

**BÀ ĐEN AND ACCULTURATION OF RELIGIONS IN THE
BLACK LADY MOUNTAIN'S AREA OF TÂY NINH
PROVINCE**

Abstract: Bà Đen mountain area of Tây Ninh province is the homeland of many ethnic groups. In history, there was acculturation among religions and beliefs, it has created a unique cultural diversity. Black Lady mountain has been considered as one of the great holy places and Bà Đen- the goddess of this sacred mountain has become a symbol of acculturation, cultural fusion in general and religious exchange in particular.

Keywords: Religion; belief; Bà Đen; mother goddess; Bà Chúa Xứ; Tây Ninh.

1. Bà Đen mountain area- many ethnic groups, many religions and beliefs

Ba Den mountain area is now in Tay Ninh province of Vietnam. During the ancient and medieval periods, most of Tay Ninh's land was wild land. The record in Dai Nam Nhat Thong Chi wrote that "The hills, the forest are immense, the trees are tall up to the sky and dense for several hundred miles"¹. That is why this land was named Romdum Ray (Elephant Cage). Since the 17th century, this place has become an area where many ethnic groups came to reclaim and settle down. Accordingly, the Vietnamese came to live with a part of the indigenous people, to reclaim the land of Tay Ninh (mainly the lands in the south, corresponding to Trang Bang and Go Dau districts now). Huynh Minh affirmed that "From Phien Tran (Phiên Trấn

*Ho Chi Minh City University of Culture.

dinh), a large number of the Vietnamese gathered there and then they gradually went northward through Hoc Mon and Cu Chi areas today to Trang Bang, Go Dau Ha to the hills of Ba Den Mountain”². Tay Ninh land at this time included Quang Hoa and Quang Phong which were integrated into Phuc Long district under the Dinh Phien Tran of Cochinchina.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, King Nac Nguyen of Chan Lap country attacked the Cham people in Binh Thuan and the Southeast region (Đông Nam Bộ) several times. In this context, Nguyen Cu Trinh offered a plan to the Nguyen lord’s government to conquer this group of Cham, “let them settle down in that land to defense, use the Man people against the Man, it is also an ingenious contrivance”³.

The leader of Cochinchina deployed this strategy. Accordingly, in November 1753, Lord Nguyen Phuc Khoat assigned Nguyen Cu Trinh to lead the soldiers and the generals of 5 regions (Dinh) including Binh Khang, Binh Thuan, Tran Bien, Phien Tran, and Long Ho and a group of Cham to conquer Chan Lap, then brought some Cham people in Chenla (Chan Lap) to live at the bottom of Ba Den mountain. The next conquest took place in 1754. The book *Gia Định thành thông chí* recorded this event as follows: “Gia Dinh’s army was divided into two groups, Nghi Bieu led troops from the Bat Dong River to capture, where the troops came, the enemy was defeated”⁴. A year later (in 1755), Lord Nguyen Phuc Khoat appointed Nguyen Cu Trinh as a consultant who along with Thien Chinh to command the Cochinchine army, as well as, to use a group of Cham people to guide, to conquer Chenla, then they protected about 5.000 Cham people who was exiling to the Ba Den mountain area to settle down. The National Institute of History (*Quốc sử quán*) of the Nguyen Dynasty recorded this event: “The Chenla army had to retreat. Then, Nguyen Cu Trinh guarded more than 5.000 Con Man men and women to stay at the bottom of Ba Dinh mountain”⁵. Thus, during 3 years, large marches of the Cochinchina army took

place on the land of Tay Ninh today, repelled the Chenla army to Cambodia, as well as, stabilized people life in the frontier. In addition to the group of Khmer people who stayed, there were a large number of Vietnamese, Chinese and Cham people who came to live on Ba Den mountain.

In the early stage of being reclaimed, Tay Ninh was an important border line, it was always in a situation of disputes and instability. That situation lasted until the first decades of the nineteenth century. In 1834, about 700 Siamese troops crossed the Xi Khe canal (Tay Ninh canal), plotted to attack Gia Dinh, and aided Le Van Khoi. Nguyen Dynasty troops defeated Le Van Khoi's army, forced Siamese forces to withdraw to Chenla territory. In 1836, the Nguyen Dynasty "placed Tay Ninh belong to Gia Dinh, took over two districts of Tan Ninh and Quang Hoa"⁶.

The book *Đại Nam nhất thống chí* wrote about the decision of King Minh Menh is as follows: "It was originally đạo Quang Phong, in the 17th year of Minh Menh, it was renamed as the present in particular, the ruler of Tan Ninh district governed Quang Hoa district"⁷. In 1837, there were many groups of people who lived in Tay Ninh including Ba Den mountain area: "Localities around Quang Hoa citadel, Gia Dinh province bordered by Tuy Lap, Tam Don and Kha Lam districts and Ba Nam belonged to Tran Tay citadel, the terrain was very important. Last year, đạo Quang Hoa was appointed and the heads of departments Thuan Thanh, Quang Phong, Quang Phuc, Quang Uy, and Kien Uy were in charge; Phien and Cham camps have thousands of people"⁸.

Due to differences in customs and practices, some Khmer people automatically retreated to the west and the another groups retreated deep into Cambodia's territory. There is no historical source that mentioned the fierce conflict between the Vietnamese and the indigenous people. It can be conjectured that this phenomenon did not occur or rarely happened. According to Trinh Hoai Duc's record of the situation in phu Gia Dinh in the seventeenth and eighteenth

centuries as follows: “At that time, Gia Dinh’s headlands were Mo Xoai and Dong Nai, and people from our country along with Cambodian people (Cao Miên) reclaimed these lands. The Cambodians greatly admired the authority of the court...”⁹.

The events that took place in the 17th- 19th centuries showed that the land of Tay Ninh was attentive by the Nguyen Lords as well as to the Nguyen Kings. In fact, there were large migrations here, mainly around Ba Den Mountain in order to establish territorial sovereignty. When the Vietnamese and the Cham arrived in Tay Ninh, the Ba Den mountain area became the home of many ethnic communities including the Khmer (Phien- Indigenous people- Man), the Vietnamese (Kinh), the Chinese and the Cham (Con Man).

The aforementioned historical sources proved the fact that by the middle of the 19th century, the Ba Den mountain area of Tay Ninh province was reclaimed and settled down by multi-ethnic groups. This was the basis for many religions and beliefs to import and expanse. Firstly, there was the existence of religion and beliefs of the Khmer, the most prominent religion was Theravada Buddhism and the worship of goddesses. Next, there was the presence of religions and beliefs of the Cham, the Vietnamese, and the Chinese with many similarities. Therefore, multi-ethnicity, multi-religion, and belief have become a feature of Tay Ninh, especially in the sacred mountain area of Ba Den. There has been the coexistence of Buddhism, Brahmanism, shamanism, worship of mother and goddess, ancestor worship, etc. These religions have met the needs of spiritual and religious life.

2. The master goddess on the sacred mountain

Ba Den is the name to identify the land associated with Ba Den¹⁰ mountain located in the middle of a large plain, next to a large freshwater lake (Dau Tieng lake) to water into the Saigon River. Ba Den mountain area is a complex of 3 consecutive mountains, spreading about 24 km², including Ba mountain 986m high (the

highest mountain in the Southeast region), Phung mountain 372m high and Heo mountain 335m high. Currently, Ba Den mountain belongs to 3 communes such as Ninh Son, Tan Binh and Thanh Tan of Tay Ninh City, Tay Ninh province. The book *Đại Nam nhất thống chí* described as follows: “Linh Son (sacred mountain) is 20 miles northwest of Tan Ninh, the towering mountain is the reassurance of the province, the West borders Cambodia, the middle of the mountain has a stone pagoda that few people go to. The book *Gia Định thành thông chí* wrote that Ba Dinh mountain has towering rocks, luxuriant trees, fresh water, fertile soil, Linh Son pagoda on the mountain, the bottom of the mountain is close to the lake, the scenery is beautiful, villages of the Chinese, the Man people. And the inhabitants rely on the benefits of the mountains and forests”¹¹. With such a special terrain, Ba Den Mountain has become a sacred place for a long time, a place to worship gods and Buddha.

On the mountain, there are many places to worship Ba Den. According to my field survey (in August 2019), the Ba Den mountain complex has 6 temples associated with the worship of Ba Den¹².

1- The highest worship place (from the top of the mountain) is located in Quan Am pagoda. Ba Den is worshiped in Linh Son Palace in the form of a black-skinned Mother goddess, wearing a heavenly hat (*thiên phụng*) and a red shirt embroidered with dragons.

2- The second place of worship is located in Hang pagoda (Long Chau temple). The main sanctuary is arranged to worship two goddesses such as Ba Den (Linh Son Thanh Mau) with black skin, wearing a heavenly hat, a red shirt embroidered with dragons, and Ba Chua Xu (Holy Mother of the Realm) with white skin, wearing a heavenly hat and a red shirt embroidered with dragons. Next to the main sanctuary, there is also a shrine to Dieu Tri Thanh Mau with white skin, wearing a heavenly hat and a black shirt embroidered with dragons. The two hands make a signal like Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva.

3- The third place of worship is located at the Hoa Dong pagoda campus. There are two shrines to worship Ba Den. In the main sanctuary of Hoa Dong pagoda, Ba Den (Linh Son Thanh Mau) has white skin, wears a heavenly hat and a red shirt embroidered with dragons. This worshipping statue is called “Linh Son Thanh Mau Bodhisattva”, Ba Den is also considered as Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. The second Ba Den statue with the name Linh Son Thanh Mau is placed to worship in Thanh Long cave on the campus of Hoa Dong pagoda. The goddess is represented with white skin, wearing a heavenly hat, a royal robe embroidered with dragons.

4- The fourth place of worship is located at Linh Son Tien Thach pagoda. This is the central and the largest worshipping place. The temple and pagoda were created in the 18th century, also the oldest temple on Ba Den mountain. They are located in wide and fairly flat terrain. There is a stone stele written about the legend of Ba Den. Linh Son Tien Thach is the name of the sanctuary to Ba Den located next to Linh Son pagoda. This temple also has other names such as Ba Pagoda, Thuong Pagoda, or Buddha Temple. Accordingly, Ba Den is arranged a separate sanctuary with the name Linh Son Thanh Mau Place. Notably, there is a statue of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara in front of the sanctuary of Ba Den.

Meanwhile, Ba Den (Linh Son Thanh Mau) was added another name Dieu Tri Dia Mau (the goddess of the Land). In this role, Ba Den has white skin, wears a heavenly hat, a black shirt embroidered with dragons, and stands in the position of two hands making a seal of giving like a statue of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara in front of the shrine. The main worshipping place of Linh Son Tien Thach is also known as Dong Ba. Ba Den is named Linh Son Thanh Mau Bodhisattva. There are 3 statues on the altar such as Ba Den (Black Lady) statue is in the highest position with black skin, wears a heavenly hat, and a royal robe embroidered with dragons; Ba Trang (White Lady) statue is lower in the form of a white stone (white

jade) with white skin, white shirt; the lowest place is a black bronze statue of the Holy Mother, dressed in a black robe.

5- The fifth place of worship is located on the campus of Long Chau Trung pagoda. Ba Palace is located in the yard of the pagoda. The Ba Den (Black Lady) statue is placed on the main sanctuary and on the highest position in the form of white skin, wearing a heavenly hat, a red shirt embroidered with dragons. In the lower row, there are five goddesses (Thánh Mẫu/ Thánh Nương). It can be said that the layout is similar to most of the Palaces of the Vietnamese people in the North and North Central regions of Vietnam. However, the statue of Ba Den (Linh Sơn Thánh Mẫu) is placed on the position of the Supreme God (Thượng Đẳng Thần), the highest level compared to the other Holy Mothers.

6- The sixth place of worship is located at Linh Sơn Phước Trung pagoda, at the bottom of Ba Mountain. Ba Den is arranged on the altar opposite Shakyamuni Buddha in the main sanctuary of the temple. Linh Sơn Thánh Mẫu is represented in the form of white skin, wearing a heavenly hat, a red shirt embroidered with dragons with a separate altar. The altar of Dieu Trì Địa Mẫu (the goddess of the Land) is on the right and the altar of Thiên Hậu Thánh Mẫu is on the left.

Thus, according to the inhabitants' minds, Ba Den has "sacred apparitions" (hiển linh) throughout the mountain area, the presence of Ba Den wherever there is a temple. In each temple, although the goddess is expressed in many different forms, they honor the goddess (Ba) as the Holy Mother (Ba Chua Xu) the Supreme God with the highest sacred authority. In other words, Ba Den is the master goddess of the Tay Ninh sacred mountain region.

3. Linh Sơn Thánh Mẫu (Ba Den)- a symbol of the acculturation of religions and beliefs in the sacred mountains of Tay Ninh province

Based on the history of the migrated ethnic groups and the spreading of religions and beliefs, Ba Den originated from a

goddess of the Khmer people. Through the process of cultural interchange, Ba Den has been added with religious layers from other ethnic groups (the Vietnamese community in particular) to become Linh Son Thanh Mau. It is partly reflected in three folk legends that are still circulating in the region today, associated with the story of the Lady Re Deng¹³, Lady Ly Thi Thien Huong¹⁴ and Lady Denh¹⁵. Although these legends have some different content, they tell us about a beautiful girl with dark skin (an anthropological characteristic of the Khmer). Even the proverbial name “Black Lady” also reminds us of the primitive features of the image of a goddess in Khmer culture because the image of Black Lady (Neang Khmau) is also associated with the image of White Lady (Neang Mé Sar). However, when the Vietnamese and Cham communities migrated to this mountainous area, with their mother-worshipping mentality, these new ethnic groups easily accepted the goddess Neang Khmau and worshiped Neang Khmau much more than the goddess Neang Mé Sar. On the basis of water rice civilization, appreciating the Mother, the Vietnamese, the Cham, and the Khmer worship goddesses. The process of coexistence and mutual exchange has led to acculturation among the Vietnamese, the Cham, the Khmer which created common forms of worship, and the most typical is the worship of the Mother of the Land (Bà Mẹ Xứ Sở-Linh Son Thanh Mau) in the Ba Den mountain area.

The influence of the Cham’s religion on the land of Tay Ninh is easily recognized through the image of Ba Den. According to the historical process of acculturation, Brahmanism’s goddesses were added to the folk goddesses’ power by the Cham people. The system of goddesses includes the Mother of the Land (Rija Nugar), the goddess of the sea (Po Riyak), the Mother of the Forest (Humu Aram), the Mother of the Fishing (Humu Chanok), the Goddess - the Mother of the Land (Po Yan Ina Nugar), Mother of the Land (Bhagavati), Mother of the Land (Po Inu Nugar), the Goddess Kauthara, Goddess Parvati, Goddess Uma, Goddess Muk Juk,

Goddess Kali. The Cham people added the majesty of Shiva or goddess Devi, which are sometimes considered incarnations of those gods. For example, Devi is the goddess of knowledge, music, art, and nature in Brahminism, however, according to the Cham people, goddess Devi in a gentle incarnation is often represented with names such as Parvati, Uma, Gauri, Po Yan Pu Nagara or Po Yan Ina Nugar. On the other hand, in the form of a fierce incarnation, this goddess has the names such as Durga, Bhagavati, Kali. Notably, the goddess of the Land (Po Inu Nagar) of the Cham's religion is also known as Muk Juk (means Bà Đen/ Black Lady in Vietnamese). It shows the mark of the Cham religion and belief in the Linh Sơn area.

Besides, the Vietnamese imprint in the image of Ba Den (Black Lady) is undeniable. Moreover, when the number of Vietnamese residents gradually took up the majority, Vietnamese religious factors are becoming more and more dominant. With the mother worship mentality, the Vietnamese easily accepted the goddess Neang Khmau and worshiped her much more than the goddess Neang Mé Sar. This worship is similar to the form of worshipping Ba Chua Xu in some other places in the South Central and Southern regions today. In the process of cultural exchanges, the Vietnamese absorbed the Khmer cultural elements to create new features in their spiritual life. This phenomenon had also happened in the process of reclamation of the Champa land. Vietnamese residents had "Vietnamized" the Cham and Khmer's religions and beliefs with new anecdotes and legends. Many gods, which originated in Khmer and Cham cultures, had been "Vietnamized" through Vietnamese legends to be "Buddha", "to the Buddha realm" or in the form of worshipping Buddha and gods in one temple (Buddha first, then gods/ tiền Phật hậu Thánh).

It can be said that this motif is found in almost the Southern region. In many places, indigenous gods are gathered into a shrine on the campus of a temple and co-existed beside "Buddha, saints, and Mother goddesses" and explained by myths, legends about the

sacred apparitions of the Mother (Bà Mẫu) on the spiritual land. Specifically, Ba Den is worshiped on a shrine located in Linh Son temple in the form of “Buddha first, then gods”. However, they sometimes integrated with the form of Buddha - Mother to become Linh Son Holy Mother Bodhisattva (Linh Sơn Thánh Mẫu Bồ Tát).

According to the belief of Mother Goddesses (Three Palaces, Four Palaces) of the Vietnamese in the North and North Central region, each Mother Goddess of the Vietnamese has the task and role of governing different “Palace”. However, in the Southern region, the importance of the river, the element “water” is prominent in the spiritual life of people and the master god of the land is respected by the local people. Therefore, Ba Den is the most powerful deity in this sacred mountain. The Mother Goddess of Mountain and Forest (Mẫu Thượng Ngàn), Mother Goddess of Heaven (Mẫu Thượng Thiên), Mother Goddess of Water (Mẫu Thoải) or Lady White (Neang Mé Sar) must not be in the same position as Ba Den- Ba Chua Xu- Mother of the Land. There are three statues of the Mother Goddesses in the main sanctuary of Linh Son Tien Thach temple, however, the statue of Linh Son Thanh Mau with yellow shirt (according to the concept of the five elements, yellow is the central color) is in the highest position on the sanctuary. It can be said that “the respect the natives” is expressed through this honor. Since the sacred Mother Goddess of the Vietnamese is placed in a humble position compared to Ba Den (Black Lady). Ba Den is worshiped as the Supreme Goddess (Thượng Đẳng Thần) with the most sacred power.

The name Ba Den is a sign of “respect for the natives”, as well as, it memorizes the Khmer and Cham origins. And the Vietnamese element has been marked more strongly with the legends of her sacred apparitions to protect the rulers and managers of the land as well as the inhabitants in the region. For example, after becoming Linh Son Thanh Mau, Ba Den was further known through the

legend that the goddess informed Nguyen Phuc Anh through a dream to help him when he was in the war with the Tay Son army at the end of the 18th century. To pay tribute to her, after ascending the throne, King Gia Long had cast her statue in black bronze and ordained her as Linh Son Thanh Mau. Therefore, Ba Palace was built more spaciouly at the end of the 19th century. Then, her sacred apparition helped Le Van Duyet to win in the battle. The legend recognized the role of the Nguyen Dynasty in helping the community around Ba Mountain. *Quốc sử quán* of the Nguyen Dynasty reflected the process of integration, a way of gradually “replacing” the indigenous elements of the Vietnamese people in the Ba Den mountains as follows: “Sometimes someone picks up ancient weapons made of stone and bronze. Legend tells that there is a bronze gong in the lake but when it disappears when someone comes. Sometimes, there is a dragon boat floating, melodious dancing and singing, and a golden turtle floating and sinking at peaceful midnight. It’s sacred air, it is not a monstrosity. The mountain is also known as Ba Palace. In the 3rd year of King Tu Duc, the temple’s name was changed as current name, recorded in the worship book”¹⁶.

The process of “Vietnamization” the “non-Vietnamese elements” affirmed the presence of Vietnamese elements in the southern land. Accordingly, many gods of Northern origin with the humble and hidden position in the indigenous god system on the altars are associated with the landmarks of the Vietnamese people in the newly discovered territory. The temples of worshipping the gods gradually transformed to become the Mother Goddesses Palaces or temples of Buddha (Phật Bà). The Vietnamese have absorbed indigenous and foreign religions and beliefs to create a diverse system of beliefs in Ba Den Mountain today. Therefore, along with the Ba Den Palaces, there is also the Ba Cô o cave system to worship the Co and Cau on the mountain. On the campus of Hang Pagoda (Long Chau Tu), there are altars to worship Ba Den and Ba Trang. In addition, there are

also shrines dedicated to Ong Ta (Nieaktà) and altars dedicated to the Jade Emperor (Ngọc Hoàng Thượng Đế) and Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, Dieu Tri goddess, Buddha, Four Mountain gods (Eastern god, Western god, Southern god, Northern god) in most of Ba Palaces. It can be said that in the multi-ethnic co-existence, each community is towards harmony and adaptation to the other communities.

The amalgamation of three religious systems of Khmer (Neang Khmau) + Cham (Muk Juk) and Viet (Thanh Mau) has created diverse worship and connected the indigenous people to new resident communities. Ba Chua Xu temple in the South in general, Ba Den Palaces on Linh Son of Tay Ninh, in particular, converge fully on four functions such as heavenly gods, water gods, mountain gods, human gods, and Mother goddesses (Phật Bà). In the presence of the Mother goddesses, these sacred spaces are increasingly functional, meeting the religious and spiritual needs of inhabitants. This amalgamation of religion and belief does not seem to create sharp conflicts. The Mother Land of the Cham people has similarities with the Holy Mothers of the Vietnamese people as well as the Mother of Rice and Lady Chua Xu (Bà Mẹ Lúa, Bà Chúa Xứ) of the Khmer people. In fact, the image of Mother Land - Lady Chua Xu - Holy Mother is present in Quang Binh- Hue region such as Lady in Blue Dress- Thien Mu, Lady Vien, Lady Thai Duong, Lady Ky Thach, Girl in Blue Dress, Lady Giang, Four Ladies, Lady Chua Ngoc, Thien YA Na Dien Phi Ngoc; in the Quang Nam - Nha Trang region such as Lady Dai Can, Lady Chua Ngoc, Nam Hai, Lady Chua Loi, Lady Yang, Four Ladies, Lady Thiet Phi, Po Inur Nagar, Thien YA Na Ngoc Dien Phi, Thien YA Na Dien Ba, Po Nagar; in Ninh Thuan region such as Po Inur Nagar; in the Binh Thuan region such as Thien Y A Na); in Tra Vinh region such as Lady Om; in An Giang region such as lady Chua Xu Thanh Mau; in Ca Mau and Bac Lieu region such as Lady Ma Chau – Ma To of the Chinese, Lord Ngoc

Nuong Nuong; on Phu Quoc Island such as Lord Ngoc Nuong Nuong, Long Hai Nuong Nuong. And this cultural sub-region of Tay Ninh province has Ba Den (goddess Neang Khmau with the appearance of goddess Muk Juk and being “Vietnamized” to become Linh Son Thanh Mau or Linh Son Bodhisattva. Thus, it can be affirmed that Ba Den is the master goddess of the sacred mountains, as well as, a symbol of the religious fusion of the Vietnamese- the Cham- the Khmer in Tay Ninh in particular, and in the South in general.

Conclusion

Through many generations, the Khmer, Cham, and Vietnamese communities around Ba Den mountainous region have attached themselves and worked together to build a harmonious life. Ba Den Mountain in Tay Ninh- the place of worshipping the master goddess (Ba Den), has become a gathering place for many religions and beliefs of Khmer - Vietnamese - Cham groups in strong acculturation. In addition to the main deity Ba Den Palace, there are many pagodas, temples, caves, shrines on the mountain. They form a diverse system of worship. Many religions and beliefs of different communities are originated from the background of agricultural culture, combined to form a strong mixture in Tay Ninh, in which, Ba Den mountain region becomes one of the great holy places, one of the typical intersection and convergence place, and Ba Den is the symbol of acculturation. /.

NOTES:

- 1 Quốc sử quán triều Nguyễn (2006), *Đại Nam nhất thống chí, tập 5*, Phạm Trọng Điềm dịch, Đào Duy Anh hiệu đính, Nxb. Thuận Hóa, Huế, p. 248. (The official geographical book compiled by the National Institute of History of the Nguyen Dynasty).
- 2 Huỳnh Minh (1972), *Tây Ninh xưa và nay (Tay Ninh in the past and at present)*, Nxb. Sài Gòn, Sài Gòn, p.15.
- 3 Quốc sử quán triều Nguyễn (2001), *Đại Nam thực lục* (Chronicle of Greater Vietnam), tome 1, Nguyễn Ngọc Tinh dịch, Đào Duy Anh hiệu đính, Nxb. Giáo dục, Hà Nội, p.166

- 4 Trịnh Hoài Đức (2006), *Gia Định thành thông chí*, Lý Việt Dũng dịch và chú giải, Nxb. Tổng hợp Đồng Nai, Biên Hòa, p.110
- 5 Quốc sử quán triều Nguyễn (2001), *Đại Nam thực lục* (Chronicle of Greater Vietnam), tome 1, Nguyễn Ngọc Tỉnh dịch, Đào Duy Anh hiệu đính, Nxb. Giáo dục, Hà Nội, p.164
- 6 Quốc sử quán triều Nguyễn (2007), *Đại Nam thực lục* (Chronicle of Greater Vietnam), tome 4, Nguyễn Thế Đạt, Trương Văn Chính, Nguyễn Danh Chiên, Ngô Hữu Tạo, Nguyễn Mạnh Duân, Đỗ Mộng Khương dịch, Hoa Bằng hiệu đính, Nxb. Giáo dục, Hà Nội, p.988.
- 7 Quốc sử quán triều Nguyễn (2006), *Đại Nam nhất thống chí, tập 5*, Phạm Trọng Điềm dịch, Đào Duy Anh hiệu đính, Nxb. Thuận Hóa, Huế, pp.240 - 241.
- 8 Quốc sử quán triều Nguyễn (2007), *Đại Nam thực lục* (Chronicle of Greater Vietnam), tome 4, Nguyễn Thế Đạt, Trương Văn Chính, Nguyễn Danh Chiên, Ngô Hữu Tạo, Nguyễn Mạnh Duân, Đỗ Mộng Khương dịch, Hoa Bằng hiệu đính, Nxb. Giáo dục, Hà Nội, pp.988 - 989.
- 9 Trịnh Hoài Đức (2006), *Gia Định thành thông chí*, Lý Việt Dũng dịch và chú giải, Nxb. Tổng hợp Đồng Nai, Biên Hòa, p.109.
- 10 Ba Den Mountain is also known by other names such as Ba Dinh, Ba Dinh Linh Son, Van Son, Qua Mot, Ba or Dien Ba Mountain.
- 11 Quốc sử quán triều Nguyễn (2006), *Đại Nam nhất thống chí, tập 5*, Phạm Trọng Điềm dịch, Đào Duy Anh hiệu đính, Nxb. Thuận Hóa, Huế, p.247.
- 12 ở Nam Bộ cũng thờ Linh Sơn Thánh Mẫu. In Tay Ninh, there are many temples and pagodas worshipping Linh Sơn Thanh Mau such as Linh Sơn Phuoc Lam communal temple (Vinh Xuan, Tay Ninh city), Phuoc Luu pagoda, Hoi Phuoc pagoda, Vinh An pagoda, Tinh Ly pagoda, Phuoc Thanh Pagoda, Phuoc Hue Pagoda, Phuoc Hoa Hoi Pagoda, Phuoc Binh Pagoda, Giac Minh Pagoda, Giac Nguyen Pagoda (Trang Bang Town), Linh Sơn Thanh Lam Pagoda, Phuoc An Pagoda, Phuoc Minh Pagoda (Go Dau District), Thien Lam pagoda or Go Ken pagoda (Hoa Thanh town), Hanh Lam pagoda, Co Lam pagoda (Chau Thanh district). In addition, there are some other worship places of Linh Sơn Thanh Mau in the South. <https://doanhnhanplus.vn/linh-son-thanh-mau-o-tay-ninh-488401.html>, accessed 19/3/2020.
- 13 Legend told that since ancient times, the owner of the mountains was a Khmer woman (many people also believe that it was a Funan woman named Re Deng. It was pronounced Đen by later generations, then it became bà Đen (black Lady).
- 14 Legend tells about a girl named Ly Thi Thien Huong (with dark skin color), she was from Trang Bang, good at martial arts. She used to come to Qua Mot mountain (the old name of Ba Den mountain) to worship Buddha. There was a sacred temple to worship Buddha on the mountain. Because the road up the mountain was dense, there were many leopards, so people

used to go in groups to support each other when they were attacked by wild animals. Ly Thi Thien Huong met a son of the village named Le Si Triet and the two fell deeply in love with each other. Once, she was bullied by a greedy mandarin in the village and he wanted her father to give the daughter to him. After knowing the news, Le Si Triet did not want his lover to get married to the greedy mandarin, Le Si Triet took action to save his lover. After saving her, they got married and lived together very happily. At that time, Nguyen Phuc Anh recruited soldiers to fight the Tay Son army, Le Si Triet joined Nguyen Phuc Anh's army. Ly Thi Thien Huong went to the mountain to pray to Buddha for her husband to return soon, but she was kidnapped by robbers. She quickly ran into the forest to escape and has been missing ever since. In the reign of King Minh Mang, there was an old monk on the temple as the abbot. One day, while chanting and reciting the Buddhist scriptures, the monk noticed the shadow of a beautiful girl, the girl said that "My name is Ly, when I was 18 years old, I was surrounded by robbers, so, unfortunately, I fell down the cliff to die. Please go down to the southeastern mountainside, find my cadaver and bury it". The monk went to find her body and brought it back for burial. People in the area praised the virgin and loyal heart of Ly Thi Thien Huong, they built the temple. Because she had black skin, people called her by the nickname Ba Den, and also call the name Qua Mot mountain to Ba Den mountain.

- 15 This legend recounts that, in the past, in the Tay Ninh mountains, there was an official who gave birth to a daughter named Đênh. When she grew up, a son of the governor of Trang Bang district (also in Tay Ninh) proposed marriage. They were both suitable, their families were also in the same category, and Đênh's parents accepted. However, she had the desire to leave home to seek a way to cultivate, so she refused to get married. One night, when the whole family was sleeping peacefully, she left and wanted to live at a temple on the mountain. Unfortunately, she was mauled by a tiger on the way. The next day, the servants followed the governor's order to find her, she was eaten by a tiger, only one leg left was stuck on the stone. Her parents were in great pain, so they had to let the soldiers bury the rest of her body on the mountain and build a temple. That day was the fifth day of the fifth lunar month. Local people believed that Đênh's death was an unjust death, so it must be miraculous, since then whenever there has been a problem, they often go to the temple to worship for blessings. [Nhiều tác giả (2013), *Lễ hội truyền thống các dân tộc Việt Nam (Traditional festivals of the ethnic groups in Vietnam)*, Nxb. Văn hóa dân tộc, Hà Nội, pp.1552- 1553].
- 16 Quốc sử quán triều Nguyễn (2006), *Đại Nam nhất thống chí, tập 5*, Phạm Trọng Điềm dịch, Đào Duy Anh hiệu đính, Nxb. Thuận Hóa, Huế, tr. 247.

REFERENCES

1. Lê Quý Đôn (1977), *Lê Quý Đôn toàn tập, tập 1: Phủ biên tạp lục*, Đỗ Mộng Khương, Nguyễn Trọng Hàn, Nguyễn Ngọc Tinh dịch, Đào Duy Anh hiệu đính, Nxb. Khoa học xã hội, Hà Nội.
2. Trịnh Hoài Đức (2006), *Gia Định thành thông chí*, Lý Việt Dũng dịch và chú giải, Nxb. Tổng hợp Đồng Nai.
3. Nhiều tác giả (2013), *Lễ hội truyền thống các dân tộc Việt Nam (Traditional festivals of the ethnic groups in Vietnam)*, Nxb. Văn hóa dân tộc, Hà Nội.
4. Huỳnh Minh (1972), *Tây Ninh Xưa và Nay (Tay Ninh in the past and at present)*, Sài Gòn.
5. Quốc sử quán triều Nguyễn (2001), *Đại Nam thực lục (Chronicle of Greater Vietnam)*, tome 1, Nguyễn Ngọc Tinh dịch, Đào Duy Anh hiệu đính, Nxb. Giáo dục, Hà Nội.
6. Quốc sử quán triều Nguyễn (2007), *Đại Nam thực lục (Chronicle of Greater Vietnam)*, tome 4, Nguyễn Thế Đạt, Trương Văn Chính, Nguyễn Danh Chiên, Ngô Hữu Tạo, Nguyễn Mạnh Duân, Đỗ Mộng Khương dịch, Hoa Bằng hiệu đính, Nxb. Giáo dục, Hà Nội.
7. Quốc sử quán triều Nguyễn (2006), *Đại Nam nhất thống chí*, tập 5, Phạm Trọng Điềm dịch, Đào Duy Anh hiệu đính, Nxb. Thuận Hóa, Huế.; Viện Nghiên cứu Tôn giáo, Viện Nghiên cứu Phật học Việt Nam (2011), *Chúa – Bồ tát Nguyễn Phúc Chu (1675 - 1725) và sự nghiệp mở mang bờ cõi, phát triển đất nước (Lord - Bodhisattva Nguyen Phuc Chu (1675 - 1725) and his career in expanding, developing the country)*, Kỷ yếu hội thảo ngày 22-23/8/2011 tại Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh.
8. <https://doanhnhanplus.vn/linh-son-thanh-mau-o-tay-ninh-488401.html>, cập nhật ngày 19/3/2020.