

INFLUENCES OF DAI VIET CIVILIZATION DURING NGUYEN LORD'S TERRITORIAL AGGRANDIZEMENT IN COCHINCHINA IN THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES

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ARTICLE INFO		ABSTRACT
Received:	10/6/2022	This research paper aims to clarify some influences of Dai Viet civilization under the expansion of Nguyen Lords as well as lead to a recognition of Nguyen Lords' role in Vietnamese culture preservation in Cochinchina during the 17th century and the 18th century. The author employs historical methods via a wide range of source materials and desk-research paper and logical method to generalize three locale points for this paper: (1) Dai Viet civilization contains new illustrations in clothing culture, housing culture and traffic culture; (2) The preservation of Vietnamese villages can be seen a copy of traditional villages in new territories, but it includes new social paradigms of the Chinese and the Khmerese; (3) Vietnamese people and other minorities performed their spiritual and religious culture through receiving new scholars of religions and beliefs to enrich Dai Viet civilization. The paper proves that there was a mass civilizational integration in Cochinchina during the 17th and the 18th century relied on perspectives of the civilizational history.
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NHỮNG ẢNH HƯỞNG CỦA NỀN VĂN MINH ĐẠI VIỆT TRONG QUÁ TRÌNH KHẼN HOANG CỦA CHÚA NGUYỄN Ở ĐÀNG TRONG VÀO THẾ KỶ XVII-XVIII

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THÔNG TIN BÀI BÁO		TÓM TẮT
Ngày nhận bài:	10/6/2022	Bài nghiên cứu này làm rõ một số ảnh hưởng của nền văn minh Đại Việt dưới sự mở rộng lãnh thổ của các Chúa Nguyễn từ thế kỷ XVII đến thế kỷ XVIII. Tác giả sử dụng phương pháp lịch sử thông qua tài liệu sơ cấp và tài liệu thứ cấp và phương pháp logic để khái quát ba đặc điểm: (1) Văn minh Đại Việt ở vùng đất mới có sự ảnh hưởng trên phương diện văn hóa vật chất, thể hiện qua văn hóa phục sức, văn hóa cư trú, văn hóa giao thông; (2) Làng Việt được tổ chức trên vùng đất mới, nhưng có thêm đặc điểm mới khi người Việt tái định cư ở phía Nam cùng với sự du nhập của các mô hình xã hội mới của các dân tộc ít người; (3) Người Việt và các dân tộc ít người khác có nhiều điểm tương đồng trong văn hóa tinh thần tâm linh. Một số trường phái mới đã được tiếp nhận bởi người Việt, góp phần và làm phong phú nền văn minh Đại Việt. Từ góc độ lịch sử văn minh, bài viết góp phần khẳng định văn minh Đại Việt đã có sự hội nhập văn hóa lớn ở vùng đất Đàng Trong thế kỷ XVII-XVIII.
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1. Introduction

The civilization of Vietnamese people is peculiar in mass integration, and acculturation and most cultures were established by solid influences of foreign culture [1, p. 7]. Dai Viet civilization is a convergence of the well-established monolithic culture of Vietnamese people to make a start in the 10th century under the Ly dynasty [2, p. 67], [3, pp. 140-183]. This process originated from the process of nation-building and nation defense and was inherited by feudal families in Vietnam from Ly Dynasty to Later Le Dynasty. Dai Viet civilization includes prominent achievements of material culture and spiritual culture, and its cultural sphere was exaggerated along with the southward march of Vietnamese people under Nguyen Lord's regime.

It is undeniable that Nguyen Lords diversified Vietnamese culture and diffused new values of Dai Viet civilization in Cochinchina, which is considered to be the peripheral factor to territorial aggrandizement. The academic topic has been viewed by the various authors since a reexamination of Nguyen Lords' position in Cochinchina in the previous decade. On the other hand, it is crucial to comprehensively analyze Nguyen Lords' involvement in enlarging territory and culture. This paper aims to revisit some additional values of the Dai Viet civilization, which was well-established around the Red River Delta in Tonkin, and then it stepped along with Tonkinese and other ethnic groups to go southward in order to avoid the Civil War under the support and aegis of Nguyen Lords. The research results contribute to generalizing some central attempts of Nguyen Lords for Vietnamese culture and utilized that as the power of Dai Viet civilization to make a double Vietnam in the past.

Historically, Vietnamese culture in Cochinchina attracted the significant attention of historians, who directly experienced the revival of Vietnamese culture in the south. *Dai Nam Thuc Luc tien bien* (大南寔錄前編 or Veritable Records of the Former Nguyen, hereafter Tien Bien) is a typical work to resume the past of the southern land [4]. Nguyen Emperors performed their responsibility to thoroughly recorded all historical events of Nguyen Lords prior to Gia Long's reign, although this work scarcely mentioned cultural changes of Dai Viet civilization in pristine territories. Besides, Le Quy Don – a scholar of the Tonkin, paid a visit to Phu Xuan citadel in 1776 [5]. Don directly eye-witnessed the rules of Nguyen Lords and conversed with indigenous people to make an understanding of this region, and *Phu bien tap luc* (Miscellaneous Records of the Pacification of the Frontiers) can be seen reliable attainment to deeply analyze cultural changes in Cochinchina over the course of Nguyen Lords' regime. Earlier, Chu Dat Quan – a Chinese convoy pilgrimed to the Chenla Kingdom and went across a savage quagmire of Mekong Delta. Quan wrote *Chan Lap phong tho ky* (A record of Chenla Kingdom's scene and land) to record all he beheld throughout his journey [6]. Quang implied that the southern land belonged to the Chenla Kingdom, called Thuy Chan Lap (Water Chenla Kingdom). Khmer denizens occupied high inlets amid large quagmires. Besides, Thich Dai San – an erudite Chinese monk, witnessed the rules and etiquettes of Nguyen Lords in his journey to Great Viet from March 1695 to June 1696 and created *Hai ngoai ky su* (Overseas writings) [7]. Although his objective was to propagate a new scholar of Buddhism in Vietnam, San narrated his voyage, and this work became more reliable to be referenced in cultural changes in Vietnamese people's culture in Cochinchina. Last but not least, it is acknowledged that Le Quy Don, along with his atom *Gia Dinh Thanh Thong Chi* (Annal of Gia Dinh Citadel), provided a summary of Vietnamese culture in Gia Dinh Citadels in the late 17th century [8]. The author focused on a chapter named Phong Tuc Chi, which gave the author a deluge of reliable information about the Vietnamese culture in the new city and made a comparison with their traditional culture.

Besides, the secondary source is also instrumental in scrutinizing peculiarities of Dai Viet civilization in the south. A myriad of academic works and research articles showed the growing literature on this topic. Conspicuously, the evolution of aggrandizement in the annals of Vietnamese history credited academic statements of Huynh Lua in *Lich su khai pha vung dat*

Nam Bo [History of southern land reclamation]. The book supplied us an overview of the Vietnamese's southern land reclamation and cultural exchanges in this region within the 17th and the 18th centuries [9]. However, it is insufficient to neglect a huge work of Phan Khoang entitled *Viet su Xu Dang Trong* [Vietnamese history: Cochinchina 1558-1770]. This report clarified Cochinchinese societies and customs through a lens of source materials to reveal that Vietnamese people had nature-based changes in order to adapt to new living conditions [10, pp. 610-620].

Similarly, Li Tana supposed that Vietnamese people had a rewarding chance to have close contact with indigenous people, some people came from uphill areas, and some ethnic groups moved from overseas, and this fruitful interaction shaped a new way of life for Vietnamese people. Cultural and social values were meticulously examined in *Nguyen Cochinchina: Southern Vietnam in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* shedding light on the power of Dai Viet civilization, which vietnamized local culture to diversify Dai Viet civilization [11, pp. 99-116]. Besides, the personal experience of Cristoforo Borri in his travel to Cochinchina also bridges a gap in the southern culture of Vietnam via his diaries. Borri scrupulously observed the social and cultural activities of the Cochinchinese and stated that this country possessed a diversity of natural sources and a variety of Eastern cultures deemed to be an appropriate place for Christian. Through the lens of a foreigner, Borri detected an enormous difference in culture to positively judge the beauty of the local culture established by the Dai Viet civilization [12].

The literature on Dai Viet civilization has recently increased in the academic background of Vietnam. Most experts focused on aspects of religion in their reflection on Cochinchinese culture. Tran My Le et al highlighted the process of importing western culture, which underwent a dynamic development of Christianity along with the growing literature of Christianity in Cochinchina. The establishment of Europeanized scripts entails the expansion of Christian literature sources [13]. This is an evolution of crusade in Asia; both Tonkin and Cochinchina were major goals of friars through the process of baptism and God's role indoctrination. Besides, Trieu Huy Ha reveals that there is a mushrooming of Christian communities in Cochinchina as a consequence of the protracted civil war leading to the vast number of Christian evacuees as well as getting exposed to foreign religions along with commercial ports of Cochinchina [14]. The author, in another finding, cited that the number of Christians in Hoi An port in the 17th century escalated to more than 1200 people in the late 16th century [15, p. 165]. These people are supposed to be pioneers of Western- Vietnamese acculturation in receiving a new belief in the chaotic history of Vietnam at that time.

Not only introduced by a new religion, traditional values of Dai Viet civilization during the southward march of Nguyen Lords witnessed radical changes. Buddhism of Cochinchina was divided into new scholars, including Lieu Quan (Dharma), Chúc Thánh (Zhù shèng), Lam Te (Linji Buddhism), Tao Dong (Soto Buddhism), Truc Lam Yen Tu (Truc Lam Zen) [16, p. 125]. The origin of these scholars is Tonkin, China, and local belief, supposing to be a sum total of civilizational process in an approach with Chinese merchants, Tonkinese refugees, and uplanders in mountainous of former Champa Empire. Tran Thuan had an optimistic outlook for the flourishing of Buddhism in Cochinchina. The Vietnamese people's civil war is considered a peripheral factor in stimulating the process of aggrandizement of Nguyen Lords and pushed Vietnamese Buddhism to harmonize with Chinese Buddhism, Theravada Buddhism of Khmer people, and established new branches of Buddhism in this country [17]. Meanwhile, Pham Thi Hue supposed that the acculturation process in southern land had two aspects: material, cultural, and spiritual value exchanges. Hue cited a variety of examples of architecture, religious venues, customs, and folk relations to draw a conclusion that southern land owned a multi-class stratum of culture, considered a venue of acculturation, and diversified Vietnamese culture in the south [18, p. 60].

In general, the Southern land of Vietnam and Nguyen Lords' land expansion have become the scholarly attention of various historians and researchers. The majority of scholars supposed that the expansion of Southern land was a great attempt by various ethnic groups, including the

Vietnamese, Chinese, and indigenous Khmer. The acculturation process in southern land is beneficial to Dai Viet civilization, which was transported by Tonkinese resettlers. This article summarized previous results with the purpose of buttressing all statements of this paper, and furthermore, the author intends to answer three research questions:

- How did the cultural customs of Vietnamese people alter to adapt to their new accommodation in the south of Vietnam during the 17th and 18th centuries?
- Which social organizations penetrated into Cochinchina when the Vietnamese, Chinese, Cham and Khmer diaspora received?
- How did the religions of Vietnam change in Cochinchina during this period?

2. Methodology

The research paper is designed using by historical method and logical method. The historical method accentuated the importance of source materials. Particularly, this topic is referenced by a system of primary sources, such as records of Le Quy Don, Thich Dai San, Chu Dat Quan, and Nguyen dynasty Academy of History. Meanwhile, previous findings of historians and researchers, with the help of textual and comparison analysis to reference them throughout the paper, buttresses all personal statements and clarify research questions. However, the primary method of this paper is the logical method, which outlines three peculiarities of neo-Dai Viet civilization in the south.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. An adaptation in material culture

Primary sources unveil that the attire of the Cochinchinese is still analogous to the Tonkinese. Vietnamese people still clung to Giao Chi customs. Annals of Gia Dinh prefecture meticulously depicted Cochinchinese outfits around Gia Dinh and stated that mandarin wore Cao Son scarf and traditional customs of Vietnamese mandarin. Commoners put on short-sleeve clothing. In contrast, women used to wear the four-part dress, men dressed in waistcloth, big iconic hats and wore barefoot [8, p. 67], [10, p. 619]. Trinh Hoai Duc also divulged that there was a rational change in Cochinchinese people under the reign of Nguyen Phuc Khoat because the King made differences to distinguish between Tonkinese and Cochinchinese. Whereby, Cochinchinese men were suggested to mimic the Chinese clothing while Cochinchinese women should dress trousers in lieu of traditional dresses. These clothes are similar to the Tonkinese, yet they were renovated to acclimatize to the southern climate and make fashioners flexible and comfortable in daily life when they were used to doing farm. Meanwhile, Thich Dai San argued that Chinese people in Hoi An in the 17th century still retained their traditional attire, which was appropriate to Ming dynasty clothing [7, p. 154]. This statement reveals that Vietnamese people have a flexible change to make their clothing more comfortable and compatible with the new climate.

Besides, the housing area of the Cochinchinese was illustrated in old history that there is a modest difference between the mandarin house and the commoner house. Under the reign of Nguyen Lords, the house of Cochinchinese mandarin was sculpted and carved skillfully. The Wall partition was constructed of stone and bricks. Desks and chairs originated from bronze and high-quality wood. The utensil was made of pottery. The harness was created by gold and silver. They were dressed in silk and satins and never wore shirt-based clothing [10, p. 617]. On the contrary, commoners resided in thatched houses and did not have furniture; specifically, they had only a rush mat for guests [10, p. 620]. The performance of clothing illustrated that there was a social stratum at that time and social division created a stark difference between social classes in Cochinchinese societies. Compared to the residential area in the north, the houses of Cochinchinese are not fussy. It seems reasonable to state that such houses are suitable for flexible changes of accommodation depending on the aggrandizement conditions of resettlers. In an endeavor to relocate themselves, resettlers did not equip their house with full furniture, and some

other people belonged to the impoverished group. The climate of Cochinchina is appropriate for agricultural thriving. Nguyen Lords were open-minded to appealing to the southward march of Vietnamese people in Cochinchina. During the sunrise of seeking new lands, Vietnamese people took advantage of their strength to cultivate and establish new resettled villages, although this region had a considerable number of savage jungles and wild animals [8, p. 24]. Mac Duong argued that the lenient regulations of Nguyen Lords encouraged a vast number of Vietnamese people to get ready to leave their villages, which clung to conventions and families to seek new accommodation in Cochinchina. It triggered the privatization of land and fields because the state showed facile attention toward landownership in an attempt to contain Trinh Lords in Tonkin. This policy attracted the impoverished, the wealthy, soldiers, and landowners to establish new hamlets and plantations in Mekong Delta [19, p. 164] and it triggered a mutation of resettlers for new accommodation throughout the new territories of Cochinchina.

Additionally, traffic in Cochinchina relied on the system of canals and rivers in the absence of village gates and bamboo hedges. The patronization of nature offered Mekong Delta a variety of waterways to link all regions for the commute. According to Trinh Hoai Duc, Gia Dinh had several simple boats, and residents traveled to visit their relatives by boat and bought and sold. It was convenient. Vietnamese people were able to permanently reside in the boat to function housing and buy-and-sell activities [8, p. 71]. It is stated that Vietnamese people were accustomed to commuting by boat to acclimatize a contraption of rivers, canals, and streams in the south. The development of waterway stations is peculiar in the open characteristic of southern land and makes leverage for economic development in the early annals of Cochinchinese history.

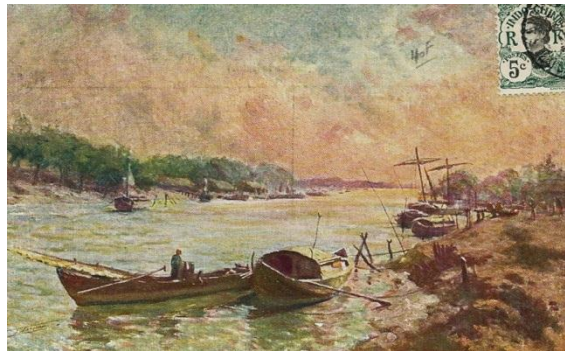


Figure 1. *Cochinchina: Towards Cholon, in the morning*
(Source: Tim Doling)

Figure 1 illustrates that the waterway is a major transport in Cochinchina. The picture is a painting, and it was printed on a stamp in Cochinchina during French colonial time. The picture was collected by Tim Doling – an expert in French colonial architecture in Cochinchina. It is clear proof to state that Vietnamese people benefited from waterway transportation for their commerce and accommodation. This factor resulted in the mobilization of Vietnamese people in the South and featured “open” Vietnamese villages in the south, which depended on natural elements and social mobilization of people in the context of the civil war.

Besides, the agricultural achievements brought to the south diversified the cuisine culture of the Vietnamese people. In the middle of the 17th century, Vietnamese people started pushing its reclamation. Trinh Hoai Duc remarked that “People in Bien Hoa province were diligent in cultivation, so they produced several goods.” [8, p. 78] There were two types of fields for Vietnamese people, namely Son dien and Thao dien. As for Son Dien, peasants must cut down trees, dry and burn them to make ashes, and then they cultivated them and planted rice. Thao Dien prefers lowland fields in swamps, popular in Nhon Trach, Long Thanh, Phien An, and Mekong Delta [8, p. 78]. Besides, Vietnamese refugees planted potatoes, beans, corn, sesame, sugarcane, banana, papaya, orange, lemon, and mulberry. They are based on the calendar and

weather to harvest the productivity, and these products became sources of food for Vietnamese people in the south. Vietnamese people added “Mam” (sauce) to their daily meals. Old historical records reveal that they used to eat pilchard, mackerel, squid, crab, and shrimp in their meal [8, pp. 90-95]. Phu Quoc became one of the places to create Mam [8, p. 87]. It seems to be reasonable to state that the foods of Vietnamese people in the south are various, and it is defined by natural conditions. Benign weather assisted peasants in cultivating effectively and harvesting a great deal of rice while diversifying the meal with fishing due to the complex system of the canal. It is a peculiarity of the cuisine culture of Vietnamese people in Cochinchina.

3.2. A diversification of social organizations

This is the first time Dai Viet civilization contained a wide range of social organization paradigms, which recognized the appearance of new ethnic groups, including the Vietnamese, Chinese diaspora, Khmer people, and uphill Cham people. A feudal system swiftly formed in Cochinchina society owing to the appearance of local landlords. The source of Cochinchinese landlords deprived the Vietnamese immigrants who permanently lived in central Vietnam but went southward under the order of Nguyen Lords [20, p. 442]. Thus, these groups were entitled to completely possess their products and land-dwellings. Ancient writings also unveil that Nguyen’s authority did not measure the square or define the situation of the land-living. The landowner can levy an arbitrary amount of paddy [9, p. 60], [20, p. 80]. The second source of landowners originated from local soldiers. Nguyen Lords encouraged peasants and military forces to secure southern land, so they allowed these people to privatize their cultivated land. These favorable policies helped a vast number of the impoverished mandarin military force to establish plantations and sporadic posts in the Mekong delta. Some soldiers became wealthy landlords in southern land. It is indicated that the open-minded policy of Nguyen Lords contributed to an increasing population of Cochinchina and early-formed landlords in this region.

As Vietnamese people, they established new openly organized villages along the river, along natural canals, and along with cultivated lands. As opposed to traditional villages in the north, which were tightened by deep-rooted village conventions and kinship, southern villages had an open arm to connect other villages in the absence of bamboo hedges and village gates. According to Huynh Lua, southern Vietnamese villages were spontaneously established which is a result of land reclamation. The residence of resettlers was provisional in a definite timeframe. Once feeling unpleasant, they quickly move to another place until they feel safe and stable. This feature led to the autonomy of southern villages [9, p. 129]. On the other hand, this point built new social paradigms of southern villages without poignant ties to traditional conventions and blood families. Onward, it led to the open minds of Vietnamese southerners. Cochinchinese societies are a gathering of the new paradigm of Vietnamese villages. Vietnamese people voyaged along the seashore of Cochinchina and resettled in Mo Xoai (Vung Tau nowadays) [9, p. 87]. Vietnamese people had a penchant for hillocks and established Ong To, Go Cong Dem, and Hanh Thong hamlet in 1698. It was not until the middle of the 18th century that the feudal authority had an onset of administrative control. According to Le Quy Don, Tran Bien province has 250 hamlets, and the estimated population is 8000 people. Phien Tran province has 350 hamlets and 15000 people. There are 350 hamlets and 7000 residents in Long Ho Palace [5, p. 185]. However, history did not leave progenies any evidence of southern Vietnamese people’s village conventions. This reality reinforced a statement that village conventions were de factor disrespected by southerners, who absconded from feudal forces in the north and central Vietnam.

Meanwhile, the Chinese diaspora played a crucial role in creating commercial centers in Cochinchina. In history, two Chinese mandarins rapported with Nguyen Lords and required a political asylum in Cochinchina. Tran Thuong Xuyen and Duong Ngan Dich led some simple boats of the Chinese diaspora and overcame arduous ordeals to shun the Qing dynasty [4, p. 79]. Thanks to the endorsement of Nguyen Lords and their business strength, the Chinese established

hustling and bustling commercial centers and commercial ports along the estuary of the Mekong Delta. Trinh Hoai Duc depicted the life of Chinese people in Cu Lao Pho that the Chinese constructed several houses and Chinese towns in this region. All streets were paved with white stone and laterite. Traders used to gather in large numbers on sea boats and riverboats for their break. There were a number of detached houses, and this place was deemed to be a bustling place for Chinese people [20, p. 114]. My Tho shared the same situation with Cu Lao Pho. Various traders and ethnic groups anchored there for recreation and awaited suitable departure times [20, p. 56]. This city was also known as a source for areca, dried shrimp, dried fish, and types of salt foods. Additionally, Ha Tien was also depicted by Trinh Hoai Duc that Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Java gathered there to buy and sell, so it was overcrowded [20, p. 246]. Hence, it is undeniable that Chinese people formed their village thanks to business strength. Residence areas of Chinese people are a gathering of businessmen and traders, and it gathered a huge number of Chinese people to reclaim the southern land of Vietnam. Besides, the role of traditional Chinese Buddhism was considered as a linkage for Chinese people to adapt to the new land. Dai Viet civilization had a rewarding chance to harmonize Chinese values in business and culture in order to diversify its elements through Vietnamese – Chinese contacts in the new land. It is implied that Vietnamese people made an attempt to cohabit with Chinese people and absorb new values of Chinese people for their own civilization.

As for the role of the Khmer people, they mainly resided on mounds along riverbanks near estuaries of the Mekong Delta. These people had a provenance of Cambodian Khmer people, but they lost contact with the central power of the Khmer Empire and had a long-term occupation in Mekong Delta throughout its comprehensive history. It was not until the 17th century that Khmer people lived mainly on hillocks and built their hamlets and villages, so-called “Phum”, and “soc” [21, pp. 14-18]. There is a modicum of scholarly attention to the paradigm of old Khmer villages in the Mekong Delta, yet the role of Khmer people, along with Vietnamese people and Chinese people, in Bai Xau commercial port reveals that Khmer people had a strength of agriculture for commerce.

Broadly speaking, some Vietnamese refugees shaped new styles of Vietnamese villages in the south, and it would not be an initiative of the Vietnamese people; otherwise, the civil war did not happen in Vietnam. Next, the Chinese diaspora introduced new values of Chinese business culture and specialized character of residence atmosphere, which is contingent upon business strength. Two groups combined with the Khmer indigenous people to reclaim unexplored lands, domesticate the wild animals, and permanently re-settle. The solidarity policy of Nguyen Lords, in collaboration with open-minded policies, made a strenuous attempt to exaggerate the cultural sphere of Dai Viet civilization.

3.3. An alternation of spiritual and religious culture

Religious life plays a considerable role in Vietnamese refugees in Cochinchina. It can be seen as their savior amid the muddled situation of the Civil War. Despite living in new territory, Vietnamese people preserved their customs very brilliantly, and this statement is proved by the illustration of life cycle occasions. Trinh Hoai Duc recognized that Vietnamese people, on their nuptial and funeral occasions, experienced a definite change in customs in Gia Dinh Citadel. Vietnamese people appreciated the appearance of petals and areca at the wedding. Match-maker is beneficial to make a couple be destined, and bride-dowry could be deposited through a land inheritance. Meanwhile, a funeral was no longer allowed to preserve death until a magician found a benign land to be buried based on Buddhism-based regulations to organize a funeral [8, p. 66].

Lunar New Year is a momentous occasion for Vietnamese people. Trinh Hoai Duc recounted his experience in Lunar New Year in Gia Dinh Citadels. On New Year's Eve, Vietnamese people planted a New Year's pole until the seventh day of the New Year occasion inside their house. Prior to New Year's Eve, Vietnamese people cleaned their houses, prepared New Year's foods, and purchased their new clothing. During New Year's Eve, Vietnamese families shared their

mutual wishes with their ancestors, who were expected to patronize them for physical well-being, prosperity, and wealth. Vietnamese foods on New Year's occasion abounds with glutinous rice wine and Banh Tet (glutinous rice cake), which are products of agriculture. After three days of the New Year, Vietnamese people burned votive objects and then they participated in New Year Festival. Vietnamese people gradually learned the acceptable customs of Chinese people during the Double Fifth Festival, Middle Age Festival, and Double Seventh Festival [8, pp. 67-69]. This evidence proved that Vietnamese people were sensible to maintaining their customs in the south, yet new customs were perceived and recognized to adapt to the diverse culture of Cochinchina.

Nguyen Lords preferred Buddhism over any other religion, so Emperors stayed focused on constructing a handful of pagodas and temples in Cochinchina. Ha Van Tan stated that there was a revival of Buddhism in the late 16th century and jumped back to development in the 17th and 18th centuries. It shows a congenial harmonization with Confucian and Taoism in this period [22]. It is effortless to prove that the prolonged war between Trinh and Nguyen caused vulnerability for the Vietnamese people, so they sought religions as a way to avoid political turmoil and appease emotional hurt. In the southward march, monks and Buddhists went hand in hand with resettlers to consult with them for the future, so Nguyen Lords benefited from this situation to make room for Buddhism's development. A long-term influence of Vietnamese Buddhism proved that the principles of Buddhism are remedies for Vietnamese people, who seriously suffered from the brutal war. Li Tana acknowledged that Buddhism flourished in Cochinchina under official patronage, offering moral support and spiritual comfort and protection to all immigrant Vietnamese from the Nguyen rulers down. Li implied that the reason comes from two elements, namely a culture shock of Vietnamese people toward Cham civilization and the political needs of Nguyen rulers [11, p. 102]. Resultantly, Mahayana Buddhism was employed to build a firm grasp of a Buddhism-oriented nation, purely salvaging personal souls from severe domestic war.

Figure 2 shows that Thien Mu is a symbol of Buddhism in Hue and has become a well-known destination for visitors nowadays. In the past, Lord Nguyen Hoàng licensed the building of the Thieu Mu pagoda in 1601, and this construction implied that Mahayana Buddhism played a significant role in Vietnamizing southern culture and made Vietnamese culture dominate the exotic culture of the defunct Cham civilization [11, p. 104].

Besides Truc Lam Zen, Linji Buddhism intruded in Cochinchina as an outcome of the Chinese diaspora. This is an additional value of Vietnamese Buddhism. Master Nguyen Thieu – Sieu Bach, that came from Guangzhou, ingrained the principles of these scholars in Cochinchina. In 1683, Nguyen Thieu visited Thuan Hoa, and Nguyen Lords appreciated its ideas to reinforce the role of Buddhism. The movement of Linji Buddhism propagation expanded its strong influence in Cochinchina at that time. It was not until the end of the 18th century that the development of Linji Buddhism had recourse to the role of Master Thieu Dieu – Lieu Quan. Sojo scholar was also imported by Thach Liem – a Chinese people with academic knowledge and dedication to Buddhism promulgation. However, compared to Truc Lam Zen and Linji, Sojo experienced a humble development, although some Vietnamese Buddhists, who were students of Thach Liem, committed to the transmission of Sojo Buddhism in Cochinchina. Conspicuously, Buddhism in Cochinchina was less didactic than Tonkin and had some aspects of superstitiousness. Le Quang Nghiem assessed that Vietnamese people were involved in the customs of Cham people, who had a vivacious round of witchcraft and amulet [23, p. 110]. However, it was no denied that Buddhism in Cochinchina profoundly influenced Vietnamese people's cosmology, and it was staunch with four immeasurables of traditional Vietnamese Buddhism, namely, loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity. It has an integrative factor to harmonize other scholars of Buddhism to stabilize the spiritual life of resettlers and immigrants in Cochinchina. However, the organization of Buddhism Associate in Cochinchina lacks cohesion in the context of war, so this is the reason why it underwent some turbulences when young people impersonated Buddhist to avoid conscript [23, p. 174].



Figure 2. *Thien Mu pagoda in Hue, Vietnam*
(Source: Author, Nov. 7, 2017)



Figure 3. *Tran Bien Confucian Temple*
(Source: Internet)

Meanwhile, Neo-Confucianism witnessed its dynamic development in Cochinchina. Despite having the stomach for Buddhism, Nguyen Lords always had a desire to depend on Confucianism with the intention of building a Confucianist authority base in the struggle with the feudalist government of Trinh Lords in Tonkin. It is evident that Nguyen Lords issued a building permit to establish Confucian temples in Cochinchina. In 1692, Lord Nguyen Phuc Chu paid a visit to Trieu Son (Huong Tra district, Thua Thien Hue province nowadays) to inspect the position of a Confucian temple. In 1770, Nguyen Phuc Thuan decided to move the Confucian temple into Long Ho. In 1715, Lord Nguyen Phuc Chu assigned Nguyen Phan Long and Pham Khanh Duc to construct a Confucian temple in Gia Dinh prefecture, called “Tran Bien Confucian temple,” with a hope of expanding Confucian education in Cochinchina with a mechanism of meritocracy. According to Le Quy Don, there is a school named Hoc Cung constructed by Nguyen Lords inside the feudal palace. “On the occasion of Confucius Day, I used to go to Hoc Cung to join the festival. There are hundreds of students. I saw them dedicatedly teaching and learning” [5, p. 35]. This evidence shows that Nguyen Lords paid considerable attention to developing Confucianism in Cochinchina. Accordingly, Borri also cited proof to state that Confucianism had an increasing effect in the south. Borri divulged that there was a university in Cochinchina, and its curriculum was synonymous with Chinese education [12, pp. 71-72].

Figure 3 depicts an influence of Confucianism in the south with the presence of Tran Bien Confucian Temple built in 1715. Confucian education intervened in villages in the south. Nguyen Huu Thong and his partners unveil that Confucian schools were opened by ong do (universal teacher), who took responsibility for customs, teaching materials, and class organization. Village classes appealed to both male and female participation [24, p. 106]. The establishment of Confucianism from central power to local provinces proved that Nguyen Lords and Vietnamese people made a strenuous attempt to protect Vietnamese values of Confucianism in new territories, and it can be considered as an instrument to educate the history and tradition of Vietnamese people for young people and children in the context of land reclamation. Also, it contributed to shaping national consciousness and enriching national literature and forming a line of Vietnamese intellectuals who performed their brilliant patriotism when confronting the invasion of the French in Cochinchina in the late 19th century.

Significantly, Vietnamese civilization was diversified by the appearance of Christianity. This religion came out in central Vietnam in the middle of the 17th century when ten missionaries anchored along the seashore of Hue, Da Nang, Hoi An. Missionaries were diligent in recording Vietnamese accents and romanizing Nom script to form Latinized Vietnamese script, the so-called “Chu Quoc Ngu”.

Figure 4 demonstrates Phuoc Kieu Parish in Da Nang province, which is considered one of the first places of Chu Quoc Ngu creation. Huy argued that Hoi An – Thanh Chiem, Nuoc Man, and Da Nang were three centers of Christianity in Cochinchina [15, p. 152], where lots of indigenous

people were baptized by Buzomi, Pina, and Alexandre Rhodes. Although being a foreign religion, the fruitful outcome of a number of Christians has a glaring illustration of Christianity in the normal life of the Cochinchinese. Launey mentioned key proof that there were 3000 churches and 70000 co-religionists in Cochinchina in 1743. Some Christians were mandarins of Nguyen Lords. He also cited that 29 friars preached the Bible in Hue, including 12 Jésuite Fathers, 6 French friars, 9 Franciscan Bishops, and two Italian friars. The number of friars was 200. There were five chapels in the capital of Cochinchina [25, p. 103].



Figure 4. Phuoc Kieu Parish (Source: Internet)

During this period, there were several Christian scholars entering Cochinchina, namely Franciscan, Daminh, Holy Cross, and Jesuit. Huy stated that the religious customs of Christianity had a significant influence on the cosmology of Vietnamese people. A report in 1619 indicated that Hoi An Christians prayed for Mother Mary and called her “Our Lady of Good Voyage”. Thong verbatim stated that “Co-religionists in Hoi An highly respected the picture of Mother Mary blessed for a good voyage. She was considered a patron saint. Francisco Vieira took care of this diocese, and the picture was sent from Macau. All of local Christians put this picture on their altar with their whole-hearted soul of reverence” [26], [15, p. 175]. The role of Christianity in Cochinchina is congruous social needs of resettlers in an attempt to seek a belief amid the political war between Trinh and Nguyen. The development of foreign religion had been gradually localized to be harmonious with other religions of Vietnamese people and diversify Vietnamese customs in history.

4. Conclusion

This research paper aims to evaluate the cultural process of Cochinchina under Nguyen Lords' land reclamation in the south. Based on the role of historical and logical method, this paper draws three conclusions in order to generalize cultural evolution in Cochinchina. First, there was an expansion of the cultural sphere of Dai Viet civilization in Vietnam in the 17th and 18th centuries in residential space, attire culture, and agricultural experiences. Second, Vietnamese people created a new paradigm of traditional villages and reorganized the structure of society to be appropriate to new life conditions. Also, Dai Viet civilization, with its highly cultural portrait, contains additional social organizations of Chinese people Khmer people to make cultural syncretism and culturally enlarge the cultural sphere and engross new features of foreign culture. Last but not least, Dai Viet civilization has a change of religious and spiritual culture with the mushrooming of new-emergent scholars in Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity, contributed to enriching core values of Dai Viet civilization as well drive the Cochinchinese to a profusion of new cultural practice.

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