Ha Tien city (Kien Giang province today), forming increasing threefold of Vietnamese territory at that time, and the expansion was the territorial waters Truong Sa (Spratly Islands) and Hoang- Sa (Paracel Islands) of South China Sea in 1711⁴⁷, a Vietnam looks like today. On the other hand, he had the strategy for social stability, strong economic development, military training operation, consolidation in the defense system of ramparts, etc..., to become a powerful nation in region⁴⁸.

Moreover, in 1694, King Nguyen Phuc Chu commissioned the Nguyen dynasty's ambassador came to China to invite the renowned Zen Masters, seeking Buddhist scripture, dharma tool, ect... And in middle 1695, king Nguyen Phuc Chu combined Zen Master Thach Liem to organize Great Altar Rules (observing Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis precepts) for over 1400 monks and nuns at the Thien Lam pagoda – Thua Thien Hue province and total of attenders was on 4,000⁴⁹. Furthermore, king Nguyen Phuc Chu had

⁴⁶Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., pp. 630-631.

⁴⁷In 1471, King Le Thanh Tong had expanded Vietnamese territory to Binh Dinh province of the Middle Vietnam today. And in King Nguyen Hoang period (1600 - 1614), Vietnamese territory has also so that. Thereafter, King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691-1725) had expanded the territory to Ha Tien's land (Southern West part Land), Highland and East China Sea.

⁴⁸Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., pp. 646 - 647.

⁴⁹Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 616.

built and restored many temples in Thuan Hoa land as restored Thuy Van temple, Thien Mu temple, ect...He was also recommended ambassador came to China seeking Three Collections of the Buddhist Canon (Tipitaka).

In 1710, the King has casted large bell weight 3.285 pounds at Thien Mu pagoda (Thua Thien Hue province), to pray for prosperous country and peaceful society, and the being have enlightened wisdom⁵⁰. In 1715, the King restored Kinh Thien pagoda at Thuan Trach – Quang Binh province. In 1721, founding Giac Hoang pagoda, ect... and ordered building a lot of pagodas other. The King himself also was a vegetarian at Con Gia garden (Thien Mu pagoda) in a month, and sharing money and rice for the poor.

The Buddhist working that King Nguyen Phuc Chu done, in that, had two most important things that he was accomplished, making its mark on history. That was a great event in 1695, he invited Zen Master Thach Liem and many other monks to Thuan Hoa. The second was the Royal family refuged Buddhism by his lead⁵¹. Thereby, showing the policies for Buddhism's development of the Nguyen Kings, starting from king Nguyen Hoang, attained radiant achievements and fullness under the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu. If the previous dynasty kings supported Buddhism came from political purpose, aiming to soothe the populace, capturing people's hearts, then Buddhism's support of King Nguyen Phuc Chu was not only political requirements, but also derived from the thought and mind of a devout Buddhism.

Through the points presented above, suggests that king Nguyen Phuc Chu was a clement virtue man, was political leaders talented. He represents the Nguyen dynastry developing country to become powerful and prosperous both economic and political, and peaceful society. It can be that the most thriving period of the Vietnamese economy at that time. In addition, he has also very high reverence to Buddhism, understanding

⁵⁰Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 16.

⁵¹Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., p. 100.

the Buddha's teachings deeply⁵². So he always supported Buddhism and concerned for the survival of Buddhism (so in 1699, he has banned spreading of Christianity in the South of Vietnam), and to bring the Buddhism became a State Religion of the nation. And he also deserved well of the Zen Master with the making Buddhism prosper in the South. Actually, King Nguyen Phuc Chu who made the history of Vietnam to a golden age in the eighteenth century.

2.3.2 Inheritance and Development from the Cultural Tradition of the previous Nguyen Dynasties

It's said that , King Nguyen Phuc Chu had made great achievement during his reign, it was thanks to the effort and enthusiasm of the Kings predecessors have defined for himself, which he could be a huge career and imposing country through his creativity and experience. To demonstrate this, we can summarize research through the following three issues:

On politically: the Nguyen dynasty, as well as King Nguyen Phuc Chu had outstanding success by the issue of political culture in the building and opening country. Through five previous dynasty, from Lord Nguyen Hoang to the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu total 134 years, and in 1558, Lord Nguyen Hoang ruled Thuan Hoa land in the South, and established a new dynasty under autonomy; in 1600, Lord Nguyen Hoang has formally declared secession his government from the Later Le dynasty in the North which became a self-governing country under the reign of the Nguyen dynasty in the South⁵³. Since then, the government apparatus of the Nguyen dynasty was more powerful and perfect, the territory was increasingly expanding to the southward, the social life was gradually peace and prosperity. Next to the reigns of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, he extended more large territory until the Ha Tien province border adjacent with Thailand Gulf and Cambodia at now.

⁵²Thich Dai San, **The Overseas Journal** (Vietnamese version), (Hue University Institute Press, 1963), pp. 87 - 90.

⁵³Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., pp. 97 - 98.

On economically: the previous kings who founded the dynasty and opening up the territory, and to survive and grow the social circumstances, that forced the Kings predecessors have strengthened the economy, ensured the military and cultural development in the nation. So, five Nguyen dynasties have spent more than 100 years in time, thinking the Kings also had the path of economic development are planned; especially in this time, the Nguyen dynasty opened up the foreign trade supporting the domestic economic⁵⁴; which have brought the benefits and tremendous success to the Nguyen dynasty, has upgraded to the Southern economy vision or crossed over with the countries in the region such as Siam (Thailand), Cambodia, Japan, China, ect... It has turned Thuan Quang land (Thuan Hoa and Quang Nam were the capital of the Nguyen dynasty) into a large commercial center of foreign trade, where economic and culture exchange to foreigners. As author Li Tana described that:

The foreign trade development of the Nguyen dynasty was placed at the top of the list of countries in mainland Southeast Asia in the seventeenth century, which favorable position made Hoi An become prosperous, populated; here, there was nothing there, homes, life, dress, all everything very classy and luxury, ect...⁵⁵.

It was a very important advantage that King Nguyen Phuc Chu owns, that was an opportunity for him making a name later. And turn the government Nguyen economy had great potential in trade and which has helped them growing over time; was expended in the territory at the time.

On culturally: The Nguyen dynastry was successful in the opening up a government, which was a separate kingdom in the south, national cultural factors have helped them make this⁵⁶. So, what were these factors?. First, the Nguyen government has cleverly knowing the

⁵⁴Le Thanh Khoi, **Vietnamese History From Origination to The Middle Twenties Century** (Vietnamese version), (Hanoi: The World Publishing House, 2014), pp. 321 - 330.

⁵⁵Li Tana, **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**, (New York: Ithaca - Cornell University Press. 1998), p. 59, p.79 & p. 86.

⁵⁶Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., pp. 548 - 552.

times and preserving for the traditional culture developing in the new territory. It is worth mentioning was the promoting successor, that were flexible and highly creative in the power, made up the Vietnamese traditional culture in the integration power more and more. That culture was always bold ethnic Vietnam. So, when the Nguyen dynasty on the beginning and gradually expand in the south, they confronted with a new context completely social, that including many the indigenous deeply influenced culture capital by India civilization, Champa, Khmer and other minority ethnics, and some migrants from the North to the South has brought many cultural influences of confucianism⁵⁷. However, the Nguyen dynasty has received skillful points or beneficial in the indigenous culture for its development.

Second, they have incorporated the cultural ideas of Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism in its ruling successfully. The Mahayana Buddhism in use as the State religion of the Nguyen dynasty not only the moral support of Vietnamese traditional ideas on new territory but also the means be tolerated the ideology and the new culture, avoiding the cultural conflicts leading to conflict war, in which the inheritance selectively indigenous cultural from a special cultural nuances of the Nguyen dynasty in the South⁵⁸. Since then, the traditional culture was promoted through the reign of Nguyen dynasties every time had the flexibility to according the social circumstance, made a colorful culture of purebred Vietnamese. Being the basic King Nguyen Phuc Chu restored traditional Buddhist culture after Vietnamese Buddhism with many silence in a lot of years.

Through the above, showing us that three factors, political, economic and cultural, we can say that constitutes a Nguyen dynasty relatively perfection of begining. King Nguyen Phuc Chu who iherited this career, has helped him make a dynasty as well as the mighty Southern government; are recognized as a golden milestone in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But the biggest mark in the rule of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu had established a new territorial sovereignty, half the vast country Vietnam today, and the development to triple

⁵⁷Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., pp. 98 - 99.

⁵⁸Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., pp. 45 - 46.

territory earlier Vietnam⁵⁹. The one can not forget what he made for the Vietnamese Buddhism became the most development and flourishing period. Certainly, the this King had many great advantages in comparison with as the previous Kings.

2.3.3 The Strategy for Build and Protection of the Country

The Nguyen dynasty was founded at the early, everything has been deficiency⁶⁰, was an autonomous territory in the Southern Vietnam (1600) in comparison with as the Latter Le dynasty (1428-1789). They existed in a situation which increased risk of aggression, should have strategies for rule over the territory. So, in general of the Nguyen dynasty and in particular of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu reign had strategic policies for sustainable development through the two following aspects:

a. On the Political Aspect:

The first strategy was military reinforcement that prepare the process of expanding its territory and enemy defenses. Because, before and after the war happened between Lord Trinh in the North and the Nguyen dynasty in the South since 1627 to 1672, the military force of the Nguyen dynasty were frail and negligible, only by two – four compared with the army of Lord Trinh; but there was a reason for such strong impact to Nguyen dynasty, forcing them to enhance the development and consolidation of military, both road and waterways. In addition, they were given a basic policy about the favour for people, to be mobilizing all the people from the North to the South joining the army to fight, who join were tax breaks or didn't collect taxes for family and food to be provided. Besides, the Nguyen Government were also issued preferential policies and incentives for migration movement. That was the strategy for

⁵⁹Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., pp. 552 - 554.

⁶⁰The territory reigned by Nguyen dynasty which called New Land. Because here the population were very scattered, it is yet establishing village and hamlet, less people tilling in this place. So, afterward Nguyen dynasty reigned this territory, they have encouraged emigrant movement to this land and created the densely and thriving place.

organization of administrative apparatus of the Nguyen dynasty. We can study essential through the problem as follow:

On the administrative organization, they have reformed governing apparatus, this time the central government apparatus of the Nguyen dynasty was structured as follows: At the top is the king. Subordinates, setting four official administration heads help the king for managing aspects of work, to be called the four highest – ranking of the court (Tứ Trụ). Subordinates lower was Tam Ty (including three subsidiary bodies as Ty Xa Sai, Ty Tuong Than Lai and Ty Lenh Su). Later, King Nguyen Phuc Khoat (1744) changed from Tam Ty into Luc Bo⁶¹. The consulate territorial government establishment were divided into Headquarters (Dinh), Town (palace – district - commune)⁶². In the army, being divided into three types of units: Tuc Ve (security army): there was responsibility to protect the imperial city; Chính Binh (regular army): the troops stationed in the provinces; Thổ Binh (land army):

⁶¹**Tu Tru** (Four Pillars): **Tu Tru** was four mandarins of royal dynasty. We can say: this four mandarin like as four mandarin of a Socialist today: General Secretary, National President, The Speaker of the National Assembly and the Prime Minister. This four people are members of privy council and will consultant for the King. When royal dynasty has upheaval or the King was absenting or the King was so young. These Four mandarins were their capacity as King representative to establish Regent Council to manage the country. This is a high organization in the feudal dynasty.

Tam Ty (Three Organizations) is administrative organization, including: 1. Ty Xa Sai : was place to manage the litigation, relative document; 2. Ty Tuong Than Lai: to manage tax collection and to supply rations for the army; 3. Ty Lenh Su: including offering sacrifices and ceremonial, also to undertake the good supply for Royal Family.

Lục Bộ (Six Ministries): the feudal dynasty has divided into six ministries, each ministry like as a ministry today. It is including: (1). **Bộ Hộ** (the same Finance and Labour department, today): this department has managed Land and Fields policy, population, rice tax and National budget; (2). **Bộ Lễ** (like as the department of Education and Informational Culture, today): it is including business follow as: ceremonial, education, religion, welfare work, document...; (3). **Bộ Lại** (the same Department of the Interior): to manage mandarin's title, promotion, manpower's supplement.... (4). **Bộ Công** (the Ministry of Construction and Transportation's Communications): this department solved the business follow as: to build rampart, bridges and road, woodwork, shipbuilding, repair...; (5). **Bộ Hình** (Supreme Court): including: litigation, imprisonment, law...; (6). **Bộ Binh** (Department of Defense): including: military arm, weaponry, the case of emergency....

⁶²Pham Van Son. Op.cit., p. 358. And See more footnot of thirty-fourth.

concentrated the south opening up the land. And each armies were divided into Cơ (division), Đội (battalion), Thuyền (naval battle) and then soldiers control strategies include Infantry, Naval force, Elephant force and Artillery in which focuses on more Naval forces⁶³. Therefrom, the effect of the force of the Nguyen dynasty were increasing: “a total of 22,740 chief soldiers for naval force and infantry”⁶⁴. At the time the Nguyen dynasty had used artillery proficiently, this artillery was salvaged from the ship of the Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch were wrecked⁶⁵.

Besides, king Nguyen Phuc Chu was still kept the administrative organization like roots but he has given more lenient policies for the fields of politics, economy, society, education and religion. And he embarked on the official layout, and made plans for the next year as: From 1692 to 1698, king Nguyen Phuc Chu has realized the problem as: to censor the document, opened examination to recruit talent, reducing tax and penalty, limiting the luxury and waste. Besides, he has combined the ideas of three religion: Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism to apply in his reign⁶⁶. On the other hand, he consolidated the military for defense with the reign of Le – Trinh dynasty in the North and other face always took the harmonious to deliver with the King of Champa in the South to focus developing social economy and to expand the territory⁶⁷.

We can relate to the process of expanding of South Vietnam of previous dynasties. In 1471, king Le Thanh Tong has expanded the territory to Binh Dinh province. Then, Nguyen kings (1558 – 1690) was still protecting and developing on that territory. Under the reign of king

⁶³Le Thanh Khoi. Op.cit., p. 305.

⁶⁴Li Tana, **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**, (New York: Ithaca - Cornell University Press. 1998), pp. 37 - 39.

⁶⁵Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in 17th and 18th Centuries** (Vietnamese version), (Ho Chi Minh City: Young Publishing House, 2014), pp. 68 - 73.

⁶⁶Le Son, Nguyen Phuc Chu king- Build and Development of South Vietnam to Follow the Three Teachings Spirituality (Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism). <<http://www.sugia.vn>>. And see more, Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 630.

⁶⁷Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., pp. 549 - 552.

Nguyen Phuc Chu within 30 years, Vietnam has taken a very long step on the area triple times more than Vietnam first⁶⁸.

In short, king Nguyen Phuc Chu was a talented politician who used the teachings of Confucianism for the country ruling, and used Buddhism for the training of the mind in his politics, build a society: moral, sustainable and prosperous⁶⁹. With his wisdom which helped him opening around world of vision, be able to make the most glorious career of an emperor in the task of preserving and protecting the nation.

b. On the Social Aspect:

Economy was also equally important strategy. Nguyen dynasty was aware of their own survival, especially in times of war, the military and economy must be completely guaranteed and grown. Thus, in the 17th and 18th centuries, Nguyen dynasty's economy was oriented foreign trade with foreign countries such as Spain, Portugal, England, France, the Netherlands, Japan and China, ect... This was the time when Europeans rushed to trade and based in Southeast Asia⁷⁰.

Meanwhile, the Nguyen dynasty established on newly land, the population was poor, the domestic economy was underdeveloped not enough to supply the market and human resources were lacking and weak. Therefore, the trade issues for international countries were chance would decide the speed development of the Nguyen government that build up and face the times, "the issue of foreign trade was a matter of survival, it was very important for the Nguyen dynasty"⁷¹. And since then, the opening policy has been enacted.

⁶⁸Le Thanh Khoi. Op.cit., pp. 309 - 310.

⁶⁹Le Son, Nguyen Phuc Chu king- Build and Development of South Vietnam to Follow the Three Teachings Spirituality (Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism). <<http://www.sugia.vn>>.

⁷⁰Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in 17th and 18th Centuries** (Vietnamese version), (Ho Chi Minh City: Young Publishing House, 2014), p. 6.

⁷¹Li Tana, **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**. New York: Ithaca - Cornell University Press. 1998. p. 59.

As in 1600, king Nguyen Hoang decided to establish the foreign trade relations with European countries, especially the regular trade with Japan and China. This was the first step that underpins the following dynasties. Afterward, the Kings recognized the importance of foreign trade, going beyond this foreign trade, king Nguyen Phuc Nguyen (1613 – 1635) married his daughter to a Japanese merchant, name is Araki Sotao⁷².

In particular, in 1695 King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691 – 1725) had preferential policies, expanding the free foreign trade boats to trade with Thuan Quang land of the South, such as Japan, China, Siam, Cambodia, Manila, Batavia, and European countries such as Britain, France, Holland, et... We can see that the foreign trade was the decisive factor for a new government in the South of Vietnam, in just a few decades, it became rich and growing to maintain its independence and expand Southward⁷³.

Thereby, it was revealed that King Nguyen Phuc Chu had developed a relatively strategic policy both political and economic for the ensuring with the social security, national defense and sustainable development.

2.3.4 The Influences of the Nguyen Phuc Chu's Reign to Vietnamese Society

With 34 years in power, King Nguyen Phuc Chu has contributed much to the expansion of the country as well as promoting the development of social economy of the South government in the early 18th century. He was a Buddhist cultivator with great compassion and toleration in all ruling and caring people. This lesson has the meaning about the humanity, that was still current and illuminated for posterity. From a religious and cultural perspective, he was a second Phat Hoang

⁷²Ibid., pp. 60 - 64.

⁷³Ibid., p. 71.

(Buddhist King) under Tran dynasty of the history of Vietnamese Buddhism⁷⁴, like as the second Emperor Asoka to the Buddhism history.

So, how did the reign of king Nguyen phuc Chu affect Vietnamese society? It was making a complete change in terms of economics, culture, politics and education that bring about a peaceful society, people living in prosperity and peace. All shown through things as follow:

a. Economy:

Right in the capital of the Nguyen dynasty, the social life and economy have become rich and prosperous. The metal industry was very developed in terms of import and export such as zinc, silver, lead, copper; it has paralleled and developed with the growing foreign trade economy in Cochinchina (the South) of Nguyen dynasty⁷⁵; along the southern land from Thuan Hoa to the southwest part, there were international ports (as, Hoi An port – Quang Nam province, Thanh Ha port of Quang Tri and Hue province, Quy Nhon port – Binh Dinh province, Vung Lam port – Phu Yen province, the port of Gia Dinh – Saigon, Cu Lao Pho port – Dong Nai province and Ha Tien port) for trade with foreign countries, as well as the highlands here have also been expanded commerce, creating a diverse economy for the Kingdom. Like as Hoi An, it was an international trading port. It became a crowded commercial center, an import – export distribution center. Or Thanh Ha trading port and Phu Xuan royal capital in Hue province was also a leading international trade gateway to Japan, China, Siam, Cambodia, Spain, Portugal, Netherlands, France, ect...life here was quiet rich and spacious⁷⁶. Thus, the economy of the Nguyen dynasty in the 17th and 18th centuries was considered to be the most amazingly developed economy in comparison with the previous dynasty of the 14th to 16th centuries.

⁷⁴Phật Hoàng: it was a Noun to hint for the King or Royal Family who had ordained to follow the teachings of the Buddha. And later, they have excellent practice and become into Zen Master, as King Tran Nhan Tong called Phat Hoang tran Nhan Tong in 14th and 15th centuries.

⁷⁵Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., pp. 268 - 271.

⁷⁶Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., pp. 30 - 38.

b. Culture:

From the beginning of the Nguyen dynasty, they were recognized the importance of traditional culture in Vietnam. It was the bridge to create the strength of national unity. Therefore, the Nguyen dynasty encouraged the people to promote the spirit of traditional culture bearing bold Vietnamese identity (now there were many different cultures: Indian culture, Khmer culture, Champa culture, ect...) in which Buddhism's culture given prominence by the Nguyen dynasty. King Nguyen Phuc Chu those promoted and created conditions for the development of Mahayana Buddhism that become a familiar religion of the Vietnamese people, and Mahayana Buddhism is seen as a means to tolerate new ideologies and cultures and was the basis for ideology and spirituality in his reign⁷⁷. Therefore, the inheritable and selective responsibility, King Nguyen Phuc Chu brought Buddhist culture into the orthodox culture of the nation as well as folk culture to a climax and flourishing period.

c. Politics:

The period of king Nguyen Phuc Chu was considered to be the most stable and peaceful political phase. Because he who was a devout Buddhist; he took the compassionate spirit of Buddhism for the society ruling, brought the happiness and prosperity for the people. King Nguyen Phuc Chu has described by author Nguyen Lang that, he were a clear-sighted king, deeply devoted for the Buddhism⁷⁸. From his Buddhist knowledge, he has realized great responsibility for the country, so his economic and social issues were organized very closely, in order to, contributing to the political stabilization.

d. Education:

In particular, king Nguyen Phuc Chu promulgated many policies to encourage education and examination, in order to, the training of

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 46.

⁷⁸Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 629.

talents for supplement the state apparatus and the raising the intellectual level in the society. In addition, he coordinated with Thach Liem Zen Master to organize dhamma classes and organized Buddhist events to train the monks and nuns for the aim to serve the Buddhadhamma and social life⁷⁹. Thus, during this time, the society of King Nguyen Phuc Chu's reign spurred the movement of the learning, the translation and the education.

2.4 Concluding Remarks

Vietnam, in the 16th to 18th centuries, the existence of feudal corporations under the rule of the Latter Le dynasty in the North, the most prominent about social and political have the civil war between the feudal power to fight for power. While a new dynasty was formed that is the Nguyen dynasty in the late 16th to 18th centuries in South Vietnam, created a new historical identity for Vietnam. Although a newly established dynasty independent of the Latter Le dynasty in the North, but it occupied a unique place in Vietnamese history. The Nguyen dynasty succeeded in the process of the building and expanding its territory, contributing the change of Vietnamese appearance during the last two centuries and they have created a powerful country in terms of economy, culture, politics and education, all pull down in the South. This was a great contribution of the Nguyen dynasty, because they have made a large Vietnamese territory as today. Without the Nguyen's breakthrough toward the South, it was unlikely that Vietnam would have such a large territory. As the author Litana said "Thank to the Nguyen dynasty, the war of Vietnam ended".

Being beautiful for history of the Nguyen dynasty, king Nguyen Phuc Chu was the sixth generation of the Nguyen dynasty, was a man who had many innovative strategies for the society and religion (Buddhism) in the South of Vietnam, left many impressive achievement, stirred in the current political wave. He who was regarded as a brilliant political leader, was the clearsighted king of country, as a devout Buddhist.

⁷⁹Le Thanh Khoi. Op.cit., pp. 344 - 346.

Chapter III

The Relationship Between King Nguyen Phuc Chu and Buddhism

In late 17th and early 18th centuries, the Vietnamese Buddhism opened a new face by king Nguyen Phuc Chu, who had the policies to built a moral society according Buddhist ethics thoughts. Therefrom, he had a lot buddhist activities to diffuse and encourage everyone should support for his policies. And, it was real modernization and challenge for own him. But finally, it got remarkable results that great impacted on Buddhist and social development in Vietnam.

3.1 Buddhist Educational Background of King Nguyen Phuc Chu

Buddhist ethics thought was a importance of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, because he want to develop social education on the base of buddhist ethical education, and onwards a civilized and peaceful society. So, even own King had not stopped learning and studying the dhamma to apply in real himself life. Thus, following the works of study and practice of the king.

3.1.1 His Zen Teachers

It can be said that for the previous Nguyen Kings who used to worship Buddhism through religious ceremony, most of them have not actually applied the teachings of Buddhism to social life. Meanwhile, king Nguyen Phuc Chu was a devout Buddhist who understand the dhamma

deeply and was a devoted person who wanted to learn the teachings of the Buddha to train himself and bring the teachings to the benefit of all by true compassion. Therefore, in this research is introduced through thought and methods of practice of three eminent Zen Masters that King Nguyen Phuc Chu has the passion and choose to study, and about the personal profiles of each are explained in chapter four.

a. Learning with Nguyen Thieu Zen Master

He was Chinese, the 33rd Patriarch of the Lam Te Zen School and came to Vietnam in 1677¹. He became the first Patriarch of the Lam Te Zen School in the South Vietnam. He had a good fortune to work with the grandfather and father of king Nguyen Phuc Chu to be king Nguyen Phuc Tan (1648 – 1687) and king Nguyen Phuc Tran (1687 – 1691). Therefore, Nguyen Thieu Zen Master has trusted and supported by the Nguyen dynasty, so he went all over the South to spread Buddhism for everyone. And he made Buddhism here become the attraction for many other monks who wanted to come here, and his reputation was known throughout the country.

During the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, Zen Master Nguyen Thieu had close predestined affinity with the King more to do Buddhist works and King Nguyen Phuc Chu often frequented to study the dhamma with him. As, in 1692, the King ordered the Zen Master Nguyen Thieu to add a pagoda in Hue province as Ha Trung pagoda (while the Zen Master was staying at the Thap Thap Di Da temple in Binh Dinh province). In 1693, king Nguyen Phuc Chu commissioned the Zen Master Nguyen Thieu through China to invite the Zen Master come to Vietnam for propagate and to open the great ceremony of the observer precepts of

¹Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Influence of Nguyen Thieu Patriarch For the Buddhism in Dong Nai – Gia Dinh Province**, (Ho Chi Minh city Publishing House, 2000), p.37; Thich Minh Tue, **A Brief History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese version) (Ho Chi Minh City: Buddhist Association of Ho Chi Minh City Press, 1993), p. 429; And, Nguyen Tai Thu, edit. **The History Of Buddhism in Vietnam**, (USA: Institute of Philosophy – Vietnamese Academy of Social Science, 2006), p. 198. According these authors all written to be 1677. But according author Nguyen Lang said that Nguyen Thieu Zen Master went to Vietnam in 1665 (Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 586).

Bhikkhu (Altar Rules) at Thien Mu pagoda – Hue province². However, king Nguyen Phuc Chu has short studied times with the Zen Master from 1691 to 1695. Because, after 1695, Zen Master Nguyen Thieu from Thuan Hoa land (Middle Vietnam) to Dong Nai province (the South Vietnam), and spreading Buddhism in this area, so the chance between Zen Master and king Nguyen Phuc Chu met few³. Although, Nguyen Phuc Chu's study time was very short with bonze Nguyen Thieu, he comprehended many meditation ideas of Buddhism through this Zen Master.

Zen Master Nguyen Thieu was a follower of Lam Te Zen School, the guideline of this Zen School was not attachment, achieving Empty Nature by methods Tam Huyen, Tam Yeu and Tu Lieu Gian⁴. So, the thought of Zen Master Nguyen Thieu also was not attachment, gained Empty Nature, his conception that the Buddha Nature of beings and the Buddha are equal⁵. Since then, studying the Buddhism between king Nguyen Phuc Chu and Zen Master was also the exchange of this practice, i.e, how to identify the Buddha nature of the mind. When we understand ourselves, we have the love of the people around. And king Nguyen Phuc Chu applied this philosophy to his own rule on the society.

²Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Influence of Nguyen Thieu Patriarch For the Buddhism in Dong Nai – Gia Dinh Province** (Vietnamese version). (Ho Chi Minh city Publishing House, 2000), p. 37. And, Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 122.

³Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 122.

⁴**Tam Huyền:** including three practice methods, as Precepts – Meditation – Wisdom. **Tam Yếu:** including three importance factors: Not speak – Not hear – Not see. **Tứ Liệu Giản:** to including four mind non-attachments, as to attain the mind but do not attaining the situation, to attain the situation but do not attaining the mind, both the mind and situation all attaining, and the mind and situation were not attaining. < according. Phan Đăng, **Meditation Master Lieu Quan and Vietnamese Buddhism in XVIII Century**. Sciential journal, Huế University, Vol.72A, No.3, 2012, p. 72>.

⁵Nguyen Tai Thu, edit. Op.cit., p. 199.

b. Learning with Thach Liem Zen Master

After the Zen Master Nguyen Thieu went in Dong Nai and Gia Dinh-Saigon province to spread; King Nguyen Phuc Chu invited Thach Liem Zen Master from China to the royal capital of Nguyen dynasty to spread the Buddhadhamma. Thach Liem Zen Master (also was known as Thich Dai San) was the 29th generation of Tao Dong Zen School in China, who went to Vietnam in 1695. And Vietnamese bonze Lieu Quan (later he became a famous Zen Master in the South Vietnam) also applied studying with him during he stayed in Vietnam⁶. It can be said that king Nguyen Phuc Chu admired and trusted so much in the practice style of Thach Liem Zen Master more than Nguyen Thieu Zen Master and the Zen Master other. Therefore, between him and bonze Thach Liem had many meetings with the discussion of the intimate Buddhadhamma, made many marks on the occasion of his stayed in Vietnam over a year.

Bonze Thach Liem's meditation thought was more open than the two Zen Master Nguyen Thieu and Lieu Quan, which were focus on three points: Thien Tinh Song Tu, Phat - Nho Nhat Tri and Lam – Tao Tong Hop⁷. Thus, when he instructed the practice method for King Nguyen Phuc Chu, the King's thought views were also opening more.

Most notably, Thach Liem Zen Master's teachings had a great impact on the Buddhist perception of king Nguyen Phuc Chu and the way

⁶Nguyen Tai Thu, edit. Op.cit., p. 200.

⁷Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., pp. 622 – 628. **Thiền Tịnh Song Tu** (Zen Buddhism and Purity Buddhism sect): This two sect were combined to practise together. According meditation of Mahayana Buddhism is destroying attachment of ego and attained Natural Buddha; And according Pure Land sect was attention the name of Amitabha Buddha to lead the enlightenment of Natural Buddha. So the Zen and Pure Land sect combined each other, and the Pure Land sect into a simple method of practice the meditation which everyone easy practice that. **Nho Phật Nhất Trí** (Buddhism and Confucianism thoughts were equivalence): Thach Liem Zen Master has combined the thoughts of Buddhism and Confucianism to teach everyone to toward morality, because he said that between these two sect have the thoughts equivalence each other. **Lâm – Tào Tổng Hợp** (the collection of two Zen School Lam Te and Tao Dong): for Thach Liem Zen Master was the collection ideas of Lam Te and Tao Dong Zen sect to become a method practice together. See more the thought of zen at section 3.2, and Phan Đăng, **Meditation Master Lieu Quan and Vietnamese Buddhism in XVIII Century**. Sciential journal, Vol.72A, No.3, (Hue University 2012), p.73.

to govern the country was very effective. As in the book “Ho Phap Kim Thang Thu”, the Zen Master asked the King to consult of the questionable subject of Buddadhamma (Problems set by Zen masters), as follows:

I have not any method of magic, only wish the king to consult this problem: who was yourself master? Practice but no dream wildly of mind... No matter in all circumstances, even during to do everything... Do not forget it...⁸.

Another time, Zen Master Thach Liem also taught king Nguyen Phuc Chu on the issue chanting mantra of upholding meditation thought:

It was important by practicer. The chanting person had purity and virtue that has result, and then Zen Master outlines 18 things about the rules of country in the spirit of Buddhist morality instead of the chanting mantra⁹.

During a consultation on Buddhism, Bonze Thach Liem talked about the abstinence issue to the King for his reign, also bearing the thought of meditation:

The abstinence (observer precept) was not just for the clean mouth and the clean mind. The abstinence was to make the country from the top to the bottom of the peaceful correction, nobody was not sitting in the right place, nobody was not resolved satisfactorily, doing so was the fullness abstinence of his one the King¹⁰.

Then, the bonze Thach Liem asked king Nguyen Phuc Chu to practice the abstinence precepts by: freeing those who were imprisoned unjustly. Releasing prisoners in prison. Charity for the poor. Unleash those who were suppressed. Abolish the rules too strict. Tax cuts and tax breaks for the poor, small bussinesses and traders.

⁸Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 627

⁹Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), P. 15, And Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 629.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 15; And Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p.630; and Thich Dai San, **The Overseas Journal** (Vietnamese version), (Hue University Institute Press, 1963), p. 97.

At the end of 1695, when Zen Master Thach Liem who was about to return his home, encouraged king Nguyen Phuc Chu and King's mother trying to practice the way of attention Buddha, and wrote a book on Attention Amitabha Buddha for them, called "An Explanation of Amitabha Nature"¹¹. Therefore, the King was touched by the merits of Zen Master Thach Liem, who exclaimed:

Being near to send early, feed chat, after the lectures on meditation and suttas, had instruction in the ethics and discipline from the great to the small, pointing out the direction, clear words, it's like bringing people from darkness into the light, helping us in politics a lot¹².

In this regard, author Nguyen Lang, from the book of A Complete Work of Historical Interpretation of Vietnamese Buddhism, commented:

Perhaps this was the greatest teaching process of Zen Master Thach Liem, because king Nguyen Phuc Chu admired and trusted him¹³.

c. Learning with Lieu Quan Zen Master

After the Bonze Thach Liem returned to China (1696)¹⁴, King Nguyen Phuc Chu had many opportunity to meet Zen Master Lieu Quan, who was a Vietnamese Zen Master, with high prestige and virtue, was a famous monk after Zen Master Nguyen Thieu, who became enlightened the Buddha's teachings in 1712, and succeeded Zen Master Nguyen Thieu to follow the thought of Lam Te Zen School¹⁵. At that time, the Nguyen's

¹¹Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 616 & p. 623. *Hộ Pháp Kim Thang Thư* was the book to guide the method practice meditation by the contemplation of Problems set by Zen Masters. *Tự Tánh Di Đà Thuyết* (the explanation of Amitabha Nature) was talking about method of attention Amitabha Buddha and comprehension Natural Buddha.

¹²Thich Dai San. Op.cit., p. 10

¹³Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 630.

¹⁴See more part (b) of section 3.1.1, which talk about Thach Liem Zen Master.

¹⁵Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., pp. 600 - 601.

King greatly respected him, because this was a rare opportunity not to be missed for a devout Buddhist King. Zen master Lieu Quan (1699 – 1742) and King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691 – 1725) made great contributions in the process of launching the Buddhist revival movement in Cochinchina (The South Vietnam). Thus, between the King and Zen Master, there was a lot of time spent together in the development of the country and the restoration of Buddhism in this period. Mostly during the period 1708 to 1722, Zen Master Lieu Quan spreaded and lived in the Nguyen dynasty capital (Hue province) more frequently¹⁶. And, this was also the opportunity for king Nguyen Phuc Chu to approach and learn the Dhamma from the Zen Master.

After, Zen Master Lieu Quan enlightened himself with Zen Master Tu Dung by the method of the Questionable Subject of Buddhaddhamma (Problems set by Zen masters)¹⁷ of Lam Te Zen School. Then, with the actual state of Vietnamese society, so Bonze Lieu Quan was unable to teach the method of the Questionable Subject of Buddhaddhamma to his disciples, and he combined his own practice experience to present the method of “**Thien Tinh Song Tu**” (the collection of Zen and Purity Land sect) to guide for everyone¹⁸, which brings bold nuance of Vietnam as from the Ly and Tran dynasties period (1010 – 1400) that the Zen Master once outlined.

So, for king Nguyen Phuc Chu, the Zen Master Lieu Quan also instructed the virtues of a leader and encouraged the practice of both meditation and attention Amitabha Buddha, thereby increasing the King’s generosity and forgiveness for everyone. But it was worth mentioning that king Nguyen Phuc Chu had more time with the bonze Lieu Quan than, so he had learned from Zen Master of style, lifestyle and humility. That was the most valuable lesson for the way of his rule.

¹⁶Nguyen Tai Thu, edit. Op.cit., pp. 200 - 201.

¹⁷This is traditional practice method of Lam Te sect of Mahayana Buddhism. They used paradox topic for reality to contemplate until attained enlightenment of Empty Nature.

¹⁸Which was also traditional method of Mahayana Buddhism. Both practice meditation and attention Amitabha Buddha all to help one another lead to enlightenment states of mind, and destroyed attachment.

3.1.2 The Skills in The Buddhist Doctrine

The teachings of the Buddha there are a lot of doctrines for their practice. But the main part of this section focuses on three basic teachings for the practice of king Nguyen Phuc Chu as follows:

a. The Compassion

King Nguyen Phuc Chu had understood the teaching of the Buddha through the teaching of the Zen Master, which was the philosophy of compassion. This was the basic element of every human being that must be in dealing with one another in life. But in particular, for king Nguyen Phuc Chu, the problem of clearly recognizing the Buddhism's philosophy of compassion was needing necessary and practical, because he was holding the lives of millions of people. Therefore, he must have a generosity and tolerance, to bring happiness and peace for the society; and these were recorded by Zen Master Thach Liem in the book *The Record of Foreign History*¹⁹.

The compassionate spirit of Buddhism has popularized and widespread by two Zen School Lam Te and Tao Dong in the renaissance Buddhism age in the south during the Nguyen dynasty. In particular, king Nguyen Phuc Chu was most affected that spirit through Zen Master Thach Liem. And it was reflected in his reigning policies that bring benefits and happiness to the people and Buddhist monks²⁰. As further illustrated, king Nguyen Phuc Chu has a passion for Buddhism, was aware of the Buddha's enlightened truth, so he observed Bodhisattva precepts for lay Buddhist²¹. This was the compassionate spirit of the Lord Bodhisattva but King Nguyen Phuc Chu wanted to practice following that spirit, to add his power and ability to benefit of the society and the Buddhism without being tired.

¹⁹Thich Dai San. *Op.cit.*, pp. 97 - 98; and Nguyen Lang. *Op.cit.*, pp.621 - 622.

²⁰Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 15, And Nguyen Lang. *Op.cit.*, pp. 630 - 631.

²¹Thich Dai San. *Op.cit.*, p. 87.

b. The Impartialness

Thanks to the spirit of self-control and independence of Buddhism, the Vietnamese people have found a new way out of the dominion of foreign invaders. And Vietnamese Buddhism has also eradicated China's culture slavery during ten centuries by the patriotic spirit and equality of Buddhism²². In the period of Ly and Tran dynasties (1010 – 1400), with the spirit of Equality and the Engaged (to enter into the worldly) of Buddhism, it opened the first independent dynasties in Vietnamese history²³, making the flow of the race along with the Vietnamese Buddhism, and it has created remarkable periods of Vietnamese culture and politics.

The role of Buddhism for building and development of Vietnam's independence is like water mixed with milk. The Vietnamese history is closely linked to the history of Buddhism, because the Buddhism has been the spiritual support for a moral culture adapted to the choice of the Vietnamese people. From then on, King Nguyen Phuc Chu who had been devoted to the Triple Gems for a long time, was greatly influenced by Mahayana Buddhism, and he applied it in the real life to create a peaceful and prosperous society, as Zen Master Thach Liem said:

“The king has done many buddhist works, great generosity and selflessness, that is blessing the whole country, for all people”²⁴.

With the spirit of Compassion and Equality of Buddhism helped a society under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu has gained democracy, human rights are elevated, no lament and indignation, one was actually a morally pure society.

²²Before Vietnamese has been invaded by Chinese from 980 C.E until the period of Nguyen dynasty (1558 – 1777), Chinese was still invading Vietnamese on politics and culture aspect.

²³Thich Mat The, **Essays on The History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version), (Da Nang: Minh Duc Press, 1970). p. 119 & pp. 145 - 149.

²⁴Thich Dai San. Op.cit., p. 89.

c. The Four Noble Truths

A doctrine which has very high value in the Buddhism, as The Four Noble Truths that had great impacted to the ideas of king Nguyen Phuc Chu. Thanks to it, he seen the suffering of man and himself, especially in the period of the country was always there are wars, people were unhappy and they went to new land was reclaimed, the economic life of the people remained. Since then, he want to practice loving kindness, equality, the doctrine of the Cause and Effect of the Buddha, in order to always benefit the country and society, he said:

Living by the Way of Confucianism, the devotion in the Buddhism, because politics can not help do the same, believe in virtue and respect the teacher, get Cause and Effect that think to the blessing. Thus, the country was peaceful, the body and mind were safe²⁵.

Therefore, his life is gentle, simple and calm, that is the result that he diligently learned from the high virtuous teachers²⁶. Although king Nguyen Phuc Chu lived in the royal life, his mind was always on Buddhism, practicing for himself and appreciating the life of the monk, which showed that he was very receptive to the Buddha's teachings, penetrated the Empty Nature of the meditation.

King Nguyen Phuc Chu accomplished many great things during his reign, because he had made the right path for himself, that path was Buddhism, which helped him recognize and penetrate the life nature through the doctrine of Compassion, Equality and the Four Noble Truths.

3.1.3 Nguyen Phuc Chu had Appied Buddhist Thoughts for His Reign

Tao Dong and Lam Te Zen School were present in Cochinchina (the South) along with the reign of Nguyen Phuc Chu who was a talented king and early buddhists; so Tao Dong Zen School has become a

²⁵Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 16.

²⁶Ibid., p. 17.

motivation for the king Nguyen Phuc Chu to try to implement the reign of country under the influence of Buddhism, as well as to promote the King to accomplish some great buddhist works²⁷. That we are not surprised at all, since the beginning of the founding kingdom of the predecessors kings those had aware of the importance of Buddhist thoughts, and it became a tradition in the reign of the Nguyen dynasty until the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, who inherited that things, and helped his career refulgent success.

So, how did king Nguyen Phuc Chu use Buddhist thoughts in his rule? First of all, he was a disciple of Thach Liem Zen Master in Tao Dong Zen School, because the King's will was to take refuge in Buddhism in order to study the spirit of compassion to escape suffering. And Thach Liem Zen Master who has helped and changed a lot of the King's aware for his rule. Therefrom, the King had taught and cleared by the Zen Master to his dynasty works, as:

The Buddhism of the king was in the state of the rule country and people. There is only one, but the status of each person is different, if the ruler of the nation, ignoring all the order of discipline, to force the pure, is not clear. If the mind is not desire, no wish, pure heart, time depends on the behaviour, although the treatment of everything but no disturbing and sadness by its; taking the virtue to rule the people, that is to make the highest level of pure Buddhism, the King or Buddha is nothing else²⁸.

From then on, the this Budhist King deeply influenced of the Mahayana Buddhist thoughts from his master and he was advised agreat deal on the path of reign, such as: instead, the king practiced the mantra method, and his master taught him how to govern by the virtuous way to follow the eighteen point testimony, called the "Founding Treaty", which was all told about the soldiers, patriots, merchants, benefactors, disciplines, and the king gladly made that order²⁹. Another occasion,

²⁷Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., pp. 633 - 635.

²⁸Prof, Tran Kinh Hoa. **A Study of the Record of Foreign History and Thach Liem Zen Master**, 2011. <<http://lytranvien.blogspot.com/2011/11/hai-ngoai-ky-su-va-su-thach-liem.html>>.

²⁹Thich Dai San. Op.cit., p. 100.

Thach Liem Zen Master taught the King how to practice the precepts, that:

The abstinence is not just keeping our mouth clean, pure thoughts. It is necessary for the Buddhist King to bring his country under his peaceful control, no one is not satisfied, nothing is not satisfactory, so called fullness³⁰.

Just as the Thach Liem Zen Master always advised the King to rule the country by clement virtue, to take loving kindness to rule, to issue a leniency policy for prisoners, to abolish severe punishments of brutality.

These were Buddhist ideas that the King Nguyen Phuc Chu received from Thach Liem Zen Master, so his temper was imbued with the taste of kind to animals, seeing the people and the soldier as his own. It is spirit of compassion and altruism of Buddhism that he applied and promoted strongly, the same way was the Bodhisattva path for the benefit of beings.

King Nguyen Phuc Chu learned a great deal about country-ruling and meditation thoughts from his master, as well as deeply knowledge of causality. He seen the suffering of the people and recognized his responsibility that what should do.

As in sutta Cakkavatti Sihanada also taught about the Character of the leader, that:

1. Good ruler: acted impartial, without prejudice, and without discrimination between other groups; 2. Good ruler: did not cherish any kind of anger with whom; 3. Good ruler: did not be afraid of anything in law enforcement, if the law was right; 4. Good ruler: there must be a clear understanding of the law of fairness and impartiality of anyone, and the law must be properly³¹.

³⁰Ibid., p. 97.

³¹(P.Abai) Y. S. Rao (ed) *Buddhism and Modern Society*, (Deep Publication 2008), p. 108

Besides, the Buddha also taught seven things to a prosperous nation, like as: “1. Democratic activity; 2. National solidarity; 3. To enact laws properly and respect the old law; 4. Harmony of the generation, respect for elders; 5. Respect for women; 6. Respect cultural beliefs in accordance with the law; 7. Honor and favor the wisdom, the sage”³². Through that, let us see that to do something successful, we also need to take ethics, humanity, tolerance as the head. In the meantime, to train good body and mind, the Buddha also teaches them about loving kindness and toleration.

In short, King Nguyen Phuc Chu applied Buddhist thoughts to reign of the country and expanded the territory with the sharp political eye. Because, the choice of Buddhism in a multicultural environment, that person must have a superior intellect. The conception of equality of Buddhism had somewhat blurred the relationship between the reign and to be reign. This was manifested during the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, and Buddhism played a very important role in social development³³.

If any nation knows how to apply Buddhist ethics, it is certain that it will bring them a prosperous nation that will put an end to social evils; to ward the true – the good – the beautiful society. And king Nguyen Phuc Chu was one of those who have applied success of that spirit, meaning the equality (compassion, selflessness) and the causal principle. And king Nguyen Phuc Chu was one of the most prominent in the process of expanding the territory, developing Buddhism under the Nguyen dynasty in South Vietnam.

3.2 King Nguyen Phuc Chu and Zen Buddhism

At that time, Mahāyāna Buddhism in Vietnam has only two Zen school in the South, those are Zen School Tao Dong and Lam Te. These two sects were all originated from China by the Chinese Zen Masters,

³²*Dīgha-Nikāya*. I.6. M. Walshe (tr) *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, Wisdom Publications, 1995 p. 68. Or see, *Anguttara Nikāya*. II.208. F. L. Woodward (tr.) *the Book of the Gradual Sayings*, (London Published for the Pali text society, 1960), p. 27.

³³Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., p. 635.

who had come Vietnam in the middle 17th century. It has great developed in the southern Vietnam, and large influenced in the masses, as well as the kings of the Nguyen dynasty, and in particular the king Nguyen Phuc Chu who had very worshipped these two sects.

3.2.1 Tao Dong Zen School (zh. *cáo-dòng-zōng* - 曹洞宗)

This school has originated from China. It was formed by two Zen masters named Đông Sơn Luong Gioi (807-869) and Tao Sơn Ban Tịch (840-901). It was one in five of Tao Khue Zen school of the sixth Hue Nang Patriarch in China: Lam Te sect, Quy Nguong, Tao Đông, Vạn Môn and Pháp Nhãn sect. Tao Dong Zen school was imported to Vietnam from seventeenth century, both in North and South. It was presented in the North Vietnam by Zen master Thuy Nguyệt when he was study in China in 1664, and he become back Vietnam in 1667, at Vong Lao temple – An Sơn mountain, Đông Triều district, Hải Dương province. Therefrom, this school developed thriving here because it has supported from King Lê Thế Tông (1575-1599) and a lot of the Zen Master other in late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. In the South, the Zen master Hùng Liên first who was propagated this school in Tam Thái temple, Quảng Nam province under the dynasty of king Nguyễn Phúc Trăn (1687-1691). And in 1695, Zen master Thạch Liêm (1633-1704) of this school from China to the Southern Vietnam to propagate by king Nguyễn Phúc Chu's invitation, and he made this sect prevalent³⁴.

In particular, Zen Master Thạch Liêm has great contribution in the development and propagation of Buddhism, and made this sect a profound influence on King Nguyễn Phúc Chu and the people, who changed the face of Buddhism in Vietnam, clearly; and creating a lively atmosphere of Buddhism in the Nguyễn dynasty capital. Zen Master Thạch Liêm was regarded the first contributing on the Buddhist revival of the South for Tao Dong zen sect in this historical period³⁵.

³⁴Nguyễn Lang, Op.cit., pp.608 – 615. And Nguyễn Khuông Đan, (Thích Nguyễn Chơn). **The Recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism In The 20th Century** (MA degree thesis), (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2008), p. 34.

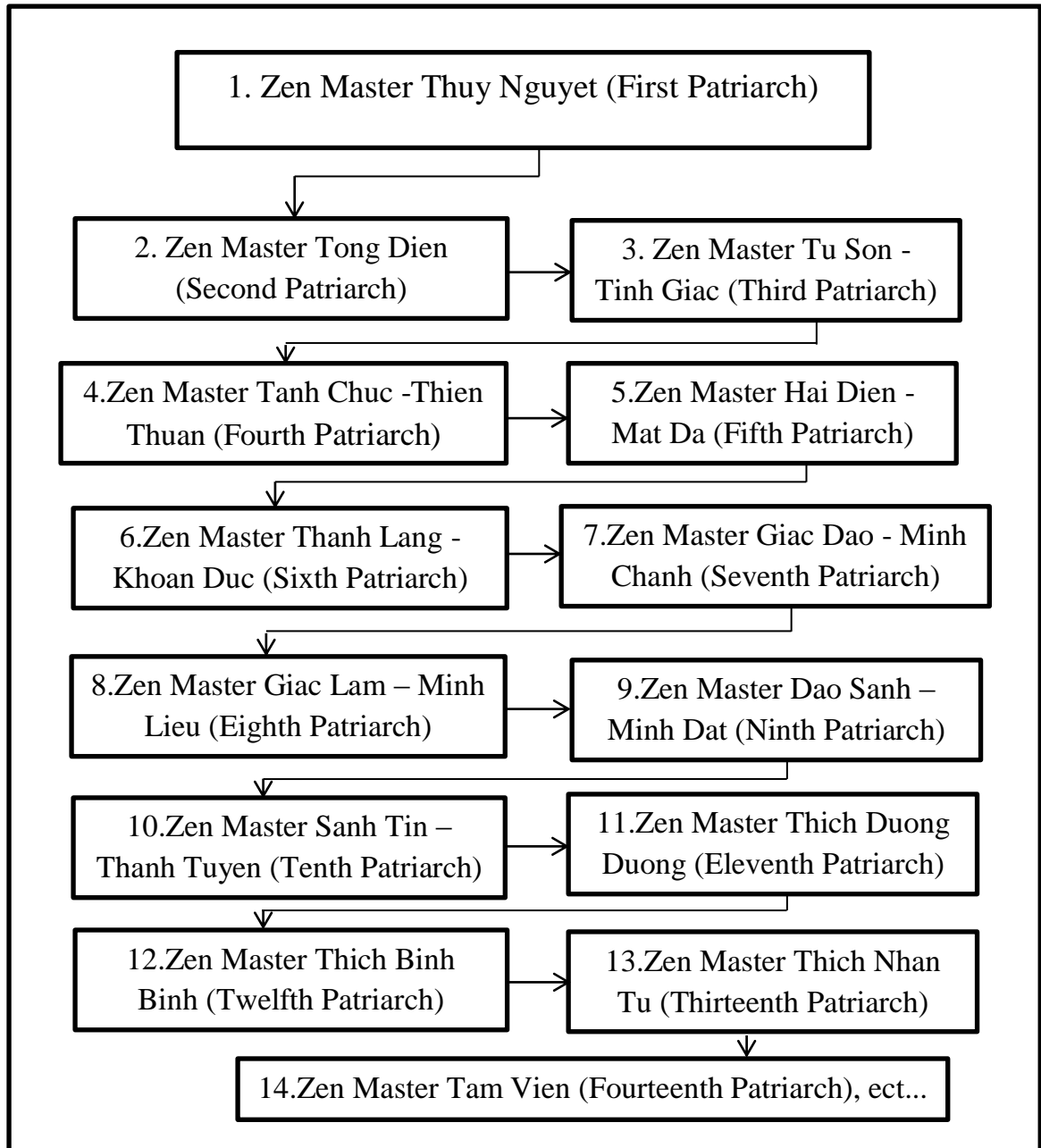
³⁵Nguyễn Tài Thu. Op.cit., p. 205.

The guideline of the Tao Dong Zen School was the eradication of ego, the realization of the Empty Nature. Later, when the Zen Master Thach Liem to Vietnam to propagate the Buddhism, the specific guidelines are: Thien - Tinh Song Tu; Phat – Nho Nhat Tri, Lam – Tao Tong Hop³⁶, was also in the spirit of the enlightenment of empty nature. But in general, the Tao Dong Zen School under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu was strongly development and popular, and King Nguyen Phuc Chu was an enthusiastic supporter and practice to this sect. In particular, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was the successor of the 30th generation of Tao Dong Sect after zen master Thach Liem³⁷.

³⁶Seen more Footnote No.103 of part (b) of section 3.1.1 above.

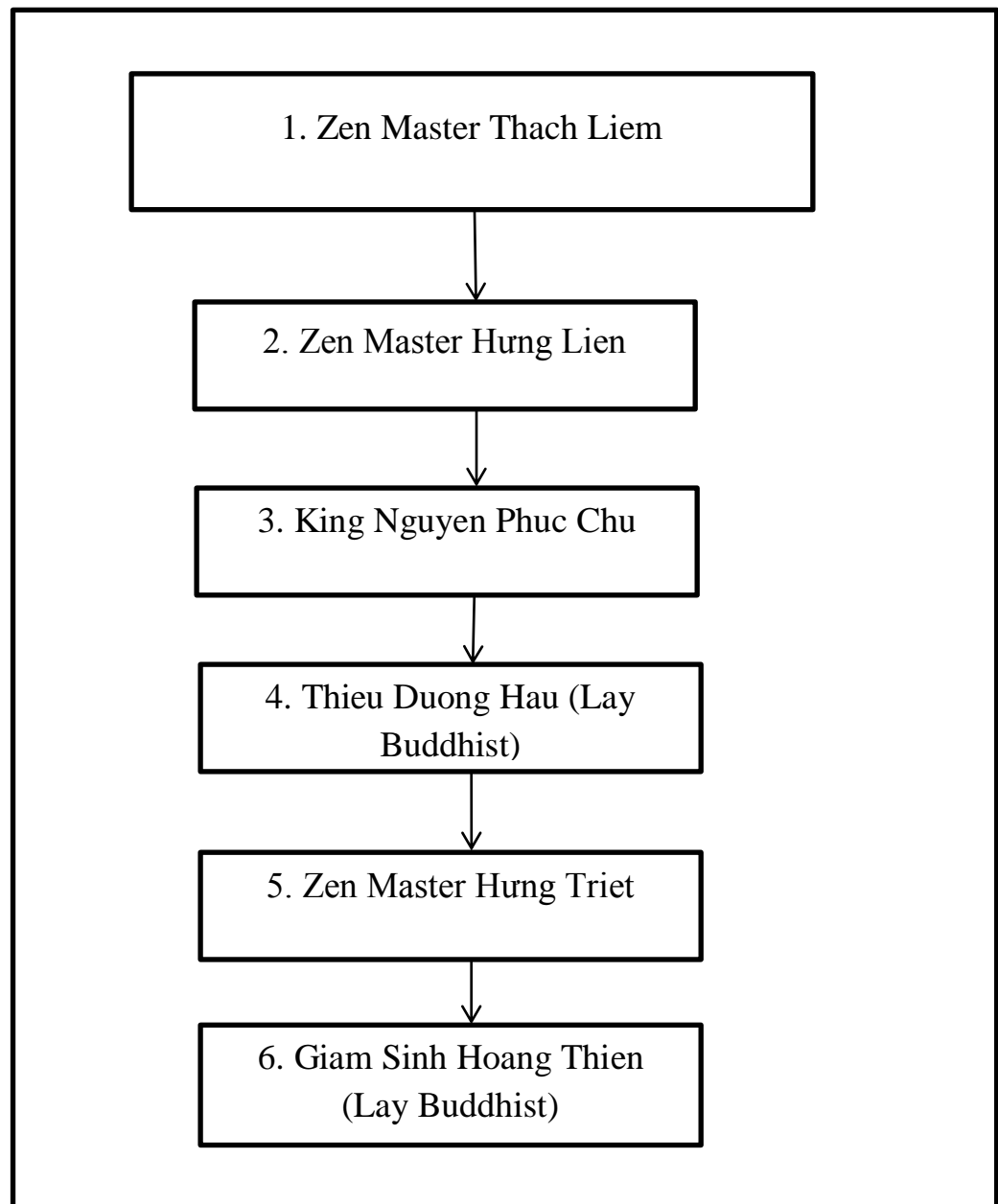
³⁷Nguyen Tai Thu. *Opcit.*, p. 204.

Table 1: The chart of the inheritable generation of Tao Dong Zen School in Northern Vietnam³⁸



³⁸Nguyen Hien Duc, **Buddhism History in Dang Ngoai (The North)**, (Vietnamese version), Vo.I, (Vietnam: Ho chi Minh City of General Publishing House, 2006). pp. 489 - 490.

Table 2: The chart of the inheritable generation of Tao Dong Zen School in Southern Vietnam³⁹



³⁹Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995). p. 124.

3.2.2 Lam Te Zen School (zh. línjì-zōng - 臨濟宗)

Lam Te zen School has also originated from China, it was formed by the Lam Te Nghia Huyen Patriarch (died in AD 867). In 1677 of middle seventeenth century, Zen master Nguyen Thieu was thirtieth-three Patriarch of the Lam Te Zen School, he from China to Vietnam to propagated, and he was also First Patriarch of this zen school in only South Vietnam. First, Zen master Nguyen Thieu come to Binh Dinh province, and he was built the Thap Thap Di Da temple, then he went to Thuan Hoa land, and to built Ha Trung temple and Quoc An temple in Thua Thien - Hue province belong the South.

Thereafter, this school arised a new Zen school, called Lieu Quan sect, it has brought particular colour of Vietnam or it called Lam Te Zen school of Vietnam. Lieu Quan school was formed by Zen master Lieu Quan. He was thirtieth-five Patriarch of Lam Te Zen School, and was First Patriarch of Lieu Quan school in Vietnam. He was born in 1667 of the district Dong Xuan, Phu Yen province in Middle Vietnam and died in 1742. And after his death then he had granted the noble title“ Most Ven. *Dao Hanh Thuy Chanh Giac Vien Ngo*” by king Nguyen Phuc Khoat (1737 -1765)⁴⁰.

The thought of the Lam Te Zen School was the enlightenment of the Natural Buddha, which means that the Natural Buddha concept of beings and the Buddha are equal. Their practice was the Tam Huyền, Tam Yêu, Tứ Liệu Giản⁴¹, which lead to the extermination of attachment, to achieve enlightenment.

This sect was strongly developed and spread throughout southern Vietnam by the enthusiastic support of the Nguyen kings before and after King Nguyen Phuc Chu. Under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, after Zen Master Thach Liem returned to China (1696), and Zen Master Lieu Quan was the most prominent at this time and King Nguyen Phuc Chu was admired and supported for his spread (because the Zen thoughts of the Lam Te Zen School was similar to Zen School Tao Dong that the Bonze Thach Liem propagated, so King Nguyen Phuc Chu had received

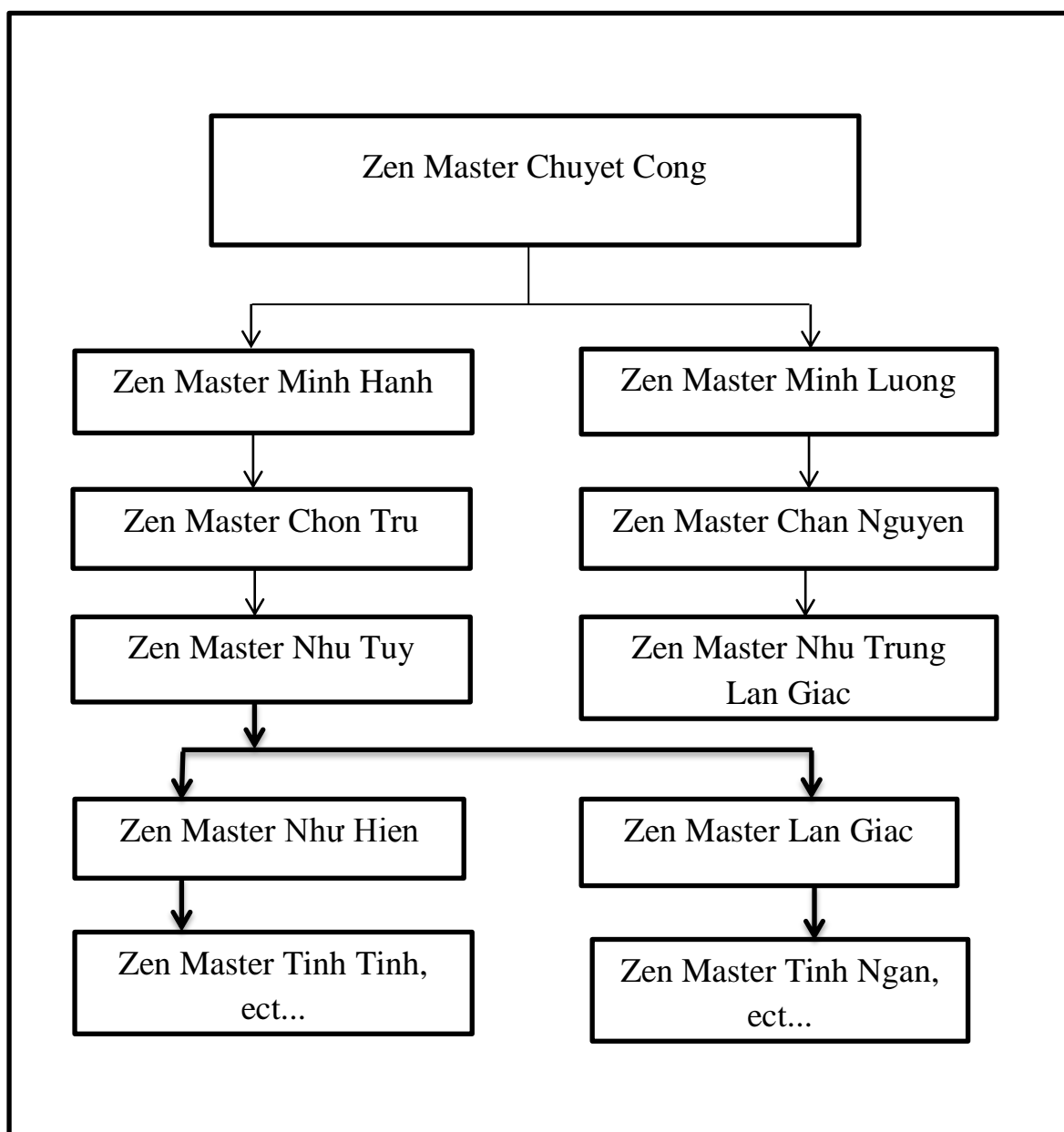
⁴⁰Nguyen Tai Thu. Op.cit., pp. 197 - 201.

⁴¹ See more Footnote No.100 of part (a) of section 3.1.1 above.

it sincerely)⁴². Thus, the Lam Te sect in the South was strongly supported by King Nguyen Phuc Chu and it developed more strongly than the Tao Dong Sects in the South and North. The Zen Master Lieu Quan's efforts to spread the teachings of Buddha have made Buddhism in the south truly lively, was the period of Vietnamese Buddhism which reached its golden age.

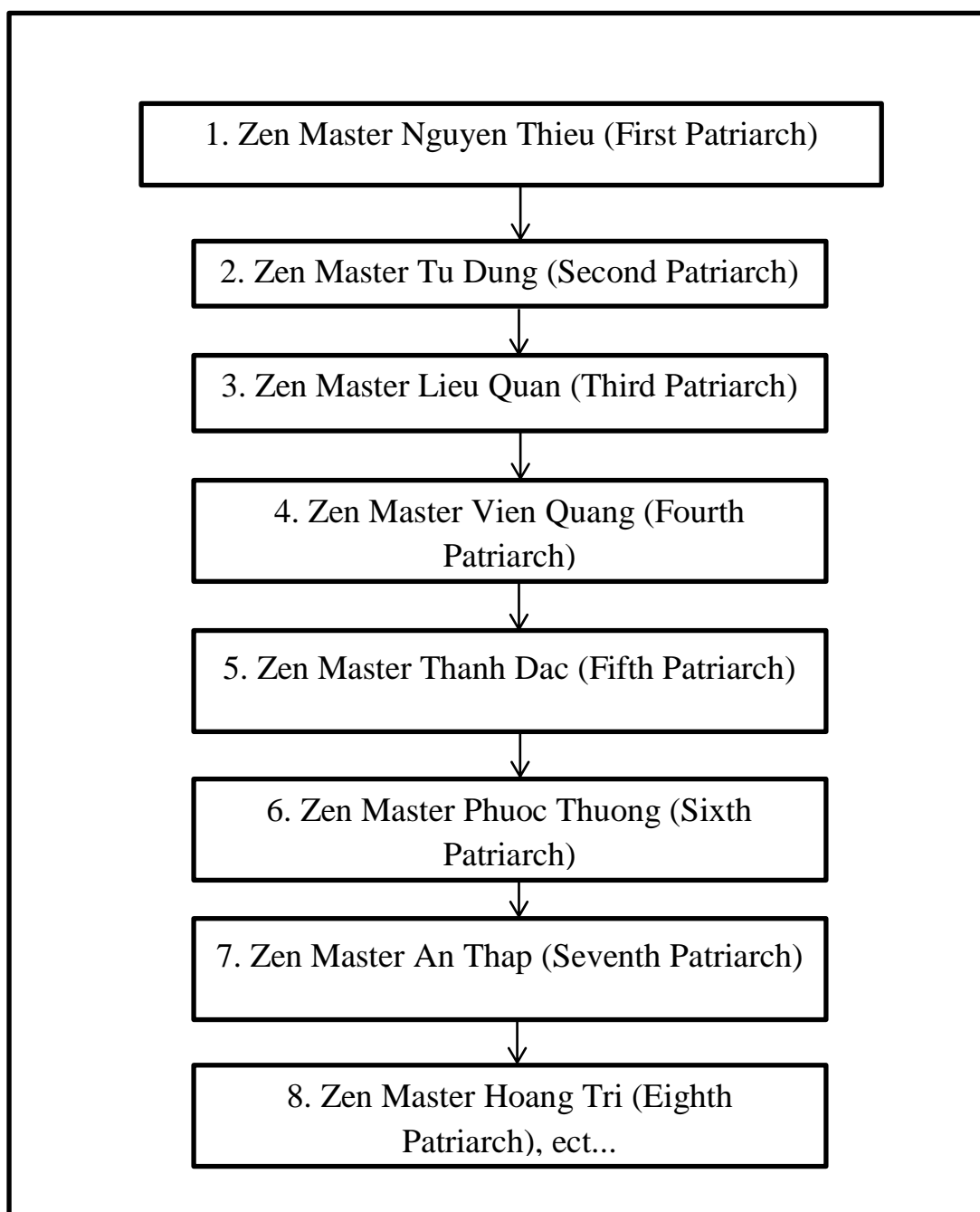
⁴²Thich Mat The, *Op.cit.*, pp. 205-207. And Nguyen Lang. *Op.cit.*, pp. 601-604.

Table 3: The chart of the inheritable generation of Lam Te Zen School in Northern Vietnam⁴³



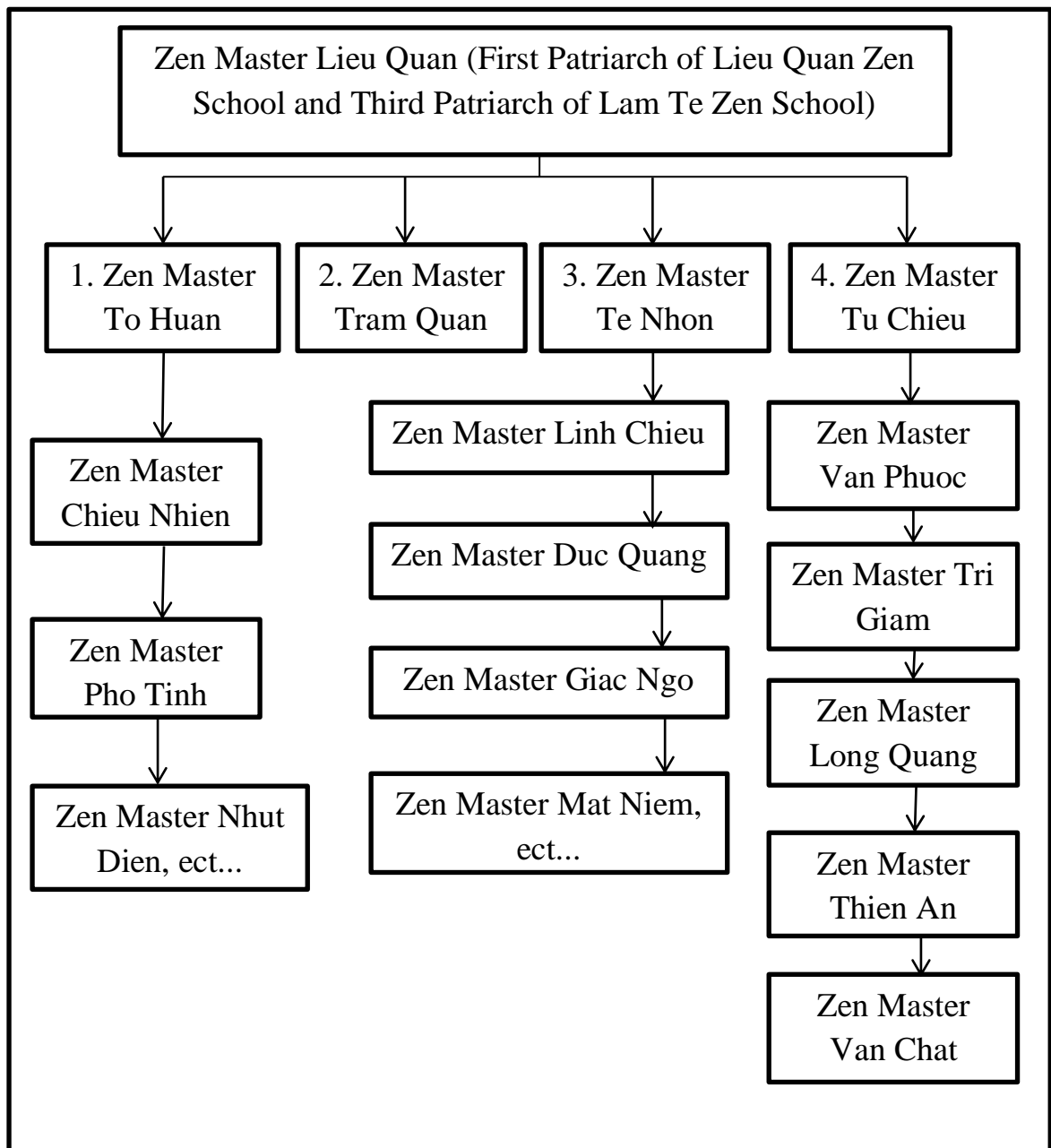
⁴³ Thich Minh Tue, **A Brief History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese version), (Ho Chi Minh: Buddhist Association of Ho Chi Minh City Press, 1993), p. 426.

Table 4: The chart of the inheritable generation of Lam Te Zen School in Southern Vietnam⁴⁴



⁴⁴Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 603 & p. 605.

Table 5: The chart of the inheritable generation of Lieu Quan Zen School in Southern Vietnam⁴⁵



⁴⁵Thich Mat The. Op.cit., p. 219.

3.3 The Buddhist Characteristics of King Nguyen Phuc Chu

By the deep influence from the Buddhist thoughts that made the faith of king Nguyen Phuc Chu growing more and more for the Buddhadhamma. Therefrom, he showed clearly virtue of the benevolence and tolerance, which always wish for social peacefulness, the people got happiness, and all everyone directs the teachings of the Buddha by study and practice instead of religious belief. Thus, the king always training himself to get well, and onwards to benefit of all everyone.

3.3.1 The Strong Faith towards the Buddhism

King Nguyen Phuc Chu was fortunate man to have been born into a royal family with a long tradition of Buddhist culture (since King Nguyen Hoang founded the Nguyen dynasty from 1600 to his period, all to follow Buddhist tradition). It is the good conditions and seed was sown in his mind, so own himself did not know why “from the time when baby to hear the words of the Buddhadhamma are revered, every time see the monk wearing the yellow robe is very happy to see”⁴⁶. Moreover, during his growing up, he met such famous Zen Masters such as Zen Master Nguyen Thieu, Zen Master Thach Liem and Zen Master Lieu Quan, which was the chance to promote good seed of his heart grew gradually.

With the faith to Buddhism since he was young, so in the meantime he come to the throne that his devotion was increasingly evident, through his actions as he did, such as building and repairing many temples in the south, doing many charitable works, issuing many open policies for the people, reducing taxes and releasing prisoners⁴⁷. By the time of the meeting with Zen Master Thach Liem and Zen Master Lieu Quan, the king had encouraged all relationship royal, great and small generals to take refuge in the Triple Gems, and own himself took refuge and received the Boddhisattva Precepts of Lay Buddhists, to practice the compassionate spirit of the Lord Boddhisattva in order to bring benefit and happiness to everyone⁴⁸. In addition, he combined with

⁴⁶Thich Dai san. Op.cit., p. 83.

⁴⁷Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., pp. 630 - 631.

⁴⁸Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., pp. 100 - 101.

these Zen masters to effort to reorganize the Buddhist sangha, to make Buddhism renaissance, and to prosper again (although Buddhism was strong supported by the previously Nguyen king but not as excellence as the era of King Nguyen Phuc Chu). If not a strong believer in Buddhism like that, how king Nguyen Phuc Chu can not to do such great things.

As Zen Master Thich Liem praised on the king's belief that:

Now, I am feeling happy so much for the king at the throne, but the spiritual is not dim, the relaxed action as the Buddhist monk, that is by wisdom, the blessing of past life a lot, living in riches and pleasures that maintain faithful like that⁴⁹.

3.3.2 The Ethical Action of the King

The most prominent of King Nguyen Phuc Chu had took refuged the Triple Gems with Buddhist name of Hung Long, with noble name called Thien Tung Dao Nhan. During the 34 years of reign, he was the creator of many great merits for the development of Buddhism in the South. Famous Chinese monks came to the south to teach the dhamma and the king facilitated the construction of temples. Such as Zen Master Nguyen Thieu founded Thap Thap Di Da temple in Binh Dinh province, Quoc An temple and Ha Trung temple in Hue province. In 1694, Zen Master Phap Hoa founded the Thien An Pagoda in Quang Ngai Province, and King Nguyen Phuc Chu issued the name board “Sac Tu Thien An Temple”. In 1697, Tu Lam zen master founded Tu Lam Pagoda in Hue province, and Tu Dung zen master founded the An Ton Pagoda (known as Tu Dam pagoda in Hue province today) in 1703; Zen master Minh Hai - Phap Bao founded Chuc Thanh Pagoda in Quang Nam province; Zen master Lieu Quan in Phu Yen province, who founded Thuyen Ton Pagoda (Hue) and Bao Tinh (Phu Yen) and also great contribution to the Vietnamese Zen school of Lam Te in south. Besides, the great mark of the king was invited Zen master Thach Liem from China to the South Vietnam to organize Buddhist events of macroscopic property, and he received the Bodhisattva Precepts, and all the royal families, the general,

⁴⁹Thich Dai San. Op.cit., p. 89.

were guided to take refuge the Triple Gems by the king (1695), and he also restored Thien Lam pagoda and Thien Mu Pagoda (a famous temple at that time), casting the largest bronze bell weighs 3285kg at this temple to worship the Triple Gems in 1710, and 1714 the big restoring of Thien Mu Pagoda one more by himself ⁵⁰.

Another time, he invited Zen Master Thach Liem and the monks of Thien Lam Pagoda to chant the mantra Great Compassion (mahākarunā), and wanted to be the abstinence himself (the meaning of not eating meat and not being close to women) for joining and praying for the country to be peaceful and the people are happy, peaceful settlement⁵¹. In 1715, the king sent his official to China to seeking Three Collections of the Buddhist Canon (which translates from Sanskrit into Chinese include: Sutta, Vinaya and Abhidhamma), to spread widely, to propagate the Buddhism thought grew up strength in the south⁵².

In addition, King Nguyen Phuc Chu had another great merit that was in 1695-1696 and in 1699 -1725, he combined with two famous Zen Master Thach Liem and Zen master Lieu Quan to rehabilitate the Buddhism again by the sangha's pureness (to create a training environment for the rising of the talent Buddhist monks; putting the precepts into respectable, enhancing the prestige of the virtuous monks)⁵³.

On socially, the king had instructed by Zen Master Thach Liem; Thus, he abolished strict laws, barbaric penalties, released prisoners, provided subsidies to the poor, and reduced taxes on the population. Besides, he issued the order to build the school and get the idea of Confucianism as the foundation⁵⁴... all the virtuous deeds to rule the country of King Nguyen Phuc Chu.

⁵⁰Thich Mat The. Op.cit., p. 211

⁵¹Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 630.

⁵²Ibid., p. 631.

⁵³Ibid.,p. 622.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 627 & p. 630.

3.3.3 The King's Charity

King Nguyen Phuc Chu had faith in Buddhism since childhood, thanks to the cultural traditions of his predecessors. However, after he ascended the throne, his work increasingly show the virtue and tolerance. His good seeds rise to greatness helped him meet the high virtuous monks, to learn the truth enlightenment of the Buddha. Since then, he has imbibed the philosophy of Causation and Compassion, and he built and restored many temples, encouraging his relatives to bless the accumulation of virtue merit (punya). Own himself has done many charitable works, bringing ethics to teach the people, creating a society full of vitality, happiness and peace.

Among the greatest marks in the charitable work of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, it was in 1695 that a very large Buddhist event took place this year with the participation of all the country in the Great Festival of Buddha's Birthday (Vesak) at Thien Lam pagoda (Hue province), under the chairman of Zen Master Thach Liem by the great support of the king. This is a Buddhist event which up to now, there have never been any, if only with micro-compact. And in this event the king issued the order to give alms to the poor and supported the construction of houses; reduced taxes and tax cuts for those who were too poor, released prisoners and abolished heavy penalties⁵⁵. And from then onwards, the king did regular this works for his people.

In 1710, the king ordered to cast a large bell (3.285kg) at Thien Mu Pagoda (Hue province); and in 1714, the king restored Thien Mu pagoda. After each the event was completed the king made a one-month vegetarian meal and charity to the poor⁵⁶.

In short, after the king met Zen Master Thach Liem who had great influences on the king with Buddhist ideas, and had made many changes to his reign. Through his ruling for the people by virtuous mind, he appears to be a benevolent king who always promulgates appropriate policies that benefit the people, create democracy and peace in society,

⁵⁵Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 15.

⁵⁶Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 631.

And he encouraged everyone diligently to do good deeds to create a peaceful and peaceful nation.

3.3.4 The Practice of Zen Buddhism

As mentioned above, at that time in South Vietnam there were only two main Zen sects, that are Lam Te and the Tao Dong Zen sect. Meanwhile, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was very much admired the virtuous of Thach Liem Zen master who was followed the Tao Dong Zen sect. Thus, the king tended to practice meditation according to the ideology of Tao Dong Zen Sect rather than the Lam Te Zen Sect. Although the zen thoughts of these two seniors are not very different.

Zen master Thach Liem taught his disciples as well as king Nguyen Phuc Chu who practiced meditation through the contemplation of the Questionable Subject of Buddhaddhamma (problems set by Zen master), as: “Who is my master?”⁵⁷, for the purpose is concentrating in right mindfulness until there is no distinction and attachment, to comprehend Empty Nature, i.e attaining enlightenment. And King Nguyen Phuc Chu had digested this one, as he wrote in the preface of the book *The Overseas Journal*, that:

*The like of the universe, the ashes, the sand which all created by the Cause and Condition. After all, between Me and Zen Master (Bonze Thach Liem), there was nothing distinguishable from the inside and outside*⁵⁸.

Or in the stele (stone stele) also recorded the words of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, which showed that he has absorbed the Zen sect's thought:

⁵⁷Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 627.

⁵⁸Thich Dai San. Op.cit., p. 10.

*The natural Buddha of the Buddha and human beings are equal, there are not differences, although the forms are different but they are the same enlightened nature*⁵⁹.

From the influence of meditation thoughts, but the life of this king also became simple, nothing fancy, flowery. This is reflected on the inscription written in the epitaph of King Nguyen Phuc Chu at Thien Mu Pagoda that:

*... consider the royal life at the palace uneasy with the monk's life. The bright Royal robe often dazzling the human eyes is not worth the monk's robe. And after all, the precious jewels and gold are nothing but only illusions*⁶⁰.

It shows that King Phuc Chu did not only love Buddhism for the sake of politics but that he came to Buddhism with the true heart of a devout Buddhist, with the aim of studying and practical the Buddha's teachings. Since then, he has become a devoutly guardian for Buddhism, actively promoting Buddhist thoughts into social life.

3.4 Concluding Remarks

King Nguyen Phuc Chu was a Buddhist king of talented ruler who plays an important role not only in the process of territorial expansion but also in the development of Vietnamese Buddhism. He is very understanding the teaching of the Buddha and meditation thought. With his thinks on how to bring Buddhist morality into real life, in order to bring practical benefits and peace to the country. It further shows that King Nguyen Phuc Chu was a Lay Buddhist, but soul as a monk. His whole life is devoted for the happiness and prosperity for the people and Buddhism.

⁵⁹Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), pp. 16 - 18.

⁶⁰Phan Du. **The Dream about Capital City** (vietnamese version), (Cao Thom Publishing House, 1971), p. 102.

Chapter IV

The Buddhist Contributions of King Nguyen Phuc Chu To Vietnamese Society

Within 30 years of the reign of Buddhist King Nguyen Phuc Chu, who has been impacted deep by the Buddhist ethical thoughts which cultured him becoming a person of talent and tolerant morality. He used Buddhist ethics as the standard for social morality. And, therefrom he has wise strategies to build and develop the powerful society, and it has impacted return for Buddhist development. With his benevolence and zeal, king Nguyen Phuc Chu made the Buddhism and society in the southern Vietnam growing more and more.

4.1 The Impacts from the Reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu on Vietnamese Buddhism's Development

To be the responsibility to Lay devout Buddhist for Buddhism's recovery after many years declined, king Nguyen Phuc Chu has supported devotion to the Buddhism through a lot meaning deeds in each of region of the Buddhist activity for the aim of Buddhist revival movement in Vietnam. So, during the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, the Vietnamese Buddhism got the golden age in the last century.

4.1.1 Impact on Revival of Vietnamese Buddhism

The Buddhism of Southern Vietnam was formed and developed along the same process of expanding the southern border of Vietnamese. A great advantage for Buddhism in the South was the Nguyen kings to be very Buddhist admirers. When Lord Nguyen Hoang chose Phu Xuan land (Hue province) to settle down and decided to build the first Linh Mu (Thien Mu) pagoda in Hue in the south, that is the beginning of Buddhist beliefs here; to create a spiritual foundation for future generations, to maintain the inheritance and create conditions for Buddhism to develop later on¹.

In the history of Buddhism in Vietnam, the main causes leading to the decadence of Buddhism as well as during the Latter Le dynasty (1428 - 1789) to the Nguyen dynasty (1558 - 1777) by the heavy stigmatization of Confucianism with Buddhism, to be called religious conflict, and in addition there were cases where Buddhism was abused and monks were seriously deprived². However, during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1675-1725), Buddhism was strongly supported by the government as well as from prominent Zen masters such as Zen Master Nguyen Thieu, Thach Liem and Zen Master Lieu Quan in the South. And in the north, there was Zen Master Chan Nguyen, Chuyet Chuyet, Minh Hanh and Zen master Huong Hai, as well as the Le Kings and Trinh lords (at that time, the Le dynasty issued a decree prohibiting the spread of Christianity, and strive to support Buddhism)³. Therefore, Buddhism has had much better than before.

¹Truong Huu Quynh. Dao To Uyen & Pham Van Hung. **The Vietnamese History From Tenth Century to 1858** (Vietnamese Version), (Ha Noi: Educational University Publishing House, 2003). p. 184.

²Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., pp.486-488. And Nguyen Tai Thu. Op.cit., pp. 168-169.

³Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 538 & p. 599. And Nguyen Hien Duc. **Vietnamese Buddhism History Under Trinh – Nguyen Dynasty: Buddhism History in Dang Ngoai (The North)**, (Vietnamese version), Vo.I, (Vietnam: Ho chi Minh City of General Publishing House, 2006), pp. 611 - 613. And Tran Hong Lien. **The Character of the**

For the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, this dynasty had a strong influence on the development of Buddhism, King Nguyen Phuc Chu made many important contributions to the Buddhist Renaissance at that time (we can see more about the activities of King Nguyen Phuc Chu in Chapters 2 and 3), but here are some key points that Nguyen Phuc Chu has made in the Buddhist revival, as follows:

(1) Interested in building infrastructure for Buddhist pagodas: This is the first thing King Nguyen Phuc Chu prioritized and executed when he became the king, and he had supported money for publishing Three Collections of Buddhist Canon from China to Vietnam over 1,000 books in 1714.⁴

(2) Calling upon and encouraging the prominent monks in the country and abroad to spread Buddhism, in which the most prominent were the three Zen Masters: Nguyen Thieu, Thach Liem and Lieu Quan⁵. Especially during this period, the Ming Dynasty has been overthrown and erected the Manchu - Qing dynasty in China. The Qing dynasty's defectors left the country, including the Zen masters, most of whom came to South Vietnam to establish and propagated the Buddhism. The Zen masters who came to Vietnam brought with them new spiritual forms, most notably were Lam Te Zen sect and Tao Dong Zen sect. And now, most of the Mahayana Buddhist systems in the South were from the Chinese descent. Since then, many prominent Zen masters have come to Southern Vietnam, both of the Vietnamese and the Chinese, and together they have created a new culture with bearing bold colors of Buddhism for the people in the south.

(3) Development of educational facilities: The king cared about the training of monks and nuns to preserve and develop Buddhism. Thus, he combined with many Zen masters to regularly organize Buddhist events of educational nature and to create a learning environment for monks for preparing personnel resources for the next step of the process revival of Buddhism.

Buddhism in Dang Trong of the 18th century, Suoi Nguon Review, Vo 1. (Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 2011).

⁴Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 615 and p. 631

⁵Le Thanh Khoi. Op.cit., p. 341.

(4) The king encouraged people to study Buddhism for improving their lifestyle morals. And the king who became the link between Buddhism and Lay people.

(5) Prioritizing the propagation and development of Buddhism: he banned Catholicism (1699), except the Confucianism and the Taoism, but these two religions were not encouraged as Buddhism.

(6) The king issued many Buddhist protectionist policies: In order for Buddhism to be spread widely, the king issued policies to protect and opening for Buddhism, such as the non-payment of pagoda land taxes and grant land for the temples to plow, financial aid, the law to protect Buddhist monks, not to harm the pagoda's properties, ect... And besides, he also did a lot of other meaningful things.

Furthermore, we can broadly analyze the problem of Buddhism in the South. Why is it given strong attention from the authorities? This was because of the Buddhism devotion of the kings at that time, and partly it was politically beneficial and made the attraction form follower Buddhism come back their government⁶. It can be said that a great feature of Buddhism in the South was formed and affirmed at the beginning, that the relationship between the government and Buddhism was very close, and Buddhism has made an important position in the field of Political and social thought in Cochinchina (the South)⁷. To put it more clearly, the Nguyen dynasty from the beginning as well as later paid great attention to Buddhism with three basic reasons:

Firstly, at that time Confucianism feudalism was decadent in the politics, the Latter Le dynasty regime was also degraded because the Latter Le dynasty adopted Confucianism's ideas to govern; so the Nguyen dynasty did not want to repeat the old path. Moreover, in the new land of the Nguyen dynasty, follower Confucianism was very limited, and unsuitable for rule here, so they decided choosing Buddhism as the foundation. Secondly, this was a new land, poor and flood victims by the war, so they needed comfort, refreshing spirit, and the Nguyen dynasty considered only to see Buddhism can do that and fitting in here. And

⁶Nguyen Tai Thu. Op.cit., p. 185.

⁷Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., p. 633.

thirdly, as showed above to be new land was less Confucian; it was very difficult to build community solidarity, while the majority of people here had Buddhist beliefs, which was a favorable feature for the Nguyen dynasty easily called upon the unity of the peasants; So the Nguyen dynasty chose Buddhism as its fulcrum for the benefit of politics⁸. This was a great favourableness for Buddhism in the South, because the Nguyen dynasty chose Buddhism as the motto for its founding. So that the Nguyen kings had Buddhist devotion, and they were many meaningful activities, and creating a solid development for Buddhism.

Thus, from the above characteristics, let us see that if the kings of the previous dynasties were the first to lay the foundation step of Buddhism in Cochinchina, then King Nguyen Phuc Chu was the one who made Buddhism the most developing and prosperous, was the first initiator for the Buddhist revival movement of the Nguyen dynasty's history in the south during his reign. All created a unique appearance and identity of Buddhism in the South during this period.

4.1.2 Impact on the Education for Buddhist Monks

May be said that King Nguyen Phuc Chu was truly a talented, well-educated, deep thinker, and loving people. Therefore, in order for a country to flourish, he paid special attention to education. For the social education, the King was interested in training talented people and organizes rigorous examinations to regularly check the capacity of current officials in order to change the incompetent and poor man; value master help the people help the country. Apart from paying attention to social education, King Nguyen Phuc Chu did not forget the responsibility for Buddhism's prosperity, which was to focus on the development of Buddhist education.

In order to maintain and develop the Buddhism of Cochinchina, as a foundation support for the process of developing the border and unifying the country for a long term ; One of the major Buddhist events emphasized by the Nguyen kings were the organization of Buddhist

⁸Ibid., pp. 635 - 636.

education events of great influential that open up the gospel-based training of monks to maintain the Buddhism system . As in 1695, King Nguyen Phuc Chu teamed up with Zen Master Thach Liem to organize the Buddhist events very large to train and purge monks over 1,000 people⁹. Or, the king was encouraged by Zen Master Thach Liem, so he set up the National Study Center as a place for training and studying for everyone, including the monks¹⁰. Thus, Thach Liem Zen Master who has a great contribution to the training and teaching of Buddhism as well as the propagation of Tao Dong Zen sect into Cochinchina in the late 17th century, which was nominated by King Nguyen Phuc Chu; and he had a very good influence on the way of governance of king Nguyen Phuc Chu¹¹. In the meantime, the support of the Nguyen Phuc Chu dynasty, the Zen Master have established many Buddhist Studies centers such as Zen Master Nguyen Thieu and Zen master Lieu Quan¹². In addition, not only did King Nguyen Phuc Chu paid attention to the knowledge of Buddhism and virtuousness of the monks, but also he paid attention to the knowledge and spiritual life of the people¹³.

For Buddhism, the spread of Buddhism, the selection of virtuous monks were considered great Buddhist works, because it was the basis for promoting the inner strength of Buddhism in the spread of the truth Dhamma. Therefore, the problem and urgency for the development and revitalization of Buddhism in the South, King Nguyen Phuc Chu invited the eminent monks to teach and impart the Bhikkhu precepts to the monks. As a result, the Buddhist education was strongly rebellion against and promoted the development of Buddhism, especially two Zen schools: Lam Te and Tao Dong¹⁴.

Thus, through the Buddhist events that took place in 1695 and later years, Buddhism under the reign of Nguyen Phuc Chu actually created a human resource to increase talented monks for Buddhism, to serve the spread of Buddhism at that time. On top of that, the Buddhist of

⁹Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 616.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 627.

¹¹Nguyen Khac Thuan, Op.cit., p. 638.

¹²Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 620 & pp. 586 - 591 & pp. 599 - 604.

¹³ Ibid., p. 629.

¹⁴Thich Mat The, Op.cit., pp. 186 - 207.

Cochinchina have had the opportunity to interact with the Chinese Buddhist culture in the early stages. At the same time, the King began to create the Buddhist belief in the reassuring of people.

In short, during the 34 years of the reign, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was one of the devout Buddhists who inherited and applied Buddhist philosophy in the construction of feudal autocracy and achieving achievements in realizing territorial expansion, proceeding to build a moral and good life for the people . The construction and restoration of the temple system, opening the training centre of monks, the building and training of Lay Buddhists resources for the service of buddhadhamma in the role of protecting the country, developing the Buddhist and using the truth Dhamma to bring peace to the people and management of people; in essence, to concretize the content of the Buddhism philosophy under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu.

4.1.3 Impact on the Buddhist Culture

If the predecessors laid stones for the foundation of Cochinchina Buddhism, then King Nguyen Phuc Chu was the one who made Buddhism the most expanded and prosperous in the history of Buddhism in Vietnam during the reign of the Nguyen dynasty. With the merit of building temples, promoting Buddhism, supporting monks and nuns. All created the appearance and unique characteristics of Buddhism in this period. So, in this section, writer focus on two issues of Buddhist culture: art architecture culture and spiritual culture.

In terms of art architectural culture : on the foundation of the Nguyen Dynasty's development in terms of social as well as religious; Buddhism has received great favor from the government. As we all know, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was a Buddhist devotee. So, many pagodas were built and restored solemnly by his encouragement and support, which had many cultural and artistic features of many different ethnic groups, such as cultural architecture both Vietnamese and Chinese, culture of Khmer and Champa people. In particular, in this period, the art of Chinese culture was the most powerful influence on the art architecture in Vietnam; so in the South when the Nguyen kings built the pagodas also

fitting two the culture of the Vietnamese and Chinese, creating the sharp and beautiful architecture of the pattern¹⁵. As Thien Mu pagoda in Hue province, was a famous pagoda, architecture to be quite excellent, was chosen as the symbol of the Nguyen Dynasty in the South, or many other pagodas were quite famous in the royal city of the Nguyen dynasty as Thien Lam pagoda (Hue province), Tu Dam Pagoda (Hue province), Chuc Thanh Pagoda (Hoi An - Quang Nam province), Phuoc Lam Pagoda (Hoi An - Quang Nam), etc..., being also the famous pagodas in the society of Cochinchina. It should be said that at this stage the art architectural of the Buddhist pagodas developed quite widely and prevalent, which contributed to the art culture of the Vietnamese people more abundant and valuable.

On spiritual culture aspect: One of the most prominent and highly human right, that was King Nguyen Phuc Chu who applies the form of social management in the spirit of compassion and wisdom of Buddhism, brought about the traditional culture and customs of living in society, bearing bold Buddhist culture, have helped people know the principles of human life, avoid the evil and doing good. This way of management has created a society of harmonization, pureness, less resentment and get indignant¹⁶.

Thanks to the spirit of devotion and support for the Buddhism of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, the Humanism of the Philosophy of Cause and Effect in Buddhism has gone into the masses, becoming a cultural fold and contributed to the educational problem for the man a lot of. Because it creates a moral foundation toward a moral, civilized and healthy society.

Besides, King Nguyen Phuc Chu also received the cultures of many countries in the world including the Buddhist culture. Because in this period, foreign affairs were very prosperous; so the Nguyen dynasty easily reached new cultures in Asia and the West, such as Japan, China and India, England, Portuguese, etc ...¹⁷. Mostly, the Nguyen dynasty has

¹⁵Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., pp. 832 - 838.

¹⁶Nguyen Hien Duc. **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 101.

¹⁷Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., p. 95 & p. 120.

influenced the culture of Japan, China and India. Because of this, the interaction with these countries was more than that, so from Thua Thien Hue province to Sai Gon, there were Chinese and Japanese streets¹⁸. So, during this time, many Zen masters from China followed the merchant come to Vietnam for their propagation of dhamma; and bringing with them a distinct Buddhist culture of China to the south of Vietnam, creating a Buddhist culture in Vietnam to be developed rich and colorful.

Since then, many Buddhist rituals have also developed with spiritual philosophy that created a beauty in folklore and contributed to promoting the development of Vietnamese national identity. In general, asserting his supreme power, King Nguyen Phuc Chu has combined the cultural philosophy of the Buddhist with the culture of the nation into a sharp weapon in the governance of his country. As a result, it has had a tremendous impact on the dramatic and profound development of Buddhist culture in the south.

4.1.4 Impact on Buddhist Sites

The Cochinchina originally comprised only Thuan Hoa and Quang Nam (from Quang Binh province to Quang Nam province). With the development trend of expanding territory, the Nguyen lords heading south began a royal dynasty in Cochinchina. Nguyen Hoang Lord who first founded the Nguyen dynasty; in 1611, he sent troops to fight Champa to expand territory to Phu Yen province. In 1693, king Nguyen Phuc Chu attacked Phan Rang – Ninh Thuan province, the Kingdom of Champa. By 1698, King Nguyen Phuc Chu again sent troops to occupy a large area of Thuy Chan Lap (Champa), open the territory to Dong Nai province and My Tho – Tien Giang province. In 1707, the power of King Nguyen Phuc Chu was very strong, expanded to the land of Ha Tien province¹⁹.

At the beginning of the Nguyen dynasty (1600) in the area of Thuan Hoa (in the Cochinchine), the Nguyen dynasty identified the

¹⁸Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., pp. 27 - 38.

¹⁹See more of section 2.3 of chapter two, which has presented quite fullness.

Buddhist thought as the foundation for its founding process. So, Nguyen Hoang Lord started to build firstly Thien Mu Pagoda (Huong Tra District-Thua Thien Hue Province) in Cochinchina in 1601. Later, he also restored Sung Hoa Pagoda (1602), to build Buu Chau Pagoda in Tra Kieu - Quang Nam province (1607) and Long Hung pagoda near The Nguyen royal palace , and setting up Kinh Thien Pagoda in Thuan Trach commune (Quang Binh province). He was the first to lay the groundwork for the development of Buddhism for the kings later on , and the successive kings continued to build many pagodas along the southward of the Nguyen dynasty. As, King Nguyen Phuc Tan (1648 -1687): In 1665, the king ordered to restore the Thien Mu Pagoda in Hue province. In 1667, the king built the Vinh Hoa Pagoda in Linh Thai Mountain - Thua Thien Hue. In 1677, the king built Thap Thap Di Da pagoda in Binh Dinh Province and appointed Nguyen Thieu Zen Master to head (from China). In 1683, King Nguyen Phuc Tan gave the Bonze Nguyen Thieu a sum of money to renovate Vinh An pagoda in Phu Xuan – Hue province, and in 1684 built Pho Dong tower and other pagodas in Quang Tri province. Or King Nguyen Phuc Tran (1687-1691) who renovated the Vinh Hoa Pagoda in Thua Thien Hue in 1688. In 1735, Nguyen Phuc Tru (1725-1738) built and restored the Sac Tu Ho Quoc Pagoda in Bien Hoa – Dong Nai province. In 1740-1744, King Nguyen Phuc Khoat (1738 - 1765) ordered to restore the Thien Mu Pagoda to be magnific, and in 1744 he built Giac Lam Pagoda in Saigon, and 1747, he extended the Ham Long Pagoda in Phu Xuan - Hue. In 1754, the king restored the Sac Tu Vien Tong Pagoda in Quang Ngai. In 1755, King restored the Thien Duong Pagoda and to give signboard for "Pho Quang Thien Son temple" by the abbot Zen Master Dat Bon (later renamed Kim Chuong Pagoda). And in 1761, the king restored Thap Thap Di Da pagoda in Binh Dinh province. In 1763, the king built Linh Son Pagoda in Tay Ninh province and appointed Zen master Dao Trung here, and many other pagodas were also restored by the king²⁰.

On the part of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691 – 1725) for the development of Buddhism. First of all, he has developed and inherited the heritage before, and then he bulted very many the temples and organized

²⁰Nguyen Hien Duc. Op.cit., pp. 10 - 21.

the Buddhist events a lot of in his territory. As in 1691 has just ascended the throne, he built My An Pagoda (Tuy Van mountain – Hue province). In 1695, the king invited Zen Master Thach Liem from China to spread the Dharma and held the big festival in Hue province. This was a Buddhist event that made the country famous after he had been ruling for four years²¹. In 1710, King Nguyen Phuc Chu restored and found great copper Bell (over 3000kg) at Thien Mu Pagoda in Hue province²². In 1711, he built Van An Pagoda in Phuoc Tuy (Vung Tau city today). In 1715, the king restored the Kinh Thien in Thuan Trach (Quang Binh province). In 1716, the king restored and issued a sign for the Thien An Pagoda in Quang Ngai as “Sac Tu Thien An Temple”. In 1721, Giac Hoang Pagoda (Phong Dien-Hue) was built, and many well-known pagodas were built and restructured in Thuan Hoa²³. Around 1708-1725 he built the Tam Bao Pagoda in Ha Tien province, ect From the tolerant and open policies of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, where many Buddhist pagodas were restored and built by himself quite beautifully spread the territory of the Nguyen dynasty. And King Nguyen Phuc Chu invited many Zen masters from China to do religious work and leading the monk (now in southern monks not enough for propagation so the king invited foreign zen masters), such as Zen Master Nguyen Thieu in Thap Thap Di Da Pagoda (Binh Dinh province); Zen Master Thach Liem, the heading of Thien Mu Pagoda and Thien Lam pagoda (Hue province); Zen master Hung Lien in Quang Nam province; Zen Master Vien Canh and Vien Khoan, the headings in Quang Tri province; Zen master Huong Hai, the heading in the North Vietnam; Zen master Giac Phong, the heading in Thanh Hoa province; Zen master Te Vien, the heading of Phu Yen province, Zen Master Tu Dung, the heading of Tu Dam Pagoda (Hue), etc.

Thus, it shows us that all the Kings and the Lords of the Nguyen dynasty were great Buddhists devotion, and they were both politically and spiritually successful. They created architectural works, pagodas were quite large and beautiful. And during the reign of King Nguyen

²¹Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., pp. 615 - 616

²²Ibid., p. 631.

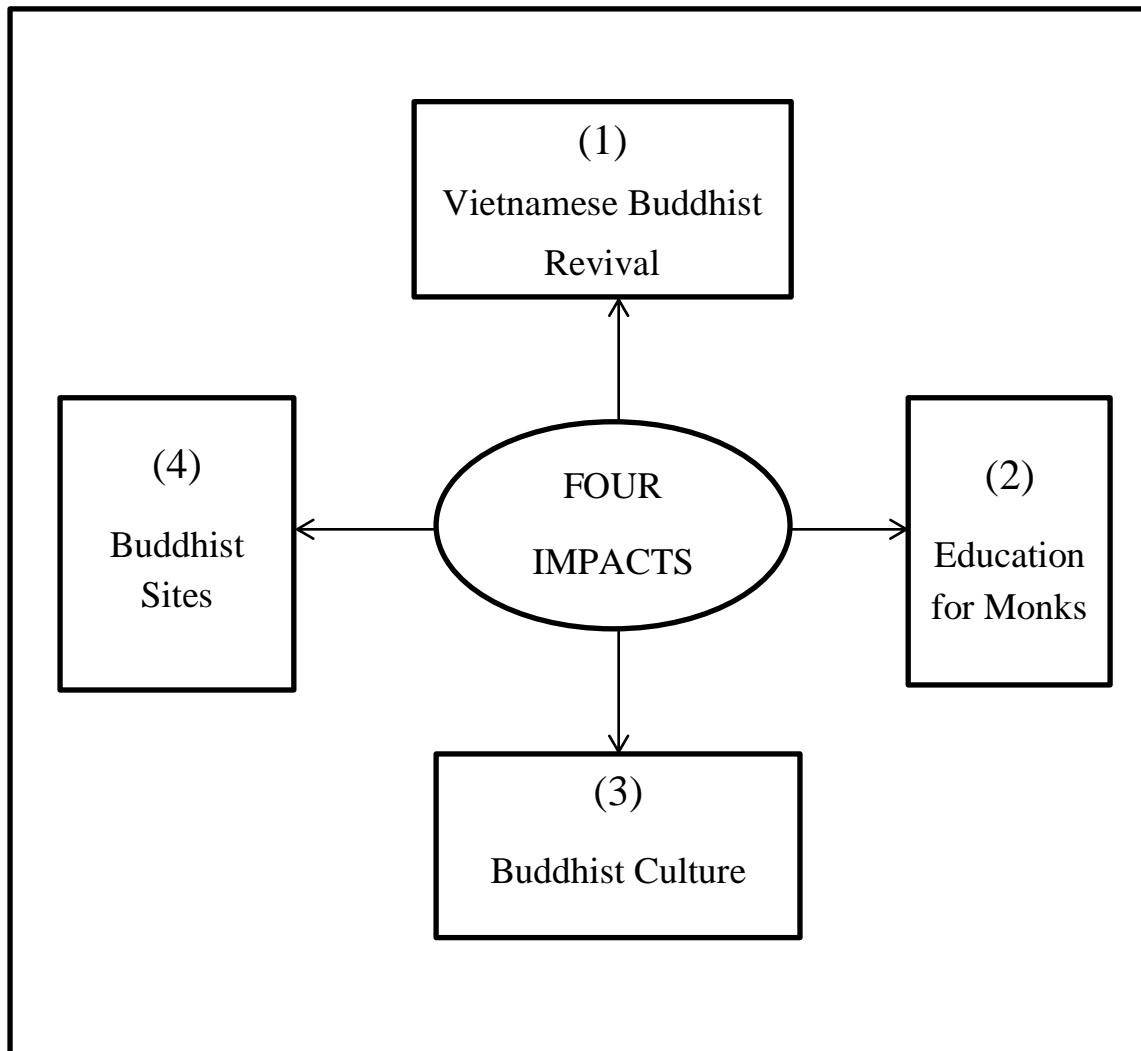
²³Nguyen Hien Duc. Op.cit., p. 16.

Phuc Chu who a devout Buddhist, he devoted himself to the foundation of the new pagodas, translation centers, and Buddhist monks training center, to facilitate the development of Buddhism. And the movement to revive Buddhism was launched by King Nguyen Phuc Chu, many events as well as many Buddhist activities have been happening a lot and often²⁴. On this basis, it has directed Buddhism to go a step further, that is, to expand the spread of Buddhism to the south. In particular, with the encouragement and invitation of the Nguyen dynasty to the monks to the new land for evangelism and social comfort. So, when the Nguyen dynasty expanded its territory to how far the pagodas and monks were present there, this was also the opportunity for Buddhism to expand its vast base and scope of diffusion.

From such favorable conditions, the Buddhism of the South has shown its full responsibility, and combines subjective and objective factors, the harmony and creation, including the spirit of unity in diversity, and really become the driving force for the development of the land Cochinchina.

²⁴Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 616 & pp. 629 - 631.

Table 1: A chart of the impacts of Buddhist king Nguyen Phuc Chu



4.2 The Contributions of Buddhist King Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese Society (1691-1725)

In each age of the history country all has the national leaders, at the same time they were also devout Buddhists, who has momentous contributions to the career of build, development and national integration, as well as spreading truth dhamma for bring the happiness to everyone. And the Buddhist King Nguyen Phuc Chu was one in those cases. He has a lot of great contributions on social development, as well as of the Vietnamese Buddhist revival movement in his reign times. All played by the his real actions for the people and the country, as belows.

4.2.1 Buddhist Religion Aspect

Buddhist development was one in the social developing policies of the power of King Nguyen Phuc Chu. So, let everyone have deep faith to the Buddhism, King Nguyen Phuc Chu had wise plans and suitability for the aim building stable base of the Buddhism through each region of the Buddhist activities as education, culture, sites, etc., But in this part only focuses on two main problems, as building the faith of religion belief and Buddhist meditation on social life.

a. Nguyen Phuc Chu who was a key vital link between Lay People and Buddhism

Since lord Nguyen Hoang was awarded the title of Doan Quoc Cong (Great General) and was appointed governor of Thuan Hoa and with the mission to open the realms of Cochinchina in 1558, and the Nguyen lords chose Buddhism where all classes of people were gathered to implement the policy of using the truth Dhamma to protect and managing the people in the process of unification, national establishment, expansion of territory. The life style of the Buddhists made people believe in their own enlightenment, believe in themselves strength, believe in the nation, and believe in the doctrine of Cause and Effect (karma) so that the people's life towards the true, the good and the beautiful.

The Cochinchina (the South) was a new land where convergence of all classes in society, who dissatisfied political regime from two civil war [Trinh - Mac dynasties (1546-1592) and Trinh – Nguyen dynasties (1600-1672)] which to made the people in chaos and social isolation, as well as the Champa people and the Khmer people surrendered to the Vietnamese, including the Chinese refugees.

Thus, the Buddhist philosophy was now operating by gathering the power to unite the entire people. Therefore, it was not surprising that, during the Nguyen Hoang King held two Thuan Hoa and Quang Nam land; he has advocated unity, winning talent, holding the people's heart, in the spirit of the national peace and human security: “Consoling the people and army, winning talent, the serious military command, expanding foreign trade, making the people lived and working in peace and contentment”²⁵.

That philosophy was easy to understand, the unity was strength. Although, their strengths were weak but they were united together in a mass, they can form the unrivaled power, which the invaders, however mighty they are hundreds of times more than they can not beat. The mass of unity of the people, first of all built on the love between compatriots as brothers and sisters. Of course, that solidarity was also built around a stable groundwork that to be a loyal, virtuous, talented, idealist. As a result, in the short time of the reign of Thuan Quang in Dang Trong, the Kings and Lords of the Nguyen Dynasty turned an area of insecurity into a capital city, with a system of pagodas restored and built; Buddhism to be developed, the people lived and working in peace and contentment, more foreign merchant ships²⁶. Clearly, the Nguyen kings were the Lay Buddhist leading nation, who draw lessons from their father's experience in the process of building, defending and opening the country, to use the power of the people through the implementation of the philosophy of life moral in Buddhism on real life.

²⁵Le Quy Don, **The United History of Dai Viet** (Vietnamese version), (Ha Noi: Social Science Publishing House, 1978), p. 64.

²⁶Li Tana, **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**, (New York: Ithaca - Cornell University Press. 1998), pp. 60 - 64; And Le Binh Phuong Luan. *Op.cit.*, p. 97.

These things proved practically through King Nguyen Phuc Chu who was the sixth king of Nguyen dynasty. He has done what the predecessors have set out but has not fulfilled their mission to society, people and Buddhism, King Nguyen Phuc Chu who completed the mission the most perfectly, creating great trust among the masses. In particular, the king took refuge in being a devout Buddhist, applying the Buddhist moral philosophy to life in an effective and radical way, and using his mercy to rule the country; creating a society of peace and happiness, bringing the country to a level equal to or better than other countries in Asia at that time²⁷. For the Buddhism, he fulfilled the duty of a Lay Buddhist perfectly, who sponsored and encouraged the construction of numerous Buddhist pagodas and the Buddhist centers, organized many Buddhist events and festivals across his territory. In addition, he was also encouraged for the mandarin and the people to study Buddhism, and he was a pioneer in advance, with kindness to create great faith for all. And in fact, the king brought Buddhism to the most prosperous period, and to be the golden age of Buddhism in the history of Nguyen dynasty of nearly 200 years²⁸. And finally, the king succeeded greatly in his mission of building a solidarity in society, creating a truly pure, happy and peaceful society through the doctrine of Compassion and Impartialness in Buddhism.

b. Establishing Zen Buddhism to the Society by inviting various Zen Teachers to South Vietnam

Although, prior to the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, Buddhism in the South had developed and sometimes there had the Chinese Zen teachers coming to preach, but these did not make Buddhism a big one strong and widespread. Its reason, because it has not yet had a clear and specific direction for Buddhism. That can not to say that there

²⁷Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., pp. 100 - 103.

²⁸Truong Phuoc Thanh (thich Nguyen Tuu), **A Study of The Meditation Method of Master Tran Nhan Tong and Its Influence On The Vietnamese Society**, (MA degree thesis), [Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2557 (2014)], p. 6.

were no talented people but there were no zealots to support the legal issues for Zen Masters, and until the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691), who was really enthusiastic about Buddhism, he had supported the missionaries in all aspects; for the purpose of bringing the Buddha's teachings to everyone. Thus, during this time Buddhism was growing, especially two large Zen schools developed quite strong, it was the school of Zen Lam Te (zh. línjì-zōng - 臨濟宗) and Tao Dong (zh. cáo-dòng-zōng - 曹洞宗). It has been shown through the following eminent Zen masters:

I. Zen master Nguyen Thieu (謝元韶)

Zen master Nguyen Thieu (1648-1728) was a native of Quang Dong (Guangdong) province in China. At the age of 19, he left his home to become a Buddhist monk at Bao Tu Pagoda, studied under the guidance of Most Venerable Khoang Vien. He was the 33rd Patriarch of Lam Te zen school in China and the first Patriarch in South Vietnam. He came to Vietnam in 1677 under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Tan. At first he came to palace Quy Ninh (Binh Dinh province), then founded Thap Di Di Da pagoda in 1683 (in 1691, this pagoda was renovated by king Nguyen Phuc Chu)²⁹.

Zen Master Nguyen Thieu was a follower of Zen thoughts of Lam Te school who came to the South of Vietnam for the first time. He initiated this practice here, and it greatly influenced Vietnamese society at that time. So many people followed him to study Buddhism, they were both Chinese and Vietnamese, and later became famous Zen masters such as Zen Master Minh Hanh Tai Tai, Minh Hoang Tu Dung, Minh Hai Phap Bao, Minh Vat Nhat Tri, Minh Giac Ky Phuong, Minh Tri Nguyen Hanh, Minh Dung Phap Thong, Minh Luong Nguyet An, etc..., by virtue and energy practice, Zen Master Nguyen Thieu has made Buddhism in Vietnam in the south more and more growing.

²⁹Nguyen Hien Duc. **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), pp. 134-135.

He was enthusiastic about Buddhism, so he traveled throughout the South to build pagodas and spread Buddhism. As such, Nguyen Thieu Zen Master from Binh Dinh went to Hue province to build Ha Trung Pagoda (1692), Quoc An Pagoda and Pho Dong tower (1683 -1684). In addition, he built many pagodas in the vicinity of the royal palace of the Nguyen. And from 1695 to 1728, he came the land of Dong Nai province, Gia Dinh - Saigon to spread Buddhism, and set up Kim Cang Pagoda (Vinh An - Dong Nai province). He has on behalf of King Nguyen Phuc Tran (1687 - 1691) to Quang Dong (Guangdong) province - China (1691) invited the Zen teachers to carry on missionary work at Linh Mu Pagoda – Hue province; such as Zen Master Giac Phong set up Ham Long pagoda (Bao Quoc Pagoda) in Phu Xuan - Hue; Zen master Tu Lam founded Tu Lam Pagoda in Phu Xuan-Hue; Zen master Minh Hoang-Tu Dung set up the An Tong pagoda in Phu Xuan-Hue; Zen master Hung Lien was the head of Tam Thai pagoda in Ngu Hanh Son Mountain - Quang Nam province; Zen master Minh Hai-Phap Bao founded the Chuc Thanh Pagoda in Quang Nam province³⁰. In addition, he wrote books to comment and analyze the Buddha's Precepts in order to purify Buddhism because of earlier false and misleading interpretations of Buddhism.

For the thought of Zen Master Nguyen Thieu that was “Buddha nature is all equality, the focus is eradicating attachment of ego, and realization of Empty Nature” With such meditation in mind to help people re-examine themselves, to eliminate suffering that leads to purity of mind³¹. By the love and admiration of the Nguyen kings, who gave very good conditions to Lam Te School of Zen Master Nguyen Thieu, and it spreaded widely and spreaded throughout the South of Nguyen dynasty, and developed strongly through generations later (see also section 3.2.2). Today, Lam Te Zen sect has greatly influenced and developed throughout Vietnam.

³⁰Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., pp. 586 – 588; And Nguyen Hien Duc. Op.cit., p. 81. And see more the footnote of part (a) of section 3.1.1.

³¹Nguyen Tai Thu. Op.cit., pp. 198 - 199.

II. Zen master Thach Liem (石濂和尚 - Dashan)

The Zen master Thach Liem (1633 - 1704) was born in Nam Kinh province (Nanjing), but he left home in China's Guangdong (Quang Dong) province at Truong Tho Pagoda, under the name of Thich Dai San (釋大汕). He was the 29th Patriarch of the Tao Dong Zen school in China. He has many good fields: painting, poetry, architecture, feng - shui, history and comprehension of Buddhism. In 1695, he was invited by King Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnam to spread Buddhism and support for the Buddhist revival movement of the country according to the king's wishes. He stayed only for more than a year in Vietnam, but his influences were so great for the people and the Nguyen dynasty, and he made the Tao Dong Zen school flourish and deep in the masses³². Previously, this sect was not outstanding, the lesser known, since he came to the south of the Nguyen, this sect had great thriving. Zen master Thach Liem became a mentor for the rule of king Nguyen Phuc Chu in the spirit of Buddhism and King Nguyen Phuc Chu took refuge with him as well as all the royal families in the court, and over thousands of civilians, and to assist many people to be left home. He and Zen Master Lieu Quan were two people who have made great contributions to reviving Buddhism in the South during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu³³.

His first job was to combine with King Nguyen Phuc Chu to organize a nationwide celebrity festival, to reorganize the ranks of monks to purify the purity of the Buddhist sangha (during this time, many young men were afraid of being taken to the soldiers, so they fled to the pagoda but most of them did not know what the Buddhist rules were), so the Zen master Thach Liem invited many famous Most Venerable nearby in the are of the Nguyen royal capital attended and certified for the man observed ten precepts of novice, and the monks observed 250 precepts of Bhikkhu, totaling over 1,000 monks and over 4000 people attending³⁴. This event took place two weeks before the Vesak Day of 1695. In July 1695, he also opened the ordination ceremony for the monks and lay

³²Nguyen Hien Duc. **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 42.

³³Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., pp . 615 – 622.

³⁴Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 616.

Buddhist of over 300 people at the Di Da pagoda (Hoi An - Quang Nam province). During his stay in Vietnam for more than a year, he regularly organized forums to preach the dhamma for public and Kings and the officials in the court, as well as open many meditation exercises, let everyone practice according to the Buddha's teachings under his guidance by the method of Thien -Tinh Song Tu (Zen and Pure Land)³⁵. Talking about meditation, he wrote a book “Ho Phap Kim Thanh Thu” gave to King Nguyen Phuc Chu; Also about Pure Land, he wrote a book entitled “Tự Tánh Di Đà Thuyết” (An explanation of Amitabha Nature) gave to King Nguyen Phuc Chu's mother. Although the short stay in Vietnam, Bonze Thach Liem made the thought of Tao Dong Zen sect to spread widely; with great virtue and purity, he left a lot of impression on the society of the Nguyen dynasty during this period.

Once other, Zen master Thach Liem and King Nguyen Phuc Chu often responded the teachings, advising the king on the issue of country's reign, and the king praised that:

“In addition all day teaching ethics, but the master teaching moral principles. From the big issue to the small issue, he was all clear guide, the analysis of coherence, how to lead people from dark places to light, help me (the King) in the work, what is the rule of the nation”³⁶.

So, let us see how great the influence of Thach Liem Zen master in the South? He brought new prosperity to the Vietnamese Buddhism in general and the Tao Dong Zen sect in particular in the south, and he contributed to the process of renaissance Buddhism during the decline age of Buddhism, just as he rised up the spirit of patriotism, loved people grew stronger of the people and the king. Fom then on, the Tao Dong sect has supported and widely developed by the Nguyen kings.

³⁵See more footnote No.103 of part (b) of section 3.1.1, which talk about Zen master Thach Liem.

³⁶Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., p. 101.

III. Zen master Hung Lien

He was a disciple of Zen Master Thach Liem in China, who came to Vietnam around the time of King Nguyen Phuc Tran (1687-1691), and the heading of Tam Thai Pagoda in Quang Nam Province. He was the first to bring the Tao Dong Zen sect to the Cochinchina of Vietnam³⁷. However, during this period, there was nothing outstanding in the Tao Dong Zen Sect, and until Zen Master Thach Liem arrived in Vietnam (1695), this Zen sect was alive and well. Zen master Hung Lien belongs to the 30th generation of Tao Dong Zen sect. He was elevated to the status of Nation Master by king Nguyen Phuc Chu (teacher teaching the dhamma and consulting the political path for Nguyen royal family in the spirit of Buddhism) before Thach Liem Zen Master to Vietnam³⁸.

Hung Lien Zen master has also contributed greatly to the spread of Buddhism in general and the Zen thoughts in particular in the south. Thus, he had twice introduced with King Nguyen Phuc Tran to China to invite the virtuous monks to Vietnam to spread Buddhism, including Zen Master Thach Liem.

However, the zen master Hung Lien's propaganda style was somewhat similar to that of Thach Liem Zen master. He with Thach Liem zen master was the first man to bring the thought of Tao Dong Zen sect to South Vietnam, making Buddhism more abundant and flourishing here.

IV. Zen master Phap Hoa

Zen Master Phap Hoa (1670 - 1746) was from Phuc Kien (Fujian) Province, China. He came to Vietnam with Zen Master Nguyen Thieu (1687 - 1691), and his other name was Zen master Minh Hai Phap Bao. He founded the Chuc Thanh pagoda in Hoi An - Quang Nam Province; he was the first founder of the Lam Te Chuc Thanh zen sect (another meditation branch of the Lam Te zen sect disseminated by the Zen Master Nguyen Thieu). He was the famous monk of early eighteenth-

³⁷Nguyen Hien Duc. **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), pp. 42 - 43.

³⁸Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 595.

century in Vietnamese Buddhism and one of the people who contributed to the Buddhist revival movement during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu. In 1694, he founded the Thien An Pagoda, in Quang Ngai province and the heading has been staying there for 60 years, and in 1716, this pagoda was restored by King Nguyen Phuc Chu and presented with the sign “Sac Tu Thien An temple”³⁹, and now it has become a historical vestiges place and spiritual travel. In 1732, the Zen master and his disciples engraved wooden boards and stone stela of the book “Sa Di Luat Nghi Yeu Luoc Tang Chu” (the explanation of the brief of precept rules of the novice – monk), and still remains today⁴⁰.

In the spirit for the development of Buddhism, Phap Bao zen master has traveled extensively in the South to teach Buddhism, especially in the Phu Xuan capital of the Nguyen dynasty. He contributed greatly to the development of Vietnamese Buddhism towards the south of the Nguyen dynasty, during the period of the Buddhist revival movement of South Vietnam by Zen masters and King Nguyen Phuc Chu initiated. Therefore, he made the Lam Te zen sect more abundant and flourishing.

V. Zen master Lieu Quan

Zen master Lieu Quan (1670-1742) was considered the leading teacher of the Buddhist revival movement with Nguyen Phuc Chu in Cochinchina . As author Nguyen Lang writes:

*Zen Master Lieu Quan has made Lam Te Zen sect to become a dynamic Zen school, strongly development in Cochinchina . And he reformed Cochinchina Buddhism which has bold Chinese color into pure Vietnamese Buddhism. Later, his zen sect was based for Buddhist revival movement in 20th Century*⁴¹.

He was born in Bac Ma Village, Dong Xuan District, Phu Yen Province, Vietnam. He left his home at the age of 12 with Zen Master Te

³⁹Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 596

⁴⁰<http://www.buddhistedu.org/viet/index.php/m%C3%B4n-phong/18-lam-te-chuc-thanh/599-bo-chinh-su-lieu-ve-thien-su-minh-hai-phap-bao>.

⁴¹Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 604.

Vien at Hoi Ton Pagoda - Phu Yen province⁴². In 1695, he from Phu Yen to Hue province to practice with many Zen masters such as Thach Liem, Giac Phong, Tu Lam. In 1702 he met the Tu Dung zen master at the An Ton pagoda, Long Son Mountain, Hue province and realizing the Dhamma of the Buddha through the teacher Tu Dung in 1712, then he was 42 years old. He traveled widely and established many religious sites such as Thien Ton pagoda (Hue), Vien Thong pagoda (Thuan Hoa) and Hoi Ton pagoda (Phu Yen), Co Lam and Bao Tinh pagoda in Phu Yen province. He organized four great Precept Platform (ordination for ordained monks) for three consecutive years, from 1733 to 1735 in Thua Thien, attended by the most monks and officials, lay Buddhists in the Nguyen royal capital. The Lay Buddhists and lay people were very revered his morality, so in 1740 they invited him to chair at the Precept Platform of Buddhist event under name Long Hoa in Hue province⁴³. Afterward, King Nguyen Phuc Khoat was also very devoted to his virtues, so the king regularly to visit Vien Thong Pagoda in Ngu Binh mountain -Hue to ask questions about Buddhism.

Before that, King Nguyen Phuc Chu admired the virtue and reputation of Lieu Quan Zen master; so many times the king invited the Zen master come in the royal to consult the Dhamma but Zen Master refused to keep his purity and virtue. Although the Zen master did not go to the royal palace, the Zen master had done a lot of Buddhist work with the king to revive the Vietnamese Buddhism here. Thus, Bonze Lieu Quan made the Lam Te Zen sect became a living and growing in Cochinchina⁴⁴. In the previous of the zen master, the Buddhism in Cochinchina was heavily colored by Chinese Buddhism, and he reformed to become the Lam Te Zen sect of Vietnam, which boldly embodies the Vietnamese culture that was suitable for all levels of society. Since then, the architecture, the ceremony began to shed Chinese color and bringing the traditional color of the Vietnamese country. Therefrom, he and his

⁴²Nguyen Tai Thu. Op.cit., pp. 199 – 201.

⁴³Phan Dang, **Meditation Master Lieu Quan and Vietnamese Buddhism in XVIII Century** (Vietnamese version), (Sciential journal, Hue University, Vol.72A, No.3, 2012), pp. 71 - 76.

⁴⁴Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 604.

disciples formed four Buddhist centers for propagation dhamma, and dozens of pagoda were set up throughout southern Vietnam.

In the eighteenth century (after 1712), he formed Lieu Quan Zen sect according to the ideas of the Lam Te zen sect, which was called Lam Te Lieu Quan zen sect (to be Vietnamese Zen school of purely Vietnamese culture), and radiating strongly. As in his hometown (Phu Yen province), this sect was developed quite strongly; and he received many disciples; then they all became virtuous fame monks, such as: Most Venerable Te Duyen founded the Kim Cang pagoda (Tuy Hoa city - Phu Yen province); Most Ven.Te Can set up Ho Son pagoda (Tuy Hoa city); Most Ven.Te Dong established Binh Quang pagoda (Tuy Hoa city); Most Ven.Te Hau has abbotting Bao Tinh pagoda (Tuy Hoa city); Most Ven.Te Sang established Duong Long pagoda; Most Ven.Te Ngan founded Long Son pagoda (Hoa- Dinh district-Phu Yen province), Most Ven.Te Dai set up Kim Long pagoda (Tuy Hoa city), Most Ven.Te Tin established Long Son pagoda (Tuy An - Phu Yen); Most Ven.Te Phap established Tu Quang pagoda (Da Trang - Phu Yen), etc. Today, this sect is thriving in Vietnam and spreading to some Western countries⁴⁵.

Thus, with the effort for spreading Buddhism to the masses, Zen Master Lieu Quan was the pioneer to the development of Vietnamese Buddhism later, as well as to the Buddhist revival movement of the twenty century⁴⁶ (in the 20th century, there are two wars between Vietnam and France and the United States, so the Buddhism of this period was persecuted by the invasive government who followed Catholic Christian. Afterward, in 1963, Most Venerable Thich Quang Duc and other superior Buddhist monks stood up to initiate the Buddhist revival movement).

After the death of Zen master Lieu Quan, King Nguyen Phuc Khoat made the stele and the tower for him, and awarded him the title of “ Most Ven. Dao Hanh Thuy Chinh Giac Vien Ngo”, was the 35th

⁴⁵Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 601.

⁴⁶Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., pp. 599 – 602. And see more part (c) of section 3.1.1.

Patriarch of the Lam Te Zen sect, and the first Patriarch of Lieu Quan zen sect of Vietnam.

4.2.2 Establishing the Power of National Unity

The land of Cochinchina of the Nguyen dynasty was a new land, where convergence of all classes in the society who had political dissatisfaction from the two civil war of dynasties (Trinh-Mac and Trinh-Nguyen), made the people to be disturbed, societies to be separated, as well as Champa and Khmer residents had tamed the Vietnamese, including the later Chinese immigrants. In such circumstances, the Buddhist philosophy has been really applied radically, in order to gather the power of national unity. Therefore, it was not surprising that, during the retention of the Nguyen Hoang lord in both Thuan Hoa and Quang Nam; he advocated solidarity, garnered talents and won the hearts of the people in the spirit of direction to social peaceful, people's welfare⁴⁷.

The spirit of solidarity was also taught by Phap Thuan Zen master, who was the National Teacher of King Le Dai Hanh (981-1009), said that:

*If the whole country attached, united together closely as well as the rope of rattan wrapped, that Vietnam will peaceful and united with the people, first of all built on the love of the people as brothers and sisters*⁴⁸.

Of course, the solidarity was also built around a firmly center to be the loyal, talented, idealist leader. The results of a short time in the reign of the Cochinchina, the Nguyen kings turned an area of insecurity into a flesh pots and hubs of commerce, with a system of pagodas

⁴⁷Truong Huu Quynh. Dao To Uyen & Pham Van Hung. **The Vietnamese History From Tenth Century to 1858** (Vietnamese Version). (Ha Noi: Educational University Publishing House, 2003), p. 184.

⁴⁸Le Manh That, **A Study of Collected Prominent of Zen Garden** (Vietnamese version), (Ho Chi Minh city: Phuong Dong Press, 2005), p. 288. And Thich Thanh Tu, **The Zen Master of Vietnam** (Vietnamese version), (The Buddhist of Ho Chi Minh City Press, 1995), p.41. And Cao Huy Giu, tr. **The Complete History of The Dai Viet** (Vietnamese Version), Vol.I. (Ha Noi: Culture and Information Publishing House. 2006), p. 208.

restored and built, Buddhism to be developed, people lived and worked in peace and contentment, foreign trade with foreign countries to be flourishing.

Clearly, the Nguyen kings were lay Buddhists national leaders, who draw lessons from his father's experience in the process of building country, holding and opening country, to apply power of all people through the implementation of the Buddhist philosophy and action in real life. Meanwhile, Zen masters accompanied kings and government officials to formulate national policy with two strategic missions: rebuilding the country and responding to the war of national threatened regular. At that time, Buddhism was active on the political arena, by the purpose for building the great unity bloc in the newly independent country.

Thereby, it was shown that from the beginning the Lords and Kings of the Nguyen dynasty have identified Buddhism as the foundation for the building of national unity for the process of national expansion and development⁴⁹. Thus, the method for the establishing strength of national unity of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, he basically built on the foundation of the previous dynasties, that was, to take Buddhism as a motto. So, under his reign, King Nguyen Phuc Chu has developed its strength more and more increasing by his devotion through the establishment of a system of village pagodas where people gather, disseminate Buddhist ethics, initiating the movement of Renaissance Buddhism, he developed his own personal morality, made Buddhism a bridge with the people, creating a solid solidarity. And that has affirmed for the neighbors the inner strength of the Vietnamese country without any power that could separate. Therefore, it can be said that the life of the people during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu was very peaceful and happy.

⁴⁹Thich Mat The. **Essays on The History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version). (Da Nang city: Minh Duc Press, 1970). p. 184.

4.2.3 Social Aspect

As was started above, the Buddhist ethics has considered the standards of social morality by king Nguyen Phuc Chu, who had wanted building a peaceful society on the Buddhist spirit for all regions as economy, education, politics, culture, diplomacy, etc. Thus, under his reign, Vietnamese society in the South was a democratic society, which showed many modernization of the human right in integration era of the country. All things will said below.

a. Establishing a Peaceful Society

The philosophical foundation of Buddhism, whether of Theravada Buddhism or Mahayana Buddhism, was filled profound human material⁵⁰. The spreading path of Buddhism has never been a sign of bloodshed and power. Buddhism was acquired by the masses in new cultures as a new mental and spiritual nourishment, replacing the psychic dependence structure of monotheistic or polytheistic religions, which was heavy on superstition and fear.

As in India, Emperor Asoka was the first to send the message of compassion and wisdom of the Buddha beyond the boundaries of India, about three centuries after the Buddha passed away (King Asoka was a famous conqueror throughout the land of India at that time. Later, he became enlightened to the Buddha's teachings. Instead of ruling by virtue of power, he took the virtue of reigning and doing many charitable society works). Since then, the Buddha's moral philosophy has been presented in many countries around the world. The thought of compassion and wisdom of the Buddha has also become the mainstream of many Buddhist countries⁵¹.

Only Buddhism can build a philosophy of peace. Therefore, in order to establish a unity or peaceful society of the Nguyen dynasty, King Nguyen Phuc Chu also had to use Buddhism, and there was no other

⁵⁰Doan Trung Con, **The Sects of The Buddhism** (Vietnamese version). (Ho Chi Minh city: General Publishing House, 2006), p. 7.

⁵¹I. M. Ghosh, **Ahimsā Buddhist and Gandhian**, (Indian Bibliographies Bureau Co-Publisher 1947), p. 58.

religion. Here, we see between King Nguyen Phuc Chu and Emperor Asoka having similarities in the rule path according Buddhist thoughts, which was also the result of the kings of Buddhist refuge and to apply the philosophy of Buddhism in his rule.

In particular, for King Nguyen Phuc Chu, who had great support and advice of Vietnamese and Chinese Zen masters. And among them, Zen master Thach Liem was a very influential person to King Nguyen Phuc Chu, and he was also the one who changed King Nguyen Phuc Chu's rule most, as he advised the king that we should bring compassion to the people, abolish the strict rules of barbarism and unhappiness⁵². So, in the process of territory expansion, king Nguyen Phuc Chu has not used to power, that he focus the means of emigrant for reclaim waste land and establishment hamlet as well as foreign affairs⁵³. This things showed peaceful spirit for his nation in particular and the neighbouring countries in general.

King Nguyen Phuc Chu has succeeded greatly in establishing the unity and peace of society on the philosophy of compassion, love for peace, respect for life, gratitude and repay of the Buddhism, and this philosophies deeply influenced the hearts of the Vietnamese people. As in the Dhammapada, the Buddha taught that “Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world. By non-hatred alone is hatred appeased. This is a law eternal”⁵⁴. If this philosophy was considered and applied by modern politicians, it will certainly open up new horizon of peacefulness and happiness.

b. Creating a Momentous Turning-point for Economy

Nguyen dynasty was a newly dynasty more than 100 years ago (1558-1691), with the necessary requirements and conditions for confrontation and survival, forcing a new dynasty to have different ways and openness in terms of social management. So a wise and favorable

⁵²Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 630.

⁵³Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., p. 102.

⁵⁴Acharya Buddhakkhita, tr. **The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom**. (Sri Lanka -Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1996), p. 22.

option for the Nguyen dynasty was the choosing Buddhism for the work of mind to the masses, for the acquisition of human heart, for social stability, and it became a good culture in human life on the way of the treatment and sense of national responsibility. Therefore, after Nguyen Phuc Chu's throne (1691-1725), he inherited this cultural tradition, and it helped him expanding and developing a strong economy. How to understand this problem, we find out the following:

I. Inland Trade

To understand the domestic economy under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, how we should learn about how the domestic economy of the predecessors, through two issues:

About the merchandise: Nguyen Hoang set up the Nguyen dynasty in 1558 and in 1600 officially announced the separation of the Later Le dynasty, was a newly dynasty to be established (Thuan Hoa), the population to be too negligible and poor, the economy to be dominated by agriculture, and inadequate labor resources, the men to be encouraged to enter the army, so the food to be not enough to give the people a hand out of the military. So, in 1600, king Nguyen Hoang had policies of appointing foreign buyers and expanding international relations as much as possible⁵⁵. Initially, the agricultural economy of the south was dominated by rice, mulberry and cash crops. And subsequently, silk, sugar, coarse fabrics, honey and pepper were produced. But with a new economic zone, the exchange will be very limited, and the price was also very cheap. Although, sales also use money to trade but were more common than in-kind⁵⁶. Especially, in 1637, the Nguyen dynasty suffered a severe economic crisis due to the King of Cambodia banning rice exports to this region. This was a difficult challenge for Nguyen Dynasty's predecessor kings, who constantly struggled to stabilize their economy, resulting in military consolidation in response to Trinh Lords in the North and Champa government in the Southern.

⁵⁵Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., p. 96.

⁵⁶Ibit., p. 132.

For King Nguyen Phuc Chu, anyway he was the next generation, inheriting an existing economy of the previous kings. As in the early 17th century, with the striving to promote the commercial economy with foreigners (such as Netherlands, England, Portugal, Japan, China, Siam and Cambodia) of the predecessors created Hoi An - Quang Nam province which was the center of southern government, became a thriving trading center. And the kingdom of the Nguyen Dynasty was at the top of the list of countries in mainland Southeast Asia⁵⁷. Thinking that King Nguyen Phuc Chu was the influencer of Buddhism ideas, a virtuous leader who was revered as clear sighted King. It shows that he was very responsible to the people, to the country, always interested in the life of society, plus the achievements of the previous dynasties, and he will certainly have the orienting for the development of the economy and creating a good society rich and strong with his benevolence.

So, under his rule, the economic life of society has changed markedly, from an economy to pay in kind to trade in place of cash, he has circulated the cent coin for trading. From the premise of King Nguyen Phuc Tran (1687-1691) sent a testimony asking the Japanese government to mint cent coin for Cochinchina⁵⁸, which triggered massive economic growth strong of King Nguyen Phuc Chu later on. In 1695 – 1697, with the policy of tolerance and openness of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, the value of cent coin increased very high, it can be said that it tripled compared with 1688, and King Nguyen Phuc Chu to improve the reinforcing the coin of light weight and bearing the Vietnamese color, showing its strength, and economic and political independence⁵⁹.

In addition, king Nguyen Phuc Chu also expanded the domestic market on the plateau and the south of Cochinchina. In Thuan Hoa, he opened the trade route through the Lao Bao border gate with Laos in Quang Tri province (vietnam) and many turns to the highlands; this was the busiest business route Thuan Hoa (Nguyen dynasty capital). In Binh Dinh province, the road leading up to An Khe Pass in Gia Lai Province forms a commercial center between the people of the delta and the ethnic

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 95.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 119.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 159.

minorities. Beside, he also expanded the shipping business, including Nước Mặn (Salt Water) Port in Binh Dinh province; And ports in Phu Xuan-Thanh Ha (Thua Thien - Hue), Hoi An port (Quang Nam), Vung Lam port (Phu Yen), Gia Dinh (Saigon), Cu Lao Pho (Dong Nai), My Tho (Tien Giang province), and Ha Tien port (Ha Tien province), ect...Thus, the policy orientation for the development of the economy of Nguyen Phuc Chu had a strong and positive impact on the development of society, creating a solid economy and prosperity, development of the following dynasties.

Policy of tax: In the 17th century, in the south of Vietnam, tax types were introduced to the people, such as personal taxes, land taxes, surcharges and sales taxes; but the personal tax was to be paid by the Nguyen dynasty and concerned more. And, depending on the locality, there were different levels of taxation. In general, the 17th century tax was higher than the 18th century of the Nguyen dynasty; as in 1642 the relative tax of a married man was 8.5 Quan for a year⁶⁰. In 1671, it was 8.3 Quan. In 1687 was between 4.5 and 5.4 per year. And in the 18th century, from 1.21 to 1.47 Quan for a year. Thus, the tax policy of the previous dynasties raised very high for the people but the issue of tax administration was not tightly caused negative problems in the officials⁶¹.

Moreover, the dynasties of the later period of King Nguyen Phuc Chu's reign, the personal taxes increase was not significant, but other taxes increased day by day, both domestically and internationally, and many prolix tax laws, if the tax law is unclear and not enforced with the people, this is the cause of the rise of the struggle of farmers. Like the 1769 tax law of Nguyen Phuc Thuan (1765 - 1777), it was marked as a twist of the Nguyen dynasty regime, increasing greediness in the substitution system of officials⁶², and adding the wage level to the official

⁶⁰Quan was copper coin of feudal regime in Vietnam. One Quan = 600 VND.

⁶¹Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., pp. 169 - 171.

⁶²In the period of king Nguyen Phuc Khoat (1738-1765) was the period of stable development and thriving of most long. Therefrom, it was also lead to pleasure and social evils which has happened and divided into many faction in royal dynasty each other. That is causes lead to bribe and increase very high tax for people (1769). See, Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., pp.560 - 561.

in the court lead to an increase in the conflict between the State and the people, which led to the explosion of the Tay Son movement that took place in 1771 and the fall of the Nguyen dynasty later⁶³.

So, how was the tax policy of the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu to the people? He was very fortunate, has been advised strongly on the way governed by the famed monks and Zen masters, especially Thach Liem Zen Master. So King Phuc Chu had changed the way of governance differently from the previous dynasties as well as the later dynasties, as he reduced all taxes for the people, and did not collect taxes on the poor, to abolish strict laws and riddles that lead to injustice, the abolition of barbaric torture⁶⁴, etc..., The king also reduced the tax for foreigners to do business in the south. Thus, for the domestic economy, the Nguyen government has had significant changes in policy, in line with the development of the economy at that time. Especially in 1714, the most prominent point of policy change in the trade made people agree and very happy.

II. Foreign Trade

Foreign trade items: The Nguyen dynasty determined the development strategy for both the economy and the military, which was to lead international alliances, and the issue of foreign trade was one of the most important strategies of the Nguyen dynasty; it was a vital determinant for Nguyen's economy and military. Since then, in 1600, the Nguyen government has invested in its foreign trade mainly by waterways and has recorded considerable profits.

First of all, the Nguyen government had diplomatic relations with Japan on the purchase of silk and luxury goods, and this relationship became deeper and more friendly, because the Nguyen dynasty wanted to promote and cheer for the trade, so they got a Japanese businessman named Hunamoto Yabeije for adoption. At the same time, they married the princess, daughter of King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen (1613-1635) to a Japanese merchant Araki Sotaa. With such good relations, the Nguyen

⁶³Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., pp. 187 - 193.

⁶⁴Nguyễn Lang. Op.cit., pp. 629 - 630.

government has received great attention from Japan and every year the number of Japanese merchant ships arriving in Hoi An - Dang Trong (Conchinchina) has increased, from 1604 to 1635. At this stage, there was mainly import and export commodities: Rice, Silk, coarse cloth, woven silk, long zhao, aloe wood, tortoise, shark skin, sugar, honey, pepper, gold, rattan, ivory, rhinoceros horns, sulfur, and some jewelry, cosmetics, etc. This was a good result, as the Nguyen government connects with the Japanese, which contributes to the boom economy and they can equip themselves with advanced weapons to deal with the North government⁶⁵.

In addition, another important trading partner of the Nguyen government, that was the China; because the trade with China also brought a great profit to the South. And vice versa, the Chinese have seen this as a convenient place to trade for connectivity between countries and surrounding areas. Moreover, China was also in the midst of a severe civil war between the Ming and Manchu-Qing dynasties; so it was also an opportunity for Chinese to seek asylum and to work a living in the Conchinchina⁶⁶. Besides, another commercial direction of the Nguyen government during this period was diplomatic relations with the western countries such as England, Netherlands, France and Portugal, from which the Nguyen government bought a lot weapon equipment for military equipment⁶⁷.

With the rising momentum of such an economy, King Nguyen Phuc Chu took advantage of the opportunities and issued more open policies, increasing the number of merchant ships in Southeast Asia as well as in the West more and more. And, the circulation of coins first pleases and promotes the commercial economy, accelerating the rapid development of the Cochinchine economy⁶⁸. Because the period of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691-1725) was a period of intersection preserving the domestic economy with a strong foreign trade economy, to be his premise for further development.

⁶⁵Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., pp. 109 - 111.

⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 115 - 119.

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 120 - 126.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 117.

Thus, in the 17th and 18th centuries Nguyen dynasty as well as the era of King Nguyen Phuc Chu has made the South to become a prosperous place, a international trade center; and Hoi An to be the great distribution center for internationalization. And most of the population lived entirely on the trade here.

Tax policy for foreign trade: Taxation was a source of income for the economy, so the Nguyen dynasty can not ignore this opportunity. But for the first period of diplomatic opening, the Nguyen government encouraged the countries to trade, so no taxes and only very small taxes were levied on Western merchant ships; and taxes on exports and imports applied just at late 17th century is 3-4% or 5-10%, and the tax only fluctuate in acceptable level but not too high, although the taxation on merchant ships was very important for the Nguyen dynasty .

However, at the time of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, taxes on the foreign trade economy were still applied at low interest rates. But there were accompanied by extended policies that created many favorable and easy conditions for investment in many countries in the region and the west to the South government.

c. Creating a Momentous Turning-point for Diplomacy

King Nguyen Hoang's talents, virtues and tolerant political lines not only impressed the military and the people, but even the neighbour countries expressed their appreciation and established good relationships⁶⁹. Afterward, during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691-1725), he saw the importance of national development through two main areas: economic and military diplomacy; these two areas support one another for a well-developed country. The above presented economic aspects (domestic and foreign trade), so below, only more about the aspect of the military, it was divided into two parts as follows:

⁶⁹Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., p. 606.

I. Internal Army Aspect

The army of the Nguyen dynasty during this period was very important, because the forces of the Later Le Dynasty and Trinh lords in the North were too strongly while the Nguyen forces were thin compared to the North⁷⁰. Therefore, the issue of military consolidation, by all means of recruiting soldiers or diplomacy with neighboring countries, was a very necessary thing for the Nguyen dynasty. And the Nguyen dynasty as well as King Nguyen Phuc Chu had great success in setting up military and military reinforcements, due to clever tactics and the policy of launching the immigrant movement (such as including the farmers exiled, the poor and miserable craftsmen, soldiers to be deported under the exploitation of feudal landlords and due to war, by natural disasters the people who left the village to the south for the setting up house)⁷¹. In addition, the Nguyen Dynasty made a good link with Champa near the border, after which Champa was weakened and surrendered to the Nguyen government. As in 1698 through the emigrant movement for reclaiming and expanding the territory, King Nguyen Phuc Chu obtained many areas of the South part of wealth and soldiers, and ordered the high-ranking general Nguyen Huu Canh set up a government facility in the South, which is the land of Dong Nai province and Saigon today⁷².

And in 1711, King Nguyen Phuc Chu realized the special significance of the Hoang Sa (Paracel islands) and Truong Sa (Spratly islands) archipelagos, so he sent General Thuyen Duc Hau to send soldiers to map the Truong Sa archipelago for established national sovereignty and exploited seafood. At the same time, under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, the military was also organized into a powerful force by regularly training and encouraging rewarding practice. The king also reformed the central organizational structure; fixing of rank, military title, and more, he also cares about and offers great reward to those who have made meritorious services to the country, whether they

⁷⁰Minh Tue, Thich. **A Brief History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version), (Ho Chi Minh: Ho Chi Minh City Buddhist Association Press, 1993), pp. 411 - 413.

⁷¹Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., p. 181.

⁷²Ibid., pp. 181 - 182.

were generals, soldiers or people. So he created a solidarity force between the army and the people.

II. Foreign Army Aspect

First of all, the Nguyen dynasty wanted to support its growing military, they needed to have a farther perspective, that is, towards diplomacy with the nations in the world, creating strong alliances, creating the peace to avoid the war. Therefore, King Nguyen Phuc Chu has strengthened diplomatic policy development stronger than the previous dynasties, through foreign trade and Hoi An port (Quang Nam province) has become an international trading port with the countries such as China, Japan, Indonesia, India, France, Portugal, England, etc⁷³ ... Since then the Nguyen Dynasty has created a solid economy, accelerating the development of equipment for the military growing stronger.

As it was, in the mid-17th century, not only in Vietnam but also in China, was the period of constant wars. In China, in 1644, the between of the Ming and Manchu-Qing dynasties, violent civil wars took place, and eventually the Qing dynasty destroyed the Ming dynasty. Since then, movements seeking to revive the Ming Dynasty took place everywhere, with Chinese people worshiping the Ming reign to seek refuge in Vietnam. By talents and virtues of himself, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was very clever to win their hearts. In particular, the receiving of a large army (over 30,000) of the Ming dynasty came from China by the leader General Mac Cuu (1708)⁷⁴. And he was assigned as a general in the southwestern region, having developed and fought against the forces of Champa, a land bordered by the Nguyen dynasty to the southward (it was the land bordered by Laos and northern Cambodia today).

At the same time, the reception of two Zen schools Tao Dong and Lam Te direct from China by King Nguyen Phuc Chu with other famous Zen masters such as Nguyen Thieu, Thach Liem that also won the sympathy of a part of the Chinese emigrant formed a strong link with

⁷³Historical Institute, **the History of Vietnamese** (Vietnamese version), vo.4. (Sciential and Social Publishing House. 2007), pp. 203 - 205.

⁷⁴Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., p. 180.

Nguyen dynasty. And, in 1701, King Nguyen Phuc Chu sent General Hoang Than and Zen Master Hung Triet to bring his credentials and tribute to China to establish good relation with the Manchu-Qing dynasty.

Moreover, the government of King Nguyen Phuc Chu also created a relationship with Siam (Thailand today) and became allies, providing support for each other during the war. Or during his reign, many Western merchant ships entered the trade and exchanged goods regularly, King Nguyen Phuc Chu took the opportunity, using Westerners to train military techniques and teaching the art of war; as in 1704, he thanks to Jean De Arnedo for the expansion of science and technology; and in 1724 there was De Lima helping him in mathematics and astronomy, as well as in association with the Spanish, Portuguese Houses, Britain and Japan to buy military equipment⁷⁵.

It can be said that, thanks to the cleverness and openness policy of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, but the army of the Nguyen dynasty grew in both quantity and weapons equipment compared to the Later Le dynasty in the north and the neighbors, which contributed to stabilizing the social and economic development of the Nguyen dynasty in the South.

d. Social and National Development

The nature of the teachings of the Buddha were to bring material and spiritual benefits to the people, which means that Buddhism was always close to and accessible to all classes of society. That was through the doctrine of According With (or Resulting from conditioning cause), Compassion and Impartialness. From the time of Buddhism was imported, Buddhism came into contact with indigenous culture, in the spirit of openness, non-uniqueness. Thus, from the man of intelligent, clever and far-sighted, and addi influenced by the Buddhist ideas, but King Phuc Chu also had open thoughts with policies on social development and management, bringing the country to a stage of

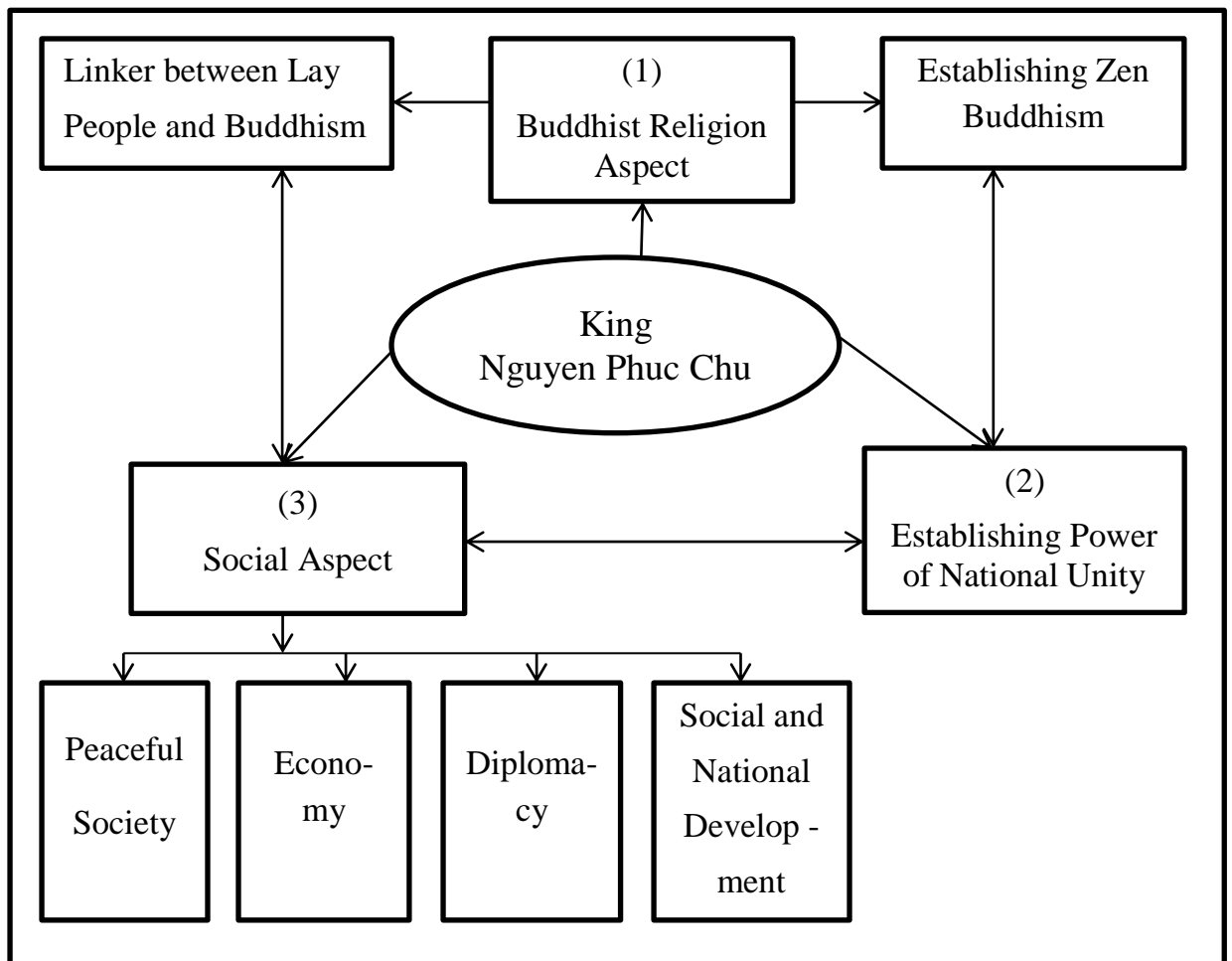
⁷⁵Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., pp. 121 - 122.

comprehensive economic, cultural, educational and political development⁷⁶.

It shows us that in order to develop in all areas of society or nation, King Nguyen Phuc Chu took the thought of Buddhism as the motto of his decisions. Since then, his actions have been directed towards the interests and well-being of the people. Thus, his social development policies were widely applauded and supported by the public. That was a great success for a political leader, and the foundation for bringing a society, a country towards prosperity and peace. And it can be affirmed that: society, the country under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu has reached civilization and wealthy.

⁷⁶ Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., pp. 699 - 701. And Ngo Thi Bich Lan, **Hydraulic Forces of Nguyen Lords** (1558 – 1777) – (Vietnamese version), (The Review of Sciential Seminar of Students - Da Nang University publishing house, 2010), p. 266.

Table 2: A chart of the summarizing about the contributions of king Nguyen Phuc Chu.



4.3 Concluding Remarks

Of all the kings of the Nguyen dynasty, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was one of the most devout Buddhist monarchs, with zeal, not deliberate, doing not for political purpose, but he came to Buddhism for the purpose of finding a way bringing happiness and peace to the nation and people. And look back to the history of Indian Buddhism, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was likened to Emperor Asoka. Because, all his life serving the nation and Buddhism tirelessly, with the desire to bring the country to peace and prosperity, the people happy, prosperous Buddhism. And he did that during his reign.

Chapter V

Conclusion and Suggestions

5.1 Conclusion

Although this study was carefully prepared, but I am still realizable of its shortcomings and research document limitations. First of all, the research was conducted of the Buddhist contributions of King Nguyen Phuc Chu on the Vietnamese society in the late 17th century and the early decades of the 18th century. Actually, there were many lay Buddhist followers also contributing to the Buddhist revival and social development, but this Buddhist King was a most eminent person of each region of Buddhist activities together zen masters.

Secondly, the study has a limitation of the time “from 1691 to 1725 of the late 17th century and the early decades of the 18th century”. But it has marked a new step forward of Buddhist revival movement and social development at that time. It was a vital hyphen of the recovery age between two stages of its before and after, those are from 15th to the 16th century and the 19th to the 20th century; these are the great declining periods of Vietnames Buddhism. So, the contributions of king Nguyen Phuc Chu was a great milestone, and thanks to it, Vietnamese Buddhism overcame many challenges, as well as brought on Vietnamese Buddhism and society to the most refulgent age in the last century.

Third, through the question of the research designed to know the historical background, the relationship with Buddhism, impacts, and contributions of this outstanding Buddhist King. The answers can be achieved by reading of this study.

5.2 Suggestions for Further Research

5.2.1 General Suggestions

The thesis is a historical summary of Vietnamese Buddhism and society in the 17th and the 18th centuries. But the main scope of it focuses on the contributions of Buddhist king Nguyen Phuc Chu in the three parts of Vietnam, analyzing the circumstances of Vietnamese society under the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, the relationship played by king Nguyen Phuc Chu and the Buddhism, as well as the influences of his contributions on Vietnamese Buddhism and society. Throughout the thesis, readers can understand more about the setting of the Buddhism and society in Vietnam before and after of the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, the new methods and policies to help Vietnamese Buddhism overcome the darkest period, as well as the prosperous development of Vietnamese society, which opened a new turning-point for Buddhist and social development in Vietnam in the last centuries.

Through this research, we should dignify to the spirit serving for Buddhism in order to bring the enlightened teachings of the Buddha to the whole world, creating peaceful world, no war and happiness, as king Nguyen Phuc Chu has been done. And, following to be the suggestions for further research topics.

5.2.2 Further Research

Although there are many shortcomings and limitations in the research, the information provided is too detailed. However, for suggestions of further studies, I would like give recommendation as follows:

1. A comparative study of the development of Vietnamese Buddhism under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691 - 1725) and King Tran Nhan Tong (1278 - 1293).
2. A study of the similarities and differences of the Buddhist revival movement under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu and the Buddhist movement of Southern Vietnam in the 20th century.

3. What are the most effective methods for the dedication of young monks and nuns to the development of today's society?.

4. Which are the plans for the dedication of young Lay Buddhists to Vietnamese Buddhism and society in the modern?

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The Appendix

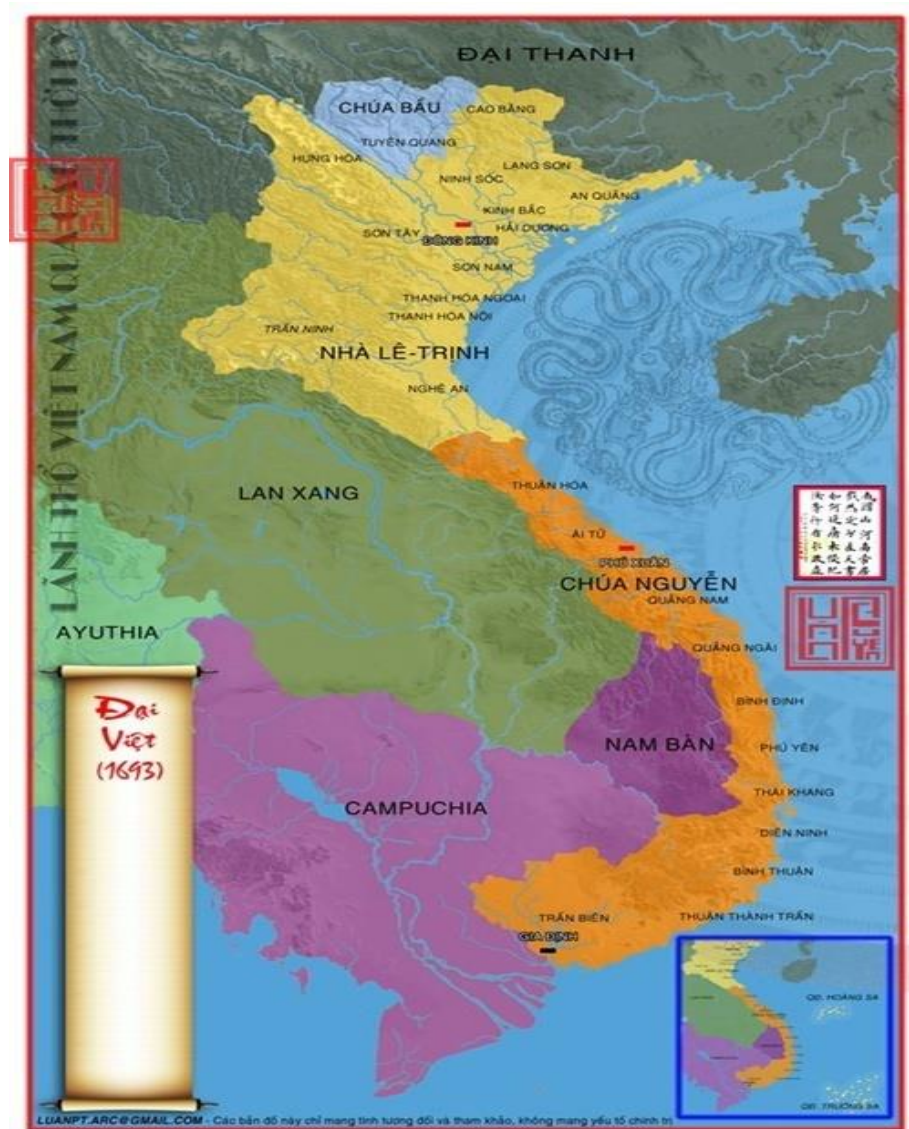


Figure 1: The map of Vietnam (1600-1757).

The yellowish coloured was territory of Latter Le dynasty in the North; and the orange coloured was domain of the Nguyen dynasty in the South. In 1693 – 1725, king Nguyen Phuc expanded territory to Hà Tiên province of the end of southern Vietnam. The research by <<https://lichsunuocvietnam.com/ban-do-lanh-tho-viet-nam-qua-cac-thoi-ky-phan-2/>>.



Figure 2: The statue of Nguyen Hoang Lord

Who was first founding the Nguyen dynasty in Thuan Hoa - Southern Vietnam in 1558, as well as who was first base for expanding of the whole Vietnamese territory afterward. He has reigned form 1558 to 1613. And this statue displayed in Vietnam National Museum of History in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city. The research by <<http://baotanglichsu.vn/portal/vi/Tin-tuc/Nhan-vat-lich-su/2016/07/3A924BAF/>>.



Figure 3: The royal tombs of Lord Nguyen Hoang in the vestiges site of Trường Cơ in Thua Thien Hue province.

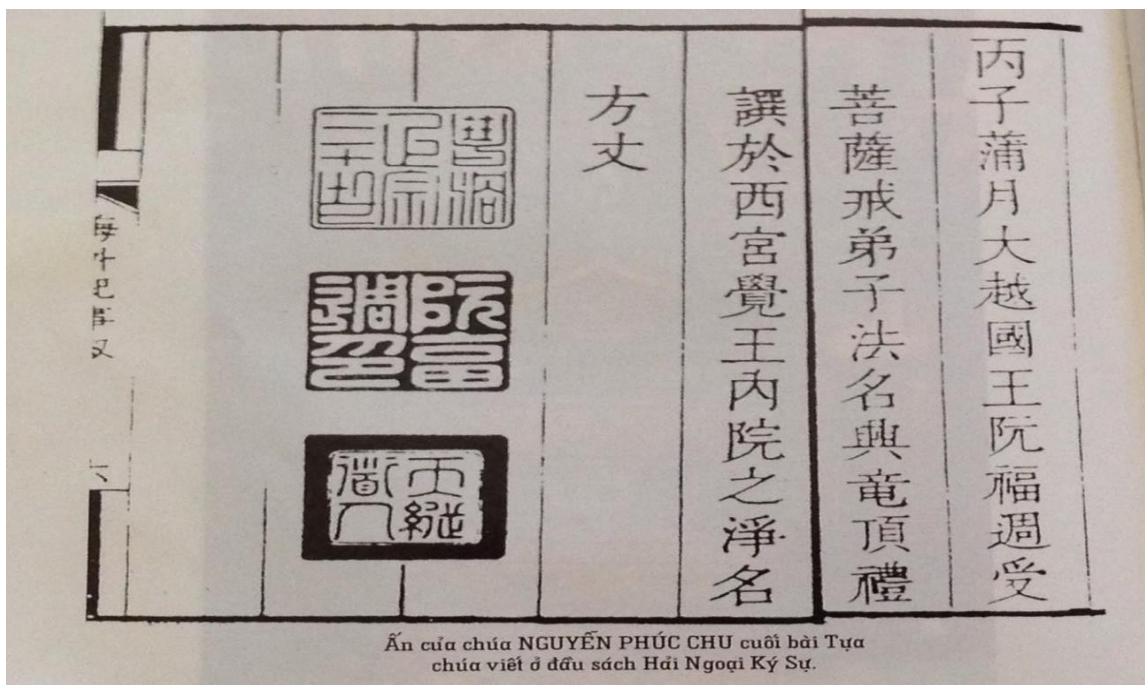


Figure 4: The royal stamp of king Nguyen Phuc Chu on the imperial edict.

This picture quoted from <Nguyen Lang. **A Complete Work of Historical Interpretation of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese version), (Hanoi: Literature Publishing House, 2014), pp. 592 – 593>.



Figure 5: the coin under the period of king Nguyen Phuc Chu.

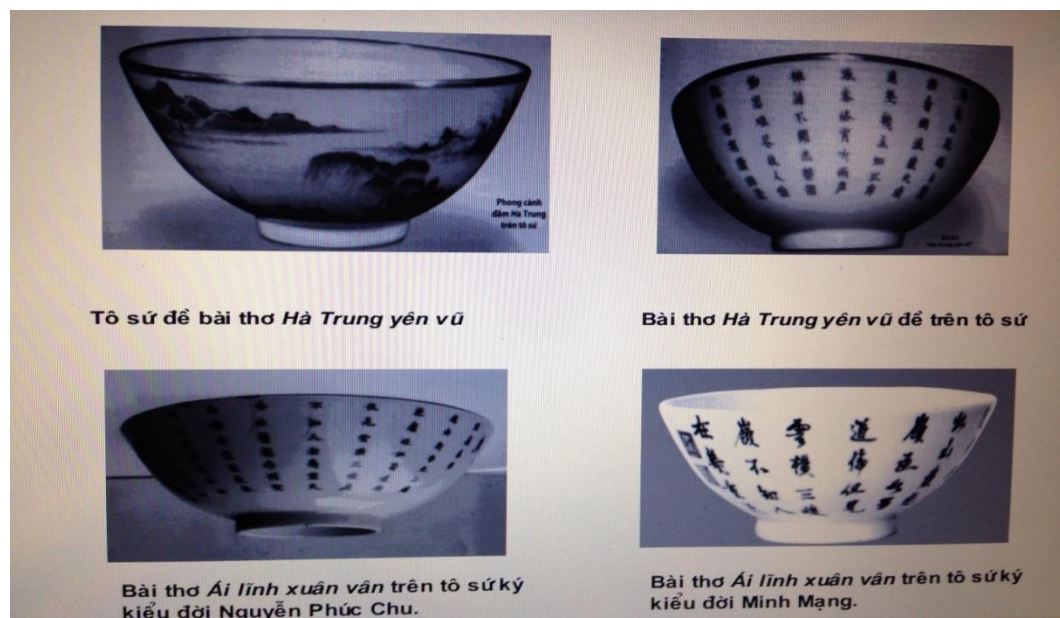


Figure 6: The poem of king Nguyen Phuc Chu written on the porcelain bowl.

The figure 5 and figure 6 were quoted from <Historical Science Community of Vietnam. **Nguyen Lords and The Nguyen Royal Dynasty in Vietnam's History from 16th to 19th Centuries** (Vietnamese version), (Hanoi: The World publishing House, 2008), p. 109 and p. 648>.



Figure 7 .a: King Nguyen Phuc Chu street in Tân Bình district in Ho Chi Minh city.



Figure 7.b: the figure 7.a and 7.b, which were brought name of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, it was near avenue of Truong Chinh in Tan Binh district – Ho Chi Minh city. And it has researched practice on 20/09/2017 by Ven. Phan Thanh Dang.



Figure 8: The old and new Thien Mu pagoda.

a: The old Thien Mu pagoda. This was a first pagoda which has king Nguyen Hoang built in 1601 in Thua Thien Hue province, and it has restored by KING NGUYEN PHUC CHU in 1714, where was king Nguyen Phuc Chu and Thach Liem Zen Master usually went there.



b: the Thien Mu pagoda today in Thua Thien Hue province.



Figure 9: Thien Lam pagoda which had restored by King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1694) in Thua Thien Hue province.

Where were king Nguyen Phuc Chu and Thach Liem Zen master used organizing Buddhist events for great festival and ordained day in 1695.



Figure 10: Bodhisattva statue of the thousand hands at Tu Dam temple (Thua Thien Hue province) in 17th century.

It is under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu. This picture quoted from <Nguyen Tai Thu, ed. **Buddhist History in Vietnam** (Vietnamese version), (Ha Noi: Science publishing House, 1988), p. 288>



Figure 11. The art architectures of the stupas and Arahants.

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<<https://giacngo.vn/PrintView.aspx?Language=vi&ID=52D659>>



Figure 12: The Bao Tinh pagoda

Where has founded by Lieu Quan Zen Master at his home in Phu Yen province (1706-1719), who was First Patriarch of Lieu Quan zen school. And it had restored in 2011, which had researched practice on 10/09/2017 by Ven. Phan Thanh Dang.

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**A STUDY OF THE BUDDHIST CONTRIBUTIONS
OF KING NGUYEN PHUC CHU TO
VIETNAMESE SOCIETY**

**Ven. Phan Thanh Dang
(Thich Giac Qua)**

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of
The Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts
(Buddhist Studies)

Graduate school
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
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Abstract

This is a qualitative research, the objectives of this thesis are: (1) To study the historical background during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu in South Vietnam; (2) To study the relationship between King Nguyen Phuc Chu and Buddhism; (3) To study the Buddhist contributions of King Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese society and Buddhism.

Through the methods of selection and documentary analysis, during the course of work, the research has the findings show is to study the historical background before and after of the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu in southern Vietnam, as well as his influence and development to Vietnamese society, and they have become a prominent historical event at the time.

Besides, it has played the process of studying the doctrines and Buddhist activities of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, as well as the Buddhist ethical thoughts great impacted to him, who used its as the standard for

social morality, and contributing positively to the national development. On the other hand, his influence has made Buddhism flourish both in form and in content. In addition, he has established the power of national unity that has strong impacted on the economy, politics, culture and education, creating a peaceful and prosperous country.

So, the contributions of King Nguyen Phuc Chu made strong development for Vietnamese Buddhism, and Buddhist development was a repercussion on the rule policies of the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu. And it became one of the important prerequisites for social development and thriving.

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Ven. Phan Thanh Dang
12/03/2017

List of Abbreviations

The following list of abbreviations and their expanded form refers to the name of the titles mentioned in reference below the entries. For details of titles, see Bibliography.

A.D	: Anno Domini
B.E	: Buddhist Era
BPS	: Buddhist Publication Society
C.E	: Christian Era
Ed.	: Editor
Etc.	: Et cetera/ and others
HCM	: Ho Chi Minh
Ibid.	: ibidden/ in the same book
MCU	: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
M.A	: Master of Arts
No.	: Number
Op.cit.	: Opera citato/ as referred
P(p).	: Page (s)
Pub.	: Published, publication
S	: Sanskrit
Tr.	: Translator
USA	: United States of America
Vol(s)	: Volume(s)
Ven	: Venerable
V	: Vietnamese

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Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Background and Significance of the Problems

Vietnam has a population of more than 90 million people, comprised of 54 different ethnic groups that possess historically rich cultural backgrounds and interesting folk arts. The country has more than one thousand historical, cultural, and architectural sites which is always to go with the national liberation movement. Vietnam is a country where had lots of wars, and has been colonized over one thousand years by aggressive and internal wars. And, in 1558 C.E, Vietnam had been occurred the wars by two powers: foreign invader of the Ming dynasty in China and internal wars of Vietnam. Thus, at that time, Vietnam had divided into two regions, called: the North Vietnam (Dang Ngoai) and the South Vietnam (Dang Trong), and to take Gianh river (Song Gianh) in Quang Binh province was border line. The North was ruled by the puppet dynasty of Latter Le government¹, the leader be king Le Anh Tong (1556-1572)², but all the power belong to the Trinh Lord, and the leader be Trinh Kiem. The South was ruled by king Nguyen Hoang (1558-1614)³.

¹Latter Le dynasty (1428 – 1789): Le Loi who is first formend this dynasty. While, before Latter Le dynasty, there is a Le dynasty called First Le dynasty (980 - 1009). This dynasty has found before Ly dynasty (1010 – 1225). See Pham Van Son, **The Complete History of Vietnam** (Vietnamese Version), (Japan: Vietnamese Community Press, 1983), p. 120.

²Quoc Su Quan Trieu Nguyen. Historical Institute, tr. **General History of Vietnam by Imperial Order** (Vietnamese Version), (Ha Noi: Hanoi Education Publishing House, 1998), pp. 643-656.

³Danny Wong Tze Ken & Champaka Monograph 5, **The Nguyen and Champa During 17th and 18th Century – A Study of Nguyen Foreign Relations**, (France: International Office of Champa Publishing House, 2007), p. 37.

Therefrom, the conflict between Nguyen dynasty and Trinh lord more and more strained.

Since above the social context, the Vietnamese Buddhism of the previous dynasties of Nguyen was impacted by that, and it had been declined, and was clearly showed in the period of the Latter Le dynasty (1428-1527)⁴, and especially, last period of the Latter Le dynasty, due to two main reasons were discrimination and boycott of the Confucianism, at this time the Confucianism had great influence in politics, therefore, they did not hesitated to repress the Buddhism⁵, such as the depravation of few Buddhist monks. Thus, in those days, The Buddhism has just played an important of religious belief⁶. However, in king Le Chieu Tong dynasty (1573 -1599) in the North and king Nguyen Hoang dynasty (1558 -1599) in the South then the Buddhism began renaissant signal, again⁷ because it was supported by the Nguyen Kings. And, afterward there was king Nguyen Phuc Chu whom had the most Buddhism's devotion rather than other Nguyen kings and he had play a part of the revival movements and development of Vietnamese Buddhism. And then, he had used the thoughts of The Three Teachings or Three Religions were a Source (Tam Giao Dong Nguyen)⁸ to make supportive methods for his rule.

⁴The Latter Le dynasty (1428-1527). According the Vietnamese history. It is including two period. The first period (1428-1527), this dynasty has been declined by the internal war of Vietnam, and then, the second period (1528-1789), this dynasty beginning rehabilitated again. See Venereble. Thích Mật Thể, **Essays on The History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version), (Da Nang: Minh Duc Press, 1970), pp. 171-175.

⁵Nguyen Tai Thu, Minh Chi, Ly Kim Hoa and Ha van Tan, **The History of Buddhism in Vietnam**, (USA: Institute of Philosophy – Vietnamese Academy of Social Science Press, 2006), p. 168.

⁶Venerable.Thich Mat The, **Op.cit.**, pp. 172-173.

⁷Thich Minh Tue, **A Brief History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version), (Ho Chi Minh: Ho Chi Minh City Buddhist Association Press, 1993), p. 412.

⁸Duong Quang Ham, **Basic History of Vietnamese Literature** (Vietnamese Version), (Ha Noi: Documental Centre of Educated Department Press, 1968), pp.37-38. **The Three Teachings (Tam Giao Dong Nguyen)**: It is including Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. King Nguyen Phuc Chu has combined the ethical and cultural quintessence of this three religion to build the good and peaceful society. Besides, he has also created unity between above three religion, without the

In fact, Nguyen dynasties's existence was over two hundred years, and the great contributions of king Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese society and Buddhism⁹. It was a vital hyphen of the recovery age between two stages of its before and after, those are from 15th to the 16th century and the 19th to the 20th century; these are the great declining periods of Vietnamese Buddhism. So, the contributions of king Nguyen Phuc Chu was a great milestone, and thanks to it, Vietnamese Buddhism and society overcome many challenges and the darkest period. But, why was nowadays only has a little scholar or a little document refered this problem? And why is nowadays society and youth people not be know or they do not interest to this event and it fade from their mind? Did those contributions had not enough influence to modern society?

For those reasons, the Researcher would like to opt for title “A Study of the Buddhist Contributions of King Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese Society” to research. For the writer wished that everyone in nowadays society to know contributing values of king Nguyen Phuc Chu for social development and Buddhist revival in those days, as well as how it has contributed for nowadays society. Beside, the writer also want to contribute a small document in studies process of Vietnamese Buddhist history such as to establishing the methods for oneself practices, serving for the Buddhism and society.

1.2 Objectives of the Research

This thesis study on the three main objectives as follows:

1.2.1 To study the historical background during the reign of the King Nguyen Phuc Chu in South Vietnam.

1.2.2 To study the relationship between the king Nguyen Phuc Chu and Buddhism.

conflict and discrimination. So, it was called Tam Giáo Đồng Nguyên. See Venereble. Thich Mat The, **Op.cit.**, p. 183.

⁹Nguyen Tai Thu, Minh Chi, Ly Kim Hoa and Ha van Tan, **The History of Buddhism in Vietnam**, (America: Institute of Philosophy – Vietnamese Academy of Social Science Press, 2006), p. 89 & p.147.

1.2.3 To study contributions of the Buddhist king Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese society.

1.3 Statement of the Problems Desired to Know

1.3.1 What is historical background during the reign of the King Nguyen Phuc Chu in South Vietnam?.

1.3.2 How was relationship between the king Nguyen Phuc Chu and Buddhism?

1.3.3 What were contributions of the Buddhist king Nguyen Phuc Chu To Vietnamese society?.

1.4 Definition of the Terms Used in the Research

1.4.1 Nguyen Phuc Chu means a Vietnamese warlord who ruled the southern provinces of Vietnam from 1691 to 1725. And he also was a Buddhist King who has great contributions to social development and Buddhism revival in Vietnam of this period. So, he was good example for latter generations to proceed.

1.4.2 Contribution means the contributions of king Nguyen Phuc Chu for revival and development of the Buddhism and society.

1.4.3 Buddhism means Vietnamese Buddhism which has only developed Mahāyāna Buddhism, and it has developed into a golden age of Vietnamese history. And nowadays, Vietnamese Buddhism had has three great buddhism traditions, Mahāyāna, Theravāda and Mendicant Buddhism.

1.4.4 Vietnamese society means a society of Vietnam during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691-1725 C.E) to the present time. And, it was greatly influenced by Buddhism cultural traditions in daily life, as the economy, culture, education, politics, even on the habits and customs of the Vietnamese people.

1.5 Review of Related Literature and Research Works

1.5.1 K.W.Taylor, **A History of The Vietnamese**. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2013¹⁰.

This book was written about Vietnamese history by the foreign author at Michigan University in American, he has studied the Vietnamese history, from Early to Modern age, comprised of language, literature, religion and warfare. So, this One exposed Vietnamese history, and specially the history of the Latter Le dynasty in the senventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. Moreover, it has refered the contributions of the Nguyen dynasty's Kings from 1558 to 1777 C.E, and the Buddhist contributions of king Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese society's development.

1.5.2 Pham Van Son, **The Complete History of The Vietnam** (Vietnamese Version). Japan: Vietnamese Community Press, 1983¹¹.

Especially, this book was noted whole historical process of Vietnam from the Epoch to Modern age (20th century). It is a historical book which has very value for the Researchers, and it help reader to be well-informed about the historical issues as well as the feudal struggles for independence of the dynasties. Furthermore, this book has showed the contribution of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu to Buddhism and society in Vietnam, and it has contributed for the development and built of the Vietnamese culture in the new period of the vietnamese history.

1.5.3 Nguyen Tai Thu, Minh Chi, Ly Kim Hoa, Ha Van Tan, **The History of Buddhism in Vietnam**. America: Washington, DC.20064, 2006¹².

This is a valuable book for the research of Vietnamese Buddhism history. Because it was noted whole historical process of the Vietnamese Buddhism as well as the Vietnamese history. Especially, the Buddhism started importing in Vietnam from the tenth to the twentieth centuries, so

¹⁰K.W.Taylor. **A History of The Vietnamese**, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2013, pp. 327-331.

¹¹Pham Van Son. **Op.cit.**, pp. 322-329.

¹²Nguyen Tai Thu, Minh Chi, Ly Kim Hoa and Ha van Tan, **Op.cit.**, pp. 196-201.

the Vietnamese buddhism's history was the historical period having a lot of change, and greatly impacted to the politics and society. Besides, this book was presented the Buddhist contributions of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu to develop culture, education, economy and politics on Vietnamese society, as well as the Vietnamese buddhism's revival in 1691 to 1725 C.E.

1.5.4 Nguyen Lang, **A Complete Work of the Historical Interpretation in Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version). Ha Noi: Literature Publishing House, 2014¹³.

This is one of the famous books which written about the Vietnamese Buddhism in the modern time. Besides, the author has also provided the information for anyone interested to Vietnamese Buddhism's history in Era to Modern age about the literature and culture. Furthermore, it was noted detail the contributions of the Kings and the Meditation Master of the Latter Le and the Nguyen dynasty in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, particularly the Buddhist contributions of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu for society's development and Buddhism rehabilitation on Vietnam in 1691 to 1725.

1.5.5 Li Tana, **Nguyen Cochinchina: Southern Vietnam in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**. USA: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1998.

The author has written about developmental history of Economy and Society of the Nguyen dynasty in Southern Vietnam in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. This is the period of the integration and innovation of Nguyen dynasty, and it has considered new developmental stage, modern stage for Vietnamese society's development. Especially, in the King Nguyen Phuc Chu's period which has considered golden developmental period of the Nguyen dynasty's history. And he has great contributions for social reformation and economic development.

¹³Nguyen Lang. **A Complete Work of Historical Interpretation of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version), (Ha Noi: Literature Publishing House, 2014), pp. 584-629.

1.5.6 Nguyen Khuong Dan (Thich Nguyen Chon), **The Recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism In The 20th Century**. (MA degree thesis). Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2008¹⁴.

This thesis studies the renaissance and development of the Vietnamese Buddhism in the twentieth century. Through, the author has presented the buddhism events and the struggling movement for the Buddhism's rehabilitation from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. And besides, this thesis has showed the contributions of King Nguyen Phuc Chu to Buddhism and society's development in Vietnam.

1.5.7 Duong Kinh Thanh. **Nguyen Phuc Chu Lord (1675-1725) - King Judiciousness - Bodhisattva of The Nation and the Buddhism**, (Sciential Seminar with title "The Nguyen Lords – Nguyen Phuc Chu's Boddhisattva", organized by Buddhist Research Institute and Religious Research Institute in Ho Chi Minh city). Vietnam: General Sciential Library in Ho Chi Minh city, 2011¹⁵.

This composition has presented the contributions of king Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese society and Buddhism as the nation expanded geographically and politically, social reformation and development, the contributions for revival and development of the Buddhism, and especially this article has refered the detail of king Nguyen Phuc Chu who has appied the Buddha's teachings for his rule in social life.

1.5.8 Ven.Thich Phuoc Son. **The Buddhist Schools's Development under King Nguyen Phuc Chu period**, (Sciential Seminar with title "The Nguyen Lords – Nguyen Phuc Chu's Boddhisattva", organized by Buddhist Research Institute and Religious Research Institute in Ho Chi Minh city). Vietnam: General Sciential Library in Ho Chi Minh city, 2011¹⁶.

In this composition, the author has refered king Nguyen Phuc Chu who has great impacted from Buddhism thoughts by the Thach

¹⁴Nguyen Khuong Dan (Ven.Thich Nguyen Chon), **The Recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism in the 20th Century**, (MA degree thesis) Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2551 B.E (2008), pp. 32-34.

¹⁵<http://quangduc.com/p4584a4865/chua-nguyen-phuc-chu-1675-1725-minh-vuong-bo-tat-cua-dan-toc-dao-phap>.

¹⁶<http://thuvienhoasen.org/a13052/duoi-thoi-chua-nguyen-phuc-chu>

Liem's Zen Master, and therefrom he has ruled the country to follow Buddhist spirit to contribute for the development, peace and unity of the nation. Besides, king Nguyen Phuc Chu has greatly contributed for Buddhism's development in Southern Vietnam.

1.6 Research Methodology

This thesis is a documentary research. Research process can be divided into the main stages as follows:

1.6.1 Collecting the relevant data from both primary and secondary sources from the Tipiṭaka, commentaries and the related historical books, dissertations and theses, journal, and the Internet.

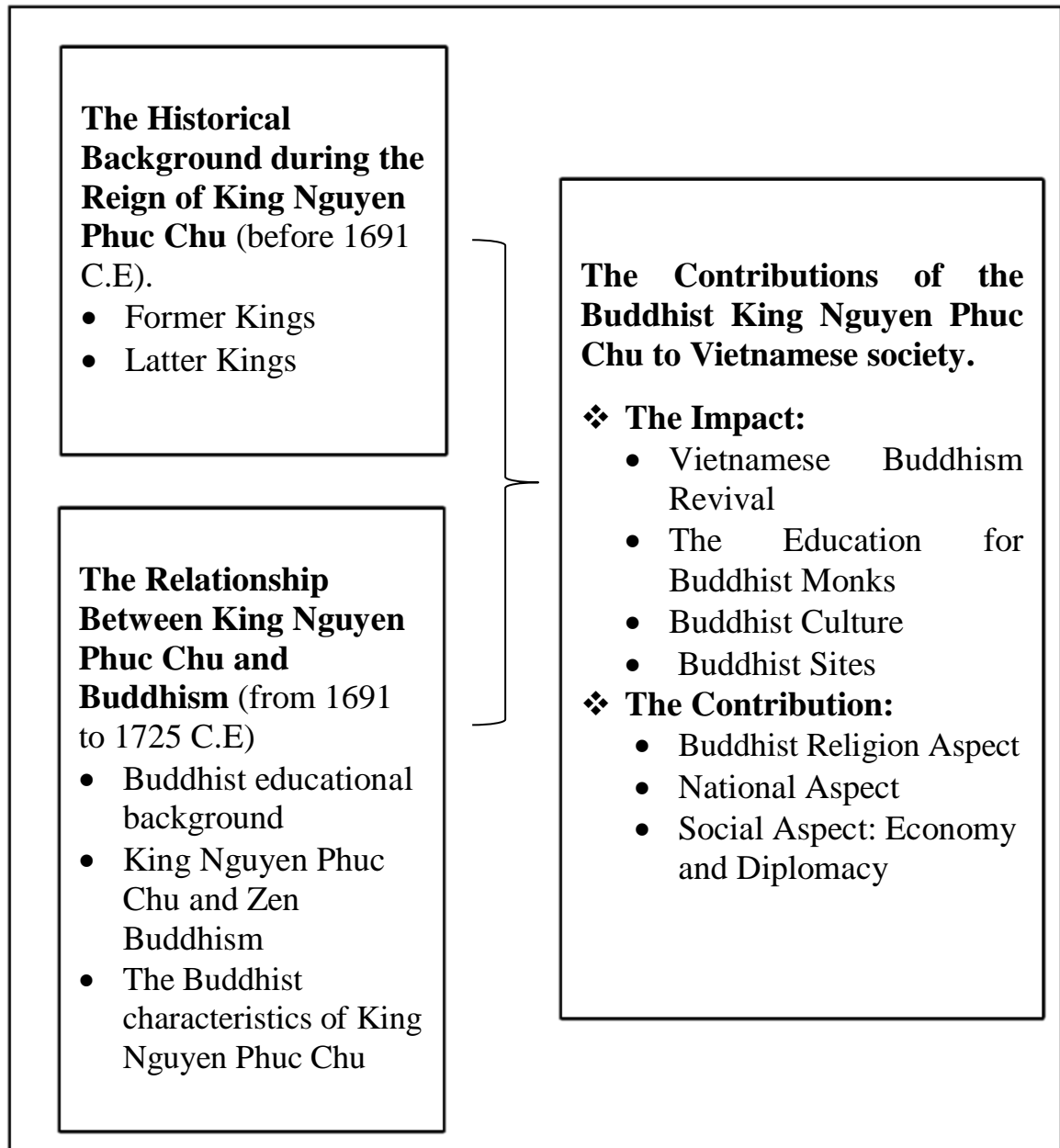
1.6.2 Synthesizing and Analyzing the collected data in accordance with the chapters of thesis.

1.6.3 Unifying the hypotheses and theoretical views without contradiction.

1.6.4 Providing a conclusion with the suggestions information for further research.

1.7 Conceptual Framework of the Research

Conceptual framework of the research can be present as the following chart;



1.8 Advantages Expected to Obtain from the Research

After finishing this study, the following advantages and results may be obtained:

1.8.1 Understanding the historical background during the reign of the King Nguyen Phuc Chu in South Vietnam.

1.8.2 Having a clear understand the relationship between the king Nguyen Phuc Chu and Buddhism.

1.8.3 Identifying the buddhist contributions of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu and its impacts to Vietnamese society.

Chapter II

The Historical Background during the Reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu in South Vietnam

Each country has different historical backgrounds, and the ups and downs were also different that have leading the governing regime changes of a country. At the same, from the influence of social circumstances had led the formation and development of the Nguyen dynasty. They have become a prominent event in Vietnamese history. And establishing new kingdom was synonymous with territorial expansion of Vietnam in the south by the Nguyen family and ended the wars between the Vietnamese and the Champa¹⁷. Such as, it has also showed the development and influence of King Nguyen Phuc Chu on society in southern Vietnam. Throughout this chapter, readers can understand more about the setting of the Vietnamese social situation before and after the reign of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu.

2.1 The Context of Vietnamese Society

In 16th to 18th centuries, the Vietnamese reigned by the Latter Le dynasty, which had the political and social situation were encountering many unpeaceful, there are a lot the faction of feudal system, who had contradicted each other that lead founding their own governments, creating social circumstance quite troubles, which happen the wars in everywhere, and great impacted to economy, politics and people life. For

¹⁷Li TaNa. **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**. New York: Ithaca - Cornell University Press. 1998, p. 244.

this reasons, the Nguyen dynasty formed in the southern Vietnam. With the objective and subjective factors of such society, for Vietnamese government at that time, what they have been done to face these problems, and how did Vietnamese social situation will be? We will study through the parts below:

2.1.1 Social and Political Aspect

At the time, Vietnam under the rule of the Latter Le dynasty (1428-1789), was also the time that the country was suffering from chaos by the civil wars and foreign invasion¹⁸. Especially the civil was took in the court of the Latter Le to scramble for power. Specifically in 1522, General Mac Dang Dung held all the powers in the post – Latter Le dynasty¹⁹, and in June 1527, Mac Dang Dung overthrown the Latter Le government and Mac dynasty established²⁰. However, the dispute between the faction has been strained, leading to the establishment of hostility between to governments: the Mac dynasty government in the North and in the South of the Latter Le dynasty (Thanh Hoa province come in of the South)²¹. Since then, the war between the Mac dynasty and the Latter Le dynasty lasted about 46 years (1546-1592), representing of the Latter Le dynasty was Lord Trinh Kiem, and we call these wars to be Trinh-Mac wars. Finally, Mac dynasty was destroyed in 1592 by the Latter Le government²². This is a brutal war, which has used the war to destroy each other, to competition for power between the dominant independent corporation which is the cause of the situation of the country was divided, and drew people throughout the country on the devastating sorrowfulness.

¹⁸Cao Huy Giu, tr. **The Complete History of Dai Viet** (Vietnamese Version), Vol.II. (Ha Noi: Culture and Information Publishing House. 2006). p. 513.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 534.

²⁰Ibid., p. 547.

²¹Before the internal wars occurred in Vietnam, Latter Le dynasty established in Thang Long capital, Northern Vietnam. But after the struggle had happened between Latter Le and Mac dynasty, and Latter Le dynasty has been defeated by the adversary, therefore Mac dynasty had occupied Thang Long capital and Latter Le dynasty had withdrawn from the North and they have occupied in Thanh Hoa province (it was southward of Thang Long capital).

²²Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., p. 647.

After the destroying Mac dynasty, the Latter Le dynasty moved the capital to Thang Long (Hanoi), Northern Vietnam. But again, the power of Latter Le dynasty that Lord Trinh Kiem was held and the Latter Le dynasty court just a puppet government. So, a devastating war was between the Mac dynasty and Lord Trinh Kiem ended yet how long, the people of the country had fallen into a new civil war between the dynasty Le – Trinh and the Nguyen dynasty, has lasted more than a century (1558-1672). And since then, the Vietnam was divided into two parts by the two ruling dynasties. Nguyen dynasty was established in 1600 in the southern land of Thuan-Quang (Thanh Hoa province come in of Vietnam southern) by Lord Nguyen Hoang head²³ and lasted until the period of King Nguyen Phuc Chu and the Nguyen dynasty later.

While the Northern situation was increasingly troubled, a part to prop the invader from China²⁴, and to confront miserable people life and deficient, lead to the fierce struggle that followed the boom, forming the extensive farmers movements, lasted almost throughout the eighteenth century. And on the other hand, the court facing the north battle with South Vietnam's government. Meanwhile, in the South, the Nguyen dynasty was stable for people life, social development and to expand the territory toward the south.

In short, looking at the plight of the country at the time, much powerful unitary authorities, making people did not know where to cry. The people had always been in a state of fear that can not settle, this creates the plight of a country mournful and revolted, the people live in

²³Lord Nguyen Hoang had ideas formation at long times to establish a peculiar government. Because the political situation of Latter Le government was very troublous at that time, so he must has thoughts so that. Therefore, in 1558, Lord Nguyen Hoang had decided into the land of Thuan Hoa to guard the frontiers for Latter Le dynasty. And from then on, Lord Nguyen Hoang has quieted mobilizing soldier and to consolidate the military position and economy for the strategy of Government's establishment later. So, in 1600, he has officially formed Nguyen dynasty and has separated from Latter Le dynasty. See more. Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., Pp. 584-596.

²⁴Nguyen Lang, **A Complete Work of Historical Interpretation of Vietnamese Buddhism**, (Vietnamese Version), (Ha Noi: Literature Publishing House, 2014), p. 485. And Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., p.729 & p. 755.

the miserableness of the civil war lasted from the late 16th century to 18th century.

2.1.2 The Impact of Latter Le Dynasty to the Nguyen Dynasty

The plight of the country has been divided into two North – South region. Here, it has two nouns, as “Dang Trong” referred to the South or cochinchina; and the “Dang Ngoai” was used for the North at the time. Other point more, the King of the Nguyen dynasty, after their death has been bestowed as “Emperor” (in the books of the Vietnamese history written such). So, in this paper, the writer also used the term “King” instead that the word “Lord” to describe the head of each of the Nguyen dynasty.

When we refer to the development of the Nguyen dynasty, we can not fail to mention the Latter Le dynasty. Because the Nguyen dynasty had been established and developed from objective and subjective reasons by weakness of the Latter Le dynasty through the problem as follows:

First, on politically, this time the country was chaos, and the division of the factions in the Latter Le dynasty, has created many internal contradictions, standing before these events, the Latter Le dynasty expressed helplessness and weakness. Therefore, for the safety and survival for himself, General Nguyen Hoang had suggested from Le Royal for he went to the land of Thanh Hoa²⁵ (southern Vietnam) to guard the frontiers in 1558. Afterward, he formed the Nguyen dynasty in 1600²⁶. He was a General who has received a lot of credibility by the King Le and the soldiers and generals other. So, this is the premise of the establishment of his career afterwards. When he left the North come to the South, thousands of soldiers and generals and relatives to support him.

²⁵Thuan Hoa: including Quang Binh, Quang Tri and Thua Thien Hue province and even Quang Nam province.

²⁶Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., p. 687.

Second, in economic terms, the economy has been weakness by the disturbance of northern government. So, after Nguyen Hoang based in Quang Nam province²⁷, the port of Hoi An was a place to dock the boat's domestic and foreign trade; they had trade with the earlies Latter Le dynasty. And to know this advantage, the Nguyen dynasty did good diplomacy, and it has become a place of economic exchanges, as an important trade center's top of the Nguyen dynasty at that time. And later, in the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, he has developed this advantage of further power.

Third, at the moment, the social reform, the country circumstance has been disturbances (one side being the enemy invasion, on the other hand, the result of the civil war under the Latter Le reign), anyone who wants the power and position to belong to themselves. So nobody interestes and cares for people while people' life are destitute and misery, their mind is always confusion, fear, not knowing what to believe. Meanwhile, the Nguyen reign seen the weakness of the Latter Le dynasty, that have devoted care for the people's life, stable life, social reforms, launched the movement of migrant from the North to the South. Therefore, they are the people loved and surrender under the Nguyen dynasty. All of this has created power government about both economic and political, flourishing social life. As *The Complete History of Dai Viet* (Vietnamese version), recorded:

*King Nguyen Hoang reigned tens of years with clement commands, often to bestow a favour on the people, to behave the fair, to advise army Gen, to prohibit the villain, the market does not challenge the price, people be not stealing, foreign merchant boat be traded, strictly orders be careful, the people will fell the love of his virtue...*²⁸.

In short, for the politicians, the first importants was known the times, and next to benevolent tolerance to convert human heart. The people's confidence is the big winner of the authorities' government and Nguyen dynasty has done good this things, and be a their major success.

²⁷Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., p. 688.

²⁸Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., p. 606.

2.2 The Kings of Nguyen Dynasty Before and After of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1558-1777)

In the Vietnamese history, the Nguyen government had experienced nine dynasties of the reign of nine other kings, which had the most outstanding and eminent points, as the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu who was sixth king of the Nguyen dynasty. And, what did the Nguyen dynasties have the contributions for Vietnamese society at that time? As well as how the setting of the social situation before and after of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, it will introduce brief, below:

2.2.1 Former Kings

Before king Nguyen Phuc Chu had five the kings reigned, who has been founded and developped the Nguyen dynasty over ninety years ago. They were also Buddhist kings those made first base for Buddhist development in the southern Vietnam. And then, king Nguyen Phuc Chu was the sixth king who had inherited this cultural traditions.

a. Nguyen Hoang King (1524-1613)

Nguyen Hoang was born in the Gia Mieu village, Tong Son district, Thanh Hoa province. He was the second son of Great General Nguyen Kim (who has helped Latter Le dynasty (1533-1675), his ancestors are the general in Le royal family since Le dynasty began founding from 1428 to 1789). King Nguyen Hoang has made so many big victories and was promoted to senior officials for the Latter Le dynasty. He was the first to establish the Nguyen dynasty in the 60s. In 1558, after the conflict for the right of the Latter Le dynasty, he has asked the court to allow him to the land of Thuan Hoa (including Quang Binh, Quang Tri and Hue province in Middle of Vietnam today) in the southern of the duty to hold the territory. He was stationed at Minister Trieu Phong, Ai Tu commune, Vo Xuong district, Quang Tri province. He has huge merit in created a new face for the southern region of Vietnam, and he officially founded the Nguyen dynasty in 1600, placing the capital in Quang Nam

province. He ruled until 1613. Later, he has bestow posthumously is *Thai To Gia Du Emperor*, also know as the First Lord (Chua Tien)²⁹.

After entering land Thuan Hoa, the first thing do to reinforce the army of Nguyen Hoang king entitled to prepare a long – term plan for the reclaimed territory, and established a new dynasty. Next to, he built and remodeled the temples, which was spiritual prop for the people, created confidence for everyone, and national establishment of Nguyen royal family late.

In 1601, he began to build the Thien Mu pagoda in Huong Tra district, Thua Thien Hue Province. In 1602, he built the Sung Hoa temple in Phu Vang district, Thua Thien Hue province. After a few years of establishment of the imperial city in Quang Nam (1600), then Nguyen Hoang king gave up Long Hung pagoda, near the palace of the Nguyen dynasty in Duy Xuyen district, Quang Nam province. In 1607, he built Bao Chau pagoda in Tra Kieu district, Quang Nam province. And in 1609, he built Kinh Thien pagoda in Thuan Thach district, Quang Binh province.

We can see that, to be successful in the career of imperial greatness, Nguyen Hoang king must have a sharp vision in politics. And he said that, the Buddhism (Mahāyāna Buddhism) was a traditional religion of the nation, the fundamental belief of the people in Thuan Hoa. With the liberal doctrine which has an energy to release and convert the human strongly. That is the reasoning is Nguyen Hoang select the Buddhism, from which he planed and executed political lines a human way. In fact, Nguyen Hoang king is a humane person, so that everyone loved him³⁰. As the book of The United History of Dai Viet (Vietnamese version) has written about Nguyen Hoang and praised him:

Nguyen Hoang who is quiet, steadfast, with shrewdness. He treated his soldiers very generous, tolerant and approachable,

²⁹National Historical Committee of Nguyen Dynasty. **Imperial Historical Mirror of Dai Viet** (Vietnamese version), Vo.28, (Ha Noi: Education Publishing House, 1998), p. 645.

³⁰Tran Trong Kim, **A Brief History of Vietnam** (Vietnamese Version), (HaNoi: The Culture and Information press, 1999), p. 310.

*pleased to appoint him as proconsul, to the frontier policing and fight the invadable enemy in the East (China)*³¹.

We can say, Nguyen Hoang succeeded on the policy of the country's rule for the win of human hearts, social stability and building a good relationship with neighbouring countries as well as the North' government because he raised high the message of Buddhism to everyone. Not only that, that message has also communicated for his descendants, as Nguyen Phuc Nguyen king, Nguyen Phuc Lan king, Nguyen Phuc Tan king, Nguyen Phuc Chu King, etc..., to continue to uphold and achieved great achievements in journey to expand the border of the future. Lastly, King Nguyen Hoang took the Buddhist tradition as the basis for life and moral culture, and also was premise for succeeding Kings continued development and nation building.

b. King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen (1563-1635)

King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen bestowed posthumously *Hy Tong Hieu Van* Emperor, also known as Chua Sai (Monk Lord)³². He was the sixth son of King Nguyen Hoang. He had his father to the throne in 1613 to 1635. He moved the royal capital to Phuoc Yen residence of Thua Thien Hue province in 1626. King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen who was very intelligent and ingenious, so the official in the court are respected him, that:

*Every day he and the minister discussed the political organization, for many things right. Founder of a dynasty (king Nguyen Hoang) know that would have entrusted his inheritance for his son, and he always look after him*³³.

And finally, he had to shoulder a great task which his father had entrusted to him that:

³¹Le Quy Don, **The United History of Dai Viet** (Vietnamese version), (Ha Noi: Social Science Publishing House, 1978), p. 64.

³²<http://kenhsinhvien.vn/topic/9-chua-va-13-vua-nha-nguyen-vai-tro-cua-nha-nguyen-doi-voi-lich-su-dan-toc.265234>.

³³Historical Science Community of Vietnam. **Nguyen Lords and The Nguyen Royal Dynasty in Vietnam's History From 16th To 19th Centuries** (Vietnamese Version), (HaNoi: The World Publishing House, 2008), p. 137.

I (king Nguyen Hoang) have to died when the unfinished, shall I have left to my son (Nguyen Phuc Nguyen), you should agree to help my child, so that it is completed inheritance. If such forces can not match, than tried to hold land to waiting for the opportunity. Do not ignore advised by me³⁴.

We can say that this is a major challenge period during the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Nguyen; because it is the beginning stage of the peak of the fierce conflict between Lord Trinh (The North) and Nguyen dynasty (The Southern), starting from 1627 to 1672. In 1620, king Nguyen Phuc Nguyen excused Lord Trinh was unfounded aggression, so he decided to completely terminate the payment of taxes to the government Le – Trinh. In 1627, the soldiers of Le – Trinh dynasty in the North, opening the first attack on a large scale hit the Nguyen Dynasty (in the South) – the opening of two tide war of during 45 years (1627 – 1672) with seven big battle³⁵. In 1630, king Nguyen Phuc Nguyen has declared official of the South's government, which has severed the dependent relationship with authorities Le – Trinh (in the North). This marks was a fundamental transition that from a local authority, carrying heavy military nature of Le – Trinh dynasty into the civil authorities of the Nguyen dynasty. And in particular, in external relations of king Nguyen Phuc Nguyen with the foreign countries, then he has proclaimed title as the King of An Nam (Vietnam) in the role of an independent national sovereignty³⁶. In 1672, after having spent seven attacks and violent conflict between the two dynasties Nguyen and Le-Trinh, so they feel unable to solve anything. Finally, they decided to end the war, and took the Gianh river (Quang Binh province) as boundary, division of the country. And each ruled their own territory.

King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen was the heir's fortune and ideology of his father, that he follow the direction of his predecessor. So, when

³⁴Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., p. 138.

³⁵Nguyen Hien Duc. **Vietnamese Buddhism History Under Trinh – Nguyen Dynasty: Buddhism History in Dang Ngoai (The North)**, (Vietnamese version), Vo.I, (Vietnam: Ho chi Minh City of General Publishing House, 2006), pp.606-609. And, see. Pham Van Son, **The Complete History of Vietnam** (Vietnamese Version), (Japan: Vietnamese Community Press, 1983). pp. 330 - 339.

³⁶Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., p. 139.

recently crowned, he reformed the bureaucracy, not stereotyped old administrative regime of the Later Le dynasty as his father had done. He has arranged the main structure from central to local and rigorous science. His reforms have key significance, which has laid the basis for further progress and more solid of the Nguyen dynasty in particular and the country in general. Besides, he has continued to execute the testament of his father, protecting and developing its own national independence and territorial expansion southward. For more than 20 years of reign, King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen has reclaimed a large area of land, from land of Quang Nam province to Sai Gon – Gia Dinh, that belong to the territory of the Nguyen dynasty. He was the first to have the opening for merger sovereignty over Hoang Sa and Truong Sa islands in the East Sea belong to the Southern government in 1631-1634³⁷.

Moreover, he also focused on implementing policies construction and restoration of the temple, encouraged monks from China to practice their religion, and he took the ideas of Buddhist ethics to take care of people's life, used clement virtue to rule the country.

King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen considered the most successful people for the strategic expansion of trade with the West as well as Asia and South East Asia since then and until the decade after that. Because, he knew to apply the policy of openness, trade tax cuts, he has turned into a land of Southern activities place for trade, as observes that:

*The most beautiful harbour, where all foreigners were coming and where there was fair reputation, that is seaport in Quang Nam province... Lord Nguyen (king Nguyen Phuc Nguyen) was not closed before any the country, he so free and open to all foreigners*³⁸.

He was also smart who have many strategies, plus gracious character and openness have helped the way of his reign to be quite successful. And finally, King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen died at 73 years old, in 1635.

³⁷Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., pp. 142 - 147.

³⁸Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., p. 141.

c. King Nguyen Phuc Lan (1601-1648)

Nguyen Phuc Lan was the second child of eleven child of King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen. In 1635, after King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen died, he took over his father served as the head of the dynasty, the main operating until 1648, he moved the royal capital from the village of Phuoc Yen (Quang Dien district - Thua Thien Hue province) to the village of Kim Long (Huong Tra- Thua Thien Hue province). And later he was posthumously honour *Than Tong Hieu Chieu Emperor*, also known as Chua Thuong (the Master Lord)³⁹.

During his thirteen years reign, he spent four great event but with the talent of his military strategy should have passed. First, just to replace his father foot steps, then his third young brother's is Nguyen Phuc Anh, who has wanted to overthrow his brother to steal the throne, so he associated with Lord Trinh of the Latter Le Dynasty in Northern troops to attack the South but he lost in this battle and he has been condemn to death by King Nguyen Phuc Lan. Second, in 1639, after Nguyen Phuc Anh died, his wife Ms.Tong Thi wanted revenge for her husband, so she used her beauty to seduce King Nguyen Phuc Lan with the aim of damaging his reputation and career, and a time long king Nguyen Phuc Lan was dismayed by her beauty and his neglect of the government, just chasing the pleasures of sensual love, lead to the chaos in royal cabinet. But in the end, he has been dissuaded from the his courtier, from which he aware of his great responsibility and dedicate itself, take care of life for the people. Third, in 1643, he must confront a war invasion of the Europeans, it is the battle of the Netherlander, with large ships equipped modern weapons, but the Army of king Nguyen Phuc Lan has beaten them and was famous victorious. Finally, the aggressive war of Lord Trinh in the North in 1648, king Nguyen Phuc Lan with his army have combatted and repulsed the invaders to be the Lord Trinh. And on the back of this battle Nguyen Phuc Lan died in 1648.

As well as his predecessor kings, King Nguyen Phuc Lan also influenced by the Buddhist tradition, and he was also a devout person to Buddhism and he has created easily conditions for Buddhism

³⁹<http://lichsunuocvietnam.com/chua-thuong-nguyen-phuc-lan/>

development in Thuan Hoa land. According his father's testament, he applied the Buddhism for the motto of the protection and development of the country. During this period, numerous appearances of Chinese famous monks as Zen master Vien Canh, Zen Master Vien Khoan, etc., they come Nguyen royal capital to spread Buddhism. As the country with major changes, King Nguyen Phuc Lan based on Buddhism to pray, as

In 1641, Summer in May, it has drought, withered wheat, population of starvation. The King was abstinence to pray for the good season, the people was prosperous⁴⁰.

Although, king Nguyen Phuc Lan ruled the country in troubles times but he completed the mission that the proposed predecessor Kings, putting upward developing country, territory is increasingly expanding, and the society was stable.

d. King Nguyen Phuc Tan (1620-1687)

Nguyen Phuc Tan was posthumously honour *Thai Tong Hieu Triet Emperor*, also known as Chua Hien (the Virtuous Lord)⁴¹. He ruled from 1648 to 1687, was the fourth king of the Nguyen Dynasty. He was very knowledgeable about the art of war, courage, intelligence, determined temperament. After succeeding his father in 1648, he continued the process of building the country. Therefrom, king Nguyen Phuc Tan care and research the art of warfare, to gather brave army, military training, readying for the attack on the Lord Trinh troops in the North.

In the fourth battle in 1648, before the throne Nguyen Phuc Tan led the soldier to fight, and after win his return, he was passed on the throne to his father, and he brought 30,000 military troops of Lord Trinh got caught, that divided equally to exploit new lands to the South. From 1655 to 1672, Nguyen dynasty faced with Lord Trinh troops through three intense battles and fierce, with intelligence of King Nguyen Phuc

⁴⁰Le Binh Phuong Luan, **The Buddhism History of Hue Province Under Nguyen Dynasty** (Vietnamese version), Vo.III, No.2, (Science and Technology Review – Hue Science University, Press, 2015), p. 99.

⁴¹<http://kenhsinhvien.vn/topic/9-chua-va-13-vua-nha-nguyen-vai-tro-cua-nha-nguyen-doi-voi-lich-su-dan-toc.265234/>.

Tan, Lord Trinh troops can not win, and had to retreat to Thang Long capital - Hanoi⁴². In 1679, with 3,000 soliders and generals of the Ming dynasty in China went to the Southern please ruled by king Nguyen Phuc Tan, and the King bestowed this soliders to live in Gia Dinh – Saigon where was new land exploit. After the war ended in the North, the King's attention for taking care, developing social life and continue to use the strategy of reconciliation with the King of country Champa (Chan Lap) in the southward to reclaim and extend the territory.

However, in addition to caring for people's life and administration of the government, the king Nguyen Phuc Tan was also a king so devoted Buddhist, and always interested in the ups and downs of the Buddhism, by which he has great impacted from Buddhist ideology that his own becomes benevolent, was wise kings as he take good hearted to treat people, from which he was called the name Chua Hien (Virtuous Lord). In the 1665, the King restored Thien Mu pagoda (Hue province). In 1667, the King gave injunction to build Vinh Hoa pagoda in Linh Thai mountain – Thua Thien Hue province, in the inauguration temple day, the King hold a ceremony through seven days and nights to chant and pray for peaceful and prosperous of the nation⁴³. In 1677, Zen master Nguyen Thieu was the 33rd Patriarch of Lam Te Zen school from China come to the land of Binh Dinh province, visiting King Nguyen Phuc Tan and building Thap Thap Di Da pagoda (the pagoda of ten tower Amitabha) by King's commanding. In 1683, King Nguyen Phuc Tan conferred Zen master Nguyen Thieu some money to renovate the Vinh An temple in Phu Xuan- Thuan Hoa and Pho Dong tower be built in 1684, and in 1689 king Nguyen Phuc Tran renamed this temple be the Quoc An temple. At the time 1660 – 1680, with the support of king Nguyen Phuc Tan, Truc Lam Zen School was renaissance in Thuan Hoa, with the arrival of Buddhist monks as Zen master Vien Canh, zen master Vien Khoan and most importantly the Zen master Huong Hai (there are many royal families have been refuged by him). During his reign, there was Buddhist monks come to carry on missionary work as Zen master Minh

⁴²Pham Van Son. Op.cit., pp. 333 - 340.

⁴³Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), pp. 10 - 11.

Hoang Tu Dung founding An Tong temple (Tu Dam temple in Hue province nowadays); Zen master Minh Hai Phap Bao founding Chuc Thanh temple (Quang Nam Province); Zen master Minh Vat Nhat Tri, and Zen master Minh Giac Ky Phuong, ect...Beside, the King also invited many other Zen master in the country as well as from China to propagate the truth dhamma, taught people to live according to Buddhist ethics.

Being the King on a battle field war, where exposed how death that mading he will understand the essence of life, and he has stayed with the Buddhist teaching, he still enjoys the tranquil scene at the meditation monastery. Thus, at that time Buddhism was strong and pervasive development, as well as the clergy also joined in the care of cultural life, education for people, contributing to social security.

f. King Nguyen Phuc Tran (1649-1691)

In 1687, King Nguyen Phuc Tan died, whose son was Nguyen Phuc Tran (Thai) succeeded him as a King, known as Chua Nghia (the Clement Lord), was the fifth King of Nguyen Dynasty in the South. He reigned from 1687 to 1691, then he was bestow posthumously *Anh Tong Hieu Nghia Emperor*⁴⁴. When he became the king, he moved the royal capital from Kim Long village to Phu Xuan village (Thua Thien Hue province); from then on it became the main capital of the Nguyen Dynasty. King Nguyen Phuc Tran was celebrity about toleration, mitigation of punishment and tax, simple ritual, appointing the talent to an important post of prior dynasty; therefrom he has venerated with calling name Nghia Vuong (Clement King) by everyone.

During the short of his reign, King Nguyen Phuc Tran also has done some the good for the society. As in 1688, General Hoang Tan betrayed the Nguyen dynasty at Dinh Tuong town – My Tho (Tien Giang province), he killed the official rule of this town was Duong Ngan Dich, and occupied the main important base and interfered the lines of traffic by water at My Tho river, not for traders across the back, looting people's property of this region. King Nguyen Phuc Tran known and ordered the

⁴⁴<http://kenhsinhvien.vn/topic/9-chua-va-13-vua-nha-nguyen-vai-tro-cua-nha-nguyen-doi-voi-lich-su-dan-toc.265234/>.

General staff, the admiral to suppress the base of General Hoang Tan. In January 1689, General Hoang Tan has leave his family, wife and children for the escape. Meanwhile, the Chan Lap government (Champa) not want to tribute the Nguyen dynasty, who have used the army to attack of the Nguyen dynasty. But finally, they also have been beat by Nguyen military. Later, the King of Chan Lap power (Champa) and King Nguyen Phuc Tran created excellent relation together (Champa where to next border of Cambodia country and My Tho district of Tien Giang province - Vietnam). In middle of 1689, the King ordered to open the examination for choice talents to help country. And in 1691, the King being ill and died, at 42 years old⁴⁵.

The King Nguyen Phuc Tran was always care social life so much, so he has applied Buddhist ideas making spiritual foundation for society like as his predecessors of the previous dynasties, and promoted the spirit of Buddhist ethics as well as Confucianism for people being alive to humanist ethics. Thus, king Nguyen Phuc Tran has remodeled and built many temples in Thuan Hoa Land as well as the clearing of new land. As, in 1688, the King ordered to restore Vinh Hoa pagoda at Tu Dung seaport – Thua Thien Hue province; and in July 1689, King Nguyen Phuc Tran ordered tax-free of ground for Vinh An pagoda and other pagodas. Then, the King tasked Zen master Nguyen Thieu to come back Quang Dong province (China) invited Zen master Thach Liem and some Most Venerable other to Vietnam (1687 - 1690) to spread Buddhism. And the King ordered opening the Altar Rules (the great ceremony of the observer precepts of the Bhikkhu and Bhikkhuni) at Thien Mu pagoda – Hue province under the chairman of Zen master Nguyen Thieu⁴⁶.

However, in a short time for the reign, the king Nguyen Phuc Tran accomplished a lot of good works for people. He has also the promotive devoutness of the Buddhism' development, which creating a peaceful and powerful society.

⁴⁵Phan Khoang, **Vietnamese History in Dang Trong** (The South) **From 1558 to 1777: The Epic of The Southward Movement of The Vietnamese People**, (Ho Chi Minh City: Xuan Thu Publishing House, 1967), PP. 412 - 415 & p. 215.

⁴⁶Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 13.

2.2.2 Latter Kings

After the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu that included three dynasties of three other kings. All were also Buddhist kings, who has also the contributions on society and Buddhism, but in this period, the Buddhism has been declined gradual by no have power support like as the king before. And these are also the dynasties to end up the reign of the Nguyen government in the south Vietnam.

a. King Nguyen Phuc Tru (1697-1738)

Nguyen Phuc Tru was the 7th King of Nguyen dynasty, who was a King taking refuge in the Triple Gems of Tao Dong Zen school with Buddhist name “Van Truyen Dao Nhan”. He was the eldest son of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, that he succeeded his father to the throne in 1725 to 1738, being called Ninh Vuong (the Peaceful King). As the follower Buddhism, so he was very focused on morality, ethics, taking clement virtue to treat people. He died in 1738, and has been bestowed posthumously honour *Tuc Tong Hieu Ninh Emperor*⁴⁷.

Further, the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Tru was the period of stabile peace of the nation, economic and social developing. In 1729, King Nguyen Phuc Tru ordered the construction of administrative station to protect social security in the South part, as Saigon – Gia Dinh, be called Phien Bien by General Truong Phuc Vinh head; a base at Bien Hoa – Dong Nai province called Tran Bien by Nguyen Cuu Triem head and Long Ho palace at Vinh Long province and My Tho city – Tien Giang province (in 1732).

Besides, king Nguyen Phuc Tru also had been outstanding achievements through his reign, such as: in 1726, he ordered the termination of alcoholic evils, gamble board, on the contrary he has advised and encouragd people to till. In 1729, in addition to quell the rebellion of the Champa and to build administrative institutions, the King was also to build the base of copper. In 1731, the King ordered

⁴⁷<http://www.vietnamgiapha.com/XemChiTietTungNguoi/51/12/giapha.htm>

measurements back for the length of the road to the local and avenue road. In 1732, the Nguyen dynasty had good diplomatic with Champa king. In 1733 the King ordered to measure the length of the southern coastline. In 1735, the commander of Ha Tien palace in Ha Tien province was Mac Cuu died, and being conferred a title “Khai Tướng Thượng Trụ Quốc Đại Tướng Quân Vũ Nghị Công”⁴⁸. In particular, last 1735, the Nguyen dynasty opened a general censorship throughout Southern and Champa land of Cambodia, and in June 1737, the court revised the official positions, wages, uniforms reform, custom change, and not follow the customary feudal backwardness as in the North⁴⁹.

Regarding religion, the King has issued a policy of openness with regard to religion, particularly Buddhism, the King was very revered and support for the Buddhism flourish. About Christianity, the King also allowed transmission religion in the South (the previous King ban spread Christianity). In 1729, for devout morality of Zen master Nguyen Thieu, the King was conferred noble name as “Hanh Doan Zen Master” (Morality Zen master). In August 1735, the King conferred with a sign plate for Ho Quoc pagoda in Bien Hoa city – Dong Nai province as “Sắc Tứ Hộ Quốc Temple”, besides the King also encouraged monks to open up new areas to expand Buddhism and building temples. With this merits that made Buddhism more flavor and spread everywhere.

Although, the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Tru not long but he was considered the person great contribution in setting up the new administrative institutions and with the policy of openness in the process of preserving and expanding the land of Dong Bang Song Cuu Long in southern west part (Mekong Delta in the Southern).

b. King Nguyen Phuc Khoat (1714 - 1765)

He was the eldest son of the nine sons of king Nguyen Phuc Tru. His father's successor in 1738 to 1765, he was also called Vu Vuong (the

⁴⁸To be a title for Great General who has been great contribution to territorial expansion.

⁴⁹Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 19.

Hopeful King). Later, he was posthumously honor as *The Tong Hieu Vu Emperor*⁵⁰. In April 1744, king Nguyen Phuc Khoat found favorable opportunity to declare Nguyen dynasty Government in the South which was officially an independent country. He was the eighth King, was very revered the Buddhism and took refuge the Triple Gems of Tao Dong Zen school, and he has Buddhist name as “Tùng Tế Đạo Nhân”.

After, coming to the throne, reforming the administrative system, change the name of the dynasty from capital city into royal palace, and change the name of the organization name and administrative base of the heads from the central down to the local, reconstructed the palace, making the Phu Xuan royal palace (Hue province) became the hustle and bustle of big city, and magnificent. Moreover, king Nguyen Phuc Khoat divided administrative system into twelve palace⁵¹ and the defend directly under central government; and private in the Southern West part of Nguyen dynasty, there are four administrative organization, putting one town management senior official.

Beside, he had some political activities as in 1740, and ordered to open the examination, giving the rights for candidates who pass the first academic, was free military service for five years, second pass and third was permanently free forever; Fourth one pass had been accredited as the mandarin of the local. In 1757, king Nguyen Phuc Khoat occupies most of the remaining lands of Champa country. As such, the Nguyen dynasty's territory stretches from the Gianh river (Quang Binh province)

⁵⁰<http://kenhsinhvien.vn/topic/9-chua-va-13-vua-nha-nguyen-vai-tro-cua-nha-nguyen-doi-voi-lich-su-dan-toc.265234/>

⁵¹The Headquarters is place to manage the Military and Administration of the Nguyen dynasty. The Headquarters including: 1. Main headquarters is King's Court of Ngyen dynasty (Phu Xuan –Hue province); 2. Cuu headquarters (Quang Tri province); 3. Quang Binh headquarters (Quang Binh province); 4. Vu Xa headquarters (Bac Giang or Hung Yen province); 5. Bo Chinh headquarters (Quang Binh province); 6. Quang Nam headquarters (Quang Nam province); 7. Phu Yen headquarters (Phu Yen province); 8. Binh Khang headquarters (Khanh Hoa province); 9. Binh Thuan headquarters (Binh Thuan province); 10. Tran Bien headquarters (Dong nai province); 11. Phien Tran headquarters (Gia Dinh- Sai Gon province); and 12. Long Ho headquarters (Vinh Long province).

to Ha Tien province, mastering all the Southern delta region or the South Vietnam today⁵².

As noted above, being the Buddhist King, he could not forget the responsibility to revive Buddhism, followed ancestral traditions. So, around the years 1738 – 1744, the King ordered to restore Thien Mu pagoda be magnificent and ordering envoy seeking the Three Collections of the Buddhist canon (Tipitaka) from China more 1,000 books. In 1744, King Nguyen Phuc Khoat ordered to construct Giac Lam temple in Chợ Lớn – Saigon, and building Ham Long temple at Phu Xuan – Hue province. In 1754, the King also granted signboard for a temple in Quang Ngai province as “Sắc Tứ Viên Tông temple”, after rename into “Sắc Tứ Diệu Giác Temple” to nowadays. In 1761, the King commissioned board “Sắc Tứ Thập Tháp Di Đà pagoda” for Thập Tháp Di Đà pagoda in Binh Dinh province, and many other pagodas were also commissioned⁵³. And in 1765, King Nguyen Phuc Khoat passed away, lived to be 52 years, reigned 27 years.

We can say, the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Khoat had more innovation than the previous dynasty. He had the whole administrative reform from the central down to the local forming a logical model of a orthodox dynasty, having many policy clemency and openness to religion, and devoutly support for the Buddhism’s development, the people had seized his clement virtue, lead to civilized and peaceful society.

c. King Nguyen Phuc Thuan (1754-1777)

King Nguyen Phuc Thuan was the 16th son of King Nguyen Phuc Khoat, succeeded his father in 1765 at the age of 11, and reigned through 1777, after he was posthumously honor as “*Due Tong Hieu Dinh Emperor*”. He was the 9th King of Nguyen dynasty, who the last ruler of

⁵²Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., p. 43.

⁵³Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), pp. 20 - 21.

the Nguyen dynasty was known as Dinh Vuong (Consistent King)⁵⁴. He was also a Buddhist, refuted with buddhist name “Khánh Phủ Đạo Nhân”, but he had not much merit with Buddhism.

In this period, the civil war had ended long ago (1672), the Nguyen dynasty's economic developed stability and prosperous, peaceful society. After, King Nguyen Phuc Thuan succeed to the throne his father, but his age was too young what was not deciding, so the regent General Truong Phuc Loan was arbitrary and abuse. As has been said, from the life was too peaceful and prosperous should lead to arise the evils of pleasure, the harassment for bribes in royal cabinet; the divided factions together leads to the arising of complex matters such as tax increases, the belief of people decrease, scattering the dissatisfaction with the reign's regime of the perverted and decaying, ect... This is the main cause of Nguyen dynasty's collapsable later by the peasant revolt to demand their rights under the lead of the Tay Son movement⁵⁵ in Binh Dinh land early in 1773. This movement was the response of the whole farmers, landowners and traders, whom want to kill decaying Nguyen dynasty's in name to claim back the rights for the people. That situation brought Nguyen dynasty fell into serious menace, caught between two force that are the Tay Son movement in the southward of Nguyen royal family and military reviews of Lord Trinh – Le king in the North.

In late 1774, Lord Trinh army captured the base of the Nguyen Dynasty and closer to the inner city of Nguyen dynasty from about 20km. Early in 1775, the Lord Trinh army attacked the Nguyen dynasty's capital and King Nguyen Phuc Thuan along the General army quit the city running into region of Quang Nam province to refuges.

Meanwhile, in 1775, Tay Son troops had been invaded Quang Nam palace, where the royal capital of Nguyen Kingdom, King Nguyen

⁵⁴<http://www.doisongphapluat.com/nguyen-phuc-thuan.html>.

⁵⁵Tay son was a Place name which was a district of Binh Dinh province and bordering with An Khe district of Gia Lai Province. From Tay Son district to Nguyen royal dynasty in Hue province about 400km, and from Hanoi to Hue province about 654km. The Leader of Tay Son civil movement was including three brothers: Eldest brother was Nguyen Nhac, Second brother was Nguyen Lu, and Third Young brother was Nguyen Hue.

Phuc Thuan on the boat along the sea for the hiding in Saigon. In 1776, the Tay Son army again occupied Saigon – Gia Dinh by General Nguyen Lu, King Nguyen Phuc Thuan again fled to Bien Hoa city of Dong Nai province to flee, Tay Son forces growing stronger. One more time, in 1777, General Nguyen Lu back of the Tay Son troops into Saigon raids and destroyed completely of the government of King Nguyen Phuc Thuan, be killed here, be 26 years old at this time, no children to inherit. Therefrom, the system of government of Nguyen dynasty in Southern Vietnam collapsed completely official instead Tay Son dynasty (1778)⁵⁶.

After the Tay Son army destroyed the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Thuan, who also set up its own dynasty instead of the traditional Nguyen dynasty ago. In 1784 and 1786, the Tay Son troops conquered the North to destroy the army of Lord Trinh by General Nguyen Hue leader⁵⁷, hand over the entire territory of the North to King Le reigned, and the Tay Son army returned to the South ruled their territory.

In summary, King Nguyen Phuc Thuan who was not talent and virtue, he had put away national destiny in the recession, made the end of a Nguyen dynasty has existed more than 200 years.

⁵⁶See Pham Van Son. Op.cit., pp. 362 -374.

⁵⁷Lord Trinh: meaning the Trinh royal family. Their family register had have tradition to become a mandarin for Later Le dynasty. They have the trust from Le king, and afterward Trinh family has hold all powers in Le dynasty, and Later Le government was a only puppet government. After, Tay Son movement had defeated Trinh family (Lord Trinh), they had brought the justice for Later Le dynasty.

Table 1: A chart showing Kings of the Nguyen dynasty (1558-1777)

	Year	Name of Kings	Detail
Former	1524 - 1613	Nguyen Hoang	Chúa Tiên (First Lord): 1558 – 1613
	1563 - 1635	Nguyen Phuc Nguyen	Chúa Sãi (Monk Lord): 1613 – 1635
	1601 - 1648	Nguyen Phuc Lan	Chúa Thượng (Master Lord): 1635 – 1648
	1620 - 1687	Nguyen Phuc Tan	Chúa Hiền (Virtuous Lord): 1648 – 1687
	1649 - 1691	Nguyen Phuc Tran	Chúa Nghĩa (Clement Lord): 1687 – 1691
Latter	1697 - 1738	Nguyen Phuc Tru	Ninh Vương (Peaceful King): 1725 – 1738
	1714 - 1765	Nguyen Phuc Khoat	Vũ Vương (Hopeful King): 1738 – 1765
	1754 - 1777	Nguyen Phuc Thuan	Định Vương (Consistent King): 1765 – 1777)

2.3 The Reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu and Its Development (1691-1725)

It's said that, the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu was a dynasty, which had a lot of most outstanding points in the history of nine Nguyen dynasties. The previous kings who had made the base for establishing dynasty that king Nguyen Phuc Chu who had built firmly strategies to contribute for economic and political development that had great

impacted to the social and Buddhist development in Vietnam at that time, and thanks to it, the Nguyen dynasty attained refulgent prosperous age.

2.3.1 Significance of King Nguyen Phuc Chu's Reign

Nguyen Phuc Chu (1675 – 1725), who was born in Thanh Hoa province in Middle North part Vietnam today, was the eldest son of King Nguyen Phuc Tran. He insteaded his father to reign from 1691 to 1725, was 34 years in the throne. He was the 6th King of nine Kings of the Nguyen dynasty (1558 -1777) in Southern Vietnam, he was called Minh Vuong (Clear – Sighted King), who also known as Quoc Chua (Nation Lord), and then was posthumously honour as *Hien Tong Hieu Minh Emperor*⁵⁸. He was the King devout Buddhism very high compared to the previous and later Kings, he took refuge the Triple Gems and observed Bodhisattva precepts with Zen master Thach Liem and was buddhist named Hung Long by Zen master, with noble name “Thien Tung Dao Nhan”⁵⁹. During this time, he always supported and facilitated for the development of Buddhism, known as the golden age of Buddhism in 17th and 18th centuries, the same period of King Tran Nhan Tong (1258 – 1308) of Truc Lam Zen School⁶⁰. And king Nguyen Phuc Chu considered the second King Tran Nhan Tong in Vietnam.

With the brisk and wise, king Nguyen Phuc Chu received many cultural ideas of many different religions including Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, to supported for his reign⁶¹. The influence of that spiritual culture but his generals was also affected by the humanistic spirit.

According the cultural tradition of previous forefathers, King Nguyen Phuc Chu had advocated taking Buddhist thought orientations for the

⁵⁸<https://tuoitre.vn/chua-nguyen-phuc-chu-va-y-thuc-chu-quyen-lanh-tho-452489.htm>

⁵⁹Nguyễn Lang. Op.cit., p. 629.

⁶⁰Truong Phuoc Thanh (Thich Nguyen Tuu), **A Study of The Meditation Method of Master Tran Nhan Tong and Its Influence On The Vietnamese Society**, (MA degree thesis) [Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2557 (2014)], p. 6.

⁶¹Nguyen Khac Thuan, **The Cultural Course of Vietnam From Beginning to 19th Century** (Vietnamese version), (Ho Chi Minh City: Vietnamese Education Publishing House, 2010), pp. 365 - 367.

national life. He had an intimate relationship with Zen master Thach Liem whom has advised invaluable for his government (see more of section 3.2.1 and 4.2.1 of third and fourth chapter). And once the Zen master presented governing opinion to the King in the spirit of the Buddhist, that:

Preceptive purity is make the country from top to bottom liquidated correction, nobody who would not sit in the right place, nothing would never resolve legitimate. Doing so is the observation precept fullness of a King⁶².

Nguyen Phuc Chu who has keen political vision plus the ideological influence of Buddhist ethics, helped his imperial executive, made great achievements in the political sphere as well as in religious activities (for Buddhism). As, in 1697 – 1698, he extended the territory into southern part lands My Tho city (Tien Giang province), and in 1707, the territory was expanded to Ha Tien city (Kien Giang province today), forming increasing threefold of Vietnamese territory at that time, and the expansion was the territorial waters Truong Sa (Spratly Islands) and Hoang- Sa (Paracel Islands) of South China Sea in 1711⁶³, a Vietnam looks like today. On the other hand, he had the strategy for social stability, strong economic development, military training operation, consolidation in the defense system of ramparts, etc..., to become a powerful nation in region⁶⁴.

Moreover, in 1694, King Nguyen Phuc Chu commissioned the Nguyen dynasty's ambassador came to China to invite the renowned Zen Masters, seeking Buddhist scripture, dharma tool, ect... And in middle 1695, king Nguyen Phuc Chu combined Zen Master Thach Liem to organize Great Altar Rules (observing Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis precepts) for over 1400 monks and nuns at the Thien Lam pagoda – Thua Thien Hue province and total of attenders was on 4,000⁶⁵. Furthermore, king Nguyen Phuc Chu had

⁶²Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., pp. 630-631.

⁶³In 1471, King Le Thanh Tong had expanded Vietnamese territory to Binh Dinh province of the Middle Vietnam today. And in King Nguyen Hoang period (1600 - 1614), Vietnamese territory has also so that. Thereafter, King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691-1725) had expanded the territory to Ha Tien's land (Southern West part Land), Highland and East China Sea.

⁶⁴Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., pp. 646 - 647.

⁶⁵Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 616.

built and restored many temples in Thuan Hoa land as restored Thuy Van temple, Thien Mu temple, ect...He was also recommended ambassador came to China seeking Three Collections of the Buddhist Canon (Tipitaka).

In 1710, the King has casted large bell weight 3.285 pounds at Thien Mu pagoda (Thua Thien Hue province), to pray for prosperous country and peaceful society, and the being have enlightened wisdom⁶⁶. In 1715, the King restored Kinh Thien pagoda at Thuan Trach – Quang Binh province. In 1721, founding Giac Hoang pagoda, ect... and ordered building a lot of pagodas other. The King himself also was a vegetarian at Con Gia garden (Thien Mu pagoda) in a month, and sharing money and rice for the poor.

The Buddhist working that King Nguyen Phuc Chu done, in that, had two most important things that he was accomplished, making its mark on history. That was a great event in 1695, he invited Zen Master Thach Liem and many other monks to Thuan Hoa. The second was the Royal family refuged Buddhism by his lead⁶⁷. Thereby, showing the policies for Buddhism's development of the Nguyen Kings, starting from king Nguyen Hoang, attained radiant achievements and fullness under the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu. If the previous dynasty kings supported Buddhism came from political purpose, aiming to soothe the populace, capturing people's hearts, then Buddhism's support of King Nguyen Phuc Chu was not only political requirements, but also derived from the thought and mind of a devout Buddhism.

Through the points presented above, suggests that king Nguyen Phuc Chu was a clement virtue man, was political leaders talented. He represents the Nguyen dynastry developing country to become powerful and prosperous both economic and political, and peaceful society. It can be that the most thriving period of the Vietnamese economy at that time. In addition, he has also very high reverence to Buddhism, understanding

⁶⁶Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 16.

⁶⁷Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., p. 100.

the Buddha's teachings deeply⁶⁸. So he always supported Buddhism and concerned for the survival of Buddhism (so in 1699, he has banned spreading of Christianity in the South of Vietnam), and to bring the Buddhism became a State Religion of the nation. And he also deserved well of the Zen Master with the making Buddhism prosper in the South. Actually, King Nguyen Phuc Chu who made the history of Vietnam to a golden age in the eighteenth century.

2.3.2 Inheritance and Development from the Cultural Tradition of the previous Nguyen Dynasties

It's said that , King Nguyen Phuc Chu had made great achievement during his reign, it was thanks to the effort and enthusiasm of the Kings predecessors have defined for himself, which he could be a huge career and imposing country through his creativity and experience. To demonstrate this, we can summarize research through the following three issues:

On politically: the Nguyen dynasty, as well as King Nguyen Phuc Chu had outstanding success by the issue of political culture in the building and opening country. Through five previous dynasty, from Lord Nguyen Hoang to the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu total 134 years, and in 1558, Lord Nguyen Hoang ruled Thuan Hoa land in the South, and established a new dynasty under autonomy; in 1600, Lord Nguyen Hoang has formally declared secession his government from the Later Le dynasty in the North which became a self-governing country under the reign of the Nguyen dynasty in the South⁶⁹. Since then, the government apparatus of the Nguyen dynasty was more powerful and perfect, the territory was increasingly expanding to the southward, the social life was gradually peace and prosperity. Next to the reigns of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, he extended more large territory until the Ha Tien province border adjacent with Thailand Gulf and Cambodia at now.

⁶⁸Thich Dai San, **The Overseas Journal** (Vietnamese version), (Hue University Institute Press, 1963), pp. 87 - 90.

⁶⁹Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., pp. 97 - 98.

On economically: the previous kings who founded the dynasty and opening up the territory, and to survive and grow the social circumstances, that forced the Kings predecessors have strengthened the economy, ensured the military and cultural development in the nation. So, five Nguyen dynasties have spent more than 100 years in time, thinking the Kings also had the path of economic development are planned; especially in this time, the Nguyen dynasty opened up the foreign trade supporting the domestic economic⁷⁰; which have brought the benefits and tremendous success to the Nguyen dynasty, has upgraded to the Southern economy vision or crossed over with the countries in the region such as Siam (Thailand), Cambodia, Japan, China, ect... It has turned Thuan Quang land (Thuan Hoa and Quang Nam were the capital of the Nguyen dynasty) into a large commercial center of foreign trade, where economic and culture exchange to foreigners. As author Li Tana described that:

The foreign trade development of the Nguyen dynasty was placed at the top of the list of countries in mainland Southeast Asia in the seventeenth century, which favorable position made Hoi An become prosperous, populated; here, there was nothing there, homes, life, dress, all everything very classy and luxury, ect...⁷¹.

It was a very important advantage that King Nguyen Phuc Chu owns, that was an opportunity for him making a name later. And turn the government Nguyen economy had great potential in trade and which has helped them growing over time; was expended in the territory at the time.

On culturally: The Nguyen dynastry was successful in the opening up a government, which was a separate kingdom in the south, national cultural factors have helped them make this⁷². So, what were these factors?. First, the Nguyen government has cleverly knowing the

⁷⁰Le Thanh Khoi, **Vietnamese History From Origination to The Middle Twenties Century** (Vietnamese version), (Hanoi: The World Publishing House, 2014), pp. 321 - 330.

⁷¹Li Tana, **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**, (New York: Ithaca - Cornell University Press. 1998), p. 59, p.79 & p. 86.

⁷²Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., pp. 548 - 552.

times and preserving for the traditional culture developing in the new territory. It is worth mentioning was the promoting successor, that were flexible and highly creative in the power, made up the Vietnamese traditional culture in the integration power more and more. That culture was always bold ethnic Vietnam. So, when the Nguyen dynasty on the beginning and gradually expand in the south, they confronted with a new context completely social, that including many the indigenous deeply influenced culture capital by India civilization, Champa, Khmer and other minority ethnics, and some migrants from the North to the South has brought many cultural influences of confucianism⁷³. However, the Nguyen dynasty has received skillful points or beneficial in the indigenous culture for its development.

Second, they have incorporated the cultural ideas of Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism in its ruling successfully. The Mahayana Buddhism in use as the State religion of the Nguyen dynasty not only the moral support of Vietnamese traditional ideas on new territory but also the means be tolerated the ideology and the new culture, avoiding the cultural conflicts leading to conflict war, in which the inheritance selectively indigenous cultural from a special cultural nuances of the Nguyen dynasty in the South⁷⁴. Since then, the traditional culture was promoted through the reign of Nguyen dynasties every time had the flexibility to according the social circumstance, made a colorful culture of purebred Vietnamese. Being the basic King Nguyen Phuc Chu restored traditional Buddhist culture after Vietnamese Buddhism with many silence in a lot of years.

Through the above, showing us that three factors, political, economic and cultural, we can say that constitutes a Nguyen dynasty relatively perfection of begining. King Nguyen Phuc Chu who iherited this career, has helped him make a dynasty as well as the mighty Southern government; are recognized as a golden milestone in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But the biggest mark in the rule of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu had established a new territorial sovereignty, half the vast country Vietnam today, and the development to triple

⁷³Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., pp. 98 - 99.

⁷⁴Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., pp. 45 - 46.

territory earlier Vietnam⁷⁵. The one can not forget what he made for the Vietnamese Buddhism became the most development and flourishing period. Certainly, the this King had many great advantages in comparison with as the previous Kings.

2.3.3 The Strategy for Build and Protection of the Country

The Nguyen dynasty was founded at the early, everything has been deficiency⁷⁶, was an autonomous territory in the Southern Vietnam (1600) in comparison with as the Latter Le dynasty (1428-1789). They existed in a situation which increased risk of aggression, should have strategies for rule over the territory. So, in general of the Nguyen dynasty and in particular of the king Nguyen Phuc Chu reign had strategic policies for sustainable development through the two following aspects:

a. On the Political Aspect:

The first strategy was military reinforcement that prepare the process of expanding its territory and enemy defenses. Because, before and after the war happened between Lord Trinh in the North and the Nguyen dynasty in the South since 1627 to 1672, the military force of the Nguyen dynasty were frail and negligible, only by two – four compared with the army of Lord Trinh; but there was a reason for such strong impact to Nguyen dynasty, forcing them to enhance the development and consolidation of military, both road and waterways. In addition, they were given a basic policy about the favour for people, to be mobilizing all the people from the North to the South joining the army to fight, who join were tax breaks or didn't collect taxes for family and food to be provided. Besides, the Nguyen Government were also issued preferential policies and incentives for migration movement. That was the strategy for

⁷⁵Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., pp. 552 - 554.

⁷⁶The territory reigned by Nguyen dynasty which called New Land. Because here the population were very scattered, it is yet establishing village and hamlet, less people tilling in this place. So, afterward Nguyen dynasty reigned this territory, they have encouraged emigrant movement to this land and created the densely and thriving place.

organization of administrative apparatus of the Nguyen dynasty. We can study essential through the problem as follow:

On the administrative organization, they have reformed governing apparatus, this time the central government apparatus of the Nguyen dynasty was structured as follows: At the top is the king. Subordinates, setting four official administration heads help the king for managing aspects of work, to be called the four highest – ranking of the court (Tứ Trụ). Subordinates lower was Tam Ty (including three subsidiary bodies as Ty Xa Sai, Ty Tuong Than Lai and Ty Lenh Su). Later, King Nguyen Phuc Khoat (1744) changed from Tam Ty into Luc Bo⁷⁷. The consulate territorial government establishment were divided into Headquarters (Dinh), Town (palace – district - commune)⁷⁸. In the army, being divided into three types of units: Tuc Ve (security army): there was responsibility to protect the imperial city; Chính Binh (regular army): the troops stationed in the provinces; Thổ Binh (land army):

⁷⁷**Tu Tru** (Four Pillars): **Tu Tru** was four mandarins of royal dynasty. We can say: this four mandarin like as four mandarin of a Socialist today: General Secretary, National President, The Speaker of the National Assembly and the Prime Minister. This four people are members of privy council and will consultant for the King. When royal dynasty has upheaval or the King was absenting or the King was so young. These Four mandarins were their capacity as King representative to establish Regent Council to manage the country. This is a high organization in the feudal dynasty.

Tam Ty (Three Organizations) is administrative organization, including: 1. Ty Xa Sai : was place to manage the litigation, relative document; 2. Ty Tuong Than Lai: to manage tax collection and to supply rations for the army; 3. Ty Lenh Su: including offering sacrifices and ceremonial, also to undertake the good supply for Royal Family.

Lục Bộ (Six Ministries): the feudal dynasty has divided into six ministries, each ministry like as a ministry today. It is including: (1). **Bộ Hộ** (the same Finance and Labour department, today): this department has managed Land and Fields policy, population, rice tax and National budget; (2). **Bộ Lễ** (like as the department of Education and Informational Culture, today): it is including business follow as: ceremonial, education, religion, welfare work, document...; (3). **Bộ Lại** (the same Department of the Interior): to manage mandarin's title, promotion, manpower's supplement.... (4). **Bộ Công** (the Ministry of Construction and Transportation's Communications): this department solved the business follow as: to build rampart, bridges and road, woodwork, shipbuilding, repair...; (5). **Bộ Hình** (Supreme Court): including: litigation, imprisonment, law...; (6). **Bộ Binh** (Department of Defense): including: military arm, weaponry, the case of emergency....

⁷⁸Pham Van Son. Op.cit., p. 358. And See more footnot of thirty-fourth.

concentrated the south opening up the land. And each armies were divided into Cơ (division), Đội (battalion), Thuyền (naval battle) and then soldiers control strategies include Infantry, Naval force, Elephant force and Artillery in which focuses on more Naval forces⁷⁹. Therefrom, the effect of the force of the Nguyen dynasty were increasing: “a total of 22,740 chief soldiers for naval force and infantry”⁸⁰. At the time the Nguyen dynasty had used artillery proficiently, this artillery was salvaged from the ship of the Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch were wrecked⁸¹.

Besides, king Nguyen Phuc Chu was still kept the administrative organization like roots but he has given more lenient policies for the fields of politics, economy, society, education and religion. And he embarked on the official layout, and made plans for the next year as: From 1692 to 1698, king Nguyen Phuc Chu has realized the problem as: to censor the document, opened examination to recruit talent, reducing tax and penalty, limiting the luxury and waste. Besides, he has combined the ideas of three religion: Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism to apply in his reign⁸². On the other hand, he consolidated the military for defense with the reign of Le – Trinh dynasty in the North and other face always took the harmonious to deliver with the King of Champa in the South to focus developing social economy and to expand the territory⁸³.

We can relate to the process of expanding of South Vietnam of previous dynasties. In 1471, king Le Thanh Tong has expanded the territory to Binh Dinh province. Then, Nguyen kings (1558 – 1690) was still protecting and developing on that territory. Under the reign of king

⁷⁹Le Thanh Khoi. Op.cit., p. 305.

⁸⁰Li Tana, **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**, (New York: Ithaca - Cornell University Press. 1998), pp. 37 - 39.

⁸¹Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in 17th and 18th Centuries** (Vietnamese version), (Ho Chi Minh City: Young Publishing House, 2014), pp. 68 - 73.

⁸²Le Son, Nguyen Phuc Chu king- Build and Development of South Vietnam to Follow the Three Teachings Spirituality (Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism). <<http://www.sugia.vn>>. And see more, Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 630.

⁸³Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., pp. 549 - 552.

Nguyen Phuc Chu within 30 years, Vietnam has taken a very long step on the area triple times more than Vietnam first⁸⁴.

In short, king Nguyen Phuc Chu was a talented politician who used the teachings of Confucianism for the country ruling, and used Buddhism for the training of the mind in his politics, build a society: moral, sustainable and prosperous⁸⁵. With his wisdom which helped him opening around world of vision, be able to make the most glorious career of an emperor in the task of preserving and protecting the nation.

b. On the Social Aspect:

Economy was also equally important strategy. Nguyen dynasty was aware of their own survival, especially in times of war, the military and economy must be completely guaranteed and grown. Thus, in the 17th and 18th centuries, Nguyen dynasty's economy was oriented foreign trade with foreign countries such as Spain, Portugal, England, France, the Netherlands, Japan and China, ect... This was the time when Europeans rushed to trade and based in Southeast Asia⁸⁶.

Meanwhile, the Nguyen dynasty established on newly land, the population was poor, the domestic economy was underdeveloped not enough to supply the market and human resources were lacking and weak. Therefore, the trade issues for international countries were chance would decide the speed development of the Nguyen government that build up and face the times, "the issue of foreign trade was a matter of survival, it was very important for the Nguyen dynasty"⁸⁷. And since then, the opening policy has been enacted.

⁸⁴Le Thanh Khoi. Op.cit., pp. 309 - 310.

⁸⁵Le Son, Nguyen Phuc Chu king- Build and Development of South Vietnam to Follow the Three Teachings Spirituality (Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism). <<http://www.sugia.vn>>.

⁸⁶Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in 17th and 18th Centuries** (Vietnamese version), (Ho Chi Minh City: Young Publishing House, 2014), p. 6.

⁸⁷Li Tana, **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**. New York: Ithaca - Cornell University Press. 1998. p. 59.

As in 1600, king Nguyen Hoang decided to establish the foreign trade relations with European countries, especially the regular trade with Japan and China. This was the first step that underpins the following dynasties. Afterward, the Kings recognized the importance of foreign trade, going beyond this foreign trade, king Nguyen Phuc Nguyen (1613 – 1635) married his daughter to a Japanese merchant, name is Araki Sotao⁸⁸.

In particular, in 1695 King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691 – 1725) had preferential policies, expanding the free foreign trade boats to trade with Thuan Quang land of the South, such as Japan, China, Siam, Cambodia, Manila, Batavia, and European countries such as Britain, France, Holland, et... We can see that the foreign trade was the decisive factor for a new government in the South of Vietnam, in just a few decades, it became rich and growing to maintain its independence and expand Southward⁸⁹.

Thereby, it was revealed that King Nguyen Phuc Chu had developed a relatively strategic policy both political and economic for the ensuring with the social security, national defense and sustainable development.

2.3.4 The Influences of the Nguyen Phuc Chu's Reign to Vietnamese Society

With 34 years in power, King Nguyen Phuc Chu has contributed much to the expansion of the country as well as promoting the development of social economy of the South government in the early 18th century. He was a Buddhist cultivator with great compassion and toleration in all ruling and caring people. This lesson has the meaning about the humanity, that was still current and illuminated for posterity. From a religious and cultural perspective, he was a second Phat Hoang

⁸⁸Ibid., pp. 60 - 64.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 71.

(Buddhist King) under Tran dynasty of the history of Vietnamese Buddhism⁹⁰, like as the second Emperor Asoka to the Buddhism history.

So, how did the reign of king Nguyen phuc Chu affect Vietnamese society? It was making a complete change in terms of economics, culture, politics and education that bring about a peaceful society, people living in prosperity and peace. All shown through things as follow:

a. Economy:

Right in the capital of the Nguyen dynasty, the social life and economy have become rich and prosperous. The metal industry was very developed in terms of import and export such as zinc, silver, lead, copper; it has paralleled and developed with the growing foreign trade economy in Cochinchina (the South) of Nguyen dynasty⁹¹; along the southern land from Thuan Hoa to the southwest part, there were international ports (as, Hoi An port – Quang Nam province, Thanh Ha port of Quang Tri and Hue province, Quy Nhon port – Binh Dinh province, Vung Lam port – Phu Yen province, the port of Gia Dinh – Saigon, Cu Lao Pho port – Dong Nai province and Ha Tien port) for trade with foreign countries, as well as the highlands here have also been expanded commerce, creating a diverse economy for the Kingdom. Like as Hoi An, it was an international trading port. It became a crowded commercial center, an import – export distribution center. Or Thanh Ha trading port and Phu Xuan royal capital in Hue province was also a leading international trade gateway to Japan, China, Siam, Cambodia, Spain, Portugal, Netherlands, France, ect...life here was quiet rich and spacious⁹². Thus, the economy of the Nguyen dynasty in the 17th and 18th centuries was considered to be the most amazingly developed economy in comparison with the previous dynasty of the 14th to 16th centuries.

⁹⁰Phật Hoàng: it was a Noun to hint for the King or Royal Family who had ordained to follow the teachings of the Buddha. And later, they have excellent practice and become into Zen Master, as King Tran Nhan Tong called Phat Hoang tran Nhan Tong in 14th and 15th centuries.

⁹¹Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., pp. 268 - 271.

⁹²Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., pp. 30 - 38.

b. Culture:

From the beginning of the Nguyen dynasty, they were recognized the importance of traditional culture in Vietnam. It was the bridge to create the strength of national unity. Therefore, the Nguyen dynasty encouraged the people to promote the spirit of traditional culture bearing bold Vietnamese identity (now there were many different cultures: Indian culture, Khmer culture, Champa culture, ect...) in which Buddhism's culture given prominence by the Nguyen dynasty. King Nguyen Phuc Chu those promoted and created conditions for the development of Mahayana Buddhism that become a familiar religion of the Vietnamese people, and Mahayana Buddhism is seen as a means to tolerate new ideologies and cultures and was the basis for ideology and spirituality in his reign⁹³. Therefore, the inheritable and selective responsibility, King Nguyen Phuc Chu brought Buddhist culture into the orthodox culture of the nation as well as folk culture to a climax and flourishing period.

c. Politics:

The period of king Nguyen Phuc Chu was considered to be the most stable and peaceful political phase. Because he who was a devout Buddhist; he took the compassionate spirit of Buddhism for the society ruling, brought the happiness and prosperity for the people. King Nguyen Phuc Chu has described by author Nguyen Lang that, he were a clear-sighted king, deeply devoted for the Buddhism⁹⁴. From his Buddhist knowledge, he has realized great responsibility for the country, so his economic and social issues were organized very closely, in order to, contributing to the political stabilization.

d. Education:

In particular, king Nguyen Phuc Chu promulgated many policies to encourage education and examination, in order to, the training of

⁹³Ibid., p. 46.

⁹⁴Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 629.

talents for supplement the state apparatus and the raising the intellectual level in the society. In addition, he coordinated with Thach Liem Zen Master to organize dhamma classes and organized Buddhist events to train the monks and nuns for the aim to serve the Buddhadhamma and social life⁹⁵. Thus, during this time, the society of King Nguyen Phuc Chu's reign spurred the movement of the learning, the translation and the education.

2.4 Concluding Remarks

Vietnam, in the 16th to 18th centuries, the existence of feudal corporations under the rule of the Latter Le dynasty in the North, the most prominent about social and political have the civil war between the feudal power to fight for power. While a new dynasty was formed that is the Nguyen dynasty in the late 16th to 18th centuries in South Vietnam, created a new historical identity for Vietnam. Although a newly established dynasty independent of the Latter Le dynasty in the North, but it occupied a unique place in Vietnamese history. The Nguyen dynasty succeeded in the process of the building and expanding its territory, contributing the change of Vietnamese appearance during the last two centuries and they have created a powerful country in terms of economy, culture, politics and education, all pull down in the South. This was a great contribution of the Nguyen dynasty, because they have made a large Vietnamese territory as today. Without the Nguyen's breakthrough toward the South, it was unlikely that Vietnam would have such a large territory. As the author Litana said "Thank to the Nguyen dynasty, the war of Vietnam ended".

Being beautiful for history of the Nguyen dynasty, king Nguyen Phuc Chu was the sixth generation of the Nguyen dynasty, was a man who had many innovative strategies for the society and religion (Buddhism) in the South of Vietnam, left many impressive achievement, stirred in the current political wave. He who was regarded as a brilliant political leader, was the clearsighted king of country, as a devout Buddhist.

⁹⁵Le Thanh Khoi. Op.cit., pp. 344 - 346.

Chapter III

The Relationship Between King Nguyen Phuc Chu and Buddhism

In late 17th and early 18th centuries, the Vietnamese Buddhism opened a new face by king Nguyen Phuc Chu, who had the policies to built a moral society according Buddhist ethics thoughts. Therefrom, he had a lot buddhist activities to diffuse and encourage everyone should support for his policies. And, it was real modernization and challenge for own him. But finally, it got remarkable results that great impacted on Buddhist and social development in Vietnam.

3.1 Buddhist Educational Background of King Nguyen Phuc Chu

Buddhist ethics thought was a importance of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, because he want to develop social education on the base of buddhist ethical education, and onwards a civilized and peaceful society. So, even own King had not stopped learning and studying the dhamma to apply in real himself life. Thus, following the works of study and practice of the king.

3.1.1 His Zen Teachers

It can be said that for the previous Nguyen Kings who used to worship Buddhism through religious ceremony, most of them have not actually applied the teachings of Buddhism to social life. Meanwhile, king Nguyen Phuc Chu was a devout Buddhist who understand the dhamma

deeply and was a devoted person who wanted to learn the teachings of the Buddha to train himself and bring the teachings to the benefit of all by true compassion. Therefore, in this research is introduced through thought and methods of practice of three eminent Zen Masters that King Nguyen Phuc Chu has the passion and choose to study, and about the personal profiles of each are explained in chapter four.

a. Learning with Nguyen Thieu Zen Master

He was Chinese, the 33rd Patriarch of the Lam Te Zen School and came to Vietnam in 1677⁹⁶. He became the first Patriarch of the Lam Te Zen School in the South Vietnam. He had a good fortune to work with the grandfather and father of king Nguyen Phuc Chu to be king Nguyen Phuc Tan (1648 – 1687) and king Nguyen Phuc Tran (1687 – 1691). Therefore, Nguyen Thieu Zen Master has trusted and supported by the Nguyen dynasty, so he went all over the South to spread Buddhism for everyone. And he made Buddhism here become the attraction for many other monks who wanted to come here, and his reputation was known throughout the country.

During the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, Zen Master Nguyen Thieu had close predestined affinity with the King more to do Buddhist works and King Nguyen Phuc Chu often frequented to study the dhamma with him. As, in 1692, the King ordered the Zen Master Nguyen Thieu to add a pagoda in Hue province as Ha Trung pagoda (while the Zen Master was staying at the Thap Thap Di Da temple in Binh Dinh province). In 1693, king Nguyen Phuc Chu commissioned the Zen Master Nguyen Thieu through China to invite the Zen Master come to Vietnam for propagate and to open the great ceremony of the observer precepts of

⁹⁶Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Influence of Nguyen Thieu Patriarch For the Buddhism in Dong Nai – Gia Dinh Province**, (Ho Chi Minh city Publishing House, 2000), p.37; Thich Minh Tue, **A Brief History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese version) (Ho Chi Minh City: Buddhist Association of Ho Chi Minh City Press, 1993), p. 429; And, Nguyen Tai Thu, edit. **The History Of Buddhism in Vietnam**, (USA: Institute of Philosophy – Vietnamese Academy of Social Science, 2006), p. 198. According these authors all written to be 1677. But according author Nguyen Lang said that Nguyen Thieu Zen Master went to Vietnam in 1665 (Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 586).

Bhikkhu (Altar Rules) at Thien Mu pagoda – Hue province⁹⁷. However, king Nguyen Phuc Chu has short studied times with the Zen Master from 1691 to 1695. Because, after 1695, Zen Master Nguyen Thieu from Thuan Hoa land (Middle Vietnam) to Dong Nai province (the South Vietnam), and spreading Buddhism in this area, so the chance between Zen Master and king Nguyen Phuc Chu met few⁹⁸. Although, Nguyen Phuc Chu's study time was very short with bonze Nguyen Thieu, he comprehended many meditation ideas of Buddhism through this Zen Master.

Zen Master Nguyen Thieu was a follower of Lam Te Zen School, the guideline of this Zen School was not attachment, achieving Empty Nature by methods Tam Huyen, Tam Yeu and Tu Lieu Gian⁹⁹. So, the thought of Zen Master Nguyen Thieu also was not attachment, gained Empty Nature, his conception that the Buddha Nature of beings and the Buddha are equal¹⁰⁰. Since then, studying the Buddhism between king Nguyen Phuc Chu and Zen Master was also the exchange of this practice, i.e, how to identify the Buddha nature of the mind. When we understand ourselves, we have the love of the people around. And king Nguyen Phuc Chu applied this philosophy to his own rule on the society.

⁹⁷Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Influence of Nguyen Thieu Patriarch For the Buddhism in Dong Nai – Gia Dinh Province** (Vietnamese version). (Ho Chi Minh city Publishing House, 2000), p. 37. And, Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**,(Vietnamese version),(Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995),p. 122.

⁹⁸Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 122.

⁹⁹**Tam Huyền:** including three practice methods, as Precepts – Meditation – Wisdom. **Tam Yếu:** including three importance factors: Not speak – Not hear – Not see. **Tứ Liệu Giản:** to including four mind non-attachments, as to attain the mind but do not attaining the situation, to attain the situation but do not attaining the mind, both the mind and situation all attaining, and the mind and situation were not attaining. < according. Phan Đăng, **Meditation Master Lieu Quan and Vietnamese Buddhism in XVIII Century**. Sciential journal, Huế University, Vol.72A, No.3, 2012, p. 72>.

¹⁰⁰Nguyen Tai Thu, edit. Op.cit., p. 199.

b. Learning with Thach Liem Zen Master

After the Zen Master Nguyen Thieu went in Dong Nai and Gia Dinh-Saigon province to spread; King Nguyen Phuc Chu invited Thach Liem Zen Master from China to the royal capital of Nguyen dynasty to spread the Buddhadhamma. Thach Liem Zen Master (also was known as Thich Dai San) was the 29th generation of Tao Dong Zen School in China, who went to Vietnam in 1695. And Vietnamese bonze Lieu Quan (later he became a famous Zen Master in the South Vietnam) also applied studying with him during he stayed in Vietnam¹⁰¹. It can be said that king Nguyen Phuc Chu admired and trusted so much in the practice style of Thach Liem Zen Master more than Nguyen Thieu Zen Master and the Zen Master other. Therefore, between him and bonze Thach Liem had many meetings with the discussion of the intimate Buddhadhamma, made many marks on the occasion of his stayed in Vietnam over a year.

Bonze Thach Liem's meditation thought was more open than the two Zen Master Nguyen Thieu and Lieu Quan, which were focus on three points: Thien Tinh Song Tu, Phat - Nho Nhat Tri and Lam – Tao Tong Hop¹⁰². Thus, when he instructed the practice method for King Nguyen Phuc Chu, the King's thought views were also opening more.

Most notably, Thach Liem Zen Master's teachings had a great impact on the Buddhist perception of king Nguyen Phuc Chu and the way

¹⁰¹Nguyen Tai Thu, edit. Op.cit., p. 200.

¹⁰²Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., pp. 622 – 628. **Thiền Tịnh Song Tu** (Zen Buddhism and Purity Buddhism sect): This two sect were combined to practise together. According meditation of Mahayana Buddhism is destroying attachment of ego and attained Natural Buddha; And according Pure Land sect was attention the name of Amitabha Buddha to lead the enlightenment of Natural Buddha. So the Zen and Pure Land sect combined each other, and the Pure Land sect into a simple method of practice the meditation which everyone easy practice that. **Nho Phật Nhất Trí** (Buddhism and Confucianism thoughts were equivalence): Thach Liem Zen Master has combined the thoughts of Buddhism and Confucianism to teach everyone to toward morality, because he said that between these two sect have the thoughts equivalence each other. **Lâm – Tào Tổng Hợp** (the collection of two Zen School Lam Te and Tao Dong): for Thach Liem Zen Master was the collection ideas of Lam Te and Tao Dong Zen sect to become a method practice together. See more the thought of zen at section 3.2, and Phan Đăng, **Meditation Master Lieu Quan and Vietnamese Buddhism in XVIII Century**. Sciential journal, Vol.72A, No.3, (Hue University 2012), p.73.

to govern the country was very effective. As in the book “Ho Phap Kim Thang Thu”, the Zen Master asked the King to consult of the questionable subject of Buddhadhamma (Problems set by Zen masters), as follows:

*I have not any method of magic, only wish the king to consult this problem: who was yourself master? Practice but no dream wildly of mind... No matter in all circumstances, even during to do everything... Do not forget it...*¹⁰³.

Another time, Zen Master Thach Liem also taught king Nguyen Phuc Chu on the issue chanting mantra of upholding meditation thought:

*It was important by practicer. The chanting person had purity and virtue that has result, and then Zen Master outlines 18 things about the rules of country in the spirit of Buddhist morality instead of the chanting mantra*¹⁰⁴.

During a consultation on Buddhism, Bonze Thach Liem talked about the abstinence issue to the King for his reign, also bearing the thought of meditation:

*The abstinence (observer precept) was not just for the clean mouth and the clean mind. The abstinence was to make the country from the top to the bottom of the peaceful correction, nobody was not sitting in the right place, nobody was not resolved satisfactorily, doing so was the fullness abstinence of his one the King*¹⁰⁵.

Then, the bonze Thach Liem asked king Nguyen Phuc Chu to practice the abstinence precepts by: freeing those who were imprisoned unjustly. Releasing prisoners in prison. Charity for the poor. Unleash those who were suppressed. Abolish the rules too strict. Tax cuts and tax breaks for the poor, small bussinesses and traders.

¹⁰³Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 627

¹⁰⁴Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), P. 15, And Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 629.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 15; And Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p.630; and Thich Dai San, **The Overseas Journal** (Vietnamese version), (Hue University Institute Press, 1963), p. 97.

At the end of 1695, when Zen Master Thach Liem who was about to return his home, encouraged king Nguyen Phuc Chu and King's mother trying to practice the way of attention Buddha, and wrote a book on Attention Amitabha Buddha for them, called "An Explanation of Amitabha Nature"¹⁰⁶. Therefore, the King was touched by the merits of Zen Master Thach Liem, who exclaimed:

Being near to send early, feed chat, after the lectures on meditation and suttas, had instruction in the ethics and discipline from the great to the small, pointing out the direction, clear words, it's like bringing people from darkness into the light, helping us in politics a lot¹⁰⁷.

In this regard, author Nguyen Lang, from the book of A Complete Work of Historical Interpretation of Vietnamese Buddhism, commented:

Perhaps this was the greatest teaching process of Zen Master Thach Liem, because king Nguyen Phuc Chu admired and trusted him¹⁰⁸.

c. Learning with Lieu Quan Zen Master

After the Bonze Thach Liem returned to China (1696)¹⁰⁹, King Nguyen Phuc Chu had many opportunity to meet Zen Master Lieu Quan, who was a Vietnamese Zen Master, with high prestige and virtue, was a famous monk after Zen Master Nguyen Thieu, who became enlightened the Buddha's teachings in 1712, and succeeded Zen Master Nguyen Thieu to follow the thought of Lam Te Zen School¹¹⁰. At that time, the Nguyen's

¹⁰⁶Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 616 & p. 623. *Hộ Pháp Kim Thang Thư* was the book to guide the method practice meditation by the contemplation of Problems set by Zen Masters. *Tự Tánh Di Đà Thuyết* (the explanation of Amitabha Nature) was talking about method of attention Amitabha Buddha and comprehension Natural Buddha.

¹⁰⁷Thich Dai San. Op.cit., p. 10

¹⁰⁸Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 630.

¹⁰⁹See more part (b) of section 3.1.1, which talk about Thach Liem Zen Master.

¹¹⁰Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., pp. 600 - 601.

King greatly respected him, because this was a rare opportunity not to be missed for a devout Buddhist King. Zen master Lieu Quan (1699 – 1742) and King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691 – 1725) made great contributions in the process of launching the Buddhist revival movement in Cochinchina (The South Vietnam). Thus, between the King and Zen Master, there was a lot of time spent together in the development of the country and the restoration of Buddhism in this period. Mostly during the period 1708 to 1722, Zen Master Lieu Quan spreaded and lived in the Nguyen dynasty capital (Hue province) more frequently¹¹¹. And, this was also the opportunity for king Nguyen Phuc Chu to approach and learn the Dhamma from the Zen Master.

After, Zen Master Lieu Quan enlightened himself with Zen Master Tu Dung by the method of the Questionable Subject of Buddhaddhamma (Problems set by Zen masters)¹¹² of Lam Te Zen School. Then, with the actual state of Vietnamese society, so Bonze Lieu Quan was unable to teach the method of the Questionable Subject of Buddhaddhamma to his disciples, and he combined his own practice experience to present the method of “**Thien Tinh Song Tu**” (the collection of Zen and Purity Land sect) to guide for everyone¹¹³, which brings bold nuance of Vietnam as from the Ly and Tran dynasties period (1010 – 1400) that the Zen Master once outlined.

So, for king Nguyen Phuc Chu, the Zen Master Lieu Quan also instructed the virtues of a leader and encouraged the practice of both meditation and attention Amitabha Buddha, thereby increasing the King's generosity and forgiveness for everyone. But it was worth mentioning that king Nguyen Phuc Chu had more time with the bonze Lieu Quan than, so he had learned from Zen Master of style, lifestyle and humility. That was the most valuable lesson for the way of his rule.

¹¹¹Nguyen Tai Thu, edit. Op.cit., pp. 200 - 201.

¹¹²This is traditional practice method of Lam Te sect of Mahayana Buddhism. They used paradox topic for reality to contemplate until attained enlightenment of Empty Nature.

¹¹³Which was also traditional method of Mahayana Buddhism. Both practice meditation and attention Amitabha Buddha all to help one another lead to enlightenment states of mind, and destroyed attachment.

3.1.2 The Skills in The Buddhist Doctrine

The teachings of the Buddha there are a lot of doctrines for their practice. But the main part of this section focuses on three basic teachings for the practice of king Nguyen Phuc Chu as follows:

a. The Compassion

King Nguyen Phuc Chu had understood the teaching of the Buddha through the teaching of the Zen Master, which was the philosophy of compassion. This was the basic element of every human being that must be in dealing with one another in life. But in particular, for king Nguyen Phuc Chu, the problem of clearly recognizing the Buddhism's philosophy of compassion was needing necessary and practical, because he was holding the lives of millions of people. Therefore, he must have a generosity and tolerance, to bring happiness and peace for the society; and these were recorded by Zen Master Thach Liem in the book *The Record of Foreign History*¹¹⁴.

The compassionate spirit of Buddhism has popularized and widespread by two Zen School Lam Te and Tao Dong in the renaissance Buddhism age in the south during the Nguyen dynasty. In particular, king Nguyen Phuc Chu was most affected that spirit through Zen Master Thach Liem. And it was reflected in his reigning policies that bring benefits and happiness to the people and Buddhist monks¹¹⁵. As further illustrated, king Nguyen Phuc Chu has a passion for Buddhism, was aware of the Buddha's enlightened truth, so he observed Bodhisattva precepts for lay Buddhist¹¹⁶. This was the compassionate spirit of the Lord Bodhisattva but King Nguyen Phuc Chu wanted to practice following that spirit, to add his power and ability to benefit of the society and the Buddhism without being tired.

¹¹⁴Thich Dai San. Op.cit., pp. 97 - 98; and Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., pp.621 - 622.

¹¹⁵Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 15, And Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., pp. 630 - 631.

¹¹⁶Thich Dai San. Op.cit., p. 87.

b. The Impartialness

Thanks to the spirit of self-control and independence of Buddhism, the Vietnamese people have found a new way out of the dominion of foreign invaders. And Vietnamese Buddhism has also eradicated China's culture slavery during ten centuries by the patriotic spirit and equality of Buddhism¹¹⁷. In the period of Ly and Tran dynasties (1010 – 1400), with the spirit of Equality and the Engaged (to enter into the worldly) of Buddhism, it opened the first independent dynasties in Vietnamese history¹¹⁸, making the flow of the race along with the Vietnamese Buddhism, and it has created remarkable periods of Vietnamese culture and politics.

The role of Buddhism for building and development of Vietnam's independence is like water mixed with milk. The Vietnamese history is closely linked to the history of Buddhism, because the Buddhism has been the spiritual support for a moral culture adapted to the choice of the Vietnamese people. From then on, King Nguyen Phuc Chu who had been devoted to the Triple Gems for a long time, was greatly influenced by Mahayana Buddhism, and he applied it in the real life to create a peaceful and prosperous society, as Zen Master Thach Liem said:

“The king has done many buddhist works, great generosity and selflessness, that is blessing the whole country, for all people”¹¹⁹.

With the spirit of Compassion and Equality of Buddhism helped a society under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu has gained democracy, human rights are elevated, no lament and indignation, one was actually a morally pure society.

¹¹⁷Before Vietnamese has been invaded by Chinese from 980 C.E until the period of Nguyen dynasty (1558 – 1777), Chinese was still invading Vietnamese on politics and culture aspect.

¹¹⁸Thich Mat The, **Essays on The History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version), (Da Nang: Minh Duc Press, 1970). p. 119 & pp. 145 - 149.

¹¹⁹Thich Dai San. Op.cit., p. 89.

c. The Four Noble Truths

A doctrine which has very high value in the Buddhism, as The Four Noble Truths that had great impacted to the ideas of king Nguyen Phuc Chu. Thanks to it, he seen the suffering of man and himself, especially in the period of the country was always there are wars, people were unhappy and they went to new land was reclaimed, the economic life of the people remained. Since then, he want to practice loving kindness, equality, the doctrine of the Cause and Effect of the Buddha, in order to always benefit the country and society, he said:

Living by the Way of Confucianism, the devotion in the Buddhism, because politics can not help do the same, believe in virtue and respect the teacher, get Cause and Effect that think to the blessing. Thus, the country was peaceful, the body and mind were safe¹²⁰.

Therefore, his life is gentle, simple and calm, that is the result that he diligently learned from the high virtuous teachers¹²¹. Although king Nguyen Phuc Chu lived in the royal life, his mind was always on Buddhism, practicing for himself and appreciating the life of the monk, which showed that he was very receptive to the Buddha's teachings, penetrated the Empty Nature of the meditation.

King Nguyen Phuc Chu accomplished many great things during his reign, because he had made the right path for himself, that path was Buddhism, which helped him recognize and penetrate the life nature through the doctrine of Compassion, Equality and the Four Noble Truths.

3.1.3 Nguyen Phuc Chu had Appied Buddhist Thoughts for His Reign

Tao Dong and Lam Te Zen School were present in Cochinchina (the South) along with the reign of Nguyen Phuc Chu who was a talented

¹²⁰Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 16.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 17.

king and early buddhists; so Tao Dong Zen School has become a motivation for the king Nguyen Phuc Chu to try to implement the reign of country under the influence of Buddhism, as well as to promote the King to accomplish some great buddhist works¹²². That we are not surprised at all, since the beginning of the founding kingdom of the predecessors kings those had aware of the importance of Buddhist thoughts, and it became a tradition in the reign of the Nguyen dynasty until the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, who inherited that things, and helped his career refulgent success.

So, how did king Nguyen Phuc Chu use Buddhist thoughts in his rule? First of all, he was a disciple of Thach Liem Zen Master in Tao Dong Zen School, because the King's will was to take refuge in Buddhism in order to study the spirit of compassion to escape suffering. And Thach Liem Zen Master who has helped and changed a lot of the King's aware for his rule. Therefrom, the King had taught and cleared by the Zen Master to his dynasty works, as:

The Buddhism of the king was in the state of the rule country and people. There is only one, but the status of each person is different, if the ruler of the nation, ignoring all the order of discipline, to force the pure, is not clear. If the mind is not desire, no wish, pure heart, time depends on the behaviour, although the treatment of everything but no disturbing and sadness by its; taking the virtue to rule the people, that is to make the highest level of pure Buddhism, the King or Buddha is nothing else¹²³.

From then on, the this Buddhist King deeply influenced of the Mahayana Buddhist thoughts from his master and he was advised a great deal on the path of reign, such as: instead, the king practiced the mantra method, and his master taught him how to govern by the virtuous way to follow the eighteen point testimony, called the "Founding Treaty", which was all told about the soldiers, patriots, merchants, benefactors,

¹²²Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., pp. 633 - 635.

¹²³Prof, Tran Kinh Hoa. **A Study of the Record of Foreign History and Thach Liem Zen Master**, 2011. <<http://lytranvien.blogspot.com/2011/11/hai-ngoai-ky-su-va-su-thach-liem.html>>.

disciplines, and the king gladly made that order¹²⁴. Another occasion, Thach Liem Zen Master taught the King how to practice the precepts, that:

The abstinence is not just keeping our mouth clean, pure thoughts. It is necessary for the Buddhist King to bring his country under his peaceful control, no one is not satisfied, nothing is not satisfactory, so called fullness¹²⁵.

Just as the Thach Liem Zen Master always advised the King to rule the country by clement virtue, to take loving kindness to rule, to issue a leniency policy for prisoners, to abolish severe punishments of brutality.

These were Buddhist ideas that the King Nguyen Phuc Chu received from Thach Liem Zen Master, so his temper was imbued with the taste of kind to animals, seeing the people and the soldier as his own. It is spirit of compassion and altruism of Buddhism that he applied and promoted strongly, the same way was the Bodhisattva path for the benefit of beings.

King Nguyen Phuc Chu learned a great deal about country-ruling and meditation thoughts from his master, as well as deeply knowledge of causality. He seen the suffering of the people and recognized his responsibility that what should do.

As in sutta Cakkavatti Sihanada also taught about the Character of the leader, that:

1. Good ruler: acted impartial, without prejudice, and without discrimination between other groups; 2. Good ruler: did not cherish any kind of anger with whom; 3. Good ruler: did not be afraid of anything in law enforcement, if the law was right; 4. Good ruler: there must be a clear understanding of the law of

¹²⁴Thich Dai San. Op.cit., p. 100.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 97.

*fairness and impartiality of anyone, and the law must be properly*¹²⁶.

Besides, the Buddha also taught seven things to a prosperous nation, like as: “1. Democratic activity; 2. National solidarity; 3. To enact laws properly and respect the old law; 4. Harmony of the generation, respect for elders; 5. Respect for women; 6. Respect cultural beliefs in accordance with the law; 7. Honor and favor the wisdom, the sage”¹²⁷. Through that, let us see that to do something successful, we also need to take ethics, humanity, tolerance as the head. In the meantime, to train good body and mind, the Buddha also teaches them about loving kindness and toleration.

In short, King Nguyen Phuc Chu applied Buddhist thoughts to reign of the country and expanded the territory with the sharp political eye. Because, the choice of Buddhism in a multicultural environment, that person must have a superior intellect. The conception of equality of Buddhism had somewhat blurred the relationship between the reign and to be reign. This was manifested during the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, and Buddhism played a very important role in social development¹²⁸.

If any nation knows how to apply Buddhist ethics, it is certain that it will bring them a prosperous nation that will put an end to social evils; to ward the true – the good – the beautiful society. And king Nguyen Phuc Chu was one of those who have applied success of that spirit, meaning the equality (compassion, selflessness) and the causal principle. And king Nguyen Phuc Chu was one of the most prominent in the process of expanding the territory, developing Buddhism under the Nguyen dynasty in South Vietnam.

¹²⁶(P.Abai) Y. S. Rao (ed) *Buddhism and Modern Society*, (Deep Publication 2008), p. 108

¹²⁷*Dīgha-Nikāya*. I.6. M. Walshe (tr) *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, Wisdom Publications, 1995 p. 68. Or see, *Anguttara Nikāya*. II.208. F. L. Woodward (tr.) *the Book of the Gradual Sayings*, (London Published for the Pali text society, 1960), p. 27.

¹²⁸Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., p. 635.

3.2 King Nguyen Phuc Chu and Zen Buddhism

At that time, Mahāyāna Buddhism in Vietnam has only two Zen school in the South, those are Zen School Tao Dong and Lam Te. These two sects were all originated from China by the Chinese Zen Masters, who had come Vietnam in the middle 17th century. It has great developed in the southern Vietnam, and large influented in the masses, as well as the kings of the Nguyen dynasty, and in particular the king Nguyen Phuc Chu who had very worshipped these two sects.

3.2.1 Tao Dong Zen School (zh. *cáo-dòng-zōng* - 曹洞宗)

This school has originated from China. It was formed by two Zen masters named Đông Sơn Luong Gioi (807-869) and Tao Sơn Ban Tịch (840-901). It was one in five of Tao Khue Zen school of the sixth Hue Nang Patriarch in China: Lam Te sect, Quy Nguong, Tao Đông, Vạn Môn and Pháp Nhãn sect. Tao Dong Zen school was imported to Vietnam from seventeenth century, both in North and South. It was presented in the North Vietnam by Zen master Thuy Nguyệt when he was study in China in 1664, and he become back Vietnam in 1667, at Vong Lao temple – An Sơn mountain, Đông Triều district, Hải Dương province. Therefrom, this school developed thriving here because it has supported from King Lê Thế Tông (1575-1599) and a lot of the Zen Master other in late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. In the South, the Zen master Hưng Liên first who was propagated this school in Tam Thai temple, Quảng Nam province under the dynasty of king Nguyễn Phúc Trăn (1687-1691). And in 1695, Zen master Thạch Liêm (1633-1704) of this school from China to the Southern Vietnam to propagate by king Nguyễn Phúc Chu's invitation, and he made this sect prevalent¹²⁹.

In particular, Zen Master Thạch Liêm has great contribution in the development and propagation of Buddhism, and made this sect a profound influence on King Nguyễn Phúc Chu and the people, who changed the face of Buddhism in Vietnam, clearly; and creating a lively

¹²⁹Nguyễn Lang, Op.cit., pp.608 – 615. And Nguyễn Khuông Đan, (Thích Nguyễn Chơn). **The Recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism In The 20th Century** (MA degree thesis), (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2008), p. 34.

atmosphere of Buddhism in the Nguyen dynasty capital. Zen Master Thach Liem was regarded the first contributing on the Buddhist revival of the South for Tao Dong zen sect in this historical period¹³⁰.

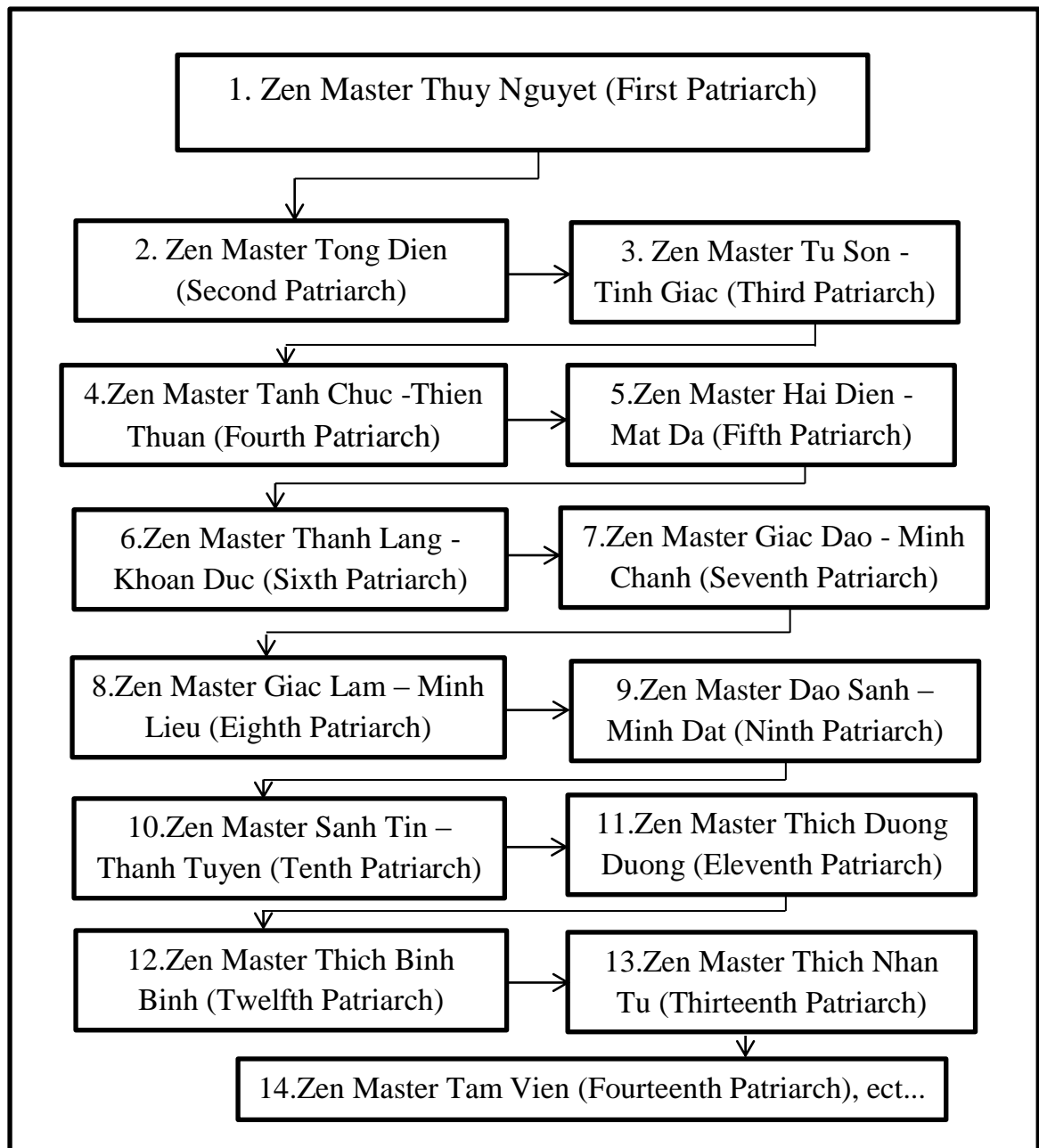
The guideline of the Tao Dong Zen School was the eradication of ego, the realization of the Empty Nature. Later, when the Zen Master Thach Liem to Vietnam to propagate the Buddhism, the specific guidelines are: Thien - Tinh Song Tu; Phat – Nho Nhat Tri, Lam – Tao Tong Hop¹³¹, was also in the spirit of the enlightenment of empty nature. But in general, the Tao Dong Zen School under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu was strongly development and popular, and King Nguyen Phuc Chu was an enthusiastic supporter and practice to this sect. In particular, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was the successor of the 30th generation of Tao Dong Sect after zen master Thach Liem¹³².

¹³⁰Nguyen Tai Thu. Op.cit., p. 205.

¹³¹Seen more Footnote No.103 of part (b) of section 3.1.1 above.

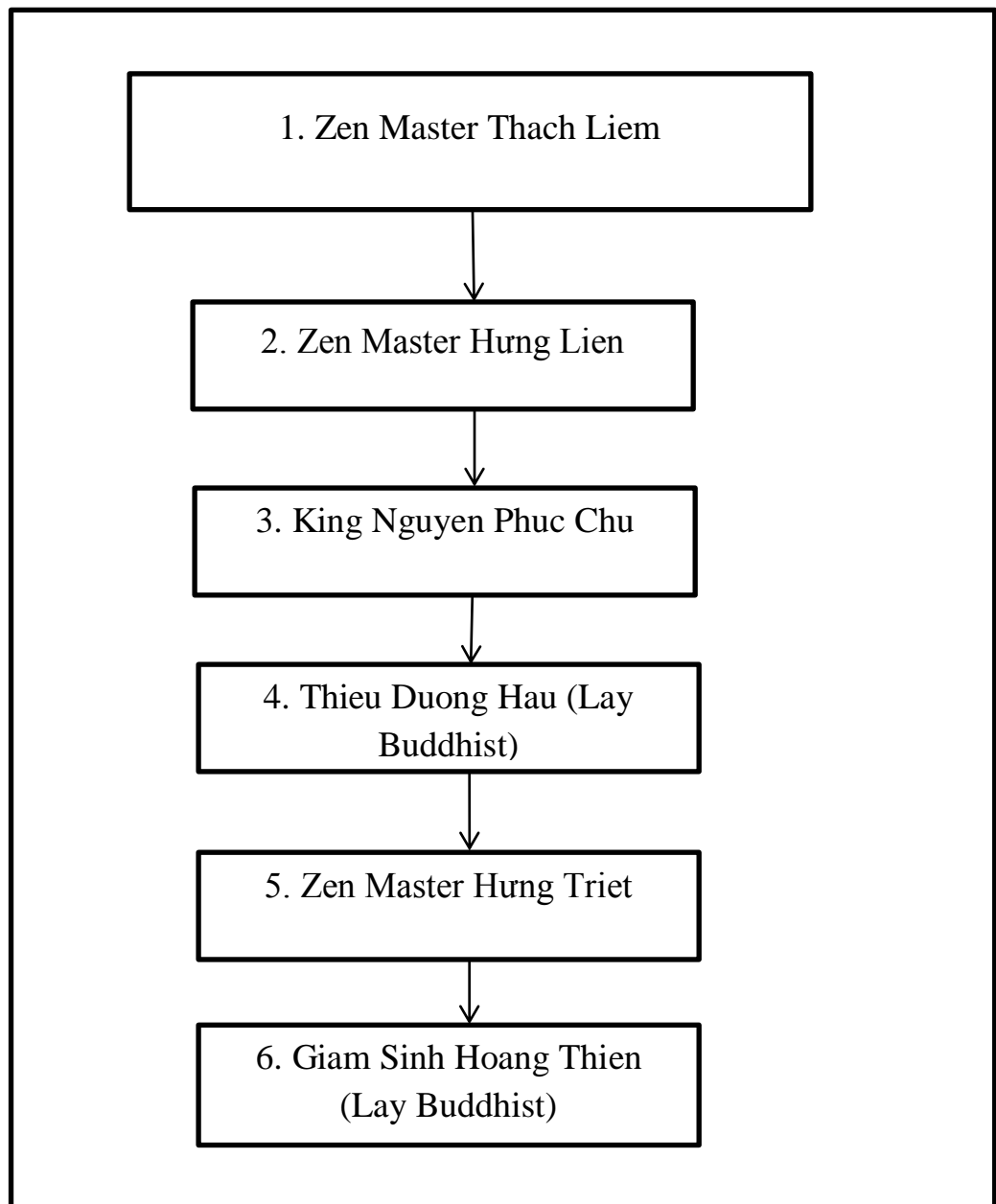
¹³²Nguyen Tai Thu. Opcit., p. 204.

Table 2: The chart of the inheritable generation of Tao Dong Zen School in Northern Vietnam¹³³



¹³³Nguyen Hien Duc, **Buddhism History in Dang Ngoai (The North)**, (Vietnamese version), Vo.I, (Vietnam: Ho chi Minh City of General Publishing House, 2006). pp. 489 - 490.

Table 3: The chart of the inheritable generation of Tao Dong Zen School in Southern Vietnam¹³⁴



¹³⁴Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995). p. 124.

3.2.2 Lam Te Zen School (zh. línjì-zōng - 臨濟宗)

Lam Te zen School has also originated from China, it was formed by the Lam Te Nghia Huyen Patriarch (died in AD 867). In 1677 of middle seventeenth century, Zen master Nguyen Thieu was thirtieth-three Patriarch of the Lam Te Zen School, he from China to Vietnam to propagated, and he was also First Patriarch of this zen school in only South Vietnam. First, Zen master Nguyen Thieu come to Binh Dinh province, and he was built the Thap Thap Di Da temple, then he went to Thuan Hoa land, and to built Ha Trung temple and Quoc An temple in Thua Thien - Hue province belong the South.

Thereafter, this school arised a new Zen school, called Lieu Quan sect, it has brought particular colour of Vietnam or it called Lam Te Zen school of Vietnam. Lieu Quan school was formed by Zen master Lieu Quan. He was thirtieth-five Patriarch of Lam Te Zen School, and was First Patriarch of Lieu Quan school in Vietnam. He was born in 1667 of the district Dong Xuan, Phu Yen province in Middle Vietnam and died in 1742. And after his death then he had granted the noble title“ Most Ven. *Dao Hanh Thuy Chanh Giac Vien Ngo*” by king Nguyen Phuc Khoat (1737 -1765)¹³⁵.

The thought of the Lam Te Zen School was the enlightenment of the Natural Buddha, which means that the Natural Buddha concept of beings and the Buddha are equal. Their practice was the Tam Huyền, Tam Yếu, Tứ Liệu Giản¹³⁶, which lead to the extermination of attachment, to achieve enlightenment.

This sect was strongly developed and spread throughout southern Vietnam by the enthusiastic support of the Nguyen kings before and after King Nguyen Phuc Chu. Under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, after Zen Master Thach Liem returned to China (1696), and Zen Master Lieu Quan was the most prominent at this time and King Nguyen Phuc Chu was admired and supported for his spread (because the Zen thoughts of the Lam Te Zen School was similar to Zen School Tao Dong that the Bonze Thach Liem propagated, so King Nguyen Phuc Chu had received

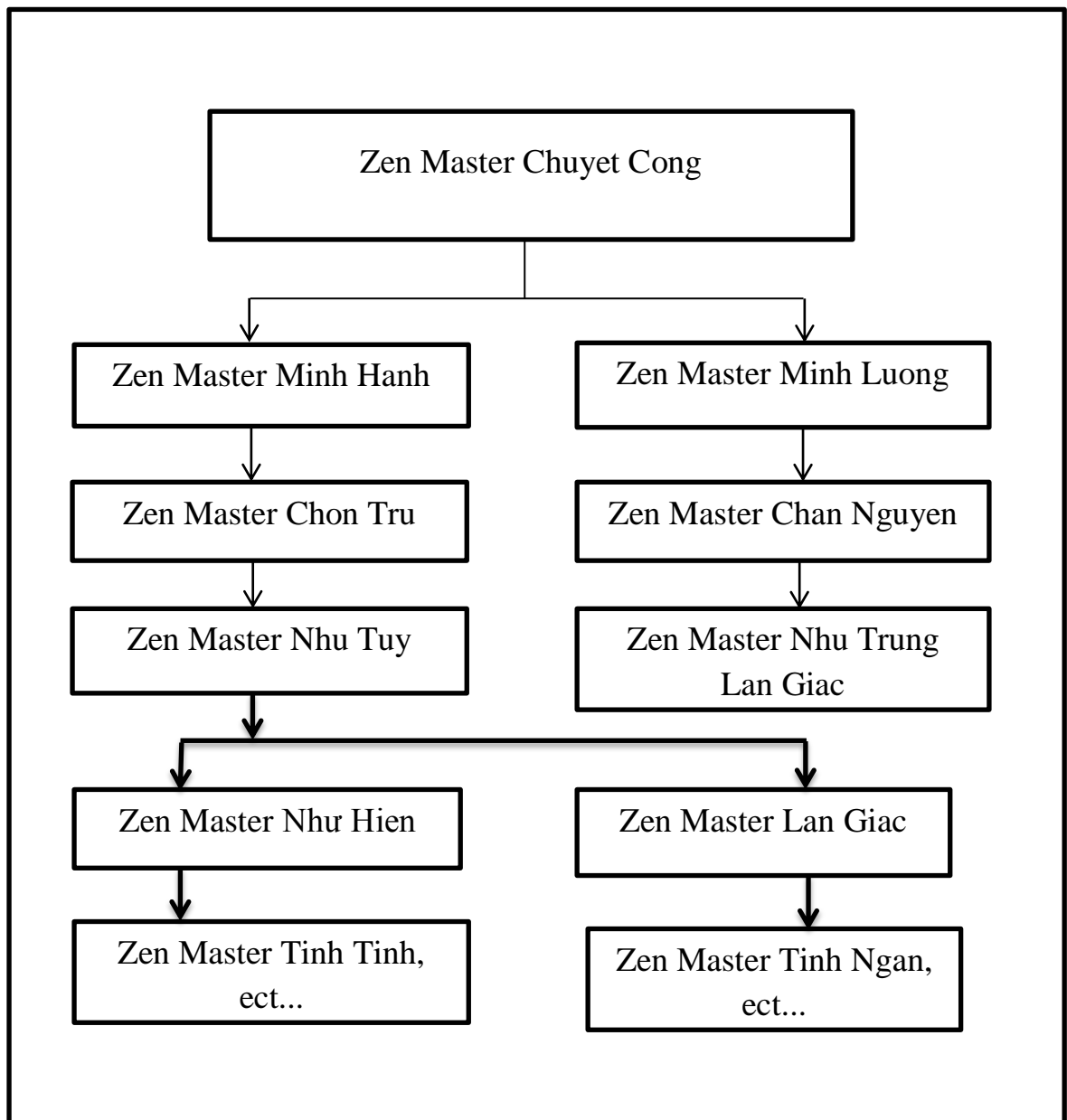
¹³⁵Nguyen Tai Thu. Op.cit., pp. 197 - 201.

¹³⁶ See more Footnote No.100 of part (a) of section 3.1.1 above.

it sincerely)¹³⁷. Thus, the Lam Te sect in the South was strongly supported by King Nguyen Phuc Chu and it developed more strongly than the Tao Dong Sects in the South and North. The Zen Master Lieu Quan's efforts to spread the teachings of Buddha have made Buddhism in the south truly lively, was the period of Vietnamese Buddhism which reached its golden age.

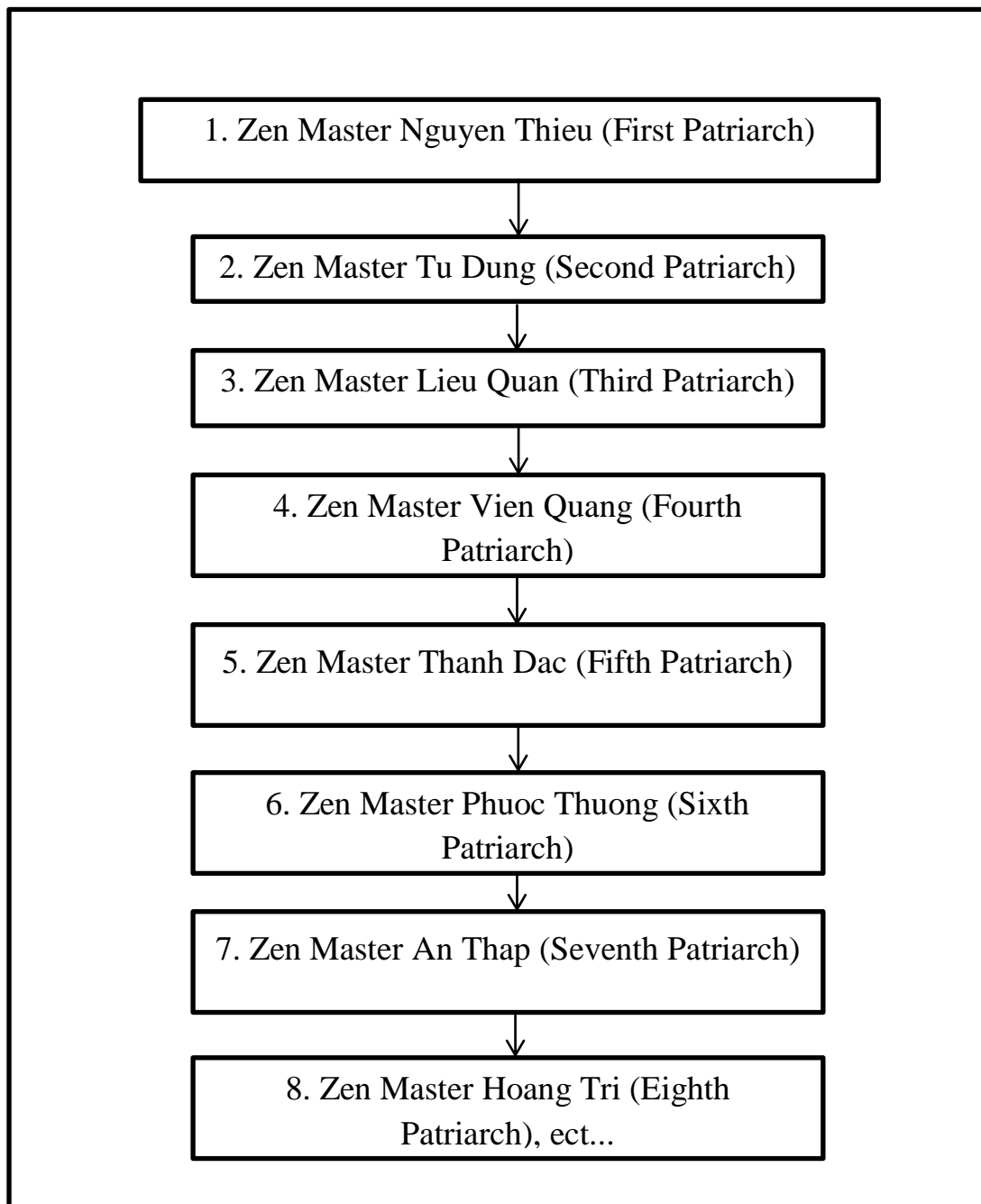
¹³⁷Thich Mat The, *Op.cit.*, pp. 205-207. And Nguyen Lang. *Op.cit.*, pp. 601-604.

Table 4: The chart of the inheritable generation of Lam Te Zen School in Northern Vietnam¹³⁸



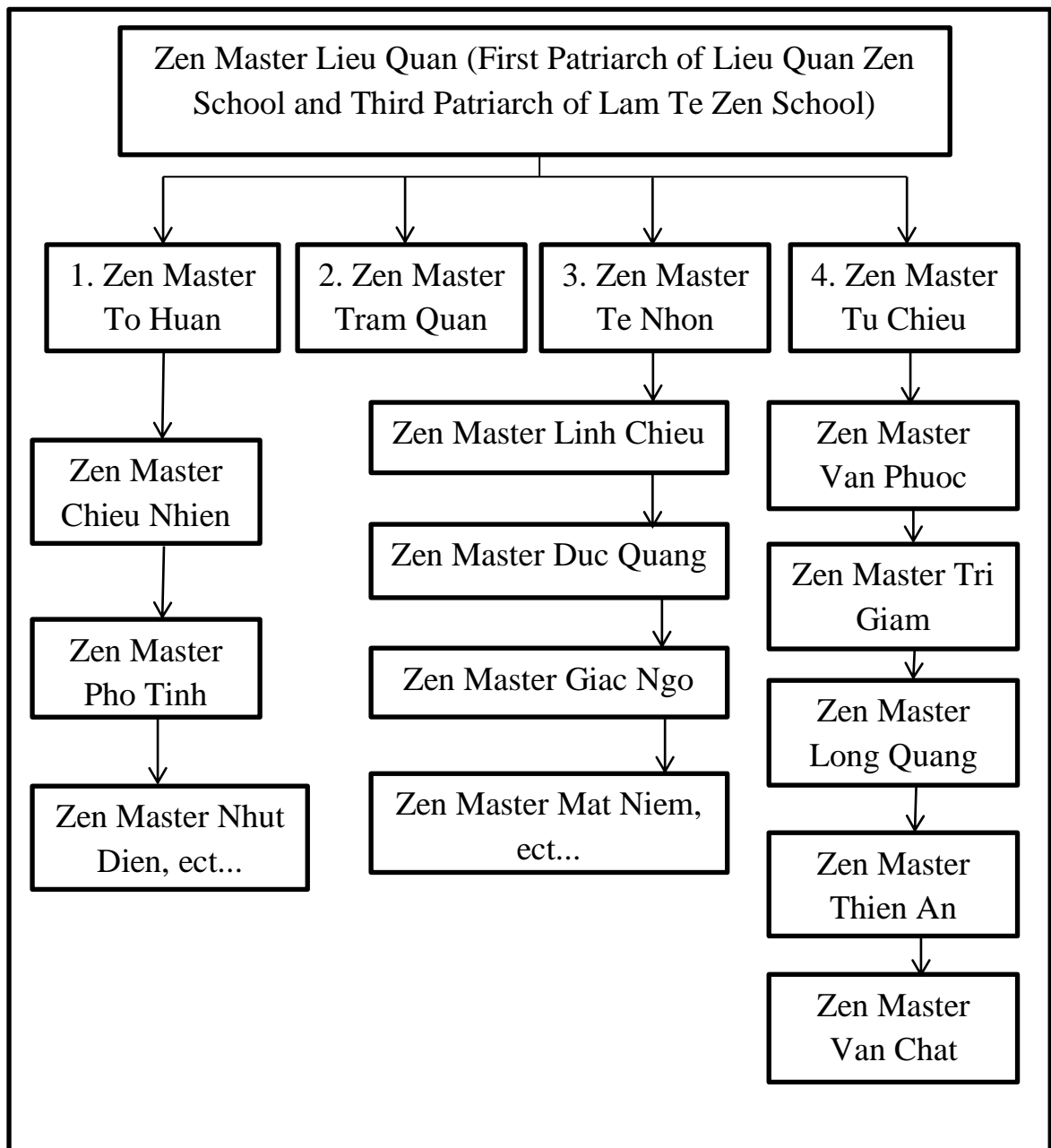
¹³⁸ Thich Minh Tue, **A Brief History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese version), (Ho Chi Minh: Buddhist Association of Ho Chi Minh City Press, 1993), p. 426.

Table 5: The chart of the inheritable generation of Lam Te Zen School in Southern Vietnam¹³⁹



¹³⁹Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 603 & p. 605.

Table 6: The chart of the inheritable generation of Lieu Quan Zen School in Southern Vietnam¹⁴⁰



¹⁴⁰Thich Mat The. Op.cit., p. 219.

3.3 The Buddhist Characteristics of King Nguyen Phuc Chu

By the deep influence from the Buddhist thoughts that made the faith of king Nguyen Phuc Chu growing more and more for the Buddhadhamma. Therefrom, he showed clearly virtue of the benevolence and tolerance, which always wish for social peacefulness, the people got happiness, and all everyone directs the teachings of the Buddha by study and practice instead of religious belief. Thus, the king always training himself to get well, and onwards to benefit of all everyone.

3.3.1 The Strong Faith towards the Buddhism

King Nguyen Phuc Chu was fortunate man to have been born into a royal family with a long tradition of Buddhist culture (since King Nguyen Hoang founded the Nguyen dynasty from 1600 to his period, all to follow Buddhist tradition). It is the good conditions and seed was sown in his mind, so own himself did not know why “from the time when baby to hear the words of the Buddhadhamma are revered, every time see the monk wearing the yellow robe is very happy to see”¹⁴¹. Moreover, during his growing up, he met such famous Zen Masters such as Zen Master Nguyen Thieu, Zen Master Thach Liem and Zen Master Lieu Quan, which was the chance to promote good seed of his heart grew gradually.

With the faith to Buddhism since he was young, so in the meantime he come to the throne that his devotion was increasingly evident, through his actions as he did, such as building and repairing many temples in the south, doing many charitable works, issuing many open policies for the people, reducing taxes and releasing prisoners¹⁴². By the time of the meeting with Zen Master Thach Liem and Zen Master Lieu Quan, the king had encouraged all relationship royal, great and small generals to take refuge in the Triple Gems, and own himself took refuge and received the Boddhisattva Precepts of Lay Buddhists, to practice the compassionate spirit of the Lord Boddhisattva in order to bring benefit and happiness to everyone¹⁴³. In addition, he combined with

¹⁴¹Thich Dai san. Op.cit., p. 83.

¹⁴²Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., pp. 630 - 631.

¹⁴³Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., pp. 100 - 101.

these Zen masters to effort to reorganize the Buddhist sangha, to make Buddhism renaissance, and to prosper again (although Buddhism was strong supported by the previously Nguyen king but not as excellence as the era of King Nguyen Phuc Chu). If not a strong believer in Buddhism like that, how king Nguyen Phuc Chu can not to do such great things.

As Zen Master Thich Liem praised on the king's belief that:

Now, I am feeling happy so much for the king at the throne, but the spiritual is not dim, the relaxed action as the Buddhist monk, that is by wisdom, the blessing of past life a lot, living in riches and pleasures that maintain faithful like that¹⁴⁴.

3.3.2 The Ethical Action of the King

The most prominent of King Nguyen Phuc Chu had took refuged the Triple Gems with Buddhist name of Hung Long, with noble name called Thien Tung Dao Nhan. During the 34 years of reign, he was the creator of many great merits for the development of Buddhism in the South. Famous Chinese monks came to the south to teach the dhamma and the king facilitated the construction of temples. Such as Zen Master Nguyen Thieu founded Thap Thap Di Da temple in Binh Dinh province, Quoc An temple and Ha Trung temple in Hue province. In 1694, Zen Master Phap Hoa founded the Thien An Pagoda in Quang Ngai Province, and King Nguyen Phuc Chu issued the name board “Sac Tu Thien An Temple”. In 1697, Tu Lam zen master founded Tu Lam Pagoda in Hue province, and Tu Dung zen master founded the An Ton Pagoda (known as Tu Dam pagoda in Hue province today) in 1703; Zen master Minh Hai - Phap Bao founded Chuc Thanh Pagoda in Quang Nam province; Zen master Lieu Quan in Phu Yen province, who founded Thuyen Ton Pagoda (Hue) and Bao Tinh (Phu Yen) and also great contribution to the Vietnamese Zen school of Lam Te in south. Besides, the great mark of the king was invited Zen master Thach Liem from China to the South Vietnam to organize Buddhist events of macroscopic property, and he received the Bodhisattva Precepts, and all the royal families, the general,

¹⁴⁴Thich Dai San. Op.cit., p. 89.

were guided to take refuge the Triple Gems by the king (1695), and he also restored Thien Lam pagoda and Thien Mu Pagoda (a famous temple at that time), casting the largest bronze bell weighs 3285kg at this temple to worship the Triple Gems in 1710, and 1714 the big restoring of Thien Mu Pagoda one more by himself ¹⁴⁵.

Another time, he invited Zen Master Thach Liem and the monks of Thien Lam Pagoda to chant the mantra Great Compassion (mahākarunā), and wanted to be the abstinence himself (the meaning of not eating meat and not being close to women) for joining and praying for the country to be peaceful and the people are happy, peaceful settlement¹⁴⁶. In 1715, the king sent his official to China to seeking Three Collections of the Buddhist Canon (which translates from Sanskrit into Chinese include: Sutta, Vinaya and Abhidhamma), to spread widely, to propagate the Buddhism thought grew up strength in the south¹⁴⁷.

In addition, King Nguyen Phuc Chu had another great merit that was in 1695-1696 and in 1699 -1725, he combined with two famous Zen Master Thach Liem and Zen master Lieu Quan to rehabilitate the Buddhism again by the sangha's pureness (to create a training environment for the rising of the talent Buddhist monks; putting the precepts into respectable, enhancing the prestige of the virtuous monks)¹⁴⁸.

On socially, the king had instructed by Zen Master Thach Liem; Thus, he abolished strict laws, barbaric penalties, released prisoners, provided subsidies to the poor, and reduced taxes on the population. Besides, he issued the order to build the school and get the idea of Confucianism as the foundation¹⁴⁹... all the virtuous deeds to rule the country of King Nguyen Phuc Chu.

¹⁴⁵Thich Mat The. Op.cit., p. 211

¹⁴⁶Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 630.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 631.

¹⁴⁸Ibid.,p. 622.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., p. 627 & p. 630.

3.3.3 The King's Charity

King Nguyen Phuc Chu had faith in Buddhism since childhood, thanks to the cultural traditions of his predecessors. However, after he ascended the throne, his work increasingly show the virtue and tolerance. His good seeds rise to greatness helped him meet the high virtuous monks, to learn the truth enlightenment of the Buddha. Since then, he has imbibed the philosophy of Causation and Compassion, and he built and restored many temples, encouraging his relatives to bless the accumulation of virtue merit (punya). Own himself has done many charitable works, bringing ethics to teach the people, creating a society full of vitality, happiness and peace.

Among the greatest marks in the charitable work of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, it was in 1695 that a very large Buddhist event took place this year with the participation of all the country in the Great Festival of Buddha's Birthday (Vesak) at Thien Lam pagoda (Hue province), under the chairman of Zen Master Thach Liem by the great support of the king. This is a Buddhist event which up to now, there have never been any, if only with micro-compact. And in this event the king issued the order to give alms to the poor and supported the construction of houses; reduced taxes and tax cuts for those who were too poor, released prisoners and abolished heavy penalties¹⁵⁰. And from then onwards, the king did regular this works for his people.

In 1710, the king ordered to cast a large bell (3.285kg) at Thien Mu Pagoda (Hue province); and in 1714, the king restored Thien Mu pagoda. After each the event was completed the king made a one-month vegetarian meal and charity to the poor¹⁵¹.

In short, after the king met Zen Master Thach Liem who had great influences on the king with Buddhist ideas, and had made many changes to his reign. Through his ruling for the people by virtuous mind, he appears to be a benevolent king who always promulgates appropriate

¹⁵⁰Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 15.

¹⁵¹Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 631.

policies that benefit the people, create democracy and peace in society, And he encouraged everyone diligently to do good deeds to create a peaceful and peaceful nation.

3.3.4 The Practice of Zen Buddhism

As mentioned above, at that time in South Vietnam there were only two main Zen sects, that are Lam Te and the Tao Dong Zen sect. Meanwhile, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was very much admired the virtuous of Thach Liem Zen master who was followed the Tao Dong Zen sect. Thus, the king tended to practice meditation according to the ideology of Tao Dong Zen Sect rather than the Lam Te Zen Sect. Although the zen thoughts of these two seniors are not very different.

Zen master Thach Liem taught his disciples as well as king Nguyen Phuc Chu who practiced meditation through the contemplation of the Questionable Subject of Buddhadhamma (problems set by Zen master), as: “Who is my master?”¹⁵², for the purpose is concentrating in right mindfulness until there is no distinction and attachment, to comprehend Empty Nature, i.e attaining enlightenment. And King Nguyen Phuc Chu had digested this one, as he wrote in the preface of the book *The Overseas Journal*, that:

*The like of the universe, the ashes, the sand which all created by the Cause and Condition. After all, between Me and Zen Master (Bonze Thach Liem), there was nothing distinguishable from the inside and outside*¹⁵³.

Or in the stele (stone stele) also recorded the words of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, which showed that he has absorbed the Zen sect's thought:

¹⁵²Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 627.

¹⁵³Thich Dai San. Op.cit., p. 10.

The natural Buddha of the Buddha and human beings are equal, there are not differences, although the forms are different but they are the same enlightened nature¹⁵⁴.

From the influence of meditation thoughts, but the life of this king also became simple, nothing fancy, flowery. This is reflected on the inscription written in the epitaph of King Nguyen Phuc Chu at Thien Mu Pagoda that:

... consider the royal life at the palace uneasy with the monk's life. The bright Royal robe often dazzling the human eyes is not worth the monk's robe. And after all, the precious jewels and gold are nothing but only illusions¹⁵⁵.

It shows that King Phuc Chu did not only love Buddhism for the sake of politics but that he came to Buddhism with the true heart of a devout Buddhist, with the aim of studying and practical the Buddha's teachings. Since then, he has become a devoutly guardian for Buddhism, actively promoting Buddhist thoughts into social life.

3.4 Concluding Remarks

King Nguyen Phuc Chu was a Buddhist king of talented ruler who plays an important role not only in the process of territorial expansion but also in the development of Vietnamese Buddhism. He is very understanding the teaching of the Buddha and meditation thought. With his thinks on how to bring Buddhist morality into real life, in order to bring practical benefits and peace to the country. It further shows that King Nguyen Phuc Chu was a Lay Buddhist, but soul as a monk. His whole life is devoted for the happiness and prosperity for the people and Buddhism.

¹⁵⁴Nguyen Hien Duc, **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), pp. 16 - 18.

¹⁵⁵Phan Du. **The Dream about Capital City** (vietnamese version), (Cao Thom Publishing House, 1971), p. 102.

Chapter IV

The Buddhist Contributions of King Nguyen Phuc Chu To Vietnamese Society

Within 30 years of the reign of Buddhist King Nguyen Phuc Chu, who has been impacted deep by the Buddhist ethical thoughts which cultured him becoming a person of talent and tolerant morality. He used Buddhist ethics as the standard for social morality. And, therefrom he has wise strategies to build and develop the powerful society, and it has impacted return for Buddhist development. With his benevolence and zeal, king Nguyen Phuc Chu made the Buddhism and society in the southern Vietnam growing more and more.

4.1 The Impacts from the Reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu on Vietnamese Buddhism's Development

To be the responsibility to Lay devout Buddhist for Buddhism's recovery after many years declined, king Nguyen Phuc Chu has supported devotion to the Buddhism through a lot meaning deeds in each of region of the Buddhist activity for the aim of Buddhist revival movement in Vietnam. So, during the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, the Vietnamese Buddhism got the golden age in the last century.

4.1.1 Impact on Revival of Vietnamese Buddhism

The Buddhism of Southern Vietnam was formed and developed along the same process of expanding the southern border of Vietnamese. A great advantage for Buddhism in the South was the Nguyen kings to be very Buddhist admirers. When Lord Nguyen Hoang chose Phu Xuan land (Hue province) to settle down and decided to build the first Linh Mu (Thien Mu) pagoda in Hue in the south, that is the beginning of Buddhist beliefs here; to create a spiritual foundation for future generations, to maintain the inheritance and create conditions for Buddhism to develop later on¹⁵⁶.

In the history of Buddhism in Vietnam, the main causes leading to the decadence of Buddhism as well as during the Latter Le dynasty (1428 - 1789) to the Nguyen dynasty (1558 - 1777) by the heavy stigmatization of Confucianism with Buddhism, to be called religious conflict, and in addition there were cases where Buddhism was abused and monks were seriously depraved¹⁵⁷. However, during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1675-1725), Buddhism was strongly supported by the government as well as from prominent Zen masters such as Zen Master Nguyen Thieu, Thach Liem and Zen Master Lieu Quan in the South. And in the north, there was Zen Master Chan Nguyen, Chuyet Chuyet, Minh Hanh and Zen master Huong Hai, as well as the Le Kings and Trinh lords (at that time, the Le dynasty issued a decree prohibiting the spread of Christianity, and strive to support Buddhism)¹⁵⁸. Therefore, Buddhism has had much better than before.

¹⁵⁶Truong Huu Quynh. Dao To Uyen & Pham Van Hung. **The Vietnamese History From Tenth Century to 1858** (Vietnamese Version), (Ha Noi: Educational University Publishing House, 2003). p. 184.

¹⁵⁷Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., pp.486-488. And Nguyen Tai Thu. Op.cit., pp. 168-169.

¹⁵⁸Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 538 & p. 599. And Nguyen Hien Duc. **Vietnamese Buddhism History Under Trinh – Nguyen Dynasty: Buddhism History in Dang Ngoai (The North)**, (Vietnamese version), Vo.I, (Vietnam: Ho chi Minh City of General Publishing House, 2006), pp. 611 - 613. And Tran Hong Lien. **The Character of the**

For the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, this dynasty had a strong influence on the development of Buddhism, King Nguyen Phuc Chu made many important contributions to the Buddhist Renaissance at that time (we can see more about the activities of King Nguyen Phuc Chu in Chapters 2 and 3), but here are some key points that Nguyen Phuc Chu has made in the Buddhist revival, as follows:

(1) Interested in building infrastructure for Buddhist pagodas: This is the first thing King Nguyen Phuc Chu prioritized and executed when he became the king, and he had supported money for publishing Three Collections of Buddhist Canon from China to Vietnam over 1,000 books in 1714.¹⁵⁹

(2) Calling upon and encouraging the prominent monks in the country and abroad to spread Buddhism, in which the most prominent were the three Zen Masters: Nguyen Thieu, Thach Liem and Lieu Quan¹⁶⁰. Especially during this period, the Ming Dynasty has been overthrown and erected the Manchu - Qing dynasty in China. The Qing dynasty's defectors left the country, including the Zen masters, most of whom came to South Vietnam to established and propagated the Buddhism. The Zen masters who came to Vietnam brought with them new spiritual forms, most notably were Lam Te Zen sect and Tao Dong Zen sect . And now, most of the Mahayana Buddhist systems in the South were from the Chinese descent. Since then, many prominent Zen masters have come to Southern Vietnam, both of the Vietnamese and the Chinese, and together they have created a new culture with bearing bold colors of Buddhism for the people in the south.

(3) Development of educational facilities: The king cared about the training of monks and nuns to preserved and developing Buddhism. Thus, he combined with many Zen masters to regularly organized Buddhist events of educational nature and to create a learning environment for monks. for preparing personnel resources for the next step of the process revival of Buddhism.

Buddhism in Dang Trong of the 18th century, Suoi Nguon Review, Vo 1. (Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 2011).

¹⁵⁹Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 615 and p. 631

¹⁶⁰Le Thanh Khoi. Op.cit., p. 341.

(4) The king encouraged people to study Buddhism for improving their lifestyle morals. And the king who became the link between Buddhism and Lay people.

(5) Prioritizing the propagation and development of Buddhism: he banned Catholicism (1699), except the Confucianism and the Taoism, but these two religions were not encouraged as Buddhism.

(6) The king issued many Buddhist protectionist policies: In order for Buddhism to be spread widely, the king issued policies to protect and opening for Buddhism, such as the non-payment of pagoda land taxes and grant land for the temples to plow, financial aid, the law to protect Buddhist monks, not to harm the pagoda's properties, ect... And besides, he also did a lot of other meaningful things.

Furthermore, we can broadly analyze the problem of Buddhism in the South. Why is it given strong attention from the authorities? This was because of the Buddhism devotion of the kings at that time, and partly it was politically beneficial and made the attraction form follower Buddhism come back their government¹⁶¹. It can be said that a great feature of Buddhism in the South was formed and affirmed at the beginning, that the relationship between the government and Buddhism was very close, and Buddhism has made an important position in the field of Political and social thought in Cochinchina (the South)¹⁶². To put it more clearly, the Nguyen dynasty from the beginning as well as later paid great attention to Buddhism with three basic reasons:

Firstly, at that time Confucianism feudalism was decadent in the politics, the Latter Le dynasty regime was also degraded because the Latter Le dynasty adopted Confucianism's ideas to govern; so the Nguyen dynasty did not want to repeat the old path. Moreover, in the new land of the Nguyen dynasty, follower Confucianism was very limited, and unsuitable for rule here, so they decided choosing Buddhism as the foundation. Secondly, this was a new land, poor and flood victims by the war, so they needed comfort, refreshing spirit, and the Nguyen dynasty considered only to see Buddhism can do that and fitting in here. And

¹⁶¹Nguyen Tai Thu. Op.cit., p. 185.

¹⁶²Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., p. 633.

thirdly, as showed above to be new land was less Confucian; it was very difficult to build community solidarity, while the majority of people here had Buddhist beliefs, which was a favorable feature for the Nguyen dynasty easily called upon the unity of the peasants; So the Nguyen dynasty chose Buddhism as its fulcrum for the benefit of politics¹⁶³. This was a great favourableness for Buddhism in the South, because the Nguyen dynasty chose Buddhism as the motto for its founding. So that the Nguyen kings had Buddhist devotion, and they were many meaningful activities, and creating a solid development for Buddhism.

Thus, from the above characteristics, let us see that if the kings of the previous dynasties were the first to lay the foundation step of Buddhism in Cochinchina, then King Nguyen Phuc Chu was the one who made Buddhism the most developing and prosperous, was the first initiator for the Buddhist revival movement of the Nguyen dynasty's history in the south during his reign. All created a unique appearance and identity of Buddhism in the South during this period.

4.1.2 Impact on the Education for Buddhist Monks

May be said that King Nguyen Phuc Chu was truly a talented, well-educated, deep thinker, and loving people. Therefore, in order for a country to flourish, he paid special attention to education. For the social education, the King was interested in training talented people and organizes rigorous examinations to regularly check the capacity of current officials in order to change the incompetent and poor man; value master help the people help the country. Apart from paying attention to social education, King Nguyen Phuc Chu did not forget the responsibility for Buddhism's prosperity, which was to focus on the development of Buddhist education.

In order to maintain and develop the Buddhism of Cochinchina, as a foundation support for the process of developing the border and unifying the country for a long term ; One of the major Buddhist events emphasized by the Nguyen kings were the organization of Buddhist

¹⁶³Ibid., pp. 635 - 636.

education events of great influential that open up the gospel-based training of monks to maintain the Buddhism system . As in 1695, King Nguyen Phuc Chu teamed up with Zen Master Thach Liem to organize the Buddhist events very large to train and purge monks over 1,000 people¹⁶⁴. Or, the king was encouraged by Zen Master Thach Liem, so he set up the National Study Center as a place for training and studying for everyone, including the monks¹⁶⁵. Thus, Thach Liem Zen Master who has a great contribution to the training and teaching of Buddhism as well as the propagation of Tao Dong Zen sect into Cochinchina in the late 17th century, which was nominated by King Nguyen Phuc Chu; and he had a very good influence on the way of governance of king Nguyen Phuc Chu¹⁶⁶. In the meantime, the support of the Nguyen Phuc Chu dynasty, the Zen Master have established many Buddhist Studies centers such as Zen Master Nguyen Thieu and Zen master Lieu Quan¹⁶⁷. In addition, not only did King Nguyen Phuc Chu paid attention to the knowledge of Buddhism and virtuousness of the monks, but also he paid attention to the knowledge and spiritual life of the people¹⁶⁸.

For Buddhism, the spread of Buddhism, the selection of virtuous monks were considered great Buddhist works, because it was the basis for promoting the inner strength of Buddhism in the spread of the truth Dhamma. Therefore, the problem and urgency for the development and revitalization of Buddhism in the South, King Nguyen Phuc Chu invited the eminent monks to teach and impart the Bhikkhu precepts to the monks. As a result, the Buddhist education was strongly rebellion against and promoted the development of Buddhism, especially two Zen schools: Lam Te and Tao Dong¹⁶⁹.

Thus, through the Buddhist events that took place in 1695 and later years, Buddhism under the reign of Nguyen Phuc Chu actually created a human resource to increase talented monks for Buddhism, to serve the spread of Buddhism at that time. On top of that, the Buddhist of

¹⁶⁴Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 616.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p. 627.

¹⁶⁶Nguyen Khac Thuan, Op.cit., p. 638.

¹⁶⁷Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 620 & pp. 586 - 591 & pp. 599 - 604.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., p. 629.

¹⁶⁹Thich Mat The, Op.cit., pp. 186 - 207.

Cochinchina have had the opportunity to interact with the Chinese Buddhist culture in the early stages. At the same time, the King began to create the Buddhist belief in the reassuring of people.

In short, during the 34 years of the reign, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was one of the devout Buddhists who inherited and applied Buddhist philosophy in the construction of feudal autocracy and achieving achievements in realizing territorial expansion, proceeding to build a moral and good life for the people . The construction and restoration of the temple system, opening the training centre of monks, the building and training of Lay Buddhists resources for the service of buddhadhamma in the role of protecting the country, developing the Buddhist and using the truth Dhamma to bring peace to the people and management of people; in essence, to concretize the content of the Buddhism philosophy under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu.

4.1.3 Impact on the Buddhist Culture

If the predecessors laid stones for the foundation of Cochinchina Buddhism, then King Nguyen Phuc Chu was the one who made Buddhism the most expanded and prosperous in the history of Buddhism in Vietnam during the reign of the Nguyen dynasty. With the merit of building temples, promoting Buddhism, supporting monks and nuns. All created the appearance and unique characteristics of Buddhism in this period. So, in this section, writer focus on two issues of Buddhist culture: art architecture culture and spiritual culture.

In terms of art architectural culture : on the foundation of the Nguyen Dynasty's development in terms of social as well as religious; Buddhism has received great favor from the government. As we all know, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was a Buddhist devotee. So, many pagodas were built and restored solemnly by his encouragement and support, which had many cultural and artistic features of many different ethnic groups, such as cultural architecture both Vietnamese and Chinese, culture of Khmer and Champa people. In particular, in this period, the art of Chinese culture was the most powerful influence on the art architecture in Vietnam; so in the South when the Nguyen kings built the pagodas also

fitting two the culture of the Vietnamese and Chinese, creating the sharp and beautiful architecture of the pattern¹⁷⁰. As Thien Mu pagoda in Hue province, was a famous pagoda, architecture to be quite excellent, was chosen as the symbol of the Nguyen Dynasty in the South, or many other pagodas were quite famous in the royal city of the Nguyen dynasty as Thien Lam pagoda (Hue province), Tu Dam Pagoda (Hue province), Chuc Thanh Pagoda (Hoi An - Quang Nam province), Phuoc Lam Pagoda (Hoi An - Quang Nam), etc..., being also the famous pagodas in the society of Cochinchina. It should be said that at this stage the art architectural of the Buddhist pagodas developed quite widely and prevalent, which contributed to the art culture of the Vietnamese people more abundant and valuable.

On spiritual culture aspect: One of the most prominent and highly human right, that was King Nguyen Phuc Chu who applies the form of social management in the spirit of compassion and wisdom of Buddhism, brought about the traditional culture and customs of living in society, bearing bold Buddhist culture, have helped people know the principles of human life, avoid the evil and doing good. This way of management has created a society of harmonization, pureness, less resentment and get indignant¹⁷¹.

Thanks to the spirit of devotion and support for the Buddhism of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, the Humanism of the Philosophy of Cause and Effect in Buddhism has gone into the masses, becoming a cultural fold and contributed to the educational problem for the man a lot of. Because it creates a moral foundation toward a moral, civilized and healthy society.

Besides, King Nguyen Phuc Chu also received the cultures of many countries in the world including the Buddhist culture. Because in this period, foreign affairs were very prosperous; so the Nguyen dynasty easily reached new cultures in Asia and the West, such as Japan, China

¹⁷⁰Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., pp. 832 - 838.

¹⁷¹Nguyen Hien Duc. **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 101.

and India, England, Portuguese, etc ...¹⁷². Mostly, the Nguyen dynasty has influenced the culture of Japan, China and India. Because of this, the interaction with these countries was more than that, so from Thua Thien Hue province to Sai Gon, there were Chinese and Japanese streets¹⁷³. So, during this time, many Zen masters from China followed the merchant come to Vietnam for their propagation of dhamma; and bringing with them a distinct Buddhist culture of China to the south of Vietnam, creating a Buddhist culture in Vietnam to be developed rich and colorful.

Since then, many Buddhist rituals have also developed with spiritual philosophy that created a beauty in folklore and contributed to promoting the development of Vietnamese national identity. In general, asserting his supreme power, King Nguyen Phuc Chu Chu has combined the cultural philosophy of the Buddhist with the culture of the nation into a sharp weapon in the governance of his country. As a result, it has had a tremendous impact on the dramatic and profound development of Buddhist culture in the south.

4.1.4 Impact on Buddhist Sites

The Cochinchina originally comprised only Thuan Hoa and Quang Nam (from Quang Binh province to Quang Nam province). With the development trend of expanding territory, the Nguyen lords heading south began a royal dynasty in Cochinchina. Nguyen Hoang Lord who first founded the Nguyen dynasty; in 1611, he sent troops to fight Champa to expand territory to Phu Yen province. In 1693, king Nguyen Phuc Chu attacked Phan Rang – Ninh Thuan province, the Kingdom of Champa. By 1698, King Nguyen Phuc Chu again sent troops to occupy a large area of Thuy Chan Lap (Champa), open the territory to Dong Nai province and My Tho – Tien Giang province. In 1707, the power of King Nguyen Phuc Chu was very strong, expanded to the land of Ha Tien province¹⁷⁴.

¹⁷²Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., p. 95 & p. 120.

¹⁷³Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., pp. 27 - 38.

¹⁷⁴See more of section 2.3 of chapter two, which has presented quite fullness.

At the beginning of the Nguyen dynasty (1600) in the area of Thuan Hoa (in the Cochinchine), the Nguyen dynasty identified the Buddhist thought as the foundation for its founding process. So, Nguyen Hoang Lord started to build firstly Thien Mu Pagoda (Huong Tra District-Thua Thien Hue Province) in Cochinchina in 1601. Later, he also restored Sung Hoa Pagoda (1602), to build Buu Chau Pagoda in Tra Kieu - Quang Nam province (1607) and Long Hung pagoda near The Nguyen royal palace , and setting up Kinh Thien Pagoda in Thuan Trach commune (Quang Binh province). He was the first to lay the groundwork for the development of Buddhism for the kings later on , and the successive kings continued to build many pagodas along the southward of the Nguyen dynasty. As, King Nguyen Phuc Tan (1648 -1687): In 1665, the king ordered to restore the Thien Mu Pagoda in Hue province. In 1667, the king built the Vinh Hoa Pagoda in Linh Thai Mountain - Thua Thien Hue. In 1677, the king built Thap Thap Di Da pagoda in Binh Dinh Province and appointed Nguyen Thieu Zen Master to head (from China). In 1683, King Nguyen Phuc Tan gave the Bonze Nguyen Thieu a sum of money to renovate Vinh An pagoda in Phu Xuan – Hue province, and in 1684 built Pho Dong tower and other pagodas in Quang Tri province. Or King Nguyen Phuc Tran (1687-1691) who renovated the Vinh Hoa Pagoda in Thua Thien Hue in 1688. In 1735, Nguyen Phuc Tru (1725-1738) built and restored the Sac Tu Ho Quoc Pagoda in Bien Hoa – Dong Nai province. In 1740-1744, King Nguyen Phuc Khoat (1738 - 1765) ordered to restore the Thien Mu Pagoda to be magnificent, and in 1744 he built Giac Lam Pagoda in Saigon, and 1747, he extended the Ham Long Pagoda in Phu Xuan - Hue. In 1754, the king restored the Sac Tu Vien Tong Pagoda in Quang Ngai. In 1755, King restored the Thien Duong Pagoda and to give signboard for "Pho Quang Thien Son temple" by the abbot Zen Master Dat Bon (later renamed Kim Chuong Pagoda). And in 1761, the king restored Thap Thap Di Da pagoda in Binh Dinh province. In 1763, the king built Linh Son Pagoda in Tay Ninh province and appointed Zen master Dao Trung here, and many other pagodas were also restored by the king¹⁷⁵.

¹⁷⁵Nguyen Hien Duc. Op.cit., pp. 10 - 21.

On the part of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691 – 1725) for the development of Buddhism. First of all, he has developed and inherited the heritage before, and then he built very many the temples and organized the Buddhist events a lot of in his territory. As in 1691 has just ascended the throne, he built My An Pagoda (Tuy Van mountain – Hue province). In 1695, the king invited Zen Master Thach Liem from China to spread the Dharma and held the big festival in Hue province. This was a Buddhist event that made the country famous after he had been ruling for four years¹⁷⁶. In 1710, King Nguyen Phuc Chu restored and found great copper Bell (over 3000kg) at Thien Mu Pagoda in Hue province¹⁷⁷. In 1711, he built Van An Pagoda in Phuoc Tuy (Vung Tau city today). In 1715, the king restored the Kinh Thien in Thuan Trach (Quang Binh province). In 1716, the king restored and issued a sign for the Thien An Pagoda in Quang Ngai as “Sac Tu Thien An Temple”. In 1721, Giac Hoang Pagoda (Phong Dien-Hue) was built, and many well-known pagodas were built and restructured in Thuan Hoa¹⁷⁸. Around 1708-1725 he built the Tam Bao Pagoda in Ha Tien province, ect From the tolerant and open policies of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, where many Buddhist pagodas were restored and built by himself quite beautifully spread the territory of the Nguyen dynasty. And King Nguyen Phuc Chu invited many Zen masters from China to do religious work and leading the monk (now in southern monks not enough for propagation so the king invited foreign zen masters), such as Zen Master Nguyen Thieu in Thap Thap Di Da Pagoda (Binh Dinh province); Zen Master Thach Liem, the heading of Thien Mu Pagoda and Thien Lam pagoda (Hue province); Zen master Hung Lien in Quang Nam province; Zen Master Vien Canh and Vien Khoan, the headings in Quang Tri province; Zen master Huong Hai, the heading in the North Vietnam; Zen master Giac Phong, the heading in Thanh Hoa province; Zen master Te Vien, the heading of Phu Yen province, Zen Master Tu Dung, the heading of Tu Dam Pagoda (Hue), etc.

¹⁷⁶Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., pp. 615 - 616

¹⁷⁷Ibid., p. 631.

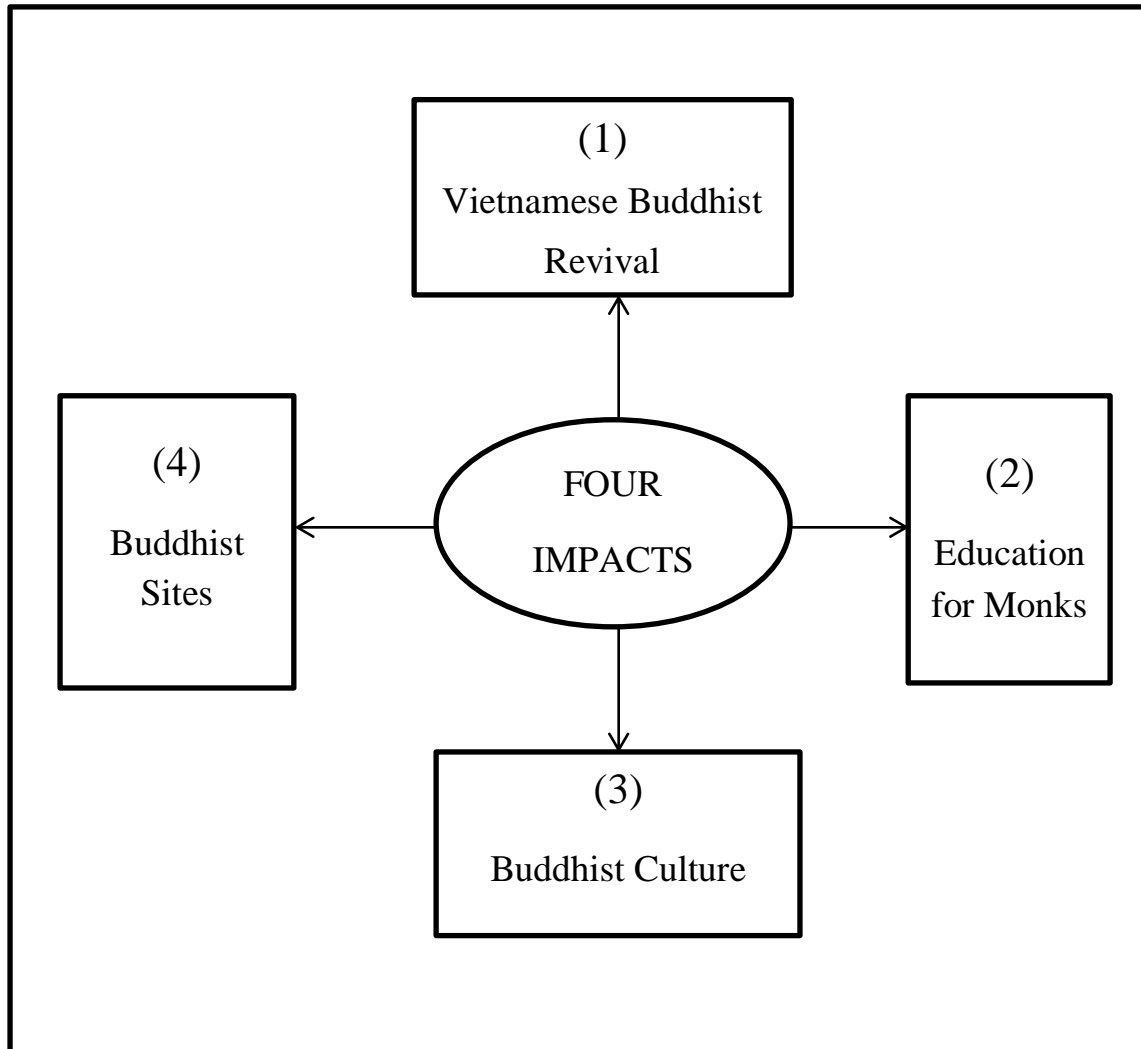
¹⁷⁸Nguyen Hien Duc. Op.cit., p. 16.

Thus, it shows us that all the Kings and the Lords of the Nguyen dynasty were great Buddhists devotion, and they were both politically and spiritually successful. They created architectural works, pagodas were quite large and beautiful. And during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu who a devout Buddhist, he devoted himself to the foundation of the new pagodas, translation centers, and Buddhist monks training center, to facilitate the development of Buddhism. And the movement to revive Buddhism was launched by King Nguyen Phuc Chu, many events as well as many Buddhist activities have been happening a lot and often¹⁷⁹. On this basis, it has directed Buddhism to go a step further, that is, to expand the spread of Buddhism to the south. In particular, with the encouragement and invitation of the Nguyen dynasty to the monks to the new land for evangelism and social comfort. So, when the Nguyen dynasty expanded its territory to how far the pagodas and monks were present there, this was also the opportunity for Buddhism to expand its vast base and scope of diffusion.

From such favorable conditions, the Buddhism of the South has shown its full responsibility, and combines subjective and objective factors, the harmony and creation, including the spirit of unity in diversity, and really become the driving force for the development of the land Cochinchina.

¹⁷⁹Nguyen Lang, *Op.cit.*, p. 616 & pp. 629 - 631.

Table 7: A chart of the impacts of Buddhist king Nguyen Phuc Chu



4.2 The Contributions of Buddhist King Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnamese Society (1691-1725)

In each age of the history country all has the national leaders, at the same time they were also devout Buddhists, who has momentous contributions to the career of build, development and national integration, as well as spreading truth dhamma for bring the happiness to everyone. And the Buddhist King Nguyen Phuc Chu was one in those cases. He has a lot of great contributions on social development, as well as of the Vietnamese Buddhist revival movement in his reign times. All played by the his real actions for the people and the country, as belows.

4.2.1 Buddhist Religion Aspect

Buddhist development was one in the social developing policies of the power of King Nguyen Phuc Chu. So, let everyone have deep faith to the Buddhism, King Nguyen Phuc Chu had wise plans and suitability for the aim building stable base of the Buddhism through each region of the Buddhist activities as education, culture, sites, etc., But in this part only focuses on two main problems, as building the faith of religion belief and Buddhist meditation on social life.

a. Nguyen Phuc Chu who was a key vital link between Lay People and Buddhism

Since lord Nguyen Hoang was awarded the title of Doan Quoc Cong (Great General) and was appointed governor of Thuan Hoa and with the mission to open the realms of Cochinchina in 1558, and the Nguyen lords chose Buddhism where all classes of people were gathered to implement the policy of using the truth Dhamma to protect and managing the people in the process of unification, national establishment, expansion of territory. The life style of the Buddhists made people believe in their own enlightenment, believe in themselves strength, believe in the nation, and believe in the doctrine of Cause and Effect (karma) so that the people's life towards the true, the good and the beautiful.

The Cochinchina (the South) was a new land where convergence of all classes in society, who dissatisfied political regime from two civil war [Trinh - Mac dynasties (1546-1592) and Trinh – Nguyen dynasties (1600-1672)] which to made the people in chaos and social isolation, as well as the Champa people and the Khmer people surrendered to the Vietnamese, including the Chinese refugees.

Thus, the Buddhist philosophy was now operating by gathering the power to unite the entire people. Therefore, it was not surprising that, during the Nguyen Hoang King held two Thuan Hoa and Quang Nam land; he has advocated unity, winning talent, holding the people's heart, in the spirit of the national peace and human security: “Consoling the people and army, winning talent, the serious military command, expanding foreign trade, making the people lived and working in peace and contentment”¹⁸⁰.

That philosophy was easy to understand, the unity was strength. Although, their strengths were weak but they were united together in a mass, they can form the unrivaled power, which the invaders, however mighty they are hundreds of times more than they can not beat. The mass of unity of the people, first of all built on the love between compatriots as brothers and sisters. Of course, that solidarity was also built around a stable groundwork that to be a loyal, virtuous, talented, idealist. As a result, in the short time of the reign of Thuan Quang in Dang Trong, the Kings and Lords of the Nguyen Dynasty turned an area of insecurity into a capital city, with a system of pagodas restored and built; Buddhism to be developed, the people lived and working in peace and contentment, more foreign merchant ships¹⁸¹. Clearly, the Nguyen kings were the Lay Buddhist leading nation, who draw lessons from their father's experience in the process of building, defending and opening the country, to use the power of the people through the implementation of the philosophy of life moral in Buddhism on real life.

¹⁸⁰Le Quy Don, **The United History of Dai Viet** (Vietnamese version), (Ha Noi: Social Science Publishing House, 1978), p. 64.

¹⁸¹Li Tana, **Nguyen Cochinchina – Southern Vietnam in The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**, (New York: Ithaca - Cornell University Press. 1998), pp. 60 - 64; And Le Binh Phuong Luan. *Op.cit.*, p. 97.

These things proved practically through King Nguyen Phuc Chu who was the sixth king of Nguyen dynasty. He has done what the predecessors have set out but has not fulfilled their mission to society, people and Buddhism, King Nguyen Phuc Chu who completed the mission the most perfectly, creating great trust among the masses. In particular, the king took refuge in being a devout Buddhist, applying the Buddhist moral philosophy to life in an effective and radical way, and using his mercy to rule the country; creating a society of peace and happiness, bringing the country to a level equal to or better than other countries in Asia at that time¹⁸². For the Buddhism, he fulfilled the duty of a Lay Buddhist perfectly, who sponsored and encouraged the construction of numerous Buddhist pagodas and the Buddhist centers, organized many Buddhist events and festivals across his territory. In addition, he was also encouraged for the mandarin and the people to study Buddhism, and he was a pioneer in advance, with kindness to create great faith for all. And in fact, the king brought Buddhism to the most prosperous period, and to be the golden age of Buddhism in the history of Nguyen dynasty of nearly 200 years¹⁸³. And finally, the king succeeded greatly in his mission of building a solidarity in society, creating a truly pure, happy and peaceful society through the doctrine of Compassion and Impartialness in Buddhism.

b. Establishing Zen Buddhism to the Society by inviting various Zen Teachers to South Vietnam

Although, prior to the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, Buddhism in the South had developed and sometimes there had the Chinese Zen teachers coming to preach, but these did not make Buddhism a big one strong and widespread. Its reason, because it has not yet had a clear and specific direction for Buddhism. That can not to say that there

¹⁸²Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., pp. 100 - 103.

¹⁸³Truong Phuoc Thanh (thich Nguyen Tuu), **A Study of The Meditation Method of Master Tran Nhan Tong and Its Influence On The Vietnamese Society**, (MA degree thesis), [Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2557 (2014)], p. 6.

were no talented people but there were no zealots to support the legal issues for Zen Masters, and until the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691), who was really enthusiastic about Buddhism, he had supported the missionaries in all aspects; for the purpose of bringing the Buddha's teachings to everyone. Thus, during this time Buddhism was growing, especially two large Zen schools developed quite strong, it was the school of Zen Lam Te (zh. línjì-zōng - 臨濟宗) and Tao Dong (zh. cáo-dòng-zōng - 曹洞宗). It has been shown through the following eminent Zen masters:

I. Zen master Nguyen Thieu (謝元韶)

Zen master Nguyen Thieu (1648-1728) was a native of Quang Dong (Guangdong) province in China. At the age of 19, he left his home to become a Buddhist monk at Bao Tu Pagoda, studied under the guidance of Most Venerable Khoang Vien. He was the 33rd Patriarch of Lam Te zen school in China and the first Patriarch in South Vietnam. He came to Vietnam in 1677 under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Tan. At first he came to palace Quy Ninh (Binh Dinh province), then founded Thap Di Di Da pagoda in 1683 (in 1691, this pagoda was renovated by king Nguyen Phuc Chu)¹⁸⁴.

Zen Master Nguyen Thieu was a follower of Zen thoughts of Lam Te school who came to the South of Vietnam for the first time. He initiated this practice here, and it greatly influenced Vietnamese society at that time. So many people followed him to study Buddhism, they were both Chinese and Vietnamese, and later became famous Zen masters such as Zen Master Minh Hanh Tai Tai, Minh Hoang Tu Dung, Minh Hai Phap Bao, Minh Vat Nhat Tri, Minh Giac Ky Phuong, Minh Tri Nguyen Hanh, Minh Dung Phap Thong, Minh Luong Nguyet An, etc..., by virtue and energy practice, Zen Master Nguyen Thieu has made Buddhism in Vietnam in the south more and more growing.

¹⁸⁴Nguyen Hien Duc. **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), pp. 134 -135.

He was enthusiastic about Buddhism, so he traveled throughout the South to build pagodas and spread Buddhism. As such, Nguyen Thieu Zen Master from Binh Dinh went to Hue province to build Ha Trung Pagoda (1692), Quoc An Pagoda and Pho Dong tower (1683 -1684). In addition, he built many pagodas in the vicinity of the royal palace of the Nguyen. And from 1695 to 1728, he came the land of Dong Nai province, Gia Dinh - Saigon to spread Buddhism, and set up Kim Cang Pagoda (Vinh An - Dong Nai province). He has on behalf of King Nguyen Phuc Tran (1687 - 1691) to Quang Dong (Guangdong) province - China (1691) invited the Zen teachers to carry on missionary work at Linh Mu Pagoda – Hue province; such as Zen Master Giac Phong set up Ham Long pagoda (Bao Quoc Pagoda) in Phu Xuan - Hue; Zen master Tu Lam founded Tu Lam Pagoda in Phu Xuan-Hue; Zen master Minh Hoang-Tu Dung set up the An Tong pagoda in Phu Xuan-Hue; Zen master Hung Lien was the head of Tam Thai pagoda in Ngu Hanh Son Mountain - Quang Nam province; Zen master Minh Hai-Phap Bao founded the Chuc Thanh Pagoda in Quang Nam province¹⁸⁵. In addition, he wrote books to comment and analyze the Buddha's Precepts in order to purify Buddhism because of earlier false and misleading interpretations of Buddhism.

For the thought of Zen Master Nguyen Thieu that was “Buddha nature is all equality, the focus is eradicating attachment of ego, and realization of Empty Nature” With such meditation in mind to help people re-examine themselves, to eliminate suffering that leads to purity of mind¹⁸⁶. By the love and admiration of the Nguyen kings, who gave very good conditions to Lam Te School of Zen Master Nguyen Thieu, and it spreaded widely and spreaded throughout the South of Nguyen dynasty, and developed strongly through generations later (see also section 3.2.2). Today, Lam Te Zen sect has greatly influenced and developed throughout Vietnam.

¹⁸⁵Nguyen Lang, *Op.cit.*, pp. 586 – 588; And Nguyen Hien Duc. *Op.cit.*, p. 81. And see more the footnote of part (a) of section 3.1.1.

¹⁸⁶Nguyen Tai Thu. *Op.cit.*, pp. 198 - 199.

II. Zen master Thach Liem (石濂和尚 - Dashan)

The Zen master Thach Liem (1633 - 1704) was born in Nam Kinh province (Nanjing), but he left home in China's Guangdong (Quang Dong) province at Truong Tho Pagoda, under the name of Thich Dai San (釋大汕). He was the 29th Patriarch of the Tao Dong Zen school in China. He has many good fields: painting, poetry, architecture, feng - shui, history and comprehension of Buddhism. In 1695, he was invited by King Nguyen Phuc Chu to Vietnam to spread Buddhism and support for the Buddhist revival movement of the country according to the king's wishes. He stayed only for more than a year in Vietnam, but his influences were so great for the people and the Nguyen dynasty, and he made the Tao Dong Zen school flourish and deep in the masses¹⁸⁷. Previously, this sect was not outstanding, the lesser known, since he came to the south of the Nguyen, this sect had great thriving. Zen master Thach Liem became a mentor for the rule of king Nguyen Phuc Chu in the spirit of Buddhism and King Nguyen Phuc Chu took refuge with him as well as all the royal families in the court, and over thousands of civilians, and to assist many people to be left home. He and Zen Master Lieu Quan were two people who have made great contributions to reviving Buddhism in the South during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu¹⁸⁸.

His first job was to combine with King Nguyen Phuc Chu to organize a nationwide celebrity festival, to reorganize the ranks of monks to purify the purity of the Buddhist sangha (during this time, many young men were afraid of being taken to the soldiers, so they fled to the pagoda but most of them did not know what the Buddhist rules were), so the Zen master Thach Liem invited many famous Most Venerable nearby in the are of the Nguyen royal capital attended and certified for the man observed ten precepts of novice, and the monks observed 250 precepts of Bhikkhu, totaling over 1,000 monks and over 4000 people attending¹⁸⁹. This event took place two weeks before the Vesak Day of 1695. In July

¹⁸⁷Nguyen Hien Duc. **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), p. 42.

¹⁸⁸Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., pp . 615 – 622.

¹⁸⁹Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 616.

1695, he also opened the ordination ceremony for the monks and lay Buddhist of over 300 people at the Di Da pagoda (Hoi An - Quang Nam province). During his stay in Vietnam for more than a year, he regularly organized forums to preach the dhamma for public and Kings and the officials in the court, as well as open many meditation exercises, let everyone practice according to the Buddha's teachings under his guidance by the method of Thien -Tinh Song Tu (Zen and Pure Land)¹⁹⁰. Talking about meditation, he wrote a book “Ho Phap Kim Thanh Thu” gave to King Nguyen Phuc Chu; Also about Pure Land, he wrote a book entitled “Tự Tánh Di Đà Thuyết” (An explanation of Amitabha Nature) gave to King Nguyen Phuc Chu's mother. Although the short stay in Vietnam, Bonze Thach Liem made the thought of Tao Dong Zen sect to spread widely; with great virtue and purity, he left a lot of impression on the society of the Nguyen dynasty during this period.

Once other, Zen master Thach Liem and King Nguyen Phuc Chu often responded the teachings, advising the king on the issue of country's reign, and the king praised that:

“In addition all day teaching ethics, but the master teaching moral principles. From the big issue to the small issue, he was all clear guide, the analysis of coherence, how to lead people from dark places to light, help me (the King) in the work, what is the rule of the nation”¹⁹¹.

So, let us see how great the influence of Thach Liem Zen master in the South? He brought new prosperity to the Vietnamese Buddhism in general and the Tao Dong Zen sect in particular in the south, and he contributed to the process of renaissance Buddhism during the decline age of Buddhism, just as he rised up the spirit of patriotism, loved people grew stronger of the people and the king. Fom then on, the Tao Dong sect has supported and widely developed by the Nguyen kings.

¹⁹⁰See more footnote No.103 of part (b) of section 3.1.1, which talk about Zen master Thach Liem.

¹⁹¹Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., p. 101.

III. Zen master Hung Lien

He was a disciple of Zen Master Thach Liem in China, who came to Vietnam around the time of King Nguyen Phuc Tran (1687-1691), and the heading of Tam Thai Pagoda in Quang Nam Province. He was the first to bring the Tao Dong Zen sect to the Cochinchina of Vietnam¹⁹². However, during this period, there was nothing outstanding in the Tao Dong Zen Sect, and until Zen Master Thach Liem arrived in Vietnam (1695), this Zen sect was alive and well. Zen master Hung Lien belongs to the 30th generation of Tao Dong Zen sect. He was elevated to the status of Nation Master by king Nguyen Phuc Chu (teacher teaching the dhamma and consulting the political path for Nguyen royal family in the spirit of Buddhism) before Thach Liem Zen Master to Vietnam¹⁹³.

Hung Lien Zen master has also contributed greatly to the spread of Buddhism in general and the Zen thoughts in particular in the south. Thus, he had twice introduced with King Nguyen Phuc Tran to China to invite the virtuous monks to Vietnam to spread Buddhism, including Zen Master Thach Liem.

However, the zen master Hung Lien's propaganda style was somewhat similar to that of Thach Liem Zen master. He with Thach Liem zen master was the first man to bring the thought of Tao Dong Zen sect to South Vietnam, making Buddhism more abundant and flourishing here.

IV. Zen master Phap Hoa

Zen Master Phap Hoa (1670 - 1746) was from Phuc Kien (Fujian) Province, China. He came to Vietnam with Zen Master Nguyen Thieu (1687 - 1691), and his other name was Zen master Minh Hai Phap Bao. He founded the Chuc Thanh pagoda in Hoi An - Quang Nam Province; he was the first founder of the Lam Te Chuc Thanh zen sect (another meditation branch of the Lam Te zen sect disseminated by the Zen Master Nguyen Thieu). He was the famous monk of early eighteenth-

¹⁹²Nguyen Hien Duc. **The Buddhism History in Dang Trong (The South)**, (Vietnamese version), (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, 1995), pp. 42 - 43.

¹⁹³Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 595.

century in Vietnamese Buddhism and one of the people who contributed to the Buddhist revival movement during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu. In 1694, he founded the Thien An Pagoda, in Quang Ngai province and the heading has been staying there for 60 years, and in 1716, this pagoda was restored by King Nguyen Phuc Chu and presented with the sign “Sac Tu Thien An temple”¹⁹⁴, and now it has become a historical vestiges place and spiritual travel. In 1732, the Zen master and his disciples engraved wooden boards and stone stela of the book “Sa Di Luat Nghi Yeu Luoc Tang Chu” (the explanation of the brief of precept rules of the novice – monk), and still remains today¹⁹⁵.

In the spirit for the development of Buddhism, Phap Bao zen master has traveled extensively in the South to teach Buddhism, especially in the Phu Xuan capital of the Nguyen dynasty. He contributed greatly to the development of Vietnamese Buddhism towards the south of the Nguyen dynasty, during the period of the Buddhist revival movement of South Vietnam by Zen masters and King Nguyen Phuc Chu initiated. Therefore, he made the Lam Te zen sect more abundant and flourishing.

V. Zen master Lieu Quan

Zen master Lieu Quan (1670-1742) was considered the leading teacher of the Buddhist revival movement with Nguyen Phuc Chu in Cochinchina . As author Nguyen Lang writes:

*Zen Master Lieu Quan has made Lam Te Zen sect to become a dynamic Zen school, strongly development in Cochinchina . And he reformed Cochinchina Buddhism which has bold Chinese color into pure Vietnamese Buddhism. Later, his zen sect was based for Buddhist revival movement in 20th Century*¹⁹⁶.

He was born in Bac Ma Village, Dong Xuan District, Phu Yen Province, Vietnam. He left his home at the age of 12 with Zen Master Te

¹⁹⁴Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 596

¹⁹⁵<http://www.buddhistedu.org/viet/index.php/m%C3%B4n-phong/18-lam-te-chuc-thanh/599-bo-chinh-su-lieu-ve-thien-su-minh-hai-phap-bao>.

¹⁹⁶Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 604.

Vien at Hoi Ton Pagoda - Phu Yen province¹⁹⁷. In 1695, he from Phu Yen to Hue province to practice with many Zen masters such as Thach Liem, Giac Phong, Tu Lam. In 1702 he met the Tu Dung zen master at the An Ton pagoda, Long Son Mountain, Hue province and realizing the Dhamma of the Buddha through the teacher Tu Dung in 1712, then he was 42 years old. He traveled widely and established many religious sites such as Thien Ton pagoda (Hue), Vien Thong pagoda (Thuan Hoa) and Hoi Ton pagoda (Phu Yen), Co Lam and Bao Tinh pagoda in Phu Yen province. He organized four great Precept Platform (ordination for ordained monks) for three consecutive years, from 1733 to 1735 in Thua Thien, attended by the most monks and officials, lay Buddhists in the Nguyen royal capital. The Lay Buddhists and lay people were very revered his morality, so in 1740 they invited him to chair at the Precept Platform of Buddhist event under name Long Hoa in Hue province¹⁹⁸. Afterward, King Nguyen Phuc Khoat was also very devoted to his virtues, so the king regularly to visit Vien Thong Pagoda in Ngu Binh mountain -Hue to ask questions about Buddhism.

Before that, King Nguyen Phuc Chu admired the virtue and reputation of Lieu Quan Zen master; so many times the king invited the Zen master come in the royal to consult the Dhamma but Zen Master refused to keep his purity and virtue. Although the Zen master did not go to the royal palace, the Zen master had done a lot of Buddhist work with the king to revive the Vietnamese Buddhism here. Thus, Bonze Lieu Quan made the Lam Te Zen sect became a living and growing in Cochinchina¹⁹⁹. In the previous of the zen master, the Buddhism in Cochinchina was heavily colored by Chinese Buddhism, and he reformed to become the Lam Te Zen sect of Vietnam, which boldly embodies the Vietnamese culture that was suitable for all levels of society. Since then, the architecture, the ceremony began to shed Chinese color and bringing the traditional color of the Vietnamese country. Therefrom, he and his

¹⁹⁷Nguyen Tai Thu. Op.cit., pp. 199 – 201.

¹⁹⁸Phan Dang, **Meditation Master Lieu Quan and Vietnamese Buddhism in XVIII Century** (Vietnamese version), (Sciential journal, Hue University, Vol.72A, No.3, 2012), pp. 71 - 76.

¹⁹⁹Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 604.

disciples formed four Buddhist centers for propagation dhamma, and dozens of pagoda were set up throughout southern Vietnam.

In the eighteenth century (after 1712), he formed Lieu Quan Zen sect according to the ideas of the Lam Te zen sect, which was called Lam Te Lieu Quan zen sect (to be Vietnamese Zen school of purely Vietnamese culture), and radiating strongly. As in his hometown (Phu Yen province), this sect was developed quite strongly; and he received many disciples; then they all became virtuous fame monks, such as: Most Venerable Te Duyen founded the Kim Cang pagoda (Tuy Hoa city - Phu Yen province); Most Ven.Te Can set up Ho Son pagoda (Tuy Hoa city); Most Ven.Te Dong established Binh Quang pagoda (Tuy Hoa city); Most Ven.Te Hau has abbotting Bao Tinh pagoda (Tuy Hoa city); Most Ven.Te Sang established Duong Long pagoda; Most Ven.Te Ngan founded Long Son pagoda (Hoa- Dinh district-Phu Yen province), Most Ven.Te Dai set up Kim Long pagoda (Tuy Hoa city), Most Ven.Te Tin established Long Son pagoda (Tuy An - Phu Yen); Most Ven.Te Phap established Tu Quang pagoda (Da Trang - Phu Yen), etc. Today, this sect is thriving in Vietnam and spreading to some Western countries²⁰⁰.

Thus, with the effort for spreading Buddhism to the masses, Zen Master Lieu Quan was the pioneer to the development of Vietnamese Buddhism later, as well as to the Buddhist revival movement of the twenty century²⁰¹ (in the 20th century, there are two wars between Vietnam and France and the United States, so the Buddhism of this period was persecuted by the invasive government who followed Catholic Christian. Afterward, in 1963, Most Venerable Thich Quang Duc and other superior Buddhist monks stood up to initiate the Buddhist revival movement).

After the death of Zen master Lieu Quan, King Nguyen Phuc Khoat made the stele and the tower for him, and awarded him the title of “ Most Ven. Dao Hanh Thuy Chinh Giac Vien Ngo”, was the 35th

²⁰⁰Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., p. 601.

²⁰¹Nguyen Lang, Op.cit., pp. 599 – 602. And see more part (c) of section 3.1.1.

Patriarch of the Lam Te Zen sect, and the first Patriarch of Lieu Quan zen sect of Vietnam.

4.2.2 Establishing the Power of National Unity

The land of Cochinchina of the Nguyen dynasty was a new land, where convergence of all classes in the society who had political dissatisfaction from the two civil war of dynasties (Trinh-Mac and Trinh-Nguyen), made the people to be disturbed, societies to be separated, as well as Champa and Khmer residents had tamed the Vietnamese, including the later Chinese immigrants. In such circumstances, the Buddhist philosophy has been really applied radically, in order to gather the power of national unity. Therefore, it was not surprising that, during the retention of the Nguyen Hoang lord in both Thuan Hoa and Quang Nam; he advocated solidarity, garnered talents and won the hearts of the people in the spirit of direction to social peaceful, people's welfare²⁰².

The spirit of solidarity was also taught by Phap Thuan Zen master, who was the National Teacher of King Le Dai Hanh (981-1009), said that:

*If the whole country attached, united together closely as well as the rope of rattan wrapped, that Vietnam will peaceful and united with the people, first of all built on the love of the people as brothers and sisters*²⁰³.

Of course, the solidarity was also built around a firmly center to be the loyal, talented, idealist leader. The results of a short time in the reign of the Cochinchina, the Nguyen kings turned an area of insecurity into a flesh pots and hubs of commerce, with a system of pagodas

²⁰²Truong Huu Quynh. Dao To Uyen & Pham Van Hung. **The Vietnamese History From Tenth Century to 1858** (Vietnamese Version). (Ha Noi: Educational University Publishing House, 2003), p. 184.

²⁰³Le Manh That, **A Study of Collected Prominent of Zen Garden** (Vietnamese version), (Ho Chi Minh city: Phuong Dong Press, 2005), p. 288. And Thich Thanh Tu, **The Zen Master of Vietnam** (Vietnamese version), (The Buddhist of Ho Chi Minh City Press, 1995), p.41. And Cao Huy Giu, tr. **The Complete History of The Dai Viet** (Vietnamese Version), Vol.I. (Ha Noi: Culture and Information Publishing House. 2006), p. 208.

restored and built, Buddhism to be developed, people lived and worked in peace and contentment, foreign trade with foreign countries to be flourishing.

Clearly, the Nguyen kings were lay Buddhists national leaders, who draw lessons from his father's experience in the process of building country, holding and opening country, to apply power of all people through the implementation of the Buddhist philosophy and action in real life. Meanwhile, Zen masters accompanied kings and government officials to formulate national policy with two strategic missions: rebuilding the country and responding to the war of national threatened regular. At that time, Buddhism was active on the political arena, by the purpose for building the great unity bloc in the newly independent country.

Thereby, it was shown that from the beginning the Lords and Kings of the Nguyen dynasty have identified Buddhism as the foundation for the building of national unity for the process of national expansion and development²⁰⁴. Thus, the method for the establishing strength of national unity of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, he basically built on the foundation of the previous dynasties, that was, to take Buddhism as a motto. So, under his reign, King Nguyen Phuc Chu has developed its strength more and more increasing by his devotion through the establishment of a system of village pagodas where people gather, disseminate Buddhist ethics, initiating the movement of Renaissance Buddhism, he developed his own personal morality, made Buddhism a bridge with the people, creating a solid solidarity. And that has affirmed for the neighbors the inner strength of the Vietnamese country without any power that could separate. Therefore, it can be said that the life of the people during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu was very peaceful and happy.

²⁰⁴Thich Mat The. **Essays on The History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version). (Da Nang city: Minh Duc Press, 1970). p. 184.

4.2.3 Social Aspect

As was started above, the Buddhist ethics has considered the standards of social morality by King Nguyen Phuc Chu, who had wanted building a peaceful society on the Buddhist spirit for all regions as economy, education, politics, culture, diplomacy, etc. Thus, under his reign, Vietnamese society in the South was a democratic society, which showed many modernization of the human right in integration era of the country. All things will said below.

a. Establishing a Peaceful Society

The philosophical foundation of Buddhism, whether of Theravada Buddhism or Mahayana Buddhism, was filled profound human material²⁰⁵. The spreading path of Buddhism has never been a sign of bloodshed and power. Buddhism was acquired by the masses in new cultures as a new mental and spiritual nourishment, replacing the psychic dependence structure of monotheistic or polytheistic religions, which was heavy on superstition and fear.

As in India, Emperor Asoka was the first to send the message of compassion and wisdom of the Buddha beyond the boundaries of India, about three centuries after the Buddha passed away (King Asoka was a famous conqueror throughout the land of India at that time. Later, he became enlightened to the Buddha's teachings. Instead of ruling by virtue of power, he took the virtue of reigning and doing many charitable society works). Since then, the Buddha's moral philosophy has been presented in many countries around the world. The thought of compassion and wisdom of the Buddha has also become the mainstream of many Buddhist countries²⁰⁶.

Only Buddhism can build a philosophy of peace. Therefore, in order to establish a unity or peaceful society of the Nguyen dynasty, King Nguyen Phuc Chu also had to use Buddhism, and there was no other

²⁰⁵Doan Trung Con, **The Sects of The Buddhism** (Vietnamese version). (Ho Chi Minh city: General Publishing House, 2006), p. 7.

²⁰⁶I. M. Ghosh, **Ahimsā Buddhist and Gandhian**, (Indian Bibliographies Bureau Co-Publisher 1947), p. 58.

religion. Here, we see between King Nguyen Phuc Chu and Emperor Asoka having similarities in the rule path according Buddhist thoughts, which was also the result of the kings of Buddhist refuge and to apply the philosophy of Buddhism in his rule.

In particular, for King Nguyen Phuc Chu, who had great support and advice of Vietnamese and Chinese Zen masters. And among them, Zen master Thach Liem was a very influential person to King Nguyen Phuc Chu, and he was also the one who changed King Nguyen Phuc Chu's rule most, as he advised the king that we should bring compassion to the people, abolish the strict rules of barbarism and unhappiness²⁰⁷. So, in the process of territory expansion, king Nguyen Phuc Chu has not used to power, that he focus the means of emigrant for reclaim waste land and establishment hamlet as well as foreign affairs²⁰⁸. This things showed peaceful spirit for his nation in particular and the neighbouring countries in general.

King Nguyen Phuc Chu has succeeded greatly in establishing the unity and peace of society on the philosophy of compassion, love for peace, respect for life, gratitude and repay of the Buddhism, and this philosophies deeply influenced the hearts of the Vietnamese people. As in the Dhammapada, the Buddha taught that “Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world. By non-hatred alone is hatred appeased. This is a law eternal”²⁰⁹. If this philosophy was considered and applied by modern politicians, it will certainly open up new horizon of peacefulness and happiness.

b. Creating a Momentous Turning-point for Economy

Nguyen dynasty was a newly dynasty more than 100 years ago (1558-1691), with the necessary requirements and conditions for confrontation and survival, forcing a new dynasty to have different ways and openness in terms of social management. So a wise and favorable

²⁰⁷Nguyen Lang. Op.cit., p. 630.

²⁰⁸Le Binh Phuong Luan. Op.cit., p. 102.

²⁰⁹Acharya Buddhakkhita, tr. **The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom**. (Sri Lanka -Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1996), p. 22.

option for the Nguyen dynasty was the choosing Buddhism for the work of mind to the masses, for the acquisition of human heart, for social stability, and it became a good culture in human life on the way of the treatment and sense of national responsibility. Therefore, after Nguyen Phuc Chu's throne (1691-1725), he inherited this cultural tradition, and it helped him expanding and developing a strong economy. How to understand this problem, we find out the following:

I. Inland Trade

To understand the domestic economy under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, how we should learn about how the domestic economy of the predecessors, through two issues:

About the merchandise: Nguyen Hoang set up the Nguyen dynasty in 1558 and in 1600 officially announced the separation of the Later Le dynasty, was a newly dynasty to be established (Thuan Hoa), the population to be too negligible and poor, the economy to be dominated by agriculture, and inadequate labor resources, the men to be encouraged to enter the army, so the food to be not enough to give the people a hand out of the military. So, in 1600, king Nguyen Hoang had policies of appointing foreign buyers and expanding international relations as much as possible²¹⁰. Initially, the agricultural economy of the south was dominated by rice, mulberry and cash crops. And subsequently, silk, sugar, coarse fabrics, honey and pepper were produced. But with a new economic zone, the exchange will be very limited, and the price was also very cheap. Although, sales also use money to trade but were more common than in-kind²¹¹. Especially, in 1637, the Nguyen dynasty suffered a severe economic crisis due to the King of Cambodia banning rice exports to this region. This was a difficult challenge for Nguyen Dynasty's predecessor kings, who constantly struggled to stabilize their economy, resulting in military consolidation in response to Trinh Lords in the North and Champa government in the Southern.

²¹⁰Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., p. 96.

²¹¹Ibit., p. 132.

For King Nguyen Phuc Chu, anyway he was the next generation, inheriting an existing economy of the previous kings. As in the early 17th century, with the striving to promote the commercial economy with foreigners (such as Netherlands, England, Portugal, Japan, China, Siam and Cambodia) of the predecessors created Hoi An - Quang Nam province which was the center of southern government, became a thriving trading center. And the kingdom of the Nguyen Dynasty was at the top of the list of countries in mainland Southeast Asia²¹². Thinking that King Nguyen Phuc Chu was the influencer of Buddhism ideas, a virtuous leader who was revered as clear sighted King. It shows that he was very responsible to the people, to the country, always interested in the life of society, plus the achievements of the previous dynasties, and he will certainly have the orienting for the development of the economy and creating a good society rich and strong with his benevolence.

So, under his rule, the economic life of society has changed markedly, from an economy to pay in kind to trade in place of cash, he has circulated the cent coin for trading. From the premise of King Nguyen Phuc Tran (1687-1691) sent a testimony asking the Japanese government to mint cent coin for Cochinchina²¹³, which triggered massive economic growth strong of King Nguyen Phuc Chu later on. In 1695 – 1697, with the policy of tolerance and openness of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, the value of cent coin increased very high, it can be said that it tripled compared with 1688, and King Nguyen Phuc Chu to improve the reinforcing the coin of light weight and bearing the Vietnamese color, showing its strength, and economic and political independence²¹⁴.

In addition, king Nguyen Phuc Chu also expanded the domestic market on the plateau and the south of Cochinchina. In Thuan Hoa, he opened the trade route through the Lao Bao border gate with Laos in Quang Tri province (vietnam) and many turns to the highlands; this was the busiest business route Thuan Hoa (Nguyen dynasty capital). In Binh Dinh province, the road leading up to An Khe Pass in Gia Lai Province forms a commercial center between the people of the delta and the ethnic

²¹²Ibid., p. 95.

²¹³Ibid., p. 119.

²¹⁴Ibid., p. 159.

minorities. Beside, he also expanded the shipping business, including Nước Mặn (Salt Water) Port in Binh Dinh province; And ports in Phu Xuan-Thanh Ha (Thua Thien - Hue), Hoi An port (Quang Nam), Vung Lam port (Phu Yen), Gia Dinh (Saigon), Cu Lao Pho (Dong Nai), My Tho (Tien Giang province), and Ha Tien port (Ha Tien province), ect...Thus, the policy orientation for the development of the economy of Nguyen Phuc Chu had a strong and positive impact on the development of society, creating a solid economy and prosperity, development of the following dynasties.

Policy of tax: In the 17th century, in the south of Vietnam, tax types were introduced to the people, such as personal taxes, land taxes, surcharges and sales taxes; but the personal tax was to be paid by the Nguyen dynasty and concerned more. And, depending on the locality, there were different levels of taxation. In general, the 17th century tax was higher than the 18th century of the Nguyen dynasty; as in 1642 the relative tax of a married man was 8.5 Quan for a year²¹⁵. In 1671, it was 8.3 Quan. In 1687 was between 4.5 and 5.4 per year. And in the 18th century, from 1.21 to 1.47 Quan for a year. Thus, the tax policy of the previous dynasties raised very high for the people but the issue of tax administration was not tightly caused negative problems in the officials²¹⁶.

Moreover, the dynasties of the later period of King Nguyen Phuc Chu's reign, the personal taxes increase was not significant, but other taxes increased day by day, both domestically and internationally, and many prolix tax laws, if the tax law is unclear and not enforced with the people, this is the cause of the rise of the struggle of farmers. Like the 1769 tax law of Nguyen Phuc Thuan (1765 - 1777), it was marked as a twist of the Nguyen dynasty regime, increasing greediness in the substitution system of officials²¹⁷, and adding the wage level to the

²¹⁵Quan was copper coin of feudal regime in Vietnam. One Quan = 600 VND.

²¹⁶Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., pp. 169 - 171.

²¹⁷In the period of king Nguyen Phuc Khoat (1738-1765) was the period of stable development and thriving of most long. Therefrom, it was also lead to pleasure and social evils which has happened and divided into many faction in royal dynasty

official in the court lead to an increase in the conflict between the State and the people, which led to the explosion of the Tay Son movement that took place in 1771 and the fall of the Nguyen dynasty later²¹⁸.

So, how was the tax policy of the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu to the people? He was very fortunate, has been advised strongly on the way governed by the famed monks and Zen masters, especially Thach Liem Zen Master. So King Phuc Chu had changed the way of governance differently from the previous dynasties as well as the later dynasties, as he reduced all taxes for the people, and did not collect taxes on the poor, to abolish strict laws and riddles that lead to injustice, the abolition of barbaric torture²¹⁹, etc..., The king also reduced the tax for foreigners to do business in the south. Thus, for the domestic economy, the Nguyen government has had significant changes in policy, in line with the development of the economy at that time. Especially in 1714, the most prominent point of policy change in the trade made people agree and very happy.

II. Foreign Trade

Foreign trade items: The Nguyen dynasty determined the development strategy for both the economy and the military, which was to lead international alliances, and the issue of foreign trade was one of the most important strategies of the Nguyen dynasty; it was a vital determinant for Nguyen's economy and military. Since then, in 1600, the Nguyen government has invested in its foreign trade mainly by waterways and has recorded considerable profits.

First of all, the Nguyen government had diplomatic relations with Japan on the purchase of silk and luxury goods, and this relationship became deeper and more friendly, because the Nguyen dynasty wanted to promote and cheer for the trade, so they got a Japanese businessman named Hunamoto Yabeije for adoption. At the same time, they married

each other. That is causes lead to bribe and increase very high tax for people (1769). See, Nguyen Khac Thuan. Op.cit., pp.560 - 561.

²¹⁸Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., pp. 187 - 193.

²¹⁹Nguyễn Lang. Op.cit., pp. 629 - 630.

the princess, daughter of King Nguyen Phuc Nguyen (1613-1635) to a Japanese merchant Araki Sotao. With such good relations, the Nguyen government has received great attention from Japan and every year the number of Japanese merchant ships arriving in Hoi An - Dang Trong (Conchinchina) has increased, from 1604 to 1635. At this stage, there was mainly import and export commodities: Rice, Silk, coarse cloth, woven silk, long Zhao, aloe wood, tortoise, shark skin, sugar, honey, pepper, gold, rattan, ivory, rhinoceros horns, sulfur, and some jewelry, cosmetics, etc. This was a good result, as the Nguyen government connects with the Japanese, which contributes to the boom economy and they can equip themselves with advanced weapons to deal with the North government²²⁰.

In addition, another important trading partner of the Nguyen government, that was the China; because the trade with China also brought a great profit to the South. And vice versa, the Chinese have seen this as a convenient place to trade for connectivity between countries and surrounding areas. Moreover, China was also in the midst of a severe civil war between the Ming and Manchu-Qing dynasties; so it was also an opportunity for Chinese to seek asylum and to work a living in the Conchinchina²²¹. Besides, another commercial direction of the Nguyen government during this period was diplomatic relations with the western countries such as England, Netherlands, France and Portugal, from which the Nguyen government bought a lot weapon equipment for military equipment²²².

With the rising momentum of such an economy, King Nguyen Phuc Chu took advantage of the opportunities and issued more open policies, increasing the number of merchant ships in Southeast Asia as well as in the West more and more. And, the circulation of coins first pleases and promotes the commercial economy, accelerating the rapid development of the Cochinchine economy²²³. Because the period of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691-1725) was a period of intersection preserving

²²⁰Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., pp. 109 - 111.

²²¹Ibid., pp. 115 - 119.

²²²Ibid., pp. 120 - 126.

²²³Ibid., p. 117.

the domestic economy with a strong foreign trade economy, to be his premise for further development.

Thus, in the 17th and 18th centuries Nguyen dynasty as well as the era of King Nguyen Phuc Chu has made the South to become a prosperous place, a international trade center; and Hoi An to be the great distribution center for internationalization. And most of the population lived entirely on the trade here.

Tax policy for foreign trade: Taxation was a source of income for the economy, so the Nguyen dynasty can not ignore this opportunity. But for the first period of diplomatic opening, the Nguyen government encouraged the countries to trade, so no taxes and only very small taxes were levied on Western merchant ships; and taxes on exports and imports applied just at late 17th century is 3-4% or 5-10%, and the tax only fluctuate in acceptable level but not too high, although the taxation on merchant ships was very important for the Nguyen dynasty .

However, at the time of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, taxes on the foreign trade economy were still applied at low interest rates. But there were accompanied by extended policies that created many favorable and easy conditions for investment in many countries in the region and the west to the South government.

c. Creating a Momentous Turning-point for Diplomacy

King Nguyen Hoang's talents, virtues and tolerant political lines not only impressed the military and the people, but even the neighbour countries expressed their appreciation and established good relationships²²⁴. Afterward, during the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691-1725), he saw the importance of national development through two main areas: economic and military diplomacy; these two areas support one another for a well-developed country. The above presented economic aspects (domestic and foreign trade), so below, only more about the aspect of the military, it was divided into two parts as follows:

²²⁴Cao Huy Giu, tr. Op.cit., p. 606.

I. Internal Army Aspect

The army of the Nguyen dynasty during this period was very important, because the forces of the Later Le Dynasty and Trinh lords in the North were too strongly while the Nguyen forces were thin compared to the North²²⁵. Therefore, the issue of military consolidation, by all means of recruiting soldiers or diplomacy with neighboring countries, was a very necessary thing for the Nguyen dynasty. And the Nguyen dynasty as well as King Nguyen Phuc Chu had great success in setting up military and military reinforcements, due to clever tactics and the policy of launching the immigrant movement (such as including the farmers exiled, the poor and miserable craftsmen, soldiers to be deported under the exploitation of feudal landlords and due to war, by natural disasters the people who left the village to the south for the setting up house)²²⁶. In addition, the Nguyen Dynasty made a good link with Champa near the border, after which Champa was weakened and surrendered to the Nguyen government. As in 1698 through the emigrant movement for reclaiming and expanding the territory, King Nguyen Phuc Chu obtained many areas of the South part of wealth and soldiers, and ordered the high-ranking general Nguyen Huu Canh set up a government facility in the South, which is the land of Dong Nai province and Saigon today²²⁷.

And in 1711, King Nguyen Phuc Chu realized the special significance of the Hoang Sa (Paracel islands) and Truong Sa (Spratly islands) archipelagos, so he sent General Thuyen Duc Hau to send soldiers to map the Truong Sa archipelago for established national sovereignty and exploited seafood. At the same time, under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, the military was also organized into a powerful force by regularly training and encouraging rewarding practice. The king also reformed the central organizational structure; fixing of rank, military title, and more, he also cares about and offers great reward to those who have made meritorious services to the country, whether they

²²⁵Minh Tue, Thich. **A Brief History of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese Version), (Ho Chi Minh: Ho Chi Minh City Buddhist Association Press, 1993), pp. 411 - 413.

²²⁶Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., p. 181.

²²⁷Ibid., pp. 181 - 182.

were generals, soldiers or people. So he created a solidarity force between the army and the people.

II. Foreign Army Aspect

First of all, the Nguyen dynasty wanted to support its growing military, they needed to have a farther perspective, that is, towards diplomacy with the nations in the world, creating strong alliances, creating the peace to avoid the war. Therefore, King Nguyen Phuc Chu has strengthened diplomatic policy development stronger than the previous dynasties, through foreign trade and Hoi An port (Quang Nam province) has become an international trading port with the countries such as China, Japan, Indonesia, India, France, Portugal, England, etc²²⁸ ... Since then the Nguyen Dynasty has created a solid economy, accelerating the development of equipment for the military growing stronger.

As it was, in the mid-17th century, not only in Vietnam but also in China, was the period of constant wars. In China, in 1644, the between of the Ming and Manchu-Qing dynasties, violent civil wars took place, and eventually the Qing dynasty destroyed the Ming dynasty. Since then, movements seeking to revive the Ming Dynasty took place everywhere, with Chinese people worshipping the Ming reign to seek refuge in Vietnam. By talents and virtues of himself, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was very clever to win their hearts. In particular, the receiving of a large army (over 30,000) of the Ming dynasty came from China by the leader General Mac Cuu (1708)²²⁹. And he was assigned as a general in the southwestern region, having developed and fought against the forces of Champa, a land bordered by the Nguyen dynasty to the southward (it was the land bordered by Laos and northern Cambodia today).

At the same time, the reception of two Zen schools Tao Dong and Lam Te direct from China by King Nguyen Phuc Chu with other famous Zen masters such as Nguyen Thieu, Thach Liem that also won the

²²⁸Historical Institute, **the History of Vietnamese** (Vietnamese version), vo.4. (Sciential and Social Publishing House. 2007), pp. 203 - 205.

²²⁹Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., p. 180.

sympathy of a part of the Chinese emigrant formed a strong link with Nguyen dynasty. And, in 1701, King Nguyen Phuc Chu sent General Hoang Than and Zen Master Hung Triet to bring his credentials and tribute to China to establish good relation with the Manchu-Qing dynasty.

Moreover, the government of King Nguyen Phuc Chu also created a relationship with Siam (Thailand today) and became allies, providing support for each other during the war. Or during his reign, many Western merchant ships entered the trade and exchanged goods regularly, King Nguyen Phuc Chu took the opportunity, using Westerners to train military techniques and teaching the art of war; as in 1704, he thanks to Jean De Arnedo for the expansion of science and technology; and in 1724 there was De Lima helping him in mathematics and astronomy, as well as in association with the Spanish, Portuguese Houses, Britain and Japan to buy military equipment²³⁰.

It can be said that, thanks to the cleverness and openness policy of King Nguyen Phuc Chu, but the army of the Nguyen dynasty grew in both quantity and weapons equipment compared to the Later Le dynasty in the north and the neighbors, which contributed to stabilizing the social and economic development of the Nguyen dynasty in the South.

d. Social and National Development

The nature of the teachings of the Buddha were to bring material and spiritual benefits to the people, which means that Buddhism was always close to and accessible to all classes of society. That was through the doctrine of According With (or Resulting from conditioning cause), Compassion and Impartialness. From the time of Buddhism was imported, Buddhism came into contact with indigenous culture, in the spirit of openness, non-uniqueness. Thus, from the man of intelligent, clever and far-sighted, and addi influenced by the Buddhist ideas, but King Phuc Chu also had open thoughts with policies on social development and management, bringing the country to a stage of

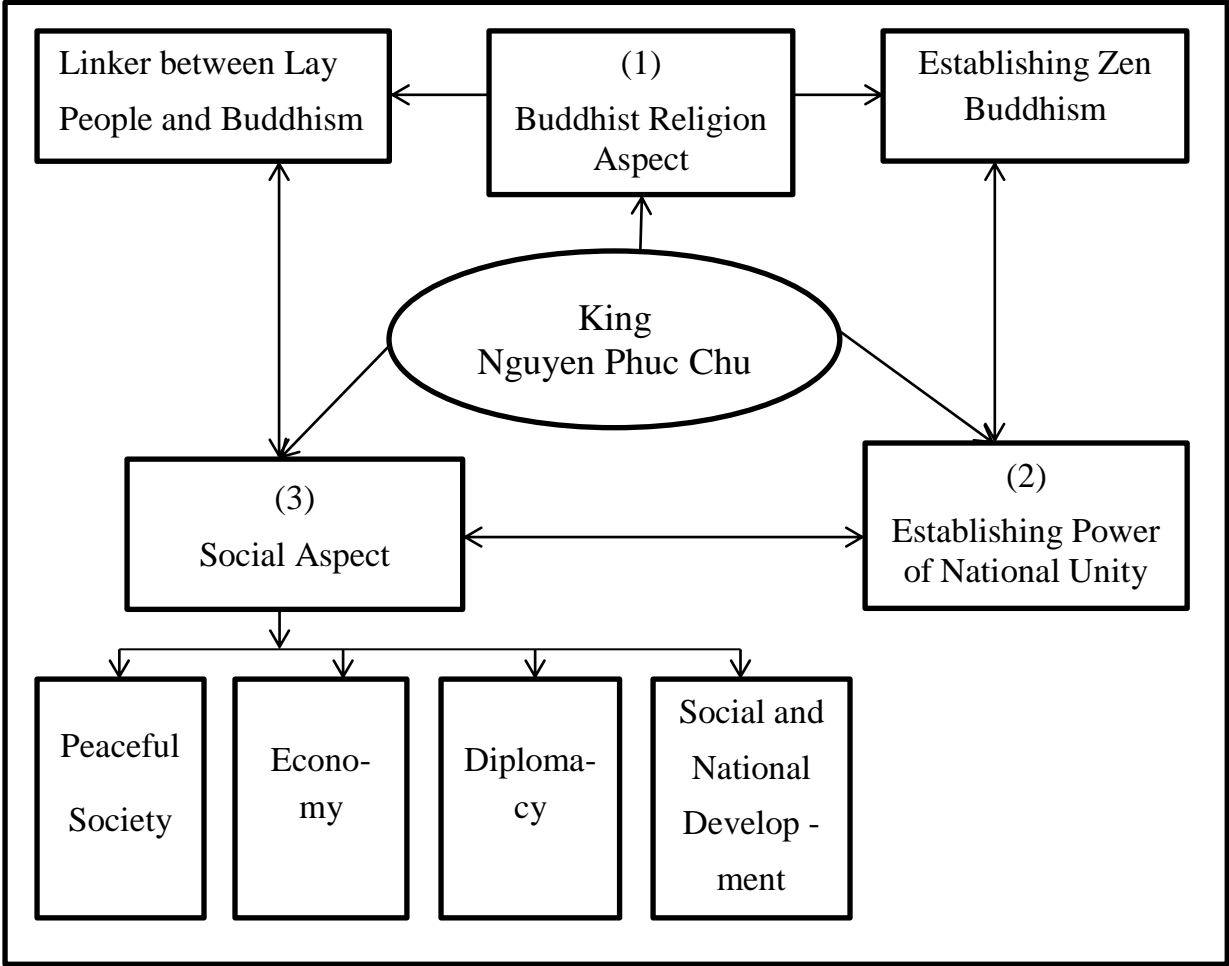
²³⁰Li Tana, edit. Nguyen Nghi, tr. Op.cit., pp. 121 - 122.

comprehensive economic, cultural, educational and political development²³¹.

It shows us that in order to develop in all areas of society or nation, King Nguyen Phuc Chu took the thought of Buddhism as the motto of his decisions. Since then, his actions have been directed towards the interests and well-being of the people. Thus, his social development policies were widely applauded and supported by the public. That was a great success for a political leader, and the foundation for bringing a society, a country towards prosperity and peace. And it can be affirmed that: society, the country under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu has reached civilization and wealthy.

²³¹ Historical Science Community of Vietnam, Op.cit., pp. 699 - 701. And Ngo Thi Bich Lan, **Hydraulic Forces of Nguyen Lords** (1558 – 1777) – (Vietnamese version), (The Review of Scial Seminar of Students - Da Nang University publishing house, 2010), p. 266.

Table 8: A chart of the summarizing about the contributions of king
Nguyen Phuc Chu.



4.3 Concluding Remarks

Of all the kings of the Nguyen dynasty, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was one of the most devout Buddhist monarchs, with zeal, not deliberate, doing not for political purpose, but he came to Buddhism for the purpose of finding a way bringing happiness and peace to the nation and people. And look back to the history of Indian Buddhism, King Nguyen Phuc Chu was likened to Emperor Asoka. Because, all his life serving the nation and Buddhism tirelessly, with the desire to bring the country to peace and prosperity, the people happy, prosperous Buddhism. And he did that during his reign.

Chapter V

Conclusion and Suggestions

5.1 Conclusion

Although this study was carefully prepared, but I am still realizable of its shortcomings and research document limitations. First of all, the research was conducted of the Buddhist contributions of King Nguyen Phuc Chu on the Vietnamese society in the late 17th century and the early decades of the 18th century. Actually, there were many lay Buddhist followers also contributing to the Buddhist revival and social development, but this Buddhist King was a most eminent person of each region of Buddhist activities together zen masters.

Secondly, the study has a limitation of the time “from 1691 to 1725 of the late 17th century and the early decades of the 18th century”. But it has marked a new step forward of Buddhist revival movement and social development at that time. It was a vital hyphen of the recovery age between two stages of its before and after, those are from 15th to the 16th century and the 19th to the 20th century; these are the great declining periods of Vietnames Buddhism. So, the contributions of king Nguyen Phuc Chu was a great milestone, and thanks to it, Vietnamese Buddhism overcame many challenges, as well as brought on Vietnamese Buddhism and society to the most refulgent age in the last century.

Third, through the question of the research designed to know the historical background, the relationship with Buddhism, impacts, and contributions of this outstanding Buddhist King. The answers can be achieved by reading of this study.

5.2 Suggestions for Further Research

5.2.1 General Suggestions

The thesis is a historical summary of Vietnamese Buddhism and society in the 17th and the 18th centuries. But the main scope of it focuses on the contributions of Buddhist king Nguyen Phuc Chu in the three parts of Vietnam, analyzing the circumstances of Vietnamese society under the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, the relationship played by king Nguyen Phuc Chu and the Buddhism, as well as the influences of his contributions on Vietnamese Buddhism and society. Throughout the thesis, readers can understand more about the setting of the Buddhism and society in Vietnam before and after of the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, the new methods and policies to help Vietnamese Buddhism overcome the darkest period, as well as the prosperous development of Vietnamese society, which opened a new turning-point for Buddhist and social development in Vietnam in the last centuries.

Through this research, we should dignify to the spirit serving for Buddhism in order to bring the enlightened teachings of the Buddha to the whole world, creating peaceful world, no war and happiness, as king Nguyen Phuc Chu has been done. And, following to be the suggestions for further research topics.

5.2.2 Further Research

Although there are many shortcomings and limitations in the research, the information provided is too detailed. However, for suggestions of further studies, I would like give recommendation as follows:

1. A comparative study of the development of Vietnamese Buddhism under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1691 - 1725) and King Tran Nhan Tong (1278 - 1293).
2. A study of the similarities and differences of the Buddhist revival movement under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu and the Buddhist movement of Southern Vietnam in the 20th century.

3. What are the most effective methods for the dedication of young monks and nuns to the development of today's society?.

4. Which are the plans for the dedication of young Lay Buddhists to Vietnamese Buddhism and society in the modern?

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The Appendix

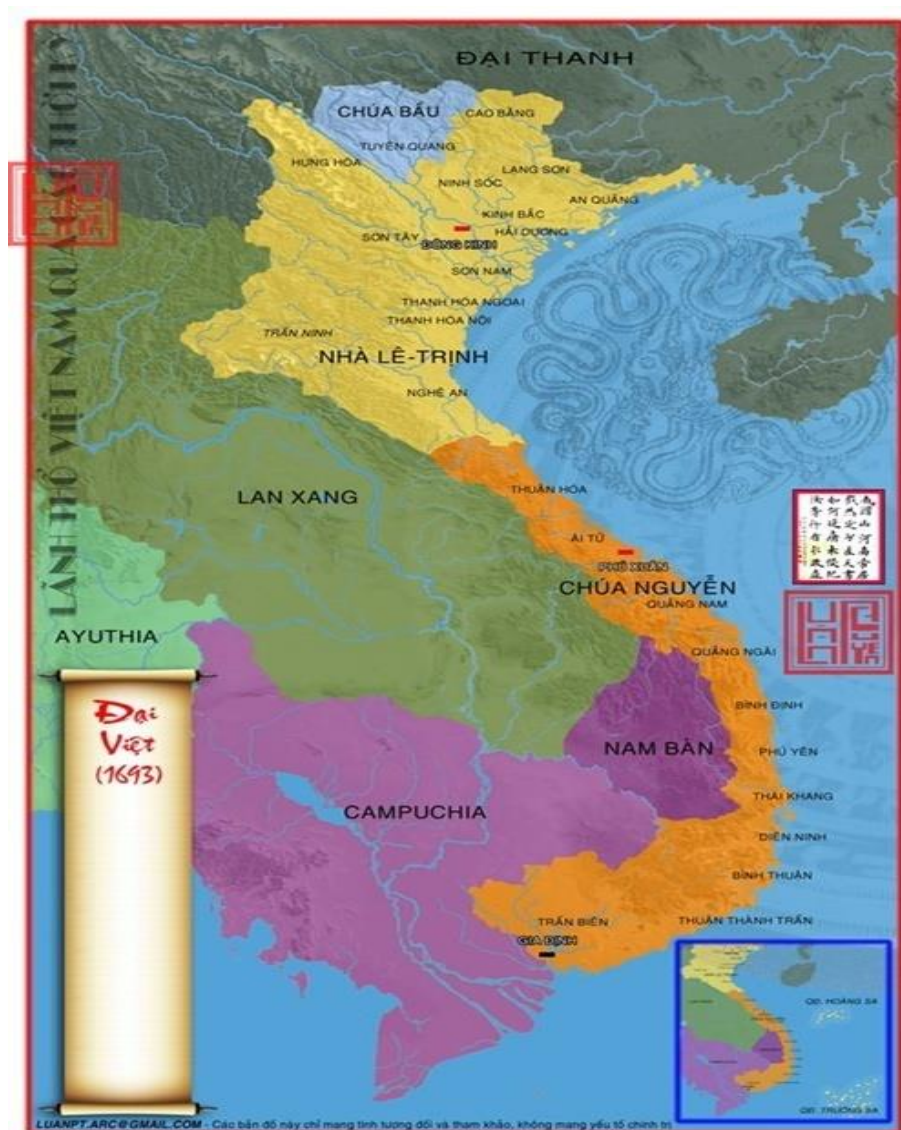


Figure 1: The map of Vietnam (1600-1757).

The yellowish coloured was territory of Latter Le dynasty in the North; and the orange coloured was domain of the Nguyen dynasty in the South. In 1693 – 1725, king Nguyen Phuc expanded territory to Hà Tiên province of the end of southern Vietnam. The research by <<https://lichsunuocvietnam.com/ban-do-lanh-tho-viet-nam-qua-cac-thoi-ky-phan-2/>>.



Figure 2: The statue of Nguyen Hoang Lord

Who was first founding the Nguyen dynasty in Thuan Hoa - Southern Vietnam in 1558, as well as who was first base for expanding of the whole Vietnamese territory afterward. He has reigned form 1558 to 1613. And this statue displayed in Vietnam National Museum of History in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city. The research by <<http://baotanglichsu.vn/portal/vi/Tin-tuc/Nhan-vat-lich-su/2016/07/3A924BAF/>>.



Figure 3: The royal tombs of Lord Nguyen Hoang in the vestiges site of Trường Cơ in Thua Thien Hue province.

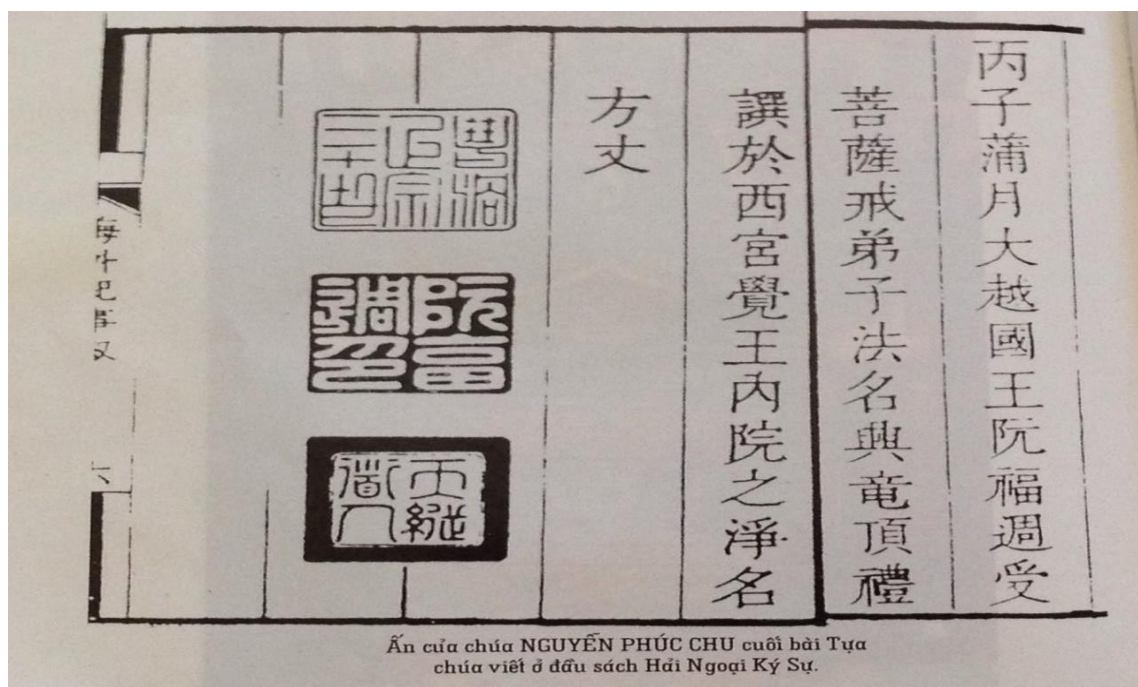


Figure 4: The royal stamp of king Nguyen Phuc Chu on the imperial edict.

This picture quoted from <Nguyen Lang. **A Complete Work of Historical Interpretation of Vietnamese Buddhism** (Vietnamese version), (Hanoi: Literature Publishing House, 2014), pp. 592 – 593>.



Figure 5: the coin under the period of king Nguyen Phuc Chu.

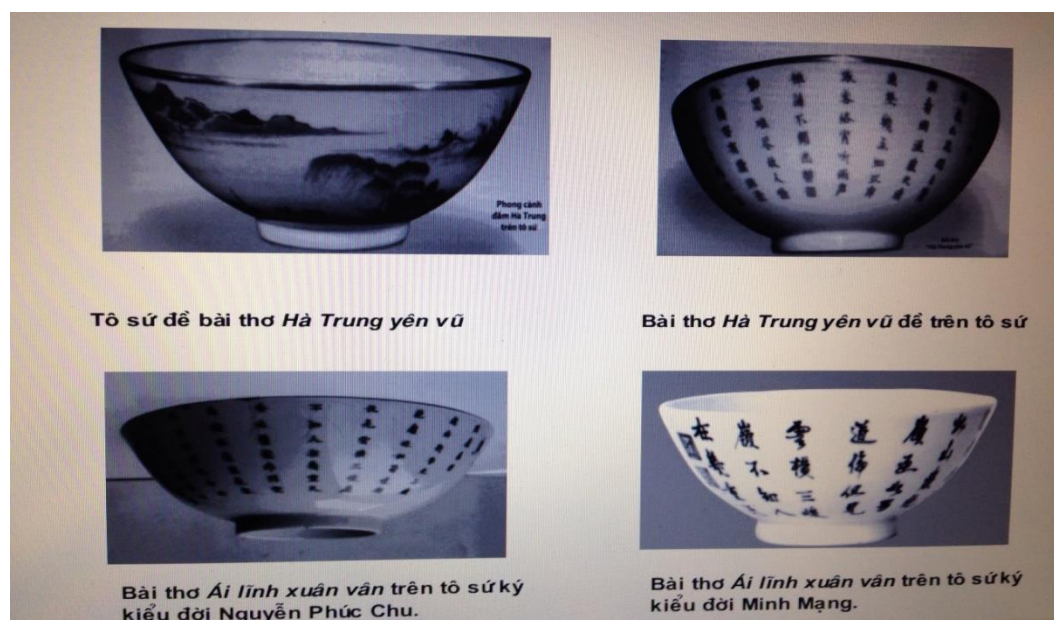


Figure 6: The poem of king Nguyen Phuc Chu written on the porcelain bowl.

The figure 5 and figure 6 were quoted from <Historical Science Community of Vietnam. **Nguyen Lords and The Nguyen Royal Dynasty in Vietnam's History from 16th to 19th Centuries** (Vietnamese version), (Hanoi: The World publishing House, 2008), p. 109 and p. 648>.



Figure 7 .a: King Nguyen Phuc Chu street in Tân Bình district in Ho Chi Minh city.



Figure 7.b: the figure 7.a and 7.b, which were brought name of king Nguyen Phuc Chu, it was near avenue of Truong Chinh in Tan Binh district – Ho Chi Minh city. And it has researched practice on 20/09/2017 by Ven. Phan Thanh Dang.



Figure 8: The old and new Thien Mu pagoda.

a: The old Thien Mu pagoda. This was a first pagoda which has king Nguyen Hoang built in 1601 in Thua Thien Hue province, and it has restored by KING NGUYEN PHUC CHU in 1714, where was king Nguyen Phuc Chu and Thach Liem Zen Master usually went there.



b: the Thien Mu pagoda today in Thua Thien Hue province.

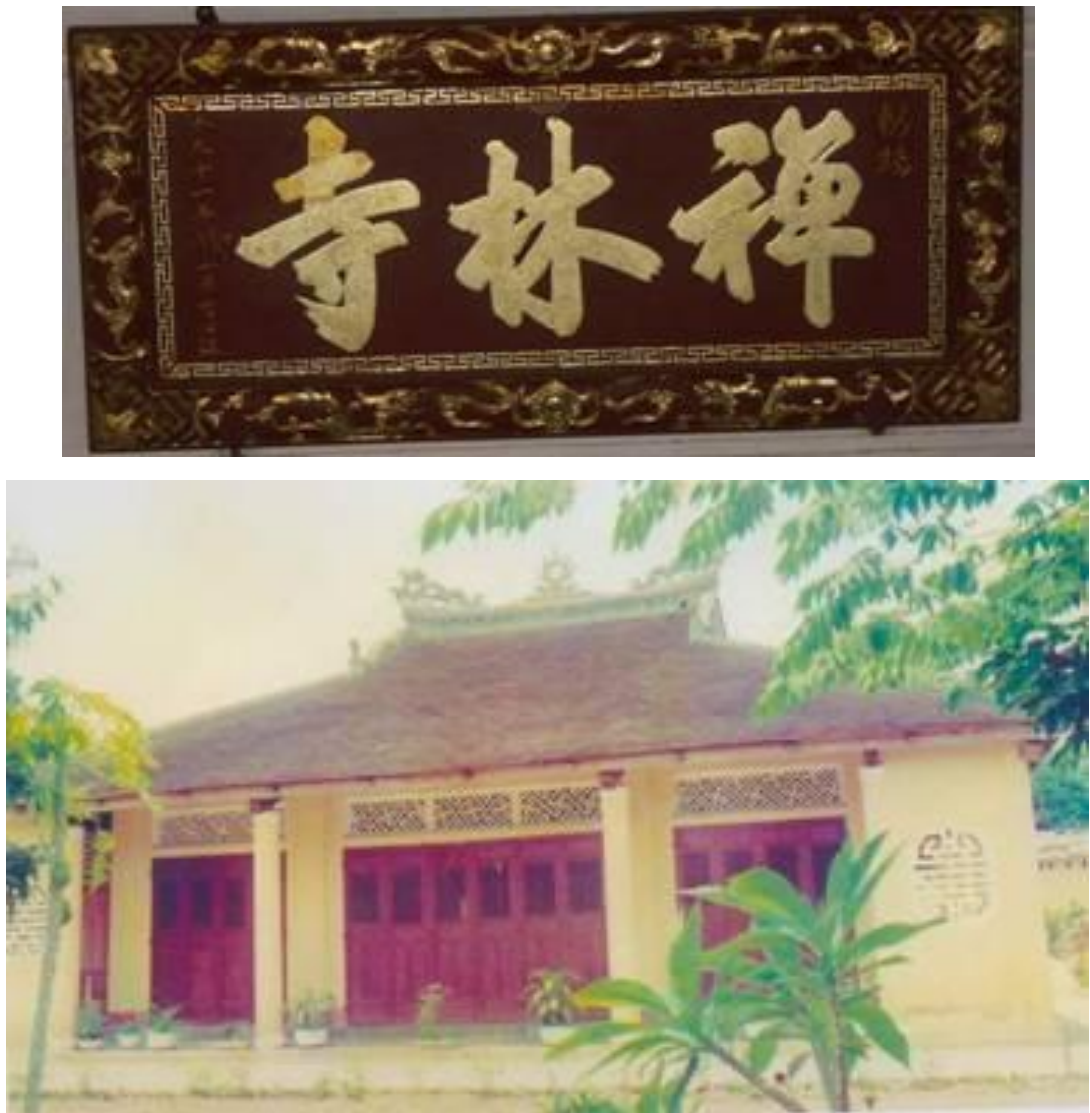


Figure 9: Thien Lam pagoda which had restored by King Nguyen Phuc Chu (1694) in Thua Thien Hue province.

Where were king Nguyen Phuc Chu and Thach Liem Zen master used organizing Buddhist events for great festival and ordained day in 1695.



Figure 10: Bodhisattva statue of the thousand hands at Tu Dam temple (Thua Thien Hue province) in 17th century.

It is under the reign of King Nguyen Phuc Chu. This picture quoted from <Nguyen Tai Thu, ed. **Buddhist History in Vietnam** (Vietnamese version), (Ha Noi: Science publishing House, 1988), p. 288>



Figure 11. The art architectures of the stupas and Arahants.

a: The Art Architecture of the stupa at Thap Thap Di Da temple (Binh Dinh province).



b: The art architecture of Lord Arahant at Thap Thap Di Da (Binh Dinh province). Figures (a) and (b) were the art architecture in the 17th and 18th centuries under the reign of king Nguyen Phuc Chu. The research by

<<https://giacngo.vn/PrintView.aspx?Language=vi&ID=52D659>>



Figure 12: The Bao Tinh pagoda

Where has founded by Lieu Quan Zen Master at his home in Phu Yen province (1706-1719), who was First Patriarch of Lieu Quan zen school. And it had restored in 2011, which had researched practice on 10/09/2017 by Ven. Phan Thanh Dang.

Biography

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