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**THEME OF LOVE IN SOUTHERN URBAN POETRY - VIETNAM (1954 – 1975)**

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**ABSTRACT**

Researching the theme of love in urban poetry in the South of Vietnam from 1954 to 1975 aims to help readers understand more about the personal consciousness or ego of Vietnamese people in poetry. Studying the theme of love in urban poetry in the South of Vietnam by studying some expressions of distant and lonely love, anxious and skeptical love, love for sexual life, love for spiritual life associated with Eastern thoughts and culture from Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, as well as Western culture through Existentialism, Psychoanalysis, etc. This article contributes to exploring the reflection of the reality of life as well as the human soul in a special period of Vietnamese literature through the theme of love, the thoughts of poets, helping readers understand their autobiography and talent by reflecting the world of human souls, contributing to enriching the world of Vietnamese poetry in the period of 1954 to 1975.

**Keywords:** Love Theme, Southern Urban Poetry - Vietnam 1954 - 1975.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Theme is a category belonging to the content of a literary work. It shows the author's thoughts (or main inspiration) and ability to penetrate the life. Love is an extremely sacred and noble human emotion. Each person and each era has a different way of perceiving, expressing, and evaluating love. The theme of love between couples in poetry is the main inspiration about the poet's love, expressed in many different levels of inner emotions. The theme of love between couples in urban poetry in Southern Vietnam is pure, everyday, existential love and "love is also used as a means to explore life, excavate consciousness...". Besides, we also see that love is tainted with the smell of guns and bullets, love is also associated with modern love poetry. We see that the theme of love in urban poetry in Southern Vietnam is very good and attracts many people's attention. According to researcher Mai Anh Tuan, "the reappearance of some urban literary phenomena in the South from 1954 to 1975 also gives us much hope, especially hope for the complete and trustworthy existence of a true national literature". In terms of reference materials for research, there are still few compared to the development potential of this literary genre.

Urban poetry in the South of Vietnam was born and developed in 20 years, from 1954 to 1975, associated with many historical events of the nation in general and the social spirit of the South in particular. In the first decades of the 20th century, the contact and exchange between Vietnamese culture and Western culture had already taken place strongly under the conditions of French colonial invasion, domination and colonial exploitation in Vietnam. In the second half of the 20th century, especially after 1954, the influence of European and American culture, especially American culture, on the culture of South Vietnam was very strong, from ideology, politics, law, education, language to lifestyle. Before the wave of Western culture entering Vietnam, urban literature in South Vietnam from 1954 to 1975 both actively absorbed and sought its own creativity, as Huynh Nhu Phuong once commented: "Literature in the territory managed by the

Republic of Vietnam government, mainly in urban areas, but there were still authors and works present in the countryside. This literature was divided into many different trends, movements, and concepts, which were both positively or negatively related to revolutionary literature and were influenced by modern Western literature, while trying to find a separate path to affirm its own creativity". Urban poetry in Southern Vietnam at this time often revolved around themes such as love, loneliness, disappointment, etc., which were trendy and aimed at innovation and renewal in art.

**Table 1. Statistical table of content on the theme of love and the poets surveyed**

Serial Number	Poet's Name	Theme Love
1	Bui Giang	Love of Distant and Lonely Love Love of Anxiety and Doubt Love of Sexual Life
2	Nguyen Sa	
3	Hoang Truc Ly	
4	Hoai Khanh	
5	Thanh Tam Tuyen	
6	To Thuy Ye	
7	Nha Ca	
8	Tran Da Tu	
9	Nguyen Tat Nhien	

## 2. AIM OF THE STUDY

In this article, we focus on the love theme of urban poetry in the South of Vietnam, specifically the period 1954 - 1975, to see that Vietnamese poetry in this period, although the country was being invaded by war, but in terms of literature and art, poetry developed quite strongly. The author chose to survey typical poets such as: Bui Giang, Nguyen Sa, Hoang Truc Ly, Hoai Khanh, Thanh Tam Tuyen, To Thuy Yen, Nha Ca, Tran Da Tu, Nguyen Tat Nhien, ... with many poems of value to human life. From there, we can see that literature has a spirit of humanism, democracy, freedom of love ... In addition, surveying the theme of love helps Vietnamese readers as well as other countries in the world have a comprehensive view of Vietnamese love poetry, which also has similarities with love poetry in some other countries in the world.

## 3. SUBJECTS AND METHODS

### 3.1. Study Design

Systemic method: placing the subject of love in the theory of Vietnamese poetry and the research situation of the subject of love in Southern poetry at systematic levels to study the period 1954 - 1975.

Historical method: studying articles and works to understand the social, cultural, political circumstances, ... as well as the thoughts of the time that influenced the theory of Vietnamese poetry and the research situation of the subject of love between couples in Southern Vietnamese urban poetry in different stages. Comparative method: placing the subject of love in the theory of Vietnamese poetry and the research situation of the subject of love in urban poetry of Southern Vietnam next to the subject of love in poetry and between poets in other periods, comparing to

point out common points, unique points, etc. Analytical - synthetic method: studying and analyzing the subject of love in the theory of Vietnamese poetry and the research situation of the subject of love in urban poetry of Southern Vietnam in the period 1954 - 1975, from events, aspects, details, images, etc., draw the most general conclusions.

**3.2. Subject and Sampling:** Theme of love, urban poetry in the South - Vietnam 1954 - 1975

## **4. RESEARCH CONTENT**

### **4.1 Distant Love and Loneliness**

The theme of love in Southern Vietnamese urban poetry emphasizes human freedom and ego, promotes objectivity and creative thinking, equality between men and women, etc. Distant love and loneliness are profound and complex issues that many people face in relationships. These emotions can greatly affect both people in the relationship as well as how they feel about themselves and life. Distant love and loneliness are challenges that many people face, but they are also opportunities for personal growth and building stronger relationships. The most important thing is to understand and accept one's own emotions, and at the same time find healthy ways to deal with them. Southern Vietnamese urban poetry at this time often revolves around themes such as distant love, loneliness, disappointment, etc., which are trendy and aim for innovation and change in art. According to Nguyen Hung Quoc, the characteristics of Southern Vietnamese urban poetry have three elements: "Realism, romanticism; humanistic development; diversity". Not only that, diversity is sometimes difficult to distinguish from Western cultural hybridization, but it has the meaning of expressing the desire for change as poet Nguyen Sa once mentioned: "Communication with Western literature and art pushes us to quickly accept to accept something else... The same author can jump from realism to surrealism and then to existentialism. And that rapid change, on the downside, is sad because it is not really us, because it still bears this or that trace, but on the upside, it speaks of the desire for change. And when they change to catch up with the changes in world literature and art, that desire will play the role of the driving force of great creations". In Thanh Tam Tuyen's poetry, we love the profound reality and reality by creating it. According to Do Lai Thuy, "the structure itself, as a center of meaning, has created a strong centripetal force that attracts and arranges scattered, even contradictory poems in Thanh Tam Tuyen, into a whole, a profound whole". In the poem Still You by Thanh Tam Tuyen, love expresses a burning, aching longing for a "you" who has a magical attraction. The more intense that longing is, the more it expresses loneliness: Still you, my chest is breathing, burying the storm/Expanding the emptiness, clashing with the emptiness/Still you, the stormy rain on the mountain cliff/Opening the cold, vague path to heaven and earth/Still you, the gentle white clouds/Stupefiedly reflecting on the desolate sea/Still you, the trembling and blooming cereus/The secret fragrance envelops our night". Loneliness is an emotional state that appears in those who lack connection or communication with other individuals. As Heidegger said: "Existence is immersed in many ways when it only feels disturbed in the world of given things". The essential loneliness of love is also expressed in the poem Tears of Green Stone by Thanh Tam Tuyen: "I know people who cry alone/ without stopping for a minute/ those who cry tears that do not fall outside their hearts/ you know/ tears are green stones/ hearts are weary". In the poem The Gospel of Her by Du Tu Le, we encounter the lament of love: "Each of us keeps for ourselves/ some wounds that have dried into scars/ and lovingly looks at/ our portraits hanging on the wall of memory", recalling a statement by Sartre in Existentialism is a humanism: "A person commits

himself to life, paints his face, and there is nothing but that face...". When people freely choose and commit, but the result is painful wounds, loneliness is inevitable.

The distance and loneliness of man are expressed in the state of anxiety about his connection with another individual and the universe: "Man is lonely, in conflict with the world of things, creating a conflict in consciousness". The lonely love in the poem "Sea of Destiny" by To Thuy Yen is revealed through the feeling of loss and emptiness when separated from his lover: "I live to get used to death/Licking the salty taste on the pain/Sinking forever into you and disappearing/Like the sun melting in the spreading water". Loneliness in love is also a form of loneliness. Readers can see loneliness in love in most poems by urban poets in Southern Vietnam, because love is their salvation in the contemporary situation, but not everyone finds comfort in complete love. Already lonely, they feel even more miserable because the last hope is out of reach. That is the confession of the lovelorn guests living in nostalgia as in the poem *Sitting by the Bridge* by Hoai Khanh: "You - still have a green smile, knowing eyes/ The color of loneliness on the flowing hair/ What else is there with the white clouds/ That have unintentionally drifted away to the distant riverbank", or the poem *A Voice of You* by Dinh Hung: "Then here on these paths/ Who will we hold hands with/ The rhythm of the five-stringed zither of illusion/ Letting go of our thoughts at midnight tonight". Loneliness becomes even more absolute when people have to live in a life and death situation, embracing the sadness of loneliness: "There is no night sadder than tonight/ Rain wets the porch, tears wet my hands/ Oh Autumn, where are you dead/ Why is someone's grave so green in my heart" (There is no night sadder than tonight, Dinh Tram Ca), "It's late autumn, where are you/ Lying in the cold ground, you must be sad/ Oh Autumn! Wake up the ghost/ I want to visit the deep grave" (To the person in the grave, Dinh Hung). Perhaps, in the midst of social upheavals in the South after 1954, the separation, fracture, and dispersion made people more lonely than ever. For that reason, the mood of loneliness seemed to become a mood of the times, so we can encounter lonely love in many poems of poets.

Thus, the love of separation and loneliness of the urban poets of Southern Vietnam has expressed the distance and deep loneliness of those who enter the path of love. That is the theme of love of separation and loneliness that brings a lot of sadness in love, and at the same time is the highest expression of loneliness on the journey to find a connection between the individual and the social community.

#### 4.2. Anxious and skeptical love

The theme of love in poetry has many different forms. Sometimes it is directly expressed as a feeling, a story, a situation, ... with the poet's own life. With the theme of love between couples, writing about the poet himself and in private relationships. Because in lyric poetry we can see the process of subjectification, through a choice, a perspective or a content issue mentioned. Anxiety and doubt are manifestations of people losing peace of mind and losing faith in the other person and life. The poem *I will visit you* by Nguyen Sa, shows the anxiety in love of a woman waiting, the burden and the endless pain. This can reflect a sense of patience and endurance in love: I will visit you/So that the eyes are the color of bright stars/Or the eyes the color of drunken rice/The dry yellow color mixed with the thin brown color/Don't remember the days when we were rice/So that tears as white as soft rice fall on your hands

The love in Nguyen Sa's poetry is poetic, anxious and carries the mood of the times. The existential subject in his poetry is like a coincidence and the love in poetry is very bright and passionate. According to Cao The Dung, "Nguyen Sa has always been a poet with a romantic and

romantic style. His poetry clearly shows the mood of his time. His poetry is not and cannot be Sartre's existentialism. He is a poet of an existential river in existence. Nguyen Sa is silent but stirring, loving in the brokenness, that existential stream carries love like a coincidence". The love in Nguyen Sa's poetry expresses many levels of emotions, Ta Ty has commented very delicately: "Nguyen Sa enters poetry with steps that bring much affection to others. Others, of course, are girls, are love. Love for Nguyen Sa is like grace, like an endless source of affection, with sweetness, with turmoil in the soul, with entwined arms, with gentle breaths. This event is very natural, because that is Nguyen Sa's nature".

The state of anxiety and doubt often appears commonly in existentialist literature, including in the poems of Thanh Tam Tuyen, To Thuy Yen, Nguyen Tat Nhien, etc. Thanh Tam Tuyen's poem Khuc Sau expresses the state of longing, anxiety and doubt about his lover who is no longer there. The long separation from his lover has made "you become a dream", "the wild grass road I return", "no one knows we love each other" and "you leave your whole life empty". Bui Bich Hanh believes: "Like freedom and not completely like freedom, anxiety in Thanh Tam Tuyen's artistic being is a dual situation of human nature and unconscious repression. It is this dichotomy of the anxious situation that forms another path of the self's form, which in Thanh Tam Tuyen's poetic text, is the speaking invasion of the committed self". It is the separated love that makes the lyrical subject feel anxious about bad things happening to his lover. According to Pham Viet Tuyen, "Thanh Tam Tuyen is the finding of despair of "an obsession that spreads pessimism throughout space and time, causing the poet to hold you in his arms and miss you in the days to come." Because of too much longing and anxiety, he thinks of bad things in love: You have died, died/In the silence of everything/The countless emptiness/Of the pinnacle of despair/Oh tonight, tonight, tonight/Struggling with thorns/In the dark cave of the rock/Pain grips you/I am just a dream".

Anxiety and doubt are psychological and physiological states characteristic of the body, emotions, cognition, behavior, etc., causing fear and sadness in people. The poem Thousand-fold Realm by Hoang Truc Ly refers to this state through fear and anxiety: "Out there, aren't you sad?/ Far away, the swallow's shadow sinks/ Who cares, anxiously searching for your eyes/ Not knowing which night will be awake all night". Anxiety in the poem When seeing off someone by Pham Huu Quang appears in the form of concern, caution, anxiety, worry and even pity for fate: "because like a person holding a knife, afraid to step/ I follow you like a mute monkey/ When loving someone, if you accidentally die/ Who knows who will have to repent?". Along with the state of loneliness and anxiety is the skepticism of the existential person. Coming to the poem I want to love, I want to believe in life by Nguyen Xuan Thiep is coming to an attitude of disbelief before a collapsed paradise: "I want to believe/ life is like a page of a textbook/ with simple honest stories/ children playing and chasing butterflies/ garcinia and figs/ gentle and obedient/ the path with the sound of clogs at noon/ but the fairy world has collapsed/ the virtuous people live a life of exile/ the honest people have died/ like my friend". With the poem Before Going to the Army by Trieu Uyen Phuong, love reveals doubts about the life one is about to face: "Now I still have hands, now I still have legs, now I still have eyes/ now I am not blind, not deaf, not crippled/ but I wonder if tomorrow I will still have enough/ and my heart too/ will it still vibrate/ or be silent/ stop beating". Living between two bullets, suffering enough pain with the choices that the times push and witness the suffering that people have to bear, how can one have a peaceful soul. And To Thuy Yen's poetry expresses anxious love and doubts as a way to connect people with the universe. That is the way people establish their own lives in the vast universe. Doubt between life and death, between existence and loss is expressed in the poem V. M. L by To Thuy Yen: I miss you, I miss



you with all my longing/On nights like tonight/The earth and sky are restless/Several ocean winds rush in and flow into space/Clinging around my house like a raging python/Are you dead? Am I alive?". Similarly, a poet with an unfinished education and an unfinished life is also frankly acknowledged by To Thuy Yen with anxious love and doubt in the poem I: "I am TO THUY YEN, a poet, a historian/ of the future/ Because my education was unfinished, I came to the right shore of life's wind/ down to nothingness/ When summer lit up rows of phoenix torches/ I have made many trips for a living or for wandering/ by car, train or on foot/ I have experienced a few love affairs, which are always/ sad so I don't like to tell".

In his existentialist way of thinking, his poetry represents the primitive nature of human beings and is always concerned with human life and the essence in the universe. According to Do Lai Thuy, "To Thuy Yen's poetic language innovations are dual-valued, both going into the future and going back to the past, both going out into the world and going into the nation, creating a new view of the world". The anxious and skeptical love in To Thuy Yen's poem Pha Tam Giang is now dry is a multifacetedness of the female character: Thinking of the pensive mother, the devilish younger brother/Thinking of all kinds of trivial things/That every girl thinks of/Then thinking of you, thinking of you/In a natural and miserable way/It might be raining now/I'm walking along the porch, weeping/Watching the bubbles of water running on the sidewalk/Like flowers blooming in a hurry/Then maybe I'll go to a familiar coffee shop/Where we used to meet". Besides, the anxious and skeptical love in Nha Ca's love poems depicts a woman full of dreams and many experiences in life. The theme of love expressed in Nha Ca's poems is the regret of the past that has gone through too much sadness and joy. Le Huy Oanh noted that "the passionate and sincere voices of a very womanly woman, someone who is always fascinated by life with all its sadness and joy. She both remembers and regrets the memories of the past and lives enthusiastically in the present, her reason for living includes a number of events, among which there are not a few events that are in sharp contrast: memories and reality, dreams and struggles, sadness and joy, among which the most important is the love for the "king" of her heart and for a whole bunch of children". In addition, the anxious and skeptical love in the poem "The Fate of our Northern Daughter" by Nguyen Tat Nhien shows the sorrow of the cruel first love: "Passionate but also full of worries about the fragility of life". The comparison shows the fate of love and the feelings of the heartbroken. Perhaps, the first love has brought people many beautiful memories and sometimes it also brings much sadness and torment throughout life: "You never had the same old feelings/I was cruel to my first love for five years/so I returned like a worm/dragged my thin legs through the dense trees/nurturing hope after a thousand years of rain and sunshine/your green leaves have not yet had any stains/looking at the young leaves, regretful, longing... not daring to bite/if because of you the genius is tired of life/then because of you I am afraid to step into society". The anxious and skeptical love in the urban poetry of Southern Vietnam 1954 - 1975, shows many different aspects of love. Each poet has a different way of expressing himself but shows a profound style in his poetry, to speak his own heart. In the urban poetry of Southern Vietnam, love, anxiety and doubt not only reflect personal feelings but also are manifestations of the turbulent social context. These works are not only explorations of personal psychology but also subtle reflections of the times.

#### **4.3. Love and sexual life**

Love and sexual life are two important aspects of personal relationships, but they are not necessarily identical or always go together. Love is often understood as a deep, emotional connection and commitment between two people, while sexual life is related to the physiological

and emotional aspects of sexual relations. Love and sexual life in urban poetry in Southern Vietnam 1954 - 1975, dominated by the theory of psychoanalytic, is a branch of psychology, a set of theories and therapeutic techniques related to the study of the unconscious mind, together forming a method of treating mental disorders, a clinical method of treating mental illness through dialogue between patients and psychologists. The discipline was founded in the early 1890s by the Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud. He is a psychologist who specializes in studying human psychological phenomena, especially the unconscious. According to S. Freud, the human mind includes the unconscious, preconscious and conscious, in which the unconscious is the mental processes that occur automatically and are not available to the introspection and include thinking processes, memories, preferences and motivations. S. Freud said: "The communication between the ego and consciousness has been described many times, there are many important points that need to be repeated. We are used to mentioning social and moral values in any field, we are not surprised that low passions gather in the subconscious, we believe that events with more social and moral values will be allowed to enter consciousness more easily". S. Freud described humans as having a mental "structure" consisting of three interacting parts: The id, the ego, the super ego, corresponding to the universal phenomenon in all humans: libido, eros, thanatos.

Love and sexual life in Southern urban poetry from 1954 to 1975 left strong evidence for the reception and creation of psychoanalytic theory in poetry, especially creating the theme of love associated with self-awareness of one's own fate. According to Tran Hoai Anh, "not only using the concepts of unconsciousness, subconsciousness, and projection to explain the creative process of the artist, critics also apply the category of sexuality in psychoanalytic theory to explain the creative psychology of writers... This is not just an isolated case, but has become a creative trend that has influenced the social life and literature of the South". Nguyen Van Trung once wrote the book *Praise the Body* (Nam Son Publishing House, 1967) and the book *Language and the Body* (Trien Bay Publishing House, 1968) to honor the beauty and value of the human body. The physical element, which was once forbidden, has now regained its position in literature. Urban poets in the South of Vietnam were influenced by psychoanalytic theory and were not afraid to talk about love through suggestive images. Although the poem *Tuong Tu* by Le Ky Thuong talks about the moon and poetry, it is expressed through a longing, making the poetic images also full of sexuality: "Mornings of love, afternoons of longing/nights craving a little love/lying and waiting for the moon to come knocking at the door/I bite into the poem until my teeth ache". In Thanh Tam Tuyen's poetry, the mark of psychoanalysis is also quite strong. Images containing sexual obsession such as "bare breasts" appear in many poems such as *Hoa*, *Mua Ngu*, *Mai*,... Du Tu Le also considered it a source of inspiration when writing: "that was when she saw her long hair, her full breasts, and her red lips" (*Her Gospel*). Cung Tram Tuong further emphasized: "Outside, the rain was pouring/ Strings intertwined/ Love became a crossroads... That moment was truly existential/ Oh, the love story" (*Love Story*). Could this be the self-expression of unconscious love governed by sexual instinct – the central factor, providing the energy that governs all activities of human mental life? This can also be seen as the intersection between Existentialism and Psychoanalysis, because human existence is important, nature exists before essence.

Along with the unconscious, the subconscious is also present in Southern urban poetry through the details of dreams, daydreams, and dreams, which are repeated and recurred in many poems, including Thanh Tam Tuyen's poetry: "April is dazzling/ Flickering and flickering/ The day is impatient and naive/ The beauty is terrifying/ The dream has not yet fallen/ The silence is brilliant." (*Ha ca*), or "Flowers have no names/ Just messy strokes on a painting/ The colors are

blurred/ I have drawn on you/ Into the dream, the song is flickering" (Hoa). Besides the love that floats in the unconscious and subconscious is the love of self-consciousness about one's fate. Consciousness corresponds to the ego, which is the expression of each person's psychological personality, it appears after instinct. Because, the ego is expressed in human conscious activities such as: perception, language and intellectual operations that allow control and restraint of personal behaviors including love for sexual life. In the poem "Ghe Mot Sau", Nha Ca expresses love with self-consciousness about the life of a girl who is very loving in love for sexual life: I also lift you up with a look at the tiles/With the soft breath still entwined together/I invite you to come close to my deep lips/The night sinks and love awakens... When the need to affirm the individual in love for sexual life is emphasized, it is also the time when people are deeply aware of their success - failure, gain - loss. Self-realization of identity becomes an individual need and a spiritual activity that takes place regularly inside people. The above reflections on personal love and sexual life will be the starting point for more general reflections on the meaning of life in the contemporary social context of love in urban poetry in Southern Vietnam. It can be seen that Psychoanalysis has influenced many creative circles to mention love and sexual life of people in urban poetry in Southern Vietnam in the period of 1954 - 1975. The influence of Psychoanalysis has helped poets express a variety of love from the unconscious to the subconscious and conscious. They have a close relationship with each other, creating a rich spiritual world and a multidimensional poetic world.

#### 4.4. Love and spiritual life

Love and spiritual life can form a deep and rich relationship, when the connection is not only based on physical or emotional factors but also has spiritual depth and connection with something greater. Below are some important aspects of the intersection between love and spiritual life, which are influenced by Eastern cultural philosophies such as Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, while Western culture is Christianity. Confucianism is a system of ethics, educational philosophy, social philosophy and political philosophy proposed by Confucius and developed by his disciples with the aim of building a harmonious society, a peaceful and prosperous country, in which people know how to behave according to reason and morality. Confucianism sets forth principles for maintaining and developing social relations, standards for all political activities and social security. Confucianism believes that "Heaven, Earth and all things are one body", meaning "Heaven, Earth and all things are one body". Individuals play an important role in building families and society. Therefore, each individual needs to maintain human morality through the path of self-cultivation, complying with the ethical standards in the Three Bonds and Five Constants. Women in particular need to maintain morality according to the Three Obediences and Four Virtues..

Southern Vietnamese urban poetry is the voice of the Vietnamese people raised in response to the impacts of Vietnamese society, so it carries a strong Vietnamese cultural influence. Through innovative poetic forms, modern writing styles, the vibrant atmosphere of current events, hot social issues, etc., and ignoring individual views on political ideals, we can still see the concepts that have been ingrained in the blood and flesh of the Vietnamese people since ancient times. That is the manly ambition to establish a great career, to contribute to building a peaceful and prosperous country, and then when the great ambition is not achieved, there is a bit of resentment, when the homeland is not yet peaceful, there is still a patriotic feeling, when parting, there is an inexhaustible longing for the old place, ... This is probably the love associated with the spiritual life that is popular in many poems: "At night, sometimes I lie on my side / Listening to the faint melody of



the clouds on the shore / Thinking of the gentleman who has not yet achieved his destiny / Playing a poetic song to call for his lover" (By the Lake of Thuy Ngu, Le Van Ngan), "The chess game of war/The moment of reunion, a thousand years later, who knows if it will still exist! / A girl in a state of exhaustion / A guy in a foreign land remembering all the years" (Khuc Ly Dinh, Cao Thi Van Gia), "So many fame and career / Not enough to keep me warm" (When I Welcome You Back, Cao Thoai Chau), ... The frustration, failure or misfortunes that must be endured are sometimes assessed by the impact of social factors, but sometimes it is explained by fate, a very common psychological trait of the Vietnamese people due to the profound influence of the Confucian idea of Heaven's Mandate. Gentlemen and noble people all have their own beauty and suffering in their love. In times of chaos, their images easily turn into the image of the soldier's husband - soldier's wife. We can see this image in many poems: "I know I will never return/ You are like a swallow flying in the vastness/ Do you understand my foolish love/ Do you understand my love is also silk" (The Lady in the Tower, Ha Thuc Sinh), "You come back and dig up your face/ Listen to the flood water flowing through your mind/ The war-torn homeland is dark/ At night, I hear the soldier's wife lulling her child to sleep" (A Night of Fighting in the Countryside, Tong Chau An), "Grow up quickly, my child/ Life is still fascinating/ Carriages and cannons still cross the river/ People are still fluctuating/ The lanterns still spin fast/ You should quickly join/ Ride a horse to become a soldier/ The unfortunate daughter/ Follows you to become a soldier's wife" (Talking to her first-born son, Dinh Giang). It can be seen that the mark of Confucianism in the urban poetry of Southern Vietnam is not deep because this is a poetry that strongly absorbs modern European and American ideas, but readers occasionally still recognize the traces that are deeply ingrained in the thinking and concept of the Vietnamese people about the responsibility of a gentleman with the will to be a man and the debt of the country or the love and fate of a beautiful guest. They have the same unfortunate fate due to the arrangement of creation. It is the Confucian philosophy that contributes to deepening the mood of the lyrical ego while increasing the national cultural content of the Urban Poetry of Southern Vietnam 1954 - 1975. As for the love of spiritual life in Buddhism, it is a religion and also a system that includes a series of teachings, philosophical thoughts as well as thoughts on humanism, cosmology, worldview, explaining natural phenomena, spirituality, society, the nature of things and events; methods of practice and cultivation. Buddhist philosophy refers to the idea of altruism and humanity, offering very specific ethical standards for people to practice. Buddhism considers "worldly relations" as impermanent and illusory, believes in the doctrine of reincarnation, advocates the ultimate goal of considering Nirvana as tranquil and the idea of practicing celibacy. The mark of Buddhism is also shown in the poems of Tue Mai (Tran Thi Gia Minh). In many poems, she has shown the transience of the world, the brevity of human life and the meaning of each moment of existence: "A hundred years fly by in a flash/ I ask you to smile endlessly/ I ask you to love me with your forehead/ We sing together with the mist and smoke/ A hundred years fly by in a flash..." (Flying the Circle of Life) or "In the shaking night/ I sleep innocently/ Let the dream come/ A thousand years of peace" (Peace). Talking about the influence of Buddhism in urban poetry in Southern Vietnam, it is impossible not to mention the poetic phenomenon of Pham Thien Thu. His poem "Golden Flower Cave" is like a journey into the Buddha realm: "Entering the mountain cave to enter nirvana/ The elite blooms a golden flower at the door/ In the future, any benefactor will hear/ Please find it and ask for a raft of green clouds... I will wait for you with my golden flower/ I will appear and sing on the apricot branch/ In this mortal world, I greet this dream world/ The Milky Way seeks a shore outside to ask for alms."

In addition, at different levels, Buddhist imprints are also found in many works of many other poets. In the poem Truth by Huy Luc, human suffering and Buddha's teachings are mentioned, as an expression of faith: "As Buddha taught/ she trembled in gratitude/ he wrote poetry/ and the first love song on the forbidden land// he and she are now all over the world/ with love and despair". It can be said that Buddhist philosophy entered the urban poetry of Southern Vietnam from 1954 to 1975 and was expressed through the awareness of love for spiritual life in many aspects such as: nothingness, impermanence, reincarnation, sea of suffering, compassion, the interaction between the past, present and future, fate, ... Those philosophies contributed to making the urban poetry of Southern Vietnam reach the depth of awareness and emotion, helping love to reveal the dimensions of a compassionate and generous soul. In addition, Taoist philosophy influenced love in urban poetry in Southern Vietnam from 1954 to 1975, typically in the poem Fragrant Forest by Han Da Thao, the image of a butterfly's wings being released to blend with the world of flowers and grass, fragrant with color and sound, reminiscent of Trang Chu's butterfly dream: "Hey, you who sing with me/ Why is the sound broken like smoke and mist/ The melody of the deep and lost silk thread/ The soaring melody of the longing/ Which melody has fallen a drop of morning rain/ Blooming a silk butterfly flying outside, disintegrating/ The old silk and grass dress and red flowers/ Today, many fragrant buds have fallen/ Tomorrow the mountains and seas will be worn away/ Will the beauty of the universe still exist, my dear?" Taoist philosophy gives people a way to free themselves from all desires, advising people not to be too respectful of material life, and to restrain their desires. In addition, people should focus on the spiritual element, "using the mind to suppress the spirit", "rather give up this body to preserve the Way and Virtue". This may be just a way of speaking, but it expresses a dream that once existed in the Vietnamese mind about a miraculous medicine that was refined to cure all diseases and bring immortality to people as mentioned by Taoism.

The belief in the mystery and immense charity of God is also conveyed through the prayer of a girl missing her lover who is thousands of miles away in the poem My Soul is the Cold Ocean by Le Khanh: "The cold wind tonight... where are you?/ My cold soul suddenly filled with sadness/ Late at night, I read a prayer softly/ Please God, have mercy on us and let us marry// God is in the sky, you are far away/ And I will forever be in tears/ Oh, my dear, suddenly understanding, then falling apart,/ The life of a flower". Urban poetry in Southern Vietnam is the place where God's followers express their admiration and at the same time show the spread of this religion in the spiritual life of the people, so that everyone who knows how to love will aim for a good life, a beautiful life, and love for spiritual life. Thus, the love for spiritual life in urban poetry in Southern Vietnam from 1954 to 1975, although different in intensity, the influence of Eastern and Western cultural thought with the philosophy of Christianity, Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism is very clear. Through their poetry, poets have brought those profound and profound philosophies closer to life, and in turn, their poetry contains more cultural sediments and love for spiritual life.

## 5. Conclusion

Through studying some expressions of the theme of love in Southern Vietnam Urban Poetry from 1954 to 1975, we see that there is a fusion and "transformation" between Southern Vietnam culture and the cultures of countries around the world. It is this cultural transformation, from long-standing thoughts and philosophies such as the philosophies of Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and Catholicism to modern doctrines such as Psychoanalysis, Existentialism, that has made Southern Vietnam urban poetry form a unique and distinctive appearance in terms of themes, thoughts as well as forms, genres, etc. Besides, it is seen that Southern Vietnam urban

poetry from 1954 to 1975 has expressed its values according to emotions, philosophy of life, human fate, religious images, and regret about love. At the same time, it also expresses the theme of distant and lonely love; love with doubt and disappointment; love for sexual life; love for spiritual life,... and prove to have a unique contribution to the general development of Vietnamese literature with its own characteristics and similarities to the literature of some countries in the world.

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