

REMUNERATION OF VIETNAM FEUDAL STATE TO STUDENTS OF QUOC TU GIAM FROM THE 11TH TO THE FIRST HALF OF 19TH CENTURIES

TRINH THI HA *

Abstract: The article refers to a number of preferential policies of the state of feudal Vietnam for Giam sinh (students of Quoc Tu Giam) of Quoc Tu Giam (the Imperial Academy – the first national university) from the 11th to the first half of the 19th centuries with many different modes: from allotting monthly salary (in cash, rice, lamp oil); appointing to important positions during the learning process; conferring pen, paper, school books; to having them exempt from manual work, taxes, military service, etc. The Vietnamese imperial dynasties attached great importance to and upheld Confucian education. As for Quoc Tu Giam, the dynasties always paid special attention in all aspects. Therefore, during operation, Quoc Tu Giam played a very important role in training and providing a Confucian intelligentsia for the centralized monarchy. The remuneration had a positive effect in fostering, encouraging scholars to continue to strive in the path of their learning career.

Key words: Giam sinh, Quoc Tu Giam, imperial dynasty, education, remuneration.

Quoc Tu Giam was built in 1076 by King Ly Nhan Tong (1072 - 1127). Over the Ly, Tran, Ho, Pre-Le, Mac, Le Trung Hung Dynasties, Quoc Tu Giam always played the role of *the center of Confucian education of Vietnam* in the capital city of Thang Long. By 1803, along with the recognition of the city of Hue as the capital, the Nguyen imperial court established Quoc Tu Giam there with the original name of the National School. During its operation, Quoc Tu Giam had a very important role in training and providing a Confucian intelligentsia (with degrees) for the central monarchy. Recognizing its important educational function, the imperial dynasties always devoted special attention to Quoc Tu Giam in all aspects, from the construction of infrastructure,

recruitment of professors and students, to the issuance of teaching and learning books, examinations, especially the provision of the Four Confucian Classics, the Five Pre-Confucian Classics, salaries, remuneration, etc. In particular, the government paid more attention to the selection of students into the school, especially provided a lot of favors for learners through edicts issued by the King.

1. Composition of Quoc Tu Giam School Students

Quoc Tu Giam came into being on the basis of Confucian ideology which was increasingly strengthened in Vietnam society, Confucian education gradually spread to

(*) M.A., Institute of History.

many strata of society. *Dai Viet su ky toan thu* (*Complete Annals of Dai Viet*) records that, in the Thần Vũ thứ 2 (Spirit Rain 2) (1070), King Ly Thanh Tong built Van Mieu (the Temple of Literature) in the capital city of Thang Long, *both as a place of worship of saints and a place for learning for the Crown Prince*. Six years later, in 1076 the Court built Quoc Tu Giam in Minh Giam village, Tho Xuong district (presently Van Mieu ward, Dong Da district, Hanoi). The area of the school at first was not recorded by history, but undergone restorations and construction by the following dynasties, the area of the school became certainly larger. According to *Minh Giam village locations book* (founded on 5 of December of the Minh Menh 18th year - 1839) the area of the Temple of Literature - the National University was: 7.5.05.9.0 (around 7 hectares, 5 acres, 5 feet, 9 inches, 0 cm).⁽¹⁾

In 1803, after taking the throne, King Gia Long built a school in the Capital of Phu Xuan (Hue), in "the territory of An Ninh commune to the west outside the Citadel"⁽²⁾, about 300m to the east of the Temple of Literature, known as the National School. In 1821, King Minh Menh (1820 - 1840) began to develop the Quoc Tu Giam School, the name Quoc Tu Giam in the Nguyen dynasty officially emerged since then.

Over the Ly, Tran, Pre-Le, Mac, Le Trung Hung Dynasties, Quoc Tu Giam in Thang Long (in the Nguyen Dynasty Quoc Tu Giam was located in Hue) was always *the Confucian educational center of Vietnam*; was responsible for keeping carved wooden

inscriptions, books; printing books to distribute to localities; and also was responsible for the selection and submit of students to the Ministry of Rites to approve and appoint as officials of the court apparatus. The duty of primary importance of the school was the teaching of wise teachings of Sages to "open the pro-Confucian path to prosperity forever". With such an especially important educational function, Quoc Tu Giam was always of interest to the monarchy governments which carried out construction, repairs and expansion in both size and architectural landscape. The school included Ming Gong House, east west auditoria, classrooms for three-hall students, doctors' steles roofed house, storehouse for wooden carved books or the school library.

Not only just taking care of facilities construction, expansion of architectural landscape, the imperial dynasties of Vietnam also were early conscious of the selection of students to study at Quoc Tu Giam. Under the monarchy, learners in Quoc Tu Giam were collectively referred to as "students", "Giam sinh", while in the *Quoc su quan trieu Nguyen* (*National Historiographers' Office of the Nguyen Dynasty*) they were called the "Toa giam".

⁽¹⁾ Phan Huy Le (Editor-in-chief) (2010), *Ancient Geographical Locations of Hanoi (Tho Xuong district, Vinh Thuan)*, Vol. 2, Hanoi Publishing House, Hanoi, p.188.

⁽²⁾ *Quoc su quan trieu Nguyen* (*National Historiographers' Office of the Nguyen Dynasty*) (2006), *Dai Nam nhat thong chi* (*Geography of the Unified Dai Nam*), Vol.1, Thuan Hoa Publishing House, Thua Thien - Hue, p.75.

Within the scope of this article, the author referred them to as "Giam sinh".

Although Confucian education in Vietnam under the Ly Dynasty was popular among the people, in the Tran Dynasty learning mode and examinations gradually became "regularized", and in folklore, in almost every village, a class was open by a Confucian master. However, under the Ly, Tran and Ho Dynasties, Quoc Tu Giam was primarily a place of learning for the crown-prince, other princes and descendants of the Court's civil and military ministers.

In the Pre-Le (1428 - 1527), by implementing the policy of widening the road to training talents for the country, so many times the Le issued decrees to recruit elite students to Quoc Tu Giam school, whereby student selection was extended. In 1428, immediately after being enthroned, King Le Thai To (1428-1433) issued a decree for "*the selection of the children of ministers and the talented children in the population to become Giam sinh*"⁽³⁾. In the following year (1429), the King also issued an order giving priority to children of the Court's civil and military ministers to become Quoc Tu Giam students.

Accordingly, children of the civil ministers from the Minister (*Tong nhi pham*—Sub second level) down to the Sub-seventh-rank mandarin and of the military officers from *Dong tri* to Company head, who were from 9 to 17 years of age, were enrolled in the school. Later, however, due to the desire to get the most intelligent students into the school, the Le Dynasty promulgated a regulation, according to which, those who wanted to become Quoc Tu Giam students,

had to go through an examination to test their level; enrollment later was for those who got a pass. In 1434, the Le Dynasty allowed to carry out examinations of *Lo Hieu Sinh* (*Lo Hieu Sinh* is to call the people who study at schools at "Lo" level under Le Dynasty)⁽⁴⁾, where there were over 1,000 successful candidates, of whom only those students who gained first and second places were admitted to Quoc Tu Giam. By the Thai Hoa 5th year (1447), the Le Dynasty enabled sons of officials to take *Huong* examinations, those who passed 4 of them became Quoc Tu Giam students; in the Hong Duc 14th year (1483), King Le Thanh Tong (1460 - 1497) allowed the "*common people and men of the military to get enrolled in Tang Quang Duong if they passed the 4 exams*".⁽⁵⁾

In 1501, with the enactment of competition rules of *Huong* examinations, King Le Hien Tong allowed those who were public service workers but passed the *Huong* examinations to leave work to follow study at Quoc Tu Giam. In summary, subjects studying at Quoc Tu Giam in the Le Dynasty were recruited from four sources:

⁽³⁾ *Quoc su quan trieu Nguyen* (National Historiographers' Office of the Nguyen Dynasty) (1998), *Kham dinh Viet su thong giam cuong muc* (The Imperially Ordered Annotated Text Completely Reflecting the History of Viet), Vol.1, Education Publishing House, Hanoi, p. 832.

⁽⁴⁾ *Lo Hieu Sinh* is to call the people who study at schools at "Lo" level under Le Dynasty. This name was used since 1428, when King Le Thai Tong reopened Quoc Tu Giam.

⁽⁵⁾ *Dai Viet su ky toan thu* (Complete Annals of Dai Viet) (2004), "*Carved Wood Inscriptions in the Chinh Hoa 18th Year*" (1697), Vol.2, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi, p.486.

- *An giam*: those Giam sinh who received King's favors to study at the school.

- *Am giam*: the children of senior officials from the fourth level upwards (in the Nguyen Dynasty, descendants of the marquis and the children of senior officials from the fifth level upwards were given privilege to attend the Giam school).

- *Cu giam*: including those who had already passed the Huong exams, not yet taken the *Hoi* exam; and those who had not taken the *Hoi* exam; applying for study at the school to get ready for the coming *Hoi* examinations to attain the doctorate degree.

- *Giam sinh*: including pupils of intelligence sent up from the locals, through an examination given by Quoc Tu Giam school mandarins (in the Nguyen Dynasty they were also known as *Cong sinh*).⁽⁶⁾

In the Nguyen Dynasty, an additional component called *Ton sinh* was added (they were the children of the King's extended royal family gaining access to Quoc Tu Giam to read books) and *Hoc sinh* (they were *Cong sinh* born in the Northern mountainous provinces, who had lower levels of education than students from other places, also allowed to study there). In the Thieu Tri 3rd year (1843), the Court allowed children of provincial officials to become *Am sinh*⁽⁷⁾. Accordingly, in the Capital city, the children of the senior officials from the fourth level upwards and 1 child of the fifth level official in the provinces were assigned to Quoc Tu Giam and granted them with salary to study.

Thus, students studying in Quoc Tu Giam were in very large number, coming

from many different sectors: from the aristocracy, descendants of civil and military officials to common people in society. While each dynasty coming to power had its specific regulations for the selection of student composition into Quoc Tu Giam, they had a common point in the implementation of the remuneration for them.

2. Remuneration of Monarchy State

The goal of Confucian education was teaching and learning to become a man of Confucian ideology which was encapsulated in four words "tu, te, tri, binh"; that is, *tu than*, (training oneself) to be able to *te gia* (well managing the family), then moving on to *tri quoc* (governing the country) and at last *binh thien ha* (making other countries under control). That goal meant training to become a gentleman; a man who valued ethics, lived responsibly, was always able to "put the national interests, social interests above the individual's"; a man who was always conscious of striving his whole life to become famous. With such particular significance, the Vietnamese imperial dynasties were early conscious of upholding Confucian

⁽⁶⁾ The classification of students of Giam School: *An giam*, *Am giam*, *Cu giam*, *Giam sinh*, is the references we take from monographic study by modern education researchers such as Nguyen Tien Cuong, "Educational Development and Testing Regime in Vietnam", Education Publishing House, Hanoi, 1998 and Dinh Khac Thuan (2009), *Education and Confucianism Examinations in Vietnam in Le Dynasty through Nom Documents*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi, 2009.

⁽⁷⁾ In the years of 1831 - 1832, King Minh Menh (1820 -1840) carried out an administrative reform, changing the administrative unit from kind of Shire to Province, as the result, the country was divided into 32 provinces.

education, respected the training of talented people for the nation by way of examinations. So, they gave a lot of favors, graces to those who followed Confucian learning, including students of Quoc Tu Giam.

We can clearly see the policy of respecting sages through dynasties by the following event: in 1825, when King Minh Minh provided for students at Quoc Tu Giam 10 quan of money, Minister of Finance Nguyen Huu Than said it was too much, King Minh Minh said, "You need not be generous with female singers who serve you, *but the students who are the state's treasure*, feed them today for use the other day, isn't it wise to be generous to them?"⁽⁸⁾.

Providing Salary for Living and Learning

Although Quoc Tu Giam students came from many different sectors of society, they were, in general, not being discriminated. The usual measurements of all students in the school were academic records and discipline, so regardless of the composition, learners at Quoc Tu Giam were granted scholarships in cash, rice, lamp oil to support learning.

The rule of providing scholarships in cash for Giam students were issued very early by the monarchy. According to researcher Nguyen Tien Cuong in "*Educational Development and Testing Regime of the Feudalism in Vietnam*", this rule existed in the Tran Dynasty. The Tran divided Giam students into 3 camps (Lower Camp, Middle Camp, and Upper Camp)⁽⁹⁾ to classify them according to teaching levels. The rule was also applied in the Pre-Le Dynasty. The author also said that during the Le dynasty,

Quoc Tu Giam classified students for scholarships very early, as early as after the first doctorate examination in 1442 under the reign of King Le Nhan Tong. Giam sinh were divided into three halls: Lower Hall (those who had passed 1 Hoi examination), Middle Hall (those who had passed 2 Hoi examinations) and Upper Hall (those who had passed 3 Hoi examinations), each hall contained 100 students, those in these 3 halls received 9 *tien* each month. However, in the Hong Duc 15th year (1484), to encourage the study, King Le Thanh Tong reallocated the scholarships into 3 categories as follows: 1 *tien* was added to the scholarship for *students of the Upper Hall* to make it 1 quan; the *Middle Hall students* received 9 *tien* as before; *students of the Lower Hall* received 1 *tien* less, making it 8 *tien*.⁽¹⁰⁾

The Nguyen Dynasty did not provide salary for students according to the *three halls*, salaries were based on the study results. On the other hand, the Nguyen Dynasty provided scholarships not only in cash, but also in rice, and lamp oil to support learners; each Giam student received a specific amount.

For the *Giam sinh*, each student received 2 *quan*, 2 *phuong* of rice, 2 *can* of paraffin

⁽⁸⁾ Quoc su quan trieu Nguyen (The National Historiographers' Office of the Nguyen Dynasty) (2004), *Dai Nam thuc luc (Chronicle of Greater Vietnam)*, Vol. 2, Education Publishing House, Hanoi, p.393.

⁽⁹⁾ Nguyen Tien Cuong (1998), *Educational Development and Testing Regime in Vietnam*, Education Publishing House, Hanoi, p.111.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Dai Viet su ky toan thu (Complete Annals of Dai Viet) (2004), *Carved Wood Inscriptions in the Chinh Hoa 18th Year (1697)*, Vol. 2, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi, p.520.

oil⁽¹¹⁾. However, in 1823, King Minh Menh classified students according to their academic capacity to allot scholarships. Accordingly, *honors students* were given 3 *quan*, 2 *phuong* of rice, 5 *can* of paraffin oil; *lower honors and credit students* received 2 *quan*, one and one-half *phuong* of rice, 4 *can* of oil; *lower credit and average students* got 1 *quan* and 5 *tien*, 1 *phuong* of rice, 3 *can* of oil.

In 1835, King Minh Menh found that a lot of the students in Giam dormitory came from remote villages. It would be very difficult for them if not enough money, food, lamp oil were provided. He decided to raise salaries for students as follows: *honors students* got 4 *quan*, 3 *phuong* of rice, 5 *can* of oil; *credit students* received 3 *quan*, 3 *phuong* of rice, 4 *can* of oil; *average students* were given 2 *quan*, 2 *phuong* of rice, 3 *can* of oil.⁽¹²⁾

For the *Am sinh*, they received each month 2 *quan*, 2 *phuong* of rice and 5 *can* of oil to study in the dormitory. However, in 1829, the Court divided students into three categories, while cutting salaries down. Specifically, *first class students* each got 2 *quan*, 2 *phuong* of rice, 3 *can* of oil each month; *second class students* received monthly salary of 1.5 *quan*, 1 *phuong* 15 rugs of rice, 2 *can* of oil; *third class students* got 1 *quan*, 1 *phuong* of rice, 1 *can* of oil.⁽¹³⁾ The reason of reduction in allowances was this. In that year the Court allowed for all children of court officials from the Fourth level upwards and 1 child of the Fifth level official to enroll to study in Giam school; as some officials had many children, they benefited too much; hence

reasonable adjustments were needed.

For the *Ton sinh*: from 1821, King Minh Menh decided to take in 60 *Ton sinh* to Giam school, in addition to royal allowances, they were given an additional monthly 2 *quan* and 2 *phuong* of rice.

By the reign of King Tu Duc (1848 - 1883), student scholarships were revised up. For example, according to regulations, scholarships for *Giam sinh* in the Tu Duc 6th year (1853), if the Bachelor, *Giam sinh*, *Am sinh* passed the examinations, those who were honors students received every month 4 *quan*, 3 *phuong* of rice; those who were credit students got 3 *quan*, 2 *phuong* of rice; average students got 2 *quan*, 2 *phuong* of rice. Honors *Ton sinh* received 3 *quan*, 3 *phuong* of rice; credit *Ton sinh* got 2 *quan*, 2 *phuong* of rice; average ones got 1.3 *quan* 20 *dong*, 1 *phuong* 10 *uyen* of rice.⁽¹⁴⁾

⁽¹¹⁾ According to the measurement unit from Le Thai Tong (1434 -1442), one *Tien* = 60 *dong*; According to *Decisions of the King of Dai Nam: Phuong* was the unit of measurement of the monarchical times, which was used to measure rice to distribute to cities and shires as wages. *Phuong* was divided into 2 categories: the large one and the medium-sized one. From the Nguyen time onwards (1805) large *Phuong* was used, each *Phuong* measured 13 buckets of rice equaling 30 bronze rugs.

⁽¹²⁾ Quoc su quan trieu Nguyen (The National Historiographers' Office of the Nguyen Dynasty), *Dai Nam thuc luc (Chronicle of Greater Vietnam)*, Vol. 2, Book 11, *ibid*, p. 430.

⁽¹³⁾ Nguyen Dynasty Cabinet (2005), *Kham dinh Dai Nam hoi dien su le (The Imperially Ordained Dai Nam Administrative Code and Regulations)*, Episode 3, Book 58, Thuan Hoa Publishing House, Thua Thien - Hue, p. 456.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Quoc su quan trieu Nguyen (The National Historiographers' Office of the Nguyen Dynasty), *Dai Nam thuc luc (Chronicle of Greater Vietnam)*, Vol. 7, Book 9, *ibid*, pp.288-289.

Thus, the Nguyen Dynasty based on academic results through quarterly tests (one test every 3 months) to increase or decrease the amount of money, rice and oil for Giam sinh. Under the reign of King Minh Menh, there was a rule which said "basing on the results of tests in the four key months [four months of this matter included: middle winter month (November), middle spring month (February), middle autumn month (August), and middle summer month (May)] to classify Giam sinh"⁽¹⁵⁾. Giam sinh had to go through a *four-stage literature examination*⁽¹⁶⁾, according to which, those who passed the *four-stage or three-stage literature examinations* were classified as first class; those who passed the first two stages or just the first stage were classified as second class; those who had not passed any of them were third class. Each class (or honors, credit, and average students) would be compatible with the amounts of money, rice, and oil as described above.

But in 1853, King Tu Duc reduced the 4 quarterly tests to 1 test in the middle month of spring, the results of which were taken as basis for scholarships for the whole year. However, in 1858, as most students came to Giam school from distant villages and depended the whole year on scholarships, this one important examination in the spring month seemed unfair; the honors students were given too generously the whole year; the credit students, though making progress, had to wait one year, which seemed to be a pitiful delay. So King Tu Duc approved examinations for Giam sinh to take place twice a year, one in the

middle month of spring and one in the middle month of autumn of the year, to increase or decrease scholarships.

Comparing the allowances for Giam sinh by the Nguyen Dynasty with the salary of some dynasty officials, it is possible to see that the Nguyen Dynasty had given special privileges to the National School students. For example, in the year of 1821, the Nguyen Dynasty provided monthly salary for those who were appointed officials of the 6 ministries each 2 *quan*, 2 *phuong* of rice; those who were appointed as trainees of such officials as District Chiefs and Mandarinate (*huyen thua*) of District leaders (training at such level before being officially appointed) 3 *quan*, 3 *phuong* of rice; students who were children of mandarins sent to work as trainee-officials 2 *quan*, 2 *phuong* of rice; bachelors, Am sinh, Ton sinh, Giam sinh sent to train as District education officers 2 *quan*, 2 *phuong* of rice.⁽¹⁷⁾

⁽¹⁵⁾ Quoc su quan trieu Nguyen (The National Historiographers' Office of the Nguyen Dynasty), *Dai Nam thuc luc (Chronicle of Greater Vietnam)*, Vol. 2, Book 24, *ibid*, p.322.

⁽¹⁶⁾ *The four-round literature examination* may still known as *the four-stage examination* which included the following: *The first stage*: 1 literature dissertation (ie, a dissertation explaining the meaning of the Pre-Confucian Five Classics) and 4 essays (each about one book of the four Confucian Classics), each should contain 300 words or more; *The Second Stage*: writing Eulogy, Royal Mandate, Petition to the King; *The third stage*: writing Poetry and Dissertation in rhythmic prose; *The fourth stage*: 1 literary dissertation related to either Confucian Classics or lines and policy of governance of the country, which should be of 1,000 words or more.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Nguyen Dynasty Cabinet, *Kham dinh Dai Nam hoi dien su le (The Imperially Ordained Dai Nam Administrative Code and Regulations)*, Vol.3 (books 36 - 68), Vol. 58, *ibid*, pp. 445-446.

Thus, although the salary allotted to Giam sinh of Quoc tu giam by the state was not much, it partly showed the attention paid by the imperial dynasties to the cause of training talents. At the same time, the attention helped to improve the life of Giam sinh, giving them more spirit in their learning cause.

Appointment of Officials

In the learning process at Quoc Tu Giam, learners could be appointed officials depending on the needs of the Court. The official history books of Vietnam such as *Dai Viet su ky tuc bien (Supplementary Edition of the Annals of Dai Viet)*, *Kham dinh Viet su thong giam cuong muc (The Imperially Ordered Annotated Text Completely Reflecting the History of Viet)*, in the Le Dynasty, there were very specific rules applied to the appointment of officials for Giam sinh of Quoc Tu Giam. As stipulated in the Doan Khanh 5th year (1509), those who had learned for 15 years and more and passed many Hoi examinations or had learned for 18 years and passed one Hoi examination, would be tested and submitted to the Ministry of the Interior for consideration and appointed as different types of officials; mainly appointed officials at district level such as District Chiefs or such officials as *Thu linh* (the leader), *Ban doc* (Education Management), *Tuong su*, *Cac mon* (Ritual propriety), *Tu ban* (as Temples mange) or other teaching officers like District education officers, *Hoc chinh tu nghi* (education service), *Giang du* (teacher), etc. During the Le – Trinh Dynasties, the monarchical governments

also extended to those Giam sinh who had not passed any Hoi exam but had a good knowledge of rites and those who had many long years of study. They were also considered and appointed officials like District education officers where work was not much and as *Cac mon su* (Ritual propriety), *Cac mon pho su* (Sub ritual propriety). When they served enough year terms, depending on the amount of work, they would be considered and appointed Chiefs of Mountain Districts, District Chiefs, Heads of Education Service.

According to the *Le Dynasty Mandarin's Charter*, those officials were ranked from the Head of All Eight Levels up to Chief of All Nine Levels, equivalent to the official rank appointed to Court examination Third-class doctorate (*Because Court examination Third-class doctorate is assigned to a mandarin, which has Sub-eighth-rank mandarin*). Clearly, that was the special favor of the state for students at Quoc Tu Giam when Giam sinh could be appointed officials on the par with university graduates. This grace was sustained by the successive dynasties.

During the Nguyen Dynasty, from the Minh Menh, as the national administrative apparatus was increasingly complete, there was a need for quality contingent of mandarins to serve the country. Therefore, in the year of 1825 the King issued an order "Quoc tu giam is the place for talented people; in recent years, they have been given generous salary, trained carefully; Giam sinh at Quoc tu giam up to now have deeply understood the grace and kept in

mind the knowledge, many of them have become successful. So, I order the Head of the school and professors by fairness select 30 people who have wide scope of knowledge and excellent literature ability and could be of good use, to submit to me".⁽¹⁸⁾ The successive reigns as Thieu Tri (1841 -1847), Tu Duc (1848 -1883) not only inherited, but also issued detailed, more specific rules relating to the appointment of Giam sinh as mandarins. For example, in the Tu Duc 1st year (1848), the Nguyen Dynasty ruled: if bachelors (implying those who had passed the Huong exam; in the Le Dynasty called *Huong cong*) stayed at Quoc Tu Giam, would be sent as trainees-officials in provinces, after three years would be officially appointed District Chiefs or Chiefs of Mountain District. Am sinh who had passed examinations to be come bachelors or higher would be appointed earlier; those, who had not passed and had to stay at Quoc tu giam to continue study until they passed all 3 examinations, would be later assigned to provinces as trainee-officials.

In order to gain a job, these Giam sinh had to go through a test and selection by Giam school mandarins, mandarins from the Ministry of Rites and ministry of Interior together. According to rules made by the feudal Lord Trinh Cuong in the Bao Thai 2nd year (1721), "there is a small gathering of students of the school for a test each month, which is carried out by District Education officers and District Education Service; in the four middle months of the year, there is a large gathering for students

and Huong cong which is held by Quoc tu giam mandarins. Those who pass all the four tests will be submitted by the Quoc tu giam mandarins to the Ministry of Interior to consider and assign tasks".⁽¹⁹⁾ The examination content was basically not different between the dynasties. Here we take the test design in the reign of Minh Menh King in 1825 for reference, the examination was divided into three stages:

The first stages, a poetry five words and an essay twelve words; a mean literary dissertation eight sentence; *The second stages*: a royal speech, antagonists four words and forty lines with explain; *The third stages*: an analyses about the times⁽²⁰⁾. By 1835, the Nguyen dynasty ruled that the selection examination would be held once every three years using the test design of 1825. But at the time of Tu Duc, from 1851, because of the need to select assistant mandarins was no longer strong, the court decided to hold selection examination once every 6 years for Quoc Tu Giam school students. Those Giam sinh who passed all the tests and had good educational and ethic qualities would be assigned to different positions depending on the needs of the

⁽¹⁸⁾ Quoc su quan trieu Nguyen (The National Historiographers' Office of the Nguyen Dynasty), *Dai Nam thuc luc (Chronicle of Greater Vietnam)*, Vol. 2, Book 31, *ibid*, pp. 397-398.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Quoc su quan trieu Nguyen (National Historiographers' Office of the Nguyen Dynasty) (1998), *Kham dinh Viet su thong giam cuong muc (The Imperially Ordered Annotated Text Completely Reflecting the History of Viet)*, Vol.2, *Ibid*, pp.424-425.

⁽²⁰⁾ Quoc su quan trieu Nguyen (The National Historiographers' Office of the Nguyen Dynasty), *Dai Nam thuc luc (Chronicle of Greater Vietnam)*, Vol. 2, Issue 31, *ibid*, pp. 397-398.

state: they might work in the offices of ministries, or take the position of Ung Truc at the princes' palaces; or working as teaching in provinces, etc. The selection examination rules were applied for all Giam sinh, irrespective of their backgrounds. Thus, compared with the previous dynasties, Giam sinh of the National School in the period reigned by the early Nguyen dynasties were mainly appointed principal officials from the Head of All Eight Levels up to Chief of All Nine Levels, but the rules of appointment this period in history were more specific.

Some Other Graces

Giam sinh of Quoc Tu Giam also enjoyed a number of other favors from the state such as being provided with books, pens, ink (including the Four Confucian Classics: Great Learning; Doctrine of the Mean; Analects of Confucius; Mencius; the Five Pre - Confucian Classics: Book of Rites, Book of Changes; Spring and Autumn Annals; and a number of other classic books to learn; being *exempt from manual and military service or being granted with clothing, ceremonial gowns, sickness and death allowance; being supported with money to go home to visit elderly parents.* In the Le Trung Hung, both Giam sinh and students at Huong schools⁽²¹⁾ were provided non-lined o sa caps, green lined gowns without leaf at the back, belts⁽²²⁾. In the Nguyen Dynasty, a student was given a junior bachelor hat, a green satin shirt, 1 pair of blue silk trousers, black scarf, socks and shoes, which were replaced every 5 years. In the case Giam sinh was appointed or for any reason had to leave the school,

this set of clothing would be withdrawn to give to others. If, unfortunately, Giam sinh was sick and died, he would be favored by being buried with the set of clothing, which showed that he was forgiven by the Court. When the state provided money to go home to visit the elderly parents, the Giam sinh must obtain a permit from school officials, must have an identification paper to show he was allowed a leave and the due day, and submit to the Ministry of Rites to stop the allowance. The book *Kham dinh Dai Nam hoi dien su le (Imperially Ordained Dai Nam Administrative Code and Regulations)* also recorded the classic case of Bui Van Do and his brother who received 10 quan each for the visit to their elderly parents for about 3 months and then returned to continue their study. Even in the learning process a student died because of illness, he was also given a death allowance for funeral, as in the case with Giam sinh Ta Dang Doai who got sick and died, King Minh Menh gave an order: "allocating 50 quan, 5 sheets of cloth, to show mercy"; in the 1st reign of King Thieu Tri (1841), *Am sinh* Tran Ngoc Du died, the Court granted 20 quan, 2 sheets of cloth.

In addition, to encourage students to study hard, as well as to help students overcome difficulties, on the big occasions like the King's crowning day, the King's father's or Queen's birthday, New Year or

⁽²¹⁾ In the Le Trung Hung period, the Giam was called the National School; schools in districts were known as the Huong school.

⁽²²⁾ Phan Huy Chu (2007), *Lich trieu hien chuong loi chi (Regulations of Successive Dynasties by Subject - matter)*, item *Rituals*, Vol.1, Education Publishing House, Hanoi, p. 718.

cold winter.., Giam sinh at Quoc tu giam were given additional money by the state.

When studying in Quoc Tu Giam, Giam sinh were under the direct management of the teaching mandarins (including the Head of the school, District education officer, professors...), and must fully comply with the school rules relating to time and learning attitude. In 1683, the Lord Trinh Tac (1657-1682) issued the six commandments to the public servants and the people, of which the second one provided: "*Teaching and learning must follow the set time, nurture the people, never turn to be political rebels*"⁽²³⁾. For Giam sinh in the dorm, besides learning hours, students had to live and play in designated areas, refrain from roaming and neglecting the learning, from gathering to drink alcohol, gambling, causing chaos, or bringing wives or girls to stay in school. Violators would be reprimanded or punished. For example, in the book *Ways to keep orders against violations* (the precious measures to keep orders) by King Le Tuong Duc (1510 -1516), issued in 1511 included 50 articles, of which article 5 had very specific rules on penalties on students violating the rules as follows: if students neglected learning in terms of attendance: being absent once, a penalty of 140 medium-sized sheets of paper was applied; twice - 200 sheets of medium-sized paper; 3 times the punishment was being beaten 40 lashes; absent a lot of times in a year should be submitted to the Ministry of Justice for interrogation, the heaviest penalty there would be being expelled from the school and forced to join the military⁽²⁴⁾. The Nguyen dynasty ruled if Giam sinh or

students violated the rule by bringing women into the dormitory area, they should be deemed guilty, expelled from the school, and sent home as common people. The Nguyen Dynasty also ordered that Giam school mandarins checked the dormitory area every three days. If a student stayed outside the dorm overnight one time or twice, he would be reprimanded by the mandarin; if it was the third time, the school mandarins would consider punishment which might be expelling from the school.

Clearly, the implementation of the remuneration for the Giam sinh of Quoc Tu Giam was carried out tightly by the imperial dynasties through the management, control of Giam sinh's attitude and consciousness of observing the rules.

Thus, the Vietnamese imperial dynasties from the Ly, Tran, Ho, especially from the periods of Le, Mac, Le-Trinh and Nguyen, had provided different treatment regimes for Quoc Tu Giam students, from giving them salary, rice, lamp oil; assignment of mandarin positions; to giving them clothing, getting them exempt from military service, etc..

In remuneration for Giam sinh in the old times, each dynasty had its own rules about the levels and number, but all what they had done showed the interest of the imperial dynasties in the policy of respecting talents through education and examinations of the monarchy state.

⁽²³⁾ Ngo Cao Lang (1995), *Different Dynasties Record*, Vol.1, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

⁽²⁴⁾ Dai Viet su ky toan thu (Complete Annals of Dai Viet) (1993), *Carved Wood Inscriptions in the Chinh Hoa 18th Year* (1697), Vol.3, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.

The above remuneration had great significance for Giam sinh in cheering, encouraging, and motivating them both physically and mentally. As a result, many of the Giam sinh of Quoc Tu Giam attained the title of doctoral laureate, quite a few of them not only became major court officials involved in the great work of the country, but they also were prominent men of culture, outstanding military men, school - masters of contemporary societies.

References

1. Phan Huy Chu (2007), *Lich trieu hien chuong loai chi (Regulations of Successive Dynasties by Subject-matter)*, item *Rituals*, Vol.1, Education Publishing House, Hanoi, p.718.
2. Nguyen Tien Cuong (1998), *Educational Development and Testing Regime in Vietnam*, Education Publishing House, Hanoi.
3. Pham Duc Thanh Dzung and Vinh Cao (Editor-in-chief) (2000), *Examinations and Doctorate Laureates of Nguyen Dynasty*, Center for Conservation of Relics of Hue, Thuan Hoa Publishing House, Thua Thien - Hue.
4. Dai Viet su ky toan thu (Complete Annals of Dai Viet) (2004), *Carved Wood Inscriptions in the Chinh Hoa 18th Year (1697)*, Vol.2, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.
5. Dai Viet su ky toan thu (Complete Annals of Dai Viet) (1993), *Carved Wood Inscriptions in the Chinh Hoa 18th Year (1697)*, Vol.3, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.
6. *Dai Viet su ky tuc bien (1676 -1789) (Supplementary Edition of the Annals of Dai Viet 1676 - 1789)* (1991), Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.
7. Ngo Cao Lang (1995), *Different Dynasties Record*, Vol.1, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.
8. Phan Huy Le (eds.) (2010), *Old Hanoi Geographical Locations (Tho Xuong district, Vinh Thuan)*, Vol.2, Hanoi Publishing House, Hanoi.
9. Nguyen Thi Mai (2012), "Quoc Tu Giam - Knowledge Cradle of many Eighteenth Century Great Scholars", *Proceedings of the Scientific Conference: Quoc Tu Giam in Thang Long and the Confucian Educational Centers of Vietnam*, Hanoi, May.
10. Nguyen Dynasty Cabinet (2005), *Kham dinh Dai Nam hoi dien su le (Imperially Ordained Dai Nam Administrative Code and Regulations)*, Vol.3, Thuan Hoa Publishing House, Hue.
11. Quoc su quan trieu Nguyen (The National Historiographers' Office of the Nguyen Dynasty) (2006), *Dai Nam nhat thong chi (Geography of the Unified Dai Nam)*, Vol.1, Thuan Hoa Publishing House, Thua Thien - Hue.
12. Quoc su quan trieu Nguyen (The National Historiographers' Office of the Nguyen Dynasty) (2004), *Dai Nam thuc luc (Chronicle of Greater of Vietnam)*, Vol. 2 and 7, Education Publishing House, Hanoi.
13. Quoc su quan trieu Nguyen (The National Historiographers' Office of the Nguyen Dynasty) (1998), *Kham dinh Viet su thong giam cuong muc (The Imperially Ordered Annotated Text Completely Reflecting the History of Viet)*, Vol. 1 and 2, Education Publishing House, Hanoi.
14. Dinh Khac Thuan (2009), *Education and Confucianism Examinations in Vietnam in Le Dynasty through Sino - Nom Documents*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi.
15. Institute of History (1977), *Le Dynasty Mandarin's Charter*, Culture - Information Publishing House, Hanoi.

