

# Characteristics of Buddhist Rituals in Vietnam

Nguyen Dinh Lam

Ph.D., University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hanoi

Email: lamvnh.edu@gmail.com

Received 3 January 2021; published 10 April 2021

**Abstract:** *Buddhist rituals in Vietnam, characterized by region and religious sects and more or less influenced by Chinese Buddhism over the centuries, have relatively different characteristics among regions, especially the Northern Delta region, Hue City and Ho Chi Minh City. Directly influenced by the teachings and laws of Buddhism, Buddhist rituals in Vietnam have also contributed a unique cultural identity to the world's Buddhist community, which affirms the unity in diversity of Buddhism in Vietnam and the world. Based on specialized and interdisciplinary approaches, the article presents the key features of Buddhist rituals in Vietnam today.*

**Keywords:** Buddhist Rituals, Characteristics, Regions, Religious Sects, Cultural Identity, Vietnam

## 1. Introduction

If Northern Buddhism, which is mostly concentrated in the Northern Delta and a large part of the Central region, is mainly Mahayana Buddhism, then in the Southern area, besides Mahayana, there is Theravada - Hinayana Buddhism that has a strong presence. Currently, the North also maintains two main sects, which are Lam Te and Tao Dong<sup>1</sup>. Northern Mahayana

Buddhism takes Meditation - Purity - Tantra as the principle. In addition, there are other cultural and ideological layers of Confucianism and Taoism together with the indigenous culture, as the essential means in the process of propagating the Dharma. It is this common feature that leads to a relative unity in Buddhist rituals throughout the region. Meanwhile, in the South, especially in the Southwest region, Khmer Theravada Buddhism has been developing strongly and is considered as one of the important factors creating cultural characteristics in this area. Due to the similarity, unity but deeply influenced by regional and sectarian factors, even the content and form of Buddhist rituals in each region have different characteristics. This is reflected in the way of arranging the altar, the name of the ceremony steps, in which music

---

<sup>1</sup> The actual survey of Buddhist rituals in both Northern, Central and Southern Vietnam from 2008 to 2013 shows that Tao Dong and Lam Te are not similar when they first entered Vietnam from China in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These two sects up to now have only the form of activities such as mountain monkhood in the Patriarchs, which have the same characteristics as the family activities, and the matters of practicing rituals bearing the characteristics of Zen no longer exist. They only pass each other the verse when they put the middle name after the last name Thich.

is an inseparable element. Such Rituals at Buddha's Birthday ceremony, Daily ceremony, Yulanpen, religious ceremonies at makeshift altars to bring relief to the needy (i.e, requiem, making offerings to souls of the dead and forsaken spirits, making offerings to one's ancestors), Great Ordination ceremony - Enlightenment, Contemplation (Commemoration Day for those with meritorious services to the dharma or a particular temple) are the fundamental factors leading to the deep division in Buddhist rituals in Vietnam. However, there is still the similarity derived from doctrine and canon law. That is what makes up the unity in the diversity of Vietnamese Buddhist rituals. This can be clearly seen through the characteristics of Buddhist rituals in each particular locality. In recent years, there are many works related to Vietnamese Buddhist rituals in general with different approaches. In the perspective of the monk, typically, Thich Duc Chanh (2008), Thich Vien Hai (2013) focused on Buddhist rituals from the perspective of doctrine and canon law. Approaching Buddhist music in the ceremony has some prominent studies such as Pham Hong Linh (2016), Bich Lien, Nguyen Van Thoa (2016), Nguyen Thi My Liem (2018), Phi Thanh Phat (2020). These studies focus on the study of musicology and the relationship between music in each ceremony step or look at traditional Buddhist rituals from the changing perspective of history. Objectively looking, no work has yet generalized the essential general characteristics of Vietnamese Buddhist rituals in general. According to our research, rituals, including music, are relatively similar and unified within a

region of the same sect. This was recognized by our study of rituals in the Northern Delta region. Through a direct survey of Buddhist ritual fieldwork<sup>1</sup> in some regions of Vietnam, we generate general observations about the general characteristics of Buddhist rituals in Vietnam.

## **2. The basic characteristics of Buddhist rituals in Vietnam**

*a) The ritual deeply reflects doctrine and canon law through the practice of the monk*  
*The daily ritual practices are considered to be one of the most obvious manifestations of Buddhist rituals in Vietnam.* According to Buddhist laws in general, the ordained must take and preserve the moral precepts<sup>2</sup>. The process of practice takes place sequentially from the time you first entered the pagoda (Novice Monk) until the moment of enlightenment<sup>3</sup>. According

<sup>1</sup> The article data is part of the author's thesis "Music in Buddhist rituals in Hanoi" published in 2014, and the author continued to develop and research in-depth in the Basis-level Topic "Music in Buddhist rituals in the Northern Delta region from 1990 to the present", performed in 2019-2020 and officially accepted in 2021, code CS.2021.17. In this work, the author conducted field research, in-depth interviews with about 25 monks from most of the Vietnamese Buddhist sects in all three regions of the North, Central and South of Vietnam to clarify the characteristics of Buddhist rituals in Vietnamese religion and its relationship with Buddhist ritual music in Northern Vietnam.

<sup>2</sup> In Northern Buddhism-Mahayana, the Sramanera ordination is 10 precepts; men, called Bhikkhu, will take the Bhikshu ordination of 250 precepts; women, called Bhikkhuni, will take the Bhikshu ordination of 348 precepts; in Theravada-Hinayana, the Sramanera ordination is 105 precepts, the Bhikshu ordination is 227 precepts (Thich Tien Dat, 2007).

<sup>3</sup> Depending on the conditions and wisdom of the monastic, together with the sect that "results" are attained differently. In the sect, there are differences between the Southern and Northern Buddhism.

to the canon of law, the basic practice for the monastic is Sramanera, Bhikshu and the Commandments for Bodhisattvas (with Mahayana), in which the stage of Bhikshu ordination is considered the most basic and important (See: Table 1). It affirms the spiritual stability of the mortal when they initially understand and come to Buddhism to pursue a career of enlightenment: “The

also called “lowering”<sup>1</sup>. Here, the higher the “lower” age, according to the precepts, is synonymous with the higher hierarchy (the monastic practitioner according to the hierarchy - the hierarchy in the canon and the congregation) and the better morality.

Thus, the practice time and the process of witnessing the monk is calculated from low to high. Studying this problem, we know

**Table 1: Daily Dharma practicing and moral precepts observing of monastic**

Activities	Contents			Note
<b>Practicing the Dharma, observing moral precepts</b>	Chanting, reciting Buddha’s name, doing the rituals of the three times: morning, noon, afternoon and evening	Learning Buddha’s doctrine, canon law and scriptures	Translating and spreading Buddhist teachings	
<b>Transmitting the commandments</b>	Sramanera	Bhikshu	The commandments for Bodhisattvas	Today, many localities have organized the Great Ordination ceremony
<b>Teaching and transforming sentient beings</b>	Bell calling: enlightenment, alertness and neutralizing karma	Recite the name of Amitabha Buddha to salvage sentient beings	Offering alms porridge for the souls, forsaken spirits; looking after and performing rituals for the people	

Source: Thich Tien Dat, 2007: 9-44.

practitioner who reached the stage of Bhikshu ordination has determined the position to enter a religious life, a process of self-liberation and liberation, and vice versa will “fail midway” if it does not pass the “door gates” of preliminary trials” (in-depth interview with Venerable Thich Thanh Quy, Dao Xuyen Pagoda, Da Ton Commune, Gia Lam, Hanoi).

From this principle, all the practice activities, from ordination to observance of precepts, are performed continuously, every day and every hour in the pagoda. The dignity of the monastic is thus accumulated and progresses through the age of practice,

that in Mahayana Buddhism, the monastic ordinance often considers the Nine Holy Grades of Lotus (*Cửu phẩm liên hoa*) as one of the symbols for practical training and is ideal for enlightenment. “The Nine Holy Grades of Lotus is a symbol that ascends from the Precepts (preserving the precepts: the three lowest stages are the lowest of the three lowest classes, the middle of the three lowest classes,

<sup>1</sup> “Lowering” is a concept of time, also a concept indicating the hierarchy or ladder that a practitioner must go through, which is specified for each level such as Venerable, Most Venerable or Most Ven.

the highest of the three lowest classes), Concentration (righteousness: the lowest of the three middle classes, the middle of the three middle classes, the highest of the three middle) and Wisdom (wisdom, enlightenment: the three highest stages are the lowest of the three highest classes, the middle of the three highest classes, the highest of the three highest classes)” (in-depth interview with Venerable Thich Minh Tien, Tho Cau pagoda, Dich Vong ward, Cau Giay, Hanoi). This is the measure, along with the process of practicing according to the canon of teachings, to guide the practitioner to attain enlightenment.

The whole process of practicing, preserving precepts must be done continuously, daily, especially through three main times. Fieldwork results and actual surveys show that, in *the first period* in the morning, around 4 to 5 o'clock, depending on each pagoda will solve two tasks: one is to chant one-pointedly to grasp the essentials about the Four Noble Truths, the Ten-Twelve Causes and Conditions, the Noble Eight-fold Path as well as the Buddha's spirit and thought through reciting the sutras; Second, is to recite the mantra, recite the Buddha's name to get rid of karma, purify the body and mind to eliminate ignorance: greed - hatred - delusion. The morning is also a ritual for the monk to offer vegetarian rice to the gods of heaven. *The second period* at noon, also known as the Midday ritual, continues the spirit of one day continuously, and in this occasion the monks and nuns will chant sutras, recite the name of the Buddha, observe the precepts and contemplate the 48 aspirations of Amitabha Buddha. In *the third period* in the afternoon, in addition to the ritual of chanting and cultivating scriptures,

the practitioners also perform the teaching, enlightenment and alertness of sentient beings through offering alms porridge to the souls and spirits which are in seclusion, near and far. “The bell, the muzzle (therefore) as well as the dharma utensils, are of particular importance to the monastic order in the ritual practicing” (in-depth interview with Venerable Thich Giac Duyen, Vice President of the Buddhist Association of Gia Lai, Head of the Phu Cuong Abbot, Dun commune, Chu Se, Gia Lai).

Moreover, all activities such as entering the Main hall, lighting lamps, burning incense, washing hands, washing faces, etc. are all according to the principles of canon law and scriptures. This is reflected in that, the above activities are performed together in connection with the sutra verse, for example, waking up and stepping on the ground with a chant, washing the feet with a separate chant, until all everyday activities have a sutra verse “following” the process of religious enrichment and observance, as well as scriptures cultivation of the monk (See: Thich Tien Dat, 2007: 9-44).

Therefore, daily practice following the principles of canon law is one of the core matters for the monk. Rituals related to evangelization and practice take place every day following regulations. In other words, whether or not Buddhism flourishes or declines, whether or not a monk keeps the precepts and enlightenment depends radically on daily and hourly practice, mission and observance activities. In addition to the Daily Rite, the monk also participates in responding to the ashram to transform sentient beings through different rites, especially through the Rituals offered to the souls of the dead and forsaken spirits.

*Like the Daily Ritual, the Rituals offered to souls of the dead and forsaken spirits are the ones that deeply reflects Buddhist teachings, and has a history of development in Vietnam for thousands of years*, which is recorded to be emerged from the Ly - Tran dynasty. It is derived from the Ullambama Sutra. The idea can be summarized in the Sutra as follows: “Muc Kien Lien when He was just rewarded for the devout life (in the Sutras said that he excelled at magic) wanted to let his parents “out of the cycle of depression”. In one time, when He used his divine eye to search for his mother, He saw that his mother was exiled as a Hungry ghost. He displayed great mercy. But, how could He save his mother while the karma she caused was so great? And He turned to the Buddha. Buddha just said that there had been no other way but “relying on the divine power of Buddhas of the Ten directions” and preparing “food with hundred dishes, fruits with hundred colours” along with many other items to pray for blessings. Only that way can “pray for transcendence within seven generations”. And He performed this ritual to save his mother” (Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, 2005: 15-20).

According to our research, Muc Kien Lien, one of the great disciples - Bodhisattvas of the Buddha, was the first person to perform this ritual and had handed it down to the next generation through the sutras called the Sutra of Filial Piety.

As a unified ideology in diversity, like other rituals, the ultimate goal of the Rituals offered to souls of the dead and forsaken spirits is to free the souls, and at the same time, through the liberation ritual, “educate” the yin people and alert the yang through the philosophy of karma reincarnation. In

Vietnam, the Rituals offered to souls of the dead and forsaken spirits organized in the 12<sup>th</sup> century was most clearly recorded in mainstream history: “In Hội Trường Đại Khánh era/ninth year [...] Autumn, July, [...] ghost festival (Trung Nguyen) at the same date of Vu Lan Festival [requiem] for Queen Dowager Linh Nhan” (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 1998: 289).

According to records, the Rituals offered to souls of the dead and forsaken spirits were held many times in the royal court since the first centuries of independence. The records say: “Autumn, July (i.e., in 1128, Thien Thuan era), time of ghost festival (Trung Nguyen), the King stayed at Thien An palace, the officials offered congratulation. Because [that day] was Vu Lan [32a] festival, Ritual to make offerings to Nhan Tong King, so the feast was not prepared (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 1998: 72). “An Nam chí lược (Brief records of Annam)” also mentioned: “Ghost festival (Trung Nguyen), founded Vu Lan ritual, to pray for the souls of the dead, not regret how much it costs” (Le Tac, 2002: 255).

Under Tran dynasty, the ceremony of making offerings to souls of the dead and forsaken spirits continue to be held in the Royal palace: “In February 1278, Queen Thien Cam passed away, King Thanh Tong worshiped, stayed in the palace, told son Nhan Tong invite Tue Trung to attend” (Nguyen Lang, 1994).

By the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, this ritual not only developed strongly within ordinary people but was still important to the imperial court. The writings of Giovanni Filippo De Marini in the years 1641-1658 while staying Vietnam said: “When the King arrived, the monks as well

as the mandarins started to do prayers. After that, the King respectfully bowed to the souls. Then, he shot five symbolic arrows at the deceased princes. Next, they started to worship on the altar of incense and pray for the generals who sacrificed themselves while fighting for the country” (Cited by Mario Sica, 2013: 79).

Until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this ritual was still preserved and developed, reflected in the events of the Tu Duc years, when the books related to the science of worship from Books of Buddhist rituals such as the Various Rituals for Water and Land (*Thủy Lục Chư Khoa* 水陸諸科) continued to be printed in Sino-Vietnamese form and handed down in pagodas and folklore.

Overall, through a few notes from the mainstream historical documents, it can be seen that the Rituals offered to souls of the dead and forsaken spirits comes from Buddhist teachings and scriptures. Through the historical process with different dynasties, this ritual is still maintained, preserved and developed to this day.

*b) Rituals affecting the cultural lifestyle of villages and localities*

One factor that creates the characteristic of Vietnamese culture is the village culture. Although each region and area owns a unique set of customs and habits, there is one thing in common is the presence of a village pagoda and its particularly important role in the cultural and spiritual life of the Vietnamese people in general. This is a space that is both real and surreal, serves the religious needs and spiritual salvation of people when facing the difficulties of life. According to Giuseppe Capra: “It is the living environment that gives them (the people of the Northern Delta) this

religious spirit: the uncertainty of life on the submerged land, the favour of nature for suitable water for cultivation, other natural dangers such as climate, water resources, animals, all of which make people desire for a support”. Therefore, “there is a pagoda in every village, surrounded by people’s houses and they put a lot of effort into maintaining it” (Cited by Mario Sica, 2013: 166).

The pagoda is the pagoda of the village, the pagoda of the people. The practitioners when coming to the temple, they first practice and then serve the people. This is the space for the Buddhist cultural ideas and the indigenous traditional beliefs to “collide” and merge together to give birth to many “common” rituals related to both Buddhism and folklore. Ordinary people rely on the Buddha’s door gate, while spiritual practitioners “adapt” to develop their religion. People have the right to come to the pagoda to practice, to look after, and vice versa.

The spirit of loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity at the door gate of the Buddha is spread; on the contrary, the neighbourly and mutual affection are brought to the Buddha’s door so that both practitioners and people in villages and streets can have a close relationship with each other, thus share with each other the rituals on happiness, sadness, piety. Therefore, morning or noon, afternoon or evening, the temple is always opening for people to enter the worshipping ceremony, to make offerings to the Buddhas whenever the family has business, or to offer midwives ceremony to babies or when “sell” the children to the temple; especially when there are people die in the village; etc. In many pagodas in Vietnam, especially those following the Northern Buddhism tradition, during the

Buddhist ritual and the food offerings for sentient beings ritual in the evening, monks often include petition papers and porridge trays to make offerings to the spirits and souls around the temple, so that the spirits and souls can listen to the sutras and receive the alms from the pagodas. This is also a means for the pagodas to grow graceful charm and transmit the Buddha's teachings to sentient beings, including both the living and the dead. Families with deceased people, in addition to being worshiped at home, are also allowed to go to the temple to take refuge in the Buddha's door. This is the reason why people have access to the pagoda, to the teachings of the pagoda; and also, the spiritual practitioners associate their religious life with the local people themselves, to instruct them, to take care of the rituals for the people. It can be said that the monastic practices themselves have a powerful impact on the lifestyle and culture of the people living in the villages and communes where the pagoda is presented, especially on the first day of the Lunar month and the Full Moon day of each month. According to Professor Ha Van Tan (2012: 335, 336): "People only believe in Buddhism when this religion has the power to replace their own angels, or better yet, together with the angels, protect and shelter them. For the sake of its own development, Buddhism had had to do that and already did so. But in the Buddhist sects, there is no sect that has enough sutras and mantras to pray for rain, sun, cure, exorcism... as good as Tantra".

The pagoda is the place for Vietnamese people to express their desires, salvation, peace and good matters. In fact, since its first introduction to Vietnam, Buddhism has been integrated with folk culture, come to the people as looking for its own

development and living environment. It rooted on the cognitive characteristics and traditional thoughts of local people to enter the real life of the human world. According to William Dampier (2007: 77, 78), in the Ke Cho - Thang Long - Hanoi area, in 1688, people came to the pagoda mostly for the purpose of salvation, placed their identities in the religious beliefs in divine beings, in which the Buddha - Pagoda was a safe place to fulfill their desires: "Many pagan monks live in these pagodas. It is said that the precepts force them to obey the principles of asceticism [...] most of the time they only live on the offerings that people give, while they (monks) are very large in number, so that they are very poor [...] one of the things that makes people come here is to see fortune-telling - which the monks consider themselves capable".

In addition, they also go to the pagoda to ask for protection and salvation: "The poor write down what they want to ask for and bring to the monks. The monks read aloud the plea in front of the statues of gods and then burn the paper (i.e., petition paper) with the plea in a vase; the beggars always prostrate themselves in the process of the ceremony" (William Dampier, 2007: 78).

On the contrary, the traditional rituals in Vietnamese villages in general and the Northern Delta in particular have been deeply influenced by the Buddhist ritual culture. Therefore, the solemnity is always shown in the ceremony, from the stage of offerings preparation to the stage of rituals and ceremonies execution. In studying religious rituals and traditional beliefs in Vietnam, Léopold Cadière (1997: 239) writes: "Rituals offered to the spirits and souls of the dead are like regular solemn

rituals. An offering to the souls is similar to an offering to the living. People treat the souls and spirits no difference than humans. They offer them what people like and need: alcohol, rice, meat, fruit, gold coins, banknotes, flower scent. Each offering has incense. Sometimes just incense is enough". It is worth noting that the reciprocal relationship of Buddhism and traditional beliefs through the village pagoda for thousands of years has left many memorable impressions, of which funeral is a typical example. The process of exchange and introduction takes place every day through the practice of the monk; the reciprocal relationship between the spiritual practitioners and the local people, local Buddhists followers thus becomes the "nucleus" to create and foster the village culture in the Northern region of Vietnam.

*c) Rituals have a profound differentiation between sect and regional culture*

The profound differentiation of the geographical position, history, culture, and features of the missionary process is the fundamental factor determining the characteristics of Buddhist rituals in Vietnam (See: Table 2). Accordingly, in the South, especially in many provinces in

the Central Highlands, the Southeast and the Mekong River Delta, Buddhism there is Khmer Theravada Buddhism, except a few follows Mendicant Buddhism. The characteristics of Buddhism here have many unique characteristics, from the process of religious living to the rituals associated with local followers; architecture, sculpture, literature as well as Buddhist art in this area also have relatively separate looks and features. "During the rites in the year and the rituals in the day, the melodies of the chanting are directly influenced by the local folk songs and traditional music" (in-depth interview with Venerable Thich Giac Duyen, Vice President of the Buddhist Association of Gia Lai province, Head of the Phu Cuong Abbot, Dun commune, Chu Se district, Gia Lai province). Particularly, the resonance of the Southern folk songs and the art of *Đờn ca Tài tử* (a special traditional genre of chamber music) is clearly shown in chanting and music ceremony practicing in Ho Chi Minh City and surrounding areas (in-depth interview with Nun Dieu Nhi, Bat Nha Abbey, Phuong Thanh hamlet, Tan Hoa commune, Phu My town, Ba Ria-Vung Tau province).

**Table 2: Basic characteristics of Northern Buddhism and Southern Buddhism**

Characteristics	Northern Buddhism	Southern Buddhism
<b>Lineage, sect and quantity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mahayana with three elements Meditation, Pure, and Tantra as principle;</li> <li>- 32,652 Monks and Nuns (Vietnamese Buddhist Association, 2012: p.507)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hinayana, basically practice according to Theravada Buddhism; Sub-tribe: Hamanikay and Thommazut, ...</li> <li>- 8,919 Monks and Nuns (Khmer Southern Buddhism is 8574; Southern Buddhism is 345) (Vietnamese Buddhist Association, 2012: 507)</li> </ul>
<b>Religious hybrid</b>	Confucianism and Taoism	
<b>Cultural regions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Language</li> <li>- Local rituals, customs and habits</li> </ul>	

Source: Vietnamese Buddhist Sangha, Office of Executive Board, 2012.



On the other hand, in the North, Buddhism is mainly Mahayana, in which the Pure Land sect is a large number compared with Meditation and Tantra, which are considered the three sects of initiates. This characteristic, along with indigenous cultural factors, especially the role of village festivals, has had significant mutual effects on Buddhist rituals in this area (Nguyen Dinh Lam, 2019: 35-43).

Regional factors and differences in sectarian characteristics, between Southern and Northern Buddhism are also reflected in the use of music to express ideas that are suitable to local followers. And as such, it will be difficult to take the ritual music of one locality as the standard for another.

### 3. Conclusion

In conclusion, the characteristics, sectarianism and the influences of factors related to regional culture are the fundamental reasons determining the unification feasibility of Buddhist rituals in Vietnam. Buddhist rituals have the unique characteristics of the tradition of each sect region, so the implementation of a unified ritual is difficult to apply (Vietnamese Buddhist Sangha, Executive Board, 2012: 307). However, after all, this is what creates Buddhism in Vietnam, so that Buddhism can accompany with each locality, each region and with all the people in the country □

### References

1. Thich Duc Chanh (2008), *Vietnamese Buddhist Rituals in the Past and Present*, Bac Lieu Buddhist Association Provincial Electronic Information Portal, accessed on 20/01/2021.
2. Thich Tien Dat (2007), *The basics for novices*, Religious Publishing House, Hanoi.
3. Vietnamese Buddhist Sangha (2005), *Sutra of Filial Piety*, Religious Publishing House, Hanoi.
4. Vietnamese Buddhist Sangha, Executive Board of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (2012), *Vietnamese Buddhist Association: Buddhist congresses (1981-2012)*, Religious Publishing House, Hanoi.
5. Thich Vien Hai (2013), *The Necessity of Buddhist Rituals*, web portal of Vietnamese Buddhist Sangha, accessed on 20/01/2021.
6. Nguyen Lang (1994), *Vietnamese Buddhist history*, Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House, Ho Chi Minh City.
7. Nguyen Dinh Lam (2019), "A few reviews of Buddhist music in Northern Vietnam", *Journal of Buddhist Studies*, No. 3, Hanoi.
8. Nguyen Thi My Liem (2018), *Vietnamese folk music in the South*, National Culture Publishing House, Hanoi.
9. Bich Lien, Nguyen Van Thoa (2016), *Mông Sơn thí thực khoa nghi*, Religious Publishing House, Hanoi.
10. Pham Hong Linh (2016), *Music at rituals offered to souls of the dead and forsaken spirits: A case comparison in Hue and Ho Chi Minh city*, Ph.D. thesis in cultural studies, Graduate of Social Sciences, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Hanoi.
11. Léopold Cadière (1997 - translated by Do Trinh Hue), *Religious beliefs and practices of the Vietnamese*, Culture and Information Publishing House, Hanoi.

(continue to page 38)