

## The philosophy about human life in Buddhism with current Quang Ninh Culture

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### Abstract

Through more than 2,000 years of development, Buddhism gradually incarnates, integrates into the spiritual life of Vietnamese people and becomes the source of a number of cultural values through adaptation to suit the nation's culture and society. Buddhism accompanies and contributes to enriching cultural identity and integrating into Vietnamese social life. In Quang Ninh, with the philosophy of life containing the spirit of tolerance, Buddhism develops very strongly and has a high reputation in the spiritual life of the people there. Currently, Buddhism in Quang Ninh participates more and more in local economic, political and social activities. Quang Ninh Buddhism is closer to the ethnic community, further consolidating the great solidarity of the whole people. Quang Ninh Buddhism has attached itself to the depth of culture, focused more on life, helped the less fortunate and unfortunate through charity programs to make religion and life more closely related.

**Keywords:** Philosophy of human life, Buddhism, culture, Quang Ninh.

### 1. Basic content of Buddhist philosophy of life

The human perspective is a central part of Buddhist philosophy. The highest goal of Buddhism is to solve the problems of human life. The starting point of the idea of liberation in Buddhist philosophy is from the viewpoint of sufferings in human life. The ultimate goal of liberation is to eliminate the ignorance and confusion of people, to reach full enlightenment, to realize one's own nature and the reality of all things with a clear mind. From there, get rid of all the sufferings of life. That is also the realm of Nirvana (Nivana).

Nirvana is the state in which people have escaped the cycle of impermanence, freed from "taha" (lust). Nirvana is the destination of those who follow the Buddhist teachings. From the Buddhist point of view, Nirvana can be attained in this world, attained in this life without waiting for the next life: "The one who understands the truth, Nirvana, is the happiest person in the world. He is liberated from all "complexes", all obsessions, worries, difficulties and problems that torment others. That person's mental health is perfect. He does not regret the past, does not worry about the future, only lives in the present moment"<sup>1</sup>.

From the Buddhism point of view, human sufferings are not caused by oppression, exploitation, ethnic oppression, or class oppression... but the cause is in each of us.

<sup>1</sup> Walpola Rahulam (1994), *The Buddha's Teaching (Learning about Theravada Buddhism)*, Ca Mau Publisher, p.94.

It is the existence of man that is also suffering (Birth - Aging - Sickness - Death) due to the "eight sufferings" - the eight basic sufferings of every human's life. Affirming that human life is immersed in sufferings, yet why do people have to endure those sufferings?

Buddhism points out that the cause of sufferings in each person's life is the Lust (Tanha) of each person, due to the bad habits and the accumulation of bad habits. Human sufferings are caused by man himself and it is desire, lust, greed that has developed all forms of sufferings.

Lust in the process of movement and development results in what follows, that process leads to the formation of the movement of the twelve causes sufferings "twelve predestined conditions" (stupidity, persecution, consciousness, reputation-beauty, six senses, feeling, longevity, love, conservative, existence, birth, old age and death) are like a chain entwined with each other, having neither beginning nor end, one is the cause of the other and helps the other to exist. It is like a complete unity, one is having all twelve, it is both a cause of birth and a cause of loss. The most direct cause for the existence of Dukkha is "lust" and as long as "lust" is still born and exists, the cycle of reincarnation will continue. It can only cease when the power that controls it - lust - is cut off by wisdom, which sees reality, truth and Nirvana.

When pointing out the nature of human life is sufferings, pointing out the causes leading to those sufferings, Buddhism also comes to affirm that people can completely escape sufferings from the cessation of suffering (Dukkha) through the process of gathering to eliminate lust. In that process, people must be compassionate, patient, joyful, and aware of the Buddha's mind in order to be able to be liberated.

Through the viewpoints of the Truth of Suffering, the Practice Soles, and the Truth of Cessation, Buddhism has pointed out that the nature of human life is sufferings, the cause of sufferings in each person's life is due to their lust or the internal causes of each person. Although human life is miserable, we should not be pessimistic, people can completely eliminate all sufferings by eliminating "lust". The result is that the person who has eradicated "lust" has reached Nirvana (Nirvana). The final goal in the path of cultivation that the Buddha pointed out.

According to Buddhism, to be able to get rid of the sufferings of life, each of us must practice according to the eight paths that are the Eight Right Paths (Ariya Atthangika Mayga) (right view, right thought, right speech, right karma, right destiny, righteous direction, righteous thoughts, and right concentration) - these are the "eight righteous paths or eight miraculous means leading people to the sublime life"<sup>2</sup>.

Thus, it is easy to see that the Buddhist doctrines and ideas about the human outlook are aimed at helping people realize the true nature of human life and thereby helping people to get rid of those sufferings. Like all other religions, Buddhism has always promoted the "moral" factor, always trying to advise people to live a life towards good things and avoid evils... consider it a way for people to free themselves.

On the basis of studying and pointing out that the nature of human life is sufferings, the Buddhist view of life has found the cause of sufferings are stupidity, the twelve

<sup>2</sup> HT. Thich Thien Hoa (2000), *Buddhist Studies (Book 1)*, Ho Chi Minh City Buddhist Association Publisher, p.540.

predestined conditions... Therefore, people always seek to end sufferings, free from sufferings, and achieve compassion in life, which is the purpose and meaning of human life. To achieve those goals, Buddhism has also shown the method of ending sufferings, which is: Precepts - Concentration - Wisdom: Eight Right Paths, Five Precepts, Ten Goodnesses, Six Doctrines... The Buddhist philosophy of life aims at the highest goal of explaining the sufferings in human life and finding a way to free people from all sufferings and the cycle of karmic retribution.

## 2. The current situation of Buddhism in Quang Ninh

Quang Ninh is a coastal province in the Northeast region of Vietnam, with a natural area of 611,081.3 hectares. The whole province has 250 km of coastline and 132.8 km of national border; border and territorial waters with China; 13 administrative units including 07 districts, 02 towns and 04 provincial cities. The current population is more than 1.32 million people with many ethnic groups living together<sup>3</sup>. The population distribution is uneven, mainly concentrated in urban areas and western districts.

Quang Ninh is a land with a long history and culture, with features and geographical location that have facilitated Buddhism to be spread to Quang Ninh early. Buddhism appeared in this land very early. Before King Tran Thai Tong (1225-1258) came to Buddhism in Yen Tu mountain, there were already many monks there. King Tran Nhan Tong (1279-1293) chose Yen Tu as the place to become a monk and established the Truc Lam Zen lineage in Vietnam. In the 14th century, Yen Tu and Quynh Lam (Dong Trieu) were the centers of Vietnamese Buddhism to train monks and nuns for the whole country. Many centuries later, Buddhism continues to maintain with hundreds of pagodas in Quang Ninh, including famous temples such as Loi Am Pagoda, Long Tien Pagoda (Ha Long), Cai Bau Pagoda (Van Don), Linh Khanh (Tra Co - Mong Cai), Ba Vang (Uong Bi), Ho Thien (Dong Trieu), Linh Quang (Quan Lan)... In particular, more than 720 years ago, in 1299, King Tran Nhan Tong - the 3rd most intelligent king of the Tran Dynasty returned to Yen Tu mountain to take the religious name Huong Van Dai Dau Da to become a monk. Truc Lam Yen Tu Zen sect - the only independent Buddhism founded and led by the Vietnamese. Since then, Quang Ninh has been the birthplace of Truc Lam Buddhism and the capital of Dai Viet Buddhism, writing the tradition of patriotism and dharma associated with the nation of Vietnamese Buddhism.

Experiencing the ups and downs of history, monks and nuns, Quang Ninh Buddhists always accompany the nation. Currently, Quang Ninh has 159 pagodas, of which 31 are recognized as historical and cultural relics by the state, 107 are being cared for by monks, nuns and Buddhists, and 52 pagodas are currently ruins or occupied. Currently, the whole province has more than 600 monks and nuns who directly abdicate, study and practice religion at monasteries and over 165 thousand lay Buddhists living in 230 ashrams, groups and associations<sup>4</sup>.

As of April 1, 2019, in Quang Ninh, there are 6 different religions accounting for

<sup>3</sup> Statistical report of Quang Ninh Provincial People's Committee in 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Document of the 4th Buddhist Congress of Quang Ninh Province, term 2017-2022, 2017, p.10

89,455 people, of which, Catholicism has 44,330 followers at most, Buddhism has 44,278 followers, Protestantism has 552 followers, Cao Dai religion has 87 followers, Islam (Islamism) has 07 followers, Pure Land Buddhist Association of Vietnam has 01 follower<sup>5</sup>. The highlight of the situation of Buddhism in Quang Ninh is the uneven distribution in localities. The monks, nuns, Buddhists and monasteries are mainly concentrated in urban districts, towns and cities, such as: Ha Long, Cam Pha, Uong Bi, Dong Trieu, Quang Yen; in mountainous, island and eastern districts, there are very few monks and nuns, Buddhists and monasteries such as Binh Lieu, Ba Che, and Co To.

In the current period, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in Quang Ninh province has developed comprehensively in all aspects. That result proves the tradition of protecting the nation and the people for 2,000 years of Vietnamese Buddhist history, demonstrating the motto of the Buddhist Sangha of Vietnam, Daoism - Nationality - Socialism and demonstrating the effective concern of the Party, Government and fronts at all levels towards Buddhism. That result affirms the maturity in all aspects of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in Quang Ninh province in the hearts of the people. Buddhist monks and nuns in Quang Ninh province have constantly upheld the tradition of patriotism, attachment to the nation of Vietnamese Buddhism, solidarity and harmony; everyone wholeheartedly better serve the Dharma and the nation. Quang Ninh is proud to be the land of the relic of Vietnamese Buddhism with 29 monasteries recognized by the state as historical - cultural and artistic relics.

#### **- Increase work**

Currently, the Executive Board of the Buddhist Sangha in Quang Ninh province has 37 members who are typical Buddhist monks, nuns and laypeople; 02 district Buddhist Sanghas are: Ba Che and Co To. This is a strong and comprehensive development step in terms of organization; creating a premise to propagate the Buddhadharma to remote, isolated and border areas. Currently, in the whole province, there are more than 600 monks and nuns (of which 80% are young monks and nuns), 4 most venerables, 99 pagodas with monks and nuns concentrated in 12/13 districts, towns and cities. The province currently has 159 Buddhist worshipping establishments and Buddhist ruins, of which 107 are operating temples and 52 are ruins, 99 are abbots and Buddhist monks and nuns<sup>6</sup>. Every year, the Buddhist Executive Board of Quang Ninh province deploys the information of the Central Buddhist Sangha to direct and organize the settlement work for monks and nuns throughout the province at 3 settlements: Trinh pagoda, Quynh Lam, and Quynh Lam pagoda. Lan Pagoda - Truc Lam Yen Tu Zen Monastery with 330 monks and nuns<sup>7</sup>.

Every year, more than 250 monks and nuns come to live in concentration and the number of following years is higher than the previous year. Lower schools also organize extra-curricular activities to visit scenic monuments, organize a great ceremony to pray for, support and charity in the central provinces and the northern mountainous provinces. The Board of Directors of the Buddhist Sangha has appointed 31 monks and nuns to be abbots of temples in the province. Monks and nuns who wish to

<sup>5</sup> Survey results of the 2019 Vietnam Population and Housing Census, General Statistics Office.

<sup>6</sup> Survey results of the 2019 Vietnam Population and Housing Census, General Statistics Office.

<sup>7</sup> Report on Buddhist affairs in 2019, Quang Ninh.

receive and transfer to appropriate religious activities will be handled in accordance with the Charter of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and the laws of the State.

In general, the living situation of monks and nuns and Buddhists at the monasteries in the province is relatively stable, united, in harmony, in compliance with the charter of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, the regulations of the Central Committee of Sangha, and implementation of the regulations, well implement legal policies, fulfill civic duties, effectively implement the motto of the Buddhist Sangha: “Dharma - Nationality - Socialism”, contributing solemnly to the development of the Buddhist Sangha in the hearts of the nation.

#### ***- Education work for monks and nuns***

The Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in Quang Ninh province has 28 undergraduates and post-graduates, 76 monks and nuns attending the Vietnam Buddhist Academy, 10 monks and nuns studying at Buddhist intermediate schools such as: Hanoi , Hai Phong, Hai Duong, Ho Chi Minh City, Bac Ninh. Currently, the Buddhist Sangha has 3 students who have completed their study abroad program in China and returned home, 2 have studied abroad in Japan.

#### ***- The work of guiding Buddhists***

Due to the specificity of Buddhism, the Buddhist Guidance Board organized the practice of Bat Quan Trai Gioi at the temple to attract a large number of Buddhists to participate in the practice. At the same time, art clubs, Buddhist martial arts clubs, activities and summer training classes for young Buddhists are held regularly at Trinh pagoda (Yen Tu), Ba Vang Pagoda (Yen Tu) and Ba Vang pagoda (Uong Bi), Canh Huong Pagoda (Dong Trieu), Long Tien Pagoda, Hung Quoc Pagoda (Ha Long), Pha Thien Pagoda (Cam Pha), Cai Bau Pagoda (Van Don), Phuc Khanh Pagoda (Hoang Bo), Xuan Pagoda Orchid (Mong Cai).

Over the years, it has taken refuge in more than 20,000 lay people and newly-enlisted Buddhists, paying special attention to developing Buddhists in the border areas of islands, mountains, and ethnic minorities. Currently, the whole Quang Ninh province has more than 165 thousand Buddhists, accounting for about 18% of the population, living in 230 Buddhist ashrams, groups and associations, especially the number of Buddhists is increasingly rejuvenated and educated.<sup>8</sup>. In addition, representatives of Buddhists and monks and nuns also actively participate in the Study Promotion Association, the Red Cross, the Youth Union, the Victims of Agent Orange Dioxin, the Association for the Support of the Disabled and Orphans, Women’s Union, Veterans Association... at all levels and many other organizations making great contributions to the construction and defense of the Fatherland.

The Buddhist Sangha has actively coordinated with the Religious Affairs Department - Department of Home Affairs, the Vietnam Fatherland Front Committee of Quang Ninh province to organize many training courses on religious law knowledge for monks, nuns, and Buddhists in order to improve legal knowledge about the Party and State’s religious policies. As a member of the great national unity bloc, the monks, nuns and Buddhists of Quang Ninh province are always associated with the nation in all activities for the stability and development of the country.

The monks, nuns, and Buddhists of Quang Ninh province always uphold the patriotic

<sup>8</sup> Document of the 4th Buddhist Congress of Quang Ninh Province, term 2017-2022, 2017, p.15.

tradition of attachment to the nation of 2000 years of Vietnamese Buddhism on the path of serving the Dharma and the nation, actively participating in and completing well the work of benefiting the country, benefiting the people, protecting the fatherland, protecting the environment, building a cultural lifestyle in the residential area, building a new countryside, and contributing to the consolidation of the government, the front and the unions. People trust to introduce many monks and nuns abbot of monasteries to participate in local elections.

### **3. The value of Buddhist philosophy of life to Quang Ninh culture**

#### **3.1. Buddhist human values to morality and lifestyle**

Over the past 2000 years, Buddhism has gradually incarnated, integrated into the spiritual life of Vietnamese people in general and Quang Ninh people in particular, and become the source of a number of cultural values through transformation, doctrinal content, beliefs, and forms of organization to suit the spiritual life of the people.

To get that, first of all, Buddhism has transformed itself to adapt to the identity of the national culture. The Buddhist principle of compassion, taking peace as the core, with a simple and open attitude has influenced the minds of Quang Ninh people; encourage them to think and act according to good moral standards. The outstanding feature of Buddhism is that it is rich in love and peace-loving, imprinted with the spirit of humanity and charity, always teaching people to do good things and avoid evils... so Buddhism is easy to follow by a large population in a city with 21 ethnic minorities like Quang Ninh, it is both a consolation and a secular belief of believers. Quang Ninh Buddhism has both accompanied and contributed to enriching the local cultural identity; Integrating into social life, Buddhism is not only a teaching but also a practice, a world entry. With the desire for a peaceful life, opposing the war... has made Buddhism close to the people, associated with the national culture to become a number of ethical criteria that everyone wants to aim for. In leading mankind to a religious way of life, the Buddha only advised people to practice the Dharma by realizing their core values and giving up evil deeds after understanding the bad consequences of such behaviours. Buddha upholds the thought of compassion and equanimity to advise people to serve and help others by showing generosity and kindness in an impartial manner, helping those in difficulty so that they can get rid of their pain, sadness, worries.

In Buddhist ethics, each person's responsibility for the good and bad deeds of his body and mind is highly emphasized. The standards in the Buddhist ethical system are very close to the traditional moral values of Quang Ninh people, so they were quickly accepted by them. Through the long process of accompanying the nation, Buddhism with its humane and human values has contributed to the formation of the lifestyle of the people of Quang Ninh. The fact of national history has proved that tolerance, peace, and generosity in the way of governing the country of the Tran dynasties (the period when Buddhism played the role of the dominant ideology of society) largely attribute to Buddhism, especially Truc Lam Yen Tu meditation.

Regarding communication etiquette in the family, Buddhism always emphasizes the

harmony and responsibility of fathers and mothers. The Buddha taught that husband and wife must love and be faithful to each other. Parents have the responsibility to advise their children to do good things, to prevent their children from doing evils. At the same time, Buddhism also promotes the filial piety of children to grandparents and parents through the implementation of the Four Gifts. According to the Buddhist concept, a perfect family must take love seriously and family members must overcome suffering by themselves and help each other out of suffering to achieve happiness.

Up to now, Buddhism is still a religion close to psychology and spiritual needs of many people in Quang Ninh. They perceive Buddhism from the human nature of its teachings, through encouraging people to live and do good things, advising people to stay away, prevent evil, and know how to stop before "greed - hatred - delusion", not to be fooled by excessive ambitions, ... many Buddhist teachings are meaningful in building human morality, making the spiritual life of society healthier and healthier.

### **3.2. Buddhist human values to culture and art**

Buddhism in the process of formation and development in Quang Ninh has been deeply ingrained in the daily life, emotions, culture, and morality of the nation and integrated into the people there naturally. Buddhism permeates the local culture there as naturally and as easily as water seeps into the soil. Buddhism spread, having a certain place in the hearts of the nation, Buddhist teachings deeply ingrained in the way of thinking of the people of Quang Ninh, becoming invaluable spiritual values for the people. Buddhism forms the mainstream throughout the history of the nation. In the most sacred and intimate cultural garden, Buddhism has left a deep impression on many areas of the social life of the indigenous people. It not only has a profound impact on the psychology and morality of the people of Quang Ninh, but also has a strong influence on culture and art.

Yen Tu, the cradle of Zen Buddhism, also contains cultural and religious elements; This is the place where a Buddhist sect was discovered - Truc Lam Yen Tu. This place is the process of interference and contact between Buddhism and Taoism creating the spiritual cultural space of Yen Tu. That cultural interference and acculturation is expressed in landscape creation, in architectural art and decorative arts with diverse cultural developments through historical periods. Truc Lam Buddhism - the first ecclesiastical organization in the history of Vietnamese Buddhism; Truc Lam Zen is a practice meditation, a thought for people to contemplate in thinking, acting and living. Truc Lam Zen flourished in the Tran dynasty and existed throughout history, it is associated with solving human and life problems of the Tran dynasty.

Yen Tu relic - scenic complex has long been considered a holy land of Vietnamese Buddhism, because of its long history and international cultural values that Yen Tu possesses. Yen Tu sacred mountain is famous mainly for its spiritual culture associated with the thought and quintessence of Buddhism, with the religious life, practice and transformation into Buddha of Buddha Emperor Tran Nhan Tong and the spirit of entering the world, attaching religion to life. of the Truc Lam Yen Tu Zen School. With a system of relics of hundreds of ancient and sacred pagodas, temples and towers and meaningful and unique spiritual festivals, Yen Tu on average welcomes about 2 million visitors each year to visit, worship, and visit all four places. seasons. Yen Tu accounts for 60% of the total number of visitors of the type of spiritual tourism in

Quang Ninh. Among the more than 600 historical and cultural relics and scenic spots of the province, there are many relics that become attractive tourist destinations that attract a large number of tourists every year. Exploiting this advantage, Quang Ninh has developed spiritual tourism with a series of typical monuments and landscapes: Tran Dynasty historical relic (Dong Trieu town), Yen Tu landscape relic complex, pagoda Ba Vang (Uong Bi), Loi Am Pagoda and Long Tien Pagoda (Ha Long), Cua Ong Temple (Cam Pha), Cai Bau Pagoda (Van Don District) ... form a sustainable spiritual tourist destination, developing at the right level. , making an important contribution to turning tourism into a spearhead economic sector of the province.

The influence of the outstanding Buddhist ideas of Buddha Emperor Tran Nhan Tong, along with the birth of Truc Lam Buddhism, contributed greatly to the brilliant development of Buddhism in the Tran dynasty and the prosperity of Dai Viet country, becoming a symbol of unique spiritual values of the Vietnamese people, creating a solid foundation for the brilliant development of Buddhism in Quang Ninh in particular and Vietnamese Buddhism in the future. According to the history of Vietnamese Buddhism, the Yen Tu sect was born from the merger of the three Zen schools of Bhikkhuni Da Luu Chi, Vo Ngon Thong and Thao Duong. The outstanding features of Yen Tu cultural and spiritual space are reflected in the system of temples, pagodas, amms and towers. The system of relics in this heritage area includes dozens of temples, hundreds of temples, towers, thousands of rare and ancient relics, especially scriptures and rare books containing spiritual values, thoughts of the Truc Lam Zen school. The spiritual cultural space of Yen Tu also has a festival culture imbued with spiritual elements of religion and belief. The cultural and spiritual characteristics of Yen Tu come from the sacred space of the topography, from the Zen Buddhist sect which is the soul of the culture, the system of temples and festivals that make up the uniqueness of spiritual culture.

The folk festival is spread over a large space and has a Buddhist connection between places in the province to become a very attractive and sacred cultural and spiritual space attracting pilgrims from all over the country about Quang Ninh land. Buddhism is present in many areas of life in Quang Ninh - through spiritual beliefs, beliefs, thoughts, philosophies, cultural lines - national history. In particular, the investment in developing spiritual tourism through the conservation and effective exploitation of the system of historical relics and scenic spots in the province in recent years is an important fulcrum, contributing to the development of spiritual tourism, affirming the position of Quang Ninh as an attractive spiritual and cultural tourist destination on the world tourist map.

The Buddhist value that directly affects the village temple has left in the hearts of the people of Quang Ninh which are the architectural works of temples with high artistic value, imbued with national identity, contributing to making people's lives better. The cultural and spiritual life of the people there is increasingly rich and healthy... The Buddhist temple has become a village temple, a common entertainment place for the whole community. Buddhist activities have become a cultural activity in people's daily lives. The Buddhist temple is also a sacred space for people in Quang Ninh to entrust their faith. The village pagoda has become the cultural center of many villages in Quang Ninh. It is a place where people, in addition to performing rituals, can also

come to learn from farming experience, receive medical treatment by monks, teach literacy, and “village temples and Buddhist landscapes” have truly become cultural beauty of Vietnam. The village is the place where the heart is anchored.

The Buddhist architecture, in which prominent are large and small temples, diverse and vivid Buddha statues... are symbols of Buddhism. Buddhist addresses such as Trinh pagoda (Yen Tu), Ba Vang pagoda (Uong Bi), Canh Huong pagoda (Dong Trieu), Long Tien pagoda, Hung Quoc pagoda (Ha Long), Pha Thien pagoda (Cam Pha), pagodas Cai Bau (Van Don), Phuc Khanh Pagoda (Hoang Bo), Xuan Lan Pagoda (Mong Cai) ... are both historical monuments and the pride of Quang Ninh culture, attracting the participation of a large number of people.

### **3.3. Buddhist human values to social security**

Social welfare activities are the core ideology of Buddhism. Promoting the tradition of sticking with and accompanying the nation, Quang Ninh Buddhism always actively participates in humanitarian, charity and social work activities in the spirit of compassion and salvation of Buddhism along with the Vietnamese tradition of compassion.

Buddhism develops with the spirit of entering the world by a simple path of ten good deeds to solve social security problems. Promoting the compassionate spirit of Buddhism and the benevolent tradition of the Vietnamese people, over the years, the Vietnamese Buddhist Executive Board of Quang Ninh province has directed the Buddhist Sangha of districts and towns, monks and nuns, and Buddhists in the whole province actively working in the field of charity and humanitarian relief. Some pagodas in the province have organized to take care of the lonely elderly and orphans such as Phuc Nghiem Pagoda (Dong Trieu), Trung Dong Pagoda (Quang Yen) to take care of nearly 20 homeless orphans. Quang Ninh Buddhist Sangha, monks and nuns, pagodas in the province have donated more than 3 billion VND to contribute funds to pull the national electricity grid to Co To island district<sup>9</sup>; gifts-giving activities on the occasion of the Lunar New Year for poor households, policy beneficiaries, and students... Responding to the campaign of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in Quang Ninh province, many pagodas in the province built 80 great solidarity houses, each house is worth from 50 million to 150 million dong. Besides, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in Ha Long city also built and handed over a kindergarten in Vu Oai commune, Hoanh Bo district (now Vu Oai commune, Ha Long city) worth 360 million VND. In addition, the Buddhist Sangha also mobilizes monks, nuns and Buddhists to help flood compatriots, raise funds for the poor, study promotion fund, funds for orphans, disabled children, Agent Orange, and relief aid, humanitarian aid centers and support other local funds inside and outside the province with a total estimated budget of more than 20 billion VND.<sup>10</sup>

Over the years, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in Quang Ninh province regularly conducts charity and social security activities in accordance with the compassionate spirit of Buddhism, such as programs to support and care for lonely elderly people in difficult circumstances, orphans without support; visit and give gifts to poor households and policy families on holidays and Tet; contribute funds to support the

<sup>9</sup> Document of the 4th Buddhist Congress of Quang Ninh Province, term 2017-2022, 2017, p.19.

<sup>10</sup> Document of the 4th Buddhist Congress of Quang Ninh Province, term 2017-2022, 2017, p.20.

construction of great solidarity houses, renovating schools in disadvantaged areas... Responding to the call of the Party and State on Covid-19 disease prevention and control activities with the spirit of "fighting the pandemic like against the enemy", April 6, 2020 in Ho Chi Minh City. In Ha Long (Quang Ninh), the Executive Board of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in Quang Ninh province organized to hand over a negative pressure room worth 650 million VND to Quang Ninh Provincial General Hospital and 1 billion VND in support for the province's Covid-19 pandemic prevention fund<sup>11</sup>. At the same time, all temples in the area do not hold festivals with large crowds, monks actively guide people and Buddhists to take measures to prevent and control the pandemic.

### **3.4. Buddhist human values with international cooperation activities**

Quang Ninh is an important place in the Northeast region of the country, has a border close to China with 04 international border gates and is a large Buddhist center with long historical value, so it attracts many tourists. frequent international exchanges, visits and exchanges.

With a common sense of responsibility for the country, monks and nuns, Quang Ninh Buddhists always have active activities to unite and befriend international guests whenever they visit the temple or exchange information about the situation of Buddhism, thereby helping the international community better understand the country and hospitable Vietnamese people. Among the pagodas with the largest number of international visitors are those in the Yen Tu relic site - Yen Tu scenic spot, the pagodas in Mong Cai area.

Over the past years, the Executive Board of the Quang Ninh Buddhist Sangha has welcomed international Buddhist delegations such as the Lao Buddhist Union Leadership Delegation, the Chinese and Korean Buddhist Association delegations ..... and hundreds of international tourist groups coming to visit, exchange, study and work.

At the same time, the Quang Ninh Buddhist Sangha has well organized the reception, introduced the cultural history and architecture of Buddhism at a number of monastic facilities for Buddhist delegations and international tourists upon arrival in order to create an atmosphere of solidarity, understanding and respecting the traditional cultural values of the nation and Buddhism. This has contributed to strengthening the friendly relationship with tourists in the people's diplomacy of the Party and State of Vietnam.

## **Conclusions**

Throughout history, Buddhism in Quang Ninh has always been attached to the nation, saving and rescuing sentient beings, actively contributing to the general development of the nation's history. Buddhism plays an increasingly important role in the cultural and spiritual life of the majority of people in Quang Ninh. With the motto "Dharma - Nation - Socialism", Buddhism in Quang Ninh continues to make great contributions to the construction and development of the country. Monks,

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<sup>11</sup> Quang Ninh Province Buddhist Sangha donates nearly 2 billion VND to support pandemic prevention and control, Fatherland Front website, April 6, 2020.

nuns and Buddhists always promote the spirit of solidarity and harmony with the direction of sticking together, accompanying the nation, and working with local authorities to well perform the tasks of socio-economic development, construction and defend the Fatherland, actively participate in and organize many social charity activities, continue the tradition of accompanying the nation, unite to build the country, promote the spirit of entering the world.

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