

SOME FACTORS AFFECTING ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMY OF THE CHINESE IN THE SOUTH REGION OF VIETNAM UNDER THE PERIOD OF THE FRENCH COLONIAL GOVERNMENT (FROM 1862 TO 1945)

Nguyen Cao Lam

Ho Chi Minh City Cadre Academy

Email: nguyencaolam83@gmail.com

Received: 02/8/2022; Reviewed: 18/8/2022; Revised: 25/8/2022; Accepted: 05/9/2022; Released: 30/9/2022

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54163/0866-773X/725>

The Chinese migrated to Vietnam very early and they quickly became a part of the population that played an important role in the economic and social development of Vietnam from the 17th century to the present. The Chinese are also one of 54 ethnic groups in our history of nation building and defense. Especially during the period of French invasion of our country, the economic and social activities of the Chinese in Vietnam in general and in the South in particular had many changes, becoming a significant economic competitive force with French capitalists in Indochina.

Keywords: *Socio-economic activities of the Chinese; Southern region; Vietnam; French colonial government; Chinese.*

1. Introduction

From 1862 to 1945, the history of Vietnam was under the rule and exploitation policy of the French colonial government. The French colonialists gradually turned Vietnam into a colony, a consumer market and a source of raw materials for French capitalism. In order to exploit the fullest extent resources in the colony, the French colonial government implemented many policies, including policies that greatly influenced the Chinese population in the South. The bourgeoisie and the Chinese landlords were both rivals but at the same time a reliable partner of the French colonialists in the process of exploiting the colonial market.

What has changed in the process of economic development and social and cultural life of the Chinese in the South during the period of French colonial rule? What factors are affected by these changes? In this article, we will try to clarify the factors that affect the economic and social activities of the Chinese in the South to clearly see their role and influence on the colonial government for Vietnam's economy in general, and for the South in particular.

2. Research overview

Related to the content of this research, there have been many research authors, some of which are typical researches such as: Tran Van Dinh (1961), "Vietnam's economic policy towards the Chinese", *Homeland Journal*, No. 21, p.146; Tan Viet Dieu (1961), "History of overseas Chinese in Vietnam", *Monthly culture Journal*, (61), p.547 - 561, Saigon;

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3. Research method

In this article, the author uses some basic methods such as primary and secondary data collection method; The method of synthesis and analysis aims to clarify a number of issues the author is interested in and researches in the article "some factors affecting the socio-economic activities of the Chinese in the southern region of Vietnam under the period of the French colonial government (from 1862 to 1945).

4. Research result

4.1. Overview of the domestic context

Since the Nguyen Dynasty was established, King Gia Long implemented many policies to maintain a "friendly" relationship with the French as far as possible, at the same time gradually minimized French interference in internal affairs of Vietnam. However, by the 40s of the 19th century, the international situation had many changes in the direction that were unfavorable for the relationship between Vietnam and France. French missionaries are increasingly active in Vietnam, causing instability in the territory's security. Faced with that situation, Thieu Tri persisted in implementing the policy of banning foreigners from preaching, at the same time guarding against dangerous places such as Hai Phong, Thi Nai, Con Lon, and Phu Quoc. Along with that, the policy of seclusion and isolation was also thoroughly implemented for Western countries and especially France. That led to the French plot to invade Vietnam becoming more and more obvious.

In order to conduct an expedition to invade Vietnam, the French Government persuaded the Spanish Government to send coordinated troops. The armed invasion of the French-Spanish coalition broke out on the coast of Da Nang in the

early morning of September 1st, 1858. Here, from the Son Tra peninsula to the mainland, there were 11 big and small battles. The Nguyen Dynasty's military officers under the command of Nguyen Tri Phuong fought bravely, repelled many attacks, causing France a lot of damage. In February 1859, Regault de Genouilly, the commander of the coalition forces decided to leave a small force to keep the Hue imperial army in Da Nang, the rest pulled in to fight Gia Dinh, where the imperial army was exhausted very few. Accordingly, on February 10th, the French-Spanish coalition attacked and destroyed the defense of the imperial army in Vung Tau. On February 11th, the attack on Can Gio. On February 15th, the enemy went along the Dong Nai River and defeated the defensive posts of the imperial army at Ben Tranh, Ong Nghia, Cha La, Xom Ray,... On February 17th, the enemy gathered forces to attack Gia Dinh citadel. The imperial army led by Tran Tri fought back fiercely but did not cause the enemy any significant damage, Gia Dinh citadel quickly fell. On December 16th, Bien Hoa citadel was also defeated. At this point, in turn, the three provinces in the Southeast region of Cochinchina fell to the French. On the morning of June 5th, 1862, the Nham Tuat treaty was signed at Truong Thi - Saigon, whereby the 3 provinces of Gia Dinh, Dinh Tuong and Bien Hoa and Con Dao were completely transferred to the French Emperor (Doan Minh Huan, Nguyen Ngoc Ha, 2017, p.40 - 44). After the three provinces of Southeastern region were under French rule, the three provinces of Southwest region were also occupied by the French in turn. On June 25th, 1867, Major General De La Grandière, the commander-in-chief of the French army in the South declared all six provinces of South Vietnam as French territory, from now on the Hue court no longer had any power over South Vietnam of six provinces. On March 15th, 1874, a treaty between the French colonialists and the Nguyen court was signed, (the Giap Tuat Treaty). In which stipulations: The Nguyen court recognized French sovereignty over all 6 provinces of South Vietnam. The fact that South Vietnam became a colony of France was reflected in the legal aspect.

4.2. French colonial exploitation policy

Cochinchina was the first place in Indochina when the French colonialists established a ruling apparatus to both consolidate control over the newly occupied places and serve as a springboard for the expansion of the invasion area.

At the beginning of the time when the provinces of South Vietnam were captured, in 1879 the French colonialists applied the form of direct rule of the expeditionary army in South Vietnam, holding the supreme command from the region to the sub-regional level are the martial arts, also known as the administrative-military regime. By 1879, the

administrative-civilian regime was established, civil politicians were appointed as governor of South Vietnam. In 1887, the Indochina Federation was established, South Vietnam is one of the four countries of the Indochina Federation.

On March 22th, 1897, Governor General of Indochina Paul Doumer, the first French colonial exploitation program in Indochina was organized systematically and methodically. From here, the ruling apparatus, administrative system, administrative apparatus as well as the way of rule and exploitation of the French colonialists in South Vietnam had many changes. The content of this policy includes the following main points: (1) To organize a common government for the whole of Indochina and to organize a separate administrative apparatus for each country of the Federation. (2) Revise the financial regime, establish a new tax system to suit the budget's requirements, but must be based on specific social bases and pay attention to exploiting customs, customs of the Indochinese people. (3) Pay attention to building large equipment for Indochina, such as building a system of railways, roads, canals, harbors,... which are very necessary for the exploitation. (4) To further promote production and commerce by developing French colonization and native labor. (5) Ensure the defense of Indochina by establishing naval bases and must organize a strong army and fleet. (6) Completing the pacification of Tonkin, ensuring the security of the North Vietnam border area. (7) Expanding France's influence, expanding France's interests in the Far East, especially in neighboring countries".

From 1887, the French President decided to establish the Indochina Federation, including Vietnam and Cambodia, headed by the French plenipotentiary. In which, Vietnam is divided into three countries: The North Vietnam is a semi-protected land, the Central Vietnam is a protective land and the South Vietnam is a colonial land. In 1899, Laos was annexed by the French colonialists into the Indochina Federation. By 1900, there was also Guangzhou Loan - China's "term lease" French land is also part of the Indochina Federation.

South Vietnam is divided into 20 provinces: Bac Lieu, Ba Ria, Ben Tre, Bien Hoa, Can Tho, Chau Doc, Cho Lon, Gia Dinh, Go Cong, Ha Tien, Long Xuyen, My Tho, Rach Gia, Sa Dec. Soc Trang, Tan An, Tay Ninh, Thu Dau Mot, Tra Vinh, Vinh Long and a grade I city - Saigon, and a grade II city - Cho Lon. The province is headed by a French Counselor. Any big province has more Deputy Counselors. Assistant to the Chief, Deputy Counselor is the Department of Counseling and the Provincial Council. The head of the city is the Chief, the Deputy Governor, with the auxiliary agency being the Governor's Court and the Provincial Council (for grade I city) or the city committee (for

grade II city). The province in South Vietnam was not divided into government units or districts, but the French colonialists set up administrative centers or agency offices. By 1919, the whole country of Cochinchina had 64 administrative centers and agency offices. The head of this level of government is the Governor of the Mission, Tri government or Tri district. In some areas of political and military importance, such as O Cap (Ba Ria, Vung Tau), Chua Chan (Bien Hoa), and Tri Ton (Chau Doc), Representative of the Counselor is directly in charge. The governing unit at the grassroots level is the village (village) which still maintains the feudal system of government with the Coalition Council. The Coalition Council consists of 12 positions with wealth, fame and control at the grassroots level. This council appoints a number of executors such as commune chiefs and village chiefs.

Especially in 1877, the French President issued a decree to officially establish Saigon city, classifying it as a grade 1 city. In 1879, Cho Lon was established as a level 2 city. In 1880, Saigon and Cho Lon merged to become a Saigon - Cho Lon area to be a very developed trade center.

Simultaneously with the organization and rearrangement of the governing apparatus at all levels, Paul Doumer with the term of Governor-General of Indochina from 1897 to 1902 carried out colonial exploitation on an economic scale, often referred to as under the name "First Mining Program". The basic spirit of this colonial exploitation was: Indochina must be specially reserved for the French market; production in this colony had to be reduced to supplying the country with raw materials or items which France did not have; industry, if encouraged, and only limited to complement the domestic industry, not to compete with the domestic industry.

Transport is prioritized for investment by France because it forms the basis for all other economic sectors to develop. The amount of capital from the French State for the Indochinese budget loan was an important part used in the construction of transport and infrastructure. The most significant type of waterway transport was the development of sea traffic, because this was a modern form of transport at that time, playing an economic role in external relations connecting Indochina with France, with other countries in region and around the world. Therefore, Saigon Port was opened to trade in 1859 when the French colonialists invaded the South Vietnam and has become one of the most important ports in the Far East.

With the policy of colonial exploitation, industry and handicrafts, the French colonial government only allowed the development of technologies that provided raw materials for industries in the country to produce products for sale to the colonial

countries, in which the South Vietnam is considered a large consumption market. Through this policy, Vietnam has formed an industry with two parts: heavy industry and light industry. In particular, the rice milling industry develop strongly with dozens of large milling establishments serving the requirements of rice processing for export, most of which are in the hands of the Chinese. Many steam-powered rice mills were established by the Chinese, leading to a series of mills being built in Cho Lon.

Trade in this period clearly showed the nature of a colonial trade because the French colonialists monopolized foreign trade. When the French first invaded Vietnam, the French capitalists encountered great barriers by Chinese merchants. In order to ensure their interests and quickly monopolize the Vietnamese market, the French colonialists quickly introduced measures to inhibit the development of overseas Chinese merchants. French colonialists have protected their market with tariff barriers since 1897, French goods only have to pay 2.5% of the value of goods while goods from other countries have to pay 5%.

Although finding many ways to limit the development of overseas Chinese merchants, the French colonialists also used overseas Chinese to manipulate the market, because overseas Chinese had enough power to buy French goods to resell in the Vietnamese market. Men make a profit. Therefore, although there is a tariff policy to protect French goods, the overseas Chinese trade still develops.

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The policy of colonial exploitation for the first time, though, brought France many significant benefits and established France's position in Indochina. But what France gained during this time was "burnt up" in the first world war (1914-1918). France came out of World War I with heavy economic and financial losses.

If in the early twentieth century, French capitalism focused mainly on mining, transportation and trade, then in the colonial period after the first world war, the industry was given the most priority agriculture, mainly rubber plantations. The amount of capital devoted to agriculture accounted for about one-third of the total investment capital during this period. In addition, French capitalism still strengthens mineral exploitation activities and a number of other economic sectors.

The capital input in Indochina in the second colonial exploitation was mainly private and

unknown French companies. State capital mobilized from the issuance of bonds, from the budget of Indochina and localities, is mainly used to develop infrastructure such as roads, irrigation, port dredging and railway construction. The presence of more and more French private capitalists in Vietnam, especially in the Southern region has greatly influenced the activities of Chinese merchants in Saigon and Cho Lon areas. French investment in the agricultural sector in the South also affects the economic activities of the Chinese in the Mekong river Delta region, especially the rice trade.

Under the positive impact of the policy of increasing capital investment and economic development in the French colony, commercial activities, especially foreign trade, took place bustling in the direction of increasing and expanding. Following the previous tariff laws (in 1887, 1892, 1910 and 1913), in 1928 the colonial government issued a new decree to strengthen tariff barriers to protect French goods and hit heavily on foreign goods, especially those from China and Japan. With the monopoly policy of foreign trade, French capitalism has facilitated the flooding of French goods into the Vietnamese market. Therefore, it can be said that most of the major trading activities in the country are in the hands of the French or overseas Chinese. Most of the local population trades products right at the village markets in the countryside.

4.3. Migration process of the Chinese to the South region

China is an early country with a strong commercial development with the “silk road”, the “ceramic road”... connecting Asia with Europe. But by the 14th and 15th centuries, China had to face the practice that the harassment of piracy (Wako) put the country's security situation at risk of encroachment and instability. Faced with that situation, in 1381 Minh Thai To (1368-1399) implemented the policy of “forbidding people not to arbitrarily go out to sea to exchange and trade with foreign countries” in 1381. However, the “Forbidden Sea” policy of the Ming Dynasty soon revealed inadequacies, not only could not control piracy and domestic commerce, but also made smuggling and immigration become more and more serious. This policy was abolished in 1567 when the Ming Dynasty allowed Chinese merchants to trade with Southeast Asian countries. Against this backdrop, many ports in Southeast Asia, including Hoi An in the South Vietnam, which are near to southern China have received favorable development opportunities.

After the fall of the Ming Dynasty, the Qing Dynasty ascended to the throne (1644-1911) under pressure from foreign invaders, the “Forbidden Sea” policy continued to be enforced with a series of edicts in 1712, 1717. In 1728, the court's regulations are stricter: if anyone leaves the country, they will

not be able to return. In 1757, the State banned the export of wool, felt, tea and many other goods out of China. All foreigners, especially Westerners are only allowed to trade in a single port, Guangzhou. That makes the number of domestic traders become even more disgruntled. The number of Chinese merchant families, especially in the area of Fujian, Guangdong, could not stand the “Forbidden Sea” policy right from the Ming Dynasty, so they sneaked abroad to trade and when the Qing Dynasty ascended the throne, they were consciously going to “new lands” to seek career opportunities, including Tran Thuong Xuyen's family to the South Vietnam in 1679, Mac Cuu to 1680,... and many other Chinese merchants. This team of Chinese merchants not only brought their wealth of reserve capital, they also brought their trading experience to Southeast Asian countries, in which the Nguyen Lords' South Vietnam accounted for a large number. That not only helped overseas Chinese merchants earn “living land”, Dai Viet's trade in Dang Trong also had a remarkable development.

Besides the policy of the “Forbidden Sea”, the Chinese political situation in the middle of the 17th century also greatly influenced the migration process of the Chinese to South Vietnam. When the Qing dynasty replaced the Ming, many former Ming gods who refused to submit to the Qing left the country and fled to Dai Viet. From Lord Hien to Lord Nghia (Phuc Tran) allowed Duong Ngan Dich to enter the land of My Tho, trade in products from the Tien River region and trade with foreign countries. My tho has quickly developed into an urban area called My Tho city.

In 1698, when Tran Bien and Phien Tran were established, Lord Nguyen Phuc Chu established two separate communes, Thanh Ha in Tran Bien and Minh Huong in Phien Tran, consisting entirely of overseas Chinese.

In addition to the department of Duong Ngan Dich, Tran Thuong Xuyen, the number of Chinese in the South China region immigrated is also quite large. They went to the trading areas and did handicrafts in Binh Dinh, Phu Yen and Gia Dinh, contributing to a number of towns.

In Quy Nhon government (Binh Dinh), the Chinese immigrated to the villages of An Thai, Dap Da, Go Gang and Nuoc Man. In An Thai, the Lam and Quach surnames were the earliest to arrive. From the church of the Le family founded by Mr. Lam Tang Tho in the year of the Dog (1862), It still shows that to this day. In the genealogy of the family, it is recorded that the first ancestor was Lan Lien Quang from Tan An Tam Do site, Dong Khe district, Thuong Chau district, Fujian province, who came to our country at the end of the Ming Dynasty. In the genealogy of the family, it is recorded that the first ancestor was Lan Lien

Quang from Tan An Tam Do site, Dong Khe district, Thuong Chau district, Fujian province, who came to our country at the end of the Ming Dynasty. At first, when they first arrived, they mainly worked as a trader of traditional Chinese medicine, then expanded to other business areas and bought land to become merchants and landlords. In the town of Dap Da (An Nhon, Binh Dinh), there are Diep and Ly surnames. The ancestors of these two families were in Zhao'an district, Fujian province. In the trading port of Thi Nai, the Chinese also immigrated and accounted for a large number. They mainly trade in traditional Chinese medicine, code products, mold clay,...

Since the 18th century, the trading ports and towns in the Central region have declined, the Chinese traders have shifted their trade to the South Vietnam, many families have migrated to the new land, especially Saigon to set up a business and look for business opportunities.

In Ha Tien, Mac Cui also came here in 1671, after stabilizing, he gathered traders from other countries, scattered people belonging to the Chinese, Duong, Lieu and Man people to establish seven communes and villages in Phu Quoc, Lung Ky, Can Bot, Vung Thom, Rach Gia, Ca Mau regions at the end of the 17th century, creating a densely populated place. Then all this area was offered by Mac Cui to Lord Nguyen to ask Lord Nguyen to protect from the aggression of Siamese army and other forces. Lord Nguyen accepted and appointed Mac Cui as the general of Ha Tien town and had all the autonomy over this land such as setting up his own mint, the right to collect taxes, the right to gather,... In the 18th century, Mac Thien Tu succeeded Mac Cui's career and continued the policy of "recruiting people, establishing villages", developing towards the Rach Gia, Ca Mau plain established the Kien Giang and Long Xuyen religions. By Gia Long's time there were 6 Chinese villages around Ha Tien and there were 19 other villages named as Vietnamese villages, but most of the people were Chinese or Minh Huong people.

Through the policy of clever use of human resources, the Nguyen lords had a large force for the process of reclaiming and establishing hamlets. Not only expanding their land, the Chinese were also good at trading, so the places they went to became major trading centers. Cities such as Bien Hoa, Ha Tien, My Tho, and Bai Xau trading port were born and became the bustling commercial centers of the South Vietnam in the 18th century. Therefore, it can be said that the role of the Chinese in expanding the area and developing the economy of the South in the 17th and 18th centuries is very important and "without the Chinese, the Nguyen Lords would have lost a lot of time and effort to acquire this vast territory".

Not only the Nguyen lords, but the Nguyen also gave the Chinese people very favorable policies. They are allowed to reside easily. The policy clearly states: "People from Thanh country voluntarily come to stay in 6 provinces of the South Vietnam, as long as there are people in the state or Minh Huong people in that county, they are allowed to reside there and are exempt from tax for 3 years". After being imported into the states or Minh Huong communes, they have the same obligations and rights as the ethnic minorities in our country.

After the French occupied the South Vietnam, creating favorable conditions for the Chinese to settle in Saigon and Cho Lon. During this period, the Chinese came to Vietnam according to the recruitment waves of the French plantation workers. In 1864, rear admiral La Grandière welcomed the presence of the Chinese and praised them through the fine words of "talented, enterprising people". The admiral also wanted to "help the Chinese families to settle in the country by firmly establishing their property" (Report of January 1st, 1864 on "Le commerce de la Basse Cochinchine", Indo anciens fonds).

Under the French colonial rule, the Chinese community in Vietnam became the object of interest of the French, the French government not only controlled the number of Chinese who immigrated to Vietnam, but also implemented a tax collection system for their business. This greatly affects the development process of the Chinese community migrating to Vietnam in general and their political and social status in particular. Like the Nguyen Dynasty, the French colonial government implemented a policy of "divide and rule" that is, grouping Chinese immigrants into different categories and giving them different rights.

After these waves of organized migration, the Chinese continued to flood into Vietnam in the 18th and 19th centuries, especially in the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, when most Southeast Asian countries became a colony and dependent of Western colonial capitalism and at that time, China also had a series of complicated economic, political and social changes. Therefore, the number of Chinese in Vietnam in general and the South in particular increased significantly.

5. Discussion

Due to the impact of many factors, from a very early age, the Chinese have clearly participated in the economic and social life of the Vietnamese people and the commercial activities of the Chinese have significantly contributed to disrupting the self-sufficient economy, self-contained, creating conditions for the development of commodity and monetary relations and the formation of ancient cities, expanding the domestic market

and flourishing Vietnam's foreign trade. Unlike other countries in the region and the world, the Chinese migrated to Vietnam very early and on the Vietnamese land there was a process of assimilation, a relatively smooth integration. This, not only stimulated the increase of Chinese immigration to Vietnam, but also facilitated the Chinese to expand their influence not only in trade, then in agriculture, industry and mining.

The presence of the Chinese in the South Vietnam created favorable conditions for reclaiming wasteland, developing handicrafts and trading. This incident contributed to changing the face of the Southern region, helping this place quickly become a bustling urban area right from the 18th and 19th centuries.

With the preferential policies of the feudal kings (except for the period of King Le, Lord Trinh, King Minh Mang) and the French government (the period when Vietnam was under French colonial rule), the life of the Chinese in the territory of Vietnam are somewhat more open, free to operate and trade

and still retain their traditional culture. Along with the process of settling and living, the Chinese immigrants have to a certain extent enrich, beautify and enrich the cultural life of Vietnamese residents.

6. Conclusion

It can be seen that, from the second half of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, the world and domestic situation had many changes, significantly affecting the economy and society of Vietnam. In particular, the invasion and placement of the French colonial rule in Vietnam affected most of the people, in which the Chinese in the South Vietnam were clearly influenced.

The Chinese came to Vietnam for a long time, continuously and regularly, associated with the history of building and developing the Vietnamese nation. They came to Vietnam due to many reasons and different forms: economic refugees, rebellions, the French policy of setting up plantations,... whatever the motive, any form of migration, as soon as they arrive in Vietnam, they quickly find a place to live to "settle down and settle down".

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MỘT SỐ YẾU TỐ TÁC ĐỘNG ĐẾN HOẠT ĐỘNG KINH TẾ - XÃ HỘI CỦA NGƯỜI HOA Ở KHU VỰC NAM BỘ VIỆT NAM DƯỚI CHÍNH QUYỀN THUỘC ĐỊA PHÁP (TỪ NĂM 1862 ĐẾN NĂM 1945)

Nguyễn Cao Lâm

Học viện Cán bộ Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh

Email: nguyencalam83@gmail.com

Nhận bài: 02/8/2022; Phản biện: 18/8/2022; Tác giả sửa: 25/8/2022; Duyệt đăng: 05/9/2022; Phát hành: 30/9/2022

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54163/0866-773X/725>

Người Hoa di cư đến Việt Nam từ rất sớm và họ đã nhanh chóng trở thành một bộ phận dân cư đóng vai trò quan trọng trong sự phát triển kinh tế, xã hội Việt Nam từ thế kỷ XVII đến nay. Người Hoa cũng là một trong 54 dân tộc trong lịch sử dựng nước và giữ nước của dân tộc ta. Đặc biệt trong giai đoạn Pháp xâm lược nước ta, hoạt động kinh tế, xã hội của người Hoa ở Việt Nam nói chung và ở Nam Bộ nói riêng có nhiều thay đổi, trở thành lực lượng cạnh tranh kinh tế đáng kể với tư bản Pháp ở Đông Dương.

Từ khóa: Hoạt động kinh tế-xã hội của người Hoa; Khu vực Nam Bộ; Việt Nam; Chính quyền thuộc địa Pháp; Người Hoa.