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Anb Thuan Truong

The Society of Foreign Missions of Paris and Building Indigenous Missionary Force: A Study on Vietnam during the 17th and 18th Centuries

Pariška družba zunanjih misijonov in vzpostavljanje domorodne misijonarske sile: študija o Vietnamu v 17. in v 18. stoletju

Abstract: Based on the original materials recorded by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris operating in Vietnam from the second half of the 17th century to the late 18th century and the achievements of French and Vietnamese scholars, this article addresses the building of indigenous force of missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Tonkin and Cochinchina (Vietnam) during this period. In particular, the author of this article focuses on comparing the results of training Vietnamese priest resources and building seminaries in the two above areas, and at the same time points out the reason for such difference. To complete the content of this article, the author combines two main research methods of historical science (historical method and logical method) with other research methods (systematic, statistical, differential analysis, synthetic, etc.), especially the comparative method. The research result presented in the article makes specific contributions to studying the history of Christianity in Vietnam and the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in this country in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Keywords: Vietnam, Tonkin, Cochinchina, priests, seminaries, catechists, seminarians

Povzetek: Na podlagi izvirnega gradiva, ki so ga ustvarili misijonarji Pariške družbe zunanjih misijonov, delujoči v Vietnamu v drugi polovici 17. stoletja in do poznega 18. stoletja, in na podlagi dosežkov francoskih in vietnamskih preučevalcev se članek posveča vzpostavljanju domorodne misijonarske sile pod okriljem Pariške družbe zunanjih misijonov ter v Tonkinu in Cochinchini (Vietnam) v tem obdobju. Avtor članka se posebej osredotoča na primerjanje rezultatov in osvetljuje razlo-

ge za razlike pri oblikovanju nabora vietnamskih duhovnikov in pri grajenju semenišč na omenjenih področjih. Kot dopolnitev vsebine članka avtor združuje dve glavni raziskovalni metodi zgodovinske znanosti (zgodovinska metoda in logična metoda) z drugimi raziskovalnimi metodami (sistematična, statistična, diferencialna analiza, sinteza itd.), zlasti s primerjalno metodo. Raziskovalni rezultat članka je nov prispevek pri preučevanju krščanstva v Vietnamu in dejavnosti Pariške družbe zunanjih misijonov, namenjene Vietnamu v 17. in v 18. stoletju.

Ključne besede: Vietnam, Tonkin, Cochinchina, duhovniki, semenišča, kateheti, semeniščniki

1. Introduction

From the second half of the 17th century, when arriving in Vietnam (including Tonkin and Cochinchina)¹ to preach the Gospel, the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris recognized the necessity of building up the indigenous missionary force. Because at that time, the workload to be done to 'incubate' for the 'seeds' of Christianity to develop in Vietnam was huge, entirely inversely proportional to the number of French missionaries dispatched due to this missionary organization. Meanwhile, political unrest in Vietnam created by wars between different political powers and the ban on Christianity imposed by the rulers of Tonkin and Cochinchina in the 17th and 18th centuries disrupted the presence of French missionaries in dioceses over which they were given authority. In such times, the indigenous missionary force would have a significant effect. They were the ones who would replace the French missionaries to take care of the spiritual and religious life of the Christians as well as perform other pastoral care works. In particular, the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris also clearly saw the advantages of the indigenous missionary force when they not only did not encounter language barriers but also had a profound understanding of the culture, customs, and habits of indigenous people. Therefore, it would be easier for them to preach the Gospel and call people to join Christianity. Stemming from the above awareness, right from the beginning, building indigenous missionary human resources were outlined and implemented by the bishops of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris from the second half of the 17th century to the late 18th century. In particular, the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris

¹ The 17th and 18th centuries were a turbulent period in Vietnamese history. From 1627 to 1672, Trinh's family in the North and Nguyen's family in the South fought each other 7 times but failed to come to an end. After 46 years of constant fighting, both sides exhausted their human resources and properties, so they had to accept a truce and a long division. Gianh River, historically known as Linh Giang, became the boundary dividing Dai Viet country into two regions: from Linh Giang to the South called Dang Trong (Cochinchina) under the administration of Lord Nguyen, and from Linh Giang to the North was called Dang Ngoai (Tonkin) under the administration of King Le Lord Trinh. This situation lasted until the end of the 18th century when the Tay Son peasant movement broke out (1771), which in turn destroyed the force of Lord Nguyen in Cochinchina (1777) and Lord Trinh in Tonkin (1786) (Hữu Quỳnh et al. 2006, 335–362; Thành Khôi 2014, 291–352).

obtained favourable results in training indigenous priests and building, organizing activities for seminaries in the territory of Vietnam during that period.

Approaching the research issue from the perspective of history, the author applies the historical method, with the desire to reproduce systematically and accurately the panorama of the training of indigenous priests as well as the seminary building activities in Tonkin and Cochinchina (Vietnam) of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in the 17th and 18th centuries with all its arising and development steps. The author applies selecting, collating, synthesizing, statistics, analyzing data and historical events and phenomena mentioned in Western and Vietnamese scholars' original material source and academic achievements to achieve this goal. In particular, the process of training indigenous priests and building seminary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris' missionaries in the 17th and 18th centuries at Tonkin and Cochinchina has always been placed in a close relationship, aiming to clarify the differences of this process in the two areas. Therefore, comparison becomes one of the research methods used throughout the article. On that basis, the author analyses the cause of the difference and examines and evaluates the results of training indigenous priests and building seminary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in the 17th and 18th centuries at Tonkin and Cochinchina. That is the manifestation of the application of the logical method in the process of studying this issue. Thus, it can be affirmed that the clarified contents in the article are the result of the combined application of the research methods mentioned above.

2. The Society of Foreign Missions of Paris and training Vietnamese priests

From the second half of the 17th century to the late 18th century, the presence of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Vietnam not only contributed to creating an exciting period of evangelization but also led to positive changes in the process of building indigenous missionary force in this country. As latecomers compared to the Jesuits,² moreover, at that time, there were not so many missionaries of this missionary organization operating in Vietnam, and the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris found that the most effective way for them to expand influence and promote evangelization quickly was nothing but to build a solid indigenous priest force.

However, this issue was not initiated right from the beginning by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris but posed by a Jesuit missionary:

² The Portuguese Jesuit missionaries were the first force to openly deploy their missionary work in Cochinchina (1615) and Tonkin (1627). However, their activities quickly encountered obstacles from the Vietnamese monarchies that ruled these two areas at the time. In Tonkin, the religious ban and deportation of foreign missionaries issued by Lord Trinh in 1663 completely ended the Jesuit missionary work in the area. Meanwhile, a similar ban issued by Lord Nguyen in Cochinchina in early 1665 also made all Jesuit missionaries be deported. However, right in 1665, the Society of Jesus sought to return to Cochinchina to evangelize (Bá Cầm 2008, 39–173; Khánh Tường 1956, 478; Launay 1923, 26–27).

Alexandre de Rhodes.³ After more than 20 years of missionary work in Vietnam, in 1649, realizing the necessity of establishing dioceses to manage the missionary work in Cochinchina and Tonkin (Vietnam), he returned to Europe to advocate for the establishment of Vicariate Apostolic in Vietnam. At the same time, ordaining the priesthood to indigenous people was also one of the contents that received Alexandre de Rhodes' attention (Vaupot 2019, 827). Because according to him, at that time, there were about 300,000 Christians in Vietnam. 300 to 400 missionaries were needed to take care of their spiritual life. However, the Holy See certainly could not accommodate that quantity.

Moreover, it needed many expenses to bring all these missionaries to Vietnam. Therefore, the best solution for the Holy See to solve this issue is to send a few Titular Bishops to Vietnam to ordain the priesthood to indigenous people. Meanwhile, according to Alexandre de Rhodes, out of 100 catechists in Tonkin (Vietnam) at that time, there were many eligible and qualified candidates to become priests (Chappoulie 1943, 390–392).

Based on the issues posed by Jesuit missionary Alexandre de Rhodes about the need to build up an indigenous missionary force, after the appointment of two missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris, namely François Pallu⁴ and Lambert de la Motte⁵ as Vicar apostolic of Tonkin and Vicar apostolic of Cochinchina (September 9, 1659), on November 10, 1659, the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith of the Holy See gave them a directive on what to do as soon as they arrived in these two regions. The Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith emphasized the importance of training indigenous missionary force. The directive clearly stated that one of the main reasons for the

³ Alexandre de Rhodes was born on 15 March 1593 in Avignon, in a Jewish family. On 14 April 1612, he joined the Jesuits in Rome and was ordained a priest in 1618. At the end of the year, he was accepted by the Jesuit Superior for the mission in Eastern Asia after having applied three times for a missionary trip between 1614 and 1618. He arrived in the Portuguese capital to board the ship to Eastern Asia, but because he was suspended for too long in Goa, until 29 May 1623, he reached Macao. Initially, he planned to go to Japan for the mission, but his wish was unsuccessful, so he was sent to Vietnam. He came to Cochinchina, Vietnam, for the first time in December 1624 and returned to Macau to go to Tonkin, Vietnam, in July 1626. On 19 March 1627, he arrived in Tonkin and was expelled from the area in May 1630. From 1630 to 1640, he taught theology at the Institute of Madre de Deus. Between 1640 and 1645, he returned to the mission in Cochinchina. In July 1645, he left Cochinchina for Macau and then went to Europe. In 1654, he went to Persia and died at Ispahan on November 5, 1660 (Quang Chinh 1972, 106).

⁴ François Pallu (1626–1684) was a French missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris, who greatly influenced Chinese and Vietnamese Christianity in the second half of the 17th century. In 1659, he was appointed by the Holy See as Vicar apostolic of Tonkin to manage Tonkin's missionary work (Vietnam), Laos, and five provinces in the southwest of China. In 1680, when the Vicar apostolic of Fujian 福建 was founded, he was appointed by the Holy See as Apostolic administrator to manage the missionary work of nine provinces and islands in South China. On October 29, 1684, he died in Fujian 福建, China (Lach and Van Kley 1993, 231; 262; Moidrey 1914, 71–72; Baudiment 2006, 532).

⁵ Lambert de la Motte was a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. He was born on January 16, 1624, in Lisieux, France. In 1655, he was ordained a priest. On July 29, 1658, he was appointed Titular Bishop of Berytus and Vicar Apostolic of Cochinchina. During administering the missionary activities in Cochinchina, he only visited this mission area twice (the first time from September 1671 to March 1672 and the second time from July 1675 to May 1676). For most of the remaining time, he worked in Ayutthaya and died there in 1679 (Gauchat 1935, 114).

Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith to send bishops François Pallu and Lambert de la Motte to Vietnam was that two bishops would apply different methods to recruit, train and endeavour to educate indigenous catechists, helping them to qualify for the competency and qualities to become priests. They would then use the powers of an ordained bishop by the Holy See to ordain such catechists as priests and assign to these indigenous priests vast missionary areas to govern under the direction of two bishops (391–402).

To realize this directive of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, after arriving in Siam (1662), Lambert de la Motte worked together with François Pallu to make a concrete plan of training indigenous priest resources for some Asian countries in general and Vietnam (including Tonkin and Cochinchina) in particular in the immediate and long term. On the one hand, they established the Seminary of Saint Joseph in Ayutthaya (1666) (Tarling 1992, 535; Lach and Van Kley 1993, 249). This was the place to receive a resource of elite catechists from Vietnam and the countries, to foster and ordain them. When the bishops were not present in the mission land due to the drastic ban on Christianity of the local government, on the other hand, during times when the bishops of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris were present in Vietnam, to directly administer and manage pastoral care in dioceses, the ordination of the priesthood in place to Vietnamese would be applied. In the 17th and 18th centuries, these two methods were combined and used by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. They brought a particular effect in training the indigenous priest force for two mission areas of Tonkin and Cochinchina (Vietnam).

Based on the materials recorded by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris operating in Cochinchina in the 17th and 18th centuries, it could be known that, between 1668 and 1796, 4 out of 6 bishops⁶ of this diocese, namely Lambert de la Motte, François Pérez⁷, Guillaume Piguel⁸, and Pigneau de

⁶ From 1659 to 1799, the Diocese of Cochinchina was administered by six bishops appointed by the Holy See, including Lambert de la Motte (1659–1679), Guillaume Mahot (1682–1684), François Pérez (1691–1728), Alexandre de Alexandris (1728–1738), Armand Lefèvre (1741–1760), Guillaume Piguel (1760–1771), and Pigneau de Béhaine (1771–1799) (Gauchat 1935, 114; Ritzler and Sefrin 1952, 119; 129; 278; Ritzler and Sefrin 1958, 65; 145; 304; 455).

⁷ François Pérez was not a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris but a secular clergy. Around his background, there are many different records at the moment. According to a written appointment of the Bishop to him of the Holy See in 1687, he was Portuguese. However, according to a report by missioner Charles-Marin Lablé sent to the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in February 1701, Pérez was a Portuguese of Indian descent. In a letter dated July 10, 1702, Pérez stated that his father was Spanish in Segovia, served King Philippe V, and went to Negapatan, India in 1630, while his mother was a Portuguese. Author Louvet in *La Cochinchine Religieuse* said that Pérez was born in Tenasserion, of the Kingdom of Siam. His father was of Manille descent, and his mother was Siam. In 1668, he was ordained a priest. On February 5, 1687, he was ordained Titular Bishop of Bugia by the Holy See and Vicar Apostolic of Cochinchina. He held these positions until his death on September 20, 1728 (Launay 1923, 379; 506; 593; Louvet 1885, 310–311).

⁸ Guillaume Piguel was a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. He was born on December 4, 1762, in La Mézière, France. He was ordained a priest on December 21, 1748. On July 29, 1762, he was appointed as Titular Bishop of Canatha and Vicar Apostolic of Cochinchina by the Holy See. He held these positions until his death on Jun 23, 1771 (Launay 1924, 394; Ritzler and Sefrin 1958, 145; 455).

Béhaine⁹ conducted 12 times of priesthood ordination or sending Vietnamese catechists and seminarians to Siam to receive the Holy Orders, with a total of 19 ordained people. It is worth mentioning that the number of Vietnamese catechists and seminarians ordained at each time was not impressive. The year 1690 was recorded when the Vietnamese received the priesthood the most, but this number did not exceed four people (Launay 1923, 353–358; 378–415; Hữu Trọng 1959, 221–222). The number in other times only ranged from 1 to 2 people. Not only that, but the training of Vietnamese priest resources by missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Cochinchina also did not secure the regularity and continuity when there was quite a long period (1691–1703, 1708–1763, 1780–1791) this work seemed to be completely stagnant.

Regarding the place of ordination, depending on the specific historical situation at each stage, the bishops of the Cochinchina diocese chose one of two methods: send indigenous catechists and seminarians abroad to be ordained as priests or conduct the ordination in place. From the second half of the 17th century to the late 18th century, out of 12 times of ordaining priesthood to the Vietnamese, to provide human resources for pastoral care in Cochinchina, there were five times that this activity was conducted in Siam and seven times right in this mission area. In particular, from 1668 to 1690, in the context that bishop Lambert de la Motte was mainly in Ayutthaya to administer the missionary work in Cochinchina, the ordination of the priesthood to Vietnamese catechists took place in Siam. From 1704, when Vicar Apostolic of Cochinchina such as François Pérez, Pigneau de Béhaine, etc., in this mission area, the activity of ordination of the priesthood to Vietnamese catechists and seminarians was conducted right in Cochinchina and maintained until the late 18th century.

Time	Place of the ordination of the priest	Quantity	Vietnamese priest name
1668	Siam	2	Giuse Trang, Luca Ben
1672	Siam	1	Manuel Bon
1676	Siam	1	Louis Doan
1690	Siam	4	Francois Van (Nho), Thaddee Nghiem, Mauro Loc (Tran The Lao), Manuel Lan (Laurent)
1704	Cochinchina	1	Matthieu (unknown Vietnamese name)
1706-1707	Cochinchina	1	Francois (unknown Vietnamese name)
1763	Siam	2	Marino Phien, Nicolas Due
1775	Cochinchina	1	Paul Ho Van Nghi

⁹ Pigneau de Béhaine was born on November 2, 1741, in Origny-en-Thiérache, France, was a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. Around 1765, he was ordained a priest. On 24 September 1771, he was appointed as Titular Bishop of Adraa and Vicar Apostolic of Cochinchina. He held this position until he died at Qui Nhon (Binh Dinh province) in 1799 (Launay 1925, 374; Louvet 1896, 7–9; Ritzler and Sefrin 1958, 65; 455).

Time	Place of the ordination of the priest	Quantity	Vietnamese priest name
1776	Cochinchina	1	Andre Ton
1779	Cochinchina	1	Jean Nhuc (Nhat)
1792	Cochinchina	2	Thomas Nam, Nhon (unknown Holy name)
1796	Cochinchina	2	Andre Giang (Ngai), Dominique Tan (Van)

Table 1: *Quantity of Vietnamese catechists and seminarians who were ordained priests and served in Cochinchina in the 17th and 18th centuries. Sources: (Launay 1923, 52; 62; 197; 237; 353–358; 378–415; 491; 565; Launay 1924, 398; Launay 1925, 57–58; 70; 74; 144–145; 266; 273; 414; Hữu Trọng 1959; 173; 221–222; Bá Cần 2008, 219).*

If the training of indigenous priest resources to serve the missionary activities of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Cochinchina in the 17th and 18th centuries did not achieve impressive results, in contrast, at the same time, this missionary organization's missionaries achieved great success in Tonkin.

Time	Place of the ordination of the priest	Quantity	Vietnamese priest name
1668	Siam	2	Jean Hue, Benot Hien
1670	Tonkin	7	Martin Mat, Anton Que, Philippe Nhan, Simon Kien, Jacques Chieu, Leon Tru, Vite Tri
1677	Siam	2	Philippe Tra, Dominique Hao
1679	Siam	2	Francois Thuy, Michel Hop
1683	Tonkin	4	Thaddee Ly Thanh, Felix Tan, Dominique Quang, Melchior Lieu
1689	Tonkin (2 people), Siam (3 people)	5	Domingo Trach, Benoit Su (in Tonkin), Louis Lieu, Paulin Khanh Hoe, Joseph Phuoc (in Siam)
1694	Tonkin	3	Jean Tuyen, Antoine Nang, Tite Bon
1703	Tonkin	3	Joseph Huan, Jean Hau, Paul Tri
1710	Tonkin	3	Antoine Chi, Benoit Uyen, Thomas Mi
1714	Tonkin	3	Paul Bang, Dominique Minh
1719	Siam	1	Vite Thu
1720	Tonkin	1	Thomas Dou
1721	Tonkin	1	Marc Toan
1722	Tonkin	1	Ignace Hoan
1724	Tonkin	1	Marco Hoanh
1725	Tonkin	2	Vite Bang, Gioan Qui
1730	Tonkin (2 people), Siam (1 person)	3	Phanxico Liem, Andrea Thong (in Tonkin), Bento Nghiem (in Siam)
1732	Tonkin (1 person), Siam (2 people)	3	Jaques Chieu (in Tonkin), Joseph Chat, Simeon Triem (in Siam)
1735	Tonkin	1	Pie Ly
1836	Tonkin	2	Barnabe Loi, Vicent Ngai

Time	Place of the ordination of the priest	Quantity	Vietnamese priest name
1737	Tonkin	1	Phaolo Thanh
1739	Siam	1	Pierre Lang (Phan)
1741	Tonkin	1	Paul Kieng
1743	Tonkin	1	Quintus Dong
1744	Tonkin	2	Anre Nhuong, Martino Luan
1745	Tonkin	2	Antoine Hien (Tram), Stephan That
1748	Tonkin	2	Gioan Hieu, Gioan Hien
1750	Tonkin	4	Gioan Tinh, Phero Kien, Phanxico Hau, Phanxico Huan
1751	Tonkin	1	Phaolo Giai
1752	Tonkin	1	Vito Tuyen
1753	Tonkin	3	Vite Tao, Anre Lieu, Dominico Phuc (Dat)
1754	Tonkin	1	Phero Triem (Dang)
1756	Tonkin	1	Phaolo Tai
1757	Tonkin	3	Denis Dien, Pio Vien, Giuse Chan
1761	Tonkin	7	Anton Kiem, Inhatio Trach, Phanxico Bau, Toma Luu, Toma Tu, Barnabe Chuong, Marco Nhuan
1763	Tonkin	1	Luy To
1765	Tonkin	1	Marco Quan
1766	Tonkin	13	Unknown ¹⁰

Table 2: *Quantity of Vietnamese catechists and seminarians who were ordained priests and served in Tonkin in the 17th and 18th centuries. Sources: (Néze 1925, 12–13; 19–21; 24–68; 70–78; 85–181; 183–206; 211–215; 220–230; 234–262; 266–270; Marillier 1995, 7–52; Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes des Missions de la Chine et des Indes Orientales 1821, 160–161).*

From the materials recorded by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris working at Tonkin in the 17th and 18th centuries, it could be known that, between 1668 and 1766, the bishops of Diocese of Tonkin (the Diocese of Western Tonkin from 1698 onwards) of the Society of Foreign Missions

¹⁰ The material source recorded in the book *Nouvelles Lettres édifiantes des Missions de la Chine et des Indes Orientales* said, in 1766, Bertrand Reydellet – Bishop of the Diocese of Western Tonkin ordained priesthood to 13 Vietnamese people, of which 5 people were catechists trained by Jesuits, 2 people were former seminarians of the Seminary of Saint Joseph in Siam, and 4 people were seminarians of Vinh Tri seminary (Nam Dinh). However, this work did not specifically mention the name of 13 Vietnamese seminarians and catechists who were ordained as priests at that time (*Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes des Missions de la Chine et des Indes Orientales* 1821, 160–161).

of Paris namely François Pallu, François Deydier¹¹, Jacques de Bourges¹², Edme Bélot¹³, François Gabriel Guisain¹⁴, Louis Nééz¹⁵, and Bertrand Reydellet¹⁶ conducted 38 times of ordination in place or sending Vietnamese catechists and seminarians to Siam to be ordained from bishops in Ayutthaya, 3 times more than the number of times of ordination of the priesthood to the Vietnamese conducted by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Cochinchina at the same time (12 times). The number of indigenous priests trained to serve the mission in Tonkin was also relatively large, with 95 people, five times higher than the number 19 priests trained at the same time in Cochinchina. The number of Vietnamese catechists or seminarians receiving the priesthood in each ordination time was also higher than that in Cochinchina, ranging from 2 to 7 people, but also up to 13 people (1766) (*Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes des Missions de la Chine et des Indes Orientales* 1821, 160–161). Especially the ordination of the priesthood to indigenous people of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Tonkin was maintained regularly but later carried out with higher frequency and less interruption for a long time Cochinchina at the same period. Regarding the place of ordination, also as in Cochinchina, the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions

¹¹ François Deydier was a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. He was born on September 28, 1634, in Toulon, France. In November 1660, he was ordained a priest. In August 1662, he and Bishop Lambert de la Motte went to Siam. There he began to study Vietnamese, and on June 22, 1666, he left Siam for Tonkin to work. On 25 November 1678, he was appointed as Titular Bishop of Ascalon by the Holy See and the Vicar Apostolic of Eastern Tonkin (Vicar Apostolic of Eastern Tonkin). He held the position until he died on 1 July 1693 (Bá Càn 2008, 373–374; Ritzler and Sefrin 1952, 100).

¹² Jacques de Bourges was a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. He was born in 1630 in Paris. In 1662, he accompanied Bishop Lambert de la Motte to go to Siam. However, in 1663, he returned to Europe. In 1669, he returned to Siam with his three missionaries (initially, there were 6 missionaries, however in the journey from Europe to Siam, three died on the way). In the same year, going with the Tonkin diocese's inspection team led by Bishop Lambert de la Motte, he began his mission in this area. On November 25, 1679, he was appointed as Titular Bishop of Auzia and Vicar Apostolic of Western Tonkin. He assumed the task of managing missionary work in the Western Tonkin diocese until 1712, when he was deported. He returned to Siam and died there on August 9, 1714 (Launay 1927, 80-83; Ritzler and Sefrin 1952, 106).

¹³ Edme Bélot was born on May 10, 1651, in Avallon, France, a missionary to the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. He was ordained a priest on January 1, 1678. On October 20, 1696, he was appointed as Titular Bishop of Basilinopolis and Coadjutor Vicar Apostolic of Western Tonkin. On 9 August 1714, he became Vicar Apostolic of Western Tonkin and held this position until he died in 1717 (Ritzler and Sefrin 1952, 115; Launay 1927, 144).

¹⁴ François Gabriel Guisain was a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. He was born in 1666 in Paris. In 1692, he came to Tonkin when he was still a seminarian. In 1693, he received the Holy orders. On 3 December 1710, he was ordained as Titular Bishop of Laranda and Vicar Apostolic of Western Tonkin. He died on November 17, 1723, in Trang Den (Nghe An province) (Launay 1927, 230–232; Ritzler and Sefrin 1952, 236).

¹⁵ Louis Nééz was born February 11, 1680, in Verneuil, France, a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. On October 8, 1738, he was appointed as Titular Bishop of Comana Armeniae and Apostolic Vicar of Western Tonkin. He held this position until he died in Ha Nam province (Tonkin) in 1764 (Ritzler and Sefrin 1958, 159; 455).

¹⁶ Bertrand Reydellet was a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris, born around 1722 in Le Grand-Abergement, France. In 1748, he was ordained as a priest. In 1762, he was appointed as Titular Bishop of Gabala and Coadjutor Vicar Apostolic of Western Tonkin. In 1764, he was appointed as Vicar Apostolic of Western Tonkin. He held this position until he died in 1780 (*Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes des Missions de la Chine et des Indes Orientales* 1821, 139–140; 144–145; 319–320; Ritzler and Sefrin 1958, 221; 455).

of Paris in Tonkin also depended on the specific conditions at each stage, such as whether the bishop of the Diocese was present in the mission area or not or whether the Tonkin government ban on the Christianity was drastic or not to decide whether ordination would take place in place or send their catechists and seminarians to Siam to receive the priesthood. However, looking at the overall picture in the training of Vietnamese priests of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Tonkin, it could be seen that the ordination of the priesthood to indigenous people right in Tonkin accounted for the dominant number compared to the few ordination times that took place in Siam. Out of a total of 38 times ordination of the priesthood to the Vietnamese in the 1668–1776 period, there were only eight times that this activity took place in Siam (accounting for 21%), with 14 ordained catechists and seminarians. Compared with a total of 95 trained priests during the whole period to serve the mission in Tonkin, the number only accounted for 14.7%. This showed that, in the Tonkin area, the ordination in place of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris played a crucial role in building an indigenous missionary force in the 17th and 18th centuries.

So why in the same period, under the same administration and management of a missionary organization, but there were different results in training the indigenous missionary force of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Cochinchina and Tonkin? Seeking the answer from the internal training of indigenous priest resources of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in these two regions, it could be seen that, for Cochinchina, the frequent absence of bishops in this mission area¹⁷, especially in the second half of the 17th century in combination with conflicts arising between the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris and several bishops. They were not part of this missionary organization but appointed by the Holy See between 1691 and 1738¹⁸, which significantly affected indigenous priest resources' training. Meanwhile, from the second half of the 17th century to the late 18th century, the activities of mission and training of the indigenous missionary force in Tonkin were always under the careful and unified management of the bishops who were missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris¹⁹, which created favourable conditions for the missionaries of this missionary organization to carry out the training of the indi-

¹⁷ From 1665 to 1679, missionary work in Cochinchina was basically placed under the administration of several missionaries who were Vicar generals of Bishop Lambert de la Motte, such as Chevreuil, Hainques, etc. Lambert de la Motte only visited this area twice (the first time from September 1671 to March 1672 and the second time from July 1675 to May 1676). He was in Siam for most of his time to remotely administer the missionary work in Cochinchina. Thereafter, the absence of bishops in this mission area continued to occur in the periods of 1684–1691, 1760–1771 (Bá Cãn 2008, 211–230; 279–285).

¹⁸ In the period 1691–1728 and 1728–1738, when the Holy See appointed François Pérez who was inherently a secular clergy, and missionary Alexandre de Alexandris of the Barnabite Order, respectively, as the Bishop of Diocese of Cochinchina, between the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris working in Cochinchina at that time and two bishops had a fierce conflict (Launay 1923, 405–408; 477; 487; 493–494; 497; Louvet 1885, 341; Launay 1924, 4–6; 14–18).

¹⁹ From the second half of the 17th century to the late 18th century, the Diocese of Tonkin (after 1698, known as the Diocese of Western Tonkin) was under the management of seven Bishops of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris, including François Pallu (1659–1678), François Deydier (1679–1693), Jacques de Bourges (1679–1713), Edme Bélot (1713–1717), François Gabriel Guisain (1718–1723), Louis Néez

genous priest resources in a planned way and with a long-term vision. Another equally important cause that determined the remarkable development of training missionary human resources in Tonkin compared to Cochinchina was that the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Tonkin paid particular attention to and achieved tremendous success in constructing seminaries counterparts in Cochinchina. So, in fact, how did the construction and operation of seminaries of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Tonkin and Cochinchina from the second half of the 17th century to the late 18th century happen?

3. The Society of Foreign Missions of Paris and constructing seminaries in Vietnam

When setting foot in Vietnam for the missionary, the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris realized that the training of seminarians in place to ordain priesthood would be a suitable solution in this country and bring a higher efficiency than sending Vietnamese people to Siam to be ordained that was inherently inconvenient, passive and potentially dangerous. Therefore, from the very beginning, establishing seminaries in Vietnam (both Tonkin and Cochinchina) was raised by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris.

In Tonkin, right from the 70s of the 17th century, the construction of the seminaries was initiated by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. Specifically, in 1666, after being appointed as Vicar general by Bishop Lambert de la Motte, missionary François Deydier went to Tonkin. At Ke Cho - the capital of this kingdom, to develop the training of missionary force, he established a minor seminary and attracted 15 indigenous people to participate in the study. He taught them French and Latin and focused on fostering outstanding qualified people to prepare for the ordination of the priesthood (Launay 1927, 71–72). However, when Bishop Lambert de la Motte was not present in Tonkin²⁰, the ordination of the priesthood could not be conducted right in this mission area. Therefore, missionary François Deydier must send seminarians trained by him to Siam to receive the Holy Orders²¹.

In 1679, based on considering a proposal made in 1659 by missionary François Pallu - Bishop of the Diocese of Tonkin, the Holy See agreed to divide the Tonkin

(1723–1764) and Bertrand Reydellet (1764–1780) (Gauchat 1935, 201; Ritzler and Sefrin 1952, 100; 106; 115; 236; Ritzler and Sefrin 1958, 159; 221; 455).

²⁰ The Diocese of Tonkin was inherently entrusted by the Holy See to Bishop François Pallu to govern from 1659. However, from then to the time he died (1684), Bishop François Pallu never set foot in this missionary area for many different reasons. Despite this, he showed his concern for the Tonkin missionary area by writing numerous letters to advise and encourage the Christian community. Also, he assigned the administration of missionary work in this area to the Bishop of the Diocese of Cochinchina, namely Lambert de la Motte. Therefore, the fact that the training of priests and seminary construction at Tonkin in the second half of the 17th century attached to Lambert de la Motte's role was also completely understandable (Launay 1927, 1–6; 9–10; 11–118; 171–175; 191–193).

²¹ On February 24, 1668, missionary Deydier sent two Vietnamese catechists named Jean Hue and Benot Hien to Siam to receive the priesthood from Bishop Lambert de la Motte (Nééz 1925, 19–21; 24–27; Marillier 1995, 7–10).

area into two dioceses and take the Red River as the boundary line. Accordingly, the East of the Red River became the Diocese of Eastern Tonkin under Bishop François Deydier. The West of the Red River became the Diocese of Western Tonkin under Bishop Jacques de Bourges' management. Despite such a division, in essence, the whole missionary work in both dioceses before 1698 was in the hands of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. Both bishops François Deydier and Jacques de Bourges, cooperated very closely and had the same Vicar general who was missionary Edme Bélot²². Therefore, the seminary construction from 1679 to 1698 in both dioceses continues to be carried out and associated with the role and merit of the missionaries of this missionary organization. In fact, during this period, there were three more seminaries in the Tonkin area, namely Trang Den seminary (Nghe An province)²³, Kien Lao seminary (Nam Dinh province), and Ke Coc seminary (Bac Ninh province)²⁴. However, the notes of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Tonkin at that time only showed such that, while they did not mention the specific activities of these seminaries. Perhaps during this period, the fierce ban on Christianity by Lord Trinh's government in Tonkin caused these newly established seminaries not to achieve as many results as expected by the missionaries and suspend after a short period the seminarian training was implemented. However, this was an essential premise, laying the foundation for creating other seminaries in the Tonkin region later.

From 1698 onwards, the Diocese of Eastern Tonkin was entrusted to the Dominican missionaries. The missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris were only active in the Diocese of Western Tonkin²⁵. Therefore, the seminaries in Tonkin of the missionaries under this missionary organization until the late 18th century took place only in the Diocese of Western Tonkin. This time also marked a new change in training the indigenous missionary force when Bishop Jacques de Bourges established a seminary in Ke So village (Thanh Tri district, Hanoi at

²² Edme Bélot was born on May 10, 1651, in Avallon, France, a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. He was ordained as a priest on January 1, 1678. On October 20, 1696, he was appointed Titular Bishop of Basilinopolis and Coadjutor Vicar Apostolic of Western Tonkin. On August 9, 1714, he became Vicar Apostolic of Western Tonkin and held this position until he died in 1717 (Ritzler and Sefrin 1952, 115; Launay 1927, 144).

²³ The birth of Trang Den seminary (Nghe An province) is closely attached to the role of missionary Sarrante of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. He was born around 1653 in Tartas. In 1683, he went to the Diocese of Eastern Tonkin to evangelize and work in Nghe An area. To ensure the safety of Sarrante, the indigenous priest in charge of this area named Philippe Tra made a house for Sarrante in Trang Den village - where all people were Christian and quite far from the authority of the town. Here, Sarrante founded a seminary, trained a few seminarians, and prepared some elite catechists for receiving the Holy orders (Launay 1927, 289–292).

²⁴ Regarding the time of the birth of Kien Lao seminary (Nam Dinh) and Ke Coc seminary (Bac Ninh), so far, the French missionary's documents did not mention them clearly. However, based on the event of 1682, missionary Delavigne arrived in Tonkin with missionary Sarrante and was assigned to take charge of these two seminaries before leaving Tonkin in 1685. It showed that Kien Lao seminary (Nam Dinh province) and Ke Coc seminary (Bac Ninh province) were born before 1682 (Launay 1927, 343; 387).

²⁵ The Diocese of Western Tonkin in the late 17th century and early 18th century included the diocese of Hanoi, diocese of Hung Hoa, diocese of Phat Diem, diocese of Thanh Hoa, and diocese of Vinh at present (Bá Càn 2008, 403).

present) and assigned a Vietnamese seminarian who completed the study of theology in Siam to manage. However, the fundamental seminary was located in Pho Hien (Hung Yen province) - where the French missionaries resided. Here, about 20 catechists and seminarians were directly trained by the French missionaries to prepare for the ordination of the priesthood in place or sending to Siam to study theology. Their lives were quite austere and destitute. They studied one session and did manual work in the other session. Catechists oversaw planting and caring for vegetables and fruits in a large garden, making fences, rowing, and other jobs.

Meanwhile, seminarians had to cook and wash clothes alternately. Each day, each person was given a tiny amount of money, from 10 to 15 cents, to buy fish. They had to cook fish with much salt and eat it with rice. In terms of clothes, each year, they were only given two fabric clothing sets and belts. So, there was no surprise to see them wearing patchwork clothes. Despite such difficult living conditions, according to the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris, at that time, the number of indigenous catechists in the Diocese of Western Tonkin who wanted to serve a long term for the mission career was quite crowded with about 200 people (Launay 1927, 456; 459). This was a plentiful human resource for training indigenous priests.

From 1712 onwards, when the Lord Trinh government in Tonkin stepped up the ban on Christianity, the indigenous seminarian training institution built by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Pho Hien had to cease work (Launay 1927, 567). Three French missionaries Jacques de Bourges, Edme Bélot, and Francois Gabriel Guisain, were all expelled. While Bishop Jacques de Bourges returned to Siam, two missionaries Edme Bélot and Francois Gabriel Guisain, tried to remain illegally in Western Tonkin. The pursuit of training great indigenous missionary human resources to serve the evangelization in the Western Tonkin made these two missionaries always nurture the plan of building a new seminarian training institution with more extensive scale and more closely organized than before. That led to the birth of Vinh Tri seminary (Nam Dinh province). From 1713 to 1723, Bishop Francois Gabriel Guisain made great efforts to maintain the training of indigenous seminarians at this seminary. In 1719, he appointed Louis Nééz - A capable missionary, and later became bishop of the Diocese of Western Tonkin (1723–1764), acting as Director of Vinh Tri seminary (Bá Cầm 2008, 413). However, the Tonkin government's ban on Christianity lasted from 1723 through 1764, i.e., the time of administration of the Diocese of Western Tonkin of missionary Louis Nééz, which caused Vinh Tri seminary not to operate stably and perform the work of training seminarians in a large scale. It was not until 1765 when missionary Bertrand Reydellet was appointed as bishop and selected Vinh Tri as the headquarters of this diocese. The activities of Vinh Tri seminary were closely organized and vigorously promoted. As noted by the French missionaries operating in the Diocese of Western Tonkin, under the administration of Bishop Bertrand Reydellet (1765–1780), there were often from 40 to 50 and sometimes a more significant number of catechists and seminarians involving in the study in Vinh Tri seminary (*Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes des Missions de la Chine et des In-*

des Orientales 1821, 145). For the catechists - who have gone through missionary work in Western Tonkin and were over 40 years old, they were present at the seminary to study theology every day under the direct preaching of Bishop Bertrand Reydellet. For the seminarians, learning Latin was a critical task that they must undertake. Accordingly, those who had good language capacity, could more or less listen to and speak Latin would be arranged to study in class directly taught by Bricart - a French missionary working at the seminary. As for the rest of the seminarians would be introduced to the most basic and essential things in Latin in another classroom, under two indigenous assistants' guidance. In addition to Latin, seminarians at Vinh Tri seminary also had to practice reading and writing Chinese characters. In addition, seminarians also learned liturgy rituals and learned to sing to serve for important Christian occasions. Although researchers were unable to find any specific statistic on the number of seminarians who graduated from Vinh Tri seminary under the administration of Bishop Bertrand Reydellet (1765–1780), from the materials recorded by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris operating in Western Tonkin at that time, it could be known that Vinh Tri seminary in the late 18th century was the place to train a large number of catechists, to provide for 21 Tonkin priests in charge of parishes throughout the Diocese of Western Tonkin. Because at that time, each priest needed 4 or 5 catechists to assist them in their pastoral care of the parishes (146).

Thus, from the second half of the 17th century to the late 18th century, on the Tonkin missionary area in general (before 1698) and in the Diocese of Western Tonkin in particular (after 1698), there were at least six seminaries established by the bishops of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris for less than 150 years, which showed the extraordinary efforts in building the indigenous missionary force in Tonkin by the missionaries of this missionary organization. However, while the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Tonkin demonstrated rather vivid 'painting' with bright colours on the construction of indigenous catechists and seminarians training institutions, on the contrary, at the same time, the establishment of seminaries in Cochinchina did not receive much attention from the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris working here. Therefore, this work did not get as many results as in Tonkin, affecting the training of priests in Cochinchina, which was also completely understandable.

In fact, in the second half of the 17th century, the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Cochinchina were even earlier than in Tonkin (1666). As early as 1664, missionaries Louis Chevreuil²⁶ as Vicar general of Bishop Lambert de la Motte, set foot in this mission area. From then until 1739, when missiona-

²⁶ Louis Chevreuil was born in 1627 in Rennes, France, was a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. In 1661, after joining the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris, he went to Siam to evangelize. From July 1664 to March 1665, acting as Vicar general of Bishop Lambert de la Motte, he came and operated in Cochinchina. However, it was not long before Lord Nguyen's government in Cochinchina banned Christianity; he was deported and had to return to Siam in April 1665. From 1666, he did missionary work in Cambodia. In 1670, he was arrested by Portugal in Macau. After being released (1673), he returned to Siam to work and died there on November 10, 1693 (Saraiva 2013, 40–41; Lach and Van Kley 1993, 239–240; 245–246; 1155–1156; 1275; Salles 2006, 17; Montézón et al. 1858, 250).

ries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris and missionaries of other religious orders²⁷ undertook to administer the Diocese of Cochinchina, they were well aware of the need to build an indigenous missionary force. However, stemming from many different causes²⁸, the establishment of seminaries in Cochinchina was completely stagnant during this period. The training of the indigenous catechists and seminarians to prepare the premise for the priesthood ordination mainly took place at the Seminary of Saint Joseph in Siam. It was not until 1739 when inspecting the missionary situation in Cochinchina and arriving in Sinoa (present-day Hue city), noticing a severe shortage of indigenous missionary human resources in this area that Bishop Elzear des Achards de La Baume²⁹ provided funding to build a house next to Tho Duc church for a seminary (Launay 1924, 87). At the same time, he worked together with missionary Jean Antoine de Lacourt³⁰ to train the indigenous missionary force in this area by recruiting five seminarians to join the class at Tho Duc seminary. However, this work did not get the approval of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris working in Cochinchina at that time. That made Bishop Elzear des Achards de La Baume and missionary Jean Antoine de Lacourt choose one of two options, either continuing to maintain the seminary operation or abandoning the intention to build the indigenous priest force. In fact, after the death of the Elzear des Achards de La Baume (1741), Tho Duc Seminary also remained active for the first few years under the time of Armand Lefèbvre (Launay 1924, 102–103) - A missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris, appointed by the Holy See as Vicar Apostolic of Cochinchina between 1741 and 1760³¹. Despite that, the establishment of Tho Duc Seminary in Cochinchina

²⁷ In the 1691–1738 period, the Holy See appointed François Pérez, who was inherently a secular clergy and missionary Alexandre de Alexandris of the Barnabite Order as the Bishop of Diocese Cochinchina (Launay 1923, 378–379; 595).

²⁸ The seminary construction of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Cochinchina in the 1664–1738 period did not achieve remarkable results, stemming from the following reasons. The first was the frequent absence of bishops assigned to manage this missionary area, due to the impact of the war between the political powers in Vietnam and the indigenous government's policy of banning on Christianity. The second was the conflict between the bishops appointed by the Holy See but not part of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris and the missionaries of this missionary organization operating in Cochinchina at that time. The third was that the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris working in Cochinchina at that time did not pay much attention to the issue of building seminary and training indigenous priests (Bá Càn 2008, 211–230; 279–285; Launay 1923, 405–408; 477; 487; 493–494; 497; Louvet 1885, 341; Launay 1924, 4–6; 14–18).

²⁹ Elzear des Achards de La Baume was a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris, born in 1691 in Avignon, France. On July 31, 1726, he was appointed as Titular Bishop of Halicarnassus. In 1737, he was appointed as the Apostolic Visitor in Cochinchina by the Holy See, coming to this area to grasp the situation and resolve the contradictions and disputes between the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris and the Spanish Franciscan Order. He died in 1741 in Cochinchina (Ritzler and Sefrin 1952, 216; Favre 1746, 162–163).

³⁰ Jean Antoine de Lacourt (1706–1746) was a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. On May 11, 1731, he was ordained as a priest in Siam. Thereafter he arrived in Cochinchina to work. On June 13, 1741, he was appointed as Pro-Apostolic Vicar of Cochinchina. During his time in this missionary area, Jean Antoine de Lacourt made an important contribution to the establishment and operation of Tho Duc seminary (Hue city) - the first missionary human resource training institution built by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Cochinchina (Launay 1924, 110).

³¹ Arnaud-François Lefèbvre was born on December 21, 1709, in Pas de Calais, France, a missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris. On 6 October 1741, he was appointed as Titular Bishop of Nea Aule

china during this period was an important event, marking the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris's first efforts in building an indigenous priest training school in this missionary area.

Interrupted for a long time, it was not until the early 80s of the 18th century that the issue of constructing and organizing the operation of the seminaries managed by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in the southern land of Cochinchina at that time (i.e., the Southern region of Vietnam today) was restarted, associated with the role of Bishop Pigneau de Béhaine. In fact, from the end of 1765, due to the unsafe situation in Siam, the Seminary of Saint Joseph based in Chantabun (Siam) moved to Hon Dat (Ha Tien town - Cochinchina). At that time, missionary Andrieux was the seminary Director, and missionary Artaud was a moderator (Launay 1924, 426). However, at the end of 1766, missionary Andrieux died. Missionary Boiret was appointed to replace until missionary Pigneau de Béhaine arrived in Ha Tien (Cochinchina) and was appointed Director of Hon Dat seminary in 1767 (Louvét 1896, 33; Launay 1924, 428-430). In a letter to his parents dated July 3, 1767, missionary Pigneau de Béhaine stated that the seminary he was assigned to administer was located in a deserted place with about 40 Siamese, Chinese, Tonkin, Cochinchina seminarians, etc., studying here. His and his counterparts' mission was to nurture and teach them what was necessary to become a priest (Launay 1925, 428-429). However, the seminary's limited financial condition caused Pigneau de Béhaine and other missionaries and seminarians to stay in makeshift bamboo cottages built and experienced in a challenging and austere. The missionaries showed their powerlessness to see many seminarians suffering from illness without having the necessary conditions, to help them. In late 1769, Hon Dat seminary was attacked by Cambodian robbers. In that situation, the seminary was relocated from Ha Tien (Cochinchina) to Malacca and then to Virampatnam village of Pondicherry (India). Under the administration of missionary Pigneau de Béhaine, the training of seminarians here was re-organized. The Society of Foreign Missions of Paris materials said that in 1771, the seminary had 39 seminarians, including 12 Chinese, 16 Cochinchinas, 5 Tonkins, 4 Siam, 1 Macaoian, and 1 Malaysian. Seminarians were arranged into four classes, theology was studied in the first class, and Latin, literature, and religion were studied in the remaining three classes (Launay 1920, 285).

After more than four years of undertaking the role of seminary manager in Pondicherry - the missionary human resource training establishment for both East Asia and South Asia at that time, in July 1774, missionary Pigneau de Béhaine handed over his position of the Director of the seminary to missionary Mathon and travelled to Cochinchina to act as bishop of this diocese. At that time, Pigneau de Béhaine realized the complete reliance on the seminary in Virampatnam (Pondicherry) to train indigenous missionary human resources for the Diocese of Cochinchina would cause many inconveniences and losses. Because Pondicherry

and Vicar Apostolic of Cochinchina. He held this position until he died in 1760 (Ritzler and Sefrin 1958, 304; 455; Launay 1923, 107-108).

was quite far from Vietnam, travel was difficult and expensive. Furthermore, it would be hazardous if seminarians from Cochinchina were sent to the seminary in Virampatnam (Pondicherry) to study, after returning, were detected and caught by the authority of this region. To overcome these disadvantages, Bishop Pigneau de Béhaine outlined a long-term plan for training indigenous missionary human resources, expressed through the idea of building a separate seminary for this mission area. At the same time, he issued a convention called „Specific Regulations for the Cochinchina and Cambodia missionary areas“, which clearly defined the goals and directions of training the indigenous missionary force (Launay 1925, 28; 51). However, in the context when the war between the forces of Nguyen Phuc Anh - A descendant of Lord Nguyen and the Tay Son dynasty took place fiercely in the late 18th century in Cochinchina, especially in South Vietnam today, it is impossible to build and organize a permanent seminary somewhere in this area. Therefore, Bishop Pigneau de Béhaine thought of the model, itinerant seminary, built to relocate the seminary location quickly depending on the war's actual situation. In particular, during this period, the close relationship between Bishop Pigneau de Béhaine and Nguyen Phuc Anh was gradually established³². That led to the fact that the seminary founded by Pigneau de Béhaine in this area in 1775³³, 'floated' through many different places in the land of South Vietnam today, from Cay Quao (1775–1777), Tan Trieu (1778–1782) to Lai Thieu (1789) (Phát Huồn 1965, 228), associated with the footsteps of Pigneau de Béhaine and Nguyen Phuc Anh's army in the confrontation with the force of Tay Son dynasty in the late 18th century.

Thus, if the fact that the Seminary of Saint Joseph was relocated from Siam to Ha Tien (Cochinchina) and operated here for 5 years (1765–1769) was excluded, from the second half of the 17th century to in the late 18th century, in the entire territory of Cochinchina stretching from Quang Binh to the South of Vietnam today, there were two seminaries established by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris to serve the training of indigenous missionary human resources. That number only accounted for one-third of the number of seminaries established by missionaries who also belong to this missionary organization in

³² After two meetings with Nguyen Phuc Anh in 1784, Bishop Pigneau de Béhaine took over the task of bringing Prince Canh - Nguyen Phuc Anh's son, to France for seeking reinforcement. On November 28, 1787, the Treaty of Versailles was signed between Count Montmorin, representative of French King Louis XVI, and Bishop Pigneau de Béhaine on behalf of Nguyen Phuc Anh. Accordingly, the French government pledged to help Nguyen Phuc Anh in terms of the military to regain his monarchy. However, this treaty was not implemented then by the French. In such a context, based on personal prestige, Pigneau de Béhaine mobilized warships, soldiers, weapons, and finance in Pondicherry and the Ile de France to help Nguyen Phuc Anh. And from 1789 until his death (1799), Pigneau de Béhaine served as a military and diplomatic adviser, making an important contribution to the restoration of Nguyen Phuc Anh's monarchy (Launay 1925, 90–92; 106; 157–157; 163–165; 168–170; 194; 198; Maybon 1919, 231; 238; 268; 271–272; Vaupot 2019, 828).

³³ In 1765, Guillaume Piguel - Bishop of Diocese of Cochinchina, intended to establish a separate seminary in Cambodia. However, it was not until five years later (1770) that Bishop Guillaume Piguel and missionary Levasseur built a small seminary on an island on the Mekong River in the territory of Kong Pong Soai province. In 1775, bishop Pigneau de Béhaine relocated the seminary to a place called Cay Quao in the South of Ha Tien (Cochinchina), arranged missionaries to administer the seminary, and conducted the training of the seminarians (Launay 1924, 431; Launay 1925, 12; 58; 130).

Tonkin during the same period. If in Tonkin, the perseverance of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in this area caused seminaries to be continuously organized and maintained in operation for nearly 150 years, in contrast in Cochinchina, the establishment and organization of the activities of training institutions for indigenous catechists and seminarians was frequently interrupted. In 1664–1738 or 1750–1764, the seminaries were completely absent on this land. That was why the training of indigenous priests in Cochinchina in the 17th and 18th centuries did not achieve as many results as in Tonkin, although missionaries of the same missionary organization did this, was the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris.

4. Conclusion

In the 17th and 18th centuries, together with the continual appointment of the Holy See as bishop of the mission areas in Tonkin and Cochinchina (Vietnam), the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris with authority in hand strongly promoted the work of building the indigenous missionary force. This was reflected in Vietnamese priests' training and the establishment and operation of seminaries in both regions during this period. In fact, building the indigenous missionary force of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris achieved positive results. From the second half of the 17th century to the late 18th century, that was less than 150 years, in two regions of Tonkin and Cochinchina, at least eight indigenous missionary human resources training institutions (seminaries) were established and put into operation by the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Vietnam at that time. Accompanying that, 114 Vietnamese catechists and seminarians were ordained to the priesthood to serve mission work in both regions. Overall, this was the case, but when compared with specific numbers, researchers could see the dominance in the results of training priests (Tonkin: 95, Cochinchina: 19) and building seminaries (Tonkin: 6, Cochinchina: 2) of missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in Tonkin compared with their counterpart at Cochinchina. What was the reason to explain this phenomenon? During this period, in Tonkin, the bishops, as the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris, were regularly present in the area they were assigned to administer. They also persisted and sought to surreptitiously operate under dangerous conditions, created by the indigenous authority's ban on religion and expelling foreign missionaries at that time.

Meanwhile, in Cochinchina, a completely different situation compared to Tonkin took place, when, in many periods, the work in this mission area was not administered by anyone or handed over to the representative of the bishop, while the bishop in Siam operated remotely and occasionally visited the mission area for a short time. Therefore, catechists and seminarians' training and especially the ordination of the priesthood could not be carried out in the absence of a bishop. If in Tonkin, from the second half of the 17th century to the late 18th centu-

ry, the work of training Vietnamese priests and building the seminary was placed under the unified management and administration of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris, on the contrary, in Cochinchina, the conflict between the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris and the bishops appointed by the Holy See to oversee the pastoral care here but not belonging to this missionary organization, had adverse effects on the training of indigenous missionary force. In addition, the difference in enthusiasm and interest in building indigenous missionary forces of the missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris working in Tonkin and Cochinchina in the 17th and 18th centuries was also one of the other reasons for the significant difference in the results of training priests and building seminaries in Tonkin and Cochinchina at that time.

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