

Recruitment regime to choose talents of mac dynasty under Thang Long term (1527-1592)

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ABSTRACT: The Mac dynasty officially existed in Vietnamese history from 1527 to 1592. During the period of capital formation in Thang Long, the Mac dynasty left many achievements in the history of the nation, and the most prominent was the career of fostering and training talents to strengthen the entire state administration. Over 65 years of reign at the Imperial Capital of Thang Long, the Kings of the Mac dynasties organized 22 examinations, passing 484 doctorates, including 11 valedictorians honored in the dragon table. Those numbers showed a particular interest in the education of the Mac dynasty. In the history of the feudal education of Vietnam, the Mac dynasty ranked second, only after the Le dynasty in the number of exams and the passing rate. The achievement was that the Mac dynasty set up a solid foundation, maintained its rule in a very complex social context, enticed the intellectual class which was sharply divided, and competed for influence with the feudal forces Le - Trinh - Nguyen. Their feudal education has dramatically contributed to the contemporary national culture.

KEYWORDS: The Mac dynasty; Vietnamese history; Thang Long

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Mac dynasty replaced the Le dynasty in the context of the country is politically unstable, the feudal forces of the Nguyen family and the Trinh family - original courtiers of the Le dynasty - waged wars to regain the throne for the Le Dynasty, leading to a prolonged civil war. It must be said that the Mac dynasty was a period of a fierce war between the Mac dynasty and the Le Trung Hung feudal corporations which the old history called the Southern - Northern dynasty war. The Mac dynasty dominated the Northern region called the Northern dynasty, the Le - Trinh dynasty occupied from Thanh Hoa to the south and called the Southern dynasty.

The Mac dynasty was founded in the context of the country has just experienced a crisis with many uprising lasting nearly 20 years. The constant war created a state of spiritual shambles, miserable people, bewildered psychology, and rampant fear throughout society. In particular, the feudal officials were also very dispersed and wavering with strong changes of the time. Mac dynasty faced many difficulties and obstacles.

In building and consolidating the governmental institutions, the Mac dynasty completely applied the old rules of the Le dynasty, implemented the policy of enlisting Confucian scholars, the large and influential class in society. The Mac dynasty paid attention to the training and selection of feudal officials through the examinations. When the Mac dynasty ascended the throne, the scholar class of Le dynasty had a strong differentiation; some fled to the mountainous area, some chose to hide their identities and refused to show up or try to fight against the Mac dynasty to restore the Le dynasty. Reusing the Le dynasty mandarins to supplement the fledgling feudal government was an entirely practical and useful measure of the Mac.

With an urgent need to build and consolidate the feudal government, which the Confucian bureaucracy played a key role, the Mac dynasty paid attention and attached great importance to educational development and examinations. With the feudal regime, the doctoral examination is indispensable to recruit feudal officials. The organization of this examination was not outside the purpose of building a Confucian intellectual class loyal to the Mac dynasty, and assist the Mac dynasty in existing and developing. Besides, early kings of the Mac dynasty also aimed to scramble for influence over the Confucian scholars who were hesitant with the changes and enlisted to attract even the Confucian scholars serving the Le Dynasty.

II. RECRUITMENT REGIME TO CHOOSE TALENTS OF MAC DYNASTY

With the purpose of building loyal elite scholars, the Mac dynasty inherited and continued the tradition of feudal examinations from the Le dynasty to select highly educated intellectuals to serve their feudal government. Two years after taking the throne, the Mac dynasty organized the first examination to recruit talents, just as Phan Huy Chu remarked: "... in the third year under the reign of Minh Duc (1529), the Hoi exam

was opened with the rules inherited from the Le dynasty. After that, all the examinations under the reign of Dang Doanh, Phuc Nguyen, Phuc Hai, and Mau Hop were all followed that rules". In this examination, the Mac dynasty succeeded in selecting 3 Tam Khoi, 8 Hoang Giap, and 16 Co-doctors. All of these men were employed by the Mac dynasty in important positions including 5 ministers, 6 Thi Lang positions, 1 middle admiral, 4 Academy positions, 5 Imperial supervisors, 3 main political officers, 1 vice political officer, and 1 military officer of Cao Bang. This was the first group of scholars to be elected through the nomination of the Mac dynasty, added to the new feudal bureaucracy.

In spite of building a dynasty in the context of the country was devastated continuously by hostile forces, civil war occurred regularly, the Mac dynasty held regular examinations every three years. During the 65 years of existence in the capital Thang Long, the Mac dynasty organized 22 feudal examinations and passed 484 feudal scholars, of which: 11 valedictorians, 12 Bang Nhan (榜眼), 19 Tham Hoa (探花), 101 Hoang Giap (黄甲) and 341 De Tam Giap (同进士出身). It can be noticed that, since seizing the throne in 1527 until being forced to withdraw from Thang Long (1592), the Mac dynasty never neglected the education and feudal examinations.

No.	King dynasty	Exam names	Total	Number of PhD and passing grades				
				First armor			Second Armor (Hoang giap)	Third Armor (Co-PhD)
				Trang nguyen	Bang nhan	Tham hoa		
1	Mac Dang Dung (1527 - 1529)	Ox (1529)	27	1	1	1	8	16
2	Mac Dang Doanh (1530 - 1539)	Dragon (1532)	27	1	1	1	6	18
3		Goat (1535)	32	1	1	1	7	22
4		Dog (1538)	36	1	1	1	8	25
5	Mac Phuc Hai (1539 - 1547)	Ox (1541)	30	1	1	1	4	23
6		Dragon (1544)	17				3	14
7	Mac Phuc Nguyen (1547 - 1562)	Goat (1547)	30	1	1	1	8	19
8		Dog (1550)	26	1	1	1	4	19
9		Ox (1553)	21	1	1	1	5	13
10	Mac Mau Hop (1562 - 1592)	Dragon (1556)	24	1	1	1	4	17
11		Goat (1559)	20			1	4	15
12		Dog (1562)	18	1	1	1	5	10
13		Ox (1565)	16			1	3	12
14	Mac Mau Hop (1562 - 1592)	Dragon (1568)	17			1	4	12
15		Goat (1571)	17		1	1	3	12
16		Dog (1574)	17			1	3	13
17		Ox (1577)	18	1	1	1	5	10
18		Dragon (1580)	17			1	5	11
19		Goat (1583)	18			1	5	12
20		Dog (1586)	22			1	3	18
21		Ox (1589)	17					17
22	Dragon (1592)	17				4	13	
Total	5 King dynasties	12 years, 22 exams	484 (100%)	11 (2,3%)	12 (2,5%)	19 (39%)	101 (20,9%)	341 (70,4%)

Table 1: Examinations and doctorates passed under the Mac dynasty (1527-1592)

Source: Ngo Duc Tho (editor) (1993), *Vietnamese academicians (1075 - 1919)*, Literature Publishing House, Hanoi.

Most of the scholars who passed the examinations were recruited into different positions in the feudal government apparatus. Among those scholars, and some became pillars of the feudal court, some became celebrities who had not only significant influence on the Mac dynasty but also became representatives of Vietnamese education culture in the sixteenth century. They were: Nguyen Thien was the valedictorian in the year of Dragon (1532), held many important positions: *Thuong Thu Bo Lai, Ngu su dai, Do ngu su, Dong cac, Nhap thi kinh dien, tuoc Thu quan cong*. Bui Vinh got the *Bang Nhan* position in 1532, became *Ta Thi Lang Bo Lai*, and then reached *Mai Linh Hau* position. Nguyen Binh Khiem became the valedictorian in the year of the goat (1535), served as a feudal official, and then reached a high position: *Thuong Thu, Thai Pho, Trinh quoc cong*. Giap Hai was the valedictorian in the year of the dog (1538), served as a feudal official and then became *Luc bo Thuong thu, Dong cac, Nhap thi kinh dien, Thai bao, Sach Quoc cong*...

The later historians sent a fairly accurate evaluation for the Mac Dynasty feudal examinations, in *Vu Trung tuy but* of Pham Dinh Ho, he analyzed and assessed the examination contents of the following generations: "In Minh Duc period (the reign of Mac Dang Dung 1527-1529), Dai Chinh period (the reign of Mac Dang Doanh 1530-1540), the learning atmosphere was getting worse and worse. Scholars vied for frivolity, getting worse and worse than the Le dynasty. But the Mac dynasty was not so fogley, the education, literature, and politics were not inferior to the previous".

1. The form of examination

Examinations are the last stage of the training and also the first stage to recruit officials for the feudal government apparatus. Depending on the purpose and the need to recruit feudal officials, the feudal court opened exams.

The examination which is very important and occupies a key position in the nomination of the Mac dynasty is the examination of the Doctor, the word “Doctor” means the selection of excellent scholars for the feudal court. The process of the doctoral examination consists of three levels: the *Huong* exam is held in the locality, the *Hoi* examination is hosted by the Ministry of Ceremony in the Royal Capital and the *Dinh* exam is hosted by the King at the feudal court.

According to author Pham Dinh Ho: “Ly dynasty started the feudal examination, there were *Tam giao* exam, *Thai hoc sinh* exam, and doctoral examination ... From Hong Duc period onwards, only the doctoral examinations were the main for selecting talents. So was the Mac dynasty”.

1.1. *Huong* examination

Huong exam, also called *Trung khoa*, is held in different provinces, those who pass this examination could be appointed as feudal officials. In the Mac dynasty, the whole country was divided into thirteen *Thua Thien* provinces and one *Phung Thien* prefecture. However, since the establishment of Le “Renaissance” dynasty, the management area of the Mac dynasty was narrowed. Therefore, the *Huong* examination was only held in the area under the control of the Mac dynasty, mainly from Son Nam province to the north (the major influence area of Mac dynasty was Thang Long capital in the center and the area of *Tu Tran*: Kinh Bac, Son Nam, Hai Duong, and Son Tay).

Candidates who wish to take the *Huong* examination must pass a guarantee regulation and a quality survey. Guarantee regulation means that before the *Huong* exam, the local officials must make a list and review the candidates. Candidates must have a clear background, regardless of origin and social class. However, vocalists, people with great mourning and people with a bad reputation cannot take the exam. Especially for the rebels, they and their descendants are not allowed to take the exam even if they have an education. This provision shows that the examination rules are stringent, preventing frauds in the examination, as well as helping the feudal state to choose virtuous people.

After passing the guarantee regulation, the candidate must go through a quality test to select people with sufficient knowledge to take the *Huong* exam (“in the *Huong* exam, firstly, the examination of quality is used to eliminate unqualified candidates”). The quality test is held in the prefectures and carried out by *tu truong* exam type. After the test, the local officials make a list of passing candidates who are eligible for the *Huong* exam and send it to the Ministry of Ceremony. Each district must select no more than 200 students for the *Huong* exam.

The process of organizing and system of judges in the *Huong* Exam of the Mac Dynasty is basically the same as the Le So Dynasty. Senior officials in the Academy are nominated as judges and examiners such as: in 1558, Giap Hai was nominated as the chief judge of *Huong* examination in Son Nam province. That time because the exam was challenging, the candidate could not take it and cause chaos in examination school, Giap Hai had to offer a new alternative exam that helps the examination school stabilize. After discovering the candidate initiated the chaos, Giap Hai decided to decapitate that candidate at the school gate to set an example for other exams. That event showed that the organization of examinations from the offering exam questions to the supervision under the Mac dynasty was severe.

Huong exam consists of four parts, candidates must pass each part to be able to do the next part. The exam rules of each part are as follows:

- Part one, the exam consists of four or five topics on *Tu thu* (The Four Books 四书) and *Ngu kinh* (the Five Classics 五经).
- Part two, the exam consists of *chieu*, *che*, and *bieu* (forms of ancient prose). For each of them, candidates must make an article in the ancient style called *tu luc* or *bien ngau* (prose has 2 sides, one side has 6 words and the other side has 4 words standing opposite each other).
- Part three, candidates must make a poem and a *phu* (one traditional style of poem). The poem needs to follow *Duong luat* (the rule of the Tang), the *phu* also follows the ancient style including 300 words or more.
- Part four, candidates must write *Van sach* (a kind of essay), the topics are from the history, the politics (conscious of developing the country and helping people) with 1000 words or more.

Those who pass all four parts of the *Huong* exam called *Huong cong* (贡士) and can be able to take part in *Hoi* exam. Those who pass only three parts are called *Sinh do* (生徒). *Sinh do* are exempt from personal taxes and feudal public works. *Huong cong* are admitted to Quoc Tu Giam, granted a scholarship for three years to attend *Hoi* and *Dinh* exams, if the candidate does not pass those exams, he can continue to study. If he wants to be a feudal official, he must pass the qualifying examination and can become a tutor or a district chief if he

passes that exam. The first rank of *Huong* examination is called *Giai Nguyen* and the second rank is called *A Nguyen*.

1.2 Hoi and Dinh examinations

Hoi and *Dinh* examinations are organized by the imperial court in Thang Long capital. Both are significant examinations, so they are called *Dai khoa*. People who pass those exams are also called *do dai khoa* (pass the significant test). Those examinations are the greatest and most glorious wish of the feudal scholars, as well as the opportunity for the feudal court to choose talented people to serve the country.

Only people who have passed the *Huong* exam can attend to *Hoi* exam. The students at Quoc Tu Giam, Chieu Van Quan, and Tu Lam Cuc, as well as the descendants of the royal family, if qualified, can attend to *Hoi* exam. Besides, the feudal officials who have passed the qualifying tests also can apply to the *Hoi* exam. The number of candidates participating in the *Hoi* exam of the Mac dynasty was immense, particularly in 1529, the first *Hoi* examination had more than 4,000 candidates.

Hoi and *Dinh* examinations are held every three years, alternating with the *Huong* examinations. The *Hoi* exam will be organized in the year after the year that holds *Huong* exam, in detail, the year of Rat - Horse - Rabbit - Chicken will have *Huong* exam, and the years of Dragon - Dog - Ox - Goat will have *Hoi* exam. *Hoi* exam and *Dinh* exam are eight months apart, for example, if *Hoi* exam is held in spring, *Dinh* exam will be in August of the fall.

This exam consists of 2 phases: *Hoi* exam and *Dinh* exam. *Hoi* exam also includes four parts like *Huong* exam but requires higher quality. In *Hoi* examination, the candidates have more examination titles to choose, the word number of each test requires more, and the requirements for ideas and meanings in the *Van sach* are also higher. In *Van sach* test, unlike the *Huong* exam, which only requires content related to the conscious of developing the country and helping people, the *Hoi* exam requires more content related to strategy, national governance, using talents... Only candidates who pass the *Hoi* exam can continue to take the *Dinh* exam. The valedictorian of *Hoi* exam is called *Hoi nguyen*.

Dinh exam is usually organized right after *Hoi* exam and takes place at the royal hall and the king assumes both position examination setter and examiner. *Dinh* exam has only *Van sach*. Topics of *Van sach* are often related to the hottest issues of the country at that time. The essay must answer the king's opinion and problem, so it is also called *Van sach Dinh doi* (response essay). The highest honor for those who pass *Dinh* exam is the title of Doctorate, divided into 3 categories as follows:

- The *Tam khoi* (top three doctors) are called *De nhat giap tien si cap de*, include:

The first rank of *De nhat giap tien si cap de* is called *Trang Nguyen* (状元) (the valedictorian).

The second rank of *De nhat giap tien si cap de* is called *Bang Nhan* (榜眼)

The third rank of *De nhat giap tien si cap de* is called *Tham Hoa* (探花)

- The second-rank category is called *De nhi giap tien si xuat than* or *Hoang Giap* (黄甲)

- The third-rank category is called *De tam giap dong tien si xuat than* (同进士出身) (also called Doctorate).

These degrees are officially and stably used from 1442 onwards. In the Nguyen dynasty, there was a change starting from the year of the Rat (1828): *Huong cong* (贡士) title changed to *Cu nhan* (举人) (Bachelor), *Sinh do* (生徒) title changed to *Tu tai* (生员) (Baccalaureate), and from the year of Ox (1829) the *Trang Nguyen* (状元) title (Valedictorian) was removed, the *Pho bang* (副榜) title was added.

1.3. The Dong Cac examinations

In addition to the regular examinations as mentioned above, there are several special examinations such as Dong Cac Examinations. They are extraordinary exams, opened in the reign of Hong Duc, to recruit talented officials to correct the documents of the imperial court to ensure accuracy before issuance. According to Phan Huy Chu in *Lich trieu hien chuong loai chi* (the Imperial Calendar): “all the che, bieu, poetry, letters, and documents are all corrected; along with the unsuitable elections in the feudal court, which were all presented in the report.”

Those participating in the examination must be Doctorates, take exams in *Van Tho* palace. The content of the exam was “given by the king and unpredictable, it could be a poem in “*Duong luat*” type, critical essay, *phu, tung, cham, minh, ky, or bat*.

In the feudal bureaucracy system issued in 1471, *Han Lam Vien* (the Academy) and *Dong Cac* were the two institutions with the highest educational level of the feudal court. One place advised making documents become highly scientific and in line with the policy; the other place offered advice on the correction of the papers content to make them more scientifically, more feasible, and in line with the system. In the doctoral exams, the best people often work at the Academy. Therefore, it is also necessary to select those with excellent talents to enter *Dong Cac* to be able to fulfill its mission. Because the examination is important and the contestants have all gone through the doctoral exam, the *Dong Cac* examination is often organized strictly, and the candidates who pass will be highly rewarded, sometimes even higher than the doctoral examination. About the grant of hats, shirts, silver belts and prize money, the reward is equal to *Tam khoi*: “Each member is given

an identical graduation hat. About silver belts and silver flower stems, the first-rank reward is like Trang Nguyen, the second-rank reward is the same as Bang Nhan, and the third-rank reward is the same as Tham Hoa. For the color of the graduation gowns, the first rank uses the green color, the second and the third use the dimgray color. Those things are given at the Doan Mon gate". About the titles, the first rank is appointed to *Dong cac Dai hoc si* (the great scholar of Dong Cac), equivalent to *Te Tuu of Quoc Tu Giam*. The second rank becomes *Dong cac hoc si* (Dong Cac scholar), equal to *Quoc Tu Giam Tu nghiep*. The third rank becomes *Dong cac Hieu thu*, equivalent to *Lang Trung Luc bo*; while the Trang Nguyen was only assigned to *Chanh luc pham*.

According to author Ngo Duc Tho in *Cac nha khoa bang Viet Nam* (Vietnamese scholars), there are quite a number of Mac dynasty doctors who participated in the Dong Cac examination such as Pham Cong Sam passed *Bang Nhan* (1541), and later passed the Dong Cac examination to take *Thua Chinh Su* position. Dao Tong passed *Hoang Giap* (1583), then passed the second rank in Dong Cac examination, getting the title of *Dong Cac Hieu Thu*; Ngo Cung passed *Hoang Giap* (1583) then applied and took the Dong Cac examination and got the first rank, getting the title of *Dong Cac Dai hoc si*.

2. Educational programs & examinations

2.1. Educational programs

From the Le So Dynasty, Confucianism became the state religion, and even though the Mac dynasty did not retain its monopoly position as before, it was still the dominant ideology of the monarchy. Through Confucian ideology, the Mac dynasty trained a team of feudal mandarins who effectively served the government. Therefore, the books used in teaching in this period were mostly Chinese books.

In *Jian wen xiao lu* (见闻小录), Le Quy Don wrote: "During the reign years of Hong Duc, give out annual free books including all the essential ones: The Four Books (四书), The Five Classics (五经), *Wen xian tong kao* (文献通考), *Wen xuan* (文选) and *Gang mu* (纲目)...". The Four Books (四书) and the Five Classics (五经) are the must-have classics on Confucianism learning. Four Books, namely: the Great Learning 大学, the Doctrine of the Mean 中庸, the Analects of Confucius 论语, and Mencius 孟子. The Five Classics of Confucianism, namely: the Book of Songs 诗经, the Book of History 书经, the Classic of Rites 礼记, the Book of Changes 易经, and the Spring and Autumn Annals 春秋. *Wen xian tong kao* (文献通考) consists of a massive 348 volumes, written by Ma Tuan Lin of the Yuan dynasty. *Wen xuan* (文选), also called *Zhao ming wen xuan* (昭明文选), is a 602-book collection, and an enormous effort made possible by Xiao Tong. *Gang mu* (纲目), also goes by the name of *Tong lan gang mu* (通蓝纲目), is another massive set of 592 books written by Chu Xi of the Song dynasty in China.

A few notable books used in teaching during the Mac dynasty: *Tian zi wen* (天字文), *Xiao jing* (孝经), *Ming xin bao lan* (明心宝蓝), *Ming dao jia xun* (明道家训), *San zi jing* (三字经). The content of these elementary books is primarily oriented for learners about piety and righteousness, how to follow good examples to study and cultivate character and morality.

In addition to the number of books compiled by Chinese people, there are many books and learning materials compiled by Vietnamese scholars such as Trang Nguyen thi consists of 278 poetry lines, telling the story of study hard to become a valedictorian to stimulate the studious spirit of young students. *You xue wu yan shi* (学五言诗) mentioned about the excitement of studying, the dream of students to become valedictorian and the obligations of parents in raising their children into successful human beings.

Besides, there are also set of notable books and materials worth mentioning: *Yi qian zi* (一千字) includes 1,000 words in six-eight-word format, each Chinese character comes with a Vietnamese word synonymous; *San qian zi* (三千字) consists of 3,000 words, letters and meanings consecutively arranged in pairs of two words, the last word of the upper paragraph rhymes with the last word of the lower paragraph; *Wu qian zi* (五千字) consist of 5000 words, words and meanings combined according to the six-eight-word format but arranged in sections; *Chu xue wen xin* (初学问心) consists of 270 sentences, 4 words per sentence and is divided into three parts: summarizing Chinese history, summarizing Vietnamese history, advising students to study hard and teach how to treat people. Those books are very meaningful and valuable in teaching culture and morality for the young. The main content is to guide students to be filial, politeness, righteousness, and follow good examples to study and cultivate moral character. When the students reach a certain level, they will learn the Confucian sutras, which help students understand the meaning of Confucianism to reach their ultimate potential, ultimately bringing their wise knowledge to serve the king, serve the country.

2.2. Examinations

Under the Mac dynasty, the examination program was managed and regulated by the government. All significant operations (national exams, for example) are being carried out by a separate government unit (*Libu* 礼部). The examination questions were usually given by famous scholars, sometimes by the king himself. The content of the exam still took Confucian ideas as the core.

Kinh Nghia dissects and gives an explanation of the Four Books, word-by-word, with the primary purpose being testing the learner's fluency in understanding Confucianism.

Van sach is the essential subject of every examination. It is mostly a debate-centered essay, presenting one's ideas about given issues. The contents are usually historical events recorded in history books or a hot socio-political issue that the feudal government, as well as the whole country, is interested in at different times. The method of taking *Van sach* is not restrictive, but candidates must show their knowledge and opinions through proposing strategies and solutions to the given issues.

For example, during the reign of king Mac Phuc Nguyen, the exam of *Van sach* in 1547 had up to 14 questions about the essentials of the royal rule. After copying the questions, a student named Duong Phuc Tu answered 14 questions in turn. In general, his method of writing is not too restrictive; sentences do not rhyme and are written as prose. The essential thing is that Duong Phuc Tu has shown profound knowledge, excellent reasoning, and the way to interpret the problem smoothly. The excellent essay brought Duong Phuc Tu to the highest point that all students dreamed of - valedictorian. With the extensive knowledge and an edgy writing style, he deserves to be a great writer, not only representing the education of the Mac Dynasty but also representing the Confucian education in Vietnamese history. Mac Phuc Nguyen king remarked: "*Practical answer, what a great writer. When a great Confucianist was born, everything went smoothly*".

According to author Nguyen Huu Tam, the writing characters used in the examination of the Mac dynasty is still ordinary Chinese characters, but the Nom (literally translated as "Southern characters" or *quoc am*), which was also emphasized by the Mac dynasty, following the achievements of the previous dynasties. In 1565, under the reign of king Mac Mau Hop, a candidate named Nguyen Hien Tich passed the exam by his exam written in Nom characters. Researcher Tran Le Sang judged that it was the only event that occurred in the history of ancient examinations in Vietnam. There is no clear evidence of the Nom characters being introduced in the formal education system by the Mac dynasty. However, the acceptance and passing of the exam written by Nom characters showed that the Mac kings paid attention to the Nom characters. It was a regular expression in the education of the Mac dynasty in compare with previous dynasties, including the Le So Dynasty.

It can be said that the educational program of the Mac dynasty has inherited and continued to consolidate education with Confucian content since the Le So dynasty, which is an education focusing on practical learning. At that time, the Mac dynasty had no new and exclusive ideas beyond the framework of contemporary education, so they had to inherit the old education system and use it effectively. That was the right choice and suitable for the circumstances of the country at that time. Throughout history, there were newly established governments eagerly abolish and change the traditional education system. That has created confusion, inadequacies in society, and other unsatisfactory results. The reason is that education is associated with social life as a cultural institution; it has its laws of advocacy and does not depend on political institutions as well as governmental institutions. The progression of the Mac dynasty was the widespread use of both Han and Nom characters in examinations, but the educational system and examination system remained the same, showing brilliant management. Because innovating perspectives and reforming educational content are more comfortable to implement than rebuild the whole educational system.

3. Organize the examination school

There is no permanent examination school in *Huong* and *Hoi* exams, so each examination needs a newly built examination campus. The examination campus is usually set in a vacant lot with the surrounding fence, inside, there is some cottage used as working places for the officials like examiners, supervisors... The examination campus is divided into three areas: the internal campus, the outer campus and the place for candidates to set up tents to sit for the test.

The internal campus is in the middle and contains a cottage called *giam vien* as the house for internal-campus officials' meetings. The two sides next to *giam vien* have two cottages for appraisal officials, two cottages for preliminary appraisal officials, and the supervisor's cottage.

The outer campus has a cottage called *thi vien* as the house for outer-campus officials meetings. The two sides next to *thi vien* have two cottages for the judge and the deputy judge, two cottages for the examiner and the associate examiner, cottage for the supervisor and a cottage called *lai phong*. Adjacent to the internal campus cottages, there is a cottage for *chanh pho de tuyen* who holds the exam book and matches the candidate information to each test.

The outer compartment is the examination field divided into eight squares with vertical and horizontal lines in the middle to split them into four equal parts called *duong thap dao* - the Cross Road. In the center of the Cross Road, there is a house called the Cross House, the front door of this house called *cua Tien* - Front Door which is reserved for contestants when they finish the exam. The four cells in front are called *giap nhat, giap nhi, at nhat, at nhi*. The four cells behind are called *ta nhat, ta nhi, huu nhat, huu nhi*. Each cell has one door to the Cross House. Eight doors of eight cells are for candidates to enter, each door has a name list of the candidates who sit in that cell. Eight doors are closed after the candidates are in their position. In the

examination campus, there are 3 watchtowers for the outer-campus officials to watch the candidates. Outside the examination campus, the fence is enclosed to ensure safety for the examination.

Hoi exam is held in the open ground, the same as *Huong* exam. Tents for the candidates are pre-built. According to Le Quy Don's description in *Kien van tieu luc* about the examination campus: surround the examination campus is the thick bamboo fence, the inside is divided into four layers: the first layer is the residence of the judges, the middle layer is the residence of *quan de dieu*, proctor, and proctor assistant. The remaining two layers are where candidates take exam day by day, the bamboo fence here is thin and set up a cottage (the Cross House) in the Cross Road to collect the test papers. The rules of our examination campus are different from the Chinese regime, so the examination campus in the past was not pre-built, the candidates had to sit in tents and do the test on the ground.

The officials in the examination consist of a chief judge, a deputy judge, a *tri cong cu*, six proctors, two *chanh pho de dieu*, two *giam dang luc*. In *Hoi* exam, the marking is not performed directly on the candidate's original test but instead on the copy copied by the *giam dang luc* officials. Before putting the copy for grading, two *giam dang luc* officials have to check the copy by the method "one read, one review" to see if there's any mistake. This work is called *doi doc* which means "read and collate". The giving mark process is spread over 2 rounds, the first round is from the internal-campus officials, the second round is from outer-campus officials. The internal-campus officials have the task of both examiner and detecting all cheating in the exam.

In *Dinh* exam, which is conducted in the royal palace so there are tables, chairs, pens, and papers for the candidates. The ritual here is very solemn, and the feudal officials stand on the two sides of the palace. Officials of literature stand on the left, martial officials stand on the right, the candidates are behind the officials of literature. When the palanquin of the king goes to the middle of the palace, all stand and bow five times. Afterward, each contestant is called to receive a pen and paper, then enter the examination room. Candidates submit the test, then the king grades all the tests and rank the candidates. On the day that the result comes out, the king gives new officials gowns and hats, and they are given a grand reception at the Thai Hoa Palace. The feudal court also erected steles and named doctorates on it to save it forever.

4. School system

The Mac dynasty inherited the educational achievements of the Le So Dynasty, typically the school system from the central to local levels. The Mac dynasty's school also consisted of two systems: Public schools organized and managed by the feudal court from the imperial capital to the prefectures, districts and private schools in the villages.

4.1. Public school system

The public school system is a school system organized by the feudal court and placed under the management of the Ministry of Ceremony. The public school system has two levels: central and local. The central level is Quoc Tu Giam, and at the local level, schools are located in the provinces and districts.

Under the Mac dynasty, Quoc Tu Giam was the highest and largest school in the capital, called Thai Hoc House, both teaching, managing and organizing training. The head of Quoc Tu Giam is "*Te Tuu*" equivalent to the positions of Dong Cac great scholar, *Thong chinh su*, *Tham chinh*; the salary is 3 *quan 6 tien* per month, in addition to being granted 4 acres of career land, 15 acres of king's field, 10 acres of sacrifice. *Te Tuu* of Quoc Tu Giam must have a doctorate degree, a profound level that is respected by the officials. *Te Tuu* also plays the leading role at the Temple of Literature. Helping *Te Tuu* has a *Tu Nghiep*, sent from the doctorate, has talent and virtue. *Tu Nghiep* gets *Tong ngu pham* position, the salary is 3 *quan* per month.

In addition to the two highest officials above, Quoc Tu Giam also has officials in charge of teaching including: *Truc giang* - Lecturer, *Tro giang* - Teaching Assistant, *Huan dao* - Instructor, *Ngu Kinh bac si* - the Confucian Five Classics Doctorate; each of them specializes in studying in depth a classic Confucian book to teach students.

Students in Quoc Tu Giam are called "Giam sinh", divided into the following types: "An Giam" is the student specially granted to study at the school by the king. "Am Giam" is the son of the officials of literature from the fourth grade upwards. "Cu Giam" is those who have passed the *Huong* examination but have not yet attended or have not yet passed the *Hoi* exam, go to Quoc Tu Giam to study and wait to the next *Hoi* exam. "Cong Sinh" are students who are selected from the locality according to feudal court regulations.

All of the students in Quoc Tu Giam are divided into 3 groups, each with 100 people as follows: *Thuong xa sinh* are those who have passed 3 *Huong* examinations and are paid a salary of 10 *tien* per month. *Trung xa sinh* are those who have passed two *Huong* examinations and receive a salary of 9 *tien* per month. *Ha xa sinh* are those who have passed one *Huong* examination and are granted 8 *tien* per month.

The main form of study is listening to teachers, listening to commentaries and practicing writing according to the examination types. The time of study in Quoc Tu Giam is 3 years, if the student does not pass the *Hoi* exam, he can still wait for the next examination until he passes. Students who travel to the capital to

study and wait for the *Hoi* examination can also register to listen to lecturers and commentaries at Quoc Tu Giam. Living in Quoc Tu Giam is quite tight, boarding students who are absent overnight or leave school for 1 or 2 days must apply for leave. If violating the rules of absence many times, they will be reprimanded, punished, expelled or forced to join the army.

The title *Giam sinh* appeared quite a lot on epitaph from the Mac dynasty, they were all highly educated Confucian scholars, invited to compose village epitaphs such as *Giam sinh Quoc Tu Giam Tinh Trai Pham Nhu Son* wrote the epitaphs of Sung Ninh pagoda (1568); or *Xa sinh Quoc Tu Giam Ta Don Phu* was the author of a stele records the restoration of Bao Phuc Pagoda in 1572.

Besides Quoc Tu Giam, the top national university in the country, there are other schools in the capital city work under the management of the feudal court such as *Ngu Tien Can Thi Cuc*, *Chieu Van Quan*, *Tu Lam Cuc*, *Trung Thu Giam* and *Sung Van Quan*.

Ngu Tien Can Thi Cuc, students are called *Can Thi Cuc*. It is unclear who can attend this school, but the old history books have recorded that there are children of officials and students who passed *Sinh Do* (生徒). After a period of study, these students have to take an exam given by *Bo Lai* (吏部) - the Ministry of Home Affairs and the candidate who passed the exam will be appointed a district official.

Chieu Van Quan, the students here are called *Nho sinh* (儒生 - Confucian student). People attending the school are mostly the eldest son of first-grade to third-grade officials.

Tu Lam Cuc, the students here are also called *Nho sinh*. They mainly are the eldest sons of the third-grade to eighth-grade officials.

Trung Thu Giam, the students are called *Hoa van hoc sinh*, most students here pass the examinations of writing and maths who are admitted. *Trung Thu Giam* can be considered as a supplementary school for the two subjects of mathematics and writing, retraining for proficiency to appoint positions.

Sung Van Quan. This is a special school for children of the aristocracy and high-level officials. After studying for 3 years, the examiner brings the list of scholars to the Ministry of Home Affairs to examine again: one article *ám tả* and two articles *khinh nghĩa* taken from the Confucian Four Books. Those who passed will become officials, can be officials of literature or martial officials. By this way, descendants of the mandarins do not need to pass Huong and Hoi exams but still have the way to become officials.

Although the Mac dynasty is not recorded much in the history, the epitaphs can confirm that Chieu Van Quan and Tu Lam Cuc still exist and have students attending: the epitaph of "Phuc Lam Hoang The" Pagoda (Ba Vi, Ha Tay) was inscribed in 1578: "Confucian scholar Le Duc Trong of Chieu Van Quan ... wrote"; or the stele record the restoration of Dai Tu pagoda (Hai Duong) in 1580 "was written by Confucian scholar Nguyen Cong Thuong of Tu Lam Cuc".

Along with the central school system is the local school system in *đạo*, *phủ*, and district. The local school is usually located in *Van chi* of *phủ* or in the district government office, normally is managed by *giao thu* and *huan dao*. The school has the task of gathering students on the 1st and 15th days (according to the Lunar calendar) every month to teach history, writing, marking and commentary. Before the exam, students can be gathered for a few weeks to study for the exam. Feudal officials in the "phu" and district will select and organize examinations to select scholars taking the Huong exam. In addition, the local feudal officials establish *Tu Van* Association which is an organization of Confucian scholars in the locality and build *Van chi* or *Van tu* to worship Confucius and ancient sages (including local Confucian seniors). Besides, it is also responsible for organizing the poetry and literature lectures. The epitaph about ancient sages in Tan Minh district (Hai Phong) engraved in 1574 states: "*Bo Ho Thuong Thu* handed over to district officials, granted 1000m² of paddy fields in Dong Ga land to build the temple of ancient sages for worshipping". At this time, *Tu Van* Association in Tan Minh District had nearly 200 members of 11 *tổng* (subordinate administrative units of the district); which included incumbent mandarins, scholars who passed the examinations and Confucianists living in the village. The association also regulated the annual ceremony on February 25th.

In addition to the Thang Long capital, Duong Kinh was considered the second capital of the Mac dynasty. The center of Duong Kinh is Co Trai village, the hometown of Mac Dang Dung now belongs to Ngu Doan commune, Kien Thuy, Hai Phong. It also established a school like in Thang Long, so there were educational officials associated with Duong Kinh land such as the title of *Hieu Sinh Duong Kinh* which was recorded by many epitaphs. For example, the epitaph that recorded the restoration of Linh Son pagoda in Ang Son commune, An Lao (1583) "was written by Dang Nhan Chieu, ... *Hieu Sinh Duong Kinh*"; or "Pham Ta Khac, *Hieu Sinh Duong Kinh* wrote" the stele in Truc Am pagoda, Du Le commune, Kien Thuy, Hai Phong. In addition, there are many epitaphs showing the location and scope of Duong Kinh such as the epitaph of Cu Linh Pagoda (Gia Phuc, Hai Duong) was built in 1534, recording: "The East via Lu Giang Bridge can reach Duong Kinh, the West through Bao Lam pagoda is to *Kinh su*", the stele in Duong Tan pagoda, Thuy Duong district, was built in 1589, said: "The north of pagoda is near the inner city, the South is near Duong Kinh, the road is to every place"; So, "It is convenient for passengers, traders, wherever to go. Farmers going to paddy fields and scholars going to *Kinh* (here means Duong Kinh) all come through this place".

Although the historical evidence is very scattered and meager, the above evidence shows that Duong King in Mac dynasty had a large school. The inscriptions on the stone stele record of the *Hieu Sinh Duong Kinh* title proved that under the rule of the Mac dynasty, the education in Duong Kinh was very developed, in fact, the number of Doctorates graduated in Duong Kinh, Hai Duong ranked second, just after Kinh Bac.

4.2. Private school system

The private school system existed in two forms: *Huong hoc* (village school) or private school (scholar's private school), most notably Bach Van school of Nguyen Binh Khiem has trained many talents for the country such as Phung Khac Hoan, Luong Huu Khanh, Nguyen Du ...

Private schools were opened throughout the hamlets surrounding Thang Long capital and the provinces, creating an educational network run by the people. These classes include many students of different ages and levels, regardless of the school year and grade. Students may apply for admission at any time.

Classrooms are usually located in the home of a scholar or in the house of a rich man who invites the scholar to teach his children and the surrounding students. Classes do not have chairs, the teacher sits on a cot or counters to lecture while students spread the mat on the floor or yard to sit, lie down on the mat to write. Although it is called *Huong hoc*, students here are getting full teaching, with content from low level to high level ensure the qualifications to take the exam.

The teacher does not collect monthly fees nor tuition fees, but depending on the circumstances, each student often contributes to the teacher in holidays or the homeowner keeps it and sends it to the teacher when he comes to visit home or when he needs it. Poor students are often exempt from school fees. All students who study with the same teacher are called *dong mon* (classmates).

Teachers in private schools include the following social components: First, those who have a certain level of education, passed *Sinh Do* but did not have the conditions to take *Huong* exam or did not pass the *Huong* exam many times. Secondly, those who have profound knowledge, achieved a high degree and went out to work as mandarins, but because they were bored or were dismissed, they retired to their homeland to become a teacher. Thirdly, those who have profound education but do not like to take the exam to be a mandarin or take the exam one or two times then hate the examination and return home to open classes for their children and surrounding students. All are referred to collectively as *Thầy đồ*.

Currently, there are not many documents detailing the number of private schools as well as the number of teachers and students in Mac dynasty. However, it can be affirmed that under the Mac dynasty, the private school system developed quite extensively, almost every village had several people attending school. Some typical teachers such as Nguyen Binh Khiem, Duong Phuc Tu, Tran Bao, Nguyen Khac Kinh, etc. are good teachers whose reputation has been praised and handed down to this day. They trained a large class of talented intellectuals who effectively served the Mac government apparatus.

5. Rate of passing

During the 65 years of reign, the Mac dynasty organized 22 examinations to pass 484 Doctorates. During the first 24 years (1529-1553), the Mac dynasty held 9 exams, taking 246 people (accounting for 50.8%). Especially under the reign of King Mac Dang Doanh (1530 - 1539), with only three examinations, the Mac dynasty had recruited 95 Doctorates (accounting for 19.63%), and they got three talented valedictorians: Nguyen Thien (1532), Nguyen Binh Khiem (1535) and Giap Hai (1538). Those valedictorians were outstanding intellectuals who not only served the Mac dynasty effectively but also had a significant influence on the history of national culture.

Among the 22 exams, the one with the highest passing rate was the year of Dog (1538) under the reign of Mac Dang Doanh with 36 doctors; The one with the lowest passing rate was the Year of the Ox (1565) under the reign of Mac Mau Hop, with only 16 people who passed the exam. Next is the examinations in 1544, 1568, 1571, 1574, 1580, 1589 and 1592, each only got 17 students. On average, each examination of the Mac dynasty took 22 people, quite a large number in a big exam. If comparing the number of examinations as well as the average number of doctoral graduates in an exam, the Mac dynasty is not inferior to the previous and subsequent dynasties.

Unit: *person/exam*

No	Dynasty	Number of examinations	Total of graduates	Average
1	Ly - Tran - Ho	19	74	3,9
2	Le So (1427 - 1527)	30	987	32,9
3	Mac (1527 - 1592)	22	484	22,0
4	Le Trung Hung (1533 - 1592)	7	45	6,0
	Le - Trinh (1593 - 1789)	66	729	11,0
5	Nguyen (1802 - 1919)	39	468	12,0

Table 2: Average number of graduate people per one examination through the dynasties

Source: Ngo Duc Tho (editor) (1993), *Vietnamese academicians (1075 - 1919)*, Literature Publishing House, Hanoi.

It can be seen that the average number of graduate people the Mac dynasty was quite high, only lower than the Le So dynasty and much higher than the Le Trung Hung dynasty.

Le So dynasty, over 100 years, organized 30 doctoral examinations, got 987 graduates; On average, an exam takes 32.9 doctorates and equivalent qualifications. As for the Mac dynasty, in just 65 years, they received 484 doctorates, with an average of 22 graduates per examination.

Whereas the Le Trung Hung dynasty, from the time of organizing the first examination (1554) to the final examination (1778), there were 73 exams, taking 774 graduates, and an average of 10.6 graduates per examination. If only take into account the period in Thanh Hoa (1554 - 1592), the Le Trung Hung dynasty opened 7 exams, took 45 graduates with the average number of students passing in an exam is 6.43, accounting for the lowest rate. In those seven exams, three exams in 1554, 1565, and 1577 were *Che Khoa*, got the *De nhat giap Che Khoa xuất than* degree (on the same level as the *De nhi giap Tien si*) and the *De nhi giap Dong Che Khoa xuất than* degree (the same as *De tam giap Dong Tien si*). The remaining four exams (1580, 1583, 1589, 1592) were Hoi exams, taking the “De nhi giap Tien si” degree and the *De tam giap Dong Tien si* degree, not taking the “De nhat giap Tien si” degree with the title of Tam Khoi. It also means that the Le Trung Hung dynasty in Thanh Hoa did not organize the Dinh exam. The highest title for the valedictorian in the examinations of the Le Trung Hung Dynasty in this period was only limited to the *De nhi giap Tien si* degree, or Hoang Giap.

In this regard, the examinations of the Mac dynasty was much better than the Lê Trung Hung dynasty. With 22 examinations, there are 11 examinations of the Mac dynasty had all the titles of Tam Khoi (Trang Nguyen, Bang Nhan, Tham Hoa). Remarkably, there were three examinations (1544, 1589, 1592), the Mac dynasty did not take Tam Khoi. As for the examinations after that, the valedictorian was only the Bang Nhan, or the Tham Hoa, sometimes only the “Dong Tien si xuất than” degree.

6. Number of Doctorates according to geographical areas.

Like the administrative units of the Le So Dynasty, during the Mac Dynasty, the whole country was divided into 1 prefecture (Phung Thien) in Thang Long Capital and 13 *đạo*(Thua tuyen) in the locality as follows: Kinh Bac, Son Nam, Son Tay, Hai Duong, Lang Son, Ninh Soc, Tuyen Quang, Hung Hoa, An Bang, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Thuan Hoa and Quang Nam. Nowadays, that range corresponds to the provinces of the plains and mountainous areas of the North to Binh Dinh province.

No	Names	1 st Armor			2 nd armor	3 rd armor	Total (Person)	Average (%)
		Trang nguyen	Bang nhan	Tham hoa				
1	Phung Thien prefecture				3	10	13	2.7
2	Hai Duong	3	4	5	35	98	145	30.0
3	Son Tay		3		12	40	55	11.4
4	Kinh Bac	5	1	10	37	115	168	34.7
5	An Bang				1		1	0.2
6	Son Nam	3	4	3	11	63	84	17.4
7	Thanh Hoa				1	6	7	1.4
8	Lang Son						0	
9	Hung Hoa					1	1	0.2
10	Ninh Soc					3	3	0.6
11	Tuyen Quang						0	
12	Nghe An				2	3	5	1.0
13	Thuan Hoa					2	2	0.4
14	Quang Nam						0	
Total	1 prefecture, 13 religions	11	12	18	102	341	484	100%

Table 3: Scholars divided by distribution area

Source: Ngo Duc Tho (editor) (1993), *Vietnamese academicians (1075 - 1919)*, Literature Publishing House, Hanoi.

The Mac dynasty scholars are distributed over a relatively wide area. In the whole country at that time, there were only three *đạo*: Lang Son (Lang Son province and some districts of Bac Giang province), Tuyen Quang (Tuyen Quang, Cao Bang, Yen Bai provinces, and some districts of Ha Giang province) and Quang Nam (Quang Nam, Quang Ngai and Binh Dinh provinces) do not have any Doctorate. The remaining *đạo*, with areas cover most of the plain and midland provinces of the North to the North of the Central region (Le Thuy district, Tan Binh prefecture, Thuan Hoa, now is Quang Binh province) all have Doctorates. In

particular, most of the scholars are concentrated in Tu Tran (Hai Duong, Kinh Bac, Son Tay and Son Nam), these four *đạo* have up to 452 doctorates with 11 Trang Nguyen, accounting for 93.4% total doctorates in Mac Dynasty. Next is Phung Thien prefecture in Thang Long with 13 graduates (accounting for 2.7%) and Thanh Hoa with 7 Doctors (1.4%); Nghe An has 5 doctorates (accounting for 1.0%); there are 3 doctorates in Ninh Soc (accounting for 0.6%); There are 2 doctorates in Thuan Hoa (accounting for 0.4%). The lowest is An Bang and Hung Hoa, each has only 1 doctor, accounting for 0.2%.

In the area of Tu Tran, two *đạo* with the highest number of doctorates were Kinh Bac and Hai Duong. These two *đạo* had total 313 doctorates with 8 Trang Nguyen, accounting for 64.7% of the total number of doctorates. This area had the highest number of doctorates in the whole country of the Mac dynasty because the area of Tu Tran is a region with the tradition of learning and academics. This area is near Thang Long capital so there are many good teachers and families with the tradition of academic learning. According to folk tales and genealogy of the lineages, the successful people come from families with a tradition of inheritance, from a young age, they have revealed their intelligence, eagerness to learn, and determination to continue the glory of the ancestors. The initial success of a family member has created the foundation and momentum for their descendants as well as the people in the village vying to study and take feudal examinations. In addition, this land was also the homeland of Mac Dang Dung, the development land of the Mac dynasty, so it was interested in building by the kings of the Mac dynasty.

Before 1533, the Mac dynasty essentially took control and management of the entire Dai Viet territory. In particular, from those *đạo* of the northern border such as Lang Son, Tuyen Quang, Ninh Soc, Hung Hoa and An Bang to the border with China and Laos are all controlled by the Mac dynasty. In 1538, Trần Phi was a “Thuong Thu” in the ministry of Ceremony and concurrently was the “Thua tuyen su” of Hung Hoa. As for those *đạo* of the south such as Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Thuan Hoa, and Quang Nam, they were also ruled by the royal officials. In 1530, “*Thai su Lan Quoc Cong* Mac Quoc Trinh defended Hoa Lam palace” belonging to Tong Son (Ha Trung, Thanh Hoa). In 1532, Dang Doanh “let Trung Hau eunuch ... serve as the general, send troops to protect three *phu* of Thanh Hoa and also manage the officials of the army”, then “bisect Thanh Hoa ... leaving Le Phi Thua to govern, together with Trung Hau hau, to control each other”. Even the remote areas like Thuan Hoa were as peaceful as Le Quy Don's comment: “Nguy Mac usurped the throne, and his younger brother Nguy Tin Vuong Mac Quyet considered Thuan Hoa area. At that time, the local authorities were in turmoil, the landlord brought troops to fight each other, when they heard that Mac Dang Dung usurped the throne and sent officials to comfort them, they all obeyed temporarily”.

But since Le Trung Hung's reign (1533) and the beginning of the South-North dynasty (1546), the management area of the Mac dynasty was narrowed. While the Thanh - Nghe area was originally the Le Dynasty's land, gradually controlled by the South Dynasty; then the Thuan Quang area since being protected by Nguyen Hoang (1558) actually belonged to the South dynasty: “*Since then, Mac Phuc Nguyen did not dare to look at the Thuan Quang area*”. The Mac dynasty lost its ability to control the northwest region, including Dai Dong (Tuyen Quang) in fact occupied by the headman Vu Van Mat who actually did surrender the Le dynasty (the descendant of Vu Van Mat during the Le Trung Hung period still occupied Dai Dong and built Viet Tinh citadel until 1699). Therefore, the main control area of the Mac dynasty was only from *đạo* Son Nam to the North with Duong Kinh as the center, a strong base, attached and loyal to the Mac dynasty. In fact, this land under the Mac dynasty was quite stable and prosperous as acknowledged by Le Quy Don: In 1532, under the reign of Mac Dang Doanh, “*after several years of good harvest, the people of Tu Tran were peaceful*”.

In particular, there are 3 *đạo*, namely Thanh Hoa, Nghe An and Thuan Hoa, which are mainly under the management of the Le Trung Hung dynasty, but still have 14 Doctorates (accounting for 2.89%), showing the effectiveness of the policies to use and attract talents of the Mac dynasty. As for *đạo* Son Nam, although the number of Doctorates is 84, and mainly concentrated around Thang Long, Kinh Bac and Hai Duong, while few in the Nam Son Nam region (Nam Dinh, Ninh Binh). There is no doctorate in the area of Ninh Binh today, because this place is a buffer zone of war, a battlefield between two forces of the North and the South dynasty.

Regarding the examinations in the South, during the Trinh - Nguyen period (1533-1788), the lords of Nguyen dynasty in the South mainly expanded the territory, gathered people to reclaim land, organized the feudal government, recruit soldiers, hoarded food and dug trenches to deal with the lords of Trinh dynasty; Therefore, education was almost neglected. Until 1674, the lord of Nguyen dynasty opened the examination of *Chinh do* and *Hoa van*. The study and examinations in the South during the time of Lord Nguyen were too sketchy, mainly for recruiting administrative workers. The number of people going to school and taking exams was not recorded but could be identified as quite small.

III. CONCLUSION

After 65 years of reign in the Thang Long capital, despite constantly fighting the opposition forces and then running to Cao Bang, the Mac Dynasty has done many things with the most outstanding achievements are education development policy, using the old dynasty's intellectuals, and training talented people for the new dynasty.

Although initially facing many difficulties, by the time Mac Dang Doanh ascended the throne, the education of the Mac dynasty had great changes. Policies of educational development from central to local levels of the Mac dynasty created a lively learning atmosphere nationwide. It is no coincidence that right from the first examination of the Mac dynasty in 1529, more than 4,000 scholars were jostling each other to compete for the exam. The Mac Dynasty held a total of 22 examinations, the number of Doctorates was 484, including 11 Trang Nguyen. With the number of examinations and the number of doctoral graduates mentioned above, it can be seen that the Mac Dynasty is not inferior to any feudal dynasties of Vietnam in organizing examinations and training talented people. The Mac dynasty was also the only one after the Le Thanh Tong dynasty to continuously implement the three-year sequential regulation of organizing an examination in the history of the feudal education of Vietnam.

Besides, to encourage scholars and promote the examination, the Mac dynasty also followed the Le dynasty to set up doctoral steles in Van Mieu (Temple of Literature). Engraved the name to the stone steles which last forever in Van Mieu is the noblest grace that feudal dynasties bestowed on the great scholars. The Mac dynasty not only erected steles, honoring the Doctors of their dynasty but also erected steles engraved with the names of pre-dynasty Doctorates. Unfortunately, due to the constant war, the erection of the steles was not conducted frequently.

It can be said that the Mac dynasty built strong support for itself, maintaining its rule in a very complex social context, enticed the intellectual class which was sharply divided, competed for influence with the feudal forces Le - Trinh - Nguyen, and that education contributed significantly to contemporary national culture. The great intellectuals who have grown up under the Mac dynasty increasingly elevate this dynasty in historical flows, such as Nguyen Binh Khiem, Giap Hai, Nguyen Du... who contributed to cultural development and honored the national pride.

The global media landscape is going through enormous changes, media organizations are racing with the ever-increasing technological advancement. The internet is proving to be an aggressive medium, taking over much of the work that television, radio and the newspaper used to do (Pew Research Center, 2012). The global perspective shows that North America with a population of 363,844,662 had a total of 345,660,847 internet users with 95.0% penetration rate in 2017. South America with a population of 428,240,515 had a total of 306,349,946 internet users in the same year with a penetration rate of 71.5 %. Europe on the other hand, with a population of 827,650,849 in 2018, has 704,833,752 internet users with a penetration of 85.2% in 2017 (Internet world stat, 2018). This situation painted by the cited figures is an important point of departure in examining the impact of digital media on traditional newspapers. In the digital era, media content is made available to people without any difficulties, simply by the click of the mouse or the tap of the finger. Less than 30 years ago, when the internet was still in its infancy, people across the globe depended on watching TV, listening to radio or reading a printed newspaper. But now with the technological advancement of the internet and other digital platforms, one can get information from a source that is thousands of miles away (Gates, 2002) thus the internet has revolutionised the communication industry. The dissolution of temporal and spatial constraints to the dissemination of information through the use of digital media presents a two faceted situation to the newspaper: a menace and a messiah, or a threat and an opportunity. A threat caused by a migration of readers to online platforms and an opportunity for print newspapers to adapt to business strategies that are cheap, constant and offer a seamless and continuous engagement with readers.

The information highway, which was described by UNESCO (1997) as a high-speed global network capable of routing to subscribers at high speed a series of new interactive services has allowed for the digitalisation of almost every information medium. News can be shared from one person to another using different platforms. One person can read a news story from online newspapers and share that story by twitting it or sharing it on Facebook, a person who is connected to the initial web surfer will then read the news story without having to search for it, by following the link to the newspaper's website. This can have either positive or negative impacts on the newspapers, positive in the sense that it is easier to reach a wider audience and also the chance to increase diversification as well as getting feedback from readers that can eventually create sources for more news stories. The gathering, production and distribution of news in the era of digitization being immense benefits. UNESCO (1997) argues that newspaper production is now fully controlled by computers, from web tension to ink feed, from registration of four-colour prints to the inserting of quires, down to the counting of copies at the delivering unit. The negative impact comes when the newspaper loses revenue due to drops in circulation as well as the confidence of advertisers. Competition gets stiffer with the use of digital platforms; increasing numbers of people are divorcing the newspaper for social media and other online sources of news.

According to Peeter (2009) with the changing time and trend, Digital newspapers and magazines are emerging as a great method for people to gather information and remain up to date with the latest developments around the world. Newspapers readers are migrating from buying hard copy of newspapers to the convenient online newspapers. Digitisation impacts on print newspapers by reducing the sales of printed newspapers since more and more people are shifting their focus towards digital newspapers thus compelling traditional print

media to act fast in order to survive the digital revolution. Peeter further argues that digital newspapers are more convenient than the ordinary newspapers as the user avoids the hassle of flipping through pages. In this fast-paced digital era, readers no longer have time to sit down with a paper text and sift through page after page to find what they are looking for. This work of searching for information is made easier through digitization. Another negative impact that digital media have on traditional newspapers is that of market fragmentation caused by the multiplication of cable channels and websites with newspapers losing vital classified advertisements revenue to online operations. The decades-long slow constriction of circulation threatens to close the print newspaper arteries unless they snag the next generation of readers. The only choice newspapers have is to go to digital platforms. Bell (2009) suggested that for their survival, print newspapers must monetize the online version in a way that is similar to how they are able to monetize print.

In Namibia, internet access is on the increase on individual and household levels. There were 570,000 Facebook subscribers in 2017. With an increasing popularity of social media, the threat for traditional media is real as millions of readers now share information through online platforms.

Digital media are becoming so sophisticated to the extent that newspapers now use videos on their website in order to keep their news up-to-date. These developments have tremendous impacts on newspapers. Lyons (2014) concluded that newspapers which do not realise they live and operate in the digital era and are not willing to shift to digital platforms, will eventually collapse. Although UNESCO (1997) predicted the decline of print newspapers with the advent of new media, the Namibian print media remains a strong medium in the face of this technological evolution. Its impact on the Namibian print media is discussed in this article under the Impact of Digitization.

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