
INFORMATION ON SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES

THE CELEBRATION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF DIEN BIEN PHU VICTORY (1954 – 2004)

SEMINAR ON “DIEN BIEN PHU –50 YEARS IN RETROSPECT”

On April 13th and 14th, 2004, the College of Social Sciences and Humanities – Vietnam National University, Hanoi and Pantheo Sorbone University, Paris co-organized the Vietnam-France Seminar under the title “ Dien Bien Phu –50 Years in Retrospect”.

The seminar attracted over 100 Vietnamese and French scientists, diplomats, commanders and war veterans. Professor, Doctor Dao Trong Thi – President of Vietnam National University, Hanoi and Mr. Antoine Poulleute – French Ambassador to Vietnam attended the opening ceremony. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Xuan Hang, rector of the College of Social Sciences and Humanities made an opening speech at the seminar.

45 papers among which 15 were written by French scholars were presented at the seminar. The seminar was divided into two subcommittees: (1) Dien Bien Phu Campaign and (2) Dien Bien Phu and Issues of International Relations. Three keynote

speeches were made in the plenary session were: Changing the Ways of Struggle – a Decisive Factor of the Success of Dien Bien Phu Battle (by Prof. Phan Huy Le), 1954 – The Year of Changing the Situation (Jean Christophe ROMER), France after Dien Bien Phu Victory: from the Imperialism to Europe (Robert FRANK).

In the closing speech, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Van Khanh – Vice Rector of the College of Social Sciences and Humanities emphasized the success of the seminar: “This is the first time Vietnamese and French historians have discussed and exchanged the documentation on the method of assessing the 50-year-ago magnanimous historical events and the development of the relationship between the two nations in the current globalization context. This is the opening step of the scientific cooperation between Vietnamese and French historians and between the two big universities in Vietnam National University, Hanoi and Pantheo Sorbone University, Paris.

By Hong Duong

SEMINAR ON THE OCCASION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF PROF. DAO DUY ANH'S BIRTHDAY (1904 – 2004)

In the morning of March 19th, 2004, the College of Social Sciences and Humanities – Vietnam National University, Hanoi organized a seminar on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Prof. Dao Duy Anh's birthday (1904 – 2004). Many professors, lecturers and students attended the seminar. On behalf of the family of Prof. Dao Duy Anh, Prof. Dao The Tuan and Historian Dao Hung together with many relatives were also present at the seminar.

After the opening speech made by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pham Xuan Hang - Rector of the College of Social Sciences and Humanities, Prof. Phan Huy Le – Chairman of the Association of Vietnamese History made a speech asserting that "Prof. Dao Duy Anh – a teacher of the first generation of Vietnamese historians, who were trained in the universities in Vietnam after the August Revolution in 1945". The speech put forward the profile of the revolutionary and scientific activities of Prof. Dao Duy Anh, especially his great services in building Vietnamese ancient history and in training many generations students in Hanoi Pedagogy University and Hanoi University. With his scientific works, Prof. Dao Duy Anh was also

a historic geographer, a lexicographer, a literature researcher, a great scholar and because of these merits he was awarded Ho Chi Minh Prize by the State.

In expressing his feeling toward his father, Prof. Dao The Tuan – the eldest son of Prof. Dao Duy Anh said: "My father – Dao Duy Anh – has brought the reader the limitless emotion and deep admiration through the stories of patriotism, scientific passion and devotion to the education and the extensive research."

In the memories of the beloved teacher, many of his ex-students showed their gratitude, admiration and feelings toward the teacher Prof. Dao Duy Anh, who devoted his life to the culture and education of our country. It is possible to feel such things through the moving speeches by Professors Ha Van Tan, Tran Quoc Vuong, Dinh Xuan Lam, Luong Ninh, Truong Huu Quynh, etc. The ex-students, many of whom have become famous historians, succeeding the glorious cause of their teacher Dao to become the historians of a new generation, and will continue contributing to Vietnamese history.

By Xuan Anh

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INSTITUTE OF VIETNAMESE STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT SCIENCES

On March 19th, 2004, the Prime Minister of Vietnam made a Decision No 40/2004/QĐ-TTg on the establishment of the Institute of Vietnamese Studies and Science Development under Vietnam National University, Hanoi. The Decision Announcement Meeting was solemnly held on July 2nd, 2004 in the Nguy Nhu Kontum Theatre, at 19 Le Thanh Tong Street, Hanoi.

The predecessor organization of the Institute was the Centre for Cooperation and Vietnamese Studies under Hanoi University, which was established in 1989. In 1995, its name was changed into *the Centre for Vietnamese Studies and Cultural Exchanges* under Vietnam National University, Hanoi. The activities of the Institute include the inheritance, expansion of the contents and the operation scope of the former centre, making a step to a more adequate and comprehensive development.

The objective of the institute is to become a unit of Interdisciplinary Studies, to use scientific applications and to train postgraduates in the direction of regional studies and development sciences. The institute has a function of being a contact organization to gather and exploit the collective power of scientists in and outside Vietnam National University, Hanoi, in our country and in the world, to build and implement the programmes, projects and subjects of Vietnamese interdisciplinary study and to use scientific applications to serve the national construction, development and defense. The institute has a target of organizing and training experts to have postgraduate degrees in regional studies, together with the faculties and colleges under Vietnam National University, Hanoi,

implements the short-term programmes to improve and foster the ability, award certificates to the learners who have graduated from the training programmes of regional studies and development sciences.

In the short term, the institute concentrates on implementing the programmes of historic science and culture of Thang Long – Hanoi, carrying out some national level research projects in the scientific programmes such as "A Study on Promoting Natural, Economic, Social Conditions and Historical & Cultural Values of 1.000 Year Thang Long-Hanoi to Serve the Comprehensive Development of the Capital", "The political system of Vietnam before the Renovation", the Hanoi National University level pivotal project "the Seaport System in the Coastal Area of Northern Vietnam". The Institute continues carrying out the study programmes of land registers, family trees and Thai Studies, and compiling dictionaries, reference materials and advanced Vietnamese textbooks.

The institute has a wide range of international relations with many universities and many Vietnamese Study Centers and many famous scholars in Japan, China, Russia, France, Germany, America, Australia and other countries. Many foreign students, postgraduates and apprentices have studied and done research in the Institute and have completed their theses on Vietnamese Studies.

The leadership of the institute consists of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Quang Ngoc – the director and two vice directors - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Thi Viet Thanh and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Truong Quang Hai.

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC SEMINAR ON VIETNAMESE STUDIES

VIETNAM ON THE PATH OF DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION TRADITION AND MODERNIZATION

From July 14th to July 16th, 2004, the Second International Scientific Seminar on Vietnamese Studies under the title: "Vietnam on the Path of Development and Integration: Tradition and Modernization" was held at the Thong Nhat meeting hall in Ho Chi Minh City. The Seminar was co-organized by the Vietnam Social Science Institute and Vietnam National University, Hanoi. On behalf of the two scientific organizations, Professor, Doctor Dao Trong Thi, Member of the Vietnamese Central Communist Party, President of Vietnam National University, Hanoi made an opening speech. He pointed out that the seminar aims at "collecting and introducing Vietnamese and foreign scholars' achievements of new research on Vietnam, widening the links among the organizations and individuals who consider Vietnam as the subject of study, looking back on the past stages and preparing for the development of Vietnam Studies, and gradually establishing the linking structure among Vietnamese study researchers all over the world".

The Seminar attracted over 212 papers (the total number of scholars was over 400), and 123 scholars, international researchers from 21 nations attended the seminar. Vietnamese and foreign scholars delivered speeches and expressed their opinions at 10 subcommittees, including: (1) Economic Issues; (2) Social Issues; (3) National

Issues; (4) Education, Human and Human Resource research; (5) Ancient and Medieval Vietnamese History; (6) Modern Vietnamese History; (7) Vietnamese Culture: Traditions and Religions; (8) Vietnamese Culture: Character, Integration and Development; (9) Literature and Language Matters; and (10) and Regional Issues.

Since the First Vietnamese Study Seminar which was held in Hanoi in 1998, with the deep changes in socio-economic life in Vietnam and the world situation, Vietnam has been the study subject which have attracted many scientists of different professional fields. With the objective of speeding up the national industrialization and modernization, in the strong trend of integrating into the development of the region and the world, Vietnam affirms its position in the world and at the same time contributes actively to promoting the relationships and cooperation in order to build a secure, economic, and cultural community among the regional countries. In that context, over the last six years, together with the development of science and technology and the mature of professional staff, Vietnam not only has gained many important achievements in not only the specialized research fields, but also interdisciplinary research fields, placing Vietnam in the general development of the whole region. Interdisciplinary research is

becoming the research orientation of many scientists and international research centers.

It is possible to say that besides specialized reports on the issues of history, society, culture, language, economy and international relations, the application of new methods and views of research such as multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary into the scientific research and analysis of one professional issue in a certain area or scope of research is a outstanding contribution to archaeology. Through the real experience and application of specific research methods, some reports revealed a high theoretical level in the view of interdisciplinary and regional studies.

Although the number of Vietnamese and foreign scientists who attended the Second Seminar on Vietnamese Studies is not as greater as that was in the First Seminar in 1998, it is noticeable in this seminar that, there is a generation of young Vietnamese Studies researchers who are self-motivated with many high quality reports to show their analyzing ability and special research combined with modern approach and research methods. This is considered as a promising generation to take responsibilities for the development of Vietnamese Studies and to promote the relationship among

colleagues and the international cooperation in the future.

During the seminar, according to the proposals of the representatives who participated in the First Vietnamese Studies Seminar, a round-table conference which consisted of 20 representatives (5 Vietnamese and 15 foreign scientists) was also organized to study the achievements of Vietnamese Studies cooperation in the past time and at the same time to point out the directions of great research and to prepare essential measures for strengthening the united system of Vietnamese Studies centers and foreign Vietnamese Study researchers in order to promote the development of Vietnamese Studies in the coming years. In the closing session, together with summary report by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tran Duc Cuong, Vice President of Vietnam Institute of Social Sciences – the co-organizer of the seminar, all participants in the Second International Vietnamese Studies Seminar also listened to the report by Prof. Phan Huy Le on the results of the round-table conference and the resolution on the establishment of International Vietnamese Studies Council. He also announced that Danang City was chosen as the venue for the Third Vietnamese Studies Seminar in 2009.

By Nguyen Van Kim

THE SUBJECT, VIETNAM AT THE FOURTH EUROSEAS SEMINAR (PARIS – 2004)

From September 1st to September 4th, 2004, the Fourth EUROSEAS Seminar took place in Pantheon – Sorbonne Paris I University (France). This is a big international seminar of the European Association for South-East Asian Studies – EUROSSEAS, which is held every three years: The first seminar was in 1995 in Leiden (Holland), the second in 1998 in Hamburg (Germany), the third was in 2001 in London (England), and this fourth time is in Paris (France).

Until now, EUROSEAS has been the association which gathers many European scientists of South-East Asian Studies. This seminar attracted more than 300 scholars. There were not only many scientists from Europe and from South-East Asia but also many famous scientists from America, China, Japan, etc. After the opening session and two round table conferences, the seminar was divided into 35 subcommittees to discuss the different themes related to the issues of history, culture, population, environment, development, public health, international relation, economy, finance and religion in the South East Asian region. There were a total of 286 speeches sent to the seminar, more than 260 of which were presented at the subcommittees.

According to the initial plan, the seminar would have three subcommittees which was specialized in Vietnam: subcommittee No 7 specialized in the 1930 – 1931 Revolutionary High Tide in Vietnam and Xo Viet Nghe Tinh Revolutionary High Tide, subcommittee No

23 specialized in the Economic Reform in Vietnam and subcommittee No 35 had the heading "the New Evidences of the Cold War in Vietnam (1954 – 1975)". Then, due to of some incidents by the organization board, subcommittee No 23 was not established. Therefore, the seminar had two subcommittees which was specialized in Vietnam. Moreover, many reports which were related to Vietnam in terms of history, culture, economy, international relation were presented in other subcommittees.

A special feature of this seminar is that there was a subcommittee which was specialized in the 1930 – 1931 Revolutionary High Tide and the Xo Viet Nghe Tinh Revolutionary High Tide. In this subcommittee, there were over 30 scholars from France, America, Germany, England, Russia, Hungary, Japan, Norway, and Thailand. The delegate of Vietnamese scientists had five people who were researchers, lecturers and editors of Vietnam National University, Hanoi, the Social Science Institute and the National Politics Publishing House. This is an old subject which has been concerned with and studied by Vietnamese historians for many years and Vietnamese historians have published hundreds of valuable works. In foreign countries, since the 1950s of the last century, scholars of France, America and England have been much interested in studying the 1930 – 1931 Revolutionary High Tide and Xo Viet Nghe Tinh Revolutionary High Tide. In particular, since 1976 with the publication of the famous book entitled "The

Moral Economy of the Peasant" by James C. Scott and the book named "The Rational Peasant – The Political Economy of Rural Society in Vietnam" by Samuel L Popkin (1979), this issue has become the subject of dozens of ebullient discussions in the international literature and art forums. However, this is the first time Vietnamese and foreign scholars have had a chance to exchange the results of their research and discussed some issues concerning this subject.

During the six sessions, the subcommittees discussed 18 reports on the issues: The 1930 -1931 Revolutionary High Tide in the Mekong River Delta (consisting of the reports by Pierre Bourdeaux, Pascal Bourdeaux and Judith Henchy), Issues of Thinking before, during and after the Period of 1930 – 1931(consisting of the reports by Pham Xanh, Sophie Quin-Judge and Pham Thi Think), The Movements and Trends of Other Periods (consisting of the speeches by Nola Cooke, Francois Guillemot and Thomas Engelbert), Mobilizing the Masses in Nghe Tinh (consisting of the speeches by Pham Hong Tung, David Del-Testa and Vu Huy Phuc), The Reaction of the Colonial Government (consisting of the speeches by Nguyen The Anh, Tobias Rettig and Valdimir Kolotov), and The Memory of Xo Viet Nghe Tinh Movement (the reports by Ngo Dang Tri, Tran Boi Huynh and Nadine Andre-Pallois).

From different angles, with different approaches and based on different material resources, most of which were new documents, the reports attempted clarify some aspects or problems of the 1930 – 1931 Revolutionary High Tide and Xo Viet

Nghe Tinh Movement. The two issues which were extensively discussed in the sessions are: (1) Issue of mobilizing the masses in the Revolutionary High Tide in the specific context of Nghe Tinh in the years of 1930 – 1931 and (2) the attitude and reaction of the colonial government, some circles, parties and religious sects before, during and after the 1930 – 1931 Revolutionary Movement. Some issues which used to be discussed among foreign scholars with no consensus have brought to this seminar and agreements on them have been achieved for the first time. However, it is suggested that many problems still need to be thoroughly studied and discussed. In the coming years, the papers presented at the seminar will be fully completed and published in the form of a special subject book. This will be an actual contribution to the 75th ceremony of this important historical event.

Subcommittee No 35 was another subcommittee which was specialized in Vietnam with many sensitive topics: "The New Evidences of the Cold War in Vietnam (1954 – 1975)". Because the number of papers was limited (seven reports), the subcommittee had only two sessions, the number of participants was 20, including both Vietnamese and foreign scientists. In the academic domain, the subcommittee dealt with the important matters of modern Vietnamese history which have not been studied and rarely discussed in both Vietnam and abroad. A special feature of this is that most of the papers are based on the exploitation of material sources which seem not to have been exploited such as the stores of German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland, the Soviet Union, England, America, Norway, etc. Based on those

material sources, scientists tried to understand and clarify the marks and influences of the confrontation between the socialism and the capitalism, conflicts and disagreements within the socialism, especially between the Soviet Union and China in building socialism in the North of Vietnam and the struggle for national reunification of the Vietnamese people.

The thing needs to be said is that each scientist exploited one, two or three of the above material sources, but for lack of a comprehensive view each approached the matters in different ways and thus gave different conclusions about the above matters. Based on the material sources exploited from one store in Hanoi, Dr. Pham Minh Quang (Vietnam National University, Hanoi) demonstrated persuasively that although the situation in the world was complex, the Vietnamese Labour Party under the leadership of President Ho Chi Minh always held fast to the guidance of independence and self-control, took the advantage of the supports from the brother

countries and advanced the Vietnamese Revolution to gain the noblest goal which is the national independence and unification.

The scientists all have found that this seminar is only the first step. In the coming years, the Vietnamese scientific institutions should have plans to cooperate with foreign scholars to exploit better and have a comprehensive, profound and true view on these issues.

Together with the Vietnamese Studies International Seminar, the Europe-Vietnam Seminar, the Vietnam Update Seminar, etc. EUROSEAS is one of the great international scientific forums on Vietnam and South East Asian Studies. Research institutions, universities and Vietnamese scientists should cooperate with the organization committee of seminars so that the Vietnamese scientists will have relevant positions in these forums in the future, promoting understanding and international exchanges, and making more effective contribution to the building of Vietnam.

By Dr. Pham Hong Tung